SOME VERY CURIOUS WILLS

QUEER DOCUMENTS AND WHAT FATE BEFELL THEM.

Where an Earl Hid His Will — Remarkable Document of a Laborer in Australia—A Wealthy Physician Hid His Will in a Secret Cabinet — One Preser ed in Cotton Wool — Some Wills Are Torn Up, Eaten by Rats, and the Like.

Have you made your will? Do you expect a legacy? In either event or in neither you cannot fail to be interested in the testamentary oddities and curiosities that are met with by the patient one who undertakes an exploration of the vaults beneath the Probate Registry in Somerset House, London. Here millions of original documents are carefully stored away, their dates running back for centuries, many of them strange and unique almost beyond belief. Rummage among them and you will conclude that the motive of "Mr. Meeson's Will" is, after all, a long way from being an original conception.

Recently an exploration was made of Somerset House's subterranean vaults by Mr. L.S. Lewis, with exceedingly interesting results. One of the first objects to attract his attention was the leg of an old fashioned four post bedstead. What relation it could bear to the surroundings was a puzzle until he learned the story attached to it.

WHERE AN EARL HID HIS WILL.

The Earl of S.—, it appears was an eccentric peer, morose and reserved, who apparently suspected everybody of similar motives. He used to hide things—important deeds and letters and bank notes for large amounts he bundled into damp cellars, with disastrous results. There was hardly a hole or corner in his house in which he had not secreted some treasure.

After His Lordship's death the will and first codicil were readily forthcoming, mainly because they were in safer keeping than His Lordship's. The second and most important codicil, however, took no less than three years to find! After the earl's death the bed on which he slept was unceremoniously pitched into the lumber room, and it was by the merest accident that a servant at length discovered the long lost codicil, cunningly tied to the bar of the bedstead leg. The paper was found folded neatly and resting on the ledge formed by the bar where it meets the bed post. As His Lordship lay in bed it was his delight to withdraw the will from its hiding place, he could do easily, and either dwell with satisfaction on its contents or else make any slight alteration that pleased him. It was the poor man's only hobby.

As the missing codicil contained legacies and bequests to a very large amount its ultimate production caused a great deal of excitement. And, therefore, in order that the whole romantic story might readily be demonstrated before the Probate Court, a complete model of the entire bedstead was made on the scale of one inch to a foot.

Quite a remarkable document which excited Mr. Lewis' interest was the

WILL OF A LABORER,

who died at Sunnyside, Canterbury, New Zealand, on June 11, 1868. He left all he had—some $1,500, in the British Post Office—to his wife, who lived at Ryc[illegible], Sussex. The will was rather [illegible]aborate affair, engrossed at pro[illegible]ious length on parchment, and [illegible]dorned with the seal of the Supreme Court of New Zealand in the bottom left hand corner. The solicitor responsible for the document was proud of his work. He was YMr. William H. Kissling, of Auckland, N.Z. In due time Mr. Kissling despatched the will to a brother professional in London, but the ship conveying the will was dashed to pieces n a hurriicane off the Scilly Islands, and out "on the face of the waters" went the will with the crew and cargo.

Some time after this tragic occurrence one of the Cornish fishermen was mending his nets on the beach when he saw a packet washed ashore. It was that antipodean will. The fisherman made inquiries as to the best course to pursue and he at length sent on the packet to London.

In his affidavit the solicitor to whom the will was addressed gives some quaint details. He received it in an envelope from the General Post Office on May 18, 1875. On the envelope was written "Ex Schiller"—the name of the ill fated vessel.

"The will," says the lawyer, "was sent with other documents, by Mr. William Henry Kissling, solicitor, of Auckland, New Zealand, to me, to enable me to take out letters of administration of the estate and effects in England belonging to the deceased. The said parchment writing, and the letters and papers which accompanied it and the envelope from Mr. Kissling which enclosed them, were perfectly wet and saturated, altogether a confused packet like pulp. It was only by using the greatest care that the said parchment writing was separated and stretched out as the same now appears, using the greatest care that the said packet came to England in the mail steamer called the Schiller, which was wrecked on the Scilly Islands on Friday, May 7, 1875."

Still another testamentary curiosity in Somerset House is

THE SECRET CABINET

which belonged to a wealthy physician who lived more than a century ago. He had an astonishing number of relations, and as he advanced in years their attentions became intolerable. They all wanted to know how the old fellow was going to dispose of his property. They wrangled and fought with him, and they wrangled and fought among themselves. The old doctor had a plan of his own. He just made his will definitely, and then made a place of safekeeping for it. In other words, he set to work and made this secret cabinet with his own hands, taking the utmost delight in devising the many panels and drawers, and when once the will was deposited in the cabinet the latter never left the doctor's possession, even for a moment. He slept with it under his pillow, and he took it about with him from place to place.

His "bedside manner" grew tenfold more serious when he was sitting on the cabinet and he allowed the report to get abroad that he carried in the brass bound box medicines of wonderous efficacy. His income increased to quite an enormous figure, but at length the time came when he had to relinguish his beloved box, which, of course, fell into the hands of his relatives.

As might be imagined, the moment the contents of the will were made known, there was a frightful outcry followed by prolonged litigation. However, matters were eventually arranged exactly as the astute old doctor had desired, a poor married niece coming in for nearly the whole of an immense fortune.

LEARNED SHORTHAND.

There is on record in Somerset House only one will made in shorthand. The paper lies in a glass case, set in a box made to resemble a bound book, so that the moment you lift up the cover you behold this most curious of wills. On the outside is the name, "H. Worthington, February, 1815."

The Rev. Hugh Worthington was formerly of Highbury place, Islington. His unique will reads:—

"Northampton square, June 16, 1813. I, Hugh Worthington give and bequeath to my dear Eliza Price, who is my adopted child, all I do or may possess, real and personal to be at her sole and entire disposal; and I do appoint William K[illegible]t, Esq., of London Wall, my respected friend, with the said Eliza Price, to execute this my last will and testament.

The other side of the queer little box also opens, and here we read:—

"Most dearly beloved my Eliza—Very small as this letter is it contains the copy of my very last will. I have put it with your letters, that it may be sure to fall into your hands. Should accident or any other cause destroy the the original, I have taken pains to write this very clearly that you may read it easily. I do know you will perfect yourself in shorthand for my sake. To-morrow we go for Worthing, I most likely never to return. I hope to write a few lines to express the best wishes and prayers and hopes of thy true

NOT TO BE TOUCHED.

All sorts of queer accidents happen to wills. They get burned or thrown into the water; torn up, eaten by rats, and the like. One will in the great registry, Mr. Lewis states, is preserved in cotton wool in a big box. If the document itself were touched it would crumble to pieces. It is the will of a rich baker, and somehow it got into a big oven where it remained for months. The original is never disturbed now, a copy being kept for reference.

Indeed there seems to be practically no end in the curious and interesting wills in the Probate Registry. There is, for example, a little pocketbook of Nelson's which seems to have escaped the notice of even Captain Mahan. In it the hero makes a strange kind of will. He bequeaths Lady Hamilton to his King and country, and relates in sonorous prose how she helped him to win certain victories. He also rambles on about some letters she stole for him. This extraordinary will is dated "In sight of the 'Alleid Fleets.'"

HUGH WORTHINGTON."

WOMAN'S BEAUTY.

This question is discussed in an English journal by a writer who maintains that "the fullness of beauty does not reach its zenith under the age of 35 or 40." This claim is disputed by another writer, who cites the opinion of women themselves as shown by the undoubted fact that "any woman who craved admiration on the score of her personal appearance would be vastly more pleased were her age to be guessed as being 30 rather than 40."

This is a very wide and delicate question. Much depends upon the race and not a little upon the woman. In some southern lands women are either wrinkled and shriveled or fat and shapeless grandmothers before they reach the age mentioned. In England and in this country it often happens that the "fullness of beauty" in women "does not reach its zenith under the age of 35 or 40."

The question of taste, too, has much to do with a decision, and it is a canon of criticism that in matters of taste there can be no unvarying standard of judgment. There is a beauty of the bud and a beauty of the blossom in all its glory. In the eye of cold fact a woman probably reaches the fullness of her beauty at her physical maturity and ripeness, a varying time in different climes and with different women. And—blessed fact!—she remains beautiful as long as she looks so in the eyes of those who love her.

The age of limit is very elastic, depending upon health, temperament, heredity, conditions of life and a dozen other things that help to preserve or to impair that beauty, which is its own excuse for being—and for being seen!

REMEDY FOR COLIC.

This remedy is nothing more nor less than glycerine, as much as the child will take. It is best to begin with a teaspoonful, but there is no fear of giving too much. The first effect is the quieting of the cry of pain; the second, the belching of the gas; later the gas passes away downward, and finally, after an easy movement of the bowels, the child falls into a sweet, restful sleep. Try it, dear readers, its efficacy will surprise you, as will also the readiness with which the little one will suck it from the spoon.

THE HOME.

DESSERTS IN VARIETY.

It seems that every housekeeper would make it a point to provide herself with a good cook book. A novel one seen recently was a strictly home-made affair, but it was highly prized by the owner, because it contained only tried and tested recipes. This ingenious woman had obtained a blank book with strong covers and in it she had pasted every recipe that was worth keeping. She had cut them from all kinds of papers and collected from all sources, many of them being neatly written with ink. The recipes were divided under different heads; for instance, under "desserts" she had dozens of delicate and economical dishes to select from. One heading was "meats," another "bread," "cake," "pies,' etc., were all neatly arranged. She kept adding to her list continually, but only such recipes as the cook of ordinary ability could deal with. This is a wideawake housewife who has the welfare of her family at heart, and who endeavors to set as nice a table as her purse and ability will permit.

There are housekeepers who serve the same thing day after day almost, simply because they will not try something new. Last summer the writer had an experience of that kind. It was at a little summer resort, and a number of the people in the town and country round opened their houses to the summer visitors. At this particular house the boarders were served pie every day for dinner while we were there, and we heard from former boarders that they never wanted pie again, and friends who were there after us raised the same complaint. Now this is certainly inexcusable. There seemed to be plenty of milk, eggs, fruit, etc., from which to make other desserts that are as easily cooked as pie, but this housewife made no use of them for anything of that kind. The charitably inclined of her boarders said she knew no better, but others claimed it was pure indolence.

Those housewives who are ambitious to have everything nice can always get a number of good recipes from papers, or from neighbors and friends. It is wise to write them in a blank book, so as to have them to refer to. There are some excellent cook-books on the market which cost from 50 cents to $2.00, but there are a great number of the recipes in them which are not available in ordinary cooking. The following are some very delicate desserts, simple to make and economical also. That is generally what the average housekeeper seeks:—

Peach Tapioca Pudding.—Boil one cupful of tapioca in water, until clear. Drain the juice from a can of peaches and place the peaches in a pudding-dish. Pour over them the tapioca, dot the top with bits of butter and bake for twenty minutes. The juice of the fruit is used for sauce thickened with a little flour and made sweeter, if need be. For fresh fruits, boil the tapioca until clear and pour it over the fruit. Serve very cold.

Raspberries, cherries stoned, and peaches pared and quartered are nice served in this manner. Sometimes the fruit is pulped and the juice only is used, in which case the whole is frozen as for ice cream and forms a delicious and nourishing sweet.

Snow Pudding.—Use half an ounce of gelatine dissolved in a cupful of cold water; allow to stand for twenty minutes, when stir into one and one-half cupfuls of boiling water; place over the fire andwhen all is dissolved add one cupful of sugar, the juice of one lemon and the well-beaten whites of three eggs. Beat all together until light, when pour into a mold. When it is hardened turn into a glass dish and serve with the following sauce: Beat the yolks of the eggs until thick, add a cupful of sugar and one cupful of boiling water. Place over hot water and stir until it becomes thick, but on no account allow to boil.

Corn-Starch Pudding.—This is very delicate and extremely good, while very quickly prepared. Place over the fire one pint of water, add a pinch of salt. Mix four tablespoonfuls of corn-starch with a little cold water until free from lumps. Now whisk the whites of three eggs to a solid froth, add half a cupful of sugar, a teaspoonful of vanilla and the dissolved corn starch; beat all well together and pour it slowly into the boiling water. Stir constantly so it will form no lumps, and allow to cook about five minutes. Remove from the fire and pour into small cups that have previously been dipped in cold water. Allow to become icy cold, when serve with the following sauce also cold: Place over the fire one-half pint of water, beat in a small sauce-pan one teaspoonful of butter, two teaspoonfuls of flour and three tablespoonfuls of sugar. When well blended add the water; now pour the whole slowly over the yolks of three eggs, which must be well beaten. Place the mixture in a bowl, over hot water and stir until it thickens, when remove; flavor with vanilla and cool.

Lemon Rice.—Wash one teacupful of rice in several waters. Place over the fire with sufficient water to cover and simmer gently. Add also the thin, yellow rind of one lemon. When the rice is tender, add a generous lump of butter and sugar to sweeten. In the meantime squeeze the juice from two lemons and pare the other lemon very thin. Cut this yellow peel into tiny pieces or chop it fine. Place over the fire half a pound of sugar and half a gill of water with the strained lemon juice and the peel. Boil this syrup for ten minutes. Pile the rice onto a dish and pour over it the syrup, taking care the little shreds of lemon peel are equally distributed over the whole. Serve warm.

Lemon Custard.—Grate the thin yellow rind of one lemon and press out all the juice. Mix the grated rind and juice with one cupful of water, place over the fire, and allow to boil, when add one tablespoonful of butter, one tablespoonful of corn-starch, wet in half a cupful of cold water, when it boils again remove from the fire, add a tiny pinch of salt and allow to cool. Break two eggs into a bowl, reserving one of the whites of the eggs; beat the eggs until light, add one cupful of granulated sugar and add to the corn-starch. Pour into a buttered pan and bake until the custard is firm; about twenty minutes will be sufficient. Beat the white of egg to a stiff froth with a tablespoonful of sugar and spread this lightly over the top of the custard and return to the oven until a delicate brown.

This custard may also be cooked in small individual cups. Fill the cups and set them in a pan, which must be filled with boiling water to nearly reach the top of the cups. When the custards are baked, remove from the pan and allow to cool. Serve with a little grated nutmeg on top of each, or a bit of bright jelly.

OF TWIGS AND LEAVES.

Autumn leaves, pressed and dried, and rough twigs can be used in many pretty ways now. A very odd looking picture frame was made of twigs. Four pieces of the same length were used. The ends were cut off obliquely, and all the small stems and knots cut off close enough to the twig to make it rough looking. The frame was oblong and the twigs were crossed at the corners and cut out so as to fit into each other. They were then made secure with good glue. The back was arranged so that a picture could be put in and fastened by a pin nail at each side. The entire frame was given a coat of varnish, and looked quite pretty.

A little easel about fifteen inches high made from knotty twigs was quite novel. To make one, secure two as straight twigs, fifteen inches long, as can be found. The rougher and more knotty they are, the prettier. Then one twig about six inches long and another four inches are required. The piece at the back which holds the easel up may be a fine, smooth, stick fourteen or fifteen inches long. The shortest twig is placed across the two long ones two inches from the top of each, and one inch of the short stick protruding on each side. The long sticks should be put on at a slight angle so the base will be wider than at the top. The short twig should be cut so that the long ones will fit in. About four inches from the bottom of the long twigs place the six-inch piece across, and glue all together. Fasten the back stick to the middle of the short twig at the top at an angle sufficient to keep the easel erect. Place a photo or other picture on the lower twig and see how pretty it all is. It may be varnished if desired.

An odd "catch-all" to be hung up on the wall was made of wood, twigs and pressed autumn leaves. There were two very thin boards, measuring twelve by nine inches, placed together V shape. Two triangular pieces were cut to fit the sides and the whole thing was put together with pin nails. The boards had been made very smooth with sandpaper. Then autumn leaves had been carefully glued on in a pretty circular design. The whole had then been varnished, leaves and all. All the edges were finished with twigs, glued into place and varnished. The red, gold and brown of the leaves, keep nicely under varnish, and the whole made rather a novel ornament.

CIDER APPLE SAUCE.

It is almost time for making cider apple sauce, still a stand-by in many farmers' homes and when well made, a sauce that is rich and delicious. To be at its best, the sauce should be left with its natural flavor. If good apples are used, and none other are advisable, the apple flavor will be better than that given by spices. For the real old-fashioned sauce boil the cider down one-third, add the apples, and cook till thick, and a homogeneous mass, dark in color, delicious to the palate, and smooth under the spoon. At the last it requires very careful watching to see that it does not burn. An asbestos mat under the pan helps avoid danger of burning, but cannot be relied upon to prevent.

Add the sugar when the sauce is nearly done; boil half an hour, then put into cans. If made late in the season, after the weather is cold, the sauce will keep in jars or crocks if kept in a cool place. It should not freeze.

I wouldn't make up such a quantity that everybody gets tired of it before it is gone, and the children turn up their noses and say "same old cider apple sass;" but a small supply, occasionally put on the table, is apt to be regarded as a treat. I make mine in a fourteen quart dishpan and find the supply ample for a family of four.

Cider apple sauce, make a fairly good pie in the spring when pie "fillin'" is scarce. At least an occasional one finds favor at our house.

YOUR BIRTHDAY.

The following list will give the gem, flower and zodiac sign for the month of your birth: January—Garnet, Snowdrop, Aquarius; February—Amethyst, Primrose, Pisces; March—Bloodstone, Violet, Aries; April—Diamond, Daisy, Taurus; May—Emerald, Hawthorne, Gemini; June—Agate, Honeysuckle, Cancer; July—Ruby, AWater Lily, Leo; August—Sardonyx, Poppy, Virgo; September—Sapphire, Morning Glory, Lubre; October—Opal, Hops, Scorpio; November—Topaz, Chrysanthemum, Sagittarius; December—Turquoise, Holly, Capicornus.

FAMILY COMPLIMENTS.

You're no longer a spring chicken, sneered the angry husband.

But you're the same old goose, came the answer with a snap.

HARD TIMES IN THE RAND.

White Men Now Eager to Work for the Wages Formerly Paid to Kaffirs.

The Acting Deputy Administrator has published a statement warning people from going into Rhodesia before the railway is opened in November, says a Cape Town letter. This is one of the most momentous warnings given by a high official in many years. Large numbers of people have looked toward Rhodesia as the place where they could make their homes. Thousands have gone up only to find that it is a land of tragedy. Work has been scarce and the cost of living enormous.

The warning, however, is not an admission of failure on the part of the officials of the Chartered Company. The excessive cost of transport has simply prevented any work from being carried out. With the opening of the railway all this will be changed, and then Rhodesia will be the land for the pioneer. The opening of the railway will be an object lesson to the whites and blacks of South Africa. What would Speke and Grant and Mungo Park think if they could know that in the early days of November, "the puffing billy" will run through a savage land?

Coming a little lower down the country to the Transvaal, the South African story of the week is still a very gloomy one. Only one piece of information gives a little hope. There is a record gold output for August. During the month 259,603 ounces of gold have been mined in Johannesburg alone, and making the total output for the eight months of this year, 1,890,-512 ounces. And yet during the whole of this year the situation has been going

FROM BAD TO WORSE,

until Johannesburg is now one of the worst places in the world for respectable people to live in. Despite its marvellous climate and its enormous yield of gold, there are probably more starving people in Johannesburg than in any other city of its size in the world. The average profit on this enormous yield of gold is said to be 3 per cent. only, owing to the appalling burdens placed upon the industry by the Government of the Transvaal. So gigantic are the impositions that many of the largest mines have been closed down, as "non-payable." The consequence is that large numbers have been thrown out of employment. There is a miniature reign of terror on the Rand to-day. Every man's hand seems to be against his neighbor's. Burglaries, assaults, daring robberies audacious swindles are the rule rather than the exception. Educated white men are taking the work which a year ago was not considered good enough for decent Kaffirs at wages running between 3s. 6d. and 4s. a day. The Government has been compelled, by the force of circumstances to start relief works and a large number of white men have been compelled by the power of hunger to accept the pittances offered.

An industrial commission has been sitting for a long time, and it has drawn up a series of reforms which it declares to be absolutely necessary if the Rand is to be saved from desolation. These include a heavy reduction of the duties of dynamite, the lowering of railway rates, and the restriction of monopolies. Whether the Government will face the situation and try to secure its own salvation as well as the salvation of the country, is one of the many mysteries which time alone can solve.

WHY THEY FAIL.

A brusque man of business, in whose conversation there were no "frills," was asked why he had discharged a certain young woman from his employ.

"She was too free with her tongue," he said, bluntly. "She talked too much to suit me, or any other man who pays people for their time and who expects them to make proper use of it."

This was not the first young woman who had lost a good position because of her failure to appreciate the fact that the habit of idle talk is one that few business men will tolerate.

The young woman who enters the business world for the purpose of supporting herself should profit by the lesson contained in these words of Fuller's: "Learn to hold thy tongue. Five words cost Zacharias forty weeks' silence."

The woman whose services are most valued in a business house or private office is the woman who is never intrusive in word or manner, but who goes quietly and faithfully about her work, keeping her opinions to herself, and leaving idle chatter to the unbalanced and the unwise.

Business men always dislike to have their affairs talked about to others by those in their employ, and those who have a proper conception of the true relations existing between the business man and his employees will regard those relations as confidential, and will not lend themselves to idle talk about the affairs of their employer. Of course this applies quite as much to men as to women, but those who are in a position to know maintain that women are more given to offending in this respect than men, and that women are more given to idle chatter during business hours

Be this as it may, the women who fill the best and most desirable positions in the business world are the women who have been clear-sighted enough to comprehend the full meaning of the words "business is business," and who have given their time and their thought to business and to nothing else during the time belonging to their employers.