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PEAFOWL ETIQUETTE.

The Hen's Formal Introduction of Her Brood to the World.

For bringing up their families peahens are a model to every other feathered fowl in existence. The nest is usually made of a quantity of dry sticks, and when fairly set and on it the difficulty is to find out where the hen is. So beautifully does the ash gray plumage assimilate with the surroundings that it is often possible to tumble over the nest before recognizing it. In this nest are laid from three to four large whitish eggs about the size of those laid by the common domestic goose.

When the chicks are hatched out they are the most delightful little brown birds imaginable. The color is a rich deep brown, and they much resemble young pheasants both in size and in coloring. Many people have often laughed at the curious etiquette noticeable in the behavior of bees toward their queen. But the peafowl etiquette in introducing young chicks to their owner is at least as curious. As soon as the chicks are able to walk the mother marshals them in a procession, and, leading herself, she stalks to the place where she and the others are generally fed. Having formally introduced her brood, she takes them back to the nest, and they are not seen any more for some weeks. The hen will come and be fed, but the chicks are supposed to remain in retreat till they are grown to the size of spring chickens, when they come out and join the rest of the fowls and learn to feed for themselves.—Country Home.

ELECTRIC MILK.

That is the Name That Was Once Given to Rubber.

M. de la Condamine, a French savant, was traveling in 1743 in Ecuador with an expedition sent out to measure a degree of the meridian for scientific purposes. He kept a journal, and the following entry is dated July 11:

In the forests of Quito there flows a kind of resin which is called "cahucho." When fresh it can be molded into any form. It is impervious to rain.

He further describes how the natives used it for making a special kind of syringe, and in April, 1745, when he had returned from his journey, he presented a sample of "cahucho" to the Academy of Sciences in Paris. The French word for rubber—caoutchouc—is simply a corruption of this Indian name.

La Condamine treated the product as a mere vegetable curiosity. It was Fresneau, a French engineer, who first studied and utilized the substance. He embarked for Guiana with a model of the fruit and a sketch of the leaf. He rowed along the rivers, offered the natives drink and music and when he had assured himself of their friendship by these and other gifts showed his patterns and asked them to indicate the plant. His efforts were finally successful, and he obtained enough rubber to make a pair of boots, which he presented to M. de Maurepas, who went to court in them. The "electric milk," as it was termed, thus made its first entry into the royal presence.—London Family Herald.

A Friendly Penguin.

I outbid a friend for a penguin, which became an interesting pet. The friend wanted the bird for his skin. On board ship the bird soon got accustomed to its surroundings and found that the cook was one to keep on good terms with, and it haunted the galley, getting many tidbits. It was always in attendance when the market boat came alongside in the morning and followed the steward as he carried the day's provisions aft. Strange to say, it developed a great liking for lettuce, although its natural food is fish, and another curious trait was that it would never pick up food from the deck or out of water, but would always take it ravenously from the hand. It behaved like a child and would make a whining sound as if begging to be lifted up and would cuddle down and appear to be quite happy when being nursed.—Scotsman.

Mosaic Work.

The origin of Mosaic work is unknown. We may be sure, however, that it began among some oriental people. It had attained to great excellence in Greece in the time of Alexander and his successors. The Romans also excelled in Mosaic work, as is shown by the many preserved specimens today to be seen in the museums. The art was revived in Italy by Giotto, Cimabue and others and from Italy made its way into the other European countries. Some of the achievements of the Mosaic works of the best Italian period are little less than miraculous.—New York American.

Grim Recollections.

"Now that you are famous, Mr. Ritter, we propose to place a tablet on your former home."

"Well?"
 "What would you wish us to say?"
 "You might say that I was ejected for nonpayment of rent," replied the somewhat embittered bard.—Washington Herald.

The Best.

Willis—What is the happiest moment of married life? Gillis—When a man throws the pictures of his wife's relatives out of the family album and fills it up with photographs of his baby instead.—Pack.

Widely Separated.

"Are you related to Barney O'Brien?" Thomas O'Brien was once asked.
 "Very distantly," replied Thomas.
 "I was my mother's first child; Barney was the sixteenth!"

WASP WAIST CONTESTS.

Curious Course of Training in Old Time Girls' Schools.

A letter recently unearthed from a trunk shows that in the sixties of the last century principals of girls' schools thought they were fitting the girls for society by urging them to retain small waists. Accordingly they offered prizes to the girls having the smallest waists. The girls were put through a course of training for reducing their waist measure. The conditions of the contest were that the corset should not be removed on retiring at night and that each pupil must be inspected every morning to make sure she had not loosened her corset. One of the persons who engaged in the contest afterward wrote of it:

"Some of us tried hard to be permitted to retire from the contest, but we were rebuked for stultifying ourselves and accused of making fools of our principals. On the following morning the undergoverness, with her maid, came as usual to superintend the toilets, and after satisfying herself that each lace was drawn in to the utmost she fastened it in a knot at the top and, passing the ends through a piece of card, placed her own seal on them, so that any attempt to loosen the corset during the night might be infallibly detected in the morning."—Detroit Free Press.

WHITE DEER SKINS.

They Passed About as Banknotes at One Time in China.

In China, the first country in the world credited with using banknotes, certain skins were so valuable that they were accepted as cash and passed from hand to hand in the same way as banknotes are at the present day. The negotiability of these skins arose thus:

The Emperor On Ti, being in want of money, gave his treasurer to understand that such a state of affairs must not continue. At that time it was customary for princes and courtiers on entering the royal presence to cover their faces with a piece of skin. Taking advantage of this custom, the treasurer ordered a decree to be issued forbidding the use of any other skins for this purpose except those of a certain white deer in the royal parks. Immediately there was a demand for pieces of these skins, which, being a monopoly, were sold at a high price and the royal coffers refilled. The steady value of the skins thus secured made them readily pass and acceptable as an equivalent of coin of the realm.

In the Russian seal fisheries of Alaska the workmen were formerly paid in the currency stamped on squares of walrus hide.—London Tit-Bits.

A Stenographer's Stumble.

A judge in one of our middle west states advertised for a stenographer with experience in legal work. A number of applicants called at his office for the purpose of making application for the position. Each applicant was given a trial to test her speed, accuracy, etc. Among the applicants was a young lady whose anxiety to make a good showing evidently unnerved her. The judge dictated to her a few sentences in legal language, one of which was, "That would give him time to complete the devastation of the assets." The sentence as transcribed by the young lady on the typewriter read as follows: "That would give him time to complete the devil's station with a hatchet." Although much amused at her ludicrous blunder, the judge permitted her to go away without telling her of her mistake.—Case and Comment.

Madrid's Fearful Climate.

Madrid is afflicted with the most changeable climate of any European capital. The temperature varies from as much as 107 degrees in the summer to as little as 16 degrees in the winter, and at all seasons of the year it indulges in violent fluctuations. It is by no means uncommon in December to wake up with the thermometer registering about 20 degrees and to find it mount to more than 60 degrees by the afternoon. Some years ago an oscillation of 37 degrees was registered in one day. No wonder, therefore, that lung troubles are far more prevalent in Madrid than in St. Petersburg.—London Chronicle.

How Music Affected Boswell.

Boswell had a good deal more feeling for music than Dr. Johnson and suffered at his master's hands. Once in a moment of expansiveness he told Johnson that music "affected him" to such a degree as to agitate his nerves most painfully, producing alternative sensations of pathetic dejection, so that he was ready to shed tears, and of daring resolution, so that he was inclined to rush into the thickest of the battle.

"Sir," replied Johnson, "I should never hear it at all if it made me such a fool."

A Human Tendency.

"You approve of economy, don't you?"
 "Yes," replied Senator Sorghum; "only too many of us are apt to economize on the cigars we hand our friends instead of those we smoke ourselves."—Washington Star.

The Influence of the Trees.

When we plant a tree we are doing what we can to make our planet a more wholesome and happier dwelling place for those who come after us, if not for ourselves.—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

If there were no pride in our hearts we should not complain of the pride of others.

CURIOUS DOMESTIC PETS.

Musical Insects and Waltzing Mice Popular in Japan.

Among the many curious domestic pets of the Japanese are their musical insects and waltzing mice.

Hung up in the verandas of Japanese houses may be seen small, exquisitely cut bamboo cages, from which in the hush of dawn and at the close of summer days proceed quaint little whistlings, tinklings and trills. Usually it is at evening that the Japanese sit at their ease to listen to the music of their imprisoned insects. One called the "suzu-mushi" gives out, it is said, a kind of trill so delicate and clear as to sound like an etherialized bird's song.

One species of Japanese mouse may be said to waltz through the greater part of the waking hours of its life, never tiring, though its feet wear out in the process. This peculiar little rodent is black and white and has pink eyes. Its chief peculiarity is that at a time when baby mice of other species are just beginning to move about this terpsichorean mouse is already able to waltz.

Put together, these Japanese dancing mice will waltz in couples, and at times more than two will join in a mad whirl. So rapid is the movement of the dancers that it is difficult to distinguish their heads from their tails.

The Japanese says that waltzing seems to be as essential to the happiness of this mouse as midair somersaults are to the tumbling pigeon. An upright peg forms a convenient pivot round which the mouse can whirl, but it is said that without any such guide they would not in several minutes cover an area larger than a dinner plate, and they easily spin under a tumbler.—New York Herald.

AN UNFOUGHT DUEL.

The Way the Father of His Country Avenged a Blow.

It is narrated that on one occasion in his early manhood Washington came very near the settlement of a dispute, so common in those days, by fighting a duel. But as he was the one who should have issued the challenge he had the still greater courage to apologize and admit that he was in the wrong.

It was in the town of Alexandria, where the young Virginia colonel was quartered with his troops, that an election dispute occurred, and in the heat of the party excitement Washington told a Mr. Payne that he lied. That gentleman at once replied with a blow that knocked the young colonel down. Word having reached the barracks that their beloved commander had been killed, his soldiers rushed to the city to avenge him. He met them, however, quieted them, and they returned to their quarters.

Mr. Payne, on receiving a note from Washington the next morning asking him to call at his lodgings, supposed it was, of course, to give the colonel opportunity to demand "satisfaction" for the blow he had received the day before. Imagine his surprise when, instead of finding pistols or swords ready for a duel, Washington greeted him with outstretched hand, saying: "I believe I was wrong yesterday. You have already had some satisfaction, and if you deem that sufficient here is my hand. Let us be friends."—H. A. Ogden in St. Nicholas.

Catching the Speaker's Eye.

The practice of "catching the speaker's eye" dates back to the session of 1670, when a heated dispute arose between members of the house, several of whom claimed precedence of speech. It was then decided that whoever first caught the speaker's eye should have the right to address the house. This rule worked smoothly until 1685, when Sir John Trevor was elected to the chair. The new speaker was afflicted with an abominable squint; consequently two members would often catch his eye simultaneously and decline to give way to one another. To obviate this a further rule was framed to the effect that the speaker should call by name upon the member privileged to address the house. So every holder of the office has to possess a good memory for names as well as keen eyesight.—London Chronicle.

The Cruel Wolf Spider.

One of the most unnatural things in nature, if the expression is allowable, is the manner in which the young of the common wolf spider treat their mother. After the little creature has laid her eggs she envelops them in a silken covering, so as to make a ball about the size of a pea, and this she carries about with her wherever she goes and will defend it with her life. When the young are hatched they climb on her back, giving her a monstrous appearance, and ride about until nearly half grown, and as soon as they discover their strength they fall to and devour their mother.

His Last Request.

As the doomed man was led to the scaffold the sheriff asked:

"Have you any last request to make?"
 "Yes," said the wretch. "I would like to have a pair of suspenders."
 So they assigned two hangmen to the job instead of one.—Baltimore Sun.

Just Like Henry.

"But why do you cry so, Frau Maier?"
 "The sight of Vesuvius reminds me so of my poor dear Henry. He, too, was always smoking."—Fliegende Blätter.

We must laugh before we are happy or else we may die before we ever laugh at all.—La Bruyere.

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