

ing her to speak to him, to save him from the fearful fate that menaced him, and these entreaties were mingled with ardent protestations of passionate devotion toward herself.

The man paused aghast, and said:
"I do believe the creature's gone mad over the picture he's made with his own hands. Come in, Mr. Higgins, and see for yourself how he's carryin' on."

Arden's staunch friend and undaunted defender through all his evil fortune—the old tavern-keeper—entered the room, carrying a basket filled with delicacies, furnished by his good wife for the use of the prisoner. The flushed features, tremulous hand, and raised voice, proclaimed their own tale of mental anguish, ending in utter prostration of the physical powers; and Mr. Higgins indignantly exclaimed:

"They might ha' known it would come to this! I jest wish I had that Withers, the old bundle of conceit, under my hand once! Wouldn't I wring his neck for causing an innocent lad to be caged up here till he's clean lost his wits! Such a smart, spry chap as he was, too, isn't often found."

"But if he killed the man, what could Withers do but lock him up? Don't blame the Squire for what he couldn't help."

"I tell you Arden didn't kill his cousin; and it will be proved yet. I know men; and this one never was yet tempted to kill any man, especially the cousin he was brought up with. Let's get the poor fellow on the bed, and bring the doctor; maybe he'll kill him before the law gets a chance, and that'll be the best thing that could happen to him!"

As they approached Arden, he sprang up and eluded them, exclaiming—

"Avaunt, wretches! Is it not enough to accuse, to torture me by this living death? Lay not your vile clasp upon me, for I am desperate!"

"Poor fellow! he's *non compos*, sure enough, or he would never talk that way to me. See here, Mr. Arden, it's your old friend, Higgins, who don't believe a word they say about you, and who wouldn't hurt a hair of your head, I'm sure! Come, now, be quiet, and let us have a talk together."

A gleam of reason returned to the helpless young man, and he slowly stretched forth his hand to grasp the offered one of the old man.

"Ye—s—I—I believe you speak the truth, Mr. Higgins; but I have suffered so much in this narrow den, that I am afraid my head is getting in a sad state. You don't think me guilty? Ha! well, that is as it should be; but you must not think *her* the murderess. Was I not a catfist to assert such treason against that peerless creature? Look at her! Did woman ever wear that look of innocence, and yet have no true divinity within her? Ah, she is a goddess, man! a peerless angel, free from all taint of sin, as if just from the companionship of her sisters in Paradise!"

"Of course she is!" replied Higgins, soothingly. "She's a beautiful creature, there's no denyin' that, and nobody that I knows on means to accuse her of any crime!"

"But it has already been done. One man has been base and treacherous enough to breathe such a charge against her, and that wretch is before you! Oh! pardon, pardon, loveliest of earth's daughters! for this vile wrong against thy spotless nature. I am guiltless of the crime myself, but I deserve its punishment for accusing thee of aught that is evil!"

Again he threw himself prostrate before the picture, and it was some time before he could be persuaded to lie down, while Higgins went to summon the village Æsculapius. He soon returned, accompanied by a chuffy man, with a very bald head, and prominent eyes shaded by a pair of green spectacles. He felt the pulse of the prisoner, shook his head wisely, and uttered a few oracular words descriptive of his symptoms, which were not understood by either of his listeners. Violent bleeding was resorted to, and Arden was left nearly lifeless from the depletion he had undergone. The loss of blood had at least one good effect—it completely restored him to a true perception of what was passing around him, and his first command was to have all his late paintings placed in his portfolio, and that removed from his sight. As his mind reacted, he half smiled at the recollection of his wild idolatry of a mere image created by his own skill, and possibly bearing a vague resemblance to the real actor in that terrible drama which promised to end so fatally to himself.

When Arden could again sit up, Mr. Higgins came in one morning to give him the village news, as was his daily custom. He informed him that every arrangement for the marriage of Lennox and Dora Withers was complete, and on the evening of the day on which his own fate was to be decided they would be united. Mr. Withers had sold his property

in Glenfall, and was converting all his possessions into money as rapidly as possible, with a view of leaving the place in company with his daughter and son-in-law. He went on to add that the bride-elect seemed to have quite lost all the brightness and gay merriment which formerly distinguished her; and the story went that the father was urging the match upon her evidently against her inclinations. However, whether true or not, the trousseau was prepared, and the bridal party would leave on an extended tour, probably ending in Florida, where it was the intention of Lennox to settle.

During the whole time of Arden's imprisonment, some concealed agent was working against the hopeless young man. The prosecuting attorney received several letters, relating such incidents in the past life of Arden as could be brought to bear injuriously against him in the approaching trial. The little escapades of youth, the disagreement between his uncle and himself concerning his choice of a profession, his ingratitude in preferring a vocation to which Mr. Carlyle was bitterly opposed, were all set forth in exaggerated colours; and an impression was produced that a strong feeling of jealousy existed between the cousins as to the degree of favour each one enjoyed with his kinsman.

The prosecuting attorney became deeply interested in the case; and, on his arrival in Glenfall, he compared the statements thus anonymously sent with such facts as were placed before him there. His mind was soon made up that he would be engaged in a righteous cause, when hunting to death this young and friendless man; and he entered the court-house on the day of the trial firmly convinced that society would be well rid of so great a villain, even by the hands of the executioner.

When Arden was placed before him, and his pale, serene face, so expressive of bitter suffering, so nobly handsome, was lifted to his own, Mr. Ilston felt almost a pang of reproach that he had listened only to one side of the case, yet had made up his mind to secure the conviction of the prisoner, if it could be accomplished through his own exertions. As he perused the wasted lineaments before him, his belief in Arden's criminality was staggered: spite of the evidence brought to bear against him, it seemed impossible that such a man should have stained his hands with his kinsman's blood from the ignoble desire to appropriate to himself his wealth.

Then he recalled the histories of so many criminals whose apparent superiority would have induced the million to pronounce them incapable of the deeds of which they had been fully proved guilty; he recalled the strong presumptive evidence against the prisoner, and arose from his seat fully prepared to bring home to him the charge of wilful and malicious murder.

Ilston spoke thrillingly and powerfully, and, as Arden listened, he, at moments, almost doubted his own complete ignorance of details he was represented as having arranged with diabolical forethought worthy of a fiend.

We will not dwell on the incidents of the trial. The jury listened patiently and impartially, and rendered their verdict—

"Murder in the first degree."

Arden bowed his head as he listened, and his heart grew faint within him. Nerving himself for what must ensue, he looked up, and with outward calmness seemed to listen to the words of the judge, but only the concluding words conveyed any definite impression to his mind—

"Harry Arden, you are condemned to be hanged on the twenty-fifth of November, at two o'clock in the afternoon of that day, and may God have mercy on your soul!"

A sudden darkness seemed to veil everything before him, his heart ceased beating, and for a few seconds he thought he was dying, but consciousness—vivid, agonizing consciousness—returned with a pang so keen as to rival even the sting of death itself; he looked out on the crowd of faces—human faces, belonging to men made after the image of God, and saw in them no compassion—no mercy for their condemned brother—innocent though he knew himself to be. Oh, it was hard to bear! but the pride of manhood sustained him, and he preserved that quiet exterior which many insisted showed the hardness of a nature which had led him to the commission of the crime for which he was condemned.

As he was taken out, Higgins came to him and wept bitterly, as he assured him that he still believed him innocent; but this was the solitary token of interest betrayed by any one for the unhappy youth. So deep a prejudice had been created against him by the stories industriously circulated to his discredit, that the expression of sympathy was stifled, even where it was felt.

As he stepped from the court-house, Withers, whose evidence had been extremely hostile toward him, came suddenly from a group of men with whom he had been talking, and stood in front of him. He seemed moved by some powerful emotion, and with parched lips and stammering articulation he begged his pardon for the part he had been compelled to take against him. His manner was eager and deprecating, and Arden wondered why he should care what one so crushed as himself might think of his conduct. He gently replied—

"You need ask no pardon from me, Mr. Withers. If you have wronged me, you must look to a higher source for forgiveness. You have only performed the duty demanded of you by the State, though I was surprised to discover that you believe so strongly in my guilt!"

The very lips of Withers grew pallid, and he attempted to reply; but Arden passed onward, pressed upon by the crowd, who were eager to see how he bore his sentence.

Just as he was about to step into his prison again, Betty Baine, who had also been a material witness against him, thrust herself forward, and, shaking her open hand toward him, tauntingly said—

"The evil reputation of the haunted house did not save you, young man, though you counted on its doing so. The old place will hardly have another tenant soon."

Arden vaguely said—
"I may yet live, old woman, to bring home to you and those concerned with you the charge of criminality me to serve your own ends."

"I defy you—I defy you," replied the crone, savagely. "Get into your kennel, and stay there till the gallows claims you!"

Shocked at her brutality, some one in the crowd hurled her back, and Arden passed again into the gloom of his prison, destitute now of even the light of hope.

Utterly worn out by the many emotions of the day, Arden sat down beside his table, and leaned his head upon his arms: incredible as it would appear, he fell asleep in a few moments—a deep, unrefreshing slumber, for it was the result of both physical and mental exhaustion; and the entrance of the jailer with a lamp and his supper, did not arouse him.

The sound of distant music came at intervals upon the night wind, but it did not bring a pang to the sleeper's heart, though it was the heralding of the marriage of his foe to the fair belle of Glenfall: it was a cruel mockery in those two men to choose this evening for the bridal—this last day of hope to the prisoner was to be the dawning one of wedded love to Lennox.

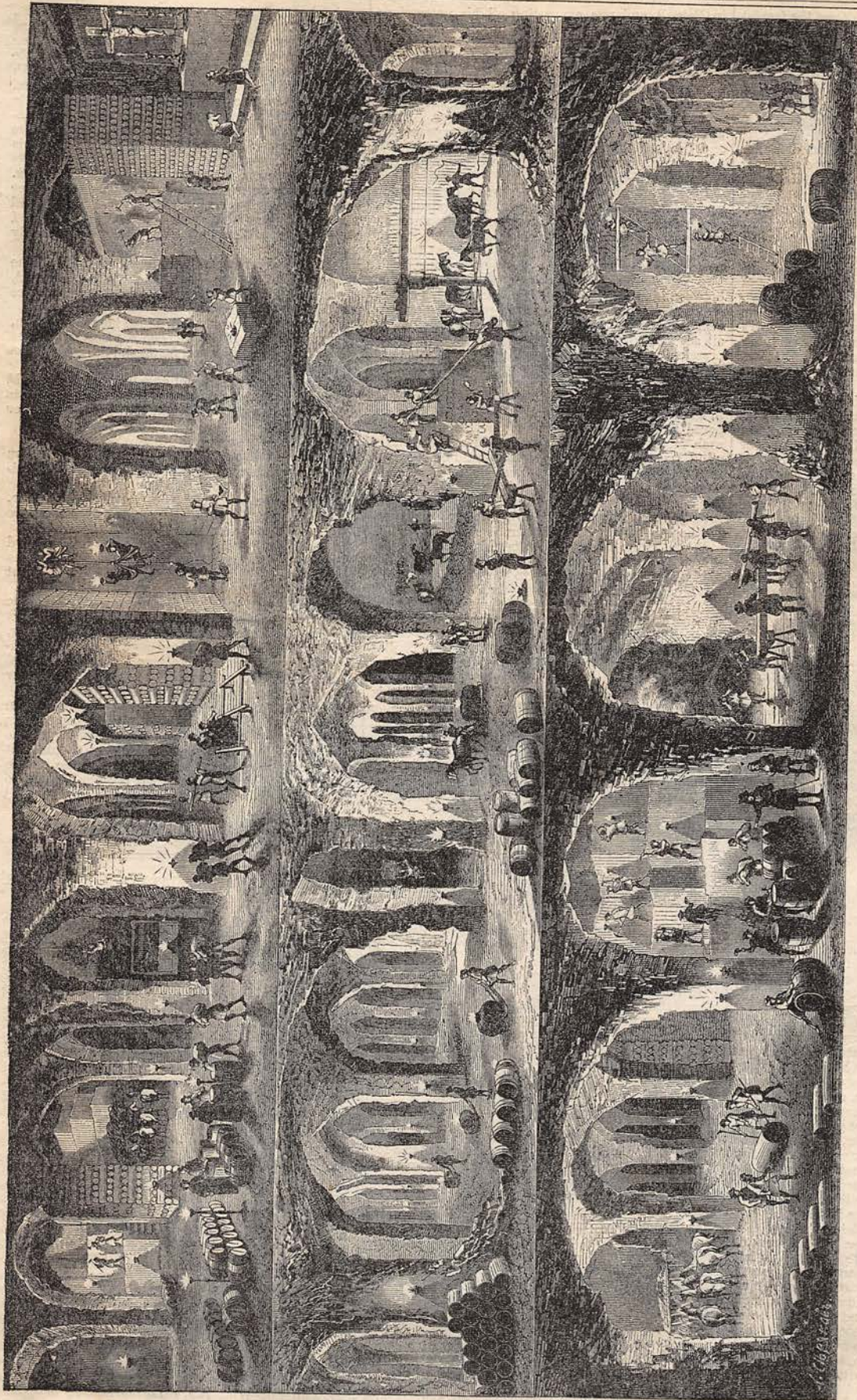
(To be continued.)

SALT, AND THE WIELITZKA SALT MINES.

SALT is a mineral of the utmost importance to the comfort and welfare of man, and is found in large quantities in all parts of the world. Land and water both yield salt. There is a mountain of salt in Turkey, and a chain of salt hills in India, extensive salt plains in Africa and America, and beds of salt in Germany, Hungary, Poland, and in our own country. The ocean is an inexhaustible salt mine—Nature's great saline draught—and man and the lower animals alike estimate its value. What a relish does salt add to our food; what a useful part it plays in the process of digestion; what a preservative it is from many forms of disease; what a healthy influence it gives to the sea-breezes! What sort of world would this be if it contained no salt? We might as well speculate on what the world would be if there was no sun; for "nothing," says the old Latin proverb, "is more holy or more useful than the sun and salt."

In an economic point of view, salt is of great importance to man; it retards the decomposition of animal and vegetable matter, and enables us to preserve food of many kinds for a much longer period than we otherwise could do. And it is well for man that a mineral which is so necessary to his comfort and convenience should be found in such vast quantities, and be so widely scattered. Besides that inexhaustible salt mine—the ocean—salt is found in extensive beds under the solid ground. In Cheshire there is a bed sixty to ninety feet deep. Along the foot of the Carpathians, from the Black Sea to the Alps, there are beds of salt; chief amongst them are the mines of Wielitzka, a representation of which we give in the accompanying engraving.

The salt mines of Wielitzka, in Galicia, are the largest in the world. They are entered by eleven



THE SALT MINES OF WIELICZKA, GALICIA.

The descent is made by the assistance of a cord and pulley, with three torch-bearers and a guide, and if the visitor be imaginative it may help him to realise the descent of Orpheus into the land of Shades. There is only a short time for thinking about anything—not more than five or six minutes—before the visitor touches the solid earth, and the further descents are made by ladders.

The visitor discovers that he has entered a crystal cavern—a region of salt. It surrounds him, covers him, and supports him. Salt everywhere. Pillars of salt, that sparkle in the ruddy light of the torches, as if they were studded with jewels; avenues of salt, that recede into a dim perspective; roof of salt, in forms that rival the splendour of the Alhambra; pendent masses of salt; mysterious labyrinths of salt; deep chasms in salt; a chapel built of salt—the altar, the statues, the columns, the pulpit, the ornaments, all of salt. Left alone, the visitor must perish in the subterranean world; he might make a weary pilgrimage—eight hours a day, for eight and twenty days—without coming to the end of the mines. Of course he must perish, and perhaps, in course of time, become a saline monument to himself; but happily, there is no prospect of such a catastrophe. Not only are there guides, but an easy mode of conveyance. Descending further into the salt mine, discovering new marvels every moment, the visitor is startled by observing a vast expanse of water—a lake formed by the water which has forced its way through the rocks and collected in one place. It is about six hundred feet in length, and more than thirty deep; and its aspect, seen in the lugubrious light of torches, recalls the ancient fable of the Styx. Where is Charon? Here, in his boat, at our service—a civil-looking ferryman, who will take us to the other side. It is not without some sensation of awe that we trust ourselves in his company; we are oppressed by the extent and apparent grandeur of the whole place—by the deep silence, which is broken now by the plash of the water, and now by the report of a distant explosion where the miners are blasting a rock. Here we are on the other side, amongst a group of busy workmen, of horses, drays, and barrels. We may descend still further into the subterranean world. Ladders, and torches, and guides, are at our disposal. More workmen, more horses, more barrels, await us; more colonnades of salt, and huge blocks of salt, that look as if they would never yield to the labour of the miners.

The mine is divided into three distinct compartments or beds, one below the other. The first contains the *zielona*, or greensalt, and comprehends the *spisa*, or grey salt, the *lodowatā*, or crystal salt combined with chalk, and *warka*, or powder salt. The bed which lies immediately below yields a

different shafts; that of Dancilowice is the most commonly employed. It is necessary for the intending visitor to obtain an "authorisation," before he

attempts the descent. It is recommended that he should adopt a stout overall, unless he is utterly indifferent as to the injury his clothes may sustain.



THE GIPSY OFFERS ISA A REMEDY FOR FULKE.

superior quality of salt, known as *szibikowa* (fossil salt). The third, which bears the name of *ockosavuta* (pearl), contains the mineral in hexagonal forms, denser and purer than is found in either of the other compartments. This salt was formerly exported to England and Holland in very large quantities; but is chiefly used in the manufacture of trinkets and crosses, which the miners sell to the visitors. The different divisions of the mine are formed by beds of slate, clay, and gypsum. These extend from west to east, bending in the centre toward the Carpathian range.

In the two great compartments, counting from the bottom to the top, the salt is found in huge masses, from which are excavated blocks of three, four, and five hundred cubic feet. During the process of these excavations, branches of forest trees are found mingling with the mineral. This wood, which is soluble, serves as food for cattle. The bones of elephants are also found embedded in the salt. Geologists suppose that the salt mines of Wielitzka are in fact the basin of the sea which formerly extended to the foot of the Carpathian mountains.

The precise date of the discovery of the mines of Wielitzka is unknown. It has been ascertained that they were explored as early as the twelfth century, and that the revenues obtainable from them served for the foundation of religious houses in the fourteenth century. There is a tradition that the Princess Cunégonde of Hungary, affianced to Boleslar the Chaste, received from her father neither silver nor gold. She departed from Poland, and in passing by the salt mines of Hungary let fall her wedding ring. On her arrival at Cracow Cunégonde requested that she might be conducted to Wielitzka, and that an excavation might be commenced in her presence. Her order was obeyed, and from the first block of salt was extracted the lost ring!

In the fourteenth century Casimir the Great established some useful regulations for the management of the Wielitzka mines, which, during his reign, were exceedingly productive. In 1656, during the invasion of the Swedes and Russians, the King of Poland solicited help from Leopold of Austria, who consented to dispatch troops to his assistance on condition of receiving an indemnity. The Polish

treasury was exhausted, and Leopold accepted as a guarantee the title-deeds of the Wielitzka salt mine, and held them till the siege of Vienna by the Turks (1683), when Sobieski, as a remuneration for the help which he rendered, demanded their restitution. Ungrateful Austria, eighty-nine years later (1772), agreed to the dismemberment of the country which had helped her in the time of her distress, and thus again became possessed of the coveted salt mines. From 1809 to 1815 she was compelled to yield half the revenue of these mines to the Grand Duchy of Varsovia, but, by the treaty of Vienna, was established in entire possession, which she holds to this day.

The miners of Wielitzka furnished to the Kings of Poland the best part of their revenue. The nobles, on a royal election, stipulated that the salt from these mines should be provided for them at the cost of working.

Twice the mines of Wielitzka have been ravaged by fire—once in 1310, and again in 1644. The first of these disasters was caused by the malevolence of a workman. The men and horses which were found in the mine were nearly all of them destroyed, the progress of the flames being at length arrested by the skill and courage of Kosciielecki and Betmann, the directors of the works. In 1644 the fire broke out accidentally, and for more than twelve months it was impossible to carry on the excavations, and the royal treasury suffered accordingly.

But Wielitzka has been the scene of festivity as well as of disaster. It became the theatre of a series of brilliant *fêtes* on the occasion of a royal marriage in 1624. When a monarch or any member of the Imperial family visits the mines, they are decorated with every available ornament, and are splendidly illuminated. Mirrors, lustres, draperies embellish the vast reception-hall, where columns of salt support a circular gallery devoted to the orchestra. It is scarcely possible to imagine anything more singular than the effect produced by these curious gatherings—these royal progresses and imperial receptions in the bowels of the earth.

The mines of Wielitzka employ more than a thousand men and four hundred horses, and yield, annually, about 962,000 cwt. of salt.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN HEIRESS:

OR,
The Old Lord.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FRENCH HAY," ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

Her lot is on thee, to be found united,
Watching the stars out by the bed of pain.

MRS. HEMANS.

AFTER a while, the fierce emotion which the remembrance of all she had suffered excited in the gipsy passed, the storm battled itself to rest, and she lifted up a face from which every trace of colour had fled, and the expression upon which, was a strange mixture of the sorrowful and the ferocious.

Then came a minute's pause; and then rising slowly, and standing with folded arms, she said: "Who I am, it matters not now that you should know. Let it suffice that your foe is mine; that I have a bitter wrong to right, and that therefore my words to you are honest. Take heed to them and to yourself, for danger is about you. But show no dread or cowardice—it will the more surely bring destruction—only be wary and brave; you must triumph in the end, for verily if there is a GOD who judges the earth, He will not suffer that monster to succeed. If he does, be at rest, lady, for"—and here her eyes flashed the lurid light I had seen and shuddered at before—"when the measure of his crimes is full, here," and she placed her hand within her bosom clutching something firmly, "is that which will revenge your injuries, and mine."

"Nay, nay," I answered, gently. "I have no injuries to revenge; and, if I had, Heaven forbid that I should take such vengeance as you hint!"

"Why not? why not? Who fears to take the life of a venomous reptile? Who, then, should fear taking his—the rankest, falsest, foulest traitor that ever sullied the earth? Revenge! I tell you, girl, that the only thought which for ten years has kept me from madness, is, that one day I should have such vengeance as would make even the fiends envy me, and reach the dead in her dishonoured