

Frederic Haskin's Letters

The Passing of the Duel.

Washington, D. C., Dec. 17.—Dueling has been dealt a heavy blow in France, we learn, by the refusal of Leon Daudet, a member of the chamber of deputies who fought 11 duels before the war, to accept another challenge. He declares that dueling is a foolish practice, and that there is no excuse for it since the war.

It seems strange to Americans that in France men still formally fight to the death, as they do also in other European countries and in most of Latin-America. It has been more than half a century since a duel of any importance was fought in the United States, and almost a century since the duel here was in its heyday.

We might claim from this that we are a more civilized country than France, but that would be a hard claim to substantiate by any other evidence. It would also be hard to claim much credit for not dueling when we will have our little lynchings and race riots, and in view of the record we have made in Haiti. A malicious critic might say that we have given up the fair fight for the unfair one.

As a matter of fact duels have undoubtedly held a high and recognized place in countries which were by every other standard highly civilized, and a study of the subject leaves one not at all sure that combat between man and man, strictly regulated, is a wholly barbarous proceeding. The duel seems to be condemned more and more, not because it is essentially uncivilized, but because it is wasteful of human life, and because it tends, especially in a democracy, to degenerate into a means of legitimizing murder.

Why Duels Declined. This seems to be the real cause of its decadence in this country. Dueling is an aristocratic practice. In theory it is a combat between two peers, regulated by the strictest regard for fairness. But in this country everyone is a peer. One man is as good as another in theory, and all had, until a few years ago, the right to bear arms. Hence the duel became a means by which a rascal skilled with a gun could kill a useful man and go free.

Long and interesting is the history of the duel in America, and it makes us realize keenly how much we have changed. A book on dueling written in 1868 by an Englishman who had traveled extensively in this country says that "America is the land where life is held cheaper than anywhere else. There duels are off-hand diversions."

He goes on to say that the walls and furniture of Washington hotels were scarred by the bullets which excited legislators and politicians had fired at one another.

In a word, 50 years ago we were the most cantankerous, truculent and self-assertive people on earth. All men went armed and were always ready to lay down their lives in defense of their honor, their property and their dignity. In those days you did not even jostle a man on the street without making elaborate apology or else fighting for your life.

Now we are as completely disarmed as medieval peasants. We are driven about like sheep in great herds. We peacefully stand on each other's toes in the subway, while consideration for the stranger is a rare virtue in our midst. There would seem to be just a mite of truth in the statement of an old writer on the subject that "the duel is a salutary remedy for rude and offensive conduct." He also points out that there is little excuse for any nation which still goes to

war to grudge itself on the abolition of dueling. "When individuals and nations have learned to treat each other with respect" he thinks that war will be a thing of the past, but he does not think that that is either any worse or any less necessary than the other.

Less of Froward Froward. Certainly no good could come of it done in defense of dueling. It does seem undeniable that a man renounces all personal protection and entrusts his safety and honor to policemen, short-winded police, and nervously unable to handle a disaster is surely not altogether an admirable figure. We have had a few with pleasure to tales of men who welded a wicked sword, shot straight and faced death calmly.

This is not an argument in favor of fighting, but it does seem to indicate that civilization has robbed the individual of something valuable. This was what William James had in mind when he said that we might be abolished if we could substitute something else strong and dangerous for it. He suggested that our young men be enlisted in armies to go out and conquer the wilderness—to reclaim deserts, explore rivers and forests. That might be a substitute for dueling.

The trouble seems to be that the heroic impulse—the will to dare and suffer—is decadent among us. We are too comfortable to fight with other or the wilderness. The man who craves battle and adventure is as much out of place among us as a lion in a barn yard.

Old Laws on Duelling. Public opinion on dueling was always divided in this country, even in colonial times. There was a feeling that men had a right to settle their differences by combat, but it was also recognized that valuable lives were lost in that way, and much crime committed in the name of honor. The killing of Hamilton by Burr probably gave the dueling its first serious setback. Various laws were passed to prevent dueling, and some of them were strange. In New Orleans, a "court of honor" was established for the arbitration of individual differences. This apparently was to do for individuals what the Hague tribunal does to do for nations, and it apparently succeeded about as well. A Massachusetts law forbade dueling and provided that the body of a man killed in a duel should be used for dissection. A Mississippi law dealt a body blow to the practice by providing that a man who killed another in a duel must pay his victim's debts!

The famous Cilley-Graves duel, in which one congressman killed another, also resulted in a great popular revulsion against dueling. A committee of congress investigated this fight and recommended the expulsion of Graves from the house. This was challenged, and a duel for reasons which he made on the floor of the house, and which were perfectly in order. This was in violation of the constitution of the United States. It further appeared that the whole thing was very nearly a frame-up on Cilley, and there was a plan on foot to murder him in case he was not killed in the duel. These unwelcome revelations brought it to the attention of the people that dueling in America had degenerated from a test of skill between gentlemen to a deadly weapon in the hands of bullies and criminals. Although it is a salutary remedy for rude and offensive conduct," he also points out that there is little excuse for any nation which still goes to

Heart & Home Problems

by MRS. ELIZABETH THOMPSON

Dear Mrs. Thompson: Some time ago I became acquainted with a girl from another town. Since she has returned to her home we have been corresponding regularly. We are just friends, however, but I ought to buy her a Christmas present, and would you speak to her about it before you buy?

E. J. M.
I am sure the girl would appreciate a remembrance from you. Since you are only friends, do not give her an expensive gift. A book, stationery, candy or handkerchiefs would be all right. Do not speak to her about it before you buy.

Dear Mrs. Thompson: We are two girls going with a couple of fellows. We see them very often. When they come back the first we meet them some place, or have them call at the house?

SUBAN.
Do not meet the boys some place. They should call for you at your home. Pretend not to mind when your brothers tease.

Dear Mrs. Thompson: I am a young girl 18 years of age and in love with a young man who works on a train in a mill near my home. Always when he passes around my home and sees me he smiles to me. Sometimes when he has time he comes and talks with me.

SNOOKS.
He seems to like me and he speaks to me every time he sees me. Do you think he loves me? He never comes to see me.

I am 17 years old, but will be 18 this month. I have never met this boy, but I know his name. If he should ask to come to see me, should I let him come?

SNOOKS.
The young man certainly does not love you or he would have made an effort to become better acquainted. Since you have been speaking to him every day, you are no longer strangers. If he asks to call and if you parents do not object to your having him, it would be all right for him to come.

He would not be all right to meet him away from home, however. Your parents should have an opportunity to make his acquaintance.

THE PILGRIM—1620-1920

BY DR. JAMES I. VANCE.
stamp their characters and deeds upon the laws and institutions of the new world.

It is said that his mind was narrow, his heart cold, and his creed cheerless, not more than half of which perhaps was true.

He has been pictured as a saint, with an almost uncanny familiarity with spiritual things, graduated out of faults, possessing all virtues, a miracle of perfection for his own day, a marvel as an example for all other days. It is hard to believe that all this is true.

The pilgrim doubtless had his faults. Let us hope he had. There is little inspiration for common folks to be had from people who are "faultless."

The pilgrim undoubtedly had great virtues. Let us rejoice that he had. Both his faults and his virtues are our heritage, his faults to avoid, his virtues to imitate and proclaim. Let us beware lest in fighting intolerance, we should become intolerant.

Argus Information Bureau

(Any reader can get the answer to any question by writing The Argus Information Bureau, Frederic Haskin, Director, Washington, D. C. Give full name and address and enclose two-cent stamp for return postage. No inquiries are considered, the replies being sent direct to each individual. No attention will be paid to anonymous letters.)

Q. What is meant by the Bill of Rights of the Constitution? II. G. M.
A. Amendments I-X of the Constitution are often referred to in this way. In some of the states dissatisfaction was expressed at the absence of anything resembling a Bill of Rights in the Constitution, and after its adoption, the first Congress proposed a series of amendments which were promptly ratified by the states as Articles I-X of the amendments as they now appear.

Q. How many cables are there from America to Europe? I. M. C.
A. A telegraph and cable company says that there are 14 submarine cables between the United States and Europe.

Q. Why is the word Christmas abbreviated "Xmas"? E. V.
A. Xmas is used as an abbreviation on account of its symbolic significance, the "X" or "cross" standing for "Christ."

Q. What is the meaning of the word "crisp"? G. N. V.
A. This is a name formerly applied to shoemakers, because of the fact that St. Crispin was their patron saint.

Q. What is a dowdow? H. A. D.
A. This is a British name for earthworm.

Q. Where is Lake Lario? B. B. A. This is another name for Lake Como, the most beautiful and celebrated of the Italian lakes, situated in Lombardy, at the western foot of the Bergamese Alps, 30 miles north of Milan.



HEUTE LIEGS MANS ANCIENT ENERGY, DULL CARE, WHO DASHTERS THE UNLOVED CUBS. (REMARKS)

TO A REJECTED MRS.
Child of a brain that is weary,
Offspring of paper and pen,
Manuscript blotted and bleary,
Why do you haunt me again?

Offspring of paper and pen,
Much of you had I expected—
Why do you haunt me again?
Why are you always rejected?

Much of you had I expected—
Now do I fear we must part.
Why are you always rejected?
Child, you have broken my heart.

Now do I fear we must part;
I am convinced you're ungrateful—
Child, you have broken my heart!
Now is the sight of you hateful!

I am convinced you're ungrateful—
Get thee hence out of my sight!
Now is the sight of you hateful,
(You are a sinner, all right!)

Get thee hence out of my sight
Into some dank mausoleum;
(You are a sinner, all right!)
Then shall I sing a Te Deum.

Into some dank mausoleum—
There may you crumble to dust;
Then shall I sing a Te Deum—
Yours be a fate that is just.

There may you crumble to dust,
Child of a brain that is weary;
Yours be a fate that is just,
Manuscript blotted and bleary.

AN idea occurs to us. Strange, but true. (Not the idea, but the fact that it occurred to us is strange.) Suppose you had \$10 to give to The Argus Santa Claus fund and suppose T. A. S. C. needed only 5 of your 10 and—as they intend doing in such instances—put the remaining 5 in the bank. Now suppose a couple hundred persons gave \$10 and half of it went into the bank until next Christmas. Well, we don't like figures but hadn't that hundred beans ought to grow a little bit in a year? Well, every little bit helps, ain't it?

"The Time Has Come," the Walrus Said,
"To Talk of Extremism."
(Bashnell Corr., Galesburg Republican-Register.)

Why is it that so many of our young ladies of Bashnell choose life partners from out of our city, this is a question that is asked by many of our citizens perhaps time and time and echo answers. Why? It is time that we have some pretty good looking young ladies, and some dandy good looking young gents, but for the last few months many of our young married couples are making their homes outside the city and in towns nearby. Step up young men of Bashnell. Do not be bashful, but choose some sweet young lady to be your partner for life, and always keep in mind, that faint heart never won fair lady.

"Mlle. PHASALIE, head of the pathological laboratory of the Colonial Museum of National History in Paris, claims that during her many years of research she has been able to learn the language of frogs."—The Argus.
"Smoothing. Lots of our doughboys learned the frog language in less than a year.

M. C. F. relays this from the Columbia: The comedian is telling the lady that when he goes fishing he uses "chawin' tobacco and a club." "Do you talk the hook with tobacco?" she asks, smiling. "Naw, just throw the chawin' tobacco in the water and the fish comes up and grabs it." "But how do you catch them?" "Hits 'em over the head with a club when they comes up to spit."

FRANKLY, we haven't been so disinterested in compiling this Colum of Cacophonny in months as we are today. What's the matter with our assistants? Where's E. F.? What's become of our bard, E. W. S.? Why don't we hear from that old friend who had the "thimble of hooch"?

It would add zest to our daily labors, too, were we to again hear from "A Columbian," not to mention A. Steno.

WHOSE colym is this, anyway? Get busy, dahgun ya!
R. E. M'G.

Save the Heat.
Engineers find it takes two or three times as much fuel as it should to heat the ordinary dwelling.

That is because houses frequently are not built to conserve heat, or for any purpose but to sell.

The way to heat a room economically is to insulate it. Most persons know that air space in walls conserve heat. But this is true only if the walls hold dead air. Most walls and ceilings aren't tight enough. Hot air goes through them like water through a net.

Banking up lower walls of houses with dry leaves and earth still is practiced in cold states, particularly in the country. But most city and town houses can be made tighter with little effort. The insulation of walls and ceilings can be improved, and much coal saved. It's worth considering in places where fuel is scarce or costly. An examination of many houses will show that the occupants literally are trying to "heat all outdoors."

Ought to Forget It.

Just when most of us were trying to forget the war a couple of ambassadors exchange the stony stare in Paris and cause long pieces to be printed in the newspapers, showing that Germany and the United States have not yet resumed peaceful relations.

There was a state dinner in the French capital, and the American and German ambassadors were invited. Both accepted. The German official asked to be presented to the American representative, but the latter declined, with the explanation that, technically, the two countries were still in a state of war.

According to a strict following of the rules of diplomacy, of course the American representative's action was correct, and doubtless had the situation been reversed the German would have done exactly what the American did, still the latter might have stretched a point without hurt to his personal dignity or that of his government by condescending to exchange pleasantries with the gentleman from Berlin.

Germany and the United States are going to be friends, and the sooner the recent unpleasantness is forgotten by all concerned the better it will be for both countries.

Ford's New Hobby.

The campaign which Henry Ford is waging upon Jewry in the United States is not adding to the laurels of the automobile manufacturer and it is not injuring the national standing of the race against which he is directing his unwarranted attacks.

Mr. Ford is circulating his vicious propaganda through the Dearborn Independent, a publication of which he is sole owner. What ends he seeks to serve one is at a loss to understand after wading through columns of the assault dictated by Ford. He seems to be of the opinion that Jews profited extensively in government contracts during the war. Perhaps they did. So did the Murphys, the Andersons, the Schultzes, the MacDuffs, the Browns, and others.

Somebody ought to tell Henry Ford that he is living in the United States of America, where every man has equal opportunity with his neighbors just so long as he behaves himself. Mr. Ford has done pretty well himself. The Jew is a pretty good business man, but we don't know any of his kind who has been any more successful than Mr. Ford has. The country has been good to Mr. Ford, as it has been to others who have had the ability to cash in on their opportunities.

There is no place for race hatred in America. Those of Jewish lineage have proven themselves valuable American citizens. They have attained leadership through their own efforts. They are numbered among our most valued citizens in every section of the nation. They are builders. They are Americans, and as such are entitled to the rewards that they are able to attain through their individual labors.

Mr. Ford is displaying a side of his nature that his friends are disappointed to know he possessed.

New Harding Plan.

Mr. Harding wants the United States to sponsor a plan whereby all nations will agree not to take the initiative in warfare until the proposal has been submitted to a vote of the people. In the event of absolute rejection of the League of Nations by congress, it is stated that Mr. Harding will seek adoption of his program. It conforms to a plan long advocated by William J. Bryan. And Mr. Harding has invited Mr. Bryan to meet him to talk over the projected scheme of world demoralization.

Americans are for any move that will prevent war, and it is sincerely hoped that whatever the coming congress would be in the interest of permanent world peace, but the latest proposal of Mr. Harding does not inspire that feeling of security that all would hope for. The world has had instances of the case with which it is possible to inflame a people over an imaginary wrong and before time to had to soberly consider consequences.

STILLER GUEST.

By Florence Mellish.
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It was a rainbow wedding—a pink maid of honor and blue and lavender and pale green bridesmaids. Evelyn looked so sweet and childlike in her white gown and veil that I just curried into my corner of the pew and cried. I had loved her from her childhood. I had made her first party frocks and rompers and her wedding gown, but my fingers had grown too stiff to be trusted with wedding garments.

Maurice Penfield, looking more dignified and self-possessed than ever, was none the less handsome as his gray temples.

"Isn't he fine looking?" Laella whispered, "and so talented, and rich, too! But aren't you serving her a widower—a widower man?"

"No," I whispered back, "he has been tested and he has borne the test. He was all devotion to his beautiful wife."

Laella was silenced, but down in my heart I was a little sorry. I wanted our Evelyn's marriage to be ideal in every way.

THE DAILY SHORT STORY

her eyes on Maurice Penfield as she passed.
"You can turn me out, but you can't turn her out. I can see her now. She is standing just behind your pretty, young bride."

Evelyn turned instantly and looked behind her. I could see how violently she was trembling. Maurice drew her gently back.

"Try to be calm, Evelyn. The poor mad woman is not worth minding."

"But Muriel is there. I saw her myself," she whispered.

"Evelyn," he said sternly, "this time 'you must be calm.' I think speaking to Dr. Landphar, 'I think we may go on now.'"

They went on with the ceremony and went through with it but the joy seemed to have gone out of it. When Evelyn came down the aisle on her husband's arm she had the same deathly pallor. I managed to get away without speaking to anyone and hurried home to have a good cry in my shabby little sitting room.

Months after the dear girl came to me in that same little shabby room and told me the whole story. "I am happy now, Miss Balfour," she said. "But I was very unhappy at first. Maurice was very patient and tender with me, but I could not make him understand. He would not believe that Muriel did come. He thought it was simply a case of nerves."

"But she was there. She came again. She came three times. I said to feel so guilty and frightened. You see it was the lock."

piercing eyes were gray, and her face had an indescribable gray pallor. She fixed those piercing eyes on the bride and I could see from where I sat that Evelyn had lost her sweet color and was growing paler and paler.

Dr. Landphar began the service in his quiet, penetrating tones. When he came to the words, "if any one knows any reason why these two should not be joined in marriage, let him speak now or forever hold his peace," and I held my breath for an instant as I always did. I always had a nervous feeling. "What if some one should come forward and speak?" I had been a guest of 24 weddings and no one had come forward.

"I know a reason," she said in a deep voice that could be heard in every corner of the church.

Dr. Landphar looked surprised, but he kept his usual dignified poise.

"Will you state your reason?" he asked quietly.

"My sister Muriel is Maurice Penfield's wife, and my sister Muriel is here."

The pink maid of honor flushed with anger. The lavender bridesmaid was in tears. The canary bridesmaid lifted her chin haughtily. The blue and pale green bridesmaids clung together tremblingly. Evelyn herself was deathly pale. Maurice Penfield threw a strong arm about her.

"It is my sister-in-law. The poor woman is insane. He turned to one of the ushers. 'Can you take her out quietly?'"

The gray lady made no resistance to the usher took her by the arm to lead her out. The first

greatest silver lock, you ever