

CORDWAINERS.

History of This Ancient Craft of Workers in Leather.

Of the ancient and influential guilds of London the cordwainers have a history second to none. They were first incorporated by Henry IV. in 1140, and in 1439 their charter was made to include all workers in leather within a distance of two miles of the city boundary. Later their control was extended over the London leather markets.

Cordwaining means working in Cordovan leather. These artisans had gathered themselves into an association at an early period. They were originally located on the fringe of the old city of Londinium when the Roman power was predominant in Britain. Here they remained for many centuries, their industry forming one of the staple trades of the country. The craft had long been recognized as an important factor in molding the municipal life of English towns. For instance, the Gilda Corvesarum of Oxford in the twelfth century was successful in obtaining from Henry I. a royal charter upon payment of an annual fine of one ounce of gold.

In the old days the cordwainer, the tanner and the currier had separate rights in the preparing of alum leather, tan leather and working cowhides. The cordwainer was to make boots and shoes of calf's hide. No master was to keep more than eight servants, and the carrying of shoes through the streets for sale was permitted only before dinner.

The first ordinance establishing the Cordwainers' company was granted in 1272 by the will and consent of the mayor and the other barons of the city of London "for the relief and the advancement of the whole business and to the end that all frauds and deceits may hereafter be avoided." In the following reign the prices allowed to be charged for shoes were 12 cents for a pair of shoes of Cordovan leather and 10 cents for a pair of cowhide shoes.

Nowadays the Cordwainers' company exists primarily to keep up its traditions, give its members banquets and incidentally to promote technical education and contribute to charities. Its income is \$16,500 a year.—Baltimore American.

Reassuring.

"Doctor, what's the matter with me?"

"How do you feel?"

"Awfully sick at my stomach."

"It is probably a disturbance confined to the interior of the principal enlargement or dilatation of your alimentary canal, superinduced by the introduction of some uncongential substance or by the undue distention of its tissues in consequence of a superfluous agglomeration of otherwise innocuous material and necessitating as a remedial measure merely abstention from the deglutition and absorption of nutrient articles until amelioration supervenes."

"Gracious sakes! Is there any cure for that?"

"Oh, yes; just go without eating until you feel better."—Chicago Tribune.

Most Valuable Faculty.

"The late William James," said a Bostonian, "used to smile at the brain fag that so often attacks the American business man. Professor James had his own opinion of the average business man's hard work. He thought that brain fag came more frequently from an excess of whisky and tobacco than from an excess of mental application."

"Apropos of this he used to tell a story about a little boy who asked his father:

"Papa, what is executive ability?"

"Executive ability, my son," the father replied, "is the faculty of earning your bread by the sweat of other people's brows."—Washington Star.

The Bayeux Tapestry.

The famous Bayeux tapestry is supposed to have been wrought by Matilda, queen of William I., or, as is held by some other authorities, to have been made under the direction of his brother, Odo, bishop of Bayeux. It is twenty inches wide, 230 feet long and is divided into seventy-two compartments, showing the events from a visit of Harold to the Norman court to his death at Hastings. The tapestry is in the public library of Bayeux, near Caen.

Worse Than He Thought.

"Now, don't tell me any story about misfortune and wanting to be a hard worker and all that," said a woman severely to a beggar. "I can see through you."

"Gracious," exclaimed the mendicant, "I know I ain't 'ad nuffin' to eat for three days, but I didn't know it 'ad thinned me like that!"—London Mail.

CAUGHT IN A BLIZZARD.

A Hardy Sheep Herder's Remarkable Feat of Endurance.

The life of a sheep herder is the life of the sheep, writes G. W. Ogden in Everybody's Magazine. It is full of hardships and dangers. His home is a sheep wagon, and he seldom sees a human being. Crouched in his wagon on a winter's night, with the incessant whoop of the wind in his ears, he knows that miles away another solitary figure is anchored like himself upon the plain; beyond him, again, another and another, then leagues of emptiness. An adventure of one herder, Arthur Chenoweth, is related, which is one of the most remarkable feats of endurance remembered in a land of hardy deeds.

Chenoweth was running a flock of sheep north of the North Platte river. He had taken off his shoes one night and was sitting on the bunk, coat off, preparing to go to bed. The wind began drumming a new note on his wagon cover. With the intention of seeing whether the sheep were resting quietly the herder slipped on his shoes and went out, hatless and coatless, to the hillside, where he had bedded them for the night. The sheep, as if conscious of danger, were moving off slowly before the wind. Shouting and running among them, he tried to turn them back and get them under the lee shelter of a hill. But an avalanche has as much reason as a flock of sheep on stampede. Chenoweth drifted with them, belaboring them with fists and feet—drifted away from the bedding ground out upon the range.

There the storm got him. It came, as those terrific pelting blizzards come, with a whistling of sagebrush and a roar, as suddenly as if the wind sprang from the flat earth. Sense of distance was confused and sense of direction lost in the shrouding curtain of driving snow.

The wind blew toward the river. Beyond the river miles away was Casper. When morning came, if the storm ceased so he could see, he might make the town. He worked free of the huddling, slow moving sheep and ran desperately before the wind. Hours passed. Casper mountain stood sharp and dark on the horizon south of him, and in a direct line between the mountain and the river the town of Casper lay. Shaping his course by the mountain, he pushed on and reached the river at last.

In the few hours which had passed since the storm broke the shallow river, gorged with snow and ice, had blocked and frozen. He passed it safely and at 3 o'clock in the morning staggered into a saloon at Casper. Hands, face, arms and feet were frozen, but they heaped snow upon him and thawed him out gradually, thus saving all but the tips of his ears. His flock perished in the storm in spite of their thick coats, but he went through with no coat at all.

Needed the Shoe Store.

A Quebec shoe dealer received the following order from a French Canadian customer:

"You will put some shoe on my little families like this and send by Sam Jameson the carrier: One man, Jean St. Jean (me), 42 years; one woman, Sophie St. Jean (she), 41 years; Hermedes and Lenore, 19 years; Honore, 18 years; Celina, 17 years; Narcisse, Octavia and Phyllis, 16 years; Olive, 14 years; Philippa, 13 years; Alexandre, 12 years; Rosina, 11 years; Bruno, 10 years; Pierre, 9 years; Eugene, we lose him; Edouard and Elisa, 7 years; Adrien, 6 years; Camille, 5 years; Zoel, 4 years; Joseph, 3 years; Moise, 2 years; Muriel, 1 year; Hilaire, he go barefoot. How much?"

"Choice Bouquet."

An interesting story of Horace Greeley, the famous journalist, has been revived for a new generation. He was presiding at a dinner given by the press in 1868 in honor of Charles Dickens, and while Dickens partook freely of the wines, Greeley did not turn his glasses down, but thrust them out of his way with a single exception, and in that he placed a beautiful red rose that had been furnished for his boutonniere. During the dinner he lifted his glass to his nose as often as others raised glasses to their mouths, and the fragrance of the rose was all the stimulant he needed.

The Reason.

Stupid and useless questions sometimes exasperate to the point of rudeness. The Los Angeles Times tells of a case where Smith met Jones one day with the inquiry: "Hello, Jones! You wearing glasses? What's that for?" Jones, annoyed at the foolishness of the question, answered irritably, "Corns!"

SPENDTHRIFT BALZAC.

Extravagance of the Man Who Had a Mountain of Debts.

"With Balzac's rising fame rises the mountain of his debts," writes a critic. "These, starting from his two disastrous years of printing and publishing in Paris, accumulated until at the top of his literary renown he had to hide from his creditors in a garret under the name of his landlady or his washerwoman. In 1837 Balzac, at that date the best known and the most debated novelist in France, owed 162,000 francs (about \$32,500). Then he must needs buy a cane which was the talk of Paris, some gold buttons for a new coat, a 'divine opera glass' and a dressing gown beyond words and give a dinner to the dandies of the opera respecting which Rossini said that he had not seen more magnificence when he dined at royal tables."

"Balzac three times a millionaire would still have buried himself in debt, for the mental exaltation of his creative hours was reproduced when he broke loose from the galley bench. He lavished in anticipation the wealth he had dreamed would be his. This gone, he borrowed anew or devised another of those schemes that were to enrich him beyond the possibilities of literature. His schemes were essentially a part of Balzac, the sovereign, unconquerable visionary."

"He would transport oaks from Poland to France—nothing like oaks from Poland to make your fortune three times over! Behold him again gravely working out his plan to make a corner in all the arts and putting up the Apollo Belvedere for competition among the nations—to act as auctioneer to Europe—the 'child man,' as his devoted sister, Mme. Surville, used to call him."

A Motorcycle Parade.

The Curbstone club members were discussing the speed of motorcycles when the ancient carpenter, who had just come in, joined in the conversation.

"Talking about motorcycles," he said, "I took a count of them in front of my house the other evening."

"I noticed that a continual string of them seemed to be coming by the place, so I started in counting."

"By the time I had reached 987 I made a peculiar discovery. I happened to notice by a mark of the tire of the wheel that it was the same motorcycle that I had been tallying."

"The rider went so fast round and round the block that I mistook him for a parade."—Youngstown Telegram.

Disabled.

In an English camp a battalion was being instructed on how to take a convoy through open country. One company was told off to represent a convoy, the men being instructed that they were to represent horses, cows and wagons.

After being halted a short time the advance signal was given, and the convoy moved on, but the major noticed that one man continued to lie down and, galloping up to him in a rage, said, "Man, why don't you advance?"

The soldier replied, "I can't, sir."

Major—"You can't? What do you mean?"

"I'm a wagon," said the soldier, "and I've got a wheel off."

He Couldn't See.

Little Jack's father was the teacher of the Sunday school class of which Jack was a new member. He had been told that as this was his first Sunday he would not be asked any questions, but he must pay close attention just the same.

So on the way home his father asked him who it was who killed Goliath.

"I don't know. I was sitting on the back seat and couldn't see," was the ready answer.—National Monthly.

Prevaricator.

The word prevaricator is from the Latin and originally meant a straddler with distorted or misshapen legs. In the Roman courts of law the expression was applied to one who in a suit was discovered to be in collusion with his opponent to compass some dishonesty. As falsehood was the necessary part of such a performance, the word by and by came to have the significance at present attached to it.

The Exception.

A cynic had returned from a party in Toronto, given by some "new rich" citizens who were rather ostentatious, but not given to the use of correct English.

"I suppose," said an inquiring friend, "that everything was very swell."

"It was," said the cynical youth, with a yawn. "Everything was observed except the rules of syntax."—Exchange

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