

BETSY ROSS A FAKE

PHILADELPHIAN DISCREDITS THE FLAG STORY.

From Historical Idol Shattered by Investigation—Her House Declared Unworthy of Place in Fame's List.

Philadelphia.—Poor old Betsy Ross' dress she goes into the limbo of fakes with Barbara Fritchie, who didn't wave the flag in Frederick, George Washington's hatchet, his prayer at Valley Forge, and other notable national fetiches.

After Philadelphia has for years bowed the knee to the legend that in the quaint little wooden house at 239 Arch street Betsy Ross designed and made the first flag, after thousands of patriotic citizens had contributed a dime each to buy it, and hundreds of thousands of children have made pilgrimages to it, it has been offered to the government as a national gift. The government turned it down.

And now the historical sites committee of founder's week has turned down Betsy and the house finally. Neither of them can have a look in on the festivities because both, says the committee, are fakes. The school book story is down and out.

Nothing has so shocked Philadelphia since it was definitely discovered by the Pennsylvania Historical society that the Liberty bell wasn't cracked while peeling out the news of freedom at all, but while it was discreetly tolling for the death of Chief Justice Marshall.

Officials of the Betsy Ross association, which supervised the purchase of the building, had made great plans to have it figure largely in the festivities. They were horrified the other day when the committee announced that Betsy and the house were really a myth.

It was the hand of William J. Campbell, who in the absence of Superintendent of Schools Martin G. Brumbaugh presided at the meeting of the committee which had gathered to mark the places of historical interest in Philadelphia, which delivered the blow. His report to the committee was curt but terse. It read: "Where Betsy Ross did design the American flag. The story is a fake, and there is positively no evidence in its favor."

"There never was the slightest excuse for the Betsy Ross fake," declared Mr. Campbell later. "The stories which you find in the school books about this imaginary heroine are all pure rot, and it is to the everlasting disgrace of America that the fiction has been nourished for so many years. I have given the traditions most careful study, and find that the story is a lie from beginning to end. The only foundation whatever for the yarn is that there was a young woman named Betsy Ross, who took to plain sewing for a livelihood and who lived in a house, now known as the first American flag house, at 239 Arch street.

"As a matter of fact, Betsy Ross was no more or less than an ordinary seamstress who would have been fired with about the same amount of patriotic zeal in sewing Old Glory as she would have found in darned a pair of socks. She never had any interview with George Washington, and the pictures painted showing the father of the country beaming over the work of the handsome young heroine of the flag is one gross libel on the truth."

Immediately the cudgels began to fly. President Adam H. Fetterolf of Girard college, a director of the Flag-house association, took first whack at the committee.

"I have rested my confidence in the title of Betsy Ross as the maker and of her house as the birthplace of Old Glory upon the existence of the whole common people's faith and belief, a belief which until now has been practically universal and unquestioned.

"We put the whole burden of proof upon those who attack the title of Betsy Ross. They must produce proof that the people, teachers, and school books are erroneous. They must prove that the flag was invented, why it spread and became part of history. They must produce the real history of the flag. Who designed it, and who made it.

"By the same method these iconoclasts eliminate Shakespeare and Quetzalcoatl, eliminate Washington's cherry tree, eliminate Key from the Star Spangled Banner," Washington at prayer at Valley Forge, William Tell, Damon and Pythias, and Moses in the bulrushes.

"The Betsy Ross house is a shrine. This is an outrage.

CAT CARRIES WOODS MAN. Peter the Great Proves Valuable Messenger Between Lumber Camps.

Millinocket, N. Y.—It is often that we hear of messages and articles carried by a dog, but it is rather unusual for anyone to make a messenger of a cat. There is a cat, known by some as Peter the Great, near Patten, in the camps owned by Mr. Flach, that does this little trick.

Mr. Flach has two camps off in the woods about three miles apart. When a message is to be sent from one to the other the cat is hunted up and the letter tied around his neck. Peter the Great seems to realize the trust bestowed upon him and soon starts for the other camp, where the letter is taken from him.

ROAD MAKES UNUSUAL CHARGE.

Agent Sends Bill for \$8 for Feeding Horses on Merry-Go-Round.

New Orleans.—When Michael Murphy received a bill from a southern railroad for eight dollars for one meal for a carload of flying horses used in merry-go-rounds consigned from Jennings, La., to Mobile, Ala. his Irish blood went hot. James F. Murphy, local agent for the railroad, sent Murphy the bill along with a statement for cost of transportation. Wired Murphy to Murphy:

"Food for flying horses, is it? Was it ice cream or hay? I'll have the interstate commerce commission down on ye."

Wired Murphy to Murphy. In all seriousness:

"Horses is horses, be they flying or running. Louisiana laws protect animals from cruelty and provide eight dollars for one square meal to a carload. Your animals were in New Orleans one day. Please remit."

Murphy's reply indicated his opinion of the railroad in particular and all lines in general and hinted of eternal punishment hereafter.

Murphy, in the course of time, after he had collected his eight dollars, began an investigation. Another road brought the car to Algiers, La., from Jennings, and the clerk at Algiers, in transferring the shipment changed the character of the horses in the bill of lading, so that when Murphy saw the document it was plain "horses," with no wings. Naturally Murphy, obeying the laws of humanity, ordered the horses around to the railroad feeding pens. There the crew saw the mistake, smiled, resealed the car and sent it on to Mobile.

Murphy got back his eight dollars, but Murphy says the Irishman has less sense of humor than any shipper he has encountered in his 30 years of railroad experience.

GREASE BOOTS WITH AMBERGRIS

Product Valued at \$20,000 Wasted by Sailors on Ship.

San Francisco.—Greasing masts, sea boots and oilskins with ambergris, valued at approximately \$400 a pound, sailors on the British bark Antiope wasted about \$20,000 worth of the product, unaware of its value.

John Matheson, master of the vessel, now learns that he let a fortune slip through his fingers. A small part of the "grease" had been saved and this was identified by an Oakland druggist as ambergris.

The Antiope reached here from Newcastle, Australia, a few days ago. On the way up, in latitude 20 degrees south, a large quantity of "grease" was seen floating on the ocean, and, a calm prevailing, the men managed to scoop up several bucketsful.

The "grease" was found excellent, and it was used for greasing down the masts, the balance being used by the men on their oilskins and boots. The captain says much more of the material could have been collected, but thought the amount picked up by the men was enough.

GETS FISH WITH HAMMER.

Carpenter Captures Sturgeon Six Feet in Length.

Muskegon, Mich.—When a sturgeon six feet long can be captured with a carpenter's hammer, it is time to cease talking "nature faking," and take up the question of the revised edition of "The Complete Angler."

Ferdinand Dratz, 48 Peck street, while running his sixteen foot launch up Muskegon lake, came alongside a large sturgeon lying a foot under the surface.

Quick as a flash Dratz reached into his tool box under the seat, and, taking the first tool that his hand came in contact with, a hammer, dealt the fish a stunning blow on the head. Then, as it commenced to sink, he grasped the fresh water monster through the gills and landed it in his launch.

The sturgeon weighed eighty pounds, and measured sixty-eight inches from tip to tip.

CUTS OFF BEARD TO KISS.

But Man's Family Can Hardly Recognize Its Beardless Head.

Pottstown.—Because a Paris physician made the discovery that whiskers are a veritable hive of disease germs, and during the kissing process transmit the bacteria to others, there is discontent in the family of Samuel Dougher, engineer at the Lucknow iron mills at Glendale.

He had read of the Frenchman's discovery, and determined that his wife and five children should not run chances of contracting typhoid fever or some other disease from his whiskers. He had a luxuriant mustache, which was the pride of the family, and without saying a word to his wife, he had it cut off.

When, smooth-shaven, he surprised her and told her why he had the thing removed, she was "put out," of course, and ridiculed the idea of getting a disease from being kissed by her husband with his whiskers on.

Three-Dollar Estate Is Settled. Lancaster, Pa.—Judge Smith, in the orphan's court, has filed an adjudication in the estate of Tobias Brubaker of Providence township.

KEEPS THE SHOES IN SHAPE.

Feedstore Man Shows His Customer a New Wrinkle.

A gale clerk departed with a large paper bag of oats under his arm. "No," said the feedstore man, "he don't eat 'em for breakfast food. He uses 'em for boot-trees."

"Oats for boot-trees?" "Sure. Every night, as soon as he gets home, he takes off his wet and muddy boots, laces 'em up, and fills 'em with oats. What happens? The oats, like blotting paper, absorb all the moisture out of the leather and swells accorda, plumpin' the boots out splendid, restorin' 'em to their original shape, takin' every wrinkle away."

"So, in the mornin', the man empties his oats back into the bag, and, no matter how slushy yesterday's walkin' had been, he now puts on a pair of perfectly dry, new-lookin' boots."

"Yes, I do quite a city trade in oats," ended the feed man. "Clerks and typists, male and female, all such as can't afford made-to-order shoes, they cost, you know, ten dollars a pair—arse learnin' to use oat trees in stid. Shall I put you up a pair in this here bag? Five cents is all."

TRIAL BY BREAD AND CHEESE.

Old-Time Primitive Way of Convicting Suspected Criminals.

There were many odd ways in ancient times of detecting criminals. Our ancestors had not lived long enough to lose their faith in the gnawings of conscience, and divine interference in earthly justice was superstitiously regarded as a daily occurrence.

No queerer example of this could be found than the ancient mode of trying prisoners by bread and cheese. The unfortunate offender was led, with a halter round his neck, to the parish church, and there in the presence of the people the priest put pieces of cheese and rye bread in a patten on the altar. These he blessed and then the supposed criminal had to eat them dry before the congregation.

If he managed to swallow them easily he was acquitted, but if he choked he was condemned. Naturally enough scores of innocent folk were thus done to death.—Pearson's Weekly.

Paris French in Canada.

"Where does monsieur come from?" asked Jean.

"From New York."

"New York? Why, I did not know that French was spoken in New York."

"No," explained, "but I learned my French in Paris."

"Paris? Where is that?"

I explained once more that Paris was a city in the great country of France.

"Oh, yes, France. I have heard of that. Well," he said, "decidedly it is not good French, that Paris French!"

Then, evidently with the kindly intent of softening the blow, he added, "however, I can understand you!"—Birge Harrison, in Scribner's.

Tender-Hearted.

Mrs. Flagg.—At last I've seen a tender-hearted tramp!

Mr. Flagg.—How's that?

Mrs. Flagg.—He came here this morning begging for something to eat. He told such a pitiful tale that I gave him a meal and offered him two of your cigars; but he wouldn't accept the cigars!

Mr. Flagg.—Offered you cigars to a tramp! Well, where did his tender-heartedness come in?

Mrs. Flagg.—He looked at the cigars longingly for a moment and then told me he didn't have the heart to smoke them.—Illustrated Sunday Magazine.

Admission by Ticket.

Mandy was a young colored girl, fresh from the cotton fields of the south. One afternoon she came to her northern mistress and handed her a visiting card. "De lady who give medals is in de parlor," she explained.

"De lady under lady on de do step?"

"Gracious, Mandy," exclaimed the mistress. "Why didn't you ask both of them to come in?" "Kase, ma'am," grinned the girl, "de one on de do step do' forgit her ticket!"—Brooklyn Life.

Supply in Danger of Exhaustion.

"Did yuh hear that Si Huskiny had gone and ordered a tombstone for himself?"

"Sakes alive! Why, ther ain't a healthier man in this hull county!"

"Wall, he's just back from the city, and he says if them New Yorkers keep on a-buildin' office buildin's, hotels, quick lunches an' bootblack parlors in the style they do, the price of marble'll soon be beyond his means!"—Judge.

Prudence.

"Why did you hit that boy when he was down?" asked the gray-headed man. "Don't you know that was a cowardly thing to do?"

"It wasn't cowardly, it was just prudent," replied the boy who had delivered the blow. "I was afraid because he slipped, and I was afraid he might not step in the same place again if I let him get up."

His Investment.

Old Lady (who had given the tramp a nickel)—Now, what will you do with it?

Hungry Hobo—Waal, ye see mum, ef I buy an auto, there ain't enough left to hire a shofer. So I guess I'll get a schooner. I kin handle that meself.—Bohemian.

PUT LAUGH ON THE ATTORNEY.

Legal Light the Victim of Swede's Peculiar Dialect.

At a court in western Massachusetts, a man was on trial, charged with having committed a robbery early in the summer, and his attorney was endeavoring to prove an alibi.

"Now, sir," said the prosecuting attorney, to the prisoner, "tell us where you were on June 15."

"In Yale," was the reply.

"Yale," snorted the attorney, contemptuously. "Listen to that, your honor! This ignorant man never was at Yale in his life. You know you are lying!" he said turning to the prisoner. "When did you leave Yale?"

"You lie, too," was the quick response.

"Silence!" roared the exasperated lawyer. "Your honor, I ask that this man be fined for contempt."

"May it please the court," interposed the prisoner's counsel, who had been enjoying the scene hugely, "my client is a Swede. What he means is that he was in jail on June 15 and left there on July 2."

And the case was dismissed.—Illustrated Sunday Magazine.

REALLY AN APT COMPARISON.

Good Illustration of the True Position of China.

During a debate in the senate on foreign affairs one day one of the senators was discussing China's somewhat precarious position in the Russo-Japanese war.

"Gentleman," observed the senator, humorously, "it has always seemed to me that China is hopelessly small and helpless as compared with Russia or Japan. Anything she may have to say to the combatants is suggestive of the remark that the gamecock made to the horses."

This game-cock, as you well know found himself one day in a stable full of horses—huge, restless steeds. They were all kicking and stamping about. The cock had to dodge from right to left and from left to right to avoid being trampled to pieces. As he shot

this way and that between the heavy hoofs, he kept singing out:

"Take care, gentlemen; don't let us tread on one another!"—Illustrated Sunday Magazine.

With Allowance.

There is an editor in a little New York town who has a well developed streak of gentle humor and a fondness for gardening. Not long ago his man of all work left him, and the editor advertised for some one to fill his place. Among the applicants for the position was a man who seemed to know his business thoroughly, but who failed to produce references as to character when requested. Moreover, his eyes were somewhat shifty.

"You say you have no references," the editor asked.

"No, sir, I have not," the man replied in a tone of humble pride; "but I think, sir, that you will find honesty printed on my face."

The editor smiled a little. "Well—er—perhaps," he admitted; "that is, allowing for typographical errors!"—Sunday Magazine.

Bad Air "Breath of Death."

"Foul air from improper ventilation is the breath of death in any great city. While poor food is causing one death in every 1,000 lives, and is this ratio confined to the slums."

In these words W. A. Evans of Chicago, commissioner of health, expressed his belief that the atmosphere of many houses is charged with a more deadly poison than impure food.

In stricter figures consumption and pneumonia have the greatest death rates in our city. In almost every case of these diseases the primary cause is the breathing of foul air," he said.

Two Really Good "Bulls."

In the report of a Dublin charity organization the following paragraph appeared:

"Notwithstanding the large amount paid by the society for medical attendance and medicine, very few deaths occurred during the year."

Which calls to mind the story of the two countrymen who were passing an eye hospital famous for its skilful operations.

"Jack," exclaimed one of them, impressively, "in there they'll take your eyes out and put them on the table in front of you and let you look at them."

The Bitter Truth. Diogenes slowly entered the pawnshop and placed his lantern on the counter.

"What can I get for this?" he asked. The pawnbroker picked up the lantern and examined it curiously.

"Rather antique pattern," he commented. "What do you consider it worth?"

Diogenes bowed his head, the humiliation of centuries upon him.

"Nothing," he bitterly admitted. "Nothing at all!"—Bohemian.

Proved His Cleverness.

The dress in a cool million had been wooed and won by a poet—at least he called himself a poet.

"Darling," she said, just before the honeymoon had slumped the slumps, "before we were married you said you intended to do something clever some day."

"And I did," replied the versemaker. "I married you."

And for the first time she realized that her bargain-counter purchase wasn't the real thing.

WANTED HIM TO UNDERSTAND.

Maughty Customer Informed Butcher of Her High Rank.

"Ye needn't think because ye see me goin' aa' comin' be th' back iv Malcolim Goldborough's mansion, thot O'im wan iv th' common servants iv th' house," said the maughty customer to the unevill butcher.

"O?" ejaculated the fat little man, abruptly turning obsequious, "are—are you a family connection of the great Goldboroughs, ma'am?"

"O'im more than a mere connection, sir."

"Pardon me," added the butcher, gazing patronizingly at this personage, "you're one of the family that's been abroad and whom I haven't had the pleasure of meeting before, perhaps?"

"Ye'll hav' t' go higher than thot."

"Not Mr. Malcolim's new wife?" gasped the fat little man. "I didn't have a suspicion that he—"

"Higher, moa. O'im higher."

"Higher?" uttered the perfectly bewildered butcher.

"Ye. O'im th' cook!"—Bohemian.

POOR FRITZ MADE A MARTYR.

German Schoolboy Victim of Father's Misunderstanding.

The Katholische Schul-Zeitung of Berlin tells this story to justify its indorsement of the imperial order against the use of foreign words: "At one of the high schools the scholars were ordered to appear before a committee of ophthalmologists for examination, with a view to correcting defects in vision and arresting the progress of eye troubles. One scholar received from the head master a note for his father which read: Today's examination showed that your son Fritz is predisposed to myopia. Some thing must be done with him! Next morning Fritz appeared with this note for the head master: As soon as I read your note of yesterday, for which I thank you, I gave Fritz a sound thrashing, which, I hope, will do him good. If he ever does the same thing again let me know. The school authorities have been instructed to use shortsighted instead of myopia hereafter."

How to Resist Colds.

Medical science is now nearly unanimous in its belief that colds are acquired by infection, just like measles or scarlet fever. They run through schools and factories and families. Folk who lead outdoor lives and dwell in well ventilated houses are least susceptible to them if they do not underfeed or overindulge in alcohol and if they do not pile on so much clothing that the splendid armor of the human skin is pampered and weakened. Plenty of cold bathing and exercise, light underwear, free use of water inside and outside of the body and sleeping with wide-open windows will help them to resist the infection.

The Mocking Bird.

Of song birds the mocking bird is easily king. The skylark and nightingale deserve all of the praise that the poets have given them. They are sweet songsters, indeed, but when it comes to a contest with the mocking bird their famed laurels wither away in its variety, range, volume and sweetness. The song of the mocking bird has no equal in the feathered kingdom. To hear the "falling song" of the mocking bird on a moonlight night in June is to hear that which never yet came from throat of skylark or nightingale.—N. Y. American.

There is an Order Higher Still.

You are set in an age when the material civilization of the world has been piled up to a gigantic height, to testify that there is an order higher still, that as the soul is more than the body, and eternity than time, so the moral order is above the material, that justice is above power; but justice may suffer long, but must reign at last; that power is not right; that no wrongs can be sanctified by success; nor can the immutable laws of right and wrong be confounded.—Cardinal Manning.

Women and Diplomacy.

Almost all the celebrated women have gained their fame by diplomatic means. The famous women of Jewish history were all subtle in their methods—Rebecca, Jael and Herodias, to name but a few of them. What born diplomatists, too, were Catherine of Siena, the great saint, and Catherine de Medici, the great sinner. The list of them down the ages is unending. The royal road to fame as well as to peace would seem for women to be marked by the sign-posts of diplomacy.

Addicted to Swearing.

A big, husky truckman was belaboring his horses with a bullwhip, accompanying each stroke with a torrent of horrid profanity that could be heard a block. A timid looking gentleman stood near, waiting patiently for an opening, and when the psychological moment arrived said in a soft voice: "My dear fellow, in acquiring your education you sadly neglected the simplest rules of oral hygiene." The truckman was so astounded that he cursed no more for a full minute.

Ignorant Woman.

"This thermometer," complained the old lady, "ain't no good. I can never tell by it how cold the room is."

"My dear madam," said the rascally dealer, with a pitying air, "do you not know the word 'thermometer' is derived from two Greek words meaning 'a measure of heat?' Naturally, therefore, it ain't meant to measure cold."

Coming, Not Going.

Mrs. Frankley—I heard Mr. Sneek telling his wife that he saw you going into a saloon yesterday.

Mr. Frankley—That statement isn't exactly correct. He saw me "coming" into a saloon. I saw him hiding behind the free-lunch counter.

A Startling Truth.

Prof. Albert Bushnell Hart, professor of American history at Harvard, is a man whose hobbies run alongside of his work. Lately he acquired a desire for statistics and began seeking them with his accustomed energy. He was very much impressed with the mortality figures, and, meeting his colleague, Prof. Grandget, in the yard, addressed him mournfully:

"I've been looking up mortality statistics Grandget, and what do you think? A man dies every time I breathe!"—Lippincott's.

L'ABEILLE DE LA NOUVELLE-ORLEANS

Abonnement en Louisiana \$1 l'an, en Cash \$2. En Cash 3fr publicite offre dans les commerces des avantages exceptionnels. Prix de l'abonnement au France: 12fr 50 par An. Editions hebdomadaires de L.A.O.S.