

Kindness to Animals

Trait of Portuguese

The Portuguese are the only Latin nation that is kind to animals. For hundreds of years noble Arabian steeds were raised here and the Portuguese rider sits well in the saddle by second nature.

The donkeys here are smaller than in other Latin countries, and the largest beast of burden is the ox. In Portugal this creature is a strong, red, well-cared for animal, with wide-spreading horns. The streets are full of yokes of oxen pulling carts with solid wheels bound fast to their axles. Since the axle is ungreased, a frightful squeaking announces the approach of these wagons, which can be heard a mile away.

Oxen are particularly common in northern Portugal, where the yokes themselves are made of beautifully carved hardwood decorated with many colors. The wheels of these wagons bearing tremendous burdens, clatter on the streets of Oporto.

I have never seen a driver maltreat his animals. In the country the cow herds guide their flocks with enormous bamboo staffs.—Roda Roda in Uhu Berlin (Living Age).

Famous Charter Oak Honored by Funeral

There is one instance on record in which a tree was given a funeral. It took place on an evening in 1856 in Hartford, Conn. Flags and mourning streamers covered the shattered stump of a tree on the hillside, while hundreds stood around with bared heads.

Amid the crashing thunder of a fierce storm the mighty Charter oak had fallen and the entire state of Connecticut was honoring its passing.

There is little of which this state is prouder than its ancient charter granted by Charles II, endowing the colony with liberties far exceeding those of the others.

It was strange coincidence that this charter, which was hidden in an oak for safety's sake, bore the seal of a monarch who himself, years before had taken refuge in a tree of the same variety.

Visitors to the State library at Hartford today may see a copy of the original charter, its frame containing fragments of the celebrated oak preserved under glass these many years—Grit.

Subtle Rebuke

Cupid has shown himself to be utterly indifferent to matters of state and messages of great moment. In 1777 James Wilkinson, who later became a general in the United States army, was an aide to Gen. Horatio Gates and by him was sent to congress at Yorktown in Pennsylvania, with the dispatches giving an account of the surrender of Gen. John Burgoyne and the British army at Saratoga. On the way Wilkinson stopped to spend a whole day with his sweet heart at Reading. When he finally delivered the dispatches and they were read in congress, a measure was introduced to reward the messenger who brought such pleasing news. Gov. Samuel Adams thereupon, with grave and solemn face, moved that the young man be presented with a pair of spurs.—Kansas City Star.

"The Marseillaise"

"The Marseillaise" has been the French national anthem for over 100 years, since the time of the French revolution. In April, 1792, when a column of volunteers was about to leave Strassburg, the mayor of the city gave a banquet on the occasion and invited an officer of artillery, Rouget de Lisle, to compose a song in their honor. He wrote the words during the night, adapting the music from an oratorio, and the song was sung with enthusiasm the following day. The Army of the North took up the song, which was introduced to Paris by the Marseillaise battalion and became known as the hymn of the Marseillaise.

Desolate by Winds

There lies between Formosa and the coast of China a group of 21 islands interspersed with innumerable reefs and ledges, which are called the Pescadores islands. According to the investigations of certain geologists these islands have suffered in a remarkable manner from the northeast winds which blow with violence there during nine months of the year. The original area of the islands has been greatly reduced by erosion, and their surfaces are barren and desolate, so that the wind-whipped group forms a quasi-desert amid the green island world of southeastern Asia.

Wild Wild-Animal Stories

The story of two Idaho men who killed a mountain lion with rocks is not quite so good as the story of the African hunter who, unarmed, met a lion. He held the beast's mouth open until it starved to death.—Athlison Globe. And neither is quite so good as that of Baron Munchausen who meeting an angry bear, thrust his hand down its throat, grabbed it by the tail and jerked it inside out.—Caplan's Weekly.

Tolerance's Great Value

Tolerance is the most lovable quality men and women can possess. It enables them to see things from others' viewpoints. Its generosity concedes to others right to their own opinions. Its very bigness wishes others to be happy in their own way.—Grit.

Child Training That Has Harmful Effects

Too much or too little affection of parents is equally harmful and both spoil character. The training that produces docile obedience spoils the child's native aggressiveness and leaves him to be easily beaten in the later competitions of life by minds superior only in their inner preparation. The authority of a parent is a responsibility rather than a privilege.

Another risk assumed by parents, which is not so commonly understood, is that of hurting their children by affection. With human beings the love attitude may persist in such a way that the child never actually matures and comes to have a fully developed self-life, or indulgence heaped upon the child by the parent may spoil the zest of life and keep the child emotionally infantile. He may become fixed upon the parent so that he is essentially parasitic in his inner emotional cravings and cannot maintain normal relationships in business, social contacts or later family life if he ever attempts to establish a home of his own.—From "Social Problems of the Family" by Prof. Ernest R. Graves.

Famous Brigade That Served "Lost Cause"

Two reasons are given for the naming of the Orphan brigade of the Confederate army. Kentucky tried to be neutral when the Civil war broke out, but neutrality was violated and many Kentuckians decided to fight for the South. The famous Camp Boone was formed near the Kentucky line, a few miles north of Clarksville, Tenn. Fifty companies from 84 counties in Kentucky enlisted. These composed the larger part of the First Kentucky, better known as the Orphan brigade.

One of the reasons why this command was called the Orphan brigade was because so many commanders were lost, either by reason of promotion or by death on the battlefield, says a contributor to the Pathfinder Magazine. Another is that the members were away from Kentucky during nearly all the time of their service and so cut off from communication with friends or family.

Meal Time in China

The Chinese consider the stomach the source of intellectual life, and therefore the fattest man goes for the wisest one. They affect to believe that foreigners come to China to eat because they have not enough to eat at home. It is considered a mark of refined politeness to treat a guest or a visitor to a meal at any time of the day. For the most part only those who have families take their meals at home; the rest eat at hotels. They usually have two substantial meals a day—one an hour after getting up in the morning, the other between three and four o'clock in the afternoon. The well-to-do class take three or four meals a day. Often the father alone eats meat, while the rest of the family have to be satisfied with rice.

Feeling Like a Lord

I have a cottage in Colebrook row, Islington. A cottage, for it is detached; a white house, with six good rooms; the New river (rather elderly by this time) runs (if a moderate walking pace can be so termed) close to the foot of the house; and behind is a spacious garden, with vines (I assure you), pears, strawberries, parsnips, leeks, carrots, cabbages, to delight the heart of old Alcibiades. You enter without passage into a cheerful dining room, all studded over and rough with old books, and above is a lightsome drawing room, three windows, full of choice prints. I feel like a great lord, never having had a house before.—From "Letters to Barton, 1823," by Charles Lamb.

Wonderful Alpha Rays

The Alpha rays from radioactive matter, it appears, consist of veritable atoms of matter projected at a speed averaging 6,000 miles a second. It is the great energy of motion of these swiftly expelled masses that gives rise to the heating effect of radium. Yet they do not go far. The swiftest alpha particle travels seven centimeters in air, under ordinary conditions, before it is stopped. But on its way it plunges straight through every molecule in its path, producing positively and negatively charged ions in the process. On an average, an alpha particle, before its career of violence is stopped, breaks up about 100,000 molecules.—Washington Star.

His Own Religion

I often wonder at religious men, they have such varying ideas on the subject. I was talking lately with a prominent man—one whose name is really a household word—and he said: "I was brought up in a religious family. I have chosen to accept religion in my own way, but never bother others with it. I have no desire to convert the world, I wouldn't give a d—n to convert anybody tomorrow."—E. W. Howe's Monthly.

Wren's Sweet Song

While Jenny Wren is incubating, her mate perches nearby, untiringly warbling his sweet song, says the Nature Magazine. After the young are hatched there is little rest for either of them. Caterpillars, beetles, bugs and spiders must be supplied in astonishing numbers all the time, until the youthful wrens are ready to help in the hunt.

Romance and Flowers in Long Association

In the development of gift-making in courtship a certain amount of romance centers around the flower. The flower is the gift of lovers, and in early Greek times a flower was worn as a sign of the engagement, the full-blossoming flower suggesting love awakened. The Polynesian men, as well as the women, wear flowers behind their ears when they are in love. The survival of another picturesque medieval custom centering around the flower is found in the bride's flower girls of today. In olden times these little girls, usually sisters, dressed exactly alike, carried garlands of wheat before the bride in the marriage procession as a symbol of fruitfulness and plenty. The very old and universally observed custom of throwing rice after the departing bride and bridegroom as a symbol of a fruitful union had its origin with the ancient Persians. Rice has always played an important part in the marriage ceremony of these people, while the wheat shower, expressing the same sentiment, was common among the early Anglo-Saxons, and certain other people employed corn. Another interesting tradition regarding the rice shower is that rice was thrown after the bride and bridegroom for the purpose of giving food to the evil spirits that were believed to accompany newly married people, and that it was to appease these spirits that rice throwing originated.

Hawaiian Island Has Many Claims to Fame

Mau, one of the islands of the Hawaiian group, has for its motto the phrase "Mau no ka oi," meaning "Mau the First." The island authorities have just cited a number of historical facts in support of their boast. Mau has Haleakala, largest extinct volcano crater in the world, the scene in 1823 of the first Christian funeral of a Hawaiian chieftain. The earliest island newspaper, as well as the first on the Pacific ocean, was published there in 1834. The paper was called Ka Lima Hawaii, meaning The Arm of Hawaii.

David Malo, earliest Hawaiian historian, was a Mau man. The island also had the first telegraph line strung between Haiku and Wailuku in 1878. The first Hawaiian wheat was planted at Makawao, Maui, in 1845, and not long afterward the first potato plantation was started at Kula, where tubers were raised for the California gold miners.

Oxygen in Air

Normal air contains about 21 per cent of oxygen, says the United States bureau of mines. Man works best at this proportion of oxygen. A candle or oil flame will not burn in atmosphere containing less than approximately 16 1/2 per cent oxygen, yet man is sufficiently adaptable to get along fairly well in 17 per cent of oxygen. He will breathe a little faster and a little deeper. But most men cannot work in air with oxygen below 13 per cent, the point where an acetylene flame is extinguished by oxygen deficiency. In an atmosphere containing between 10 and 13 per cent oxygen, men become dizzy, pant, have a rapid heart beat, and often suffer from headache; 8 to 10 per cent usually produces unconsciousness and ultimately death.

Trollope's Cigars

Lord Birkenhead recently boasted a lifelong devotion to cigar smoking, but he can hardly claim to have given more thought and time to his hobby than did Anthony Trollope, remarks the Manchester Guardian. Trollope, as soon as his income was large enough to stand the expense, had one entire wall of his library equipped with air-tight little bins fitted with sliding doors and numbered. These he kept filled with choice cigars, laid across and across like planks of timber, to get thoroughly seasoned. True to the Trollope tradition, he worked through the bins in methodical fashion, refilling each as it was emptied with special imports from Havana. Thus, he declared, he attained the most perfect smokes in the world.

Porpoise's Fish Appetite

The porpoise has a great appetite, is feeding constantly as opportunity offers and lives principally on fish, and scientists were able recently to get a ciew to the number of fish a lively porpoise may eat when a giant porpoise was caught and 15,193 otoliths were found in its stomach. The otolith is the earbone of a fish, is very hard, supposed to be the last remnant of a fish that is reduced by the chemical process in the mammal's stomach, and the large number found may be far less than the number of fish served live and wiggling for the satisfaction of the porpoise. At any rate, it bids fair to hold first place as a fish eater.

The Arabian Nights

The author of the original Arabic work, and the period in which it was composed, is unknown. But the Arabian Nights, as it stands at present, is the work of many hands, and numerous references in the stories show that they were added at different times. The work was introduced into Europe from Syria, where it was obtained in the latter part of the Seventeenth century, by Antoine Galland, a French traveler. It was first translated and published by him between 1704 and 1717.

"Star-Spangled Banner" Finished in Rowboat

The last lines of "The Star-Spangled Banner" were written in a rowboat by Francis Scott Key and were not penned in the hold of a prison ship as the old school books taught.

Legendary history was that Key was a prisoner of war while watching the British bombardment of Baltimore and Fort McHenry during the war of 1812. The correct story has been brought to light by the Woman's Home Companion, which shows that Key was permitted to go to the British flagship under a truce signal to obtain the release of a friend who had been taken prisoner, and arrived just as the enemy was ready to open fire.

The young poet developed his verses during the anxiety of the night, but it was while returning to shore in a small boat the following morning that he wrote exultantly "Tis the Star-Spangled Banner. Oh! long may it wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Then the Fun Began

A young university undergraduate had to present himself for an examination in which he was expected to read a short thesis on Greek tragedy. Knowing nothing of the subject, he asked the help of a friend, who was an expert. This gentleman wrote and gave him a masterly little treatise, of which the only fault lay in the penmanship.

At the examination all went well until the young man startled his audience with the sentence, "We now come to the tragedies of Bophocles."

"The tragedies of whom?" gasped one of the examiners.

"You mean Sophocles!" exclaimed another.

For some moments the young man gazed earnestly at the manuscript. Then he looked up with a reassured smile, and said, "No, it is distinctly Bophocles here."

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