

Ninety Years Old.

The Emperor William of Germany has completed the ninetieth year of his age. The occasion was celebrated with unusual rejoicing and festivity throughout his dominions. In Berlin the displays of military pageantry and of court gaieties were brilliant and various, while throughout Germany the people gave themselves up to a joyous holiday. The event is certainly a very rare one, if, indeed, it is not unexampled in the history of modern royalty. It is not easy to recall any sovereign of a large nation in modern times who has reached so patriarchal an age. There have been, it is true, many longer reigns than that of the Emperor William. At least three living European potentates have sat upon the throne longer than the Victoria of England has reigned nearly fifty years. Francis Joseph of Austria has reigned thirty-nine, and William of Holland has worn the crown thirty-eight years. But the German Emperor has only been king of Prussia twenty-six years, and has been at the head of the Empire sixteen years. The monarchs who have had the two longest reigns in modern times, Louis XIV. of France and George III. of England, both died younger, however, than the German William.

Louis reigned no less than seventy-two years (1643-1715), and yet died at seventy-seven. George reigned sixty years (1760-1820), and died at the age of eighty-two. The present Emperor of Brazil, who is now just closing the fifty-sixth year of his reign, is in the sixty-second year of his age.

It is wonderful to think that in the yet sturdy old ruler of Germany a monarch is still reigning who became an officer of the Prussian army eighty years ago; who took part in, and still well remembers, the battle of Waterloo (1815), and who has seen all the great events of this eventful nineteenth century, now so near its close, pass in dramatic succession before his eyes.

The Emperor William has always shown a high, haughty, despotic nature. He is perhaps the only remaining sovereign in Europe—except his grand-nephew, the Russian Czar—who devoutly believes that he has a divine right to rule, and who clings to the old despotic ideas of kingship which prevailed in the Middle Ages.

Yet he has never been a capricious tyrant. He has shown an ardent love of his people and his country; has been ambitious to make Germany great, strong, and prosperous; and has sincerely tried to be a kindly as well as a strict ruler over his subjects.

Like almost all of his stalwart race, William has always had a fondness for military affairs. The greater part of his life, indeed, was spent in active service in the Prussian army. He had a taste of war very early in life, in the Napoleonic campaigns; and has always been regarded since as one of the best-trained soldiers in Europe.

At the age of ninety, the wonderful physical powers which have suffered the wear and tear of an unusual busy and laborious life seem almost undiminished.

The veteran Emperor is still seen daily by his people, standing erect and soldierly at the window of his palace; and we often hear of his appearing, mounted on his white horse, at the great military reviews which are frequently held in the neighborhood of his capital.

More than one attempt has been made, by wild fanatics, on the Emperor's life. Yet there is no doubt that his intelligent and thoughtful subjects regard him, not only with the deepest reverence, but with the fondest affection.

Alike in his person and in his character, he presents a noble type of royalty, a representative of the German nation of which it may well be proud; and when, as must, ere very long, happen, he passes away, he will be deeply mourned and regretted throughout the Fatherland.

VICTORIA AT THE TABLE.

How the Queen Manages to Get Through Her Meals.

The strict ceremonial of the dinners of Queen Victoria has not changed since her assumption of the throne. A quarter of an hour before the time fixed for the repast—generally 8 o'clock—all the party invited to dine with the Queen meet in the grand salon and form themselves into a half-circle about the door where she is expected to enter.

The Queen, on entering, makes a beautiful courtesy (for which she is renowned), then bows to the gentlemen and gives her hand to the ladies, who courtesy deeply. She then goes in first to the table, accompanied generally by one of her sons. If any imperial or royal person is present he sits at her right hand. But, even in the case of General Grant, she placed the Princess Beatrice between them. The Queen never removes her gloves during dinner, except at state banquets. This is a singular piece of etiquette, and one which it would be exactly the reverse. Her gloves are new, of white kid, embroidered with black, never worn but once, and become, after using, the perquisites of the ladies-in-waiting. The Queen has a small and beautiful hand.

As soon as she has finished a certain "plat," everyone else stops eating of it, as when she finishes eating her fish, everyone else stops eating fish, etc.

After she has spoken to her guests on either side, conversation may become general, but in a subdued tone, always deferring to the sovereign.

Sir Arthur Helps, who was her private secretary, used to tell an amusing anecdote of being snubbed by her for telling a rather funny story down the table, among the ladies-in-waiting, to relieve the monotony of a dreary dinner, when the Queen remarked: "What is it? We are not amused." She has, however, a love of fun, and some times laughs heartily.

"So you wouldn't like to be a minister, Bobby, when you grow up?" remarked Mr. Whitechoker at the table. "No, indeed," responded Bobby emphatically. "And why not?" insisted Mr. Whitechoker, amused at the lad's earnestness. "Because ma says she always feels sorry for country ministers, an' that's the reason she has you here to dinner so often."

Faithful Pastor—A minister's life is a very hard one. Parishioner—Why, there are only two sermons a week to write, and— "Oh! I don't mind sermon-writing; that's easy enough. But my duties require frequent visits to the homes of every member of the congregation, and just think of the strain on my conscience." "Conscience?" "Yes. I am expected to admire all the new babies."

M. Katkoff.

Recent dispatches concerning Russian affairs state that, while the Czar's head is with M. de Giers, his heart is with M. Katkoff. This is probably as accurate and concise a statement of the situation in Russia as it is possible to obtain. M. de Giers is commonly regarded as the apostle of peace, while M. Katkoff, the rampant Slavist and exponent of the autocratic idea in its most extreme form, is looked upon as the apostle of war. The latter is the personal friend and private counsellor of the Czar, who, on the other hand, detests M. de Giers and his methods. Nevertheless the position of Russia is such that the great Autocrat is compelled to close his ears to the advice of his favourite and to allow himself to be guided by the far-seeing and moderate De Giers.

The position which M. Katkoff occupies in Russia is a unique one. The editor of the leading paper of the country, the *Moscow Gazette*, he occupies no official position, and yet his influence at St. Petersburg has for years been almost supreme. He has, in fact, been described as the real autocrat of the empire. Previous to the insurrection in Poland he was a Liberal, and was believed to be strongly tainted with Socialism. The spread of Nihilism, however, caused him to change his tactics, and he became the strongest exponent of the idea that the only power capable of erecting a barrier against the assaults of the revolutionists was that of the Czar. From that time forward the *Gazette*, of which he became proprietor in 1863, has been the earnest advocate of absolutism and Slavism. For years M. Katkoff has been admitted to the Imperial Council, and his position as the chosen confidant of the Czar's innermost thoughts was soon established. So powerful did he become that he was the principal instrument in the overthrow of M. Valonoff, who had dared to suspend the publication of the *Gazette*. He is the vigorous enemy in Russia of Bismarck and his policy, and his views have been very largely accepted by the people. His famous article against the German Chancellor, published in August last, met with a responsive echo throughout the country, and he has since been working assiduously to undermine the favour which Berlin enjoys at St. Petersburg. It is for this reason that the Czar has been compelled to side with M. de Giers against his own personal inclinations. He sees clearly enough that Russia cannot afford, at present at least, to quarrel with Germany, and he has been obliged, therefore, to administer something like a snub to M. Katkoff. Russia is not ready for war, and dare not displease M. de Giers to make room for Ignatieff. M. Katkoff must therefore bide his time and, await a more favourable opportunity of raising once more the cry of "On to Constantinople."

It is a singular fact that, though M. Katkoff has shown himself the most determined enemy of Nihilism, and has done much to thwart its schemes, no one has yet been found to carry out against him the sentence which Nihilism imposed upon its enemies. The secret of this, it is said, is his great popularity, which has practically made his life sacred. He is a man of wonderful powers—a scholar as well as a publicist and a politician. He personally superintends the studies at the Nihilist College to which institution he devotes a large portion of the many hours which he daily gives to hard work. No man in Europe, or elsewhere, occupies a position similar to his, and it seems a pity that his great influence should be exercised in behalf of a system opposed to the spirit of modern civilization.

The Luck of the Prince of Wales.

The *News Viewer Tagblatt* informs us that the Prince of Wales is regarded on the Continent as having a singularly lucky hand at games of chance. "The day before the earthquake he appeared in Monaco, and tried his luck in just at *trente et quarante*. His success was so satisfactory that the Prince resolved to venture at roulette the sum which he had won at the other game. Here again luck followed him like a dutiful servant, and in a very short space of time he left the salon with a gain of £600 sterling." The incident reminds the Vienna journal of the equally fortunate play of the Prince a year ago, when he was the guest of Count Tafflo Fastetics at Buda-Pesth. "In one single night the future ruler of England won nearly a quarter of a million gulden in a well-known aristocratic club. The Prince told his fellow-players that he would give them an opportunity for revenge as soon as he returned from his hunting tour. Fourteen days later he appeared at the club, according to his promise. The 'revenge,' however, cost his opponents 8,000 florins!" It appears from the same journal that the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, the Crown Prince Rudolph, is not quite so prodigal and reckless in gaming as the Hungarian nobles. He will only play for very small stakes, like the aged German Emperor, who thinks that a sum of 50 pfennig is as much as a king or prince should venture at a time.

Ladies of Lima.

The ladies of Lima are all eyes. They have the reputation of being, as a class, the most beautiful in the world, and meeting them on the way to mass in the morning or shopping later in the day one can see how they obtained it; but knowing them in their homes the opinion changes, and you conclude, after calm reflection, that they are not so pretty as the women of Toronto. It is the manta which they wear in such a coquettish way that gives them their reputation for beauty, for it conceals every feature except their bewitching eyes and lovely olive complexion. No matter how ugly her mouth or her nose is; no matter how high her cheekbones or large her ears; no matter whether she is as scrawny as a scarecrow or as bald as a bat, a manta will make any woman with pretty eyes look handsome, and, like charity, it covers a multitude of sins. This garment, which is peculiar to Peru, and is worn by ladies of all ages and social positions, from the President's wife to the laundress who comes after your linen, is a sort of foster-sister to the mantilla of Spain. It is usually of crepe from China, and costs anywhere from \$10 to \$500, according to its quality.

The Sabbath-school teacher had spent considerable time in drilling into her pupils the truth that "pride cometh before a fall." Near the close of the lesson, wishing to test the result of her efforts, she inquired: "Now, children, can you tell me what comes before a fall?" "Yes, ma'am; summer," was the reply from the seat farthest away.

Wolves Caught in Traps.

If perchance a wolf should be caught in a trap, all its courage deserts it and it allows itself to be killed without any resistance. The pitfall is the trap most in favor, as it does not injure the skin. In depth the pit is about eight feet, and it is always made with the bottom much wider than the top, so as to prevent the wolves from scrambling out—just the shape which, on a smaller scale is so useful in trapping the field-mice on the Continent. It is narrated that on one occasion an old woman had the misfortune to fall into one of these traps. She was not hurt and sat on the ground waiting until the owner of the trap should come to look for his captive. Presently large wolf came tumbling into the pit, she and gave herself up for lost. The wolf, however, evidently considered her as part of the trap, and was quite as afraid of her as she was afraid of him. So there the fellow-prisoners remained until the farmer came up, shot the wolf, and released the woman from her captivity. In his well-known works, Audubon mentions that at the beginning of his hunting career he happened to visit a farmer who had been greatly plagued with wolves, and had dug a number of pit-falls about his premises. Into one of these pits three fine wolves had fallen. To Audubon's astonishment, the man descended into the pit, armed only with his knife, pulled out the hind legs of the animals, severed the tendons so that they could not escape, and hauled them to level ground, where he could kill them without damaging the skins. A similar example of the abject terror of a trapped wolf is mentioned by Mr. Lloyd. During a severe winter a peasant was driving to his home, not far from St. Petersburg. Eleven wolves chased him to his very gate, through which the horse dashed, followed by nine of the wolves. The gate swung back on its own accord, when the wolves, so ferocious only a minute beforehand, tried to hide themselves in holes and corners, and allowed themselves to be killed without offering any resistance. Sometimes, when hard pressed, the wolf will feign death.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

The principal acid of the tomato is malic; but there is also a trace of oxalic acid.

The most thorough way to secure a dry cellar is to plaster the exterior of the cellar walls with the best Portland cement.

Cloth can be cemented to polish iron shafts by first giving them a coat of best white-lead paint; on this being dried hard, coat with best Russian glue dissolved in water containing a little vinegar or acetic acid.

Cocaine has a rival in an alkaloid obtained in Australia from the juice of *Euphorbia Drummondii*, which Dr. John Reid, its discoverer, calls drumine. The new local anesthetic acts almost entirely by paralyzing, and does not excite.

Silver dissolved in nitric acid may be again reduced to a metallic state by adding copper after removing excess of acid by evaporation. Gold can be dissolved in warm nitro-muriatic acid, and it may be recovered or reduced to a metallic state by precipitating with copperas and then melting the precipitate in a crucible.

An anti-insect fabric has been patented at New York which is intended to be used for the lining of trunks, &c., as a protection against the ravages of moths and other insects. The fabric is prepared by soaking it in a solution of tobacco and cascarilla bark macerated in benzine. It is then dried, and again steeped in tobacco, cascarilla bark, and hot water.

Koumiss is prepared by dissolving four ounces of white sugar in one gallon of skimmed milk, and placed in bottles of the capacity of one quart; add two ounces of baker's yeast or a cake of compressed yeast to each bottle. Cork and tie securely, set in a warm place until fermentation is well under way, and lay the bottles on their sides in a cool cellar. In three days fermentation will have progressed sufficiently to permit the koumiss to be in good condition.

It.

The pronoun 'it,' is a comical word—it is sometimes amusing, it is often absurd; it is large, it is small, it is round, it is square, it rains and it snows—it is foul, it is fair; it is black, it is white, it is long, it is short, it is every thing, almost, and then it is nought; it is true, it's a lie; it isn't, it is. Indeed, the word it, is a humbug.

Galic Gall.

"Well, that just like the cheek of these foreign artists," observed Mrs. Snaggs. "What is?" asked her husband. "Why, that man Munkacy is coming back here next Summer to paint Niagara Falls, and I believe he'll just spoil them, so I do."

Going Her One Better.

First little cherub—My aunt has got false hair. Second little cherub—So has mine. "But mine has got false teeth." "I don't care, my aunt has false teeth, too, and yesterday I heard ma say that she had a false tongue."

A Man of Undoubted Family.

Aunt Cressus—"I cannot tell you, Clara, how shocked I am to come home and find you married without consulting me. And to a man with all these children, after all that I've told you about my fortune being yours whenever you should marry to my liking!"

Clara—"Why, Aunt, you know I gave up young Smith on your objection that he hadn't family, and I supposed this would just suit you."

So Much For Dreams.

"Speaking of omens," he said, "not long ago I read of a cashier who dreamed that he was murdered while protecting the funds of the bank and that seven angels carried him off to heaven. The very next night he was—"

"Murdered?" she interrupted, with a shiver. "No; he was on his way to Canada."

What Time it Was.

(Scene—Road from Busby to Eaglesham. Two countrymen who have left Busby behind are staggering homewards). First Countryman—"Whit o'clock is't, Bob?" Second do. (after spending some time examining his watch in the moonlight)—"It's either ten minutes past eight or twenty minutes to two. Ye can just please yerself!"

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