

### THE FINISHING TOUCH.

How an American Art Student Electrified a Berlin Audience.

"It is probable that the young American who entertained a Berlin audience unexpectedly one evening half a dozen years ago may have set up a studio of his own somewhere in this country, and if he has I'll guarantee that he entertains well," said an artist at the Lotos club one night last week. "I was in Berlin doing a little painting at the time, and I fell in with a little colony of Americans who made my stay very pleasant."

"We dropped in to see a variety show one evening at the Reichs hall. The star performer was a lightning sketch artist who figured on the bill as 'professor.' He was a tall, long haired man, with arms that reached almost to his knees. A large easel held his canvases, and the rapidity with which he worked greatly pleased his audience. His arms worked like a windmill, and as he swung them the paint flew off his brush in a steady stream. The result on the canvas didn't resemble anything until, with a quick spit of the brush, he put a touch here and a touch there, and behold, a picture! The picture wasn't a work of art, to be sure; but, then, the spectators were by no means critical. As the professor's arms flew around and his brush whacked the canvas, turning out new pictures in less than half a minute, the enthusiasm increased. The professor sat down to rest. A well dressed young man, very evidently an American, called out in very shaky German: 'Oh, professor, you are slow and your pictures are bad.'

"Come up and try one yourself, if you think so," replied the professor cheerfully.

"All right," said the young man, and while the rest of the spectators were shouting and laughing at the invitation he climbed up on the stage, and took possession of the professor's paints and easel.

"It was apparent that he knew something about painting from the ease with which he handled his brush. After two or three preliminary motions to limber up his arms he turned and bowed low to the audience in the professor's best manner. The caricature was appreciated, and a terrific howl greeted him. Turning to the canvas he swung his paintbrush at a rate that made the professor's previous efforts seem slow by contrast. He seemed to be in a frenzy, and the eyes of the stolid Germans in the theater bulged out with astonishment. They forgot to drink their beer. In less than a minute the American turned and bowed again to the spectators to imply that his picture was completed, and he awaited their decision. As he stood aside and the canvas on which he had been working was exposed there was silence for a moment, and then came a storm of jeers, in which even the professor joined. The canvas was merely a blotch. Not even the wildest imagination could trace any suggestion of a picture on it.

"The American looked pained at his greeting and then turned toward his canvas. A surprised expression came over his face. That couldn't be his picture. The spectators were still jeering him when, as if it were a second thought, he sprang to the easel and turned the canvas bottom side up. The jeers were changed to cheers. The canvas now bore an excellent landscape, with a nolet left out. There were trees, a stream, an old Dutch house, and in the background several cows. It had been painted so expertly, but it was effective and far superior to anything that the professor had turned out. While the spectators were laughing at the young American's ready wit he sprang off the stage and, accompanied by several friends, left the hall. I learned that he was studying art in Berlin, and that he spent more time in practical jokes than at the art schools. He had fairly beaten the professor at his own game, however, and there were no more lightning sketches that evening."—New York Sun.

#### Century Old Piano.

Landlord Carey J. King of the Hotel Safford has quite a curiosity in the way of an old piano, says the Portsmouth (N.) Times. Mr. King says that it is probably the oldest piano in this country. It is the property of his wife and came into the possession of her family away back in the closing years of the eighteenth century, when it was purchased of the family of Governor John Sevier of Tennessee for the great-grandmother of Mrs. King.

The piano was made for Governor Sevier by J. Stewart of Baltimore, the governor presenting it to his wife. It is a quaint old instrument, finely finished off in mahogany, and doubtless could tell many a romantic tale of the olden times if perchance it were gifted with the power of speech. The keyboard is smaller than that of the pianos of today, covering only five octaves.

#### Marriage as a Safety Valve.

Visiting Sister—Why were you so cross to your husband at breakfast?

Wife—I just couldn't help it. I felt as if I must scold at somebody or burst. Just physical irritability, you know—and then everything went wrong. Breakfast was late, the steak burned, the coffee thin and cakes heavy.

"Then why didn't you scold the cook?"

"Oh, I couldn't—she'd leave."—New York Journal.

### A BATTLEFIELD'S CROPS.

#### Relics of a Giant Race Found on a Florida Farm.

A graveyard in a farm is not an extraordinary thing, but a farm in a graveyard is something different. Imagine a vast tract of many acres planted with corn, cane, tomatoes and many other vegetables, while the ground round about is almost completely covered with skulls, bones and other debris that belongs to a graveyard proper. Such is the farm of Captain E. J. Watson, who lives at Chatham Bay Key, Fla., in the Tel island section. In the fields are seen big cornstalks and sugar cane growing out through empty skulls, while the ground underneath the thickly matted tomato vines seems nothing but a surface of bones.

This key is one of the most peculiar of the many odd islands in this group. It is a large island, containing about 50 acres, most being extremely rich land. In the center is a sort of raised highland, containing about ten acres. On the edges of this there are still to be seen remains of what was formerly probably a fortification of some kind, the coquina walls showing about a foot high in some places, while in others they have completely disappeared. In the center are the ruins of what was once a temple of some sort, the fragments of wall foundations still remaining being about 300 by 300 feet, in the form of an eight pointed star. In the center of this island is a square upright column made from coquina. It is now only about 10 inches square and not over 12 feet high, but from its foundation and other points it would seem to have been at least 2 feet square and possibly 20 or more feet high. Queer Indian figures can be yet made out on it.

The Indians have a superstition regarding this island, and it is impossible to get any of them to visit it at night. Chief Iconadachee, one of the oldest Indians there, says that years ago when the Spaniards in Florida were persecuting the Indians a powerful race inhabited this southern section. They were large and fierce and astonished the invaders by their gigantic size and immense strength. He says that this tribe was driven south of the Chatham river, beyond which lies an impenetrable morass. They made their last fighting ground, and many tales are told of the encounters that occurred there between the Spaniards and these Indians. Finally they were driven away from this refuge, and what was left of the tribe, possibly 1,000, moved to this island. A mighty battle was fought here afterward, and it is supposed that the tribe was completely exterminated. An examination of the farm would indicate that a massacre of some kind had occurred, as the whole upper part of the key is completely covered with skulls and various bodily bones of all sizes and conditions. One can scarcely walk without treading on something of the kind. Hundreds and hundreds of the skulls are crushed in, as if the owner had been killed by a bludgeon wound or by a battlement—in fact, three-fourths of all the skulls picked up show the marks of wounds of this character.

A large number of skeletons have been put together, and the result has been surprising. A majority of them are nearly 8 feet in height, correspondingly broad in shoulders and with a mighty arm reach that would astonish even a Fitzsimmons or a Corbett. All the other frame bones are correspondingly large, being much larger than the bones of an ordinary human body. A great many scientists have visited this section this winter, but none of them could explain this strange find, except on the hypothesis of a complete massacre and an extinction of this tribe. Mr. Watson's farm is noted for its richness, decaying bones giving it an immense amount of fertilizing. From 30 acres planted in cane and vegetables he has sold nearly \$10,000 worth of stuff. This shows the incomparable richness of the place. —St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

#### Mutilated Documents.

In the files of the house no signatures of Webster, Clay or Lincoln remain. While there should be hundreds of letters from these distinguished men in evidence, all have disappeared, and there is no trace of their whereabouts. President Lincoln in the course of his official career in Washington sent hundreds of original documents bearing his signature to both house and senate, but on all these original papers filed in the house the signatures have been cut off. There are other important documents in the house files which have been similarly mutilated. —San Francisco Argonaut.

#### Mrs. Anna Gage, wife of Ex-Deputy U. S. Marshal, Columbus, Kan., says:

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### His Great Brain.

Two exquisite chappies were talking over the necessity of making presents and the demands thus made on their purses when Charlie broke out: "You don't mean to say you spent \$50 in these hard times on your fiancée's presents? Why, man alive, you are going to marry the girl in a few weeks! What's the good of wasting presents on her!"

Freddie smiled and toyed with his dear little mustache. "Well, you see, she's a lovely fellow, Nance is—a real lovely fellow, Sport, don't you know—wheel, golf, ride—um, all that sort of thing. I got her some stunning scarfpins, just the sort of thing a fellow would like to have—horsy, racy, you know—and I got her a flask—just a pretty single drink for a fellow; fit the palm and the pocket—just the right sort. A set of cards that would make you play if you never saw a card in your life. They cost—well, never mind. I don't begrudge it. I got a tantalus set, too—all the tools, silver and cut glass. My boy, you should see them. A dandy golf set too. No rubbishing girl affair, but the sort of thing a fellow likes to be seen with, and—"

But Charlie was weeping. "Forgive me, Freddie," said he. "I'm a baby beside you, I see that. If you marry her, you've got 'em all, and they are a pretty lot, and if she doesn't marry you you get them back. Freddie, all you need is a few affairs to have the fittest bachelor rooms in town."—London Answers.

### Mr. Hutton on the Cæsars.

In his "Literary Landmarks of Rome," in Harper's Magazine, Mr. Laurence Hutton adopts a tone of facetious humor occasionally when writing of the ancients. Here is a sample of his style:

All students will remember that Julius Cæsar announced that all Gaul was divided into three parts, each of which, with all the gall in his possession, he attached to himself. This celebrated man of letters, against the advice of his wife, Calpurnia, went out to meet his fate on a famous March morning, from the Regia, close to the Temple of Vesta in the Forum, and here his widow received his body, brought back with all its gaping wounds by a few of his faithful slaves. Alas, it was too late for her to tell him that she had told him so, but no doubt in all her great grief she thought it.

## Cancer Of the Breast.

Mr. A. H. Crausby, of 158 Kerr St., Memphis, Tenn., says that his wife paid no attention to a small lump which appeared in her breast, but it soon developed into a cancer of the worst type, and notwithstanding the treatment of the best physicians, it continued to spread and grow rapidly, eating two holes in her breast. The doctors soon pronounced her incurable. A celebrated New York specialist then treated her, but she continued to grow worse and when informed that both her aunt and grandmother had died from cancer he gave her the case up as hopeless.

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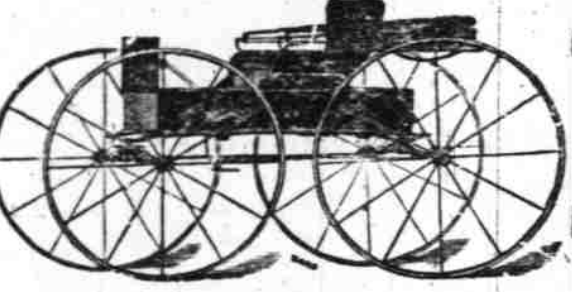
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