

Incognita

By F. A. MITCHEL

It so happened that King Caspar of Walkaria and Queen Bertha of Zingerland inherited their kingdoms when very young. Their domains joined but they had never met, for during their childhood their fathers had been at continual warfare. When these two kings died—about the same time—the cabinets of both countries decided to make a match between the young king and the young queen.

Queen Bertha would not consent to the match without some acquaintance with the man she was to marry. She therefore insisted on their meeting in one of her palaces near the border line between the two kingdoms, the king to be attended by three men and the queen by three women. To this the king gladly assented.

Before leaving for the rendezvous the queen said to a maid of honor who was also her bosom friend: "I wish you to exchange places with me at this meeting, you to personate me, I to personate you. This will be easy, for I have purposely limited the number of my attendants so that there are only two besides ourselves to be in the secret."

When the king met the substitute queen, whose name was Catherine, he was well pleased with her, for not only the queen herself, but her attendants, were beautiful women. Bertha had charged Catherine to treat her with some severity lest by her accustomed deference she betray the secret. During the first interview Catherine spoke to Bertha somewhat sharply, and the king's notice was turned from the spurious to the real queen, who bore the reproach with becoming meekness. Indeed, King Caspar was charmed that the maid showed no temper whatever, while the reproach which seemed to be uncalculated for, produced him against her supposed mistress.

Queen Bertha had gone to the meeting with no other object than to overlook her future husband incognito. But from the moment she saw him she was much smitten with him and resolved to win him if possible. She directed Catherine to lose no opportunity to show her severity while in the king's presence. Catherine, who was an excellent actress, played her part remarkably well. Did she order the queen to do her any service, no matter how trifling, she would perform it with the most perfect grace. At such times the real queen would cast down her eyes, bearing the injustice with angelic sweetness.

One morning Catherine sent Bertha to the royal garden for some flowers, and when she returned she found her not getting the kind she wished. Nevertheless she handed several of the choicest to King Caspar, whose brows were knit at the harsh treatment. He selected the most beautiful flower, a rose, and handed it to Bertha. As might have been expected had the play been a reality, Catherine after this, with the queen's concurrence, redoubled her harshness to Bertha, who availed herself of the opportunity to show herself an angel of patience. This excited the king's sympathy and admiration for the poor maid to such an extent that he resolved to break off the negotiations.

When Bertha considered the fruit ripe for plucking she contrived to meet the king in a corridor in the palace as if by chance. He stopped her and, despite her pretended efforts to get by him, forced her to chat with him. This she did with her eyes bent upon the floor in well affected modesty. While they were together a door opened and Catherine came out into the corridor. With fire in her eyes she ordered Bertha to her room, then said to the king: "If this is a sample of your majesty's constancy I think you had better go no further in this matter."

"As your majesty pleases," replied the king with a formal bow. Thus was the king cured from one woman to another. Queen Bertha and her maids of honor returned to Zingerland and King Caspar to Walkaria. But the king did not remain there long before he took a step which he must take with great care, since his failure to marry the queen of Zingerland had made him unpopular in both kingdoms. He sent a confidential friend to Zingerland to learn if he could marry one whom he supposed to be the queen's maid of honor.

King Caspar had no hope that he would be permitted the woman of his choice. The queen had shown herself unusually jealous of her maid of honor, and would doubtless refuse his request, with some harsh and dignified message. During his messenger's absence he walked the floor impatiently and with anxiety, waiting for his answer. His embassy returned with a surprise, announcing that the maid was the queen and the queen was the maid. Without losing a moment the king mounted his horse and, summoning his escort, rode night and day to the capital of Zingerland and, appearing before Queen Bertha bespattered with mud from his quick ride, knelt before her and kissed her hand. When he looked up he saw her face bent down upon him filled with merriment.

Turning his eyes to a maid of honor standing by the queen, she saw Catherine looking at him with the same amused expression. And so it was that the two kingdoms were united and there was no more war.

Enormous Rainfall in Hawaii.

The rainfall on the island of Hawaii varies greatly, ranging from the enormous downpour of 323 inches a year in the upper Waipio valley, to twenty inches on some of the slopes of Hualalai. The only surface streams on the island are found along the northeast coast between Hilo and Kohala. Waipio river, according to the United States geological survey, is the largest stream on the island and has been partly developed for irrigation. At Kapoho, on the east point of the island, warm water flows from seams in the rocks. These warm springs flow into a pool about 100 feet long, 25 feet wide and 20 feet deep. The pool is entirely surrounded by rocks, and its color varies in shade from a beautiful blue to violet. Waipaele, or Green lake, is a body of fresh water in the pit of an old crater near Kapoho. This lake covers an area of about five acres and is fed by springs below the surface. A pumping plant takes water from this lake for domestic use and for irrigation.

Military Music.

"No one in time of peace can understand what war is," writes Rev. Charles E. Jefferson in the Woman's Home Companion. "We may prepare for it, but we do not realize what it is, we are preparing for. Military preparations are quite interesting, even exciting. Boys and girls are always fascinated by the paraphernalia of battle. Never have the instruments of war been so intricate and sparkling as now. All the trappings of the military world are alluring. Military music is full of piercing notes, which set the corpuscles of the blood dancing. But military music is not the music of war. The music of war is the groans of wounded and dying men and the sobs of broken hearted women. Military music is one of the embroidered veils thrown over the face of war to make boys think that war is glorious."

A Mulberry Tree Legend.

The mulberry, "wisest of trees," as Pliny termed it, really "likes" London and fruits profusely even in the grounds of the Charterhouse, at murky Smithfield. London mulberry trees are mainly derived from a fad of James I, who wanted to found a silk growing industry. With the proverbial folly of a pedant, the British Solomon introduced the black mulberry, disliked by silkworms, instead of the white variety which forms their food. The black mulberry had been planted by Cardinal Pole at Lambeth in 1555, and there were still older specimens in the garden of Syon House. According to a pretty Greek legend, all mulberry trees were originally white, but a mulberry tree was growing beside "Ninny's tomb" when Pyramus and Thisbe died there, and the blood of the lovers turned the fruit to its present color.

Origin of the Onyx.

When waters charged with carbonate of calcium derived from limestone are allowed to evaporate they deposit their load in the form of winter, or tufa. This process can be observed at many thermal and "petrifying" springs and also the formation of stalactites and stalagmites in limestone caverns. This way large masses of compact carbonate are formed, some of them of great beauty. The so-called "onyx marbles," of which the Mexican "onyx" is a familiar example, are formed in this way. Some rock of this class is stalagmitic in cavern, and some of it is formed by springs. Its variations in color and texture, to which its ornamental character is largely due, are commonly produced by impurities or inclusions, such as oxide of iron or even mud and clay.—New York Telegram.

Ancestry of the Hen.

Darwin believed that our domestic fowls are descended from the jungle fowls of India. As other authorities have sometimes disputed his view, the statement of Charles William Seebo, curator of ornithology at the New York zoological park, is especially interesting: "After studying all four species of feral Gallus in their native haunts as well as many examples of natural and artificial hybridizing and reviewing the evidence from all points of view I can find no reason to attribute the ancestry of all varieties of our domestic fowls to other than the red jungle fowl of India."

Inquisitive.

"Yes, Henry writes very good letters from college. They show a strong thirst for knowledge. He never writes without asking for information."

"That's fine. What does he ask?"

"He always asks, 'When are you going to send me some more money?'"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

All the Same.

The "horray banded" calls what he lives on "pay," the skilled mechanic "wages," the city clerk "salary," the banker "income," a landowner "rent roll," a lawyer "fees," a burglar "swag," but it all comes to the same in the end.—London Scrap.

To Avoid Worry.

If you would avoid worry train yourself to be methodical and to set up to the good old maxim of never putting off till tomorrow what can be done today.

Their Glee.

"He boasts that he came of a fine old family."

"Yes, and how they must have laughed when he left!"—Judge.

Precaution is better than repentance.

—Great Exhorter.

WORDS THAT ARE ACCURSED.

To Use Them, Before the Year is In to Invite Death.

The Yeggies, a peculiar Turkish sect, are perhaps the only people in the world who consider certain letters, words and phrases as being cursed and the person who pronounces them a worthy subject for immediate destruction.

They attach no value to human life, and to these ordinary dangers are added those arising from the embarrassing etiquette of conversational intercourse with them, for if any one inadvertently speaks the word "devil," " Satan" or anything with the same meaning he commits a mortal offense, and to get off his head is a God pleasing act, a sacred duty of the Yeggies, the fulfillment of which will insure him a place in paradise.

In a like manner several letters are wholly banished from their language, chiefly those which contain the sound of "abim." The Arabian word "malik," "Thou art damned," is also expunged because it is believed by the Yeggies to have been the word uttered by God when the fallen angels were thrown into hell.

These and similar words and phrases are set aside and combinations which do not belong to any language used instead.—London Spectator.

WHY SNOW HEATS THE HANDS

The Brain Calls to the Blood to Help the Chilled Skin.

It is very wonderful that our hands should become warm after playing with snow, for it must be perfectly certain that the cold snow takes heat away very quickly from our warm hands.

The warmth of our hands is derived entirely from the blood, except at times when something hot is actually shining upon them. Therefore, for some reason or other, a very much larger amount of blood than usual must be flowing through our hands. The blood is no warmer in itself, or the whole of the body would at once notice it, but what really happens is that the hands are getting richer and quicker supply of it. The effect is just the same, really, as the delightful glow that we feel after a cold bath. The brain has the duty of taking care of the skin, as of every other part of the body. Now, when the skin has been chilled its life has been heavily taxed, and it will suffer unless it is compensated. So the brain orders the small blood vessels in the skin, wherever it has been chilled, to relax and widen so that the warm blood is able to circulate quickly through them.—The Child's Book of Knowledge.

Pension.

"Pension" is among the numerous cases of words of Latin origin specialized to mean something which the original did not mean to the Romans. "Pension" signifies simply a payment in the broadest sense, and we are at liberty to draw the sound moral that a pension is not really something thrown in as a gratuity, but deferred pay. The word for a soldier's pay was "stipendium," and here we have another curious shift of meaning. No body speaks of a soldier's "stipend" now. It is a magistrate or a clergyman whose pay receives that name. The "stipendium" was paid in lump sum three or four times a year, and the word came to be used to mean a year's term of service.—London Chronicle.

How the Trouble Began.

He had been reading the paper and occasionally repeating to her some item that seemed particularly interesting. Thus it happened he ran across an item about the invention of a machine for washing babies.

"They'll have machines for washing babies next," he suggested.

"But," she exclaimed indignantly, "I'd just like to see my baby washed by a machine!"

"So would I," he returned.

He afterward explained to some one at the club that it was an exhibition of the insincerity of woman, for, while he had done absolutely nothing but agree with her, she was so displeased that he found it impossible to read his paper in comfort.

A Stubborn Husband.

"My husband is one of the most stubborn men in the world."

"He can't be any more stubborn than mine."

"Oh, yes, I'm sure he must be! Yesterday I had an engagement to meet him at 3 o'clock."

"Yes?"

"Well, it was nearly 4:30 when I got there, and he won't admit yet that the rest he got while he was waiting did him good."—Kansas City Star.

Made Them Go Pretty Far.

Willis thought our bank cashier was a good business man because he was always talking about making the funds go as far as possible. (Gillie)—Did he do it? Willis: yes, the last time he traced the detectives got of him he was in South America.—Town Topics.

Rare.

"Have you any rare coins?" asked the old fogey.

"Yes," replied the crumch. "I have a five dollar gold piece in my pocket right now."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Made It Fit.

Lady Teacher: Who can make a sentence with the word "gracious" in it? Little Willie: I can. "The man stopped shaving and gruesome whiskers."—London Tit-Bits.

One great doctrine everywhere inculcated among men is this—the necessity of cheerful perseverance.—Carys.

Mistaken For a Spy

By SARAH BAXTER

When the great European war broke out I was in Berlin. Being a woman and not brave, I concluded that I had better remain where I was than try to get back to America. So I stuck to my quarters in the capital, though I displayed an American flag at my window and visited the embassy to make sure my passport was all right.

By October the lines of traffic over the Atlantic had become sparse, and bearing that I could get passage at Rotterdam for New York I concluded to venture upon a trip home. The only danger in my personality lay in the fact of my accent. As Bostonians are the broadest of the English, and on this account I was liable to be taken for an Englishman.

At the time I started the allies in the west were engaged in repulsing the attacks of the Germans in France and a part of Belgium which was still occupied by the Belgians. Having crossed the Meuse I fell in with the German army in the rear of the line of trenches which was being held as a reserve. I was conducted to the headquarters of the general commanding, and my passport was examined by an officer of his staff who spoke English, but with the usual accent of a German. After a few questions he left me, but soon returned.

"There is fighting on the route you must take, and it would not be safe to proceed just now. The general desires that you join him at dinner, and we will see that you have a comfortable place to sleep."

I was sorry for the delay, but accepted patience, especially since I was to be well treated. Some British prisoners were brought in during the day, and I went among them, chatting with them. I noticed that they all supposed me to be English, several of them asking from what part of England I hailed. This troubled me, for there were German officers and soldiers present, and I was quite sure that at least one of the officers was listening to our conversation.

I dined with the general and several members of his staff. There was also another woman present besides myself, who spoke English fluently. Indeed, not every one would know whether she was English or German, though in certain words that a German can never pronounce. For the "r" she used a "r." For a "k" she used "ch." But it seemed to me that she must have learned English while young, for these peculiarities of German pronunciation were very slight.

After dinner the man arose and said that they would smoke outside, giving us two ladies an opportunity to enjoy each other's society for a short time. They had scarcely left us alone together when my companion's manner changed completely. She drew her seat very near me and whispered:

"I am not German, I am English. I have very important information of the German forces which I wish to carry to England. But there are officers here, and I am the only one who knows me, and if I proceed I will be arrested as a spy. If you will carry a bit of paper through the lines to General Francis headquarters you will save the lives of hundreds, thousands, of our countrymen."

This speech frightened me dreadfully. I arose and attempted to leave the woman, convinced that she was really working upon me for some purpose which I did not know. She caught me by the skirt and held me, looking up at me with an expression which was intended for terror but which I believed was feigned.

"Do not betray me!" she cried in a hoarse voice. "It will mean death to me!"

"Let me go," I retorted. "I am not English, I am American."

The woman held me, imploring me not to betray her. I told her that I had no interest in her whatever. I was neither German nor English, but a native and a citizen of a neutral country. She played her part admirably, and for a moment such was the agony she assumed that I almost believed her. But I remembered how she had betrayed herself in her speech and refused to credit her.

I pulled myself away from her and fled. Outside the general and the other officers who had retired from the dinner table were seated on camp chairs smoking. They arose as I appeared and turned toward me.

"General," I said, "I wish to proceed on my journey at once. You have set this woman upon me to see if I am what I pretend or a spy. She is not English, which you know as well as I. She is German, though she speaks English better than any German I ever met. But when she tells me she is not a German I know better. I am an American bearing an American passport, and I demand to be allowed to proceed on my journey to Rotterdam, where I hope to find passage to my home in America."

The general broke into a laugh in which the other officers joined. The man who had examined my passport said to me:

"Why, if you are an American, do you use the broad 'a' like the English?"

"Because I am a Bostonian."

I was not only permitted to proceed at once, but was furnished with transportation and an escort. I reached Rotterdam a few days before the sailing of a steamer for America and secured a passage in her.

SEEING THE SUN

A Traveller's Experiences Among the Nations of Mountains.

In Thirty Years in Mexico, Dr. Donald Christie tells the interesting story of an experience that he and the Rev. John MacIntyre underwent on a trip they took from Mexico to the top of Yala, the border of heaven. Of their way back they found themselves in a very dark and gloomy place, and in a hurried descent several miles they were only lost. They reached it by taking a swift river, swollen with melting snow and found a poor horse and only one common room and two men as innkeepers.

"There was neither candle nor lamp, but the end of a tarred rope that came from a beam was burning, and by this dim light I looked at my watch," says Mr. Christie.

"What is that toy?" asked one of the old men.

"It tells the time," I answered.

"What time? What do you mean by time?"

"It shows where the sun is."

"Turning to the brother, he asked to be pointed away. But the sun's down long ago. How can he tell where it is?"

"Alas!" said the brother, with a sigh. "He can tell us in the glass. When can these foreigners not do?"

"Early the next morning we were sent, preparing to go on. As our horses were being saddled the old men questioned us again.

"How far away is your country?"

"Many thousand miles."

"And did you ride all the way on that horse?"

NEWSPAPERS IN INDIA.

They seem to be full in a happy-go-lucky sort of way.

American, accustomed to the haste and length of our newspapers that are so surprising to a nervous Indian, would be amazed if not surprised with the papers of India. One of the latest recently published this explanation:

"This is only the beginning of our paper. We were not sure how much matter was required to fill it up, and thinking we had sufficient, we did not start out with much to get any more. We therefore beg that our readers will excuse us for the space left blank and promise to do better and get more in the future."

How many subscribers would have been the country? With these papers was the announcement of a paper that came out with two columns blank, the editor having the cheek to say that a large quantity of something of interesting matter had been left out for want of space.

When the average Indian citizen wants a holiday he spends his money, but such is the convention in relation to the public that his good deeds, informed them plainly why the paper was not issued on the appointed date. "With the consent of our readers we now propose to take out a special holiday. We are sure some of them will begrudge us our relaxation."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Birth of Music.

There are many legends concerning the origin of music, but it is impossible to say which is the oldest. By the old Romans the god Mercury was credited with the invention of music. According to Apollodorus, the latter was as follows: The Nile after an overflow left on the shore a dead tortoise. Its flesh was finally dried up by the hot sun, so that nothing remained in it, but the cartilage, which being struck and contracted by the sun, became sonorous. Mercury, happening to be walking that way and striking his foot against the shell, was so pleased with the sound produced that the idea of a lyre presented itself to his imagination. He immediately constructed the instrument in the form of a tortoise and string it with the sinews of dead animals. And so music began.

The Last Reporter.

When Monsieur—the first Monsieur—at the court of Louis XIV.—discovered at his levee that his watch had been stolen, presumably by one of his valets, he dashed dressing hastily and, addressing them all, said: "Gentlemen, the watch-strikes. Let us separate as quickly as we can." What a tact and finish were there!

The spirit of Monsieur was admirably caught by the French gentleman of the time, who, attacked by robbers at 6 o'clock in the afternoon, simply observed: "Sir, you have opened very early today."—Cornhill Magazine.

Domestic Problem.

First Modern Parent—Aren't your two children something of a problem?

Second Modern Parent—Yes, indeed! They go away to school for thirty-eight weeks, to camp for ten, and that leaves four whole weeks when I don't know where to send them.—Life.

Sense of the Practical.

"The Romans had a strong sense of the beautiful," remarked the student.

"Yes," replied Mrs. McQuidey, "but they wasn't practical. For instance, those Roman candles was very pretty to look at, but they wasn't much good to read by."—Washington Star.

Corrected.

Miss Kitty—Before you were married, Mrs. Brine did your husband bring you many flowers?

Mrs. Blinn—I didn't have any husband before I was married, dear.

His Hint.

Hunter—Are you ever short of by mistake for a deer? (Gulde, impressively)—I don't. They never give me to test what they seek at me for.—Exchange.

The greatest pleasure of the world is to be in the company of a woman who is not only beautiful but also intelligent. The only way to find such a woman is to look for her in the company of a man who is not only successful but also kind.

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