

TRIAL MARRIAGES. A Queer Old Custom That Existed For Ages in Scotland. "Handfasting" was a custom that existed for ages in Scotland. The contracting parties met at the annual fairs in their several districts. There young men chose the maids who best pleased them. They joined hands and by that act became man and wife until the corresponding day of the following year. If the love and fortunes of the pairs had prospered during the year, on the anniversary of their meeting they were legally married by the priest; if all had not been well, they parted.

The practice is supposed to have arisen from the scarcity of clergy. If the pair decided to part at the end of the twelvemonth, the bride was at liberty to marry another man, her apprenticeship to matrimony not ending with it any more than the year. Such marriages were by custom made legal. Any issue resulting from the union would in the case of a second marriage be taken by the father and rank as heir after the children of the marriage which lasted for life. Many weddings were unmade at the end of the year, but it was dangerous if the initiative were taken by the man who had wedded the kinswoman of a chief. When a Macdonald of Steat availed himself of his right to send back the sister of a Macdonald of Dunzaven, the latter resented it as an indignity. "He had no business to celebrate his wedding, but he shall have one to solemnize his divorce," Macleod swore. He kept his word, and a terrible vendetta between the clans resulted.

ODDITIES IN GRAVES.

A Woman Who, Born, Living and Dying Crossed. There is a curious old gravestone in Prestbury churchyard which records the fact that one woman at least in England died a bachelor. Her name was Sarah Pickford, and the stone gravely informs the reader she was there interred "August 17, Anno Dom. 1703, and died a Bachelor in the 48th year of her age."

A stone in Westminster abbey records the interment there of George Graham, who was the only workman that received the honor of being buried in Westminster abbey. He was a scientific instrument maker, who in 1700 invented the deadbeat escapement in clocks. His funeral was attended by the royal society in a body. In East Ham churchyard there is a tombstone placed crossways. The woman interred is said to have been born cross, lived cross, married a Mr. Cross and died cross. Her dying request was to be buried cross, and this was carried out.

POETICAL DEATHS.

Welcoming the Grim Reaper With a Greeting In Verse. There have been numerous instances of poetical deaths. The Emperor Adrien made a poetical address to his own soul as death was casting the seal of final silence over his lips, and Margaret of Austria while almost within the grasp of death in a terrific storm at sea calmly sat down and composed her epitaph in verse. The ship weathered the gale, however, and the epitaph was not needed.

Philip Strozzi when imprisoned and awaiting death on the gallows resolved to commit suicide. Before he killed himself he carried with the sword upon which a few minutes later he impaled himself the following verse from Virgil on the wall: "Rise some avenger from my blood."

The Marquis de Montrose when he was condemned to have his limbs nailed to the gates of four cities said that he was sorry that he did not have enough limbs to nail to all the cities in Europe, and this he put into beautiful verse as he was walking to his execution.

Patris, a poet of Caen, finding himself at the door of death, composed a poem, and De Barreaux, it is said, wrote while on his deathbed a well known sonnet which was soon afterward translated into English.—New York Tribune.

"His Horse's Plash." "Dear me, cabby," said an old lady as she alighted from a four wheeler at Liverpool street station, "your horse's knees are bad."

"Don't you go and think it's because 's got into a silly 'abit of tryin' to stand on 'is 'ead in the street, ma'am, 'cos it ain't" was the reply. "That there 'oss is a serious thinkin' 'oss, 'is, 'is, ma'am. A werry prayerful animal 'is 'is too. 'E's been prayin' 'is last six year as 'ow 'is pore old master'll one of these days come across a kind 'arted party what'll give 'im a copper or two over 'is bare fare, but 'Lor' bless yer, ma'am," he added as he looked at the shilling the old lady had handed him, "'e's lovin' fall'n off, and unless somethin' soon happens 'e'll die a bloomin' blind!"—London Tit-Bits.

Why We Get Indigestion. Recently a medical man gave it as his opinion that the oven was responsible for more dyspepsia than any other household contrivance. The modern cook finds it much easier to bake than to roast. The spit dog has almost gone out of existence, and there is seldom any one in the kitchen to take its place. It follows very reasonably that any food cooked within a confined space will not be so digestible as that done before an open fire, where all gases have freedom to escape.—Country Life.

A Jolt. "Did you tell 'er teacher that I helped you with your French exercises, Sidney?" "Yes, father." "And what did he say?" "He said he wouldn't keep me in to-day, 'cos it didn't seem fair that I should suffer for your ignorance."

How We Do Change! "Ah!" exclaimed Mr. Jellus. "Been treasuring another man's picture all these years, hey?" "Not exactly," answered his better half. "That's a photo taken of you, dear, when you had hair."—Washington Herald.

THE CHILD'S MIND.

Give it a Chance to Develop by Its Natural Processes. The littler they are the better, because further removed from the world that is ours and deeper placed in their own world. A good baby radiates peace. Every one who is rightly constituted smiles at the sight of it.

They are busy, they are cheerful. As a rule, they seem to be kind to one another. They are not bored, and uninterested. Insufferable or they are sick they are not depressed.

What philosophers! What heroes! Is it strange that the attitude of an unperturbed child should be the Christ? The great merit of childhood as companions lies in the breadth of their tolerations. They are easy to please, agreeable to most propositions and not very critical.

They do not "know better." That is one of their dearest traits. Children will trust you, and that is one of the most gratifying compliments possible. In the company of children you have relief in considering what will pay. The things that they do and prefer to do, do not pay, as a rule, except in the doing of them.

Wise elders who are qualified to train the mind of a child are pretty scarce. The next best thing is the elder who is wise enough to respect the child's mind and give it a chance to develop in a sympathetic atmosphere by its own natural processes.—E. S. Martin in Harper's Magazine.

AN OLD GERMAN LEGEND.

The Skull With the Nail Driven Through It. At Freiburg, Baden, in front of an old chapel rich in mediæval painting depicting the rewards of virtue and the wages of sin, stands a great cross, at its foot a skull with a nail driven into the temple.

A shoemaker of Freiburg, according to tradition, died suddenly in the good old days before coroners and juries were too inquisitive and was buried near where the cross stands. Scarcely had the earth upon his grave been wet by the rains before his wife took a second husband.

Neighbors talked, but that was all. One night the priest of the parish awoke to find standing at the foot of his bed the ghost of the dead shoemaker. The ghastly figure raised a gory lock from its forehead and pointed to a nail driven in the temple.

The body was exhumed, and there was the evidence of the crime just as the specter had indicated. The wife confessed the murder and was executed. But the skull was placed at the foot of the cross as a warning.

"The effect was most wholesome," relates the truthful chronicler, "for since then not a wife of Freiburg has murdered her husband."

A Contrary Flag.

If ever there was anything in the world that went by contraries, it is the Chinese flag. It will be recalled that it is one of the gayest of national standards. The body of the banner is of a pale yellow. In the upper left hand corner is a small red sun, and looking at it is a fierce Chinese dragon.

About 1,000 years ago, so the story runs, the Chinese made war upon the Japanese. They prepared for a great invasion. An prophecy of victory they adopted a standard which is that of the present time. They took the sun of Japan and made it very small. This they put in front of the dragon's mouth to express the idea that the Chinese dragon would devour the Japanese. It happened, however, that the Chinese fleet, conveying an army of 100,000 men, was wrecked on its way to Japan by a great storm, and all but three of the 100,000 perished. The result of recent events has not been any more convincing than the first affair that the Chinese flag has been correctly conceived.

Humor in the Far East.

Abdur Rahman, the late ameer of Afghanistan, had a grim sense of humor which was sometimes exercised without scruple. On one occasion a durbar he was holding was interrupted by a man who, in a state of the greatest excitement, rushed in declaring that the Russians were advancing to invade Afghanistan. Turning aside for a moment from the business in progress, the late ameer in the most unconcerned tones ordered his shahghasi to conduct the man to the summit of a certain watch tower. "Look you out well for the Russians," commanded Abdur Rahman. "For you do not eat until you see them arrive."—Grand Magazine.

Cooks Run Their Taste.

"I never season things up to my own taste," said a man who has cooked in a restaurant for many years. "Very few cooks do. They have palates that crave high seasoning. The longer they cook the more salt and pepper and spices they require. If I should send up my dishes as I like them, they would be so hot and peppery that half the patrons in the restaurant would be unable to eat them."—New York Press.

The Accident.

Hissner—You are charged with breaking a chair over your wife's head. Prisoner—It was an accident, your honor. Hissner—What! Didn't you intend to hit her? Prisoner—Yes, but I didn't intend to break the chair.

The Lazy Horse.

An Irishman once purchased a poky horse with a whip and said, "Pick up your feet, and they'll fall themselves."—Athenian Globe.

The readiest and surest way to get rid of constipation is to correct oneself.—Demosthenes.

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Tennyson's "Brook."

It is not generally known that Tennyson's beautiful poem, "The Brook," once came very near perishing. One day the Rev. Edward Ravensley was sitting with the poet in his lodgings in London, when Tennyson began burning papers and manuscripts and was about to destroy "The Brook," says Home Notes. "Stop, stop! You mustn't burn that!" said Mr. Ravensley. "It is one of the best things you have written."

Stupid Jeweler.

Miss Inez Entz—Yes, Mr. Fickel proposed last night, and we're engaged now. I'm so happy! And I'm the first girl George ever loved too! Miss Wise—Yes? I don't notice your ring. Didn't he give you one? Miss Inez Entz—Yes, but you see, he had to take it back to have it fixed. The stupid jeweler made the inscription read, "George to Genevieve" instead of "George to Inez."—London Sketch.

A Little Sarcasm.

An old woman went into a grocer's and ordered a pennyworth of carrots. After being served she inquired, "D'ye not throw something in 'il' with 'em?" "Oh, yis," replied the greengrocer; "if ye wait a minute I'll throw in a sack o' tittles an' a barrel o' apples an' a hundredweight o' wurms 'il' a box o' oranges!" "An!" he shouted as the old woman founced out of the shop, "when I'm busy I'll throw in a horse an' a calf! If ye not satisfied then, come back for the shop!"—London Mail.

Criticism never hurt anybody. If false, they cannot hurt you unless you are wanting in many character, and if true they show a man his weak points and forewarn him against failure.

Do You Think For Yourself?

Or, Do You Open Your Mouth Like a Young Bird and Gulp Down Whatever Food or Medicine May be Offered You? If you are an intelligent, thinking woman, in need of relief from weakness, nervousness, pain and suffering, then it means much to you that there is one tried and true, honest medicine of KNOWN COMPOSITION, sold by druggists for the cure of woman's ills.

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