

BERTO DE THE DWARF.

His Shrewd Answer at the Court of Alboin, King of the Lombards.

Mary Shears Roberts in her series of "Historic Dwarfs," contributes an article on Bertholde to St. Nicholas. Bertholde was an Italian, and one day he made his way to the palace of Alboin, King of the Lombards, at Verona and boldly seated himself in an empty chair next to the throne.

The courtiers were as much surprised at his audacity, as they were amazed at his grotesque appearance, but the Lombard chief smiled grimly upon the intruder and inquired of him "what he was, when he was born, and in what country."

"I am a man," replied the dwarf whereupon the attendants went off into fits of laughter. "I was born when I came into the world, and the world itself is my country."

King and courtiers now began to realize that they had a shrewd little imp before them and they commenced to ply him with questions of all kinds. The asking of conundrums was a sort of trial of wit to which sovereigns were much given at this period of history.

"What thing is that which flies the swiftest?" asked one.

"Thought," replied Bertholde.

"What is the gulf that is never filled?"

The avarice of the miser," was the ready answer of the quick witted dwarf.

"What trait is most hateful in young people?"

"Self conceit, because it makes them unteachable."

"How will you catch a hair running?" inquired the king.

"I'll stay till I find her on the spit."

"How would you bring water in a sieve?"

"I'd wait till it was frozen," answered the dwarf readily.

The king was delighted. "For so clever a rejoinder," he said, "you shall have from me anything you may desire."

"Oh, no," cried Bertholde, with a mocking laugh. "I shall have nothing of the sort. You cannot give me what you do not possess. I am in search of happiness, of which you have not a particle. So can you give me any?"

"How!" exclaimed the king. "Am I not happy on so elevated a throne?"

"Yes, you are, if the happiness of a man consists in the height of his seat."

Then Alboin referred to his kingly power and dignity, and the dwarf retorted with another mocking laugh, and when the king called attention to the nobles and courtiers about him, Bertholde, with a sneer, remarked:

"Oh, yes, they cluster round your throne; so do hungry ants round a crab apple, and with the same purpose—to devour it."

"Well said," spoke the king, keeping his temper, "but all this does not prevent me from shining among them as the sun among the stars."

"True, but tell me, shining sun, how many eclipses you are obliged to suffer in a year? For the continual flattering of these men must now and then darken your understanding."

"For this reason you would not be a courtier?" inquired his majesty, whose fingers began to play upon his sword in a threatening manner.

"Miserable as I am, I should be sorry to be placed in the rank of slaves," replied the dwarf. "Besides, I have not the necessary qualities to succeed in this fine employment."

"What, then, do you seek at my court?" asked the king in an angry tone.

"Something I have not been able to find there," answered Bertholde. "I was told that a king was as much above common men as a tower is above common houses. I find, as I suspected, that sovereigns are honored more than they deserve."

This was a little too much. The king lost his patience and commanded the dwarf jester to leave the palace immediately or he would have him whipped out of court.

Dangers of the Grippe.

The greatest danger from La Grippe is of its resulting in pneumonia. If reasonable care is used, however, and Chamberlain's Cough Remedy taken, all danger will be avoided. Among the tens of thousands who have used this remedy for la grippe, we have yet to learn of a single case having resulted in pneumonia, which shows conclusively that this remedy is a certain preventive of that dread disease. It will effect a permanent cure in less time than any other treatment. The 25 and 50 cent bottles for sale by J. P. Broyden.

He Blames Society for being a Thief

Otis Smith, cashier of the Georgia Security and Banking Company, who is in jail in Atlanta for embezzling \$10,000, says his effort to keep up the gait of a swell in society in Atlanta caused him to go wrong. Talking in his cell to a reporter he said: "I did not intend at first to defraud any one. I was in the swim and it took cash to keep in the tide. I do not like to arraign society, but I am forced to talk about it when I discuss the real cause of my downfall. I have been asked why I did not go along and do the best I could on my legitimate income, which was about \$1,200 a year. But it takes money to hold a place in society in Atlanta. If you do not put up the stuff you are not appreciated. So long as you pay for the fun you are a king bee, but the moment you do not get in the push with the cash you are nobody. I was in the push and I had to get money to hold my own. It took money to pay for the theatre parties, german, suppers, flowers, and other presents, and I was like the fellow who had hold of a galvanic battery. I could not let it go. After once started I had to keep it up or I was lost. There is nothing real or tangible in this society business," he continued. "There is no genuine friendship. You are appreciated for what you do in the way of entertaining and giving pleasure. The fellow who comes to the front with the most in the way of giving the girls a nice time is the biggest man in the ring. Let him slack up and he is soon in the background, but, as I said, I have no arraignment to make of Atlanta Society I paid my way and it gave me the best it had."

Must Pay a Tax.

The Finance committee has under consideration an amendment to the Revenue Act imposing a license tax of \$250 on each and every bucket shop or broker's office in the State. This is to apply only to those dealing in stocks, bonds and agricultural products for future delivery, such as the offices of Cuthbert & Co., Hubbard, Price & Co. and Lamson & Co., which are doing business in many cities in this State. This amendment was proposed by State Auditor Ayer, and will probably be incorporated in the Revenue act.

A new section has been put in the Revenue Act. It imposes a tax on legacies and inheritances as follows: Those in a direct line 2 1/2 or 1 per cent, and to those collateral (save for charitable uses) 1 1/2 per cent. No administrator or executor is to be permitted to file final account until such tax is paid.

Killed by the Flood.

Reports of the loss of life in the eastern Kentucky flood is appalling. Jas. M. Morgan, wife and child were drowned in Floyd county by the overflowing of Beaver Creek, which destroyed their home. Elder Morton, a Mormon missionary, was drowned near Mount Eikhorn. An unknown woman was drowned in Leslie county, and in Jackson county Henry Holcomb lost his life while trying to ford a stream. At Barboursville, the Cun berland river has forced a third of the population to move out.

A Dinner to Mr. Bryan.

Hon. John R. McLean, who was a prominent candidate for the nomination for vice president at the Chicago convention, entertained Hon. William J. Bryan, late candidate for President, at dinner in Washington last week. The house was tastefully decorated and the music was furnished by the marine band. There was no politics connected with the affair, both republicans and democrats being present. There were no speeches.

The issue of standard silver dollars from the mints and treasury offices for the week ending February 20th was \$331,649, and for the corresponding period last year was \$317,148. The shipment of fractional silver coin from February 1st to 20th aggregated \$460,598.

Mrs. Mayes, of Union county, met an awful fate on the 22d inst. She carried her husband his dinner at Helm's saw mill. Her dress caught in the shafting, and she was wound round time and again. When the saw was stopped she was found dead. The bones of her limbs and body were broken in twenty places.

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