

CURIOUS REMEDIES.

A COLLECTION OF PRESCRIPTIONS MADE IN THE FIRST CENTURY.

Fever Cured by Amulets—A Compound for Deafness—Toothache and Headache—Sore Eyes—Relaxed Throat—Hydrophobia—Recipes for Everything.

In the first century of the Christian era lived in Rome Celsus Plinius Secundus. He was a good man and true, a scientist so far as his light went, and with a professional distrust for the prescriptions of those whom he calls magicians, who strove to cure by spells, amulets and charms. And he set himself to make a collection of prescriptions for the benefit of the suffering Romans of his day, being careful only to insert those which had been duly recommended by the faculty. This curious and interesting book was translated into English by Dr. Pillemon Holland, three years before the death of Elizabeth, at which time there were great numbers of people who implicitly believed in the remedies there set down. We venture, then, no apology in offering our readers a few of Pliny's choicest prescriptions, so old that now they are new.

Fever resolves the attention it deserves, being cured most by amulets and remedies to be worn round the neck; as, for instance, you are to take "the right eye of a wolf, salt it, and so tie it about the neck, or hang it fast to any part of the person." Elephants' blood was invaluable, but if the squameous should turn against the remedy, a poetic substitute is provided—"a lion's heart steeped in oil of roses!"

Deafness was readily cured by a compound of "goosegrease, fresh butter and bull's gall, tempered with myrrin and rue, or the fume that a horse doth froth, mixed with oil of roses."

A very rational remedy is recommended for toothache: "If one bite off a piece of some tree that hath been blasted with lightning, provided always"—and here is the rub—"that he holds his hands behind him in so doing, the said piece of wood will take away the toothache."

Headache was at once cured by having the forehead touched by "the trunk or snuff of an elephant," or, "if a man pour vinegar upon the hooks and hinges of doors, and make a liniment with the dirt that cometh of the rust thereof, and therewith anoint the forehead," his headache is at once cured.

Sore eyes were a simple matter, and required only "to anoint them with wolf's grease or swine's marrow," but actual blindness required, of course, more elaborate treatment. "The grave or dripping of a hyane's liver, newly taken out of the body and roasted, being incorporated with clarified honey into an unguent, rideth a man from blindness." Or if the eyes squinted, "if the eyes be dipped three times in that water wherein a man or woman hath washed their feet, they shall be troubled neither with blindness nor any other infirmity."

The remedy for "relaxed throat" was simple enough, but the doctor needed to be of herculean strength. "If the uvula be false, it will be up again if the patient suffer another to bite the hair in the crown of his head, and so to pull him plumb from the ground."

Should an accident occur in eating, Pliny is equal to the emergency: "If a piece of bread have gone wrong, or lie in the way ready to stop the breath, take the crumbs of the same loaf and put them into both the ears, you shall see it shall soon be gone, and do no further harm."

There are medicinal properties of hydrophobia, or rather fear of that horrid malady, and it is as well to know how to treat the bite of a dog, whether mad or sane. This is what Pliny recommends: "Make a decoction of a badger, a cuckoo and a swallow, and drink it off." Cramp was to be cured by a cataplasm of a live wolf, sorded in salt till the salt will be gelled to the height of a constant of a quart. Pliny seems to take it for granted that the "live wolf" would raise no objections to be thus utilized. The nervous and shy will be filled with courage if they "take the pith or marrow out of the hyane's backbone, along and incorporate with oil and honey; it is passing good for the nerves."

Pliny has receipts for everybody and everything; even the ladies are not forgotten. For the complexion, "The pasterne bones of a young white bulkin, or steere, sodden for the space of forty daies and nights together, until such time as they be dissolved into the liquor; if the face be wet with a fine linnen cloth dipped in the said decoction, it catcheth the skin to look clean and white, and without any wrinkles or wrinkles; but the said linnen must be kept all night to the face in the manner of a mask." For the hair: "Ants' eggs stamped and incorporated with flies, likewise pounded together, will give a lovely black colour to the hair of the eyebrows." To curl the hair: "A case's tail dried and reduced into ashes and incorporated with oil doth curl and frizzle the hair of the head."

It seems incredible to us that remedies such as these could gravely be recommended and believed in, and yet such was the case. It must have required a marvelous amount of faith to get some of these grotesque prescriptions down, and the healing art.—All the Year Round.

English and American Journals. Perhaps the most striking contrast between English and American journals is in the relative amount of space allotted to verbatim reports of speeches, discourses and other addresses. Besides the room given to parliamentary proceedings, there are many columns in each issue of the average English daily devoted to recording the utterances of men, wise or otherwise.

The first qualification required of a reporter in England is the ability to take verbatim notes; and, looking over some of the English papers, an American is inclined to think it is the only qualification. The space given to description in reports of political and other meetings over there is very small, no matter how many columns of wind are photographed. In this country we do not care to reproduce all the words that fall from the lips of a speaker on the stump; much less does the reader next morning care to read them. I was somewhat astonished while visiting England last summer to observe how eagerly your intelligent Briton wades through a three or four column speech delivered the night before at a political meeting, letting his breakfast coffee cool meanwhile.—J. O. Moffett in The Writer.

A PASSAGE IN THE STEERAGE.

Some of the Discomforts Encountered During an Ocean Voyage.

It may serve as warning to all concerned to publish the following extracts from a recent private letter, giving an account of the first part of a voyage to the River Plate on board one of the first-class steamers afloat, and belonging to one of the best known companies. The writer is a young man who has to face the world as best he may, and by necessity took a steerage passage. He says:

"In the bay of Biscay we had very bad weather—high wind, rain and heavy seas. Last night was dreadful. The horrors of a steerage passage can only be realized by experience. The food is bad and is eaten the best way we can manage. There is no table. We must eat—sitting on a wooden bench or standing—from greasy tin plates with greasy tin spoons and forks or greasy knives, and we drink out of greasy tin mugs. At 7 a. m. we have a compound which bears a faint resemblance to coffee, without milk, and good bread, which is the only good thing we have. There is also a substance they term "butter," but the sight and smell of it are enough. At 8 a. m. we have breakfast, which consists of a kind of soupy stew with potatoes, and a concoction which has not the least resemblance to tea, being, in fact, merely dirty water. I do not drink it. At noon we have dinner, which consists of beef cut in slices about an inch thick, and which will not yield to mastication, potatoes and bread and water. At 5 p. m. we have more soupy stew and biscuit, which will yield only to the hammer. These are all the meals, and the bill of fare has only varied twice in four days—once on Sunday, when we had salt fish, which was horrible, and today, when we had salt pork, which was worse.

"The sleeping arrangements are on a par with the rest. Our cabin has twenty-eight berths, which are all full. The bunks are about two feet wide, and the beds are composed of straw mattresses and pillow, and two blankets. The washing arrangements are simple—tin basins, with about two inches of water. Baths there are none. The state of dirt we shall be in when we reach Montevideo I cannot conjecture. At night we have only one light—a dingy oil lamp. But the worst is to come. At Bordeaux, Coruna and Vigo, we took on a cargo of the wretchedest ragtag and bobtail of the French, Spanish and Portuguese nations—men, women and children. I believe we now have about eight or nine hundred of these on board, and there are more to come at Lisbon, which we should reach to-morrow.

"The scenes that have taken place on deck and below since these poor wretches came on board baffle description. Men, women and children are scattered about, eating, drinking, chattering, singing and vomiting. Fortunately it is that our cabin is full, so that these people are berthed in other cabins; but the noise at night and the stench are horrible. Some of them are literally in rags, many without shoes or stockings, but all with one accord are very dirty. Moreover, the ship itself is dirty. There seems to be no attempt to keep it clean. The door of our cabin is slippery with grease and dirt. We have three unkempt Portuguese stewards to attend on us. They are fairly civil. The only English steerage passengers are the twenty-eight in our cabin. They are all decent fellows. Some are engine drivers from the Midland railway, some clerks, etc. They share little luxuries freely with one another. As the above mentioned ragtag and bobtail are in the habit of stealing out of the cabins, and even ripping bags open, we have organized a watch of half an hour a spell, such, so that the cabin is never left untenanted all day."—St. James' Gazette.

Ratio Between Men and Women.

Prof. W. K. Brooks, of Baltimore, has discovered that a favorable environment tends to produce an excess of females among animals and plants, and an unfavorable environment an excess of males. If this be true, a race or species which is on the point of extinction should have an excess of males.

The population of Australia consists of a small and decreasing number of aborigines, and a prosperous and increasing population of foreign settlers and their descendants, amounting in all to nearly 3,000,000 persons. As the native population is rapidly disappearing, we should expect to find the males more numerous among them as compared with the females than among the inhabitants of foreign origin, provided other conditions are equal. For each 100 females there were in Victoria of native born Australians 100.3-10 males, and of foreigners, exclusive of Chinese, 129.1-10 males. The ratio of males to females in the population of foreign origin is therefore very much greater than it would be if it depended upon the birth rate alone; and as this modifying influence does not affect the aborigines, an excess of males among them, no greater, or even a little less, than that found among the inhabitants of foreign origin, would indicate that the excess of male births is much greater among them than among the people of foreign origin. Computation shows that the excess of males among the aborigines is, notwithstanding these neutralizing influences, very much greater than it is among the foreign population.

For all Australia there are 143.72 aboriginal males to each 100 females; there are only 118.64 males of foreign descent to each 100 females, notwithstanding the fact that 129 males settled in these colonies to each 100 females.—Science.

No More Young Men.

A dissertation on the French youth of the day appears in a Paris paper, and is in great part a reproach to the modern young man of France. The writer, These grave and solemn beings who take life so seriously and find so little joy in their youth cannot be called young men. They talk of deputations when they should be thinking about balls and pretty partners. Instead of inditing a sonnet to his mistress' eyebrow, the modern young man contributes a paper to a political journal in which he elucidates the counsels of Europe and gives his views upon them. He never descends to the frivolity of dancing. He marries money, and cares little whether the lady that goes with it be pretty or plain, young or old. He is insensible to all but the practical issues of life. His heart beats in his brain and leaves his bosom cold. Can he be called young? There is nothing of youth about him but the superficial appearance of it.

Another type of the unyouthful young man is he who dresses like an English groom, talks stables and racing, pigeon shooting, and discusses the repertory of the music hall. His little soul begins with his tailor and ends in his case. He is a heavy nullity, impervious to soft impressions, and almost as devoid of brain as he is of heart. This is the gilded youth of France as sketched by a Frenchman. Have we nothing in England to match either type?—London News.

IN NORTHEAST GEORGIA.

GRAPHIC PICTURE OF AN ODD TYPE OF HUMANITY.

The Abode of a Blue Ridge Mountaineer of Average Means and Thrift—Primitive Furniture and Household Conveniences, Hospitality and Simplicity.

The house stands in a clearing of some ten or fifteen or twenty acres, comprising a narrow strip of bottom land on the banks of a little stream or branch, while the rest of the cultivated ground gently slopes upon the mountain side. The house is built of logs, the cracks being stopped with mortar made of clay or by split boards nailed over them. There are generally two rooms in the house, and the one I am about to describe had a rude porch in front, used as a storage place for agricultural implements, as also a saddle and bridle. A winding path of about fifty yards carries you to a cold spring, from which the family bring their water for domestic purposes.

You summon the lord of this manor at the gate by loud "halloo." He is generally found in the house or around the premises attending to some minor duties. The stranger is kindly received and seldom refused shelter and entertainment. Shortly after I had dismounted and seen my horse attended to, two pale, sickly looking women came to the gate, each driving a little bull calf attached to a plow. They seemed thoroughly wearied out, and touched my sympathy. They were dressed in cloth spun and woven by their own hands. Their heads were protected by old fashioned sun bonnets, and their shoes badly worn. Pretty soon they were joined by a young mountaineer, apparently about 25 years old, with an ax on his shoulder. He was six feet tall, a remarkably handsome man, and proved to be the husband of one of the women, while the other was his mother.

I was as kindly received and treated as hospitably as their means allowed. On entering the door of the house I found myself stunned for an instant by receiving a severe blow upon the forehead. I then discovered—what I afterward found to be a custom among mountaineers—that in cutting the door, at least one more log should have been taken out, and unless you hunch a bow in your head you are reminded of the incivility by a bump on the forehead.

There is a scarcity of chairs in most of all the mountain houses, there generally being only enough for the adult members of the family. The visitor, however, is given the most comfortable seat, while the family find accommodation on the beds and boxes in the room. The wealth of the mountaineer seems to rest in bed quilts, and you see these coverings piled up in the corner of the room as high as your head. These people have superfluous money, instead of investing it in stocks or bonds, they go to the nearest store and purchase calico with which to make more quilts. When one of the girls marries, this is her principal dowry. You find the room filled with beds, and they are stuck everywhere it is possible to place one. Their literature is of the crudest kind, consisting of several Grier's almanacs, dating back a number of years, and perhaps two or three odd volumes of old novels, or a well thumbed school book. The room is decidedly uncomfortable. There are numerous cracks in the floor and walls, through which the keen wind whistles. The meals are prepared in the other room at an open fireplace, where is also kept the boom and spinning wheel. You are given a seat at the table, but the chair you occupy is so low that your plate is about on a level with your chin, and eating is a decidedly disagreeable undertaking. You are given a greasy old knife, with one side of the handle broken off, and a fork with a single prong. Your plate is the old style blue rimmed crockery, with a dirty crack nearly through it. The tablecloth has been stained yellow with the numerous times upon which you have last wash day, and it is still enough to stand alone on its corners. Fried hogs' meat, floating in grease, is invariably served, and this is passed to you in the skillet, from which you are expected to help yourself. The piece of corn bread is also passed by hand, and as it is several inches thick and cooked very hard, it requires a pretty strong grip of the fingers to break it. If you are given coffee, it is nothing but weak water, and if there is butter on the table, it is a white stuff.

When bedtime comes one of the beds in the room is pointed out as your place of repose. Perhaps there are several females in the room, and you of course wait for them to retire before disrobing for the night. You will, however, find yourself disappointed. No more attention is paid to your presence by these women than were you a log of wood, and they will keep their seats by the fire smoking and dipping snuff. When you have retired, they will go to sleep in another bed in the same room, and perhaps not removed two feet from the one you occupy. Even when there are two rooms in a house all the beds will frequently be placed in one apartment, to be occupied by the entire family and their guests.

The next morning on asking your bill you will find the invariable charge to be—4 cents. Not that you get your fare or accommodations—several for each meal, bed, and horse feed. As I stated, however, these people are hospitable and kind. Some of the best soldiers in the Confederate army were selected from among these mountaineers, and if they were taught habits of industry and thrift and properly educated, would make a superior class of citizens. Of course, in this description I refer only to the rudest class of inhabitants of our mountain counties—the typical mountaineer.—Cor. Athens (Ga.) Banner-Watchman.

A Lawyer's Odd Whim.

Two gentlemen were conversing in the United States circuit court room, when one, pointing to Lawyer Gifford, who is counsel in a patent suit involving \$4,000,000 or \$5,000,000, said:

"How many rooms do you suppose there are in that man's house?"

"The other gentleman would be blessed if he knew, and then asked how many."

"One hundred and eleven," was the reply. Man No. 2 smiled, said that was one on him, and asked if the house was a hotel.

"No, no!" exclaimed man No. 1. "There's no hotel about it. He lives in his own private dwelling on Jersey City heights. I don't know what they do with so many rooms, suppose they entertain a great deal. This is the way they came about."

"Mr. Gifford's father, Livingston Gifford, the eminent patent lawyer, had a hobby for building a new room. Every time he won a case he built a new room. Thus the dwelling gradually grew, from extensions to wings, until it reached its present hotel dimensions. Now the house is as big as a New England village, and the stranger needs a pocket compass and calcium light to find his room."—New York Telegram.

New Way to Kill Wolves.

Out in Douglas county, Kansas, they have hit upon a new way of destroying wolves. A large piece of beef is placed where the wolves will easily find it, and in the fight resulting for its possession experience has shown that one or more of them are sure to be killed.—Brooklyn Eagle.

FOREIGNERS OF NOTE.

Sir Morell Mackenzie never accepts a fee from a professional singer.

Prince Henry of Germany has had himself photographed 700 different times.

The octogenarian Duke of Devonshire writes all his own letters, in a firm, legible hand.

When in Paris, M. Zola is the most taciturn of men, but at his country home he is a great chatterer and talks his visitors almost to death.

During his stay at Rome the emperor of Brazil did not find time to call upon the pope, a circumstance which gave rise to considerable comment.

M. Jovis, a French aeronaut, is making a balloon nearly 200 feet in height, in which he proposes to sail through the air across the Atlantic next autumn.

Sir Morell Mackenzie's fee for his attendance on the German emperor has been fixed at 60,000 marks (\$13,000) per quarter, or any part of a quarter. This is equivalent to the sum of \$50,000 per annum. It must be added, however, that Sir Morell Mackenzie's income of recent years in London has been slightly over \$75,000.

"I have interviewed Boulanger," says a correspondent of London Truth, "you would never guess about what. This morning I heard him violently attacked, not this time for riding a black horse, but for wearing a scalp and being a faux jeune homme. So I went to him, in question. He said, 'I give you leave to "wig" me. Pull my hair.' I did so. It was firm at the roots, and not even dyed."

With his musicians the sultan has always been capricious. His pet violinist, Wondra, wished to leave the court and go to Paris to study there with the best masters. A petition was accordingly presented to his imperial majesty, who abruptly tore it up, flung the pieces at the messenger, and said: "Why should he study? Is it to earn money? If he wants that, my treasury is open; let him help himself, and stop here. I wish it." So, willy-nilly, Wondra had to stay.

George Muller, celebrated throughout the world as a worker for the good of his fellow men, is now 82 years old and as full of zeal and activity as ever. He has just returned to England, after a preaching tour of 37,000 miles through Australia, China, Japan and other countries. Two thousand children greeted him at Bristol upon his return, the little ones being inmates of his orphanage in that city.

M. Louis Nobel, who died in France the other day, was not the inventor of dynamite, but Alfred Nobel, his brother, who is still living, was. M. Nobel is a strong advocate of peace, and regards with horror the use to which his invention has been put by assassins and political conspirators. The only time when he shows a warlike spirit is when he reads of the misuses which are made of dynamite. Then he feels like putting all these miscreants into a storehouse of dynamite and blowing them up.

Worked Well for a While.

The autograph collector and the relic hunter disturb much of the peace and quiet of senators and representatives. Congressman "Tim" Tarsney, however, is credited with inventing a clever means of answering the demands of this gentry. He has recently been besieged with requests from his constituents to secure the pen with which the late chief justice signed the great telephone decision. It was impossible to get the pen, and even if it were possible, the pen could not be passed around to all who were desirous of obtaining it. Tarsney finally hit on a plan. He purchased a job lot of ancient looking quills and soaked the points in ink. One of these he labeled:

"With this quill the late chief justice penned the great Anarchist decision."

Another bore a card on which was written:

"This pen wrote the great telephone decision."

A dozen or more were thus labeled and forwarded to Tarsney's relic hunting constituents of the Saginaws. The plan is said to have worked admirably until last week, when five distinct pens which had written the great Anarchist decision were exhibited in five distinct windows at Tarsney's Saginaw home.—Washington Cor. New York Tribune.

Pen Picture of Kentucky's Post.

Robert Burns Wilson, the Kentucky post, who has the advantage of both political fame and face, is in New York on one of his little visits to the metropolis which his friends make so delightful for him. He is a straight, rather slender man, of some 35 years of age, of medium height, red lipped like a woman, his dark brown hair just a little longer than a city man would wear it and brushed back from a big, smooth, broad forehead, which in itself would be a stamp of distinction. His eyes are dark and large; tender and merry by turns, wistful in repose. His voice is smooth and clear, and when he reads his "Coquette" and "Rain in Summer" at an informal social gathering a few nights ago, he made a distinct sensation. "Mr. Wilson," said a prominent man about town who was present, "is the kind of man susceptible women rave over. He has a very taking way. But his nose is too short and uncertain for the masculine test of comeliness."—New York World.

A Barrel for a Souvenir.

When one sees a friend off to Europe this year the approved farewell souvenir is a barrel of herrings. Not a very big barrel, just large enough to hold very comfortably in a lady's hand, and not real herrings at that; paper mache or composition herrings done in low relief on the head of the barrel. They are very realistic herrings, however, and in spite of their diminutive size it takes a second glance to assure you that they are not the real things. The herring barrels are confection boxes and hold bonbons for the voyage. They are popular just now.—New York Mail and Express.

Two Views of It.

Smalley (coming out of church)—Don't you think that Dr. Taker's sermon this morning was a finished discourse? Lever—Yes, I do; but for about an hour I didn't think it would be.—Harper's Bazar.

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