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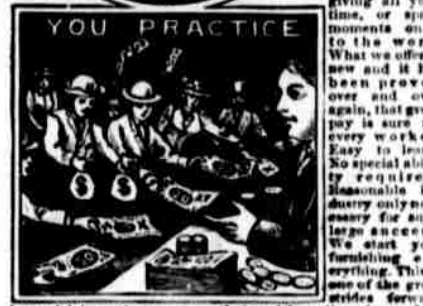
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SOME ODD STORIES.

INTERESTING INCIDENTS RELATED BY ALFRED R. CALHOUN.

The Honor of McGregor, a Scotch Gardener—The Sacred Law of the Gaelic Clans—A Life Taken and a Life Saved.

(Copyright, 1892, by American Press Association.)

There was in my father's employ an old Scotch gardener named McGregor, and my delight as a child was to attend the old man in his work, while he told me stories of the Highlands, and particularly of the fierce fighting clan whose name he bore and of whose exploits he felt so proud.

Curiously enough, while visiting the Trossachs country, many years after the death of Duncan McGregor, the same story was repeated to me and vouched for by a gentleman of the same name, so that I have good reason for believing that it is true.

It was and ever had been the pride of the McGregor clan that they had always been true to themselves, and that to avenge a wrong to the humblest—if any could be humble where all were equal—the most powerful stood ready with his claymore and his life.

In Dumbarton there lived, when Ronald more McGregor was chief (more is a Gaelic word meaning big or great), a family of position, but numerically small, named Lamont. The Lamonts were rich and held up their heads above their Highland neighbors because that they were "bookmen"—that is, they could read and write—while the bearded and killed Mc Gregors looked upon such accomplishments as beneath the dignity of soldiers, and only suited to priests and carpet knights.

Kenneth Lamont went over from Dumbarton, on the Clyde, to Lass, on Loch Lomond, and he brought with him a servant and two horses, and announced his purpose to hunt the red deer from the Trossachs to Loch Katrine, nor ask the consent of Ronald more McGregor.

One night as young Lamont and his servant were returning to their camp they met two of the Mc Gregors. Daggers were drawn in the dark, and in the short, fierce struggle that followed the servant and one of Lamont's assailants were killed.

Hearing others coming to aid the Mc Gregors, Lamont, with the red dagger still clutched in his right hand, fled into the hills till he saw a light far in front, and he knew that it marked the abode of one of the clan whom he so bitterly hated and whose territorial rights he had so recklessly set at defiance.

He also knew that if he could reach this light before the pursuers, now close behind, overtook him, he could claim and find protection under the laws of Highland hospitality, which gave shelter and protection to the bitterest foe, standing under the roof-tree, he placed his life in the keeping of his host.

Lamont sprang through the open door of the house and stood face to face with a girl of surpassing beauty. At the same instant a tall, bright eyed man entered the room, and the fugitive recognized the Chief Ronald more McGregor.

"I was attacked to-night in the hills," cried Lamont, "and to save my life I killed a man—it may be of clan McGregor. Here in the house of the chief I claim the protection of his roof and sword."

"And you shall have both," said the chief, then hearing near by the flying steps and the pasting of swift runners, he motioned to his daughter to take the stranger into an adjoining apartment.

An instant after, six men, with drawn claymores in their hands, stood before McGregor more, and one of them gasped, but the fugitive could hear him.

"The Lamont of Dumbarton this night killed your son in the hills and we have pursued him hither!" The chief smote his forehead and staggered back as if he had been struck a powerful blow, then, quickly recovering himself, he said to his followers:

"I amont is now innocent my roof, and my word is pledged for his life." Knowing full well the sacred law of the Gaelic clans, the men did not attempt to argue, but bowed their heads, sheathed their claymores and went back to bring home the body.

At daylight the next morning the chief fed his guest, then accompanied him till they reached that part of Loch Lomond's shores from which they could see the spires of Lass, then he halted, and folding his arms in his plaid of crimson and green he said: "Lamont, go thy way. I give thee thy life, though thou hast robbed me of my only son. Henceforth there will be death awaiting thee in the land of the Mc Gregors," and the two men bowed and parted.

with the king that led to the withdrawal of Argyle's marauders and the release of the chief and his clan from the ban of outlawry.

As must have been anticipated, Kenneth Lamont subsequently married Jeanette McGregor, the beautiful daughter of the chief, and within a month he was formally adopted into the clan.

A "L'yal" Farmer. After the battle of Prairie Grove in Arkansas six Union officers and the same number of Confederates met under flag of truce at Camp Hill to arrange, in accordance with the cartel in existence at that time, for the exchange of prisoners.

The officers on both sides appeared in their best uniforms and ranged themselves on the opposite sides of a table. They had just completed the purpose of their meeting when an old gray bearded farmer, clad in a butternut suit, came in, and addressing himself to the Confederates he said: "Say, stranger, is this the pro's office?"

"What do you want?" asked the Union officer. "I want a pass powerful bad." Some one attempted to explain to the old man that he was in the wrong shop, but being somewhat deaf he paid no heed, but continued with great earnestness:

"Don't be skeered to give me a pass, stranger. I'm 'lyal, I am. I've got my truce at Camp Hill here, and I got sold forage to Mr. Lincoln's folks—and got paid for it too. So you see that ain't no discount on my 'lyalty."

"Look out, my friend," laughed Colonel Wilkins, as he pointed to the Confederates at the other side of the table. "You had had better be careful what you say about 'lyalty.' Can't you see that these gentlemen are southern officers?"

"The old man's hand trembled as he read just his spectacles and made a critical inspection of the men in gray uniforms. At length he began in great perplexity to stammer out his explanations.

"Wa'd, gentlemen, I didn't think. The fact is, I've allus been a southern man and so huz all my folks sense 'way back. I've got a son with Marmaduke. Then there's my son-in-law, Jake Carter, he's out a-fightin' with Price, and ef so he 'twasn't that I was so cussed old and havin' the ager!"

"Hold on, old fellow!" cried Colonel Wilkins. "What about your being a loyal citizen?" "Will you inform me," asked a Confederate officer, "who paid you for your ager?"

The old man wiped his spectacles, walked to the foot of the table and in great perplexity surveyed first the blue side and then the gray. Then he laid his hands on the table and said, with an oath:

"Wa'd, gentlemen, go on and fight it out among yersel's. Me and my ole wom an reckons ez how we ken live in any d—d kinder government you choose to build, or in no government at all. And it does look powerful like ef that's w'at we're a-comin' to!"

An Honest Beggar. Mr. Solomon Fletcher—his many intimate friends call him Sol—is a well to do New York broker. When clothed in his customary calmness he is not distinguished for his generosity, and he particularly dislikes beggars.

Recently Mr. Fletcher had a great run of luck, and by way of celebrating the event he invited a number of fellow brokers to enjoy a little Delmonico dinner at his expense.

The wine was of the best and abundant, and Mr. Fletcher felt particularly amiable and generous when, at midnight, he went down to the street to look for his carriage. As he stood beaming at the electric light an old mendicant approached with pleading eyes and extended hand. Anxious to make others as happy as he imagined himself to be the broker took some small change from his pocket and handed it to the beggar.

With profuse thanks the old man with drew, and a few minutes afterward he hurried back and handing a coin to Mr. Fletcher, he said:

"Parlon me, sir, but you must have made a mistake. You intended, no doubt, to hand me a quarter, but this is a five dollar gold piece." For the instant the broker was thoroughly sobered by this extraordinary exhibition of honesty and his dormant generosity sprang into sudden vigor.

Putting the gold coin into his vest pocket he pulled out a roll of greenbacks. Selecting a ten dollar bill he said, as he handed it to the old man, "Take that for being so honest, my boy."

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A SIMPLE TALE.

But It Wasn't So Simple When He Told His Wife.

If there is one thing more than another calculated to throw a man into a gnashing-of-the-teeth and tearing-of-the-hair condition, it is his attempt to give the wife of his bosom an account of some ordinary affair, to which she listens after this fashion:

He—Oh, my dear, I must tell you something Jack Burroughs told me today when he was here.

She—Where did you see Jack Burroughs? He—Oh, we went to luncheon together, and—

She—How did you happen to go out to luncheon together? He—Well, we didn't exactly go out together. I met Jack at the restaurant, and—

She—What restaurant? He—Calloway's, and Jack—

She—How did you happen to go to Calloway's? I thought you always lunched at Draper's? He—I nearly always do, but I just happened to drop into Calloway's today, along with Jack, and—

She—Does he always lunch at Calloway's? He—I'm sure, my dear (a little sharply, though I don't know if he does or not. It makes no earthly difference if—

She—Oh, of course not. (Hastily I just wondered if he did, that's all. Go on with your story.) He—Well, while we were eating our soup, Jack—

She—What kind of soup? He—Oxtail. Jack said that—

She—I thought you disliked oxtail soup? He—Well, I don't care much about it, but—

She—How did you happen to order it if you didn't care for it? He—Because I did. (Severely.) But the soup has nothing to do with the story.

She—Oh, of course not. (In arieved tone.) I never said that it did. I don't see why you should get cross over a simple question. Go on.

He—Well, while we were eating our soup, I saw Mrs. Hildreth and his wife came in, and—

She—They did? He—I have just said so.

She—Well, you needn't be so cross about it. He—They came in, and—

She—Is she pretty? He—Pretty enough. Jack bowed and—

She—Does he know them? He—Well, now, do you suppose he would have bowed if he hadn't known them? I declare if I—

She—How was she dressed? He—How should I know? I never looked at her dress. What I was going to tell you was that—

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