

Wichita Daily Eagle

OLD FEUDAL CUSTOMS.

Some That Still Survive in Portions of Canada.

Belongings Near Quebec Still Run on the Principles Laid Down in Paris Four Centuries Ago and Retained as Long Ago as the French Revolution.

Parkman and others have told us all about the mild feudal system which prevailed in French Canada down to 1854. The seignior received a grant of wild land from the king on condition that he should put settlers upon it. He had to preserve the oak timber for ship-building, and the seignior for the manufacture of tar, and to notify the king's agents if he found minerals on the seignior. He had to go through the form of paying homage and fealty to the king's representative at Quebec when he entered on possession, sometimes offering, and to pay a fifth of the purchase money if he sold the estate to the royal coffers, though he was allowed a rebate of two-thirds for cash down. The seignior or habitant, who held the land under the seignior, had to pay the annual cens et rentes, often a sol (cent), or half a sol, with a half pint of wheat or a few live capons or eggs for each arpent. The land of the seignior passed to his heirs, but, in case he sold during his lifetime, the lands of ventes came into play, and one-twelfth of the purchase money went to the seignior. By the droit de retrait the seignior could compel a purchaser within forty days of the sale to transfer the property to him at the price paid if he thought it had not fetched enough.

The seignior had to get his wheat ground at the seignior's mill, and on some seigniors to have his bread baked at the seignior's oven, paying a toll in each case; to give a tithe of the fish he caught to the seignior, to do corvée or road work, and to get out stone and timber for public purposes. Seigniors who could afford to support a local magistrate were empowered to administer superior, mean and inferior justice on their estates, but as a class they were very poor and this right fell into disrepute.

In 1834, says the New York Post, the parliament of Canada bought out the seigniors. There were 100 of them, in possession of 230,000 acres, embracing 6,000,000 acres of cultivated land. The seignior was given his choice of two things—the cens et rentes were capitalized, and he could either pay the capital sum to the seignior, in which case, of course, he got a clear title to his holding, or continue on as a tenant at a rental equal to 6 per cent. of the capitalization. The tenant I came across, or his father before him, had, like many more, chosen the latter course. The other seigniorial rights were settled by the government at a cost of about \$5,000,000. The system would have been abolished before 1854 only the Roman Catholic church was afraid that in the debacle, as timid souls called it, the titles and fabrique taxes which she collected by authority of law might be abolished, too.

The landlord of whom I have spoken was good enough to let me look at a batch of old papers and books in which the doings of his predecessors in the seignior and of their censitaires are recorded for 150 years. These papers enabled me to form a tolerably good idea of the sort of life the people led.

First as to prices. In 1697, as other documents show, wheat sold in the markets of Quebec at 30 cents per bushel. A creditor was bound to accept it at that price. Beef sold for 8 cents and pork for 6 cents per pound, the four-pound loaf for 10 cents. Prices had dropped a little by 1733. Wheat was then worth 42 cents. In 1743 it fell to 40 cents. There had been a good crop in the region east of Quebec on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, which was regarded as the granary of New France. Capons sold for 10 cents each in 1740, but when partridges or geese their conventional price was 20 cents. Most of the deeds called for "good fap" of the brood of the month of May.

In 1750 carpenters and blacksmiths got from 50 to 80 cents a day, unskilled laborers 40 cents. Cloth of all kinds except homespun was dear. The foreign trade of the colony was confined to France and French possessions, but there was a good deal of smuggling by land and water from New England and New York. Twenty yards of "fine woolen cloth" cost 92 1/2 cents a yard in 1754. The censitaires and the common people generally clothed themselves in homespun. Before the day made boots out of green beef hides, got their sugar from the sump, and had, as a rule, plenty of game and fish. Most of them had a vegetable patch. They exchanged timber or furs for store goods as they required. The well-to-do seigniors imported wine, brandy, velvet, lace, jewelry, etc. An all-velvet suit with a dress-sword, ruffles, buckles and a gilt snuff box thrown in, cost \$50 in 1770. The poorer seigniors made do with their own stuffs.

Their wives and daughters were forced to work in the fields to save the cost of hired labor, which was scarce. Just before the British conquest the colony was flooded with depreciated paper money, and the crops failing at the same time the price of wheat ran up to \$1.00.

There were no booties save among the clergy and seigniors; printing was not introduced until nearly a century and a half after the first printing press had been set up in New England. There were no schools in the rural parishes and no semblance of municipal government either in town or country. Public meetings were not allowed lest they stir up sedition.

A Curious Coptic Custom. The Coptic patriarch of Alexandria is never allowed to sleep more than fifteen minutes at any one time, and if the attendant should allow the holy one's nap to extend beyond the allotted time the penalty is decapitation. Upon being aroused at the end of each quarter hour the patriarch arises and spreads his rug upon the floor, kneels upon it, bows his head three times to the east, and again retires.

Experiences Doct. "And you say you should always suspect a man who is extremely attentive to his wife?" "I certainly would."

"Why?" "Because he would not know how to do it unless he had had abundant practice with some one else."

WONDERFUL FEATS OF MEMORY.

Some Minds Have a Facility for Retaining Certain Classes of Facts.

Among those who have performed great feats of memory Cassell's Family Magazine mentions Dr. Fuller, author of the "Worthies of England." He could repeat another man's sermon after hearing it once, and could repeat five hundred words in an unknown language after hearing them twice. He one day undertook to walk from Temple Bar to the farthest end of Cheapside and to repeat on his return every sign on either side of the way in the order of their occurrence, and he did it easily. In such feats as this the eye plays a chief part; yet blind people also have good memories. Rev. K. J. Johns, chaplain of the blind asylum, London, testified that a large number of pupils learn the Psalter and that one young man was there who could repeat not only the whole of the one hundred and fifty of the prayer-book Psalms and a large number of metrical psalms and hymns, as well as a considerable amount of modern poetry, including Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," but the whole of "Milton's Paradise Lost," with marginal notes and a biography. Lord Macaulay on one occasion repeated to himself the whole of "Paradise Lost" while crossing the Irish channel. At another time, waiting in a Cambridge coffee-house for a post chaise, he picked up a country newspaper containing two political pieces—one the "Reflections of an Exile" and the other a "Parody on a Welsh Ballad." He looked them once through, never gave them a further thought for forty years, and then repeated them without the change of a single word. Macaulay's mind, some one has said, was like a dredging net, which took in all that it encountered, both good and bad, nor ever seemed to feel the burden. Very much unlike a dredging net, and more like a strainer, are the minds of some other persons who carefully select what they will retain and have a natural facility for remembering special classes of facts—George Bidder for figures, Sir W. Scott for verses, Mezzofanti for languages.

IMPROVING THE EYES.

Country Life Said to Be the Best Antidote for Poorness of Vision.

It is satisfactory to be told by Mr. Ellis that blindness in England is "slowly decreasing," though Great Britain still stands in this respect behind two other European countries and three more come before Ireland. Short-sightedness, however, appears to be increasing everywhere, Germany having a signal and sinister preeminence in this respect.

A French doctor has noted the remarkable fact that wild beasts caught quite young or born in captivity become shortsighted, the conclusion being that the eye adapts itself to its habitual sphere of vision, and unless "educated" to use Mr. Ellis' term, to see objects at a distance, loses the capacity of so doing. Even in after life the eye may be, to some extent, so educated, though probably only when the myopia is not considered.

It is thus within the experience of the present writer, says the London Spectator, that his sight greatly improved in days gone by, when he became a volunteer, by practice at the butts, so that while at first he could not see the target to shoot at without spectacles at a three hundred-yard range, after a twelve month or so he only needed to put on spectacles at four hundred yards. But beyond that range he was never able to dispense with them.

Country excursions are, therefore, extremely valuable as means of strengthening the sight of "town" children, and the conductors of such excursions should take pains to direct the eyes of the children to distant objects—to the furthest hill, church tower, or other land mark—noting, if possible, any incapacity to discern the selected object, and then selecting some nearer one for the weaker sighted.

A ONE-GUN REPUBLIC.

When It Was Secured They Could Not Safely Fire It.

The rulers of the miniature Republic of Andorra decided recently that the country should possess a cannon. Krupp, therefore, was ordered to manufacture one of the most modern type. The great gun arrived at its mountain destination a short time ago, and was placed on the highest point in the "country," so that the citizens could see that the valley was well protected. A day was appointed to try the cannon, which was able to send a ball eighteen kilometers. Just as the two artillerymen of Andorra were ready to fire it occurred to one of the prudent citizens that the shot might cause some trouble. The territory of the republic Andorra does not extend over more than six kilometers. To direct the shot, therefore, toward the surrounding mountains would be the same as firing on France or Italy, as the ball would necessarily fall on the territory of one of these countries. A war might be the result. It was then decided to shoot the ball in the air, but some one suggested that it would endanger the lives of too many people in its descent, and possibly bore a great hole in the republic of Andorra. Good council prevailed and the two artillery men were commanded to unload the gun. The shot had not yet been fired, and the good republicans are uncertain what to do with the expensive gun.

Pressure Sustained by Divers.

A veteran submarine diver, in relating some anecdotes concerning the bottom of the sea and its inhabitants, gives some interesting figures as to the amount of pressure the body of the diver is subjected to. At a depth of only one hundred feet the pressure is forty-four pounds to each square inch of the diver's surface. The ordinary human frame has about twelve square feet of surface, which would make the pressure at the depth mentioned above not less than thirty-eight tons. This enormous weight is not all pressing downward, but inwards from all directions.

It Seemed Necessary.

Bowne de Bout—You wouldn't marry Miss Roxy for her money, would you, Upson?

Upson—Duck.

In the Blood. "I think a love of football must be inherent in the Pigskin family."

"What makes you think so?"

"Why, whenever little Jemie wants to play the game his mother kicks."

TRAINING HIM DOWN.

Why the Rest of the Crew Were Not Invited.

They rated and they raved at him but he was impervious. His surname does not matter in the least; it had long been forgotten. The coach of the "varisity crew" knew him as "Six," and the rest of the crew as "Jumbo," though, of course, he may have had another title.

He was as strong as a bull, and had thought training would do much for him; but—he was so heavy. "He could spare a stone if he could get it off him," said the president ruefully.

"It's too late to try Turkish baths," said Parsons, late of Trinity, who had been down to see the crew train, "and you tell him you'll win for Higgins, of Calcutta, if he does not look out, and worry him one way or another until he gets excited."

"Nothing worries him," said the president, mournfully.

"Nothing?"

"Well, nothing that's any use here," said the president. "He confided in me last Easter that he was desperately in love with some one."

During the May week—said she inspired him. I really believe running after her kept his weight down; he used to say she treated him badly, and told me a lot of rot when we were going down to Ely to practice in the autumn."

"What's her name?"

"Dorothy—Dorothy Derrick; you'd know it if you'd heard it as often as I have. All the time the trials were proceeding he used to write hexagrams on it, and recite them in the shower-bath at the boat-house."

"And now he's engaged, I suppose, and happy, so he puts on flesh."

"Not a bit of it; it's all off," he says, and his mind is at rest, confound him! I don't wonder she could not stand his easy-going ways, great leathargic brute."

Mr. Parsons was a grave-looking young man, and he looked portentously solemn as he sat reading a brief in the temple that night. When he had done his work he went to supper with some of the cleverest of his friends.

When he came back he turned grave again, and sat down and wrote a long letter about Six and his sins to the president of the C. U. B. C., who read it in solemn silence at breakfast, casting baleful glances at Jumbo; but Jumbo seemed to have nothing more harassing to think of than how to screw enough sustenance out of training diet to make thirteen stone thirteen pounds feel comfortable inside.

Then he went out; there was a garden to the house where they were staying, and he said there was a man opposite who smoked. He could watch him, if he could do no more.

The rest of the crew were talking in the hall when he returned; they grew suddenly silent when he had entered and they saw his face.

"Good heavens you chaps," he said, "look here! He was holding a sheet of paper in his hand, and I saw it."

"What is it?" they all said at once.

"I don't quite know," he said; "a small boy asked me my name and put it into my hand, and made a face and hooked it. I don't understand it, but it reads awful. Her name and mine, and 'Victoria by the grace of—the devil, there's something on the back!'"

If he was white before he was green afterward, as the president looked over his shoulder and read out aloud: "The plaintiff's claim is for damages for breach of promise of marriage."

"It's awful for me, isn't it?" said Six, disconsolately.

"It's worse for the 'varisity,'" said the secretary, in awestruck tones.

"Let's go out in the garden and talk it over before a rubbing time," and the president and secretary linked their arms in his and drew him gently, but firmly, through the front door.

"I can't row to-day," said Six, in a hopeless way. "Can you excuse me? Put Simpson in, or someone else, just who you like, and call on Dorothy and put things to rights; she can't really mean to ruin me; she knows I never would give me the chance."

"I think the matter had better be put into the solicitor's hands," said the secretary.

"O, if Jumbo's really going to go up to town and be subpoenaed and written and summoned and caveat-employed and all that kind of thing, I'll row for you a week, I'll wire to Calcutta to see if Higgins is still up," said the president.

"Dash it, old chap! don't kick me out for this," said Six, almost tearfully. "I'll do anything, pay anything, not to lose my blue—unless, of course, you think I'm not good enough."

Here the secretary looked puzzled and seemed to have forgotten something. He took off his light-blue cap and scratched his head; and the president, reaching round a simey leg behind Jumbo's back, kicked the trusty henchman. The kick had no inspiring effect.

"Can't you suggest anything?" said the president.

"O, yes," said the secretary, with an effort, "who coaches us to-day, Smithson? I wish it was Parsons; he's a barrister, and could tell us what to do."

"Can't we wire?" asked the president, producing the back of a letter. And in response to their message the tall form of Mr. Parsons darkened the doorway before the eight went down to the river to take advantage of the afternoon's tide.

A young solicitor, a friend of Mr. Parsons, was to some extent to take his instructions for entering an appearance, and all subsequent matters in the suit, and from that day forward he and Mr. Parsons were to conduct every detail between them as their direction.

Jumbo was to do nothing but what they told him not even to write or answer a letter or open one till they had read it, and, above all, not to worry. That was the great point. He was not to worry.

The crew impressed it on him to a man, they inquired after his nerves every time they spoke to him, and put on an air of anxiety and compassion whenever they met him, stopping whenever they would otherwise have passed him to lay a weighty grip upon him and beg him to keep up his spirits.

The effect of the inquiries of Bow, Two, Three, Four and Five on Six, and the fact that Seven and Stroke always insisted on drinking the "reduction of damages" in the measures of port allowed them after dinner, was to distress rather than to relieve his mind.

Mr. Parsons, too, was a young man, and was then a young practitioner; his methods of doing business and advising his client were not consulting. He took a serious view from the first: it was a "question of damages," he said. "An amicable trial," said Mr. Parsons, "that you are being very badly treated; it is her solicitors who are doing it. Regular blood-suckers. I know them." "The fiends!" groaned No. 6, writhing; "and I've only twenty-five thousand dollars in all—everything I have for my old age." He was then twenty-two, so his position was a sad one. "If I went to these solicitors and thrashed them," he said, grinding his teeth.

"They would only sue you for damages," said Mr. Parsons, "and be glad of the chance of doing so."

"I'd break every bone in their confounded bodies!" said No. 6.

Whatever complaints may be made about the law's delays, No. 6 in the Cambridge crew of 18—had none to record. He was startled at its rapidity. A document half a yard long entitled a "Statement of Claim," arrived in Mr. Parsons' post the day after the writ had been served. It was answered that day.

"The rules only allow twenty-four hours for the delivery of the defense in cases of breach of promise," said Mr. Parsons. "It's a new enactment to prevent fraud and concealment of assets. They'll get an order for discovery, and, perhaps, a no exact regno to-morrow."

Assured enough they did. The order for discovery was the most unkindest out of all. Her letters were always in his pocket. There were only five, and three were invitations to dinner or lunch; but his answers! Mr. Parsons had inspected them.

Coupled with the documents now produced they clinched the matter, while a hairpin, a bit of ribbon and a broken shoe-sole (he had broken it in trying it and kept ever since) all of which he had fastened on the breast pocket on the left side of his coat, simply piled up the total of his responsibility, and so they plainly told him.

Each blow as it fell produced a visible effect on its recipient, and it did not speak well for the kindness of Mr. Parsons that each had point in the case, each harsh letter from the solicitor for the plaintiff rejecting terms offered in settlement was communicated to him just as the boat started on its day's row.

"Six's rowlock is strained badly," said Bill Aspin to the president one evening.

"It's those beastly solicitors," said Six, in explanation.

The president nodded.

"You think you're slogging at their heads. You sprung an oar the day before yesterday, don't worry, old chap, for goodness' sake; it's serious matter, but Parsons and his pal will pull you through."

Just before the day of the race the case was set down for trial.

"O, it's terrible to think of my little Dollie treating me like this!" groaned Six on the eventful morning, as they got ready to walk to the river.

Mr. Parsons was jumping out of a cab and running up the gravel path with hurried steps.

"I say!" he called to the president, who was trying to keep up Six's spirits in his usual kind-hearted way, "what is the earliest moment the tide will serve?"

"Eleven-forty; the time we start at," grunted the president.

"Don't let it be a moment later," cried Mr. Parsons. "Jumbo's case will be called on at 12:30, and if he's not there give evidence I won't be responsible. You must all row like blazes. There's a train he can catch if you row record time; if you don't he'll have to drive, and may be late."

It was a grand race and the best crew won; and as the one blue flag was hoisted above the other, Six in the Cambridge boat was seen plunging through the crowd on the shore.

A small boy pursued him and caught him by the arm; he had seen him before and he was an active lad. The note he delivered ran thus:

"Case dismissed with costs, plaintiff not appearing." Then followed the signature of Mr. Parsons' friend, the solicitor.

"How d'ye do, Mr.—? How splendidly you rowed," said a lady's voice. But Six was turning his back on her and trying to walk away.

"How well you are looking. I think you are thinner," said the same young lady. She had a very big light blue hat and eyes to match.

"When are you coming to see us again?" she called out, as he turned involuntarily, trying to struggle through the crowd away from her. The crowd was very thick and Jumbo's was very big. He got quite red in his struggles, but they pressed round to stare at one of the heroes of the day.

"You have not been to see us for an age," said the same young lady, as he was brought close to the wheels of her carriage. "Why did you not answer my last note?"

"Miss Derrick," he stammered, "I—"

"Well," she said, "how hot you look. Come and sit by me and wait till the crowd disperses."

Their explanations are too long to print here.

Neither the rest of the crew nor Mr. Parsons were asked to the wedding, which they thought hard, as they sent very handsome presents; and, by the way, the weight of the Cambridge Six in that race was recorded in the sporting papers (which all praised him highly) as twelve stone eight pounds—St. James' Gazette.

He Touched Her Heart at Last.

Isolated by lights of eloquence, I wooed her in poetical strains. I buckled down to common sense. In vain: 'twas all in vain. I then gave her an estimate. Of the whole enterprise. Heard me the whole enumeration. And then she smiled.

—N. Y. Press.

Don't Forget About It.

She—Before I give you my answer, I think you would better interview papa. You can see him at his office to-morrow and then walk around here and let me know the result.

He—There is only one objection. I may not be able to walk.—Life.

"A FAIR FACE MAY PROVE A FOUL BAR-GAIN." MARRY A PLAIN GIRL IF SHE USES

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THE "AUDISON"

An Invention to Bring About a Needed Reform in Telegraphy.

At a competitive trial of skill before the telegraph operators absurdly called a tournament, which took place recently, one of the most interesting features was a test of the capacity of a receiving machine technically known as the "Audison"—a small instrument fitted to the head of the operator, giving a sound which, although perfectly distinct to him, is wholly inaudible to anyone else. It is high time, says the Engineering Magazine, that the use of a receiving instrument of this character became general in the telegraph service.

Under the present condition of affairs it is almost literally true that he who runs may read. Hundreds of telegraphic stations in hotels, railroad depots and other equally public places are equipped with noisy sounders, enabling every message that goes over the wire, to or from that or any other station, to be read by any person within hearing who is able to do so. There is not the slightest attempt to preserve the secrecy of communication, which ought to be one of the all-important requirements of the service.

There are thousands of ex-operators and other persons in the community who can read these signals as easily as they could read a bulletin board, and there is obviously nothing whatever to prevent any one of them from obtaining information of other persons' business or personal matters in this way and using it to their own advantage. It is a state of affairs which calls loudly for immediate reform.

SCHOOLBOY PHILOSOPHY.

Answers for Every Question the Teacher Can Ask.

The schoolboy has queer ideas sometimes, says the Great Divide, as is demonstrated by the following answers given to teachers in search of information. A poor boy was asked: "What is a gentleman?" "A fellow that has a watch and chain," he replied, adding, when he saw that his answer was not perfectly satisfactory, "and loves Jesus." "Medieval is a wicked man 'who has been tempted,'" "A demagogue is a vessel containing beer and other liquids." "Tom, use a sentence with 'responsibility' in it." Tom said: "When one suspender button is gone there is a great deal of responsibility on the other one."

"What is a lad?" Inquired the teacher. A very small girl answered: "A thing for courting with." "Give the future of drink." "Present, he drinks; future, he will be drunk." "The plural for pillow." "Bolster."

"Compare ill." "Ill, worse, dead." This recalled the answer of the boy who said: "Masculine, man; feminine, woman; neuter, corpse." "Who was the first man?" said a teacher. "Washington," promptly answered the young American.

"No," said the teacher. "Adam was the first man." "Oh, well, I suppose you are right," replied the undaunted patriot. "If you refer to furriners." "How did that blot come on your copy-book, Sam?" "I think it is a tear, Miss Wallace." "How could tear be colored, Sam?" "It must have been a colored boy who dropped it," suggested the reflective Samuel. "What made the tower of Pisa lean?" "The famine in the land."

A Shrewd Irishman.

The humor of the telegraph are notorious. "Do ye ever charge anybody for the address of a message?" asked an ingenious Irishman. "No." "And do ye charge for signing the name, sir?" "No." "Well, then, will ye please send this? I just want me brother to know I am here," handing the following: "Sept. 3.—To John McFlynn, at New York. (Signed) Patrick McFlynn."

Children Cry for Pitcher's Castoria.

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