SUPERSTITIONS' GRIP.

THE PET OMENS WHICH MOST PEOPLE CHERISH.

Charms, Spells and Hoodoos—Beliefs Which Follow a Man from His Cradle to His Grave, Despite the Fact of Frequent Disproof.

Every human being has his pet superstition. It came to him almost in the cradle, and has remained with him, by a strange pertinacity, all his life. Man is too proud to admit a governing influence which has no real foundation and must fall to pieces when its stability is tested, but no matter how silly a superstition may be, once imbedded in memory by a single instance when it came true, all its signal failures will generally fail to loosen its grip upon the human being who has been taught it in childhood. A pet superstition will lose not a jot of its influence, should it fail every time in a hundred, provided it proves true in one instance only. This fact shows how men are joined to their superstitious idols.

"Sing before breakfast, cry before night," is the most ridiculous of all old bogies, and the most destructive of mirth, laughter and happiness. It is not difficult to prove its fallacy. Let every man, woman and child stand up against it; sing—howl, if they cannot give forth melodious sounds—laugh merrily, and rejoice at the coming of day, like the birds, whose first thought upon waking on the appearance of the first streak of dawn is to sing happily with pure joy for the return of another day. Let each be as happy as the birds, and make everybody else happy, and thus will this detestible superstition retire to the gloom of its inception and be heard of no more.

There is an old superstition that

THE LEFT LIMBS

should always be dressed first, but not completely at one time. Suppose that the man who manifests his indignation at the assertion that he is superstitious commences, cautiously, as it were, without letting himself know that he is being watched, with the first garment he puts on in the morning, and learn what is the result. How surprised he will be to know, perhaps for the first time, that his left arm goes into his shirt first, his left leg in his trousers first, and his left sock on his left foot first, to say nothing of continuing the observation as far as the shoe. There are men who will change a garment which has been put on, unconsciously, inside out, but there are many men who will not, for their lives, risk the old superstition concerning such an act. Kings have not dared it.

Where is the man or boy, who, saving only in a spirit of bravado, will knowingly walk under a ladder? Even if done in a spirit of defiance of the old bogie, how expectantly and, sometimes tremblingly he awaits the coming of the penalty. Try it, man, and if the penalty of sorrow or loss, disappointment or accident, does not result before the day has swept by, you will not tell of it. If it comes to you, the rule will be followed, and you will never cease telling of it, this rare occurrence.

When a man returns to the house after once starting out, having, perhaps, forgotten to kiss his wife, or something less important, his natural inclination, without special prompting, is to sit down

BEFORE STARTING AGAIN.

It is said to be bad luck to omit this.

Even death may result if a human being should raise an open umbrella over his head within doors, it is said. Umbrella-makers have been known to observe this religiously.

People who live in the country must be careful not to have around their homes a white-nosed cow, for should the window be open and this cow with the white proboscis reach it over the windowsill in search of information or something dainty, there will be a death in the family before long. So says the old saw.

Why must we give a penny for any sharp instrument presented by a friend? Why do we seek a four-leaved clover, and why must we pick up a dirty horseshoe from the street whenever we see it there! Why do men nail the horseshoe over their doors, and ends down, too, invariably, when the original superstition, of which they seem to be in ignorance, asserts that it should be nailed up the other way, so as to catch within its embrace the luck which descends?

There is no longer any use of talking about the old bogie concerning one of thirteen sitting at table dying within a year after the feast, for the Thirteen Club exploded that foolish old saw by sitting thus, month in and month out, many years, many tables with thirteen at each, and all lived out the dangerous year, and more years added, but there are still living men who will not undertake a journey

ON A FRIDAY,

although, after coming to sum the matter up, multitudes of men have discovered that Friday, of all days in the week, is the most fortunate day for everything. And it is rarely, now, that a criminal is executed on Friday in any part of the world, thanks to the same Thirteen Club, who laugh at superstition, knife and fork in hand. Yet there is not one of them who has not his pet superstition, either consciously or otherwise. The biggest man in the club carries a horsechesnut in his pocket to ward off rheumatism, and another is a spiritualist. They all put on the left sock first, and few of them dare sing before breakfast. But they are deserving of great praise for what they have done and must not weary in well-doing.

When a valuable vase in the Tuilleries fell to the floor and was shattered a short time before the great battle of Waterloo, Josephine prophesied disaster would follow—and it did. Napoleon met his fate there, but his "Book of Fate" never told him defeat was near and disaster hovering over him. But this was not the first vase broken by many in the Tuilleries. What about the others and the old omen? The opal is a stone of ill omen, it is said, and ill luck must follow the person who wears one, yet Queen Victoria of England makes it a point to have one of these beautiful stones put in every piece of jewellery she intends for a present. What about the wearers of them? Are they all unfortunate?

THE CROCKERY TRADE

has reason to rejoice in the existence of the ancient English superstition, so well known to the housemaid, that if she breaks one piece of china, she must, necessarily, break another immediately after—whereupon she proceeds deliberately to smash the least costly piece within her reach.

It is the negro who is the most superstitious being on earth. Superstition rules his every action, and leads him to the performance of the most ridiculous things. His pet superstitions are the hoodoo and the ghost. In both of these he believes as implicitly as he does in a God. The heart, torn out of a living chicken, the tongue of a living frog, a dead man's finger, a slit from a growing ash tree, or the blood of a murdered man, as well as a few other such things, and a midnight walk of a mile or more, clad only in his night shirt, may serve, in his imagination, to quell the hoodoo, but the ghost can never be laid until its own purpose is completely served. Some years ago there was an elegant mansion in the outskirts of New Orleans which had been occupied by a strong-minded old woman, who owned, together with the mansion and grounds, a number of slaves. It was said of this woman that she was accustomed to chain one and another in several rooms of this mansion and beat them terribly, some times even to death. When this horrible woman died, and ever after, the negroes round about swore that unearthly groans and the

RATTLING OF CHAINS

were heard nightly coming from the ghosts of her victims within the house. Consequently, the house remained untenanted, although the surrounding ground was sold, and the mansion surrounded by houses. The mansion was valued at $75,000.

One day an enterprising Yankee purchased it for some $3,000, and, after slight preparation, threw open the doors for the admission of the public at so much per head. The "Chamber of Horrors," and so on, were timorously inspected by the multitude for many months, and the enterprising man from down East retired from the showman's profession with a fortune and the title deed to the house. But the ghosts were too sensible to disgrace themselves to the extent of being shown up for a mere song of admission fee, and were laid then and there, much to the satisfaction of the "cullud gentleman."

It is human nature to see in others what we fail to see in ourselves. A very apt caution is sometimes met with, which is, "Man, know thyself!" If every man will watch himself attentively he will find that more than a single superstition will, to his utter astonishment, perhaps, crop out now and again. It is worth trying, just for the fun of the thing and to satisfy a commendable curiosity.—N.Y. Times.

A HINT TO TURKEY.

The British Premier Tells Turkey in Plain Language What She Must do.

Lord Salisbury drops a hint to the Sultan that reform must be effected in Turkey, and that without delay. No matter what may have been the origin of the troubles with the Armenians, or of the persecutions to which the Christians have been subjected, certain it is that the horrors are of such a character that no civilized State can view them with equanimity. Let it be said that the Armenians were the aggressors, and it follows that these people must have beeen hard pressed or they would not have so far broken from their traditions as to enter upon a conflict with their powerful and fanatical rulers. Assume on the other hand that the Turks gave the offence, and it must be acknowledged that the proceedings have been as wanton as they are cruel. There are those who treat the Armenians as answerable for the difficulties and for the slaughters of which they have been the victims. But the opinions of the nations is that nothing they could have done could warrant the barbarities to which they have been subjected. Added to the murders which have swept thousands and tens of thousands to their graves, and the

TERRIBLE INDIGNITIES

visited upon the women, there comes now action equivalent to a denial on the part of the Sultan of the demands made upon him for relief. It is possible that the duplicity he has practised in his dealings with the powers, although characteristic of an Oriental prince has been forced upon him by the necessities of the situation. He cannot lighten the load the Christians have to carry without lightening that of the of the Sultan to the stronger nationality it, awakening dissatisfaction and trouble in a new quarter. But the powers are not concerned with the relations of the Sultan to the stronger nationality under his rule. They are interested now only in insisting that order shall somehow be restored, and that the Christians shall not be molested and murdered. It is gratifying to know that the Sultan is not to be allowed through cunning prompted by fear, or resulting from inefficiency, to evade his plain duty. He must act, or, as Lord Salisbury hints, he must be prepared to take the bitter consequences. No more polite, yet direct, threat could be made than that which Lord Salisbury has issued. Turkey he points out, is the creation of the powers. Europe desires to maintain the Empire in its integrity. Peace and justice, with a complete regard for the rights, the lives, and the properties of the Christians, however, must prevail. If these cannot be assured under present conditions then—and here the Sultan is left to draw his own conclusions.

Passing Judgment.

Jonkin—I never see her except on Sunday when she passes the house; but, old boy, isn't she fair?

Old boy—Yes; passing fair.

Two Souls.

Bride—"We must do our best not to let people see we're on our wedding tour."

Groom—"Indeed we must, or we'll be charged four prices for everything."

AGRICULTURAL

Basement Barns and Manure.

"The saving of barnyard manure is much more thought of by farmers now than it was in the earlier history of farming in this country. This is the chief reason why there are more barns with deep and warm basements. In the old-fashioned barn set on a stone foundation, but little removed from the surface of the ground, there was necessarily great waste of manure. Quite often the floor was laid with unseasoned lumber, which, as the planks dried, left space between them, through which all the liquid manure was lost. The underpinning of the barn was often just enough to hold it from the ground, or if stones were laid it was so loosely that it made a free course for the wind. As cattle and horses were stabled over these open floors a great deal of what they ate during cold weather went to sustain animal heat. It was practically wasted," quotes the American Cultivator.

"The building of basement barns has made a great improvement in the conditions for saving the excrement of winter-fed stock. The stable should be in the basement, the entire floor of which should be of concrete. This is much better than a matched floor, as the latter will rot, and it will always after a year or two, be offensive with the odors of manure soaked into it. It is commonly thought that a side hill must be chosen as a site for a basement barn. This makes it easier to build an approach to the upper side. But a very slight elevation is better than a larger one. It costs some labor to make the approaches to the doors; but there is the advantage that the wall is open to the light with opportunities for large and frequent windows. Most barn basements are necessarily too dark for the health of the stock. It is true the window lets in more cold than does a wall, but this can be remedied by putting in double windows, which if kept clean will let in more sunlight in cold weather than will windows that are single, but obscured by the frost which will surely gather upon them from the breath of animals. The air space between double windows excludes frost nearly or quite as well as a wall.

"Most farmers who have built basement barns have been surprised to find that the extra room thus secured cost less than that in the upper portion. Only one roof is needed whether the barn be high or low, and where stone is plentiful on the farm the materials for a basement wall that have to be purchased consist only of lime. The pasement can be used as a cellar to keep roots, pumpkins and other food for stock. Whenever a silo is built it should reach to the basement floor, and extend as high in the building as the silage can be raised. Where a great deal of stock is kept it pays to run an elevator by horse or steam power, so as to lift the silage higher than would be possible by hand.

"But the greatest advantage of the basement barn is that it enables the farmer to save all the manure without waste. With a concrete floor the liquid as well as solid excrement will be preserved from loss. There will be no freezing in such a basement, and the manure may be drawn and spread on land intended to be plowed the following spring. In this way there can be no loss, and the soluble portions of the manure will be well mixed by rains and melting snows with soil beneath. A load of manure spread early in the winter produces double the effect the next season of one that is drawn on the land just before it is plowed. If it is desired to compost the manure, it had better be done in heaps under a covered shed outside the basement. In such heaps its decomposition will prevent it from freezing, and, being covered, it will be saved from being wasted by rains and snows. Most of the scattered manure in open barnyards becomes frozen, and cannot be gathered in heaps until spring, by which time the rains and snow have washed from it most of its soluble plant food. The saving of manure, which comes from keeping stock in basement stables, enables the farmer to increase the productiveness of his land. Such a farmer can well afford to purchase commercial fertilizers which provide the kind of fertility that most stable manure is deficient in. When the farm once begins to grow more productive, every after-step becomes easier. It is only another illustration of the truth that to him who hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly. The first step in this will be to secure better stock, and its corollary will be to provide basement stables in which they may be comfortably sheltered, and all the manure they make can be saved."

Maintain Composure.

Nerve to meet alarming conditions is always demanded. It is especially required of the stock man, whether growing or feeding for the meat markets, or operating in milk, butter and cheese.

Scarcely three months of the year go by in which the clouds of adversity do not rise on some part of the horizon.

It is the brave part to meet adverse appearances in coolness and hope for the best continually, employing every available method to thwart the invasion on one's property. East of the Missouri river, there is no cause for serious alarm over occasional dry weather.

If early in the season meadows and pastures are cut short, millet, rye, roots, drilled corn, and other supplementary crops can be planted that will be fair substitutes for hay, and the shortened supply of grain may be husbanded to the best advantage, and with this precaution one is able to hold to all the livestock on the farm and maintain it from the farm's resources, with but little outlay for the essential grain, linseed cake, etc., which experienced feeders find of peculiar value where straw and the rougher grades of fodder are the principal food in the stockyards.

Threatened drouth often passes by, too, leaving the hasty man in selling off his sore regret.

Markets waver and seem at times to fall out of sight, leaving the feeder, with valuable grain and half-fattened stock, in the quandary of uncertainty as to his best policy. There is a conservative rule which applies in most cases, viz: Maintain your regular course, when doubt exists as to what is desirable.

Many swine breeders have experienced a loss of five per cent of their stock by a beginning of sickness. By prompt action they have given proper preventive attention to the herd, by reducing and changing food providing pure water, clean feeding floors and troughs, and the administering of a common-sense tonic, such as every successful swine breeder understands. By effort the stout-hearted are continually wresting success out of apparent disaster. The policy of holding when the masses are selling usually holds good.

If one has good brood mares, cows, ewes, sows, hens, etc., there is safety and profit in the future for him who breeds them right, and is vigilant in attention to the details of successful management. The pure bred sire of the best individual merit is a necessary part of assured success.

MONKEY AND COBRA.

The Instinct of Animals in Dealing With Snakes.

The sagacity which many animals display when dealing with snakes is one of the remarkable things in nature. An intelligent puppy knows, somehow, that snakes may be venomous, and treats them accordingly. If he attacks a snake, he does it with a series of quick jumps and recoils, and continually jerks his head upward to avoid a possible dart from the snake.

A horse kills a snake by leaping upon it with all four feet kept together, so that the snake's fangs can find nothing but the horny hoof to strike into. The knowledge of these special tactics is a part of the instinct of all animals.

A correspondent gives an interesting description of a monkey's attack on a deadly cobra in India. The serpent was coiled up on the ground under a tree. The monkey slowly left his perch in the forks of the tree, and quietly, with great caution, moved downward until he had approached within about two feet of the reptile.

He looked like a solemn old man, curiously moving his head from side to side, as if closely inspecting the object beofre him. Then he took a firmer hold of the tree with one arm, and wrapped his tail closely around the trunk.

He reached forth his hand until it was within six or eight inches of the snake, and then quickly withdrew it. I was excited, and wondered if he knew the dangerous character of his adversary. Was he playing unknowingly with death?

The hand of the monkey again moved toward the venomous reptile. Was he going to seize the creature? Suddenly, like a lightning flash, the monkey grasped the cobra around the neck, close to the head, in such a manner that it could not bite, while the snake's body encircled the monkey's arm.

An astonishing scene followed. The snake hissed loudly; the monkey chattered and screeched and danced and leaped in frantic delight. He would stop his wild contortions, and seriously examine the snake's head and eyes and protruding tongue, and again grin and dance about.

After he had had enough of this sport, he began to rub the head of the serpent on the hard ground, and continued to do this, with repeated serious inspections of his work, until he had rubbed the head of the cobra entirely off. Then, with much gleeful chattering he dropped the still writhing body and scampered away to join his companions in a neighboring grove.

CURIOUS OBSERVANCES.

Interesting Forms and Ceremonies in Modern English Life.

One of the most interesting features of English life is the maintenance of ancient forms and ceremonies in the midst of the hurry and bustle of modern life. The other day the corporation of London performed the annual rent service of the crown which has been rendered for 600 years without intermission. It was originally rendered by the senior alderman to the king in person, and is in acknowledgement of certain property which the city holds to the Crown. The Queen's remembrancer now takes the place of the sovereign in receiving the service, which is performed by the City Solicitor. After the reading of several documents and the invariable "Oyez, oyez, oyez," of the crier, the City Solicitor cuts one fagot with a hatchet and another with a billhook. Then there is more reading of documents and another proclamation, after which the City Solicitors counts out six horseshoes and 61 nails, the representative of Her Majesty acknowledging the service by saying in each case, "Good number." This last sevvice refers to the tenancy of a property still known as

"THE FORGE."

The forge itself was pulled down in a riot five centuries ago, and has not been restored, but the ancient name and ceremony are still maintained. People without imagination may scoff at these curious observances, as absurd, but those who value our connection with the past will treasure them as relics of a time forever gone by. They are touches of poetry and color in the dull prosaic round of modern life. They remind us of the time when America was an undiscovered continent, and England a very different England from that of to-day, but England still. What tremendous changes have taken place while year by year the City of London has been cutting wood and counting horseshoe nails for the sovereign, and the reply "good number" has been uttered in acknowledgement of the due service of Her Majesty's faithful commons. In this simple ceremony, idle as it may seem to some, we have the secret of the gradual growth of the British Empire to what it is today—the observance of law and custom, the granting to sovereign and subject of what is justly due, and the honoring of ancient ties because of the glories of a time which is past but not forgotten.

HOUSEHOLD.

How They Named the Baby.

They talked of Medora, Aurora and Flora,
Of Mabel and Marcia and Mildred and May,
Debated the question of Helen, Honora,
Clarissa, Camilla, and Phyllis and Fay.
They thought of Marcella, Estella, and Bella,
Considered Cecelia, Jeanette and Pauline,
Alicia, Adella, Annette, Arabella,
And Ethel and Eunice, Hortense and Irene.
One liked Theodora, another Lenora;
Some argued for Edith and some for Elaine,
For Madeline, Adeline, Lily and Lora;
And then, after all, they decided on Jane.

Good Coffee.

Truly can it be said of coffee that it is a "cup which cheers but not inebriates." As a stimulant nothing can surpass a cup of fresh coffee, providing it is well and carefully made. It is indeed a pity that it is seldom appetizingly served, thus making of it a most wretched beverage. As a rule, the housekeeper is busy enough without taking the additional labor of roasting her own coffee, but there is more satisfaction in doing so than can ever be found in buying it ready for the coffee-pot. Where one has room—a cool, dry place—the best way is to buy a sack of green coffee and roast just enough for a week at a time. It should then be placed in an air-tight can that none of its delicious aroma may escape.

It may be best to grind the coffee quite fine, as the coarser it is the more is required for a cup. Even if one buys the coffee already roasted it is best to grind it at home, just the quantity required each time. It always pays to procure the best if one cares to cater to his taste in the least. The coffee generally preferred, and that which is most likely to suit the average taste is two-thirds Java and one-third Mocha. Many like a little Rio, and have equal parts of each. The coffee-pot must be perfectly clean, the water must be boiling and the coffee ground fine, then we can proceed to make our coffee. There is such a diversity of taste and opinion about the quantity of coffee to use, that to specify it would be impossible; but a very good coffee, and one which suits most tastes is made thus. A heaping tablespoonful of ground coffee to each cupful of water. The coffee is thoroughly mixed with a fresh egg—shell and all—and the required amount of water is added. It may have to be stirred once or twice so the egg cannot cook into lumps. Permit it to boil a few seconds and allow it to remain standing at the back of the stove a short while. Of course, this may not be strong enough to suit everyone's taste, so double the quantity of coffee can be used. Use thick cream with it. Every farmer has cows, so let him not be guilty of insulting the coffee with blue milk. It is mistaken economy.

Here is another way to make coffee—an old-fashioned and a good recipe: Scald the tin coffee-boiler and put in it one heaping breakfast-cupful of ground coffee mixed with the yolk, white, and broken shell of one egg; to this add about three pints of briskly-boiling water; place on the front of the range and allow it to boil fast for sixty seconds, then clear with a third of a cup of cold water and remove gently to the side of the range. After a minute or two pour into the pot in which it is to go to the table, having first scalded the pot thoroughly. Coffee made in this way and served with cream and sugar is particularly good.

After each time used, the coffee-pot should be carefully washed in soap suds and thoroughly rinsed, care being taken that it is perfectly dry before it is put away. A coffee lover would prefer to have but one cup of good coffee a day, rather than two poorly made. Why is it, with so many excellent methods of making it, coffee is so often found to be the most undesirable beverage one can drink? Take a little time, exercise a little care in making it, serve it more daintily, and no one can or will say of your coffee but that it is delicious.

Have You Made Your Mince Meat

Appleless Mince Meat.—Chop fine 8 lbs. green tomatoes and add 6 lbs. sugar, 1 oz. each of cloves, cinnamon and allspice, simmer slowly till tomatoes are clear. Then put away in covered jars. For pies take in the proportion of 2-3 tomatoes and 1-3 meat and season with butter, boiled cider and sugar if needed, as regular mince pies should be seasoned.

Mince Meat.—Two bowls chopped apples, 1 bowl chopped meat, 1-4 lb. suet, grated rind and juice of 1 lemon, 2 teacups molasses, 1 large teaspoon each of cinnamon, and cloves, 1 nutmeg, 1 lb. raisins, 1-2 lb. currants, 1-4 lb. citron cut fine, 1 quart cider and sugar and salt to taste.

Mince Pies.—Five crackers rolled fine, 2 cups hot water, 2 cups sugar, 1 cup raisins, chopped a little, 1 cup molasses, 1-2 cup vinegar (fill the cup with water), 1-2 cup butter, 1 teaspoonful each of cloves, cinnamon and salt, 1-2 teaspoon pepper and nutmeg.—Mrs. Henry Hall.

Cracker Mince Pie.—Two cups rolled crackers, 1 cup sugar, 2-3 cup molasses, 1-2 cup butter, 1-2 cup boiled cider, 1 cup hot water, 1 cup currants, 1 cup raisins and spices same as for a mince-meat pie.

Mock Mince Pie.—Twelve crackers rolled fine, 1 cup hot water, 1-2 cup vinegar, 1 cup molasses, 1 cup sugar, 1 cup currants, 1 cup raisins, spice to taste; measure with a teacup. Some use 1 cup dried bread crumbs and also add small cup butter. This will make four pies.

No Sale.

What did Barebones say when you asked him if he served equine steaks?

He gave a horse laugh.