

Freak Apple Tree Grows Queer Fruit

Cashmere, Wash.—Apple trees trained against a perpendicular rock cliff near here this season produced remarkable fruit. While the apples are large and well formed, they were colored only on one side because the sun and light could not paint the one next to the cliff. The trees were planted by John Ishmer and the branches pruned and trained to grow close to the rocks. Ishmer says the roots found perpetual moisture in the debris at the foot of the cliff.

RINGED WITH FIRE ONE NIGHT A YEAR

Capital of Tyrol Has Peculiar Celebration.

Rome.—One night in the year Merano, the ancient capital of the Tyrol, is a city ringed with fire.

By the arbitrament of war Merano is today Italian territory. A few years ago it was Austrian, known as Meran and peopled by 12,000 Austrians speaking the German tongue. In the years to come it may, perhaps, salute another flag.

The city's proudest boast, however, is that it has been and always will be Tyrolean. Roman and Hun and Goth and Saracen have never succeeded in leaving much of an imprint upon the character and habits of these picturesque mountain people.

The nine hundred-year-old Schloss Tyrol, the residence of the counts of Tyrol until they became extinct, still stands sentinel, reminder of a vanished glory.

Merano is a jewel spot as well as the one-time capital of this land of rugged peaks and rushing streams, land of old and beautiful customs and traditions that have been handed down from generation to generation through the long ticking of centuries.

Origin of the celebration known as "Sonnenwendfeier" or "Sonnenfest" is said. It is also called by some "Johannisfeier" in honor of John the Baptist, who was supposed to have been born on that day. The celebration did not have its origin in honor of John the Baptist, but because June 24, according to the Tyroleans of the past, marked the longest day of the year.

Merano is seated in the bottom of a mighty limestone cup, the precipitous sides of which rise almost immediately above the town in varying heights up to 10,000 feet.

It is these gaunt rocks, these towering summits, these unsalable precipices that make the "Sonnenwendfeier" such a thing of beauty—for it is the changeless law of the Tyrolese that their fires shall blaze from the highest peaks, the most inaccessible points of the sky line.

Days before the celebration the Tyroleans, in groups of five, or ten or twenty, begin their preparations for the fiery night. One group will select this summit for their fire, another group will select these two points, and so on until every crest is an almost continuous, though irregular, circle of piles of firewood waiting the hour to be touched off. The city seems completely surrounded. Every fire must blaze against the sky. There must be no higher peak in the background to dwarf the glory of a single flame.

No Weaking's Job. Preparing for these great fires is no weaking's game. The carrying of heavy and cumbersome bundles of fagots up mountain slopes to a height of 10,000 feet is mountain climbing with a very serious handicap.

Scarcely has the sun of the summer day slipped behind the Zilschpitz when, here and there, at widely different points of the compass and at varying heights, little clouds of blue smoke ascending above the rugged peaks announce to the watchers in the city below that the first fires have been lighted. Soon smoke clouds are arising from a thousand fires—north, east, south and west wisps of smoke curl against the darkening sky. As the summer night deepens the fires are seen, intermittent at first, like fireflies. Then they burn steadily. The thing has been perfectly timed, and when the last faint light from the vanished sun has gone from the west the great fires are burning splendidly against the night.

Venus de Milo Never Had Arms, Says Dr. Edde

Paris.—It may be some consolation to art lovers throughout the world, who have wondered in what position were the missing arms of the famous Venus de Milo statue in the Louvre, to learn that even the ancient themselves were perplexed on this point.

Doctor Edde, a French physician, has just made known that during a recent visit to Egypt he came into possession of a small bronze statuette of the same period as the Venus de Milo. This statuette is an exact copy of the famous Venus, and like the original, it has no arms. Doctor Edde therefore concludes that the Venus de Milo never at any time had arms, and he believes the sculptor, when he had carved out of the stone such a divine form, gave up all idea of adding arms. When the Venus de Milo was discovered on the island of Milo a large reward was offered to anyone who could find the arms, but in spite of extensive search nothing was discovered.

One Occasion When His Mind Worked Quickly

Smith was a freshman, older than most of his class. He was tall, lanky and slow. His mind, like his body, worked slowly, and the nervous professor in mathematics, after a careful explanation, was wont to say:

"Well, Smith, if you will go over that explanation carefully and meditate on it, I think you will understand. Meditate, Smith, meditate." So Smith became "Meditate" Smith to his fellow students.

One evening a party of students gathered in the room of one of their number, and Smith was one of them. The meeting was for fun and perhaps mischief, and such a meeting was an infringement of rules.

When the jollity was at its height a warning came that the professor was coming to investigate. The room was cleared at once. Smith, as usual, was the last and, hearing steps approaching, he crawled under the bed, seeing no other way of escape. Here he sat doubled up like a jackknife awaiting the event with no little apprehension.

The professor entered, looked about him, saw that the room was empty, then turned to depart. As he closed the door, a thought seemed to strike him; he re-entered the room and looked under the bed.

"Hey, Smith, what are you doing there?" he cried.

Smith turned his head with difficulty. "Meditating, professor." The professor withdrew.—Youth's Companion.

Allowing "Off and On" Every Year Counted

A lawyer, noted for his success in cross-examination, found his match in a recent trial, when he asked a long-suffering witness how long he had worked at his business of tin roofing. The answer was:

"I have worked at it off and on for some time, but have worked at it steady for the last 12 years."

"How long off and on have you worked at it?"

"Sixty-five years."

"How old are you?"

"Sixty-five."

"Then you have been a tin roofer from birth?"

"No, sir; of course I haven't."

"Then why did you say you have worked at your trade sixty-five years?"

"Because you asked how long off and on I had worked at it. I have worked at the trade sixty-five years—twenty years on and forty-five off."

Beauties of Nature

It may be observed that what we call beauty of nature is mainly negative beauty; that is, the mass, the huge rude background, made up of rocks, trees, hills, mountains, plains, water, has not beauty as a positive character, visible to all eyes, but affords the mind the conditions of beauty, namely, health, strength, fitness, etc., beauty being an experience of the beholder. Some things, on the other hand, as flowers, foliage, brilliant colors, sunsets, rainbows, waterfalls, may be said to be beautiful in and of themselves; but how wearisome the world would be without the vast negative background upon which these things figure and which provokes and stimulates the mind in a way the purely fair forms do not.—John Burroughs.

How He Accomplished It

Sir Eric Geddes once remarked that before doubting any statement a man may make, no matter how seemingly incredible it sounds, one should be quite sure as to its precise meaning.

In order to illustrate his contention he went on to instance the case of a friend of his who knew a little about billiards and chess, and who told him one day that he had beaten the amateur champions of England at both games.

Sir Eric expressed great surprise and some incredulity, but the other persisted that his statement was quite true.

"You see," he explained, "I took on the champion billiard player at chess, of which he knew nothing, and I played the champion chess player at billiards, of which he knew less."

Carlyle Is There

Carlyle is sometimes as irresistible as "The Campbells Are Coming," or "Auld Lang Syne." He has described some men and some events once and for all, and so takes his place with Thucydides, Tacitus and Gibbon. Pedants may try hard to forget this, and may in their labored nothings seek to ignore the author of Cromwell and the French Revolution; but as well might the pedestrian in Cumberland or Inverness seek to ignore Helvellyn or Ben Nevis. Carlyle is there, and will remain there, when the pedant of today has been superseded by the pedant of tomorrow.—Augustine Birrell.

On the Contrary

Maud (newly married)—You look very melancholy, George; are you sorry you married me?

George—My dear, of course not. I was only thinking of all the nice girls I can't marry.

Maud—Oh, George, how horrid of you! I thought you cared for nobody but me.

George—That is so, my dear. I wasn't thinking of myself, but of the disappointment they have had!

Incompatibility "What was the cause of their separation?" "Incompatibility. She believed in getting into debt and he didn't."

Depends Musician—What rent are you asking for this room? Landlady—Play me a tune first, then I'll tell you.

Earliest Accounts of Trade Among Nations

From the time that men began to live in cities, trade, in some shape must have been carried on to supply the town-dwellers with necessities; but it is also clear that international trade must have existed, and affected to some extent even the pastoral nomadic races, for we find that Abraham was rich, not only in cattle, but in silver, gold, and gold and silver plate and ornaments (Gen. 13:2; 24:22, 53). Among trading nations mentioned in Scripture, Egypt holds in very early times a prominent position, though her external trade was carried on, not by her own citizens, but by foreigners—chiefly of the nomadic races. The internal trade of the Jews, as well as the external, was much noted, as was the case also in Egypt, by the festivals, which brought large numbers of persons to Jerusalem, and caused great outlay in victims for sacrifice and in incense (1 Kings 8:63). The places of public market were, then, as now, chiefly the open spaces near the gates, to which goods were brought for sale by those who came from the outside (Neh. 13:15, 16; Zech. 1:10). The traders in later times were allowed to intrude into the temple, in the outer courts of which victims were publicly sold for the sacrifices (Zech. 14:21; Matt. 21:12; John 2:14).

Loaded Shells Spelled Doom of Shot Towers

Until the loaded shotgun shell was developed shot was sold to the jobbing trade throughout the entire country packed in bags, which in turn were purchased by the man having a muzzle-loading shotgun, who was obliged to reload his gun with powder and shot whenever the gun was fired at game or target, says the Detroit News. The loaded shot shell and the breech-loading shotgun sounded the death knell of the old type of shot tower.

The business of the ammunition concerns manufacturing shot shells grew by leaps and bounds so that the shot consumption of the country centered at the points where these shot shells were manufactured, notably in New England, and in the course of events these ammunition concerns began to manufacture their own shot, thus completely destroying the business of the many shot towers located throughout the country.

Picturesque Whitby Abbey

Other of the ruined churches of England have a more picturesque magnificence, but none a more incident fame than Whitby abbey. Henri Picard writes in the Chateaufort Enquirer. There the first rude poetry of England was written more than twelve centuries ago. There, earlier still, was held the synod which decided that the British church should keep Easter at the same time as the rest of Christendom, a choice which meant that Christendom should be united, and Britain remain within the influence of the civilization of Italy and Gaul. But the modern traveler who climbs the many steps which lead from the river to what was "high Whitby's cloistered pile" has seen nothing of the Abbey of St. Hilda. In the ruins on the hill there was no fragment older than Plantagenet times. But discoveries of great interest have now been made.

Religion and Slang.

Big Dave Holly, from way back in the Smokies, had held a job in a distant lumber town long enough to pick up a few choice bits of slang, which were a welcome addition to his scanty vocabulary. Soon afterward he fell under "conviction" in a mountain revival, and after several nights of bodily and spiritual struggle finally "came through." Leaping to his feet he began shouting: "Glory Halleluyah! Praise the Lord! I'm a saved sinner—hot dawg."—Every body's Magazine for February.

The Mourner.

Frederick was crying, when Billy came along and asked what was the matter.

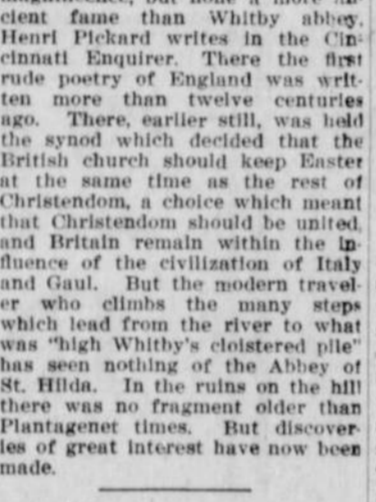
"O, I feel so bad 'cause Colie's dead!" sobbed Frederick.

"Shucks!" said Billy. "My grandmother's been dead a week and you don't catch me crying."

Frederick gave his eyes and nose a swipe and, looking up, sobbed desparingly:

"Yes, but you didn't raise your grandmother from a pup."—Every body's Magazine for February.

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KITCHEN CUPBOARD

By NELLIE MAXWELL

Seasonable Foods

IT IS hard to spoil a good Hubbard squash. Steamed or baked, mashed and buttered with a bit of cream, salt and pepper, it is a most delectable vegetable. Try it in another way:

Puree of Hubbard Squash.—Cut the squash into pieces about two inches square, after removing the seeds. Weigh two pounds of the pieces and bake until soft in a moderate oven. Scrape out the squash and mash it. Have ready three cups of hot milk, thicken with three tablespoonfuls of flour rubbed to a paste with three tablespoonfuls of butter, add the squash, season with salt, white pepper and two teaspoonfuls of sugar and one teaspoonful of meat extract dissolved in one-fourth cupful of water. Stir until boiling hot. Serve in bouillon cups garnished with marshmallows.

Tetrazzini Turkey.—Blend three tablespoonfuls of flour and butter, one teaspoonful of salt and one-fourth teaspoonful each of celery salt and pepper. Add to one cupful of thin cream heated to the boiling point, stir until the whole boils. Add one cupful of cold turkey cut into cubes, one-half cupful of cooked spaghetti cut into short lengths, and one-half cupful of minced mushrooms. Stir all together for a moment over the fire, then fill into ramekins, cover with buttered crumbs mixed with a little grated cheese and bake until brown.

Southern Sweet Potatoes.—Boil or steam three medium-sized sweet potatoes, pare, slice and place in a shallow baking dish. Add to one cupful of brown sugar one-half cupful of water, two tablespoonfuls of butter, mixed with one-half teaspoonful of grated cinnamon. Cook for ten minutes until thick and slippy, add one-fourth of a teaspoonful of salt and pour over the sliced potatoes. Set into a moderate oven, cover and let bake fifteen minutes, remove the cover and bake until there is a slight brown over the top. Serve from the dish. (© 1914, Western Newspaper Union.)

Franklin and Masonry

The first American newspaper item concerning a lodge of Freemasons in the western hemisphere, according to a recently published book, "The Beginning of Freemasonry in America," appeared in the Philadelphia Gazette for December 8, 1730. This paper was published by Benjamin Franklin.

Oddly enough, says the Detroit News, the item consisted of an alleged exposure of Freemasonry which had been circulated for some time in England. Franklin afterward became a Mason and held the position of grand master of the province of Pennsylvania.

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