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MEASURING THE BRIDE

Competitions and Awards in an Old Fashioned Scottish Hamlet.

It is a very quaint matrimonial competition that prevails in the old-fashioned fishing and agricultural hamlet of St. Cyrus, on the northeast coast of Scotland.

It is an annual contest open only to brides, is judged and umpired by the parish minister in the parish church and has to do entirely with age and stature. Four money prizes of equal value are awarded every year. There is one each for the youngest, the oldest, the shortest and the tallest bride married during the course of the year in the parish church.

Candidates, if not resident in the parish, must take up residences there at least six weeks before the nuptial knot is tied.

The procedure followed is the essence of simplicity. At the close of the wedding ceremony the bride retires to the vestry in order to sign the marriage register and to have her competitive qualifications ascertained. The "birth lines" as they are familiarly designated, show her age, but no documentary evidence of stature, however authoritatively attested, can be accepted. Proof must be forthcoming on the spot. For this purpose the candidate has to submit to an ordeal, the first part of which consists of removing of her shoes. Then comes the dividing of her hair until the tresses, length permitting, hang loosely over the shoulders.

Thus temporarily bereft of part of her adornment, she steps on the measuring stand provided for this special purpose, and always kept on the premises. Now comes the crux of the ceremony. The judge carefully winds the sliding indicator, and in the gentlest possible manner checkmates any suspicion of unduly manipulating the head and feet.

Measuring completed, the pastor enters the particulars in the brides' register. The entries close with the end of each year, and it is an interesting group that wends its way to the manse on the first week day of the year to receive the dowry.

The origin of this droll competition is decidedly interesting. One boisterous winter day a wealthy local laird observed a young couple wending their way to church to be "made one." Curious to know their circumstances, he made inquiries and learned that the mutual love of the ploughman and the ex-servant lass was their principal asset for setting up house. As a sequel the laird left at his death a legacy of \$5,000 the interest of which he decreed was to be divided annually for all time coming into five equal portions, four among brides, as already mentioned, and the fifth to provide oatmeal, tea, sugar, etc., for the poor of the parish.

This quaint custom, besides creating pleasurable excitement, does much material good to the humble participants. The fun, which is invested in government consols, at present stands at \$5,650.

Ancient Perfumes.

Perfumes have played an important part in the beautification of the people of all nations and ages. Egypt was the great mart for all perfumes. Even the dead were not forgotten, for the embalmed mummy was saturated with spices and scents, and sweet perfumes were burned before their statues. Those who could not afford this had scent bottles painted on their tombs.

Most of the perfumes were thought by the ancients to have a medical value. Thyme was thought to have a tonic quality and lavender a soothing one. Patchouli was cheering, jalapine stimulating, while heliotrope was irritating, unless used in small quantities. Some people today believe that sandal is a tonic, and its virtue was known to the Greeks, who anointed themselves with it when they entered the Olympian games.

The Jews excelled all in their love of perfumes, for night and morning they burnt sweet incense of myrrh, and their beds were perfumed with aloes and cinnamon. So indispensable were scents considered for the bridal toilet that one-twelfth of the dowry was set apart for the purpose. The trade in perfumes was enormous in Greece. Like the Egyptians, they understood the fascinations of flowers, and an Athenian not only perfumed his house, but scented his drinking vessels with myrrh, the gum of a tree which grows in Arabia. To such an extent was the love of perfumes carried that each part of the body had its special perfume. The hair required wild thyme, the neck and knees sweet myrrorin, the arms balsam, the cheeks and the breast palm oil, the feet and legs sweet oilment. The perfumers' shops in Athens were the rendezvous for the beaux to discuss politics and intrigue. The love of perfumes spread to the Romans and the business became so great that a bunch of sage denoted their shops. A Roman lady frequently kept one slave to sprinkle her hair. Nero had a rare device of ivory leaves which shed sweet scents over his guests.

In the time of Elizabeth perfumes were very rich and numerous. Civet, a scent taken from the civet cat, and musk are often mentioned in the literature of that time. Perfumed gloves were in vogue then, and the queen had her portrait scented with them. Even her shoes were made of leather steeped in scented oils, which permeated the skin.

Chinese dealers in Singapore have refused to buy Manila cigars from Singapore merchants, on the ground that Manila is an American colony. Still the China-Manila vessels which go from Manila to Hong-kong every few days all carry large consignments of Manila cigars and cigarettes.

WOMAN'S ADAPTABILITY.

She Readily Adapts Herself to Her Surroundings.

Why is it that women have so much more adaptability than men?

Is it because they have more need of it, and that men have so many fields open to them that they are never called upon to adapt themselves to various conditions or circumstances?

The mother of a family can place the baby upon the floor, and watching its frolicsome manoeuvres out of the corner of her eye, can readily nail up a shelf, hang a picture or mend a piece of broken furniture; but what would be the world's opinion if the father should be called upon to help wash the dishes on his return from the office? Oh, the very idea! Again, a girl can go downtown and attend to all her brother's shopping commissions, but, on the other hand, her brother would be staggered at the thought of remaining home and making his sister an evening waist.

Sometimes we see a lovely, fun-making girl marry a solemn, staid man, and before the year elapses a change is noticed in that girl's disposition. One of the two obliged to adapt himself or herself to the change, and such a thing is never expected of a man. It was up to the girl to do it, and she did. If a man does not happen to be a poet he can enter into business life, and if he possesses no business ability, various professions are holding wide their doors for his entrance.

But a woman! If she is a poetess, in all probability she will have to sell pins and shapeliness over a notions counter in a dry goods store; and if she is practical and domestic, the only employment she is able to obtain is likely to be that of writing sonnets for the Sunday paper or correcting composition papers in a school. She does it well, not because it is agreeable, but for the reason that it is a means of maintenance. And it is on account of this very faculty of making the best of circumstances in whatever lot she may be cast that the palm of adaptability belongs to woman.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Canned Milk Preferred.

It was her first visit to the country. She never before had been out of Chicago. Everything she saw was a fresh delight. Eye in the garden could not have found it more novel. The cows especially interested her.

"At milking time she clung so closely to the hired man that to free himself he gave her a cup of new milk, warm and frothy from the pail. She took a deep draught."

Then such consternation was pictured in the pretty, pliant face, that her mother cried: "What is it, Dorothy?"

"Oh," she sobbed in disgust and disappointment. "I don't like cow's milk. It's horrid. I like milkman's milk."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Buying Gold Is Dangerous.

It is dangerous to purchase unwrought gold or rough diamonds in South Africa from any but the recognized dealers in those articles: Isaac Goldfiam, a Johannesburg jeweler, charged with purchasing from a police officer a quantity of unwrought gold valued at \$2,000, has been sentenced to eighteen months' hard labor, and to pay a fine of \$1,500. The purchase did not actually take place, and the point was reserved for argument before the Transvaal supreme court as to whether the agreement to purchase was an offense.

Venezuelan Alligators.

Consul Plumacher at Maracaibo reports that untold numbers of alligators of all sizes swim in the lakes, lagoons and rivers of Venezuela. He has himself seen thousands of them of large size on the banks of the Rio de Oro and the Rio Taura, where they deposit their eggs on the sand banks. He thinks that there are considerable possibilities in hunting them, for their oil, as well as their skins, command a good price in the market.—Exchange.

Ventilation Through Walls.

The fact is that considerable ventilation is capable of taking place, and quite a large exchange of fresh for bad air is effected through the walls of buildings. Many a room that is notoriously "stuffy" could doubtless be made pleasant to live in by removing the solid paper or impervious coat of paint from the wall and substituting porous paper, or, better still, giving up paper altogether and using a distemper wash of pleasing tone.—Exchange.

Whiskey Stored in a Church.

Thorverton Church, Devon, was recently put to a novel use. A serious fire broke out in the village, involving an inn and half a dozen thatched cottages, and the inhabitants of the adjacent houses took their furniture to the church and buried ground for safety. Among the property taken into the church were a number of jars of spirits, rescued from the cellar of the inn before the roof fell in.

Emotion and Baldness.

Strong emotion sometimes causes baldness. A farmer saw his child thrown from a cart and trampled under the feet of a mule. He supposed it killed and experienced in his fright and anguish a sensation and chill and tension in the head and face. The child escaped with a few bruises, but the father's hair, beard and eyebrows began to drop out the next day, and at the end of a week he was entirely bald.

If a man gets rattled there must be a screw loose somewhere.

ARMOR PLATE AND SHELLS

Made of Best Steel—Struggle Between Armor and Projectile Firms.

"A constant struggle is always going on between the firms that make armor plates and those that make guns and projectiles, though these firms are often rival departments of the same great establishment," writes Capt. F. G. Jackson, the English writer and explorer. "The old armor plates of wrought iron could keep out shells of a diameter equal to their own thickness, except at short ranges. The Palliser shot, however, with hardened point, soon dislodged iron plates. Then a steel face was welded to a wrought-iron back. This was beaten and then plates were made wholly of steel. A fresh advance in projectiles was met by various hardening processes applied to the face of the steel plate. A splinter of Krupp-hardened steel, it is said, will scratch glass like a diamond. This intensely strong resistance had the effect of either throwing off the projectiles when they struck at an angle or of breaking them up, even when they penetrated the plate. The makers of projectiles responded by fitting the points of their missiles with softer caps of mild steel, so that they should bite on the plates instead of slipping off when striking at an angle.

"All modern projectiles are fired from rifled guns and are cylindrical in shape, with conical heads. To keep them point first and to correct deviation from the course they are made to revolve on their own axis while traveling. This is the purpose of the rifling of the guns with spiral grooves. The projectile is made to follow the grooves by having a driving band of copper on the shell, which is rather larger in diameter than the bore of the gun. This band is forced into the grooves by the explosion of the charge, compelling the projectile to follow the grooves. The latest American invention is to fit the projectile with ball bearings to avoid friction and damage to the grooves and inner tube of the gun. If practicable this should enable an even higher velocity, and thus a longer range, to be obtained from guns.

"Armor-piercing shot or shell goes through a special method of manufacture. It is made of the very best steel, sometimes alloyed to give additional strength. It is cast or forged to a size very slightly larger than its intended dimensions. A groove is turned round it to hold the driving band that takes the rifling and the shot or shell is then hardened by heating the head of it till red-hot and cooling it suddenly in water or oil. The scale produced by this process is ground off the shell, the driving band is pressed into its groove by hydraulic power and turned down to its proper size and the projectile is ready."

A Sioux Falls Samson.

Peter Sater, of Sioux Falls, is the name of a strong man who is surpassing all by his marvelous feats. He is a Norwegian, about twenty-four. Sater is a section hand on the Great Northern, between Sioux Falls and Garretson. His great strength lies chiefly in his jaws. On one occasion he fastened a strap around an anvil in a blacksmith shop, placed the end of the strap between his teeth and walked away with the anvil. At another time by means of a rope and his teeth he lifted a 300-pound granite hitching block clear of the ground. Another feat is to take three sacks of sugar, weighing 100 pounds each, grasp them with his teeth by the corners and lift them clear of the ground.

Fearful to Disturb Them.

On one occasion Joseph Chamberlain was invited to Liverpool to make a speech. It was to be a great celebration. The mayor, who was to preside at the meeting, had arranged in fine dinner for the great orator. A distinguished assembly surrounded the table and at the right of the host sat Mr. Chamberlain. For a couple of hours the company chatted over the food and finally the coffee was served. It was at this juncture that the mayor leaned over and whispered to Mr. Chamberlain: "Your excellency, shall we let the crowd enjoy itself awhile longer or had we better have your speech?"

The New Jerusalem.

There is a Jerusalem without the walls as well as one within. "The new Jerusalem without the walls is larger than the inclosed city. There are several Jewish colonies, a Syrian orphanage, an English agricultural colony, an American colony called 'the Overcomers' and several European consulates. The view of Jerusalem, both the inner and the outer cities, is best seen from the Mount of Olives. Without the walls one sees many cemeteries. The Jews lay out tombstones over their dead. The Mohammedans erect marble slabs of headstones like those seen in our cemeteries, but for some strange reason the Mohammedan tombstones all seem to stand aslant. The effect is most forlorn.

Welsh in House of Commons.

A country gentleman in Wales has sent a letter to every member of the British house of commons written in Welsh. One of the recipients has made a neat retort by replying in German.

Thigh Broken Kissing.

English newspapers tell of a laborer named Samuel Wellington who attempted for a wager to kiss his toe. In doing so he broke his thigh and had to be conveyed to a hospital.

THE FIRST KISS

