AUSTRIA'S EMPEROR WASHING FEET.

A Curious Custom—Twelve Poor Women and Men to Have Their Feet Washed by the Emperor of Austria.

VIENNA, Feb 23th.—The twelve old men and twelve old women who will have their feet washed by the Empress and Emperor of Austria on Maundy Thursday (March 18) have been selected from the ranks of the Vienna poor. On the particular morning they will assemble at the palace gates and be escorted by a chamberlain to the hall of Thrones. Certain clothes will have been sent to their place of abode, so the men will be wearing black tunics with broad white collars, knickerbockers, and shoes, and the women, black dresses, with close fitting starched caps.

These poor people take their seats at two long tables set on opposite sides of the room, and punctually at 10 the Emperor and Empress arrived, attended by the archduke and archduchesses, a throng of court officials and the clergy of the metropolitan chapter, headed by the Archbishop of Vienna. A priest ascends to a lectern and intones a prayer, after which the serving of a sumptuous meal to the almsfolk is at once proceeded with. Four-and-twenty stalwarth life guardsmen, in gold-laced scarlet coats and plumed helmets, march in, carrying trays, on which stands a tureen of soup and two plentiful dishes of fish.

The trays are cleared at the men's table by the Emperor and eleven archdukes, and at the women's table by the Empress and as many archduchesses. This ceremony is repeated three times more, for a tray with three entrees follows the first; then comes a tray with three sorts of roasts and vegetables and, lastly, a tray with sweets and fruit. The almsfolk, however, do not touch these dainties. The Empreror and Empress ask them if they desire to eat and on a negative sign being made the tables are cleared in the same order as the serving, that is, the life guardsmen come in and go out four times with their trays. After this they enter once more to remove the jug of wine, silver goblet, plate, knife, fork, spoon and napkin from each "cover."

All these articles, along with the dishes of food, are carried to an ante room and there packed in large white boxes emblazoned with the imperial arms; and an hour later, these boxes are delivered at the houses of the different almsmen and almswomen, and become their property. The wine jugs are of a peculiar pattern, colored green with the imperial escutcheon highly gilt and the date of the year on a white scroll. They are much prized by collectors as only twenty-four are made yearly and there can only be purchased from the actual recipients.

Once the meat has been carried out, the tables are removed, and the foot washing begins. A number of pages kneel and take off each almsman's right leg stocking and shoe. The same office is performed for the women by the maids of honor. Another prayer is intoned, and the Emperor and Empress, drawing off their gloves, kneel and proceed respectively to pour over the foot of each man and woman a little water out of a golden ewer. This ewer is handed by a chamberlain, another chamberlain holds a golden basin, and a third a lawn towel. This towel serves for the drying of the feet, this also being done by the Emperor and Empress. When the function is over, pages and maids of honor advance again to replace the shoes and stockings, and the last act of the ceremony consists in the bestowal of twenty-four purses, containing each fifty florins in gold coins, fresh minted. These purses are hung round the necks of the recipients. The whole service lasts about half an hour and is conducted with the most impressive order and gravity.

Capt. Lugard's Pleasure Trip.

It is fourteen months since the Arab slavers in Central Africa attacked the mission station at Karonga, on the north-west shore of Lake Nyassa, and announced their purpose to drive all the whites out of Nyassaland. The cable tells us that the white men and their native allies, commanded by Capt. Lugard, still hold Karonga against the enemy, who are in possession of a large territory north of Nyassa. Capt. Lugard must thoroughly believe in the saying, "It is the unexpected which always happens in Africa." He is a British army officer who went to Africa on a leave of absence to wander for his own pleasure among the highlands, rich in game, at the south end of Nyassa. When the news was brought down the lake that the Arabs had attacked the white station at its north end, he was asked to take command of the relief expedition. Convinced that fighting was necessary he consented to do so, and there he has been confronting the Arabs ever since, a wholly unlooked for outcome of his pleasure trip. It is a curious fact that while this mere visitor to Africa is still able to direct all the movements of the defence, all but six of the white men who accompanied him have been compelled by the unhealthful climate to return to the Shire highlands.—[N. Y. Sun.

Superstitions and Figures.

Virgil tell us that the gods esteemed odd numbers.

There were seven wise men in antiquity and seven wonders of the world.

Miraculous powers are supposed to be possessed by the seventh daughter.

Nine grains of wheat laid on a four-leaved clover enables one to see the fairies.

It is an ancient belief that a change in the body of a man occurs every seventh year.

Falstaff says: "They say there is divinity in odd numbers, either by nativity, chance or death."

The number three was the perfect number of Pythagoreans, who said it represented the beginning, middle and the end.

In the Aaroe Islands there is a superstition that seals cast off their skins every ninth month and assume the human shape.

Among the Chinese heaven is odd, earth is even, and the numbers 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9, belongs to heaven while the other digits are of the earth earthy.

The Siamese have a regard for odd numbers, and insist on having an odd number of doors, windows and rooms in their houses, and that all staircases must have an odd number of steps.

Mourning brooches composed of playing dominoes, in black onyx, with pearl dots, are receiving patronage.

A Horse's Sagacity.

Some of our contemporaries have lately chronicled wonderful instances of equine and canine sagacity. A marvellous instance occurred some years ago, the veracity of which I can personally vouch for, as it happened on the glebe land of my father's rectory. It was in the autumn during our ploughing time. One of the horses had been taken suddenly ill, and we borrowed a neighbour's horse to take its place. The new horse being blind stumbled up against the hedge at the end of the furrow, this it did twice, but on its third ending of the furrow, our own horse remembering the two previous stumblings pushed the stranger back from the hedge into the return furrow. Now what about a horse's calculating and reasoning powers? On another occasion this selfsame horse of ours did a very much more marvellous thing. During the summer we used to change our winter residence to our summer one, 75 miles off, by the sea-side, in Pembrokeshire, and our personal "impedimenta" and sundries were taken down in a van drawn by this said horse. On one occasion we engaged a new waggoner who was totally unacquainted with the tortuous and difficult route he would have to travel. He, having expressed his fear that he could not find his way, was assured by my father that if he trusted to the horse he would reach the Deanery all right, and he actually did so, though the journey was done in the darkness of night through an intricate and sparsely populated country, and those who know the mountainous passes and defiles of "Wild Wales," will cordially and readily substantiate my statements.

PROFESSOR LEWELLIN, L. D. C.

Driven Mad by Cruelty.

The Russian schooner "Johannes" had hardly left Riga late in November, 1887, when Jan Umb denied an accusation of having stolen clothing. Induced alternately by floggings and Captain Harboe's promises, a confession was extorted, which was followed by further whipping and confinement in a dark cell for several days without food or water. When released he was abused by the crew, and, to put an end to his misery, jumped overboard. The captain promised better treatment if he would allow himself to be rescued, and, a boat being lowered, he was brought back. While changing his wet clothes, he received a a brutal kicking about the head and naked body, and was again put below. Next night, December 7, 1887, he was ordered to take the wheel, and unable through weakness to perform that duty, the captain struck him in the face and ordered him to follow, seemingly for further punishment. As the captain was picking up a piece of rope, Umb, now a perfect maniac, seized a handspike, and struck and killed the captain. He then killed, in a like manner, the two sailors on deck. Procuring a sheath-knife, he stabbed the mate, and proceeding forward, killed two more sailors in their sleep. The cabin boy was killed next. A Danish steamer sighted the schooner, which it towed to Copenhagen, where Jan Umb was delivered to the Russian authorities.

Diamonds in the Snow.

See the diamonds in the snow!
As across the fields we go,
How they glitter, how they gleam,
On the pale moon's silver beam.

See each scintillating light!
Green, and blue, and crimson bright—
Galaxy of tiny stars
Interoressed with brilliant bars.

Diamond s'ars, so pure and frail,
Over all earth's virgin veil.
Where no shadow comes a creeping,
Where the moonlight pale is sleeping.

Hush! a wind is on the lake,
Hear its echoes softly wake!
Wooing from each gleamy spray
Diamonds through the air away.

From the branches bending low,
With a shining crown of snow,
All the lovely gems are falling,
At the night-winds gentle calling.

All the winter world is fair,
Silver moonlight fills the air,
Day in night, and night in day,
Fleet the moments speed away!

HELEN M. MERRILL

Picton.

Sharp Thrust.

Some men who pass for very respectable citizens, and who really are not without good qualities have a habit not only of finding fault with their wives at every least provocation, but of doing it in terms such as no gentleman would ever think of applying to any lady except his own wife, or possibly his own sister.

There is a story that such a man came home from the shop one night and found his wife much excited over the outrageous behavior of a tramp. He had begged for something to eat, and not liking what the woman gave him, had abused her in the roundest terms.

"Johnny," said the man, thoroughly indignant, "when you heard that cowardly rascal abusing your mother, why didn't you run at once to the store and let me know? I would have made short work of him. Didn't you hear?"

"Yes, pa, I heard. I was out in the barn and heard what he said about the victuals; but—"

"But what?"

"Why, pa, I thought it was you scolding mother. He used the very same words you do when the dinner doesn't suit you. I didn't think anybody else would dare talk to mother in that way."

To Cure a Corn.

There is no lack of so-called cures for the common ailment known as corns, the vegetable, animal, and mineral kingdoms have been ransacked for cures. It is a simple matter to remove corns without pain, for if you will go to any druggist or medicine dealer and buy a bottle of Putman's Painless Corn Extractor and apply it as directed the thing is done. Get "Putman's," and no other.

John Grundy, of Polk County, is the largest man in Arkansas. He is six feet ten inches in height, weighs 328 pounds, is active, and in strength is equal to three men. Still he entertains a wholesome regard for the opinions of Mrs. Grundy.

Snug Wintering Place for a Snake.

A daughter of Editor Mortimer of the "New Bloomfield Times" brought up out of the cellar a large head of cabbage to prepare for the family's Sunday dinner. She cut it open and immediately began to scream loudly. A member of the family ran in and found a snake, nearly two feet long squirming about on the table. It had been snugly coiled around the cabbage head under the outer leaves, where it had probably been making its quarters all winter.

Thomas A. Edison celebrated the forty-second anniversary of his birth on Monday. The ninety employees of his laboratory at Orange presented him with a $700 set of furniture for his library, taking him completely by surprise. The set consists of thirty-five pieces, all solidly and substantially made of quartered oak, hand-carved in very elaborate designs, and each piece bears Mr. Edison's monogram. Other presents were a large and handsome electric clock and a phonograph made of gold and silver.

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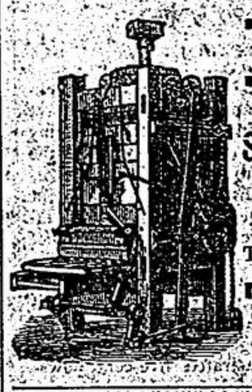

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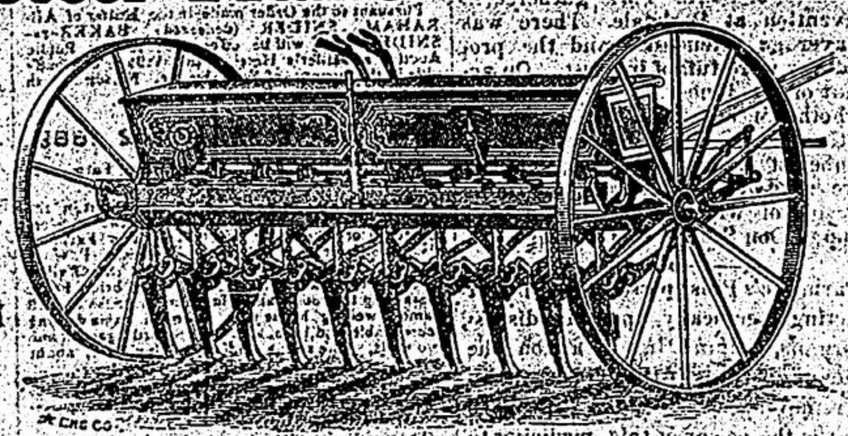

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