

AMERICAN FOLK LORE

SCIENTISTS FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY SOON TO MEET AND SET FORTH THE RESULT OF THEIR STUDIES

To search out and put on record the beliefs, superstitions and myths of the fast dying or already dead old races of America, to gather up and preserve the legends, traditions and some accurate knowledge of their curious customs and ideas is the work of an organization that is little heard of, but yet is strong among scientists, and has its members in every corner of this country—the American Folk Lore society.

because here lay the greatest wealth of superstitions, record of customs and mythology. There were living representatives of these races at hand, ready to be questioned. The work, however, only begins here. Step by step the folk lore society is digging into a far distant past. Its 11 volumes of its journal (quarterly) and the six books it has published in addition to these, show that a new literature is already well started.

"The field being one which no other agency now fully covers, there is thrown upon the society an important task which cannot be postponed. The collection of American oral traditions should be regarded as a national duty. To gather materials for history which are indispensable to anthropological record, and which, unless recorded, will in a few years have irrevocably perished, appears even more important than the collation of historical records already safely lodged in libraries."

The society's head and forefront is William Wells Newell, of Cambridge, Mass., an author whose immediate work of recent years has been medieval literature, he having recently issued a volume on "Arthurian Romance, King Arthur and the Table Round." The projector of it, the editor of its journal, and long its secretary, Mr. Newell has kept on pushing the society through all these years, reaching out constantly to new members and ever striving to make folk lore better cared for and understood among people of education and refinement.

Scientists to whom this peculiar field has appealed have cooperated with him, and the result is shown in the quaint papers in the journal. A recent number of this contained the following features, the mentioning of which will be of much interest: Ninth Annual Meeting of the American Folk Lore Society, The Collection of Maryland Folk Lore, Work and Methods of the Hampton Folk Lore Society, Negro Hymn from Georgia, Traditions of the Tillamook Indians, The Legend of the Holy Grail, Borrowing Trouble, Negro Song from North Carolina, Record of American Folk Lore, The Sixth Volume of the Memoirs of the American Folk Lore Society, Folk Lore Scrapbook, Notes and Queries, Local Meetings and other notices, Bibliographical Notes.

As an instance of the material the society is collecting, here is a Baltimore, Md., folk lore story (in part): "Georgia, did a witch ever get after you?"

"Nor'm, but my mother, she knew a woman that was mighty bothered by



"AFTER AWHILE THE BOY WHO LAY IN THE BOTTOM OF THE BASKET SCRATCHED A HOLE, THROUGH WHICH HE ESCAPED."—Traditions of the Tillamook Indians.

ing or convention of the society is close at hand, the dates set being December 28 and 29, and the place chosen Fayerweather hall (the Physics building), Columbia university, New York city. Very nearly 200 folklorists are expected at this conference, to listen to papers on the negro and the Indian, the French and Spanish settlers, the races of Central and South America; a multitude of odd facts dug in some cases from old documents; in others taken, as in the cases of certain negro settle-

ment and Indian tribes, direct from the lips of patriarchs and others whose memories are long, and who are still aloof from civilization.



PROF. O. T. MASON.



DR. D. G. BRINTON.

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Thus the conference will hear, on these days, and among other papers already arranged, Prof. Charles L. Edwards, of the Cincinnati university, on negro folk lore; Dr. L. Ferrand of Columbia, on the folk lore of British Columbia, and A. L. Krocher, of Colum-

From almost nothing has the society grown in its course of ten years until now it numbers a famous delegation of American scientists, particularly of anthropologists. This is so marked that the meeting of the Anthropological society, to be held in Columbia university the same week, will have very many of the same prominent members, and the two conventions will not be unlike.

a witch. Ev'ry night, soon as de women went to bed and turn over on her back, dat witch would come and jump on her and ride her hard, so she couldn't move. So one night she fix for dat witch. She put pins in de seat of a chair, and when de witch come, she sat right down on de pins. Witches have to sot down lefo' dey can get out de skin; dey can't ride you long as dey is in dey skin. Well, de witch sot down on de pins, and she stuck fas'. She couldn't git up out er de chair, and she beg de woman to let her go, and she promise, ef she did, she wouldn't come back no mo'. Den de woman let her go!"

Six volumes mark the progress of the society outside of the Journal. These are "Folk-Tales of Angola" (Africa), by Heli Chatelain; "Louisiana Folk-Tales," by Alice Fortier; "Bahama Songs and Stories," by Charles L. Edwards; "Current Superstitions, Collected from the Oral Tradition of English-Speaking Folk," by Fanny D. Bergen, with an introduction by William Wells Newell; "Nanako Legends," by Washington Matthews; "Traditions of the Thompson River Indians of British Columbia," by James Teit, with introduction by Franz Boas.

And here, there and everywhere does the research go. The society has several local branches, notably one in Boston, one in Baltimore, one in Cincinnati. That in Baltimore is diligently sending negro-folk-lore. There is to be a special range of folk-lore studies in the direction of music. Henry E. Krebhiel, of New York, having collected much in this way.

Dr. Henry Wood, of Johns Hopkins university, is the society's president. Charles L. Edwards is the first vice president, Miss Alice C. Fletcher the second vice president, William Wells Newell permanent secretary and John H. Hinton, of New York, treasurer.



"WELL, DE WITCH SOT DOWN ON THE PINS."

bia, on "Animal Tales of the Esquimaux." The other papers that are to be read will extend the breadth of the study of the meeting to all corners of the continent.

For, in whatever pertains to folk lore, the society is eclectic and liberal. Its greatest work since its founding in 1888 has been, it is true, upon the negro and the Indian, but that has been only

OF A PERSONAL NATURE.

The duke of Cambridge is the only member of the royal family who employs a woman cook.

A young man named Shivers has been arrested at Chillicothe, Mo., for stealing a stove.

Though one of the youngest general officers in the confederate army Gen. Wheeler was the oldest in the national service against Spain.

Gen. Wood, military governor of Santiago, before the war broke out was an obscure army surgeon with a salary of \$2,400 and no prospects.

Rev. Frederick C. Brown, now on the Iowa, which is making the voyage to Manila, is said to be the youngest chaplain in the navy. His age is 25.

Senator Fairbanks, of Indiana, is said to be one of the greatest readers in the senate. All new books, especially history and fiction, are at once purchased by him.

Harrison M. Seal, of Whitecomb, near Brookville, Ind., probably holds the voting record for that state. He voted for Jackson in 1828 and for each democratic presidential candidate since then.

Paul Du Chailu, who is visiting in Boston, said the other day: "I don't know why I'm always called the 'African traveler.' I spent three times as many years in exploring the land of the midnight sun."

Balzac's birthday, the 20th of next May, is his centenary, and it is to be celebrated both at Paris and Tours. It is said that his long-forgotten play, "Marat," will be performed at the Paris Odeon.

OATMEAL FOR BREAKFAST.

The Greek traders seem to have had some knowledge of oats, as they termed them bromos.

It is not known what country first cultivated the wild oat grass to a condition usable for human food, nor is any reference made to this grain in the Old Testament.

Oatmeal in the olden times was an extremely coarse food, as the only means of separating husk from groat was bruising sundried oats between stones by hand and afterward winnowing in a strong breeze.

The phenomenal growth of the oatmeal industry in our country is second to none, when it is noted that as early as 1865 the milling of oats was a most limited affair. The larger portion of oatmeal sold here came from Canada and Great Britain and it is an amusing fact that the retail druggists carried packages of Scotch oatmeal in stock to meet the requirements of physicians, who would prescribe gruel for their patients made from it.

If our advice was asked regarding the consumption of cereals we would give it emphatically, never eat oatmeal every morning, but alternate it with other cereals such as corn, wheat and rye, which are manufactured in such variety of form that you have no need of duplicating your breakfast food but once in two weeks. It has been definitely shown that the continuous use of oatmeal by the Scotch people has caused more cases of dyspepsia than any other known food.

CONCERNING PERFUMES.

Bartholm says: "The odor of the rosemary indicates the coast of Spain more than ten leagues out to sea."

Cinnamon is an aromatic bark of odorous fragrance. It is a native of Ceylon and India. The Egyptians and Romans held it in high esteem.

The Bedouins use civet to anoint their bodies, a substance of the consistency of honey, strong and offensive in itself, but agreeable when a very small proportion is mixed with other ingredients.

Lavender is an English production, and is cultivated about Hertford, Surrey and several other districts. Its name, "lavandula," from "lavare," to wash, indicates its use, which was performing the baths of wealthy people.

Some perfumes have a stronger scent than others, some give out their fragrance at special times. Certain flowers need the warmth of the sun, some the soft rain and others the cool night air before they venture to throw at their redolence into the atmosphere.

PHOTOGRAPHIC NOTES.

Amateur photographers in Russia are obliged to secure licenses.

The late empress of Austria was an enthusiastic amateur photographer, and in the course of her wanderings in European countries made over 1,000 studies of the various types of beauty that came in her way.

A photographic film 9 1/2 miles in length is somewhat of a novelty, even in this age of big things. Three of these articles of the size stated are now in progress of construction for use in a cinematograph. The cost of these films is about £200 a mile. Photographic films can, therefore, now be had per yard, per acre, or per mile.

One of the latest and most novel, as well as daring, feats of the amateur photographer is to take portraits in profile, and then trim and mount the same so that the head is completely cut away, leaving only the line of profile. In this the familiar lines, which serve to reproduce what is commonly known as the likeness, are all preserved.

ODD LITTLE FACTS.

A woman's brain declines in weight after the age of 30.

Many thousands of persons in Chicago wear wooden shoes.

Paper quilts are extensively used abroad by the poorer classes.

In very clear water sunlight penetrates to a depth of over 1,500 feet.

Small nostrils are said by physiologists to indicate small and weak lungs. Fleas will never touch an epileptic, and will instantly leave a dead or dying person.

PAINT AND PAINTING.

Painting damp wood imprisons the moisture and induces dry rot.

From a sanitary point of view painted walls are best; the worst is a papered wall.

Two ounces of dragon's blood dissolved in one quart of turpentine, gives a good mahogany stain.

As a filler and putty, some painters use plaster of Paris, mixed with weak glue, to the consistency of putty.

Putty can be kept soft by covering with water, or, still better, with linseed oil. Any good putty will harden on exposure.

When mixing tints in the light, it must be remembered that the color will not appear quite the same in a partly darkened room.

All light tints are more or less affected by the application of clear varnish over them. It is better to mix a little of the color in the varnish.

If your brush was not cleaned at the proper time, and has become hard, put it in linseed oil and heat the oil until the dried paint is loosened.

Dry burnt umber mixed in vinegar makes a good walnut stain, as does also one pound of dry Venetian red mixed in one quart of turpentine and one pint of asphalt.

To test the durability of colors in paint, apply a coat to strips of thick paper and nail them on the wall, exposed to the strongest possible light. Over one-half of the sample or samples of color, fasten heavy paper, excluding all light. After a few weeks remove this covering and note the difference in the exposed and unexposed portions.—The Master Painter.

SERVE THE RICH AND GREAT.

The salary of Queen Victoria's chief butler, who looks after the wine, is £500 a year.

The washing of the clothes for the English royal household costs more than £3,000 per annum.

Mrs. Oliver H. P. Belmont prefers men servants of herculean proportions. Her new footman is about seven feet high and otherwise in proportion. Forty servants is the average number employed by the Astors, Vanderbilts and other multimillionaires, with an average pay roll of \$1,000 a month.

The Rockefeller servants are on duty certain hours, with certain hours for themselves, and they remain indefinitely, none ever leaving of his own accord. Very many marry, and their children, too, remain as part of the family below stairs.

There are 1,500 people upon the German emperor's list of employes, including 850 women servants, who are engaged in looking after the 22 royal palaces and castles that belong to the crown. Their wages are small. The women receive not more than \$12 a month and the men servants from \$15 to \$25 a month.

The court of Pope Leo XIII. comprises 1,000 persons. There are 20 valets, 120 prelates, 170 privy chamberlains, 6 chamberlains, 300 extra honorary chamberlains, 130 supernumerary chamberlains, 30 officers of the noble guard, 60 guardsmen, 14 officers of the Swiss guard and police guard, 7 honorary chaplains, 20 private secretaries, 10 stewards and masters of the horse and 60 doorkeepers.

BEFORE THE FOOTLIGHTS.

London has 45 theaters.

Emma Eames takes great care of her voice, and says she "lives by the thermometer as most people do by the clock."

"There is only one thing I enjoy more than singing," said Jean De Reszke the other day. "That one thing is bicycling."

Frank Hunter Potter, a nephew of the Episcopal bishop of New York, is a grand opera tenor, whose stage name is Sig. Filipe.

Sara Bernhardt in 1872 earned \$40 a month. During the last five years her average earnings have been \$100,000 a year.

The singing of certain masses has been forbidden in the Roman Catholic churches of Cincinnati because they too closely resemble operatic music.

The manager of a London music hall announces that anyone who purchases a ticket for the performance may have his or her teeth extracted for nothing.

The climax in a new English melodrama is a marriage ceremony performed in a church by a burglar, who, being interrupted in stealing the silver communion utensils, puts on the rector's robe and reads the service.

GATHERED FROM ABROAD.

Kissing a woman's lips is a gross insult in Finland.

The Singalese, after extracting the honey from the bee, chew up the insect itself.

The Chinese tael is a coin which has never existed. It is simply a unit used for convenience.

Fashionable Japanese young ladies when they desire to look attractive, gild their lips.

A Swiss village is to be constructed at Paris for the exposition, at a cost of \$600,000.

The revenue of Denmark is 40,000,000 crowns, one-half of which sum is absorbed by military expenditures.

Waiter girls in some of the large Munich cafes receive no wages, because they get as much as three or four dollars a day in fees.

Since 1879 more than 3,000 houses have been detented and closed in Dublin on account of their unsanitary condition.

When a dog barks at night in Japan the owner is arrested and sentenced to work for a year for the neighbors whose slumbers may have been disturbed.

POESIES OF THE POETS.

Be Not Vain Because of Spain.

We were tempted to be bumptious when the sinking of the Maine

Was followed by the drubbing we administered to Spain,

But 'twill pay us to remember it was arrogance and pride

Which led Spain to the sins for which her soldiers bled and died.

It may be that republics, like old monarchies effete

May get the big-head badly, toppling off their props and feet.

We love our flag of freedom, with its brilliant promise-stars,

The many grand achievements frescoed in its battle scars,

The grand domain it represents, its men who fear no foe,

But ride the car of progress with resistless vim and fire

And yet 'tis well to fit the car with air-brakes and the like,

Control is of importance from a warship to a bike.

So let us mix humility with all our loud hurrahs,

Content with common sense to love our country and its cause,

To look for inspiration and true wisdom to the skies

Remembering that God is great and in Him victory lies;

So while we crow a little for the victory o'er Spain,

Mix love with your loyalty—all bragging brays are vain—

Bombastic pride is but the sugar coating o'er pain.

The greatest are the humblest high in Heaven and here on earth.

Self-praise is but a bubble and a text for honest mirth;

We want to feel responsible for greatness and its use

With penalties awaiting its perversion or abuse.

So do not stop to cackle or to waste the precious time,

March on in modest might toward our destiny sublime,

For gratitude is virtue, but mere boastfulness a crime.

I. EDGAR JONES.

Let Me Believe.

When bought are shakles of bloom, and dead leaves drifting to,

I would recall their first perfume and the sunlight sifting through;

When fields lie barren without, and bitter frosts are come,

Bid me not hear the winds of Doubt, that with the darkness roam.

When hours grow dim and gray, and the song of the year is sung,

Leave me the thrill of the dawning day, in a heart that is young, is young!

Though Hope be a blossom whirled, and Time doth pillage and win,

Let me hearken the pulse of the World, and learn of Truth therein.

Ay, though my dreams shall pale, while night is an ember burn,

Let me believe, though its light shall fall, that Love, that Love endures!

—Virginia W. Cloud, in Bookman.

Spain's \$20,000,000.

What'll we do with this money of ours— Money we scarcely expected?

No one will hint that we've wasted the hours

Nor the country's finances neglected.

Shall we devote it to powder and shot, And talk about fiercer and slaughter,

Buying ships to be added, no doubt, to our lot

Of scrap-iron under salt water?

Shall we simulate pride, and still sneer at the rules

By which the world makes its progression?

Or shall we hire teachers and open up schools,

And try to be in the procession? —Washington Star.

Palimistry.

She takes my hand with the soft diffidence That seems a part of girlish and proclaims

The timid amateur; then glibly names Each line thereon, but holds me in suspense

A sweet long while before she can commence The oracle's delivery. Like twin flames

Her cheeks burn up when finally she frames The promise of long life and affluence.

If through some gypsy strain she reckons dear

Her reputation as a prophetess, Then by her pleasant art may she divine

That it is thrice secured if she will clear My way to all felicity with "yes"

In answer to a small request of mine. —Edward W. Barnard, in Judge.

A Touching Tale.

The playwright with his manuscript Went sadly on his way,

Threescore and more of managers Refused his play that day;

Then from a corner dark there sprang A robber bold and masked,

And of the author, with a gun, His life or money asked.

"I've nothing but this play, I swear!" Replied the trembling scribe:

"All say it is not worth the string With which the cover's tied!"

The robber snatched the manuscript And fled without delay.

"Thank God! At last!" the playwright cried,

"A man who'll take my play!" —Boston Transcript.

A Lullaby.

Sof' an' low, sof' an' low, An' sweetly es de rivah's flow,

We heards de music cross de sea, Whah spreads de lan' of is-ter-Be,

An' sweet an' low, an' sof' an' low, De baby's teensy footfalls go;

But bimely he's gwine be at peace Whah roses spring an' lilies blow.

De music comes 'om bahns of go', Tetched by de fingers nevah ole,

An' Gawd leans down, leans down to heah De strains dat's floatin' to His eah.

An' sweet an' low, an' sof' an' low, De baby's teensy footfalls go;

But bimely he's gwine be at peace Whah roses spring an' lilies blow.

—Will T. Hale, in Chicago Times-Herald.

Homely Advice.

Try to spread de gladness. 'Tain' no use to show

Other people's badness. Folks is folks, you know,

Jes' be kind an' lovin' To de yob fellow man;

Dinner's in de oven, An' de gravy's in de pan.

Don't you stop to listen To a scan'lous tone,

'Cause you might be missin' Bus'ness of yoh own.

Don't cloud hours dat's sunny Wif "She says, says she."

East de turkey honey, An' let de neighbors be.

—Washington Star.

Life.

Whence and whither? From the night,

We come hither To the light.

Love and worry, Joy and pain,

Toll and hurry— Night again.

—J. A. Edgerton, in Chicago Inter-Ocean.