

## SWORDS OF JAPAN

Old Samurai Blades Are Looked Upon as Sacred.

HANDLED WITH REVERENCE.

**A Curious Formula of Etiquette Follows When "the Steel Bible of Bushido" is Drawn From Its Sheath by a Hand Which Grasps It in Peace.**

If one were in a friend's house in Japan and should ask to examine one of the old samurai swords that rest in the lacquered sword rack in a place of honor there a curious formula of etiquette would be followed by the host.

He would go to a closet and return with a little square of silk in his hand. This he would wrap about the shark-skin handle of the sheathed sword before touching his bare hand to the sheath. Then, with his right hand grasping the silk covered handle and the fingers of his left gingerly raising the lacquered hilt from the rack, the Japanese host would lift the sword to the level of his forehead and bow to it. All this in reverent spirit and with utmost gravity. The square of silk, preserved for no purpose but this and having its own name in the Japanese vocabulary, is to prevent the defilement of the handle by a hand which grasps it in peace. The bow is meant for the spirit of the swordsmith who forged this weapon. The reverence is for the sword itself, "soul of the samurai," in the Japanese poetical conception and aptly called by foreigners "the steel Bible of Bushido."

But this is only the beginning of the formality. When the Japanese host unsheathes the blade he does it with the edge toward his own body and the point directed away from his guest. When the guest receives the sword in his own hands he must be careful to keep the outer edge always away from the direction of his friend the host. If he wishes to examine both sides of the blade he must even turn his back so that never will the menace of the sharpened edge be directed toward his friend.

After the examination is completed the sword is returned to its scabbard, and the owner receives it with another bow and places it once more on its rack.

The etiquette of the sword is no empty thing. With the high spirited Japanese, who have not forgotten the many centuries of chivalry and of hand fighting behind them, the delicately curved and curiously veined sword of the samurai has a significance almost sacred. There is a philosophy of the sword no less stern than the use of the weapon.

In the old days when the Japanese fighters wore the war masks and the steel armor seen nowadays in the curiosity shops the boy was taught that as the shining blade must be kept free from spot and corruption, so must his soul be ever clean. Neglect of the blade brings rust; neglect of the soul an impure character.

Then the sharp edge was held not only as a constant guardian of personal safety and honor, but as a sacred disciplinarian to punish whenever its possessor stepped from the narrow path of the Yamato spirit of chivalry. Again, the sword was emblematic of true gentility, which is never overbearing or vulgar in deportment, but sternly self-repressive.

No man knows when first the forge for fighting weapons was set up in the dawn of Japanese history nor who was the man who first replaced the rude bronze blades of a primitive folk by the tempered steel of the Yamato blade. There is in the Imperial collection of swords at the castle of Nara the weapon worn by the Crown Prince Shotoku, who compiled the constitution of seventeen articles in A. D. 603, the oldest sword known in Japan. From that weapon, which was straight and not curved as all other swords of Nippon are, down to the fall of the Tokugawa shogunate in the middle of the last century there is an unbroken history of the art of the swordsmith. Twelve centuries of recorded art in swordmaking and the names of over 10,000 makers constitute the history of the sword in Japan.

The Japanese blade, placed almost on a par with the Damascus product in art and utility, differs from the Arabian weapon in one material detail of manufacture. Instead of having a uniform high temper, which gives the remarkable flexibility possessed by the Damascus blade, the Japanese sword has two tempers, a hard and a mild steel.

The edge of the blade is hard with the finest temper, the body and back of a milder temper, sufficient to give some elasticity. A Japanese sword cannot be bent half double with the pressure of a hand; it is nearly rigid.

Though sword manufacture has ceased to be in Japan today outside of the government arsenals, which turn out only the accepted military blade of the modern army, the country is filled with prized relics of the past art, and these are relics which the Japanese will not sell. A possessor of one of the old swords, keen and blue white in luster as the day it was forged, would sell his house, even himself maybe, before he would part with his Iron Bible of Bushido for money.—Japan Magazine.

**Starting the Trouble.**  
Mabel—Did he stutter when he proposed? Ethel—No, I don't think so. Mabel—Really? He must have improved.—London Punch.

Great minds have purposes; others have wishes.

**DON'T SNEER.**  
Never bring a human being, however silly, ignorant and weak—above all, any little child—to shame and confusion of face. Never by petulance, by suspicion, by ridicule, even by selfish and silly haste—never, above all, by indulging in the brutal pleasure of a sneer—crush what is finest and rouse up what is coarsest in the heart of any fellow creature.

## The Wedding Day

A Tale of New Amsterdam

By HELEN INGLEHART

Copyright, 1910, by American Press Association.

There lived in the town of New Amsterdam, which is now the great city of New York, a Dutchman—they were all Dutchmen there then—named Peter Van Gaasbeek. Peter had a daughter, Katrina, whose eyes were as blue as the vault of heaven, whose cheeks were like two roses floating in a pan of milk and whose hair hung down her back like a lovely woven fax rope.

Now, there were a people not far to the east of New Amsterdam who were of English extraction and of an entirely different makeup from the Dutch. These were the Yankees. Whenever the two peoples met for trade—they never met for anything else except to fight—the Dutchman invariably went home with nothing, while the Yankee had twice as much as he had before. It is not to be wondered that the former hated the latter.

Pardon Langdon, the Yankee who had won Katrina's young heart, was a long, lean, hungry looking youth who walked with a slouchy gait, drawled his words and did not appear to know enough to go under cover when it rained. Nevertheless he was not to be shaken from his purpose to marry Katrina despite the refusal of her father and mother and the principal citizens of New Amsterdam. These principal citizens, including her father, met to take measures to prevent the robbery of one of the most beautiful of their lassies by a Yankee and her transfer to the cabbage fields of Connecticut. A great deal of schnapps was consumed, and many pounds of tobacco were smoked—for a Dutchman could not deliberate without both—when the council came to the conclusion that the best way to prevent Katrina's marrying a Yankee was to marry her to a Dutchman.

No sooner was this decision reached than every unmarried man present put forward a claim for the position of Katrina's husband, whereupon her father announced that she should be wedded to the man among them who could show the largest number of petrels—for that was the sole business of the town—and old Dietrich Van Crinicle, some sixty years old, baldheaded and with the palsy, having shown that he owned more skins than any other, was selected to save Katrina to the community.

This was too much for Katrina's mother, who from this time sided with her daughter. But Katrina's mother was the stupidest woman in New Amsterdam. Katrina told Pardon Langdon all that had happened and that she was to be forced to marry old Van Crinicle on the fifteenth day of June coming. Pardon told Katrina to persuade her father to promise her that if she was not married to Dietrich Van Crinicle on the 15th of June, 1847, she should not be forced to marry him at all, but he was permitted to marry whomsoever she liked. Katrina, aided by her mother, spent a week persistently entreating the old man to grant this request, and he, worn out by their importunities, finally gave in. But he told Van Crinicle what he had done and warned him to surely be on hand on the appointed day to claim his bride.

When Katrina reported the success of her and her mother's work done upon her father he told her to tell her mother to meet him that night at the base of the tower wherein was the town clock. The mother did so, and Pardon, opening the door for her, told her to go up and set the clock back twenty-four hours. This was done, and Pardon instructed her that on the 15th of June she should tell her husband what she had done.

The result of all this was that on the morning of the appointed wedding Peter Van Gaasbeek called the council together, told them of his promise to his daughter, of his wife's turning the clock back twenty-four hours, and that Katrina now claimed that the day for the wedding had passed. What should he do?

Anthony Ten Broeck, the clearest headed man in New Amsterdam, arose and attempted to prove that, though the clock had been turned back a day, no day had been lost. But he became involved in his own argument and sat down in confusion. Others endeavored to set the matter right, but met with no better success than Ten Broeck. Then the bridegroom expectant attempted to show that the day appointed for the nuptials had arrived, but he only succeeded in proving that a day had been lost by the turning back of the clock and it was now the 16th of June. As the schnapps and tobacco smoke mounted to the brains of the Dutchmen the confusion became greater, and the debate lasted so long that some of them went to sleep, while others went home to dinner. After dinner the discussion continued till it began to grow dark, and all went home to supper and to bed.

The next morning Katrina went to her father and claimed that the 15th of the month had passed while the council were debating and she was now entitled to marry whom she pleased.

The old man was satisfied that it was now at least the 16th of the month, and he was not quite sure but it was the 17th. Katrina's mother got so mixed in her calculations that her reckoning was lost entirely. The father, being satisfied that whatever was the date the day appointed had passed, felt bound in honor to permit his daughter to have her own way.

**How the Butterfly is Protected.**  
The brilliant coloring on the wings of some kinds of butterflies is a bitter tasting pigment, which to a certain extent protects those species from being eaten by their foes. Frogs will try to eat sulphur butterflies and after tasting them will promptly reject them. The brilliant colors may be produced in order to advertise the nauseous taste as well as to aid the butterfly in attracting a mate of its own kind. We may be equally ignorant of the latent social powers of birds.—Westminster Gazette.

## THE STOMACH.

Its Power to Resist Its Own Gastric Juices is a Puzzle.

One of the greatest questions disturbing the minds of physiologists both past and present is that of the stomach's digesting powers. It is asked why the stomach does not digest itself. It is well known that gastric juices have the power to digest the tissue of which the stomach is made. One of the things actually manufactured by the body, secreted in the glands near the stomach and poured into it, is hydrochloric acid, a powerful agent that will eat up almost anything. Why it does not eat the stomach up is problematical.

It is known that a stomach from a dead animal or man can be digested by a living man. It has been found out also that when a man is killed accidentally and his stomach is in the process of digesting, if the body be kept warm, his whole stomach will be digested and possibly, too, adjacent organs, as liver, pancreas, etc. From this it was argued that the "principle of life" kept the process from going on in a living being. Subsequently, however, this was proved to be untrue. A living frog was put in an unconscious condition and his leg inserted through a small hole in a dog's stomach, the dog being alive and well. It was found that the frog's leg was wholly digested in the process, although living. So the last reason conceivable was proved incapable of explaining the phenomenon.

About the only conclusion left is that the stomach does gradually actually eat itself up, but that it is being constantly rebuilt. However, as this experiment is hard to perform and as no results have so far been announced in this direction, we are left in a state of absolute ignorance, and all we can do is to be devoutly thankful to Providence that our stomachs do not digest themselves except in the ordinary course of human events.—Lawrence Hodges in New York Tribune.

### In Doubt.

Editor—Look here, what sort of writing is this in your story?

Reporter—What's wrong with it, sir?

Editor—You say in your account of this party where they had fun with a bashful guest, "As his intended partner swept past gracefully the others brushed by to scour the place for the timid victim of the game, who had lost courage and dusted." Say, are you writing about a social party or a housecleaning exhibition?—New York Journal.

### A Lesson in Anatomy.

A professor at one of our universities is very witty upon occasion.

A medical student once asked if there were not some works on anatomy more recent than those in the college library.

"Young man," said the professor, "there have not been many new bones added to the human body during the last ten years."—London Standard.

### Lovers of Sports.

The Anglo-Saxons love sport. No matter in what part of the world they are found the spirit is strong among them. Wherever the restless Anglo-Saxon dominates the love of sport is dominant. The Americans are—at least the most of them—descendants of this virile race, and nowhere is the love of sport so much exhibited as in this country. Our people are patrons of horse racing, of baseball, of golf, of football, of all out of door sports as no other people. The English are great sportsmen, but not to the extent that Americans are, for the reason that the opportunities are greater here.—Nashville American.

### Bad Advice.

Friend—What's worrying you? Manager—The prima donna of my company refuses to sing oftener than twice a week. I am making only hundreds where I ought to be making thousands. Friend—I'd settle that. If I were you I'd marry her. (A year passes.) Friend—My gracious, you look seedy! What's happened? Manager—I took your advice and married the prima donna, and now she won't sing at all.

### Reciprocity.

There is one word which may serve as a rule of practice for one's life. That word is "reciprocity." What you do not wish done to yourself do not do to others.

Friendship—One soul in two bodies.—Pythagoras.

## Gentlemen's

Panama and Straw Hats,

As well as Soft and Stiff Hat cleaned, Bleached, and Re-docked at my store. Satisfaction guaranteed. Prices reasonable.

Miss Kate L. Lucas.

## FOR SALE.

Nice 6 room, 2 story residence 1-1 75x100. Modern plumbing. \$1300.00.

Twelve lots, North End, best vacant lots in city, \$400.00 to \$600.00 each.

Seven buildings to be sold in lump, \$2,000.00.

29 acres hammock land, 2 acres cleared, \$100.00.

FOR SALE—Nice 8 room Residence; modern improvements. Lot 100 x 150, one of the best homes in the city. Worth \$3,000 to close quick for \$2,500 cash.

400 acres potato land at Hastings, ranging from \$50 to \$100 per acre.

4 room residence, 10 acres land 2 miles from town, \$650.

Do you want a home? If so, I have it for you. Twenty-four acres land with 4-room residence, joining city limits, for \$1,000.00.

P. J. BECKS,

Palatka, Florida.

## WHERE I FOUND HER

By WILLIAM R. KING

Copyright, 1910, by American Press Association.

What tragedies, what joys, are constantly being enacted in a great city! And the ups and downs there are! Walk along an important thoroughfare and suddenly you come upon a wedding party just entering or just coming out of a church. Proceed a little farther and you see a crowd gathered about an auto. A child has been run over and killed. Still farther you meet a starving mother with a sickly babe in her arms. A nurse trundling a child dressed in embroidered and lace garments turns the perambulator for fear her charge will be contaminated.

One bright moonlight night I was walking over a bridge. The scene was pleasing, and I paused and leaned over the rail to enjoy it. "How fine it is," I remarked to myself, "to live in a city! By day there is the excitement of people and vehicles passing and re-passing, the hum of business and pleasure; by night myriads of lights, with occasionally the one great night lamp of heaven to illumine the whole."

Suddenly to my left down on the water I heard a splash. A moment later a human figure came to the surface and went down again. A boat shot under an arch, and a man in it dived and brought up a woman, and the two were hauled into the boat. A policeman ordered the boatman to pull ashore. While they were doing so I went to where he was standing.

"What were you doing?" asked the policeman of the girl, who by this time showed signs of life.

"I wanted to die. Why didn't you let me alone?"

"What's the matter?"

"No home, nothing to do to earn a living, tired and heartsick."

"Well, you'll have to come along with me to answer to a charge of suicide."

"Policeman," I said, "will you let me provide a carriage?"

"I can call the patrol wagon."

An empty carriage was passing. I hailed it, and the policeman, the girl and I got in and were driven to the police station.

I must pause here in my story to tell what I afterward learned of the girl's history. Some twenty years before one passing up one of the fashionable streets of the city on a certain day and hour would have seen a party emerging from a church. A young bride and groom were starting in life with every prospect of happiness. The groom's father was head of a large business, and the son had been made a junior partner on the day of his marriage. A little girl was born to the couple, and she was taken to church banded in embroidered and lace garments, like the child in the perambulator I have referred to, that she might be baptized. Then in a handsome stone residence there was a christening feast, with a millionaire for godfather.

That was the year before the great panic of '73, when one morning it was announced that a great business house had failed and down went the other concerns like card houses. The father and son of this story fell with the rest, the father dying of disappointment and wounded pride. The clothing of the baby girl from that moment began to grow plain, then dingy. Her father died, and her mother lived in want. The child grew to womanhood with no remembrance of her baby clothes. When her sun arose the sun of her family set. Then her mother died. The girl went from place to place begging for a situation, but nobody wanted her. Then one night she stood on the bridge. The waters below said, "Come, I will give you rest."

The morning after the attempted suicide I went to the courtroom where the good and the bad, the unfortunate and the unregenerate, were brought up before a magistrate. In her turn the girl was led in and placed in the dock. She had no defense. She simply said that she had got discouraged, and, passing over the bridge on her way to her dingy room which she had been notified she must leave on the morrow, she had looked out on the brilliant scene, then down on the water, and she could not resist the call to oblivion. The downward slide in life, though it had marred, had not destroyed her comeliness. There was evidence of an inherited refinement both in person and bearing.

Suddenly a member of the police court arose and said that there was a young man present who would marry the girl if she were willing. He was produced. The girl looked at him, then languidly gave her consent. What could she do?

"Judge," I said, rising, "if you will send the girl to some home where she will be protected I will interest myself in her."

The judge asked the girl which plan she would prefer, and she chose my plan. She was sent to a home for indigent girls, and soon afterward I called upon the matron and got her charge's story as I have given it here.

I looked up a few of those who had known her parents, but found there was no one to take an interest in her. Some were dead, some were very poor, and the children of those who had kept in touch with the upper stratum had no use for the children of those who had gone down. What was to be done for her I must do myself. I followed the example of the young man who had offered to marry her. I could do nothing for her in any other way. She consented, not languidly, as she had done with the other, but gladly.

### CLIMBING UPWARD.

Every true life should be perpetual climbing upward. We should put our faults under our feet and make them steps on which to lift ourselves daily a little higher. We never in this world get to a point where we may regard ourselves as having attained the loftiest height within our reach. There are always other rounds of the ladder to climb.

# Subscribe for

# THE PALATKA NEWS

## \$1.00 per Year. Six Months, 50c

If you go home at night and find your wife talking to the neighbor's wife over the fence, and your supper not prepared, don't get angry and accuse her of gossiping. She is simply finding out the news. Give her a year's subscription to the PALATKA NEWS and your meals will always be ready.

# Our Job Department

Is thoroughly equipped to turn out all kinds of COMMERCIAL Printing at reasonable prices.

Estimates on any kind of printing cheerfully furnished.

## Send Us a Trial Order.