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Perhaps if the children, and the "grown-ups" too, always ate exactly the right quantities of exactly the right things, at just the proper times, and in every other way obeyed the rules of health, there would be no sickness in the family, and no need of medicine.

But they never have and probably never will, so in every family there are sure to be more or less frequent attacks of sick headache, biliousness, indigestion, constipation, and kidney and liver troubles, and occasionally some one is "sick in bed."

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This Little One is Better off than Most

HOW SCOTSMEN MARRY

CURIOUS LAWS AND CUSTOMS IN THE LAND OF CAKES.

The Old Green Green Weddings, Which Consisted of a Mere Declaration Before the Village Blacksmith, Have Passed and the Scottish Laws Governing Matrimony Are Highly Intricate.

If you ask anyone, layman or lawyer, outside of Scotland to give you a correct definition of the marriage laws of Scotland, there is the ten-to-one chance that he will be unable to do so. People have been heard to gravely declare that if a person, even in jest, introduced a lady as his wife to somebody else in Scotland, they were thereby tied together in matrimonial bonds. Others who do not "joke with difficulty" have been heard to state their belief that many Scots do not know whether they are married or single! Such matrimonial travesties may have had some semblance of reality in the romantic days of Green Green, when runaway couples were united in wedlock by the village blacksmith, but in these days a higher standard is placed upon the ceremony of marriage, both by the civil law and the law of the church.

Only the other day an important point arising out of evidence given by a Scottish minister at a bigamy trial in London was settled by the Registrar-General for Scotland, who has laid it down that "witnesses are essential" to the due observance of a Scottish marriage. The essence of the Scots' law is that marriage is essentially a civil contract. Thus, if two parties in the presence of witnesses solemnly and deliberately say to each other, "You are my wife," "You are my husband," they are as indisputably married as if the whole ceremony of banns, clergyman, and marriage lines had been gone through. No need, therefore, for anxiety on the marriage day about mistakes in these formalities; the want of any or all of them does not in the least impair the validity of the marriage. Or again, if a man and woman write, say, on the fly-leaf of a Bible the words, "I take you, A, for my wife," and "I take you, B, for my husband," respectively, and add their signatures, both intending to marry, they are as firmly bound as if they had been wedded by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Such are the unromantic facts of a Scottish marriage.

The propriety of allowing marriages to be effected in this simple way without the safeguard of any religious ceremony has often been questioned, but the fact remains that the Legislature allows it and that "it is suited," as one authority has said "to the Scottish national character and circumstances." It cannot be said, however, that such marriages are regarded with favor either by the law or by public opinion.

Another interesting point cropped up the other day when a minister refused to marry any couple whose names had been published on the registrar's board instead of having been proclaimed in the parish church. He did not object to the registrar's certificate on the ground that proclamation in the church was a guarantee of greater publicity, but simply that it was a prerogative of the minister that he was not obliged to marry parties unless after proclamation of banns. In older days the fees charged by church officials or kirk session for proclamations of banns were very heavy. An ordinary charge was \$5 to \$7.50, but sometimes it rose as high as \$10. After the Marriage Notice Act of 1878 came into operation (for the express purpose of encouraging regular marriages), the church had to set its house in order, and in 1880 an act was passed by the General Assembly, in which it was decreed that the fee for proclamation of banns and certificates should in no case exceed 60 cents. When originally instituted, proclamation of banns was made on three successive Sundays preceding the marriage, but it is now sufficient if proclamation is made on one Sunday "for the first, second, and third times."

Disenters of strong opinions like to show their independence by patronizing the registrar rather than the Clerk of the Kirk-Session, but the women still have the preference to be "cried in the kirk." The marriage "lines" are issued by the session clerk or the registrar, as the case may be, and the minister of any church can carry through all the formalities of the marriage at the bride's home or in an hotel. A small party of relatives, or a large assembly, is gathered, according to the accommodation of the house and the means at disposal. The more fashionable have their weddings about noon or two o'clock. But a great number of marriages take place in the evenings about seven or eight o'clock. Among the working classes Friday evening is the popular time, and in Glasgow and the other great towns the last Friday of the year sees as many weddings as any ordinary month. In recent years in Scotland marriages in church have become quite common among the better class people, but it is not often that a couple belonging to the artisan population are wedded in church.

As is the case in England, civil marriages are greatly on the increase in Scotland. They provide a lucrative business for a certain class of solicitors in large towns.

PISA'S LEANING TOWER.

It Seems to Have Been Intentionally Built Out of Plumb.

That remarkable piece of architecture, the leaning tower of Pisa, has always been a subject for discussion and conjecture. Many architects have closely inspected its foundations, measured its columns and theorized as to its strange departure from the perpendicular. In 1773 Goethe explained it as intentionally so built for the purpose of attracting the spectator's attention from the ordinary straight shafts of which Pisa in the twelfth century is said to have had 10,000.

The baptistry of the cathedral in Pisa, built also in the thirteenth century, leans seventeen inches out of the perpendicular, and the plinth blocks of its foundations tilt down gradually and evenly for nine inches in the direction of its inclination. The Campanile of San Nicolo leans forward in the same way, as likewise do the facades of the Cathedral of Pisa. It is worthy of note, too, that they curve back toward the perpendicular.

In the leaning tower there is a deliberate effort above the third floor to return to the perpendicular. This is made by a delicate series of changes in the pitch of the columns on the lower side, evidence taken by some investigators as indication of an attempt to remedy an error made by the architect in the foundation according to one theory having subsided as the result of their inexperience with the peculiar soil of Pisa.

Careful measurements below the third floor show that the arches of the staircase were deliberately increased in height and that the downward dip was so arranged that the weight of the tower was thrown off the overhanging side, writes Mr. Isaac Bickerstaffe in The London Field. This would have been quite unnecessary if the architect had meant the tower to rise straight up from its foundations.

The Mysterious Gegenschein.

There is visible in the night sky, under favorable circumstances, a faint light, rounded in outline and situated always exactly opposite to the place of the sun. It is called the "Gegenschein" and is one of the most inexplicable objects known to astronomers. According to a scientist, it may be a sort of cometary or meteoric satellite attending the earth. He supposes it to be composed of a cloud of meteors, situated about 1,000,000 miles from the earth and revolving around it in a period of just one year, so that the sun and the meteors are resting on opposite sides of the earth. He estimates that the size of this ghostly satellite may be nearly the same as that of the planet Jupiter—viz., about 86,000 miles in diameter.

Professional Forging.

Forging is generally quite an amateur affair in England, but in India where the profession of forger flourishes, it is the business of a lifetime. A father, for instance, who thinks he detects in his son an aptitude for the occupation, apprentices him to one of its masters. He learns among other things, engravings, photography, paper-making, chemistry, so that he can make any kind of metal, and, above all, fine penmanship and delicate miniaturelike painting. After several years hard work is pronounced proficient and sets up in business for himself, generally commencing by counterfeiting government stamps.

A Plague of Cats.

The Australians, besides the plague of rabbits which they have been afflicted for many years, are now obliged, it appears, to fight a "plague of cats." The cats were introduced originally in the hope that they might take to killing off the rabbits, and now some planters are putting in dogs to kill off the cats. The cat-hating misbehavior in some instances, the victims are looking about for dog-killers, and apparently there is to be no end to this endless-chain game of The House that Jack Built.

Functional Disease.

Organic disease is so called in cases where the structure of the organ has become so affected as to alter its character. If the liver hardens or the kidneys decay this is organic trouble. The doctors call it a functional disease when the functions of any organ are deranged—that is, do not work normally, when, for instance, the liver pours its secretions into the system too freely or the kidneys, through a cold, do not remove the impurities from the system.

The First Monotheists.

So far as we are able to discover, the Egyptian priests were the first monotheists. There existed in Egypt two kinds of religious teaching, the "ecoteric" and the "esoteric," that for the masses of the people and that for the select few, the little company of the "wise." The masses were polytheists, believing in the multitude of gods, while the few believed only in one god, of whom Osiris, head of the popular deities, was but a weak reflection.

Spilled Children.

The child that is constantly indulged, who has every wish gratified as soon as expressed, is sure to be a very miserable child and man. It thinks that the world revolves about it, and when at school or in the world it finds that it must both give and take it is made utterly wretched. The spoiled child is not only a terror to all others, but most painful to itself.

St. Peter's, Rome.

St. Peter's, Rome, was three and a half centuries in construction, and during this time forty-three popes reigned.

Huge Coral Reef.

The largest coral reef in the world is the Australian Barrier Reef, which is eleven hundred miles long.

We ought to say "Merry Christmas,"

even to the most undeserving, enough to do something for the poor. You are never really out of debt when you get something for nothing. Forget self and self interests long.

STARTLING POLITENESS.

In Sicily a Friendly Salutation May Scare a Stranger.

In Sicily you must not believe everything you think you hear, and above all you must not act rashly upon first impressions. When a Sicilian is feeling well his "Good morning, sir!" sounds like "Spartacus to the gladiator!" When any one addresses you as if murder was contemplated, with yourself as the victim, be easy. He is probably expressing a polite wish for a pleasant journey. In "Vistas in Sicily" Mr. Arthur Stanley Riggs gives his own experience of this characteristic Latin ferocity and infection:

On our first morning in Taormina a wild looking peasant beauty, bearing upon her shapely head a huge dripping amphora, stopped us with uncouth gestures and a laugh so dextrous that it startled me. Jerking her finger at the signora, she poured forth a torrent of impassioned Sicilian dialect that we could not understand, although I suspected she was saying that we were unfit to be in Taormina and had better leave immediately.

Unpleasant thoughts of the Mafiusi, the Black Hand we loosely call them, swept through me. The girl's utterance was so fierce, her expression so menacing, I wondered whether she might not be really an agent of the dreaded band. But before my combined annoyance and alarm led me into difficulties, two Taorminians came up and explained in Italian, "The signorina is afraid your signora will lose her handkerchief. It is falling out of her belt."

I was glad I had not skouted for the police!

When I asked the girl, who could understand Italian perfectly, although she spoke none herself, if I might photograph her, she consented and refused any gratuity. Then she wished us a torrential good day and vanished up the black and smoky stairs of a stone hut on one side of the side stairs.

When Hanging Pictures.

An annoyance to all good householders is the line of dirt on the wall that forms at the backs of all pictures at their lower edges and requires frequent dustings to prevent the paper or print from being permanently marred by an ugly discoloration. To obviate this, take small nails called brads, that are about the thickness of an ordinary pin and about half an inch long, and drive one in each lower corner of the frame where it touches the wall, leaving out perhaps a quarter of an inch. This will prevent the picture from resting against the wall; no dust can possibly settle there; it permits of a free circulation of air, and the tiny heads of the nails will not mar the most richly-decorated wall.

Reading Between the Lines.

To get the good of the library in the school of life you must bring into it something better than a mere bookish taste. You must bring the power to read between the lines, behind the words, beyond the horizon of the printed page. Phillip's question to the chamberlain of Ethiopia was "crus!" "Understandest thou what thou readest?" I want books not to pass the time, but to fill it with beautiful thoughts and images, to enlarge my world, to give me new friends in the spirit, to purify my ideals and make them clear, to show me the local color of unknown regions and the bright stars of universal truth.—Henry van Dyke.

Dew Point of Air.

To determine the air's dew point, Hergendorf, a German meteorologist, fills with water a cup of silver or other good heat conducting metal and introduces sal ammoniac, hypophosphite of soda or other salt that lowers the temperature in dissolving. As the salt is slowly added the mixture is gently stirred with a thermometer bulb. At the instant when the cooling causes a deposit of moisture to begin on the outside of the cup, the indication of the thermometer is taken and gives the desired dew point or temperature at which the moisture present in the air would become complete saturation or 100 per cent. of humidity.

Mexico's Oldest Theatre.

The oldest theatre in Mexico, and indeed the oldest on this continent, is the Teatro Principal of the City of Mexico. There is nothing particularly distinctive about its architecture to testify as to its antiquity, however, for its two stories of repared facade covered over with lurid posters corresponds in general style to the other playhouses of the city. Then, too, there is a certain animation about the crowds that pass in and out the entrance that is somewhat misleading to those on the outlook for the relics of the past.

Getting Back.

"Why do you insist on trying to sell me beefsteak and beans and buckwheat cakes?" demanded the barber. "I told you all I wanted was too fried eggs."

"Well, I was in your shop yesterday," retorted the restaurant man. "All I wanted was a shave, but you bulldozed me into shampoo, a foam fix and a tonic rub."

Broke It Gently.

A railway man who was instructed to inform a lady that her husband had been killed by a railway accident and was cautioned to break the news gently is credited with writing the following letter:

Dear Madam—I write to say that your husband is unavoidably detained. An undertaker will call on you to-morrow with full particulars.

Reason For Athletics?

The increase in the practice of athletic sports is said to account for the fact that men and women of to-day are nearly two inches taller than their ancestors.

The dead heat always has ways of fainting honest trails of character. A lot of people complain of destiny of which they are the sole creators. Thinking you know should always be followed by the act of proving it.

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Two Points of View.
Cook (ghast)—Oh, mum, I've split a lay-out o' milk over the front of me night dress, an' I'm thinkin' I'm atter spillin' it intirely.
Missus—Oh, Mary, how could you! Was it all we had?

Moral.
Every day a new cure for something is announced, but also one or more new diseases are found. The moral is to stay in the fresh air, eat plain food and quit worrying.

The liberal spender may, sooner or later, develop the anxious borrower.
As a rule, the man anxious to do all the talking is a mighty poor listener.