

claiming, as the wonderful similarity of features recurred to my recollection. "And how was he kil—that is, how did he die?"

"Nathan, you say eem how your boor bruder vas kilt."

The Baroness had to repeat her commands twice before Nathan, who had watched us with a cowed, but malignant aspect, reluctant and sulky, complied.

"He hafe bin in de garten, an' a-cuttin' de grass mit a scyt' fruh in de mornin'. An' vee tinks he puts de scyt' agin de vall; an' den gits oop a latter dere, an' he toomple, oder de latter toomple, an' ach mine himmel! de messer cuts his leck so schwer—oonter de knee—shooost here." The poor man indicated the place with his hand on his own limb.

"Popliteal artery, by Jabes!" interpolated Blake. Nathan paused, regarding Morris doubtfully; but apparently satisfied by the sympathy his face expressed, he continued:

"Mine bruder, ach, mine bruder! no potty hear eem, he cannot git oop; an' he plead, an' he plead; an' vhen vee finds eem, he ist deat'; ja, mine boor bruder ist ganz deat'; ja—ja—deat'!" He became more and more affected as he went on relating the sad event, till, at the conclusion, overcome by his feelings, he rushed from the room.

It was only after a considerable pause that the subject was resumed by Blake inquiring: "And pray, madam, was there any public notice taken of the poor man's death?"

"No-dice!—Gott in himmel!—ya'es. Dere coom de goroner an' eem's jury, an' eet vas in all de bapers."

"Oh, thin, thank you, Baroness. Excuse my curiosity; but how came his head to be painted without iver a body to it?"

"Oh, das vas because he hafe no blut in eem; an' he make so pe-utifool a Shone der Paptist, mit de Princess. Vee hafe pring her mit us to pe mottel for anoder bictur' oaf de jung-frau Cenci; she hafe such eyes for dat she hear not! aber, vhen dis habben, she doos efer so mo'sh betterer for a Salome mit eem, ya'es. So vee cut eem avay his head."

Morris and I glanced at each other, and then at the singular creature before us who, in so indifferent a manner, avowed the cutting off of a corpse's head, without the shadow of a doubt in either of our minds that the act had been done by the fat, jewelled, and nervous hands lying there so composedly on her lap. Her manner, during the latter part of our conversation, had completely changed to one which I can only describe as "gossipy." Suddenly, after a pause, she addressed me:

"Vere doos you leef, now?"

I told her.

"Doos der Viscount coom dere to you?"

"No; I saw him at his own place in —shire."

She looked furtively, yet keenly, or rather knowingly, at me.

"When you vas coom in, vhat vas you say about de bicture you vas baint, as he hafe it?"

"Yes, madam. He told me the whole story, and how, as well as for vhat, he bought it of Baron Mordecai."

"Ah, I knows noting about dem tings. Vhat he tink eet vas vhen he buy eet?"

"He bought it for a Murillo, madam, at a cost of thirteen thousand guineas," I replied, severely; but my answer only seemed to amuse her, for she actually laughed.

"Ha, ha, ha! Potztausend! vas for a fool! He is von as tink he know eferyting about bictures. He see a bicture, an' he say, Dis ist Polemberg; he see anoder, an' he say, Dis ist Cuypp; an' he say, Dis Ostade; oder, Guido Reni; oder, Murillo; an' eef you gontradict eem, you make eem in a great bassion. Hafe you gontradict eem?"

"No, I certainly did not. It would be cruel, as he is so entirely satisfied."

"Oh, you ist vise man, gewiss! He vill nefare forgif you—he hate you allways—if you gontradict eem. Vee hafe pay you all for your bicture vhat vee hafe bromis?"

"More, Baroness, more. I am bound to acknowledge you acted most liberally."

"An' vhen you coom'd here, doos alle I says I doos for you?"

"Certainly, in every particular—certainly."

"Ah, eet vas vhat der Baron say; you vas a perfit shen'l-man; dat eef you gif your vort oaf honour you nefare, nefare forgits eem—ya'es. I hafe lofe you den—a goot deal lofe you; an' I lofe you now fery mo'sh."

I was greatly startled by the tender confession, uttered, as it was, in the wheeziest whine I had yet heard her use. But I was in a much greater degree surprised by the adroit manner in which she managed to shift me from being the "master of the situation," into one in which I had to confess myself the obliged party, the recipient of favours, and the subordinate to pledges which, though given so long ago, were reproduced now in their native freshness, as altogether indestructible by time or circumstance. As for Morris Blake, I believe he thoroughly enjoyed the position affairs had assumed.

"An' he deservs it, Baroness," he struck in; "as well as being exactly the one to appreciate the soft kindness, now his conscience isn't haunted any longer by raw heads an' bloody bones. As for your Murillos an' Viscounts, as they seem mighty well satisfied with each other, I'll go bail he won't interfere by word or deed. Why should he? when, as you told him long ago, 'tis no business of his at all."

This assurance seemed highly satisfactory to the lady, especially when it was corroborated by myself. As we had now neither reason nor excuse for prolonging our visit, we took leave of the Baroness, and that with a cordiality which neither of us would have thought probable when we entered her presence an hour before.

"Supayrb cratur, that!" Morris remarked, as we got into our hansom. "I'd just like to bet to any amount that 'tis she wove the net that caught the Vi—Hollo! hould me, Charley! hould me tight, or I'll be over head an' ears in poethry!"

I could not help laughing, as I assented strongly to his opinion.

"Yes; an' the sentiments the story convarts me to, Charley, is that the pictur-thrade, badad! licks horse chauntin' by chalks."

While returning to town, an idea occurred to us which we carried out at once by driving to the British Museum, where, by the courtesy of Mr. B—, of the reading-room, we were enabled to verify, from the *Times* of the date, the account of the accidental death of Nathan's brother.

The Baroness lived till a little more than a year ago. I have a great respect for her memory. I really think she was a good sort of woman in her way. She presented to my youngest child, a girl, a very handsome coral with gold bells, besides a necklace and sleeve-loops of the same with

massive gold clasps; also, at various times, several articles of jewellery, and some splendid old point-lace to my wife. Through her generosity, too, I am the possessor of that embossed and chased silver dish which, whilom, did duty for King Herod's salver in my picture of Salome and John the Baptist's head. As for the picture, when Lord Bricbrakmont died, several years ago, it was disposed of by his heir, a distant relative, without a scintillation of aesthetic taste, to the great Russian dilettante, Prince Dgilmgskoff, in private contract for some incredible amount of money previous to the rest of the collection being dispersed by Christie & Manson. It is, I suppose, in Russia; but wherever it may be, as I see no occasion for further secrecy, I here assert my claim to be the painter of "THE GREAT MURILLO DE LA MERCED."

H. CARL S.

[THE END.]

PUTTING UP STOVES.

In consequence of the arrival of cold weather once more, about these days there is a universal putting up of stoves, preparatory for the winter campaign, and undoubtedly a great deal of profanity is indulged in. One who has had considerable experience in the work of putting up stoves, says the first step to be taken is to put on a very old and ragged coat, under the impression that when he gets his mouth full of plaster it will keep his shirt bosom clean. Next he gets his hands inside the place where the pipe ought to go and blacks his fingers, and then he carefully makes a black mark down one side of his nose. It is impossible to make any headway in doing this work, until his mark is made down the side of his nose. Having got properly marked, the victim is ready to begin the ceremony. The head of the family—who is the big goose of the sacrifice—grasps one side of the bottom of the stove, and his wife and the hired girl take hold of the other side. In this way the load is started from the woodshed towards the parlour. Going through the door the head of the family will carefully swing his side of the stove around and jamb his thumb nail against the door post. This part of the ceremony is never omitted. Having got the stove comfortably in place, the next thing is to find the legs. Two of these are left inside the stove since the spring before. The other two must be hunted after for twenty-five minutes. They are usually found under the coal. Then the head of the family holds up one side of the stove while his wife puts two of the legs in place, and next holds up the other side while the other two are fixed, and one of the two falls out. By the time the stove is on its legs he gets reckless, and takes off his old coat and puts on his linen. Then he goes off for a pipe and gets a cinder in his eye. It don't make any difference how well the pipe was put up last year it will be found a little too short or a little too long. The head of the family jams his hat over his eyes, and taking a pipe under each arm goes to the tin shop to have it fixed. When he gets back he steps upon one of the best parlour chairs to see if the pipe fits, and his wife makes him get down for fear he will scratch the varnish off from the chair with the nails of his boot heel. In getting down he will surely step on the cat, and may thank his stars if not the baby. Then he gets an old chair and climbs up to the chimney again, to find that in cutting the pipe off the end has been left too big for the hole in the chimney. So he goes to the woodshed and splits one side of the end of the pipe with an old axe, and squeezes it in his hands to make it smaller. Finally he gets the pipe in shape, and finds that the stove does not stand true. Then himself and wife and the hired girl move to the left, and the legs fall out again. Next it is to move to the right. More difficulty with the legs. Move to the front a little. Elbow not even with the hole in the chimney, and he goes to the woodshed after some little blocks. While putting the blocks under the legs the pipe comes out of the chimney. That remedied the elbow keeps tipping over to the great alarm of the wife. Head of the family gets the dinner table out, puts the old chair on it, gets his wife to hold the chair, and balances himself on it to drive some nails into the ceiling. Drops the hammer on his wife's head. At last gets the nail driven, makes a wire-swing to hold the pipe, hammers a little here, pulls a little there, takes a long breath, and announces the ceremony completed. Job never put up any stoves. It would have ruined his reputation if he had

A VISIT TO ROYALTY.

BY MARK TWAIN.

At all hours of the day and night the sailors in the fore-castle amused themselves and aggravated us by burlesquing our visit to royalty. The opening paragraph of our Address to the Emperor was framed as follows:

"We are a handful of private citizens of America, travelling simply for recreation—and unostentatiously, as becomes our unofficial state—and, therefore, we have no excuse to tender for presenting ourselves before your Majesty, save the desire of offering our grateful acknowledgments to the lord of a realm, which, through good and through evil report, has been the steadfast friend of the land we love so well."

The third cook, crowned with a resplendent tin basin, and wrapped royally in a table-cloth mottled with grease-spots and coffee-stains, and bearing a sceptre that looked strangely like a belying pin, walked upon a dilapidated carpet, and perched himself on the capstan, careless of the flying spray; his tarred and weather-beaten Chamberlains, Dukes, and Lord High Admirals surrounded him, arrayed in all the pomp that spare tarpaulins and remnants of old sails could furnish. Then the visiting "watch below," transformed into graceless ladies and uncouth pilgrims, by rude travesties upon water-falls, hoop-skirts, white kid gloves, and swallow-tail coats, moving solemnly up the companion-way, and bowing low, began a system of complicated and extraordinary smiling, which few monarchs could look upon and live. Then the mock consul, a slush-plastered deck-sweep, drew out a soiled fragment of paper, and proceeded to read, laboriously,

"To His Imperial Majesty, Alexander II., Emperor of Russia:

"We are a handful of private citizens of America, travelling simply for recreation—and unostentatiously, as becomes our unofficial state—and therefore we have no excuse to tender for presenting ourselves before your Majesty—"

The Emperor—"Then what the devil did you come for?"

"—Save the desire of offering our grateful acknowledgments to the lord of a realm which—"

The Emperor—"Oh, d—n the Address!—read it to the police.

Chamberlain, take these people over to my brother, the Grand

Duke's, and give them a square meal. Adieu! I am happy—I am gratified—I am delighted—I am bored. Adieu, adieu—vamos the ranch! The First Groom of the Palace will proceed to count the portable articles of value belonging to the premises."

The farce then closed, to be repeated again with every change of the watches, and embellished with new and still more extravagant inventions of pomp and conversation.

At all times of the day and night the phraseology of that tiresome address fell upon our ears. Grimy sailors came down out of the foretop placidly announcing themselves as "a handful of private citizens of America, travelling simply for recreation and unostentatiously," etc.; the coal passers moved to their duties in the profound depths of the ship, explaining the blackness of their faces and their uncouthness of dress, with the reminder that they were a "handful of private citizens, travelling simply for recreation," etc., and when the cry ran through the vessel at midnight: "EIGHT BELLS!—LABBOARD WATCH, TURN OUT!" the larboard watch came gaping and stretching out of their den, with the everlasting formula: "Aye-aye, sir! We are a handful of private citizens of America, travelling simply for recreation, and unostentatiously, as becomes our unofficial state!"

As I was a member of the committee, and helped to frame the Address, these sarcasms came home to me. I never heard a sailor proclaiming himself as a handful of American citizens travelling for recreation, but I wished he might trip and fall overboard, and so reduce his handful by one individual, at least. I never was so tired of any one phrase as the sailors made me of the opening sentence of the Address to the Emperor of Russia.

GERMAN FIELD TELEGRAPHS.

One of the correspondents of the *Times*, attached to the German army, gives the following interesting particulars of the manner in which the German telegraph corps is organized. He says:—

"The telegraph system attached to our army is composed in the following way. To understand it completely it must be recollected, however, that an army is composed of various Corps d'Armée, and each corps of two divisions; therefore the telegraph is divided into three sections—1, the station at the commander-in-chief's; 2, the station at each corps; 3, the station at each division. Sending a message from a division of this army, to London we will say, it first goes to the station of the corps to which the division belongs; thence to the headquarters of the army to which the corps belongs, and then to the nearest main line. Each section has one inspector and five secretaries, or what we should call clerks, four carriages, two smaller ones, and six waggons. The first-named contain the cable, the second the apparatus and batteries, and the last-named the posts upon which the wires are fixed. They carry twenty English miles of cable, and the average time it takes to lay it is three hours to every four miles. The process of laying is naturally the most scientific part of the arrangement, and is conducted in the following manner: An intelligent officer from the army, with some assistant under him, is intrusted with the general supervision of the telegraph of each army, and to him is intrusted the task of directing where the main line shall run. He rides on ahead of the wagon, which proceeds at a footpace, the cable being passed out over a wheel, and indicates to the drivers by means of a piece of paper stuck on a stick or a blazed tree the direction they shall follow. In the mean time, the foot soldiers attached to the telegraph, who are selected from the regiments for superior intelligence, and wear a different uniform, with a large T on the shoulder-strap, are divided into what is called troops, or, in navy language, "gangs" of three men each. The first take the wire as it is payed out, lay it on the ground, and on it a post every 100 yards; the second coming after them, twist the cable round the insulator, which is made of gutta-percha, not glass, as we are in the habit of using, and erect the posts in the ground. This is a matter of great ease, they being about 12 ft. high, and about the thickness of the butt-end of a salmon rod, slightly tapering towards the top. The third troop strain the wire, and ascertain that it is clear of all wood, &c., and, in short, "runs clear." I should mention that whenever it is possible the trees are used as telegraph posts, and, by means of a light ladder, are easily ascended to the requisite height. It is altogether as perfect an arrangement as can be found. They all, however, complain that this war has tried them terribly, as, from the utter break up of the railways by the retreating army, enormous distances have to be traversed before they can touch a main line. I forgot to mention that if necessary, and, in fact, always when on the field of battle, the telegraph is worked by a machine fixed inside one of the carriages. When, however, a house is obtainable, a room is instantly turned into an office."

FEARFUL ALPINE ACCIDENT—ELEVEN LIVES LOST.—A frightful catastrophe has just occurred at Mont Blanc. A party, consisting of eleven persons, reached the summit, and were to return the same evening by the Grands Mulets. As they did not appear, men were sent out to search for them, but, after long and fruitless efforts, were obliged to return unsuccessful. No doubt can now exist that the whole have perished. The travellers were Mr. Cohendal, Scotch; Mr. J. Bean and Mr. J. C. Kendall, Americans; with three guides and five porters, and when last seen they had arrived upon the Dromedary's Hump, an hour's march distant from the summit. They had been seen suddenly to collect together, and to hold fast one to another, and then to disappear in the snow wreaths raised by the wind. It is probable that at this moment they were making a supreme effort to withstand the tempest, so horrible on those heights, that their effort was of no avail, and that they were precipitated together upon the Glacier du Miage, which spreads out on the side of the Allee Blanche. The names of two of the guides were Jean Balmatek and Joseph Breton, who were well known on account of their numerous ascensions.

The songs, either of a warlike or patriotic nature, which have been published in various German newspapers since the outbreak of the war, number, according to official accounts, up to August 22, 634. The first appeared on the 16th of July, and 491 owe their origin to the North German Confederation, while 143 have been written by people of the South German States. A collection of all these songs is preparing, and the work will be sold for the benefit of patriotic aid societies.