

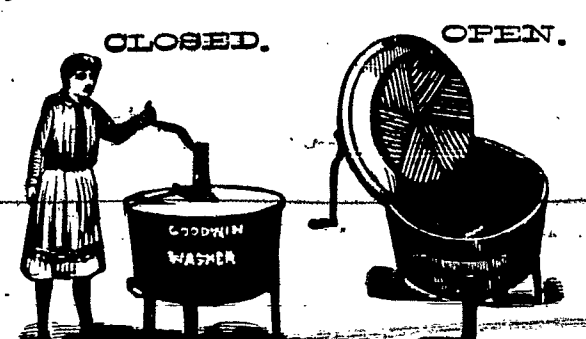
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HE SMELLED THE SNAKE.

A STRANGE CASE OF WONDERFUL HEREDITARY FACULTY.

How a Hospital Assistant Was Affected by the Presence of a Snake—The Doctor's Investigations and Conclusions Therefrom.

"A few years ago," said a hospital steward, "I was employed in one of the two hospitals supported by a well known mining company in Arizona for the care of its sick and injured employees. It had over a thousand employees, and the casualties, great and small, sometimes averaged one every day, so that the surgeon's office was no sinecure. The company was not, however, entitled to credit for benevolence, for it levied a tax of \$1 a month on each of its employees stopping it out of their pay, to support the hospital, surgeons and nurses. The head of the service, Dr. Eckerson, contracted to bear all its expenses, so that it was a good thing for the men, the company and the physicians, although the men paid it all.

"Dr. Eckerson was a young man for such a responsible position. He was a Swede who had been thoroughly educated in his own country and in Germany, and possessed the mechanical skill and manual fact that made a good surgeon and the diagnostic intuition without which no man can be a successful physician. He was an enthusiast in his profession and in the cognate sciences—botany, chemistry, physiology and especially comparative anatomy.

"The assistant in the other of the two hospitals was a young French Canadian named Perot. He was a reticent young fellow, very pallid, but vigorous. He possessed remarkable eyes. The iris had a singular way of changing color under the influence of his physical, mental or nervous conditions, and these changes perceptibly altered the entire expression of the man's face. We got so after a little that we could fairly read his moods by the color and expression of his eyes, in spite of his reticence.

"One day the doctor had an uncommonly difficult operation to perform, and both Perot and myself were summoned to assist. When Perot entered the operating room I noticed that his eyes changed color repeatedly and rapidly as if he were under some great excitement. In a few seconds he complained of being dizzy, and before we realized the urgency of action in his behalf he had dropped to the floor in a dead faint. The ordinary means of restoration were immediately applied, but without avail, and Dr. Eckerson ordered him removed to one of the hospital wards and laid upon a bed. Here, to our surprise, Perot at once came to himself without further aid and declared himself ready for duty.

"Upon our return to the operating room, however, Perot's disturbed symptoms at once returned. His eyeballs became fixed and glaring, his breathing stertorous, and he would again have swooned had we not caught him and removed him from the room. The experiment was tried the third time, with the same phenomenal result. Perot himself was at a loss to account for his condition. He said he felt perfectly well and had no repugnance for the scenes of the operating table, but directly he entered the room the terrible symptoms were at once apparent.

"The doctor now set seriously to work to investigate this strange case. He soon came to the conclusion that the influence that disturbed Perot was external to himself, and, as he had these attacks only in the operating room, began to examine its contents, condition and surroundings for the cause of the extraordinary affection. What seemed further to complicate the case was the fact that Perot had for months frequented the room without experiencing any unusual sensation. At last I said to the doctor: 'Easily change been made in this room recently?' At first he said, 'No.'

"Suddenly, with a half smothered exclamation, he went to his zoological cabinet, and taking down a jar which contained a live rattlesnake, which he had purchased a few days before from an Indian, he examined it with a curious expression on his face.

"The reptile was in this large jar, over the mouth of which a wire gauze cover had been bound to permit the admission of air. The cabinet stood behind a curtain, and no one but the doctor knew of the snake in the room. "The doctor caused the jar to be removed from the operating room, and called Perot in. To our astonishment none of the previous unpleasant symptoms appeared. Then the jar was carried into another room and secreted. Perot was summoned, and upon entering the room the former distressing symptoms at once recurred. Whenever the Canadian was brought near the reptile he went into the same

"Dr. Eckerson believed firmly in the influence of heredity on individual characteristics, and he began questioning Perot about his family antecedents. Perot said that his father was a Canadian of mixed blood; his mother a French woman, who had died when he was about 12 years old. He recollected her as a woman of vivacious and happy temperament. He said that she had a great passion for flowers, and would in the autumn gather and dry large bouquets, declaring that they smelled as sweet to her as when fresh. She also liked to smell flowers which were perfectly inodorous. These facts had been riveted in Perot's memory by his father's scoffing at her strange taste and by her persistent defense of the same. This singularity seemed to have been the cause of no small contention in the family and talk among the neighbors.

"The doctor was now convinced that with his special hereditary sense Perot had smelled the snake. He at once drowned the reptile with alcohol, stoppered the jar tightly and called Perot into the room. To his delight the man exhibited none of the unpleasant symptoms. The jar was then placed before him, but without affecting him in the least. The mystery was solved. Perot had smelled the snake."—New York Sun.

THE "BIDDING WEDDING."

How Gifts Are Secured for Newly Married People in Parts of Wales.

In certain parts of Pembroke and Carmarthen, in Wales, one of the quaintest of marriage customs used to be prevalent, and it is said still to linger to a certain extent in some of the remote valleys, but now curtailed and shorn of its pristine surroundings. This was known as a "bidding wedding" and was so-called of patriarchal times that it may be interesting to describe what is destined soon to become a mere-memory of the past. Tradition is silent as to the origin of this custom of Cambria, so we may presume that it goes a long way back indeed.

In the first place, all who received invitations were expected to show their respect to the bride and bridegroom by bestowing such presents as befitted their station and means. We may remark that these weddings were generally restricted to the farmers and others of the respectable class, so that to have a bidding implied a certain social status and that the young couple were both come of respectable families.

When two of this class made up their minds to get married the first thing considered was who were to be invited to the festivities, a list being made out, varying, according to the number of their friends and neighbors, from forty or fifty up to 200. Invitations were written or printed, and sent round to all those whose presence was desired. After these had been dispatched the next thing was to send round the "bidder," there being one person who filled this important post in every district.

The duty of this worthy was to go to all places where invitations had preceded him, there to advocate the claims of his clients to the best of his ability. The bidder, as may be supposed, was generally a noted character, the local wit and orator, as no one could hope to fill the responsible position who had not "the gift of the gab." In some instances females held office, for which they were doubtless as well qualified as their male rivals. These functionaries were generally cordially received and were in the habit of specifying any particular articles that they thought desirable, generally fixing their requests high, on the principle that they who ask for a sheep were likely to get a lamb at least.

On completing the rounds of calls the bidder gave in his report to his employers. The presents were sent before the wedding to the house of the bride, when a large company assembled to view them and discuss their value. From the fact that intended presents were all entered on the bidder's books there were seldom too many articles of one sort, a business like proceeding by which the fashionable world of today might say brides from having so many "repeats" in their marriage presents.—Chambers' Journal.

THE DOCTOR'S DISCOVERY.

When the Later Will Catch the Grower. Assuming the population to be now 65,000,000, with the area in cereals producing average crops and current consumption 10 per cent. greater per capita than in the five years ending in 1874, present supplies are in excess of population as follows: Corn for 5,500,000 people; wheat for 14,000,000; cattle for 6,000,000, and swine for 11,000,000. Should population continue to increase as heretofore, and should production not increase more than now seems probable, hence require its will absorb all food products before the end of this century.—C. Wood Davis in Forum.

Only One Interruption.

"Did everything go off smoothly at your wedding, Chawles?" "Yes. There was only one interruption. That tailor man wouldn't allow the ceremony to go on till I'd paid him for my wedding suit."—Yankee Blade.

GIANTS OF MODERN DAYS

MEN WHO SURPASS ANCIENT HEROES IN STRENGTH.

Some of the Samsons of Ancient and Modern Times and the Immense Weights They Lifted—A New York Man Beats the Record by Using a Harness.

Savants tell us that by distributing weights over a man's body in such a manner that every part of his frame will have to bear its share, he can be made to raise a weight of over 2,500 pounds. The savants are right, as the performance of W. B. Curtis, of New York, will show. December 20, 1888, Mr. Curtis, with harness, lifted 3,839 pounds. As a horse is about seven times larger than a man, it should be able to carry seven times the number of pounds lifted by Mr. Curtis, but the horse never was born that could accomplish such a feat. Speaking of wrestling and strong men reminds me that centuries ago there was born in Crotona, Italy, a babe who in after years became a famous Greek athlete. At husking bees, house warmings and country fairs he was the high roller of all the men of muscle who gathered to show what they could do in feats of strength. He was the pet of the young ladies, and his name was Milo.

At the Olympic and Pythian games he threw all comers in wrestling, and one day, just to show how strong he was, he carried a 4-year-old heifer four times around the Olympic race course. At another time Milo lifted a thousand pound ox, and didn't seem to exert himself greatly in the attempt, either. His strength, however, gave him what the moderns call a swelled head, and one day while in the woods he noticed a tree which some wood choppers had partly split open. A wedge held the two sides of the tree apart, and the wood choppers were gone. Milo, first to give himself an exhibition of his own strength, inserted his hands in the opening and tried to rend the tree asunder. He pulled the breach a little wider, just wide enough, in fact, to let the wedge drop out, and then his strength began to fail him. Like a vice the tree closed on his hands, and he was held prisoner until nightfall, when a pack of wolves held high jinks over his bones.

A POWERFUL EMPEROR.

History also tells of another man of prodigious strength, Maximinus, one of the Roman emperors. Toward the close of the Second century he first saw the light of day in Thrace, and when old enough to work was sent to the fields in charge of sheep. From earliest boyhood he was celebrated among the lads of his neighborhood for marvellous feats of strength and agility, and one day when the Emperor Septimius Severus was passing through Thrace on his return from the East his attention was attracted by the young shepherd's fleetness of foot and other remarkable feats in athletics. The young Thracian was over eight feet in height, and was a perfect model of physical manhood. He was offered a place in the army of the emperor and accepted. Although a barbarian he rose from rank to rank, and was finally proclaimed emperor of Rome. He reigned for many years, hated by everybody, and was finally killed by his own soldiers. It is related that in one day Maximinus overthrew twelve of the strongest men that could be produced. On his thumb he wore his wife's brochelet, and it took forty pounds of meat a day to appease his appetite.

In 1838 there lived in Kent, England, a man named Joyce, who exhibited such feats of strength that he was called the second Samson. To Joyce is due the credit of having discovered many tricks in lifting and pulling against horses. He flourished for about ten years, but when his secrets became known he dropped out of sight.

THE STRONGEST MAN OF TODAY.

In the early part of the Eighteenth century a German named Van Ekeberg attracted a good deal of attention. Like most strong men of the present day he took the name of Samson. His most extraordinary feat was the holding of a massive cannon, which he suspended from his girdle. To accomplish this he stood on a framework over the cannon, which rested on rollers, and when all was ready the supports were knocked out from under the weight, leaving it dangling in the air. In performing this feat all depends on the natural strength of the pelvis bones, which form a double arch, capable of sustaining a great weight.

Probably the strongest man of today is Louis St. Cyr, the Canadian. His feat of lifting 3,538 pounds of pig iron has never been equaled. The iron was placed on a platform at Berthiersville, Canada, Oct. 1, 1888, and St. Cyr pushed it up with his back, arms and legs until the whole weight was clear of the platform upon which it rested. St. Cyr also pushed up the 340-pound dumbbell from floor to

shoulder, and from shoulder to ceiling length with one hand. In March, 1888, he lifted a platform upon which seven men were seated, and which also contained a barrel of flour and seven dumbbells, the whole weighing 2,378 pounds. St. Cyr is about 26 years old, stands 5 feet 10 1/2 inches in height and weighs 323 pounds.

The best on record lift with the hands alone was accomplished by David L. Dowd, who some years ago had charge of a gymnasium in Springfield, Mass. Dowd succeeded in raising 1,448 1/2 pounds of pig iron clear from the Springfield opera house stage, using no artificial means whatever.—Boston Globe.

Too Circumlocutory.

Young Husband—This bread isn't such as my mother used to make. Young Wife—Now, John— Husband—It's better. But he spoke to lifeless day. Harper's Bazar.

Usually Seen Behind.

"Strange thing that dog's tail, isn't it?" "What makes it strange to you?" "Why, I never saw one before."—New York Press.

"Blacked Out."

Speaking of the Russian censorship, Mr. George Kennan, in an article in The Century, says: "What does the Russian government hope or expect to accomplish by 'blacking out' articles that simply tell the truth with regard to Russian affairs, and by throwing into prison every man in whose possession such articles may be found?"

"The Russian author Prugavin, in a book that was inadvertently sanctioned by the press censor, but that was afterward seized and burned, asks this same question, and says: 'Can an idea be choked to death? Can thought be killed, buried, or annihilated? Are not truth, and love, and justice, and freedom immortal? It is the most terrible of mistakes to suppose that ideas can ever be crushed. People have perished—men have died in chains and casemates, their bodies have decayed, their graves have been forgotten; but their ideas and aspirations live on. Washed in the blood of suffering, such ideas and aspirations have become the dream of every man whose brain a thought stirs and in whose breast a heart beats.'

"The press censor, when he burns Prugavin's book, thought that he had destroyed forever its 'pernicious' influence, but the ideas and aspirations of the gifted author 'live on,' and his words, although burned by order of government in Russia, will appeal to hundreds of thousands of sympathetic hearts in England and the United States.

"Some time in the far distant future the free Russian patriot, no longer blinded by the censorship of the press, will look over the pages of his national history that record these attempts to gag public opinion and strangle human thought, and will wish from the bottom of his heart that so humiliating and shameful a record might be 'blacked out.'"

Philanthropic Beggars.

"Say, mister, give me some money to buy some supper with. I haven't had a bite to eat today. Can't you help me along?"

It was a street beggar accosting a sorrowful looking young man on one of the principal thoroughfares of the city. The young man stopped. "There's a nickel," said he. "It's the last I have, but here it is. I shall soon be where they don't want me. I am tired of this life, so take it and good luck to you."

"Are you so much in need as that, partner?" asked the beggar.

"Yes, I have been looking for work for two weeks, but it's no use, and my money's all gone."

For a while the beggar hesitated, then he pulled out a dollar. "Here," said he, "take this. You're worse off than I am."

"No," answered the young man firmly. "It won't do me any good, good-by, and he walked rapidly down the street. A policeman overheard the remark, and he followed and overtook the stranger.

"Look here," said he, "are you the fellow that's about to commit suicide?"

A hearty laugh interrupted further questions. "That's all right, officer," said the would-be suicide. "I am just trying a little game on these street beggars, and that's the third one to-night who has offered me money."—Kansas City Globe.

They Are Like New Yorkers.

A New York man in Philadelphia the other day dropped into a Chestnut street restaurant for dinner, and was surprised at the vanda mentioned on the bill for a waiter, "Sal." "Do you eat dolphins and fishballs and beef-cakes for dinner?" "Do they eat such" responded the waiter, "my guest, 'Am I like de New York man? You want say yes.'"