ORIGIN OF "BEST MAN"

BRIDEMAN'S DUTIES IN OLDEN TIMES.

He Gave the Bride Away and Passed the Cake and Cups.

It may be a surprise to some people to know, says the London Globe, that the phrase "best man"—the bridegroom's nearest attendant—is of Scottish origin. In the North, also, the principal bridesmaid used to be called the "best maid." Neither expression has much to recommend it. It is a great pity, indeed, that "best man," an inelegant and in itself meaningless phrase, should have so completely ousted from our common everyday speech the good old English name of "brideman" or "bridesman." Another old name is "groomsman" and in days gone by the bridegroom was attended, not by one friend, but by several, who were known as the bridemen or groomsmen.

The term "best man" came into use, presumably, to indicate the one of these who took the lead in performing their various duties and was in closest attendance on the bridegroom. In recent years the custom of having groomsmen has been occasionally revived, but it has not become general. At a fashionable wedding, four or five years ago, the bride was content with five bridesmaids and two pages, whereas the bridegroom was supported by no fewer than nine groomsmen.

But at the present time such an array has by no means the same meaning, nor are those attendant friends of so much use, as in days of old. The forerunner of the brideman was the brideleader, whose duty it was to bring the bride to the bridegroom. In most countries where the real or pretended capture of the bride was an essential part of the ceremony, and wherever traces of the very ancient custom of bride capture existed, the friend or friends of the bridegroom had the important office of capturing the lady and

BRINGING HER TO HER LORD.

In one of Dryden's plays there is the line:—"Betwixt her guards she seemed by bridemen led," and Brand tells us that at many old English weddings the bridegroom was led to the church between two maids, and the bride by two young men, holding her by the arms as if unwilling. This was evidently a survival of the idea of capture.

The same idea, somewhat more disguised, can be traced in the custom which was not unknown at old-fashioned weddings less than a century ago, in the North of England, and in the West of Scotland, of the bridegroom's "best man" escorting the bride to the church. It has been disputed, naturally, whether the groom's nearest friend was chosen as escort with the idea of protecting the lady from seizure by others, or whether he might be regarded as the leader in the act of capture.

But whichever idea lay at the back of the practice, it was clearly a survival connected with the custom of marriage by capture. Later, the bridemen had various functions to perform which have now become obsolete. There was still a trace of the capture idea in the old duty at one time assigned to the brideman of giving the bride away. He led her to the church and then acted the part now filled by the lady's father or other near male relative.

In the old seventeenth century ballad of the "Golden Glove," which used to be a great favorite at rural gatherings in all parts of the country in the old, unsophisticated days, before the melancholy monstrosities of the modern music hall had driven the genuine old English ballads and songs out of use and memory— in this ballad there are the lines which allude to the custom named:—

'I thought you had been at the wedding," she cried,
"To wait on the squire and give him his bride."

And it has been pointed out that the same custom may be hinted at in the marriage service rubric—"The minister receiving the woman at her father's or friend's hands."

Among the Shropshire peasantry in quite recent years something of the old custom seems to have prevailed. Miss Burne, in her delightful book on "Shropshire Folklore," says that at weddings in humble life the bride's father is seldom and her mother never present. As a rule the only companions to church of the bride and groom are the best man and the bridesmaid. In such circumstances it is obvious that the lady must be given away by her lover's friend, on whose arm she has walked to church.

LUCKY OMEN.

A still more curious thing is that it is considered lucky, Miss Burke tells us, for either the best man or the bridesmaid to be already married. "I have really seen," she writes, "a married woman acting as 'bridesmaid!'" Less than twenty years ago a Newport newspaper, describing a village wedding, said that Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so, of ———, "accompanied the happy couple and performed the offices of best man and bridesmaid, respectively."

Another old function of the bridemen, or bridesquires, as they were sometimes called, was to carry the cake and the bridebowl—the loving bowl, or cup, was handed round at a wedding, so that the friends might drink the health of the newly-married pair—a kind of loving-cup ceremony.

But before the proceedings had reached this pleasant point, it had been the duty of the bridemen to lift the bride over the threshold. This is an ancient and widespread custom, the meaning of which has caused much sheading of ink. In the west of Scotland, of old, says Mr. Napier, in his book on the folklore of that region, "the threshold of the house was disenchanted by charms, and by anointing it with certain unctuous perfumes, but as it was considered unlucky for the wife to tread upon the threshold on first entering her house, she was lifted over it and seated upon a piece of wood, a symbol of domestic industry."

The custom is not confined to European peoples, for a somewhat analogous practice exists in China, where the bride is carried into the house by a matron, and at the door is lifted over a pan of charcoal. Apart from marriage, even in this country, there are folk who are careful on entering a house to step over and not on the threshold. There is a world of lore, indeed, surrounding the subject of the threshold into which we cannot here enter.

The modern best man may feel thankful that his duties are not so onerous as those of his predecessors of long ago; nor need he trouble to be on his guard against unlucky omens, or on the watch to propitate the uncertain goddess, Fate.

THIS BUTCHER IS ALL RIGHT

HAD DIABETES BUT WAS CURED BY DODD'S KIDNEY PILLS.

Great Interest in the Case as People Realize what will Cure Diabetes will Cure any Kidney Disease.

Toronto, Ont., Aug. 1.—(Special)—As the people learn to realize how much the general health depends on keeping the kidneys right, and how many diseases are the direct result of bad kidney action every verified cure of a severe kidney disease is received with interest.

For that reason the case of A. W. Holman, the well-known butcher of 193½ Mutual street this city, is well worthy of attention. Mr. Holman had Diabetes. Now he is a well man. Dodd's Kidney Pills cured it. Asked concerning his case, Mr. Holman said :—

"Yes, I had Diabetes for six years. I tried all kinds of remedies but to no use. My attention was called to Dodd's Kidney Pills by an advertisement and I began to use them. I only used six boxes when I was completely cured."

As it is conceded that what will cure Diabetes will cure any Kidney Disease it must be admitted that Dodd's Kidney Pills will cure any Kidney Disease.

DUKE CYRIL'S ROMANCE.

Survivor of Petropavlovsk Will Marry in Royal Family.

A romantic errand will bring the widowed Duchess of Saxe-Coburg—who will be better remembered as the Duchess of Edinburgh—to England soon on a brief visit to her brother-in-law, King Edward, after an absence of three years from England.

It is understood that the purport of her Royal and Imperial Highness' visit is to obtain the sanction of King Edward to the engagement of her daughter, Princess Victoria, formerly the wife of the Grand Duke of Hesse, to the Grand Duke Cyril of Russia.

The Grand Duke Cyril, who had so miraculous an escape from the Russian battleship Petropavlovsk when she was blown up by a Japanese mine before Port Arthur, is the hero of royal love story, of which the Princess is the heroine.

She is his first cousin, and he fell in love with her when he was sixteen and she was two months younger. The attachment, however, was viewed with disfavor by relations on both sides, and a year later the Princess was married to the Grand Duke Ernest Louis of Hesse.

It was an unfortunate match, for the parties to it were diametrically opposed in temperament and tastes, and had apparently no point in common.

The marriage took place in 1894; in 1901 it was dissolved an the ground of irreconcilable mutual antipathy. The only issue of the union was the little Princess Elizabeth, who so pathetically fell a victim to cholera last year.

After the divorce the Grand Duke Cyril renewed his suit. Then the Czar intervened. Grave reasons, both religious and social, he said, forbade the marriage which the Grand Duke Cyril sought.

The Czarina is a sister of the Grand Duke Ernest of Hesse, Princess Victoria's former husband; and the Grand Duke Cyril may one day succeed to the Russian throne. Moreover, the Russian church prohibits a marriage, either of the parties to which has been divorced.

The Grand Duke Cyril declared that he would marry the Princess even though he lost all his rights and property, but to this sacrifice the Princess firmly refused to consent.

Then came the death of her little daughter, on which the Princess dismissed her lover and refused to see any one, and the Grand Duke Cyril went to the front.

When he came back wounded it was to find that the Czar had withdrawn his opposition to the union, and he hurried on with the good news to Coburg.

All that now remains to complete this love story is the acquiescence of King Edward, for the consent of the Sovereign in Council is imperative in the case of all marriages of Princes and Princesses of his family.

DOWN OF BIRDS' SCALPS.

A basket recently changed hands in California which took the squaw who made it three years to complete. It was in the form of a fancy work-basket, entirely covered with the down of woodpeckers' scalps, among which were a number of hanging loops of strung beads, and around the rim an upright row of little black quails' plumes. Altogether there were eighty plumes, which required the sacrifice of as many quails, and at least 150 woodpeckers had been robbed to furnish the beautiful scarlet nap for the outside. It was originally purchased from the squaw who designed it for $25, yet it was sold not very long ago for $1625

How's This

We offer One Hundred Dollars Reward for any case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure.

F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O.

We, the undersigned, have known F. J. Cheney for the last 15 years, and believe him perfectly honorable in all business transactions, and financially able to carry out any obligations made by his firm.

WALDING, KINNAN & MARVIN,
Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O.

Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. Testimonials sent free. Price, 75c. per bottle. Sold by all Druggists.

Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

A rather pompous orator rose on one occasion to make an extended speech at an electioneering meeting. He began in this rather sententious fashion, "Mr. Chairman, I have lived long enough——" "Hear, hear," yelled a number of the audience, and such a storm of laughter broke out that the aspirant for political honors was forced to resume his seat.

Minard's Liniment Cures Diphtheria

Edith—"Tell me frankly, George, if you were a rich man, do you think you would ask me to marry you?" George—"I don't think it would be necessary, Edith; in that case you would probably do the asking."

Keep Minard's Liniment in the House,

"Then you have no sympathy for the deserving poor)" said the charity worker. "Me?" retorted the self-made man. "Why, sir, I have nothing but sympathy."

$50.00 TO CALIFORNIA AND RETURN.

Via the Chicago, Union Pacific and North-Western line from Chicago, Aug. 15 to Sept. 10. Choice of routes going and returning. Correspondingly low rates from all points in Canada. Two trains a day from Chicago through without change. Daily and personally conducted tourist car excursions. Write for itinerary and full particulars regarding special train leaving Chicago August 18 and 25. B. H. Bennett, 2 King st. east, Toronto, Ont.

Young Wife (just home from the cooking school)—"I feel so encouraged! I was complimented on my progress to-day. But poor Miss Smith! I am really sorry for her. She tried hard, but she doesn't seem to get on at all." Young Husband—"You must remember, my dear, that Miss Smith has no one to practise on."

Flies Carry Contagion

Wilson's Fly Pads

Kill the flies and disease germs too.

More than half the battle in cleaning greasy dishes is in the soap you use. If it's Sunlight Soap it's the best. 6B

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The popularity of Blue Ribbon Tea is a fact.

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THE DAWSON COMMISSION CO, Limited

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HAUNTS OF FISH AND GAME.

Attractions for Sportsmen on the Line of the Grand Trunk.

The Grand Trunk Railway Company has issued a handsome publication, profusely illustrated with half-tone engravings, descriptive of the many attractive localities for sportsmen on their line of railway. Many of the regions reached by the Grand Trunk seem to have been specially prepared for the delectation of mankind, and where for a brief period the cares of business are cast aside and life is given up to enjoyment. Not only do the "Highlands of Ontario" present unrivalled facilities for both hunting, fishing and camping, but the 30,000 Islands of the Georgian Bay, Thousand Islands and St. Lawrence River, Rideau River and Lakes, Lake St. John, and the many attractive localities in Maine and New Hampshire, present equal opportunities for health, pleasure and sport. All these localities are reached by the Grand Trunk Railway System, and on trains unequalled on the continent. Abstracts of Ontario, Michigan, Quebec, New Hampshire and Maine fish and game laws are inserted in the publication for the guidance of sportsmen. The Grand Trunk Railway has also issued descriptive illustrated matter for each district separately, which are sent free on application to the agents of the Company and to Mr. J. D. McDonald, District Passenger Agent, G. T. R., Union Station, Toronto.

"Ah," said the tourist who was visiting the enterprising South American Republic, "so you are the insurgents, I presume?" "No, sir," replied the commander, "we were insurgents last week. We are the administration now."

I was Cured of a severe cold by MINARD'S LINIMENT.
Oxford, N. S. R. F. HEWSON.

I was Cured of a terrible sprain by MINARD'S LINIMENT.
FRED COULSON.
Yarmouth, N. S. Y.A.A.C.

I was Cured of Black Erysipelas by MINARD'S LINIMENT.
Ingersville. J. W. RUGGLES.

OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

The British Consul at Calais, France, tells in his annual report, of an effort to deal with old-age pensions. Twenty-three years ago M. Chatelus formed a society, the rules for membership being a monthly payment of a franc, all the funds to be invested, and at the end of twenty years the interest on capital to be equally divided among members, and in each succeeding year those who had been members for twenty years to receive their equal share of this interest. The present rate of pension is $72 per year. The membership now stands at 347,951, with a capital of over $7,500,000.

Sunflowers make good fuel. The stalks when dry are as hard as wood and make a good fire, and the seed-heads, with the seed in, burn better than coal.

BUCHANAN'S UNLOADING OUTFIT

Works well both on stacks and in barns, unloads all kinds of hay and grain either loose or in sheaves. Send for catalogue to

M. T. BUCHANAN & CO., Ingersoll, Ont.

FEATHER DYEING

Cleaning and Curling and Kid Gloves cleaned. These can be sent by post, 1c per oz. the best place is

BRITISH AMERICAN DYEING CO.
MONTREAL

It happened on Sunday night. They were sitting, not so far apart, on the sofa. "Love is intoxicating, is it not?" he asked. "It certainly is," was her coy reply; "but there is no law that I know of which prohibits a person from indulging in it on Sunday."

For Over Sixty Years

MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP has been used by millions of mothers for their children while teething. It soothes the child, softens the gums, allays pain, cures wind colic, regulates the stomach and bowels, and is the best remedy for Diarrhœa. Twenty-five cents a bottle. Sold by druggists throughout the world. Be sure and ask for "MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP." 22—0

Augustus—"Darling Wilhelmina, just one word. Will you be mine?" Wilhelmina—"You must ask papa." Augustus—"What's the use of that? I've asked no end of papas, and they all said 'no.'"

Minard's Liniment is used by Physicians

"You complain of the expense of a typewriter. Why don't you have your wife do it?" "I can't dictate to my wife."

Lever's Y-Z (Wise Head) Disinfectant Soap Powder is a boon to any home. It disinfects and cleans at the same time.

Publisher—"This work of yours isn't as good as it used to be." Author—"It doesn't need to be. I've got a reputation now."

Minard's Liniment for sale everywhere

Distinguished Artist—"Perhaps if you come here you will get a better light on the picture. This studio is not nearly large enough." Fair Visitor (desirous to understand)—"Yes, yes, I know. One can't get far enough away from your pictures!"

Summer Colds

You should cure that cold at once. It is not only making you feel miserable, but it is doing you harm. Take

Shiloh's Consumption Cure The Lung Tonic

It is guaranteed to cure you. Your money refunded if it doesn't.

At all druggists, 25c., 50c. and $1.00 a bottle. 503