

OLD TIME PRICES.

Glimpse of the Days When Living Was Cheap in England.

Old time hotel rates in England were low. For instance, in the days of Queen Elizabeth the charge at the George Inn for a feather bed per night was a penny. Dinner cost sixpence (12 cents) and offered choice of "beef, mutton or pigge or fish." In Stuart times each room owned a name instead of a number, chiefly those of inn signs, such as the Cross Keys room, the Bell chamber, the Adam and Eve room, and so forth.

Formerly the custom in important cities during festival times was to limit the price of food and lodging by statute. In Canterbury during the celebration of the bicentenary of Becket's translation (1372) the price of bread was fixed at two loaves for a penny (2 cents), a fairly high figure considering the comparative value of money then and now, and wine brought 16 cents a gallon.

A century or so later the scale of prices in Edinburgh all the year round was equally moderate, sheep being sold at prices ranging from 12 cents to 20 cents, according to quality, "best hens" at 1 cent each and Rochelle wine at 1 cent a pint. Any vendor departing from these prices ran the risk of forfeiture of his goods.—Chicago News.

QUEER CRABS.

The Ingenious Manner in Which They Disguise Themselves.

Some species of crabs disguise themselves in an ingenious manner. They deliberately bite up seaweeds and plant them on their backs, very soon establishing a growth which harmonizes perfectly with the surroundings and deceives many an enemy. Should the weeds grow too vigorously the crab industriously prunes them with his claws and every now and then scrapes the whole lot off and starts a fresh garden on his roof, so to speak.

The sponge crab behaves in a similar manner, nipping off little bits of living sponge and sticking them on his back, where they grow vigorously. The same end is served as in the other case. It is very amusing to keep crabs of one or other of these kinds in an aquarium and deprive them of the usual means of concealment.

They get very nervous and agitated and try to cover themselves with bits of paper or anything else that may be provided. One such captive is said to have had a little greatcoat made for him, which he put on in a hurry as soon as it was handed to him.—London Sphere.

Queer Talismans in Malta.

There are still to be found in Malta a number of small stones shaped and colored like the eyes, tongues and other parts of serpents. The superstitious among the Maltese connect these with the tradition that St. Paul when shipwrecked was cast on their island, and it was there that while lighting a bundle of sticks for a fire a viper fastened on the apostle's hand. St. Paul calmly shook the reptile off into the flames, and no harm followed. The natives wear these stones as talismans, in which character they suppose them serviceable in warding off dangers from snake bites and poisons. They are found in St. Paul's cave, imbedded in clay, and are set in rings and bracelets and when found to be in the shape of a tongue or liver or heart are hung around the neck. They are also taken internally, dissolved in wine, which method is attended, according to some people, by more immediate results.

Islands in New York City.

"I was showing an Englishman our city a week or two ago," said a New Yorker, "and was surprised to hear him express astonishment at the number of islands within our municipal boundaries. 'Is this entire island a part of New York city?' he asked as I took him on several trolley rides over on Staten Island. 'And all these islands, too, are they New York city?' he inquired another day as he went up the East river. His remarks put me to thinking, and I've discovered that not one of the really great cities of the world has so many islands within its boundaries as New York. Staten Island in itself would make a good sized city. Some of the other islands, of course, are hardly more than specks, but they belong to New York city just the same."

The Darkest Hour.

The proverb which tells us that "the darkest hour is that before dawn" is inaccurate, for light increases in the morning as gradually as it decreases in the evening. The saying should be "the coldest hour," etc., which is perfectly true and is owing to causes connected with the deposit of dew. Hoar-frosts, too, usually take place just before daylight and are an additional cause of the peculiar chilliness of this time.—London Scraps.

The Salt in the Sea.

A scientist has calculated, after extensive tests of the density and saltiness of the ocean in all parts of the world, that there is the equivalent of 3,651,342 cubic geographical miles of common salt in all the known seas. This is more than five times the mass of the mountains in the entire Alpine range.

The Resemblance.

"The buckwheat cakes at my boarding house always remind me of a baseball game."

"How so?"

"The batter doesn't always make a hit."—Puck.

For the noblest man that lives there still remains a conflict.—Garfield.

Philanthropic Misers.

In several remarkable cases real philanthropy has been a miser's motive in spending and saving to a grotesque degree. Thus when the first Pasteur Institute was suggested in Paris to keep green the memory of the world famous scientist a poor wretch who lived in utter misery came forward with a subscription of \$500. And when the city officials called upon him with a message of thanks they found him in an evil smelling slum behind the Cathedral of Notre Dame. When the door was opened the miser philanthropist was found quarrelling violently with his miserable looking servant for throwing away a match that had not been burned at both ends. A similar case, but on a much larger scale, was that of Jacques Gurgot of Marseilles. Every one in the city knew and hated him for his incredibly sordid life, yet when the old miser's will was proved all France was amazed to find he had left \$250,000 to his native city especially to furnish the poor with a good and cheap water supply. "I know," the old man wrote, "that 50,000 of our citizens died of the plague during the epidemic of 1720, which was generated by the noxious effluvia arising from filthy streets that were never cleansed."—New York Tribune.

The Poor Ensign.

The following story of German military officialism is published in London: One Ensign Flugge claimed compensation for damage to kit caused by a mouse having gnawed a hole in his best tunic. The officer who had to decide the point dismissed the claim and ordered the ensign to be severely punished on the ground that, contrary to orders, he had hung his best tunic on a nail when going on guard at night in an inferior garment instead of packing it in his knapsack, thus enabling a mouse to gnaw a hole in it "without having to overcome the slightest impediment." Ensign Flugge appealed, and on further hearing it appeared that the officer who first dealt with the case was mistaken in the facts, the tunic having been stowed in a knapsack at the time when the mouse defaced it and not hung upon a nail. The first decision was therefore set aside by higher authority, and Ensign Flugge was ordered to be severely punished for having stowed his tunic in his knapsack instead of hanging it on a nail, thereby giving opportunity to the mouse to gnaw a hole in it "under cover of the darkness." The sentiments of Ensign Flugge are not recorded.

The Arab Mare.

The Arab is regarded as the first of horsemen and the Arab mare as the perfect steed. The Arab's idea of horse taming is of the simplest. The colt is treated from the first as a member of the family. It goes in and out of the tents and is so familiarized with the doings of that extraordinary creature, man, that there is never any need of breaking it in. The Bedouin is very careful of his mare. He does not mount her when he sets out to play his usual tricks upon travelers. He rides a camel to which the mare is tethered. Not until the caravan is in sight does he mount the mare and give chase. There is, by the way, an impression that the Bedouin is a bloody minded person who would as lief take your life as not. This is unfair to him. He is a thief of very peaceful inclinations and much prefers to effect any necessary transfer of property with as little bother as possible.—London Graphic.

A Poor Bath.

A Frenchman was talking in New York about the excellent bathing beaches of America.

"There are no such beaches in Europe," said he. "And the sea over there is not so pleasant to bathe in. Frequently, you know, great pipes empty sewage into it. They who stay late for the bathing in Nice, for instance, swim about among lemon peel, orange skins, melon rinds, soaked but still buoyant newspapers—fearful rubbish. I once bathed in Nice. The Mediterranean was warm and pleasant, but it resembled soup or something worse. I heard an American after coming out say to the bathing master: 'Look here, friend, where do strangers go for a wash after bathing here?'"

How We Fall Asleep.

It is not generally known that the body falls asleep in sections. The muscles of the legs and arms lose their power long before those which support the head and these last sooner than the muscles which sustain the back. The sense of sight sleeps first, then the sense of taste, next the sense of smell, next that of hearing and lastly that of touch. These are the results of careful and lengthy investigation by a French scientist, M. Cabanis.

Making Practice.

"These mere rascals of the town have the audacity to say my poems make them sick," said the proud bard. "You don't object to them, do you, sir?"

"No, indeed," answered the stranger. "And may I ask who you are?"

"Why, I am the town physician."—Chicago News.

Virtue of Hospitality.

Hospitality solves and annuls even the mysterious antagonisms that exist between races. This glorious and beautiful and sacred rite makes all men brothers.—Cassell's Saturday Journal.

Poor Eve.

Eve (in the garden)—Adam, I've got to have another dress. Adam—Eve, you're the most resolute woman I've ever known. You're always turning over a new leaf.—London Tatler.

Ring the Breakfast Bell.

An American family who had experienced the difficulty of obtaining and retaining the services of a reliable kitchen girl while on a visit to Ireland became acquainted with a promising young girl and brought her back home with them.

In a few weeks she was installed in her new home and made acquainted with her new duties. Among other things she was told that it was customary when breakfast was ready to be served to ring the breakfast bell. Her "all right, mum," came in such a confident tone that her mistress gave the matter no further thought.

The following morning at 6 o'clock the family were rudely awakened by the violent ringing of the front door-bell. Thinking that a messenger must be waiting with some unusual message, the gentleman of the house did not stop to dress, but hurried down in his night robe and opened the door. The new kitchen girl awaited him, her face beaming with a beautiful smile of triumph. Bowing low, she said in her rich Irish brogue, "Breakfast is ready, sor."—Los Angeles Times.

Diamond Cutting.

It is said that before the fourteenth century no one knew how to cut and polish diamonds. They were esteemed for their marvelous hardness, but not greatly admired for beauty. There is a tradition that a journeyman jeweler in Flanders, Louis Van Berghem, discovered the art of cutting diamond with diamond. But it is probable that he only made some notable advance in the art since associations of diamond cutters had existed in France and Flanders from the fourteenth century. Louis Van Berghem's most famous achievement was the cutting and polishing of a huge diamond belonging to Charles the Bold. Charles was so delighted with the result that he rewarded the artist liberally and declared that the diamond would now serve him for a bedroom lamp. This jewel, which was found on Charles' body after the battle of Nancy, is still in existence and celebrated under the name of the Sancy diamond.—Youth's Companion.

He Gave Them Latin.

Once, before he was president, Andrew Jackson was making a political speech in some obscure campaign in a backwoods Tennessee district. His address was very well received, but somehow there did not seem to be exactly the enthusiasm wanted for the occasion. Having vainly tried to "warm up" his hearers, the general was just going to sit down when the chairman of the meeting plucked him by the coat-tail. "For the Lord's sake, general, give 'em some Latin!" he hurriedly whispered in the speaker's ear. "They won't think you know anything at all if you quit like this, Smith, the opposition candidate, talked Latin to 'em half the evening."

Old Hickory rose to the situation. Advancing to the edge of the platform, he extended his arm and thundered out: "E pluribus unum! Sic semper tyrannis! Hebeas corpus!"

The audience roared with applause. The credit of the orator was saved, and the Jackson ticket won out in that county.—St. Paul Pioneer Press.

A Spoiled Scene.

E. H. Sothern once found his wit fail him in time of need. It was in the fourth act of "The Lady of Lyons." Sothern played Claude Melnotte, and Virginia Harned was cast as Pauline. Beausant, the villain, was pursuing Pauline, and she cried loudly for help. Claude is supposed to dash to her rescue and catch the fainting Pauline in his arms. Sothern dashed on to the stage, but slipped and slid, sitting down near the footlights. Losing his presence of mind, he declaimed the line: "Look up, Pauline. There is no danger." As Virginia Harned was standing, this was, of course, an impossibility. By this time the audience was in an uproar, and when Arthur Lawrence, who played Beausant, scornfully said, "You are beneath me," the amusement of the audience knew no bounds.

The Stick For Wives.

In the old Anglo-Norman marriage ceremony the gentleman used to promise her husband to be buxom "unto my gentil manne." The word buxom corresponds to the modern German biegsam, meaning bending or pliant, and the old English was "buskam," all of which goes to show that things must have been very pleasantly ordered in the good old days that are dead and gone. According to the old English law, which is still unrescinded in the statute book, the "gentil manne" was allowed to beat his good wife with a stick the diameter of which did not exceed a quarter of an inch.—New York World.

What She Wanted to See.

The chauffeur was taking his load of tourists for a ride through the residence portion of the metropolis and pointing out to them the state mansions of the nabob. "I've often heard," said the portly dowager with the diamonds, "of these Oliver Wendel homes. Would you mind showing us one of 'em?"—San Francisco Argonaut.

Sensitive.

"I hear you is out of a job, Willie?"

"Yes, I may be a little too sensitive, but when the boss sez 'Git to blazes out of here before I kick you out!' then I got mad and resigned me position."—Illustrated Bits.

He Knew.

Teacher—Now, Johnny, what was Washington's farewell address? Johnny—Heaven.—New York Sun.

Conscience and wealth are not always neighbors.—Messenger.

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BAY CITY.

Chas. Willman and Arch Provoost, from Bremerton, Wash., have opened up a horseshoeing and blacksmith shop on the county road east of Provoost's store. We are glad to welcome them, as this shop was badly needed.

D. L. Van de Wiele, of Portland, is in the city and intends to join his brother-in-law, Homer Provoost in business. D. L. Van de Wiele is a well known Portland man, having been traveller for the German American Coffee Co. We need more of this kind of persons in our midst to build up and care for the increasing business.

Mrs. Wm. Elliott went to Tillamook, Saturday, to visit her parents, Mr. and Mrs. B-w-l-e-v.

The Bay City people are elated at the idea of another boat running between Portland and Bay City, and the Argo will be well patronized by all here.

Rev. P. J. Jonas will conduct a preaching service, Sunday, 13th December, at 7:30 p.m. All are invited to attend.

Rev. P. J. Jonas will conduct a preaching service at Garibaldi on Sunday, December 12, at 11 a.m. Mr. Byron has kindly consented to allow the use of his hotel.

The Ladies' Aid have arranged to have a sale of cooked foods at Nelson's every Saturday. It is helping a good cause all around. Firstly, it helps the church, and secondly, it helps the housewives out who are so busy with their Saturday work, can now depend on getting good wholesome things for their Sunday dinner. Here is a good wish for the Ladies' Aid.

Last Thursday night Virgil Lloyd took a party for a run to the Sand Spit and back. They enjoyed the trip, the night was fine.

The Rev. A. B. Calder will hold services in the M.E. Church, Bay City, 13th December, at 11 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. All are invited.