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REVELED IN PERFUMES.

The Ancients Indulged In Them to an Extravagant Degree.

The use of perfume was indulged in to such an extravagant degree by the ancients that some of the more ascetic men had good reason to denounce it. Solon issued an edict prohibiting its sale in Athens. Julius Caesar and Lucinus, who were Roman consuls in 565, published a law forbidding the sale of exotics in that city, and by the laws of Lycurgus perfumers were expelled from Sparta as being wasters of oil and encouragers of sensuousness. Clearchus wrote against the excessive use of unguents, and Socrates declaimed against them in strong terms, preferring, he said, "the smell of healthy toil and the perfume of a good and manly life." It was customary at festivals to pass round to the guests perfumes served in alabaster boxes and vessels of gold. At one of these feasts Cynulcus, who loved to deride the youth for the use of perfumes, was made a butt for their ridicule. Some mischievous youth anointed the cynic with much ointment, pouring it lavishly over his head and face. When he awoke he exclaimed in an angry voice: "What is this? Oh, Hercules, will not some one come with a sponge and wipe my face, which is thus polluted with a lot of dirt?"

At the Syrian banquets it was usual for the slaves to come in with bladders full of Babylonian perfumes and bedew the garlands and walls and hangings and fill the halls with delicious fragrance. In some of the more modern feasts statues and ornaments were provided with jets which threw out diluted essences and attars.—London Society.

TABLE NAPKINS.

They Came Into General Use In the Fifteenth Century.

Curiously enough, that article, now considered almost indispensable, the table napkin, was first used only by children and was only adopted by elder members of the family about the middle of the fifteenth century. In etiquette books of an earlier date than this among other sage pieces of advice for children are instructions about wiping their fingers and lips with their napkins.

It seems that the tablecloth was long enough to reach the floor and served the grown people in place of napkins. When they did begin to use napkins they placed them first on the shoulder, then on the left arm and finally tied them about the neck. A French writer who evidently was conservative and did not welcome the napkin kindly records with scorn:

"The napkin is placed under the chin and fastened in the back, as if one were going to be shaved. A person told me that he wore his that way that he might not soil his beautiful frills."

It was a difficult matter to tie the two corners in the back, and it is said that thence originated our expression for straitened circumstances, "Hard to make both ends meet." This custom led to the habit of table waiters carrying a napkin on the left arm.

Tennyson's Astronomy.

In Tennyson's "Palace of Art" occur the lines:

She saw the snowy poles and moons of Mars,
That mystic field of drifted light
In mid Orion, and the married stars.

This at first looks like a literary parallel to Swift's well known fortuitous forecast of the discovery of the Martian satellites, and J. S. Stevenson, writing from Blairavon, Norwood, Ceylon, points out that Professor H. H. Turner quotes it in "Modern Astronomy" as having been written in 1835. This, however, appears not to have been the case, for Mr. Stevenson on reference to the biography of the late poet laureate by the present Lord Tennyson has found the note: "The 'Moons of Mars' is the only modern reading here. All the rest are more than half a century old." Scientific discovery was thus not anticipated by Tennyson in the mention of Martian satellites.—Nature.

In Good Season.

In a place in New Jersey the town officers had just put some fire extinguishers in their big buildings. One day one of the buildings caught fire, says the Philadelphia Ledger, and the extinguishers failed to do their work.

A few days later at the town meeting some citizens tried to learn the reason.

After they had freely discussed the subject one of them said, "Mr. Chairman, I make a motion that the fire extinguishers be examined ten days before every fire."

Napoleon's Tomb.

The windows in the Chapel of the Invalides in Paris, where the great Napoleon lies buried, are of a singularly translucent amber glass. When the sun shines full upon them the rays are transmuted into gold, and they fall like a ladder of light upon the bronze sarcophagus of the conqueror until he seems glorified from the skies.

The Purse.

The invention of the purse was doubtless contemporaneous with that of money. The purse is mentioned in Old Testament history as a part of a traveler's outfit. When the disciples, spoken of in the gospels, were sent forth to preach they were commanded to take neither gold nor silver nor brass in their purses.

Popular.

"He's a popular poet."

"Dear me! Why, I thought he hadn't written anything for years!"

"He hasn't; that's why he's so popular."

TYROLESE CUSTOMS.

Peculiar Manner In Which Proposals of Marriage Are Made.

There is an old custom prevailing among the Tyrolese regarding proposals of marriage. The first time a young man pays a visit as avowed lover he brings with him a bottle of wine, of which he pours out a glass and presents it to the object of his desires.

If she accepts it the whole affair is settled. Very often the girl has not yet made up her mind, and then she will take refuge in excuses so as not to drink the wine and yet not refuse it point blank, for that is considered a gross insult, proving that she has been merely trifling with the affections of her lover.

She will, for instance, maintain that the wine "looks sour" or that wine disagrees with her or that she is afraid of getting tipsy or that the priest has forbidden her to take any—in fact, she makes use of any subterfuge that presents itself at that moment.

The purport of these excuses is that she has not come to a decision and that the wine offering is premature.

This strange custom, dating very far back—according to one account, it was known as early as the ninth century—is called "bringing the wine" and is synonymous with the act of proposing.

Shy lovers, loath to make sure of their case beforehand, find it a very happy institution. Not a word need be spoken, and the girl is spared the painful "No" of civilization.

If any of the wine is spilled or the glass or bottle broken it is considered a most unhappy omen—in fact, there is a peasant's saying for an unhappy marriage, "They have spilled the wine between them."

SACRED CROCODILES.

The Famous Shrine and the "Labyrinth" In Egypt.

The crocodile, one of the most sacred animals of the east, has given its name to several ancient sites. Of the various cities of crocodiles the names of which have been handed down to us by Herodotus, Pliny and Strabo, perhaps the most striking was the "Crocodilopolis" of the ancient Egyptian province of Fayum, which, according to tradition, was built by that pharaoh who "made the lives of the children of Israel bitter with hard service." This province lies within an almost complete circle of hills—a little oasis in the midst of the desert, where roses and grapes mingle with figs and olives and luxuriant palm trees grow almost into forests. Its capital is Medinet, and a little to the north of the city are a number of irregularly shaped mounds. Beneath these are the ruins of the pharaoh built "Crocodilopolis," the "City of Crocodiles," later called Arsinoe and the shrine of the sacred crocodile of the neighboring Lake Moeris, which was then 450 miles in circumference. This lake held the sacred crocodiles, and as each died in turn it was buried in one of the 1,500 underground sepulchers of the world famed "labyrinth" at hand, side by side with the embalmed bodies of successive pharaohs.

Holy Saturday In Naples.

Naples celebrates in a curious manner Lent and the end of Passion week. Ropes are stretched from house to house across the streets in the ancient districts on the day of the carnival, and dolls made of rags, wearing the traditional Neapolitan costume and carrying a distaff and bobbin, are suspended from these ropes. At the feet of the spinner is attached an orange containing seven feathers, corresponding to the seven weeks of Lent. Each week one feather is plucked, so that only one remains at Holy Saturday. Then, as soon as the cannon of Fort St. Elmo and the church bells announce the noon hour and the resurrection of Christ, firecrackers, which have been tied in long strings to the orange at the dolls' feet are lighted, and the Quaresima figure explodes amid the cries of the crowd, wherein pious formulas and profane phrases alternate.

London's Most Ancient Court.

The ancient court of hustings is of Saxon origin, and the name is derived from hus, a house, and thing, a matter of cause—that is, a house or hall of causes. Courts of the kind were established in all the great cities, and, as regards London, it is the supreme as well as the most ancient court and is the court of appeal from the sheriffs' court. In the earliest times it was held weekly, but it is now summoned only as occasion requires.

Golf.

A writer in an English paper has this to say regarding the game of golf: "Golf is a great game, but shiver me niblicks if I think it comes up to tiddledywinks. It is played with a couple of farms, a river or so, two or three sand hills, a number of implements resembling dentist's tools, a strange language much like Hindoostanee, any old clothes and a large assortment of oaths."

Two Looks.

He climbed down from the pay car, with his month's wages still in his hand.

"Sure, ye must be feelin' rich, Pat, with all ye have there," said a bystander.

"And what does this signify to me?" answered Pat. "Just two looks, wan whin I get it and wan whin I give it to the ould woman."—Life.

Just as Well.

Singleton—No man can tell just what a woman will do next. Wedderly—And it's just as well he can't. Otherwise she'd be sure to do something altogether different.—Chicago News.

He that runs out by extravagance must retrieve by parsimony.—From the Dutch.

QUEER LOVEMAKING.

A South American Bird Which Wins Its Mate by Dancing.

There is a bird in South America that makes love with its feet. It is a handsome creature, but walks clumsily, and the only sound it can utter is a hoarse cluck. It dances, however, in a way that wins admiration from the females of its sex, though its antics only serve as an incentive to laughter to human beings who see them.

This bird, known as the cock of the rock, lives in the northern mountainous portion of South America. It is about the size of a large chicken.

The entire bird—body, head wings and tail—is blood red in color, with the exception of the tail feathers, which have a narrow band of brown across them near the ends which are tipped with buff. On the head is a crest of feathers like a great red ball, which contracts or expands at the pleasure of its owner.

When the mating season comes seven to ten males seek some secluded spot where there is a level patch of ground and clear it of any sticks, stones or leaves, stamping down the dirt till it is hard and level.

Then they call the females, who stand at the edges of this novel arena. One at a time the males then perform a most curious dance. Each dancer will first strut up and down a few times and then, to the apparent delight of the rest, commence to caper around in an extremely ludicrous manner, spreading his tail and wings, puffing up his crest, bowing to the others and at the same time keeping up a hopping gait until he is exhausted.

When all the males have danced each female will choose a mate, and the happy pairs depart to begin housekeeping.

ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS.

Each Part of the Larger Ones Is Made by Specialists.

Artificial flowers were invented by pious nuns. In the Italian convents the altars and shrines were up to the end of the eighteenth century decorated with artificial flowers, laboriously put together, of paper, parchment and other stiff materials. In a Venetian warehouse the most wonderful productions of natural flowers are exhibited in glass cases, and in many cases, not only the richest and most brilliant colors, but the very scent of the flowers has been stolen from nature, for some of the artificial flowers are steeped in the perfume distilled from the flower which it represents. Last century a Swiss invented a machine for cutting out the leaves and petals, but it can only be used for the smaller kinds, such as are wanted for hyacinths, lilies of the valley and other small flowers. In larger petals the irregularities of manual work are preferred to the stiff and correct forms produced by machinery. This material of which the petals are made is woven in special factories. The scissors and other tools used by the girls employed as well as the presses in which the veins are traced on the leaves are of a shape specially adapted to the work. Each part of a flower is made by specialists. In one room, for instance, only stalks of flowers and leaves are made; in another, fruits and berries of all kinds are cast if they are wax or blown if made of glass. The cleverest workers are employed in making blossoms of the single petals and bouquets, wreaths and garlands of the single blossoms.—Dundee Advertiser.

First Tariff Makers.

If you turn to a map of Spain, you will take note at its southern point and running out into the strait of Gibraltar of a promontory which from its position is admirably adapted for commanding the entrance of the Mediterranean sea and watching the entrance and exit of all ships. A fortress stands upon this promontory, called now, as it was called in the time of the Moorish domination in Spain, Tarifa. The name is of Moorish origin. It was the custom of the Moors to watch from this point all merchant ships going into or coming out of the midland sea and to levy duties according to a fixed scale on all merchandise contained therein. This duty was called from the place where it was levied "tarifa," or tariff.

Arnold's Comment.

As school inspector Matthew Arnold was examining a class in geography one day, and, holding up the poker with which he was about to stir the fire, he asked if any child could tell him where it was manufactured. There was a long silence, broken by the schoolmistress, who remarked nervously that such information was not mentioned in Cornwell's geography. "No," said Arnold; "Cornwell's an ass!"

The Entertainer.

"My wife is a lecturer, and I am an entertainer," said Hobbs.

"Indeed? I knew your wife appeared in public, but I did not know that you ever did."

"Oh, I don't. I stay at home and entertain the baby."

Effect of High Living.

Goodman Gonrong—Wake up, pard. Wot ye groanin' about? Tuffold Knutt (rubbing his eyes)—Gosh, but I've had a hor'ble dream! I thought I'd got a job o' work an' wuz doin' the manicurin' fur a octopus.—Chicago Tribune.

Impossible.

First Duke—Why don't you travel incognito, as I do? It's far pleasanter. Second Duke—Yes, but my wife always goes with me, and I married an American.—Pick-Me-Up.

Luck follows the hopeful; ill luck, the fearful.—German Proverb.

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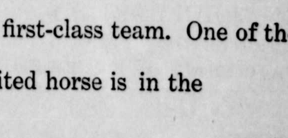
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