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BOY KING'S PALACE. Where Alfonso Lives, and How They Guard Him in His Sleep. The Infanta Isabella, aunt of the king, a widow of 60 years of age, and the most popular person in Spain, formerly had a large suite of apartments on the main floor of the palace, but with her usual delicacy and thoughtfulness she vacated them after the recent coronation, in order that they might be ready for the queen mother in case the king should marry. Isabella now lives in a private palace within a few blocks of the royal residence and is a daily visitor there.

The young king and his mother have large suites on the front of the palace, facing the city, and the location of their bedrooms is indicated by the invariable palm leaves attached to the balcony, according to the Spanish custom. You will see similar palm leaves hanging to the balconies of nearly all the residences in town, those of the poor as well as the rich.

A sheet of white paper tied to the iron railing means that the room is for rent, a palm leaf means that it is the sleeping chamber of a pious Catholic, who brought it home from church on the last Palm Sunday and placed it there to keep away evil spirits, diseases and misfortunes. It remains there the entire year until the next anniversary, when a new palm, fresh from the blessing of the priest, is substituted.

The king has very comfortable quarters much more homelike than are usually found in royal palaces. He has a series of drawing rooms, a dining room larger than that at the White House at Washington, a library with about 6,000 volumes upon the shelves, mostly modern publications and current literature in all the European languages, a music room, a smoking room, billiard room, gymnasium and study, which is also used as an office.

His sleeping chamber is large and airy and contains two beds, one of which is occupied by his private secretary or one of his tutors, or aides, as they are termed since the coronation—Maj. Lorija, Maj. Casteljon or Count Andino. He is never allowed to sleep alone, and in an adjoining room Francisco, his venerable valet, while two of his body guards are always in the anteroom which must be passed before his chamber is reached.

Some of these rooms are occupied in common with the queen mother but she has her own suite of five or six rooms adjoining, with access to the flat roof of a long-wing which is occupied by the guards and the incense, or superintendent of the palace. This is arranged so that awnings may be dropped in hot weather, and is decorated with palms and other plants and flowers. It also gives the king and queen an opportunity for exercise, the roof being about 400 feet long and 40 feet wide.—Chicago Record Herald.

PEDESTRIANISM IN EUROPE. Walking Craze Which Has Swept England and France. "The walking craze," which swept over England and subsided some time ago, left in its wake a wholesome revival in country walking for health and pleasure. But at its height the fever of club and other forms of long-distance walking for prizes was an amazing phenomenon. From England the enthusiasm crossed over seas, and Australia has been in the thick of it up to the present time. On one of these recent competitive walks, with hundreds of entries, the route led up a mountain. Despite insistent warnings, prompted by the approach of a storm, the pedestrians kept on, were caught in a snowstorm, and scores of them badly hurt. There were several deaths from exposure and a long list of hospital patients as the net result.

In France the "club walking" is now raging with Gallic fervor of zeal. At a recent event of the kind nearly a thousand scholars from the higher classes of schools in and around Paris were starters. Vast crowds lined the course and cheered the struggling army from start to finish. The wave has not crossed the Atlantic, but a microbe or two may have gotten past quarantine. For in this land where walking for pleasure is a vanishing pastime. As assemblyman Howard Conkling, of New York, has recently finished a walk of 225 miles, for health and pleasure. He reported that he had never experienced a more enjoyable ten-day's vacation; but the average American citizen will be likely to comment: "Why did he walk if he had the price of a ride?"—Illustrated Sporting News.

King Edward as a Fireman. By actively assisting to subdue the flames at his racing stables Lord Kessebery is added to the famous people who have turned fireman on occasion. Though we now learn that it is not true that the Pope superintended the work of putting out the fire at the Vatican, the German Emperor was certainly well to the front when there was an outbreak in the new palace a year ago. King Edward, too, displayed the utmost energy when a fire took place at Marlborough House in July, 1885. He took command of the water taps and superintended the filling and passing of jugs and buckets, and the flames not abating, he took further measures. When Capt. Shaw arrived with the brigade he found the King in his shirt sleeves and as black as a sweep, hard at work slipping up the flooring to get at the seat of the fire.—London Chronicle.

SACRED TABLE CLOTH. It Belonged to the Emperor of China and Fetched \$5,000. What was one of the most valuable pieces of loot brought from China by American troops in the siege of Peking has been sold for \$5,000 by the soldier who carried it to Cincinnati. It is a table cloth taken from the Emperor's table in the holy of holies in Peking. It was brought to this country by Corporal Kassen, who was in the United States Marine Service and was among the American soldiers who entered the forbidden city. The term of enlistment of Kassen expired and he came to Cincinnati to visit friends. He had with him a large amount of stuff captured in Peking, including a most remarkable dog and a rifle he had taken away from a Chinaman who was shot in battle.

His collection included the wondrously beautiful table cloth which he has just disposed of for \$5,000. Many Cincinnati people tried to buy it, but Kassen refused to sell, and now it turns out that the table cloth has some remarkable history, and one version of the story is that it was purchased to be returned to the Emperor of China.

The cloth is about eight feet square. In the center, embroidered in gold thread, is a large dragon. In each of the four corners is a smaller dragon, all worked out in gold thread. The cloth is made of finest silk and the beauty of the article attracted many Cincinnati people. Mr. William von Steinbohr was an anxious bidder, but could not persuade Corporal Kassen to part with it. Ever since reaching this country the former marine has been pursued by people anxious to buy that table cover. He has gone into the drug business in New York and was surprised very frequently by visitors who wanted to see the table cover with its golden dragons. The majority of these people were strangers, and it was a mystery to Kassen as to how they learned he had it. Then he happened to remember that he had shown it to a rich Chinaman when he landed in San Francisco and that the Chinaman had tried to buy it. The Chinaman in question expressed great indignation when shown the table cloth, and declared it should never have been taken from the Emperor's apartments; that it was sacred. Ever since then Corporal Kassen has been sought by people who wanted to secure it, and finally an agent of a New York firm came to see him and made him an offer of \$5,000 for the cloth and he accepted it.

While it is not known what the firm intends to do with the cloth, it is believed by Corporal Kassen and his friends that they represented the Emperor of China in the transaction.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

RUSSIAN POLICE TRICK. Stragem to Test Efficiency of Paris Force. When the Emperor and Empress of Russia had arranged to visit Paris and Compiegne the efficiency of the French detective police was thus tested. The chief of the Russian police came secretly to Paris with orders to report himself in a hotel and only to stay a week. But he had not been three hours in Paris before the prefect of police learned of his arrival from a French detective. At St. Petersburg they thought this a satisfactory result, and the imperial pair, ventured to come to Paris and drove down the Champs Elysees without cavalry round their carriage.

A similar test applied last month in Rome brought to light police slackness there. The head of the Russian police lay by there for a whole week without his arrival being suspected. On the evening of the sixth day he called on Count Neldoff to report himself, to the great astonishment of that ambassador. They both agreed that if the Roman police had not scented out the head of the greatest police force in the world, they could not be depended upon to know much about the going on of anarchists and nihilists.—London Truth.

Italy's Democratic King. Victor Emmanuel III. is probably one of the least kingly of European monarchs by temperament and disposition, but he is more clever than most of them, and makes a better monarch than a good many of his brother sovereigns. In person he is homely, in manners he is somewhat awkward, and in company he is shy. No one more thoroughly detests than he does the dreary tomfooleries of a court, or is more glad to escape from them, although he loyally accepts the exigencies of his position. He is entirely free from the illusion which usually possesses the royal personages that he is a good general because he has to wear on occasions a military uniform nor has he that passion for arraying himself in various uniforms which is so prone among his royal brethren.

The King is exceedingly well read, and interests himself in both science and literature, but he has not the royal gift of saying a few happy words to those with whom he converses, generally talking to them on some subject entirely alien to their occupations, and on which they know a good deal less than he does. He loves his wife. She is his constant companion, and the smiles and blandishments of other women have no influence over him. His court is the most democratic in Europe. His receptions are omnium-gatherums, and he is ready to accord an interview to every one who has the slightest pretension to ask for one.—London Truth.

RAT CATCHING IN CHICAGO. The Catcher's Modern Way of Securing the Rodents Alive. Rat catching in Chicago is becoming one of the necessary and paying vocations. Hearing that one of the settlement houses down in the heart of the city was to be the scene of operations, we put on short skirts and proceeded to the spot.

After waiting some time the rat catcher and his assistant finally appeared, and we immediately rose to the occasion, and, incidentally to the table.

From this stronghold we watched the rat-catcher-in-chief don a pair of long heavy felt boots, which he smeared plentifully with some thick and sticky substance. Then he placed himself in the middle of the floor, cautioning us not to make a sound, while the assistant turned out all the lights and opened the doors back and front.

After waiting, perhaps five minutes though it seemed more like an hour, we heard a faint squeak and scurrying, and in the dim light we could see little black bodies with long tails circling round and round the man with the boots, until it seemed as though an army of them was there. The tapping of tiny feet scratching rustling and the little thuds of falling bodies made the air hideous. We drew our dress tighter and wondered what was going to happen next.

Suddenly the assistant scratched a match and lit the gas, and what a scene was there. The chief rat-catcher stood like the "Pied Piper of Hamelin" with a scrambling mass of charmed rats about his feet. Quickly the assistant slammed both doors, and while the little animals were blinded with the light the two men produced each a pair of long pinchers from their pockets and proceeded to catch the rats by their long, wiry tails and deposit them in two big sacks. As they slipped them up, squealing and wriggling, we counted. There were just ninety-six.

When the sacks, which were of leather, had been securely tied we crawled down from our perch and asked them what they were going to do with their "cat-h."

"Why," said the man of the boots, "maybe we'll skin 'em alive and sell the pelts."

"What for?" "Oh, for kids' shoes and mits," he replied.

When we ventured to inquire what he smeared on his boots—not that we ever wanted to use it—he answered: "That's tellin', and we don't tell."—Chicago Post.

English as Tea Drinkers. The average Englishman drinks in the course of a year six times as much tea as the average American of Dutchman, and nearly a hundred times as much as the average Frenchman. But an Englishman only gets through about a twentieth part of the coffee which a Dutchman will consume.

In fact, the Briton's extreme preference for tea over coffee is in contradistinction to the taste of all the rest of the world, and this, too holds good as well of the colonial as of the home born Englishman. The reason is perhaps a little hard to find but we should not be surprised if a recent writer has not very nearly hit the mark when he attributes the difference to temperament rather than to taste. Tea can be made so much more quickly and easily than coffee, and the Briton adopts that drink which is easiest to make. We should ourselves, however combine a want of knowledge with a want of time as producing this remarkable result. English people as a rule, do not know how to make good coffee.—London Caterer.

The Kaiser as a Patient. Fortunately there have not been many times in the Emperor's life when he has been entirely under medical sway; but the German Court doctors were long since convinced that his majesty in the capacity of patient was no more conventional than he is accustomed to be in any of the other roles he plays from day to day. At the outset of his indisposition he is inclined to give the doctors endless trouble by his resistance to advice and his constantly expressed desire to put his own views as to treatment into practice. When, however, he sees that the matter is very serious, he surrenders with a sigh and begins to petition for permission to do rather more work during his confinement than the doctors are disposed to allow him. He has a horror of the prescription of "absolute rest." He is fond of cross-examining his doctors on every detail of his affection, and they have no sooner left him than he is in the habit of sending for a text book upon the subject and reading it up thoroughly. Then he has new theories to present to the physicians at their next attendance, and they know from experience that it is risky to attempt to show their complete superiority by plunging into detail.—Men and Women (London).

The Most Costly Hair. Every year, two or three days after the fete of St. John, a market of human hair is held at Limoges. Girls, matrons and old women from the country around bargain to obtain the best price for their tresses, which are shown off in the market place. White hair always fetches the highest price, because the color cannot be produced with dyes. It is often worth \$25 per pound. Gray hair comes next in market value, then flaxen colored, golden auburn, light and dark brown, in that order. The cheapest is black hair.—Exchange.

THE CIRCUS AT PEKIN. State Performance for the Dowager Empress of China. A state circus performance was lately given before the Dowager Empress of China, and a member of the troupe, Mr. J. P. Schooner, describes the curious event in the Japan Times. Chaire's circus was conducted to the summer palace with much ceremony, imperial guards lining the route, and one of the royal houses was placed at its disposal. A huge tent was erected near the large lake, and two little yellow-painted booths were built for her majesty and the suite. As soon as all the preparations were completed, the royal party came from the palace in the imperial steam launch. The empress was escorted by several large barges, splendidly decorated, with imperial guards, and a small group of handsomely adorned Chinese ladies, highly painted, with headgear of the most elaborate designs, adorned with pink yellow, and pale-blue flowers, and wearing pearls and beads of different hues. The imperial party arrived at 4 p. m., the empress being carried to her booth in a sedan chair from the landing. Arrived at the booth, her majesty comfortably seated herself on a couch placed in the center of the booth. The emperor took his station, standing just outside the doorway to the left and the ladies in waiting stationing themselves on either side of the empress. The high official about twenty in number stood some to the right and some to the left, and about 400 soldiers filled in the space where the gallery usually is.

The empress, after receiving a light cigarette from one of the ladies in waiting, requested that the performance be commenced. Mr. Chaire, accompanied by the circus staff, advanced into the arena and, after saluting her majesty in royal Indian fashion, according to the native custom when visiting a royal head, he presented her majesty with a diamond ring set with seven large diamonds, a cashmere shawl highly embroidered with threads of gold in elaborate Indian designs, and he also presented the baby elephant, five years old. The gifts were all graciously accepted by the empress. Her majesty was very much interested in the balancing acts, as well as the Indian rubber babies, constantly directing her binoculars, which were inlaid in solid gold, at the performers.

After the conclusion of the performance her majesty ordered in the tiger cage. She showed great interest while examining this animal. After the removal of this cage the lion cage was brought in, but this did not interest her majesty so much as the tiger. On her way back to the imperial launch she beckoned to one of the dwarf clowns and minutely examined him, showing much curiosity, and asking his age, nationality, and whether he liked Peking.

How He Was Begged. Jules Huret, the French journalist, who has announced that Americans make love too coldly, is the son of a rich and astute merchant. M. Huret likes to tell a story in illustration of his father's fine business sense.

"My father, years ago," he will begin, "occupied a small shop on the ground floor of a large building. He was then at the beginning of his career, and his income was somewhat paltry. He was, however, an economical man.

"A clothing firm occupied all of the building except the portion held by my father, and this firm had arranged with the proprietor that they should have that portion, too, whenever they were ready to pay the rental demanded.

"Well, one day they decided to take in my father's shop, and their manager accordingly called on him, and in a friendly way told him that he had better look about for another stand at once, since his firm would be taking over the shop in May.

"But I don't want to move," said my father.

"Well, but you'll have to," said the manager. "You are a poor man, and my firm is rich. We can afford to pay three times as much rent for this floor as you can. Now, if you'll leave quietly, without making any fuss, we'll help you to find a new place. But if you stay you'll have to pay a rent that will beggar you—simply beggar you, remember."

"Give me," said my father, humbly, "two weeks to think this matter over."

"Well and good," the manager replied, and two weeks later he called again. My father was all smiles as he received him.

"Everything, my friend, is arranged," my father said. "You may stay here as before; I don't pay any rent at all, but you pay 2,500 francs a year more than you paid last. I have bought the building."—New York Sun.

Natives in Civil Service. According to the annual report of Chief Examiner Higgins, of the Civil Service Commission, the Porto Rico examinations, given in both English and Spanish, in which Americans and Porto Ricans competed, were passed by a larger proportion of Porto Ricans than of Americans. The number of Americans in the Philippines service constitutes more than 50 per cent. of the entire force. As the Filipinos acquire a knowledge of English and become more familiar with American methods, they are expected to take the places of Americans.

During the last fiscal year, 112,624 field service, and 40,823 appointments persons were examined for the class—were made.