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GREW A HOUSE.

A Tree in Germany That Is a Remarkable Work of Art.

On the bank of the river Oder, in Ratibor, in Silesia, Germany, there grows a maple tree which is one of the most remarkable works of art in existence, for though a tree, and to that extent a natural object, it has been trained, twisted and cut until it has become more like a house than a tree.

The tree is more than a hundred years old, and through the greater part of this time the work of cutting and twisting has been going on. The trunk rises from the ground much like that of any other tree, but a flight of steps leads to the first level, where the branches have been gradually woven together until a firm and leafy floor has been made.

Above this is a second floor smaller in diameter and formed in the same way. Around each floor the branches have been woven into solid walls, making two circular rooms. Each of these rooms is lighted by eight windows cut through the walls of branches and foliage.

Below the first floor, at the level of the second and at the top of the tree the branches have been allowed to grow out naturally, while the intermediate walls and the edges of the window openings are kept closely trimmed.

These tree rooms are occasionally used as sleeping apartments in summer. The old tree is in a healthy condition and promises to remain as a curiosity of Ratibor for many years.—Harper's.

The Sandbow.

The unusual optical phenomenon of a bow produced by the sun shining not on raindrops, but on particles of sand suspended in the air by wind, has been witnessed over a part of the Great Salt lake. The colors were very brilliant, and there was a secondary bow visible. The main bow was fully double the width of an ordinary rainbow. Only a segment of it was seen. The sand was oolitic, consisting of calcareous spherules of fairly uniform size, ranging between the limits of No. 8 and No. 10 shot. It has been claimed that the production of the bow must be due to reflection from the outer surfaces of the spherules and that it cannot be explained on the principle of refraction and total reflection, generally applied to the explanation of the rainbow.

The Word "Caucus."

As to the origin of the word "caucus" there is much diversity of opinion. It has been traced to a North American Indian word, "kaw-kaw-ka," meaning to talk, advise or instigate, whence came "caucorouse," a chief. More often, however, it is explained as English, a corruption of "calkers' meeting," and here again there is a variety of choice. One version tells of meetings of the Boston dockyard calkers to elect delegates to represent their grievances against the English soldiers. Another makes it a term of opprobrium, "calkers" standing for humble folk generally. A third explains that it was in a calkers' meeting place that the Boston politicians assembled.

Origin of "Buncombe."

In historic Buncombe county, N. C., was originated the phrase "talking buncombe," for in this mountainous country years ago Colonel Edward Buncombe founded his famous hall and placed the words "To Buncombe Hall, Welcome All," over his doorway. The expression "I am talking for Buncombe," meaning Buncombe county, became current hereabouts by home folks, but unregenerate strangers have used it to signify political blarney or exaggerated praise.—National Magazine.

Equity and the Judge.

Equity is a roguish thing; for law we have a measure, know what to trust to; equity, according to the conscience of him that is chancellor, and as that is larger or narrower so is equity. 'Tis all one, as if they should make the standard for the measure we call a foot a chancellor's foot; what an uncertain measure would this be! One chancellor has a long foot, another a short foot, a third an indifferent foot. 'Tis the same in the chancellor's conscience.—John Selden.

A Grand Success.

The story of a Scotchman who attended a funeral which lasted two days is told by a man who was present. On the second day, having imbibed too freely, he rose and proposed the health of the bride and groom.

A friend urged him to sit down, saying, "This is not a wedding; it is a funeral."

"Well," retorted the Scotchman, "whatever it is, it's a grand success."

WALL PAPERS.

The Idea of Their Use Was Borrowed From Ancient China.

It is said that the European notion of wall paper was imported from China. There its ornamental use for screens, partitions and the like was known as early as the fourth century. Authorities on this subject assert that it was Holland, during her naval supremacy of the sixteenth century, which first began to adopt and hand around the wall paper idea. The early Chinese wall papers were printed from blocks, hand painted or stamped with infinite labor and exquisite art. They were made to order—produced in sheets of varying dimensions according to the uses to which they were put. The modern rolls of wall paper with a continuous duplicate design were unknown. It was not until the invention of the modern printing and stamping machines with cylindrical rollers that a continuous conventional pattern was favored.

As neither China nor Japan was a communicative country during the beginning of the commercial history of Europe, these wall paper importations were few and far between and considerably at a premium. Yet they soon hit the European fancy as a good substitute for the arras and tapestries of the time. Up to the end of the seventeenth century the imported product was prohibitive in price, however, and it was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that it was really a familiar thing on the market. When the methods for printing and stamping wall paper from blocks was introduced from China each nation was jealous of its neighbor in the wall paper trade and tried to keep its own process a secret.

Toward the end of the seventeenth century the English were the largest importers of the hand decorated Chinese wall papers, but only for a short time. As the demand increased they began to perfect a process of paper stamping and paper decoration to imitate tapestries and with improved machinery soon cheapened their product and popularized it all over Europe. By the time of the Stuarts the arras of Shakespeare's era were beginning to disappear.—Chicago News.

He Wasn't Spiteful.

A man had for years employed a steady German workman. One day Jake came to him and asked to be excused from work the next day. "Certainly, Jake," beamed the employer. "What are you going to do?" "Vell," said Jake slowly, "I tink I must go by mein wife's funeral. She dies yesterday." After the lapse of a few weeks Jake again approached his boss for a day off. "All right, Jake, but what are you going to do this time?" "Aber," said Jake, "I go to make me, mit mein fraulein, a wedding?" "What? So soon? Why, it's only three weeks since you buried your wife!" "Ach," replied Jake, "I don't hold spite long!"

Knew She Would.

A minister who was noted for his absentmindedness in a small country village was once observed to stop suddenly in the middle of his sermon and heard to murmur, "I knew she would; I knew she would."

After the service some one asked him the reason. "Dear me!" said he. "Did I? Well, you know, from the pulpit I can just see old Mrs. Smith's garden, and this morning she was out pulling a cabbage, and I thought, 'Now, if that cabbage comes up suddenly she'll go over, and just then it came up and over she went.'—London Ideas.

A "Lady Judge."

We have noted several feminine justices of the peace, but there has been only one lady judge. This was a certain Lady Berkeley, who complained to Henry VIII. of trespass that had been committed on her estate, with assaults on her servants. The king very obligingly granted her a commission of assize, armed with which she apprehended and prosecuted the offenders, impaneled a jury, sat as judge in her own cause and passed exemplary sentences on the prisoners and then bade farewell to the judicial bench forever.—London Chronicle.

Your Shadow.

Every one of us casts a shadow. There hangs about us a sort of penumbra—a strange, indefinable something we call personal influence—which has its effect on every other life on which it falls. It goes with us wherever we go. It is not something we can have when we want to have it and then lay aside at will, as we lay aside a garment. It is something that always pours out from our life, like light from a lamp, like heat from a flame, like perfume from a flower.



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