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THE EFFICACY OF CHARMS.

AN AGREABLE SUBSTITUTE FOR NAUSEATING MEDICINE.

Strange Superstitions of English Farmers Settled in Pennsylvania—Some of Their Queer Beliefs.

A letter from English Settlement, Penn., to the New York Times says: Years ago a number of emigrants from Devonshire, Lancashire, Cornwall, Yorkshire, and other counties of England settled in Northern Pennsylvania, near the New York State line. They have made some of the finest farms in the State, and are the best of citizens, but many of them cling with singular tenacity to a strange belief in the efficacy of certain charms that have been used for centuries among the class to which they belonged in England. The charmed ring cure for epilepsy is one of these. Only a few days ago a jeweler at Honesdale was called upon by a resident of the settlement who had with him his daughter, a sickly girl of fifteen. The girl produced nine English two-penny pieces from which the jeweler was requested to make a ring to fit the girl's middle finger. It was necessary, the farmer said, that a portion of each coin should be used and the rest of the pieces saved and returned to his daughter. The coins were given her by nine boys, as near her own age as could be found, which would give to the ring a charm which, when she put it on would cure her of epilepsy, from which she was suffering. This he maintained was a cure that was always tried in Devonshire and never failed. If the victim of epilepsy was a male, the nine coins must be presented by nine females.

Some of these farmers keep the skins of adders in or on their houses and buildings, believing them to be a certain charm against fire. To cure ague the patient is taken to a spot where two roads cross, and an oak tree is found as near the spot as possible. A lock of his hair is lifted up and driven into the tree with an ash peg. The patient must then tear himself loose, leaving the hair sticking in the tree, and walk away without looking behind him. Sufferers with erysipelas by wearing in a silken bag around their neck a toad from which the right hind leg and the left fore leg has been cut until the mutilated reptile dies will get well of the disease. The tongue cut from a living fox, these charm-believers say, carried about the person will ward off disease of all kinds, but as the person carrying one of these fox tongues will surely die if he should happen to meet a fox at any crossroads the charm is seldom invoked. One old resident of the settlement carries in his pocket constantly an immense tooth from a human jaw. The tooth, he says, was taken from the mouth of a man who was hanged in Hartfordshire more than a hundred years ago after the man was dead, and was carried by the present owner's father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. It is carried as a preventive of toothache, the tooth from the dead person's mouth being a certain charm against that malady. The owner of the tooth says he never had the toothache in his life. A double hazelnut carried in the pocket or about the person is also a preventive of the disease.

The charms for the dispersion of warts believed in by many of these honest farmers, are numerous and most singular. For instance, if a person with warts on his or her hands will write down the number of them on the band of a tramp's hat without the tramp knowing it, he will carry the warts away with him—that is, they will gradually disappear from the person's hands and appear on those of the tramp. By cutting a notch on a green elder stick for every wart a person may have, rubbing the stick on every wart, and then burying it in the barnyard until it rots, the warts may be cured. Warts may also be removed by taking a black snail, rubbing it on all the warts at night, and impaling the snail on a thorn bush, repeating the process nine successive nights, by which time the warts and the snail will both be shriveled up. Another way to get rid of warts is for a person to see a funeral pass unexpectedly, wherever he may be, and as it passes rub his warts quickly and repeat the words, "Warts and corpse pass away and never return." Green peas may also be used to advantage in taking off warts. Let the afflicted person take as many peas as he has warts and touch each wart with a different pea. He must then wrap each pea in a separate piece of paper and bury them secretly in the shade of an ash tree or under a hazel bush. If peas are not in season and the person with warts does not care to try the efficacy of any of the above named charms, let him select as many pebbles as he has warts. Sewing them up in a small bag, he must take them to where four roads cross and throw the bag over his left shoulder. This charm will never be resorted to, however, by persons who have no maliciousness in their hearts, for if, by chance, any other person should find the bag and open it the warts will appear on his hand.

A wen is usually a troublesome and unsightly thing to be afflicted with, but the victims of wens need not suffer long if they believe in the English charm. Take a common snake. Hold it by the head and tail, and draw it backward and forward nine times over the wen. Then cork the snake in a bottle and bury it. If that fails, the patient must not repine, but simply wait until the next May Day. Rise early in the morning of that day before the sun has disturbed the dew. Go to a graveyard, and by passing the hand three times from head to foot over the grave, collect the dew that lies on the grave of the last young person who was buried in the yard. If the victim of the wen is a woman the grave must be that of a man, and vice versa. Apply the dew immediately to the wen, and a cure is guaranteed. In England, according to an old resident of the settlement, the "dead stroke" was considered a never-failing cure for wens. This was the stroking of the affected part with the head of a dead criminal.

The charm for curing nosebleed is a curious one. If a person is subject to nosebleed he may effect a cure by going to a person of the opposite sex and requesting him or her to purchase a piece of lace, such as may be specified, for the person making the request. When the lace is brought the person must take it and neither pay for it nor return thanks for it. He must make a necktie out of the lace and wear it for nine days, and he will never have the nosebleed

again. If the person is too modest or gallant to get the lace in that way let him catch a toad, kill it and wear it around his neck in a bag until the stomach sickens him. His nose will never bleed again. If a person has cramps in the legs or feet at night, he has but to place his stockings in shape of a cross on the floor in front of his bed when he retires, or lay his slippers under the bed, soles upward. Placing the shoes under the coverlid at the foot of the bed so that the toes of the shoes protrude is also a sure preventive of cramps. No one who wears a snakeskin around his head need ever have headache. If one feels a sty coming on his eye let him take a hair from the tail of a black cat, rub the eye with it nine times before midnight on the first night of the new moon, and the sty will die. A ringworm may be dispersed by simply holding between the thumb and fingers a pinch of hazel ashes before breakfast for three days and saying:

"Ringworm, ringworm!
Never mayest thou speed or spread!
But saye grow less and less,
And die among the ash!"

These and many more strange superstitions are part of the faith of the simple, honest and thrifty farmers of English Settlement.

Drinks for the Voice.

Tea, coffee and cocoa are three admissible drinks, but none in excess. For the voice cocoa is the most beneficial. It should never be made too strong, and those cocoas are the best that have been deprived of their oil. A cup of this cocoa, just warm, is more to be recommended between the exertions of singing than any alcoholic beverage. Tea must not be taken too strong nor when it has drawn too long, for tea then becomes acrid, and has a bad influence on the mucous membrane that lines the throat. There is always a dry sensation after having taken a cup of tea that has been allowed to draw too long. A vocalist had better do without sugar in tea and only take milk with it, or, if an exhilarating drink is needed, mix some claret wine with the tea, putting in a slice of lemon and some honey.

Coffee should never be taken too strong and not too often. Two cups a day is all that can be allowed; without sugar is best. Very strong coffee heats and makes the voice husky. In fact, no drink should be taken too hot or too strong; the voice wants an equable, mild temperature, that will keep up constant moisture and flexibility in the vocal organs.

These are of all classes and are now universally taken, but I am sorry to say that the chemical ingredients of the syrups used with them are often very injurious to the voice. Soda-water is refreshing when pure, but when mixed with all kinds of aromatic substances actually dries the throat instead of moistening it. Ginger ale, cider, and such manufactured drinks are only serviceable to the vocalist when of the very best manufacture, otherwise they are heating and drying instead of cooling. No few fruit syrups are now made of fruit that it is difficult to know where to find them, and the artificial syrups are really dangerous to the voice.

Water is to be recommended when pure, but not too much ice-water. In any case, it must be filtered water, and never too cold. A spoonful of pure syrup or honey in a glass of cold water is better than aerated drinks. Water to excess is also injurious to the voice. Milk in excess is also injurious, while a glass of fresh milk in the morning is most helpful to the voice. It not only softens it, but nourishes it and purifies the blood.

Fortunes in Stone and Bronze.

Washington City has a great deal of money invested in statuary, and some of it may be looked upon as a mighty poor investment. Greenough's naked statue of Washington cost \$45,000, and the statue of liberty cast up there on the capitol dome cost \$25,000. Clark Mills, the sculptor, received great sums from the government, though he died comparatively poor. Fifty thousand dollars was the price paid him for Andrew Jackson, who sits upon a rearing horse opposite the White House, and he received another \$50,000 for his equestrian statue of General Washington in Washington circle. Another \$50,000 statue is that of General Thomas in Thomas circle, and it must make the taxpayer happy as he looks at it to remember that Congress paid \$25,000 for the pedestal, and that the four bronze lamp posts around the base cost \$1,000 apiece. Away off to the east of the capitol, in Lincoln square, three thousand pounds of brass represent Abraham Lincoln giving freedom to the negro. The statue cost \$17,000, but it was paid from contributions made up by the freedmen of the South. General Nathaniel Greene stands in a park northeast of the capitol at a cost of \$50,000, and in Scott circle, General Winfield Scott has been embodied in bronze for \$45,000. Vinnie Ream's statue of Farragut cost \$20,000. The statue of Melherson, together with its pedestal, cost about \$50,000, and down in Rawlins square, southwest of the White House, there is a bronze statue of General Rawlins which looks just as well, at a cost of \$10,000. In addition to these there is the statue of Professor Henry in the Smithsonian grounds, which cost a small fortune, that of Admiral Dupont, opposite Blaine's, which represents a large enough sum to pay several times a Congressman's salary, and the beautiful bronze statue of Martin Luther in front of the Lutheran Memorial church, which cost but \$5,000, and is as fine a piece of statuary as you will find this side of the water.—Carp, in Cleveland Leader.

An Astonishing Scene at Sea.

A singular scene was witnessed by some sailors off the Irish coast a few days ago. The sea was calm and many birds were seen moving about with great rapidity, occasionally disappearing beneath the water and coming up again half strangled. As the vessel approached it was seen that a shoal of fish several acres in extent was visible upon the water. A bird would alight on the back of a fish, spread its tail or wings to catch the breeze, dig its claws deep into the finny monster's hide, and go before the wind with such speed as to soon devour the victim. The bird would then devour the fish at its leisure.—Manchester (Eng.) Courier.

THE GUN FAILED TO BURST.

EXPERIMENTS THAT SURPRISED AN ARMY OFFICER.

A Cannon Thirty Feet Long—How the Non-Bursting Principle was Discovered by Mr. Edgar.

Lying snugly housed near a point on Sandy Hook is a great gun, nearly thirty feet long. It has been there for some time, and is an object of curiosity to all who visit the neighborhood. This gun was designed in part by Mr. George Edgar, and is his property. Many thousands of dollars have been spent upon its construction and exhibition; but, though a military committee reported favorably upon it, no steps were taken by the government toward purchasing the patents taken out by its constructors. The claims made for the gun refer exclusively to the breach, which is said to possess no little novelty and merit.

Not long ago Mr. Edgar visited Washington on business connected with his gun. He was accompanied by an American mechanic and designer of guns, now employed by the Russian government to conduct their great gun works on the Neva. After a somewhat unsatisfactory visit to the war department, the two were sitting in the cafe of the Ebbitt house, discussing the chances of the adoption of the principle of the gun by the military authorities.

"They tell me," said Mr. Edgar, "that what they want is a gun that won't explode; when they get such a one, they say they expect to have no trouble in finding an easy working and efficient breech mechanism."

"Yes," replied his companion, "that is what they are looking for all over the world."

The two men sat silent for some time.

Finally, Mr. Edgar, in crossing his legs, kicked off the cover from an India rubber cuspidor. Like most of these contrivances, this cover was made of hard rubber with beveled edges, the sides, as they sloped toward the hole in the center, having a fall or decline of about thirty degrees from a plane.

Mr. Edgar observed this cover intently as it rolled and grated about the marble floor.

Before it came to a dead stop he seized it with something like precipitation, and, with sparkling eyes, exclaimed to his companion, "I've got it!"

"Got what?" asked the latter, languidly.

"I've got the principle on which the non-bursting gun can be constructed."

"Bah!"

Not heeding this expression of incredulity on the part of his friend, a man, too, of great skill in mental working, Mr. Edgar gave such forcible reasons for believing a non-bursting gun could be constructed of a series of plates similar in form to the top of a rubber cuspidor, that he was compelled to admit that there was something in the idea.

Returning to New York city, Mr. Edgar at once set to work to make a gun on the plan suggested by the incident in the Ebbitt House cafe.

The experimental gun is four feet long and composed throughout its whole extent of corrugated plates of Russian iron. At its completion, he took it up to West Point, which, he had been told in Washington, was one of the government testing points for guns.

On his arrival at the works, and mentioning the fact that he had a new gun with him, he was told that the number of new guns constantly appearing was legion. "The trouble with all of them," said the officer, "is, that they burst too readily. What kind of a test do you want to put your gun to?" he added.

"Why," replied Mr. Edgar, "I would like to have you burst it."

"Certainly," said the officer, with something like sarcasm in his voice. "We are always glad to accommodate gentlemen with new guns."

The gun was now taken behind a hill, a double charge of powder introduced, and fired with a time fuse. It turned two or three back somersaults, but remained intact. It was now loaded with a quadruple charge, and fired, the only effect being to multiply the number of the back somersaults.

"This is very good indeed," said the officer. "I am sorry to keep you waiting so long. I'll now load it up to the muzzle, and that will be the last of it." Fired under these conditions, it rose in the air, whirled around for a few moments, and then came down and buried itself in the earth. After being dug up it was charged nearly up to the muzzle with powder and wad, and then spiked. The only result was that it rose higher in the air than before, spun around more rapidly and buried itself still deeper in the ground when it came down. It had not even been chipped!

"Is there anything else you'd like to put into it?" demanded Mr. Edgar, it being now his turn to be ironical.

"No!" was the reply; "it beats me."

Having thus stumped the gun-testing authorities, Mr. Edgar brought his little gun back to New York in triumph.—Scientific American.

The Longest Word.

Far behind most foreign languages, ancient and modern, comes the English language as regards length of words. Except in the word "honorificabilitudinitas," which, though it exists in literature, is, of course, a mere manufactured piece of absurdity—we have, I believe, no word extending beyond seven syllables. To some European nations this may appear contemptible enough. In this respect, however, the old world can teach a lesson to the new. In a work to which I hope some time to make a more direct reference, I have met with an Aztec word of thirty-two letters, "amatlacuolliquitlacalahuilli." It is satisfactory to learn that the signification of the word is worthy of its proportions. It means "payment received for having been bearer of a paper with writing on it." So far as regards the number of letters employed accordingly we are far more extravagant than the Aztecs. Gallatin, in the "Transactions of the American Ethnological Society," supplies from the Cherokee language a word even more portentous. This is "Wintatweginniskawlutganawellicisest," which means, "They will by that time have nearly done granting (favours) from a distance to them and to me." With a vocabulary of this kind a perfect command of speech and writing must be a matter of some difficulty.—Gentleman's Magazine.

Clever Sailor Rats.

A battered old sailor sat on the taffrail of a barkentine lying at a South street pier, and gazed with interest at a brace of wharf rats gamboling across the stringpiece of the dock. They were big and untrifled, and spared no pains to entertain their audience as they stole corn from a bag with a hole in it. A young man came up and joined in the sailor's stare; then they said:

"Clever varmint, ain't they? Allus wuz an' air wherever ye find 'em. Wharf rats is ship rats, too. That's whar they graduated, too. Sort o' cut their teeth on the docks, an' then take to y'gin. I see somethin' the other day tellin' that jail rats wuz smart. Well, mebbe they be, it 'ud bestrange if they didn't git into 'em some o' the cussedness round 'em. Fancy a rat's livin' round with Ferd Ward an' not gettin' wickid? But whar I want to tell ye is that when it comes to right up an' down git up an' git smartness, the ship rat lays over 'em all. 'Frinstance, one time I wuz up in the Arctic a whalin', an' we wuz friz up the tightest way. Some o' the boys got sick, an' the ship became unhealty. 'Sides, she more' swarmed with rats. Consenekly the ole man had us camp outen the ice for three days, while the hatches wuz battened down an' pots o' brimstone kep' burnin' in the hold. When the ole man got 'em to bilin' he sed he guessed he'd got the leeway on the rats, an' so we all thought. When the smoke got out we moved back. It smelt like suthin' dreful; like the hereafter, the cook sed. The mornin' arter our fast night on board I wuz snootin' in my bunk, when I heard a soft nibble, an' lookin' up, there sat a gray old sea rat a lurchin' off a my seal boots an' smilin' like a circus clown, with his 'Here we air agin.' We 'vestigated, an' may I be drowned if there weren't jest as many rats on her as ever. Lookin' in the snow at the side, we foun' it full o' tunnels an' little snow-houses. You see, the cute rascals had heerd the ole man a blowin' about his brimstone, an' seein' us move, they jest fo'lered soot. Jail rats smart! Jail rats ain't a circumstance."

"Whar does they leave a sinkin' ship? Cos they're smart an' kin' smel. They know when the bilge water gets too fresh an' skip, that's how."—New York Sun.

School-Houses in Switzerland.

A correspondent of the Chicago Times says in a letter from Switzerland: Stone houses are very rare in Alpine districts, and I remember quite a commotion in a little village, where I was staying with some friends in their own chalet, by a presumptuous lowlander setting at naught the ancient traditions of the place, and building a house of stone. He was rather looked upon with mingled awe and resentment as an innovator of the deepest dye. In most Swiss communities the handsomest building is the school-house, with separate sections for the boys and girls; and it is pleasant to see the clean, cheerful faces of the little lads and lassies as they pour in and out of the great doors, with eager steps and bright looks.

School, indeed, is no bugbear to the Swiss child. The education is simple and practical, though capable of high development. There is nothing, according to all one reads, hears and sees, of which the Swiss have so much reason to be proud, and to which they pay so much attention, as their system of education. The school-house may almost be considered the most characteristic, as well as the most charming, feature of their national life.

Hepworth Dixon tells an amusing story of a little Swiss girl who, accompanying her father to Paris, was taken by him to see the "glories" of Versailles, and on the first view of the colossal palace clasped her hands and cried out, "Oh, papa, look, look at the school-house!" It is only on the other side of the Atlantic that the same importance is attached to instruction, and that it is given with the same equality and liberality, and all honor to both republics, to the small as well as the great, for the highest and wisest gift a government gives its people.

THE INVENTION OF COTTON-SPINNING.

To Sir Richard Arkwright the world is indebted for the manufacture of cotton cloth. Arkwright was born in Lancashire, Eng., December 23, 1732. He was the youngest child of a family of thirteen, and his family was so very poor that they could give him no education whatever, and he did not even learn to read until late in life, after he had become celebrated through his invention. He followed the business of a barber in a small way until he was twenty-eight years old, when he became a dealer and invented a dye through which he was able to study the principles of machinery, being led to do so by hearing it said that the government would give an enormous sum of money to the man who would discover the secret of perpetual motion. Fortunately, however, his attention was soon drawn aside from that delusive object to improvements in cotton-spinning. At that time, what were known as cottons were all made with linen warp, as it was thought impossible to make a warp thread of sufficient fineness and strength from cotton fiber. In 1768 Arkwright produced the model of his famous cotton-spinning frame by which thread could be spun of any required fineness and strength and with great velocity. After several fruitless efforts to interest some rich persons in his invention, he at last induced a wealthy firm of manufacturers in Nottingham to take hold of it. The first mill of the new kind was soon established, to be driven by horse-power. A machine to work by water-power was soon after set up in a mill in Derbyshire. The first patent was granted to Arkwright in 1769, and others in 1775. These patents were more or less successively contested, but in 1785 a decision of the courts gave him a monopoly of the new method of spinning cotton. He encountered the bitterest hostility from the manufacturers, but he triumphed over all opposition and acquired a fortune of £500,000. Arkwright was knighted in 1786. His invention enabled one man to do the work that had hitherto required 130 men. It is estimated that 4,000,000 persons would scarcely suffice to accomplish by hand the cotton spinning now done in England alone by Arkwright's machinery.—Inter-Ocean.

Billious Symptoms Invariably Arise from Indigestion, such as furred tongue, vomiting of bile, giddiness, sick headache, irregular bowels. The liver secretes the bile and acts like a filter or sieve, to cleanse impurities of the blood. By irregularity in its action or suspensions of its functions, the bile is liable to overflow into the blood, causing jaundice, sallow complexion, yellow eyes, bilious diarrhoea, a languid, weary feeling and many other distressing symptoms. Billiousness may be properly termed an affection of the liver, and can be thoroughly cured by the grand regulator of the liver and biliary organs, BURDOCK BLOOD BITTERS. Act upon the stomach, bowels and liver, making healthy bile and pure blood, and opens the culverts and sluiceways for the outlet of disease. Sold everywhere and guaranteed to cure.

DOWN'S' ELIXIR

For Colds, Bronchitis, Coughs, Croup, Lung Fever, Asthma, Pleurisy, Whooping Cough, Catarrh, CONSUMPTION, and all Throat, Chest and Lung diseases. It will cure when all other remedies fail.

Read what the people say concerning the efficacy of Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil to cure asthma, catarrh, croup, colds, etc. Mrs. J. C. Corbridge of Buffalo says: "For croup it is decidedly efficacious." [Mrs. Jacob Melior, of Marion, Ohio, says the same thing.] S. S. Graves, Akron, N. Y., writes: "Had asthma of the worst kind, took one dose of Thomas' Electric Oil and was relieved in a few minutes. Would walk five miles for this medicine and pay \$5 a bottle for it." J. H. Gray, Grayville, Ill., says: "Cured an ulcerated throat for me in twenty-four hours. Put up in bed till the clothing was wet with perspiration. My wife insisted that I use Thomas' Electric Oil. The first spoonful relieved me." R. H. Perkins, Creek Centre, N. Y., writes: "Thomas' Electric Oil is also a TIT-TOP external application for rheumatism, cuts, scalds, burns, bruises, etc. When visiting the drug-store, ask for it, and you know of Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil; if he has been long in the trade be sure he will speak highly of it."

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BILIOUSNESS.

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Read what the people say concerning the efficacy of Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil to cure asthma, catarrh, croup, colds, etc. Mrs. J. C. Corbridge of Buffalo says: "For croup it is decidedly efficacious." [Mrs. Jacob Melior, of Marion, Ohio, says the same thing.] S. S. Graves, Akron, N. Y., writes: "Had asthma of the worst kind, took one dose of Thomas' Electric Oil and was relieved in a few minutes. Would walk five miles for this medicine and pay \$5 a bottle for it." J. H. Gray, Grayville, Ill., says: "Cured an ulcerated throat for me in twenty-four hours. Put up in bed till the clothing was wet with perspiration. My wife insisted that I use Thomas' Electric Oil. The first spoonful relieved me." R. H. Perkins, Creek Centre, N. Y., writes: "Thomas' Electric Oil is also a TIT-TOP external application for rheumatism, cuts, scalds, burns, bruises, etc. When visiting the drug-store, ask for it, and you know of Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil; if he has been long in the trade be sure he will speak highly of it."

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