

WORLD'S OLDEST FAMILIES

Of Them All, the Mikado of Japan Early is Entitled to the First Place.

Families which trace their ancestry through eight or ten generations are counted old, yet they are mere fledglings compared with some of the really ancient families of the world.

The oldest family in the British Isles is the Mar family, in Scotland, which traces its pedigree back to 1093. The Campbells of Argyll began in 1190, Talleyrand dates from 1159, and Bismarck from 1270. The Grosvenor family (that of the duke of Westminster), 1666; the Austrian house of Hapsburg goes back to 952, and the house of Bourbon to 864.

The descendants of Mohammed, born 570, are all registered carefully and authoritatively in a book kept in Mecca by a chief of the family. Little or no doubt exists of the absolute authenticity of the long line of Mohammed's descendants. In China there are many old families, also among the Jews.

But in point of pedigrees the mikado of Japan has a unique record. His place has been filled by members of his family for more than twenty-five hundred years. The present mikado is the one hundred and twenty-second in the line. The first one was contemporary with Nebuchadnezzar, 660 years before Christ.

SHOW RARE OLD MANUSCRIPTS

Exhibition in New York of Intense Interest Equally to Historians and Antiquarians.

At the exhibition of the American Historical association, in Columbia university library, New York, there are many early manuscripts of historical writers, first editions of Greek and Roman historians, medieval chronicles in manuscript and in print, autograph manuscripts of modern historians, valuable and rare works and documents relating to European and American history and many other treasures dear to the historian.

Probably the exhibits most interesting to the American historian are the famous Columbus letter announcing the discovery of America in 1492, the first dated edition of Americus Vesputius (1504), Corlaer's Journal of 1634, describing the Mohawk Indians, the earliest historical manuscripts in existence of the Dutch period of New York, the original manuscript rolls of the Concord minute men and many valuable items relating to the colonial and revolutionary periods.

Gutenberg's Bible, printed on parchment, was exhibited to show the transition from the manuscript to the printed book.

An Island of Sulphur.

In the Bay of Plenty, New Zealand, is one of the most extraordinary islands in the world. It is called White Island, and consists mainly of sulphur mixed with gypsum and a few other minerals. Over the island, which is about three miles in circumference, and rises between 800 and 900 feet above the sea, fogs continually an immense cloud of vapor attaining an elevation of 10,000 feet. In the center is a boiling lake of acid-charged water, covering fifty acres, and surrounded with blow-holes from which steam and sulphurous fumes are emitted with great force and noise. With care a boat can be navigated on the lake. The sulphur from White Island is very pure, but little effort has yet been made to procure it systematically.

Cradle Rented on Approval.

"What do you think of renting a cradle on approval?" said the boss of a New York secondhand shop. Sounds funny doesn't it? I rented one last week. A woman in the next block was expecting company from the west. They were bringing a baby along—a baby that was used to a cradle and couldn't sleep in anything else. The woman knew nothing about the size of the child, so she couldn't figure on the size of the cradle. She hoped he wasn't very big, because her fat had nothing but a bandbox. She picked out the smallest cradle she could find. The boy turned out to be a regular buster. He slept one night with his toes tucked under his chin. The next day they swapped for a bigger cradle."

Grippe.

Grippe was first described in England in 1173, since when there have been more than 100 epidemics. It first appeared in the United States in 1627 and went all over the western hemisphere. The last epidemic started in Bokhara in May, 1889, and reached the United States in the middle of December. Its rate of spread is exactly as rapid as travel. Since 1889 there have been grippe epidemics in most American cities every winter—just as there are many mild cases of "cholera" during deadly epidemics of cholera, so there are many cases of bad colds in the head, or "grippe," false influenza, when true grippe is about.

On Cats.

Anthony H. Enwer wrote an essay on cats. The chapter on "Different Breeds" supplies the following information:

Cats that are made for little boys and girls to maul and tease is called Maltese cats. Some cats is known by their queer purrs—these are called Puritan cats. Cats with very bad tempers is called Angorrie cats. Sometimes a very fine cat is called a Magnificent. Cats with deep feelings is called Feline cats.

SECRET OF THE AGES SOLVED

Seven Medin Claims to Have Discovered the Sources of Brahmaputra and Indus.

Of the results achieved by Sven Hedin's latest plunge into the wilderness of Tibet, it is probable that he himself, possessed as he is by a passion for scientific geography, would rank as the greatest his discoveries of the sources of the Brahmaputra and the Indus.

A sense of exultation is quite apparent as he writes of his standing by the small spring, sacred in the eyes of the Tibetans, which is the uppermost of the headwaters of the Indus. "We passed a remarkable evening and a memorable night at this important geographical spot, situated 16,946 feet above sea level.

"Here I stood and wondered whether the Macedonian Alexander, when he crossed the Indus 2,200 years ago, had any notion where its source lay, and I revealed in the consciousness that except the Tibetans themselves, no other human being but myself had penetrated to this spot.

"Providence had secured for me the triumph of reaching the actual sources of the Brahmaputra and the Indus, and ascertaining the origin of these two historical rivers, which, like the claws of the crab, grip the highest of the mountain systems of the world—the Himalayas.

"Their waters are born in the reservoirs of the firmament and they roll down their floods to the lowlands to yield life and sustenance to 50,000,000 human beings. Not without pride, but still with a feeling of humble thankfulness, I stood there, conscious that I was the first white man who had ever penetrated to the sources of the Indus and the Brahmaputra."

BEST WAY OF BACKING FELON

Holding Sore Finger in Hot Wood Ashes is the Method Most Generally Recommended.

A simple home remedy that taken in time has been known to back many a felon is to hold the sore finger in hot wood ashes. These, when burnt to ash, are put in a half pint or more of boiling water and the finger dipped up and down in it until it cools.

If wood ashes cannot be found, those from coals may be used, though they are not so effective.

The modern treatment of a felon is not to wait for lancing until it comes to a head, but to cut in deep while the sore is still hard. This needs a surgeon and should never be attempted by the novice. It is an heroic measure for victim at best.

Everything with a felon depends upon taking it in time. Neglecting it not only means great suffering, but may mean a finger disfigured for life. At first twinge of pain dip finger repeatedly in hot water or apply some good liniment or salve. There are several that are especially noted for their efficacy in backing felons, boils and carbuncles.

Politics in 1840.

On the great western canal in New York, from Schenectady to Buffalo, there is a grogshop within every quarter of a mile (about every seventy rods), making the whole number about 1,600 or 1,700 groggeries on the banks of that one canal, and the two political parties are striving hard to obtain the influence of these shops on the elections of the state.

So it is in Massachusetts. Every grogery is hailed as a betel, as though it must be obtained for political capital. Oh! Dreadful!

Leading partisans are silent as to the evils of drunkenness. Self-styled politicians, the Absaloms of the day, are struggling for the rabble to gain their votes to advance party objects.—From a New England Lawyer's Diary.

Feminine Fortitude.

Who will say that women are afraid? Who will venture to call them the "weaker sex?" The true modern woman fears no peril. We already know that she—like all women, at all times—could endure even the most excruciating pain with admirable fortitude and, generally speaking, much better than the average man. And yet, in spite of facts, there are men who will deny that fearlessness, as they deny this fortitude. There still exists—and there will probably always exist—the type of husband, for instance, who tells his wife, after she has already gone through some terrible physical agony: "Well, done, little woman; you bore it like a man!"

Statue with Silk Hat.

The warmest admirers of the silk hat will hardly claim that it lends itself to the sculptor's art. Yet the artist responsible for the bronze statue of Krupp, on the lawn of the Kiel Yacht club, has presented the ironmaster with a top hat and a walking stick in his right hand. He has also endowed him with a tightly-fitting frock-coat, carefully creased trousers and a mathematical parting in the center of the head; so that the statue looks more like a tailor's dummy than the representation of a captain of industry.

Longevity of Birds.

The duchess of Bedford is an enthusiastic ornithologist. In an article in British Birds she gives some remarkable instances of longevity among birds in her own collection. A Barbary dove which has been in the duchess's possession for fifteen years was left her by an old woman who also owned it for fifteen years and who always said it was an old bird when it was given to her.

SOMEWHAT HARD TO ANSWER

Judge's Questioning Telegram Must Have Made the Railroad Men Sit Up and Wonder.

Some years ago Judge Gray of the supreme bench of Iowa was called to Colorado by the death there of a relative, who had in vain sought better health in the mountains. On the way back with the body a transshipment was necessary at Council Bluffs. Judge Gray purchased tickets for Iowa City, and attended to the checking of the coffin box in regular form. Then he retired to his berth in the sleeper for a night's rest. At half-past four the next morning the porter roused him to dress, as Iowa City was but a few miles away. The judge had not slept well, and the early rising had not helped to put him in good humor. He was feeling anything but cheerful when he stepped upon the platform at Iowa City, and, walking to the baggage office, found that the body of his relative was not there. "No body came this morning," said the agent. Judge Gray was furious. He was too full for utterance, and, without uttering one word, he walked to the telegraph office, seized a pen, dashed off a dispatch to the baggage agent at Council Bluffs, and thrust it through the window to the astonished operator. It was this: "Where in — is my mother-in-law?"

RAISING HEART BOWED DOWN

Widow's Change of Sentiment Shown by Her Selection of Colors for Her New Bonnets.

"See that little woman who just went out?" remarked a milliner to a customer. "Notice that red hat, did you? Well, as a milliner and a person whose business it is to study the different characteristics of women, I have watched her for two years. It has been a kind of study of the 'evolutions of the widow.'"

"Two years ago she came to me, recently bereaved, and had me make her a hat of deepest black. She was broken-hearted, and declared she would never again take an interest in the pretty things that women like to wear. A year ago she came again. "Don't you think I might have the least bit of white in my spring hat?" she asked.

"Yes," I said, "I think you might," and the hat was made. Three months later she came for another hat, and she stood for a little touch of lavender. Next she had a big white plume, and last week I made her that red hat. It just shows what time will do in lifting up a heart bowed down."

How Finger Nails Grow.

It has been computed that the average growth of the finger nail is 1-32 of an inch per week, or a little more than an inch and a half per year. The growth, however, depends to a great extent upon the rate of nutrition, and during periods of sickness it is retarded. It goes on faster in summer than in winter, and differs for different fingers, being most rapid in the middle finger, and slowest in the thumb. According to the rate of growth stated the average time taken for each finger nail to grow its full length is about four and a half months, and at this rate a man of seventy would have renewed his nails 186 times. Taking the length of each nail at half an inch, he would have grown seven feet nine inches of nail on each finger and on all his fingers and thumbs an aggregate length of 77 feet six inches.

Young Commentators.

Jerome S. McWade, in a Sunday school address at Duluth, quoted oddities from a number of children's Biblical compositions that had been submitted to him in competition for a \$15 New Year prize.

Among the more whimsical oddities were:

"Mana is being polite."

"Jerusalem was surrounded with walls to keep in the milk and honey."

"Jacob was a patriarch by trade. In them days people lived on corn, like horses do now. They always called pudden and porridge messes. Jacob could eat a good mess, but Esau, who was the oldest, could not eat as much as you might think. The patriarch Moses never ate nothing except when there was a famine."

Made Cats His Booty.

Says the Pekin and Tientsin Times: "A novel sort of crime was discovered by the Tientsin police when a portly native was arrested and asked to explain his embonpoint. He had a thieves' bag around his waist, filled with dead cats to the number of seven. One of them, a very fine specimen of the tortoise-shell, was still quite warm. In a smaller bag was found the lure: it consisted of bits of dried fish treated with some deadly poison. The man was sent up to the yamen, where he received thirty blows and one month's imprisonment."

Wiles of the Chinaman.

For wiles that are dark and tricks that are vain the Chinese is still peculiar. The other week while some customs officers were making investigations among the Chinese gardeners at Northam, 100 miles east of Perth, Scotland, they discovered quantities of opium concealed in sausage skins and in lemons from which the pulp had been extracted.

The Great Decider.

Mrs. Gramercy.—"What is your opinion about the right of women to vote?" Mrs. Park.—"It's enough for me to know, my dear, that it is fashionable."—Judge.

MAN NOT REALLY TO BLAME

Suburban Customer Realized He Was Too Hasty in Censuring Plumber for Time Consumed.

The suburban customer shook the bill in the plumber's face. "I'll never pay it!" he yelled. "The idea of that little job in my kitchen taking your man 10 hours; it's an outrage!" "Now, please don't put all the blame on the man," the plumber said, conciliatorily. "He would have got through in one-tenth of the time if you had chosen a more advantageous day."

"What was wrong with the day I selected?" the customer from the suburbs fumed. "Several things," replied the plumber quietly. "In the first place, it was not your cook's day off, she was present and did all she could to make the man feel at home; secondly, your wife's society held a musicale in the parlor and my man, who is passionately fond of music, could not help bearing the strains of harmony; lastly, there was a football game played in the empty lot next door to your place and my man, who used to play at Yale, naturally glanced at the game from time to time. With all these attractions to fascinate him can you censure the man for lingering a little?"

The demeanor of the suburban customer changed. "No, I cannot," he confessed honestly. "I received your bill and give this to the man I have been wronging so unjustly," and he flung down on the plumber's desk a golden eagle.—Chicago News.

SARCASM THAT WAS WASTED

Whist Player's Ill Humor Had Little Effect on Good-Natured Man from the West.

Life tells of an old fellow, a member of a whist club in Brooklyn, who enjoyed the reputation of being a great crank. His animadversions against his partners were so severe that it was rare indeed that he could get anyone to play with him.

One night, however, a man happened in from the west and the avoided one promptly assailed him with a request to "sit in." The western man was about to comply when he was taken aside by one of the members of the club who told him the reputation of the crank.

"I don't care," he said. "I can stand it, I guess." At the end of the evening he was approached once more by the curious member.

"Well," said the member, "how did you manage?"

"First rate."

"Why, no."

"Didn't he insult you?"

"Not at all."

"Didn't he say anything?"

"Nothing special. He only spoke once during the whole course of the game."

"What did he say then?"

"Why, I didn't get the cards out right, and he looked over very pleasantly and said: 'Why, you can't even deal, can you?'"—Montreal Herald.

Treatment of Sprains.

Sprains require prompt and thorough attention. They sometimes give rise to permanent injury. Soak the affected part in hot water for 20 to 30 minutes. The water should be maintained at as high a temperature as is possible by the little addition of hot water at frequent intervals. The duration of a hot foot bath should be ten to 20 minutes, after which an elastic bandage should be applied to the affected joint in such a way as to prevent swelling on the outside of the bandage. The foot should be elevated for a few hours, until the tendency to inflammation has subsided. After the first 24 hours very gentle rubbing of the limb may be employed. The rubbing movement should be in a direction from the injured part toward the heart.

Bishops Don't Do So.

A friend of the late Father Tabb said in Elliott City:

"This fine poet and good man thought that class hatred was due to ignorance—that the rich knew too little of the poor, and vice versa.

"He once illustrated this ignorance with the story of a Methodist bishop's wife who addressed a meeting of slum housewives on their home duties. The address made the home life seem all very fine and ideal, but one housewife voiced the opinion of the rest, perhaps, when she said to her neighbors with a sniff:

"She's all right as far as she goes; but what I'd like to ask her is this—what does she do when her old bishop comes home on pay night with his envelope empty and a fighting jag on?"

Hopeless Case.

"How did you come out with that damage suit?" one lawyer asked another as they chanced to meet recently.

"Lost it," was the mournful reply.

"Why, I thought you had a pretty good claim?"

"We did, a good claim but a poor chance, as I knew as soon as I saw that jury. Was it likely that our evidence would be given full weight with two coal dealers and an ice-man in the jury box?"—Exchange.

Prudent.

"So the bride and groom especially requested their friends not to throw rice after them?"

"Yes, they asked us to hand the rice over in a package so that it could be used when they go to housekeeping."

STRICT NEW ENGLISH LAW

Grins of Clown and Acrobat's Contortions May Be Copyrighted in the Future.

"All grimaces in Mr. So-and-So's performances are copyrighted." This notice on the program may greet the eye of a spectator of the harlequinade of the future. If effect is given to the recommendations of the committee to consider the law of copyright, which has just concluded its sittings, says an English exchange. For in its report just published appears the recommendation that the protection of copyright should be extended to "entertainments in dumb show," and these Mr. Scrutton, K. C., a dissenting member of the committee, points out, must necessarily include facial expressions.

But the clown will not be the only one to benefit. The contortionist who uses himself in a novel knot, the gymnast who invents some new feat, may equally copyright them, for their entertainments may be "entertainments in dumb show."

Verbal contortionists, too, will have their need of protection, for the committee recommends that authors of lectures, speeches and sermons should have the sole right of delivering them, though newspapers may report them unless notice prohibiting publication is given at the time of delivery.

No longer will the author of a musical work groan at the thought of lost royalties when he hears his masterpiece ground out on a barrel organ, for he is to have the sole right of authorizing its "adaptation to instruments which can produce them mechanically."

And the artist who sees his picture reproduced by a cinematograph may be tempted to overlook the absence of some of its finer shades in reckoning the profits of the performance.

For, so the committee recommends, authors of literary, scientific or artistic works are to have the exclusive right of authorizing the reproduction and public presentation of their works.

ADAM BEDE HAS NEW IDEA

Insists That a Society for the Suppression of Cruelty to Soil is Needed.

A Society for the Suppression of Cruelty to Soil is advocated by J. Adam Bede, former congressman from Minnesota and humorist of national reputation, the St. Paul Dispatch says. Not only does he believe in such a society, but he says he expects to live long enough to see one organized under government supervision.

"Stuff! This thing of increased cost of living," Mr. Bede said. "It doesn't cost more unless you make it. If we'd live like our grandmothers did it wouldn't cost any more. The trouble is, we're living too fast and too luxuriously. I worked my way through school. I'm paying the way of my children. Grandma did her own housework. We're hiring ours done. It's just that kind of thing which causes us to spend money. And luxuries! Why, the farmers are getting so wealthy they want to ride in automobiles. Cows upstate are getting so they won't give down their milk unless you turn on the electric lights and have a Caruso to sing. It's the rust, not the trusts, which is hurting us. Traveling down through Kansas a short time ago, I saw all kinds of farm machinery, wagons, bugles and implements, standing out in the weather—rusting. We're too lazy to take care of the things we have. We're not making the ground produce as it should. We're neglecting it. We have not learned to rotate the crops. We plant wheat and more wheat until we have 'wheated' the ground to death. That's why I want to see a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Soil."

Palestine and California.

That the soil possibilities of Palestine and California are much the same is quite a revelation. Prof. A. Aaronson of Haifa, Palestine, has pointed out that each region has a range of low mountains near the coast, and beyond this a long interior valley with a range of higher mountains for the eastern wall, and, as the prevailing winds have the same direction, the distribution of rainfall corresponds closely. It is found that the very similar climatic and topographic conditions have produced similar plants. The languishing of agriculture in Palestine seems to be a result of poor government, not of sterile soil and arid climate, and it is believed that under better management the economic plants that flourish in California will be successfully introduced among the plants discovered in Palestine. A wheat, growing wild in high altitudes on sterile soil, that is considered the prototype of our cultivated varieties.

A Mighty Massachusetts Hunter.

Roland Smith, who lives in the town of Sheffield, probably holds the record locally as a hunter of muskrats, says the Springfield Republican. Every year during the January thaw he is in company with a man spends the warm days shooting rats, and they have captured a great many. This month during the two days that the water overflowed the meadows they went out in a boat and killed between 150 and 180 rats. These will bring from 50 to 75 cents a pelt, according to the size and quality of the fur. Mr. Smith hunts the rats with a rifle and in this way is able to kill them without damaging the skin to any extent. Sometimes when it is necessary a shotgun is used.

Recognized Higher Power.

King James I. of England, although keenly alive to his own divine right, yet recognized the power of the house of commons. Sir Robert Cotton was one of the 12 members to carry the famous declaration against monopolies to the king at Newmarket. When the king caught sight of them he called out: "Oh! chairs, chairs; here be twal' kynges comin'." His majesty mounted his horse on one occasion, to find his usually quiet steed in a restive mood. "The devil I'll say, sirrah," said the king to the prancing brute, "and you be no quiet horse to send you to the 500 kyngs in the house of commons. They'll quickly tame you."

Proof Lacking.

"Doctor," he asked, "do you think there is anything in the theory that alcohol is bad for the brain? A man was telling me the other day that the constant use of whiskey resulted in time in the destruction of the tissues between the brain cells.

"There is no doubt about the correctness of the theory."

"I can prove that there isn't anything in it. I've been taking from two to three or four drinks a day for years."

"Well, bring on the proof you spoke of."