

QUEER MANX CUSTOMS.

Why Natives Ate the Meat Before They Took the Bread.

Peculiar to itself is the code of laws of the Isle of Man. The laws of England have never prevailed there, and some of the Manx enactments are very curious. One of the earliest enjoined "all Scots to avoid the land with the next vessel that goeth into Scotland, upon pain of forfeiture of their goods and bodies to prison." Another enacted that "Irishwomen loitering and not working be commanded forth of this isle with as much convenient speed as may be" (1561).

The first of these laws was the result of a series of raids on the Manx coast by a Galloway rover named MacCulloch. It is said that it was at this period that the Manx custom originated of "eating the meat before they supped the bread," lest they should be deprived of the more substantial part by the appearance at their doors of this Scotchman and his crew. About this time the parish clerks were ordered "to stand at the church doors at the time of the service and whip and beat all the dogs."

During the seventeenth century a law was made that "whoever shall be found or detected to pull horse tails shall be punished upon the wooden horse of the parish, thereon to continue two hours, and to be whipped naked from the waist upward."

Every woman, widow or spinster in the Isle of Man, whether she be owner, occupier or even lodger, enjoys the franchise for the Manx house of keys elections. Every widow enjoys half of her husband's personal estate and has a life interest in his real estate, and she cannot be deprived of this by will. Her written consent must be obtained to all transfers and deeds affecting her husband's property. On the other hand, no married woman can legally own in her own right either money or property in the Isle of Man. She can have no separate estate unless specially provided for before marriage.

The Rope of Ocnus.

"The Rope of Ocnus" is the name of a famous picture painted by Polygnote, a Greek artist, who died about 426 B. C. He was the first who gave life, character and expression to pictures. According to Pliny, he opened the mouth and showed the teeth of his figures and was the first to paint women with transparent draperies and rich headdresses. The picture represents Ocnus as a poor man weaving a rope of straw, while behind him stands an ass consuming the other end of the rope. The silent lesson thus conveyed is said to have had a wholesome effect upon the wife of Ocnus, whose extravagance had been his ruin, so that she became frugal and thrifty and helped him to rise from penury to great prosperity. The phrase "like the rope of Ocnus" signifies profitless labor.

Bankipur's Grain Galah.

A curious instance of the magnificence of eastern ideas and admiration for things that are large is the grain "golah," to be seen at Bankipur, in Bengal, India. It was built as a granary in 1783, but never used as such. Its walls are of masonry twelve feet in thickness, and it stands ninety feet high, with a circumference of forty-three feet at the base, and would contain about 130,000 tons of grain. Access to the interior is obtained by a staircase on the outside leading to a platform on the top, where there is a stone placed in the center, which can be removed. Now it is perhaps the finest whispering gallery in the world.

Hats in Mexico.

In Mexico and other Spanish speaking countries the hat has for centuries been the object of man's vanity. The custom found its origin in the days when the Hapsburg power was supreme. One of the most cherished privileges that the old grandees enjoyed was that of wearing their hats in the presence of royalty. The absolute power of the monarch left them little else to do but enter into rivalry with one another in regard to the splendor of their head coverings. The gay conceit spread rapidly throughout the Spanish dominions, and even today characteristic sugarloaf hats may be found in Mexico for sale at the astounding price of from \$500 to \$1,000 for a single hat.

CURIOUS PRIVILEGES.

Some Advantages Ambassadors Have Over Mere Ministers.

"Ambassador" and "minister" mean pretty much the same to the average man, but there is a very great difference between the two, inasmuch as an ambassador possesses many privileges abroad that do not pertain to a mere minister.

Perhaps the most curious privilege of an ambassador who is accredited to the ruler of a country and not merely to the government thereof, as is a minister, is that the ambassador may when dismissed turn his back to the sovereign to whose court he has been assigned. Briefly described, the mode of procedure is as follows:

When the audience is at an end the ambassador waits to be dismissed by the sovereign. When dismissed the ambassador bows, retires three paces, bows again, retires three paces, bows a third time, turns on his heels and walks to the folding doors. But when the reigning sovereign is a woman a more polite method is employed. To turn his back would be to resign a privilege; therefore the ambassador retires sideways. He keeps one eye on the sovereign and with the other he endeavors to find the door. By this unique means he contrives to show all politeness to the sovereign and at the same time retain his ambassadorial privilege in retiring.

Another privilege of an ambassador is that of being sheltered into the royal presence through folding doors, both of which must be flung wide for him. No one save an ambassador can claim this privilege, the greatest favor in this respect that can be shown any nonambassadorial representative consisting in the opening to him of one door only.

There is one privilege of the ambassador, a privilege that sometimes occasions great inconvenience to the ruler, which consists of his right to demand admission to the sovereign by day or by night.—Exchange.

Hans Christian Andersen.

A critic writes of Hans Christian Andersen: "His vanity was perhaps his most salient characteristic. He was photographed scores of times in every position and costume, and he never wearied of new presentations of his strong but unhand-some features. His whims were legion. He had a morbid horror of being buried alive and always set a slip of paper by his bedside bearing the words, 'Sog es skindet' ('I am in a trance'). His hosts often found him an exacting guest, but his little fallings were easily pardoned for the sake of his genius and his child-like nature."

A Relic of Barbarism.

In ancient times it was the custom of the victors in a battle to decorate their doorposts with the skulls of the vanquished. With the advance of civilization of course we no longer continue this bit of barbarity, but the custom has not been allowed to drop altogether, as is seen by the stone balls which are often set on gateposts, a relic of a barbarous idea of long ago. In certain parts of Africa the skulls are still used as decorations. Whole villages may be seen with the doorposts of the houses surmounted in this ghoulish fashion.

You Can't Lose It.

"Of course," said the optimist. "If a man gets into the habit of hunting trouble he's sure to find it."

"Yes," replied the pessimist, "and it's because he's sure to find it. He's what the difference?"—Catholic Standard and Times.

His Only Worry.

Graphter—I've got my books out for a swell political office, big salary and all that. Jestin—Do you think you can fill it? Graphter—Never thought of that. What's worrying me is whether I'll be able to get it.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Something New.

"Your snowstorm made a hit." "I knew it would," declared the proud playwright.

"Yes; this turned it loose in the drawing room scene."—Exchange.

Its Location.

Gladya Rexton—And the duke is a brave, good. Why, he declares he intends to become an aviator. Papa—(in): He does, eh? Wants to visit his castle, I suppose?—Pack.

A FAMOUS SCHOOL.

The Fireside University Has Graduated Many Great Men.

A man speaking before a large club of the most cultivated men and women in the city of Boston gave an address of such compelling interest in the beauty of its diction and in the forcefulness of its argument that all were sorry when the address came to an end after the speaker had talked a full hour. At the close of the meeting some one said to the speaker:

"From what college or university are you a graduate?"

"From the Fireside university," he replied with perfect seriousness.

"The Fireside university? I don't think that I quite understand. Where is that university?"

"It may be located in any home. In my own case it was before the fire on the long winter evenings on a farm in the middle west."

"Do you mean that you have never been to a real college?"

"I have never had the privilege of attending even a graded school," was the reply. "I had to stop attending even the little district school when I was a lad of fourteen years. Then I became a student with my brother in the Fireside university. It is all the university I have ever known."

If the truth were known it would be revealed that hundreds of men of ability as writers and speakers, hundreds of men of wide information, have known no university or college but the Fireside university. It was the university of Abraham Lincoln and other presidents of the United States. It is the university open to every boy in the land, and he need not pass any entrance "exams" in order to get into it. The opportunities for self culture were never so many as today. The free public library is to be found everywhere in the land. The best of reading matter was never so inexpensive as it is today. The Fireside university may be set up in any home, and it is possible for the graduates of this university to go out into the world and to climb high up the ladder of achievement.—Christian Herald.

The Joke That Failed.

A farmer drove along the streets of Conway Springs. He had a top box on his wagon, and over the edge could be seen the heads of several sheep and young stock. As he drove on his way he was accosted by a dude, who, on seeing the "hay-seed," sang out, "Say, Noah, your ark seems to be pretty well crowded today."

The farmer looked around and, unconcerned-like, replied: "Don't worry. I have saved a place for a jackass, and you can get right in."

The city upstart looked sheepish, and the farmer drove on.—Kansas City Journal.

An Eye For Business.

A life insurance agent was standing on the rear platform of a crowded car and was given the squeeze by a bunch of pickpockets. He felt himself jostled, but did not know that he had been touched until the thieves had left the car. Then an other passenger remarked:

"I think those fellows got the purse out of your hip pocket."

"No," said the insurance man, with a sigh of gratitude. "If they only got to my hip pocket they got a rate book, and perhaps they'll take out some insurance."—Chicago Post.

Long Winded.

There have been many terms of reproach and ridicule applied to interminable and wearisome talkers, but here are two that seem to be particularly apt:

One is the comment of a politician on a Washington orator. "He has a good train of thought, but it lacks terminal facilities."

The other comes from the village humorist, who said of the village orator, "He's the only feller I ever knew who could set his face talkin' an' then go off an' leave it."

A Good Start.

"Now, Johnny," said the arithmetic teacher, "suppose that one man were to put a stone two feet thick on top of another like stone, and the next day another on top of that, and keep on thus for seventy years, what would be the result?"

"I dunno," replied the student. "But I guess he'd have a pretty good start for a new postoffice."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

TYPEWRITERS GIVEN AWAY

The Emerson Typewriter Company of Woodstock, Ill., have recently given away over 400 of the highest grade, wholly visible Emerson typewriters made in the world. They have gone into every state and territory in the United States. There may be some in your town. They are giving them away everywhere to men, women, boys and girls, over 18 years of age, on surprisingly liberal conditions.

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If you could possibly make any use of a high grade typewriter, even though it didn't cost you one cent of money, or if you would like the agency in your town on a plan by which you could make big money, or if you would like a position with the company, then to send, on a postal card or in a letter addressed to "Frank L. Wither, President, Woodstock, Ill.," say, "Mail me your Free Offers."

A correspondent is wanted from each neighborhood in the vicinity of Scio. What has become of all our old friends who furnished items last winter?

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