

SURPRISE

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is **SOAP**

Pure Hard Soap.

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Household Notes.

CHARLOTTE RUSSE.—A correspondent asks for a receipt for "the old-fashioned charlotte russe, such as I used to see served in a large glass dish at my grandmother's tea party, says a writer on domestic topics. It was as different from the modern caterer's variety as possible. The top was frothy and rich, but as the dish began to be served there came out morsels of delicate, flavoursome blanc mange and bits of rich wine-soaked sponge cake that I should love to taste again." It seems almost ungracious to remind this writer that her enthusiasm is probably largely tempered by the glamour of her youthful appetite. It is much to be feared that the duplicate of that dish set before her to-day would not produce the same joy and relish. From a scrap-book, compiled about thirty years ago, a receipt for home-made 'charlotte russe' is taken: Soak a quarter of a box of gelatine in a little cold water until soft; flavor a pint of cream with a half a cup of powdered sugar and a teaspoonful of vanilla. Whip it, skimming the froth on to a hair sieve that rests on a pan. Line a high glass dish with strips of plain sponge cake or separated lady-fingers, sprinkling the cake, after it is put in the dish, with a wine-glass of sherry wine. When the cream is whipped, mix the gelatine with that which has drained through the sieve, add the whipped portion instantly, stir the whole through lightly once or twice with a silver fork, and pour at once into the dish. Lay on the top two or three strips of cake or lady-fingers, sprinkle with a few drops of wine that has been saved for the purpose, and set the dish on ice till ready to use. Cream, gelatine, and all dishes used should be kept very cold. It is a good plan to set the draining-pan which holds the sieve on a bed of ice in a second pan. The success of the dish depends largely upon the rapidity and delicacy with which the final putting together of cream and gelatine can be managed.

PAINTED FLOORS.—Floors that have been shellacked may be cleansed without injuring the polish by wiping over rapidly with clean cloths dipped in clear warm water, to which kerosene has been added in the proportion of a tablespoonful to a pail of water.

PRESEVERING TIME.—Mrs. Lincoln's directions for canning strawberries are to be specially recommended. She emphasizes the use of sound, perfect fruit, for one overripe spot or berry may spoil the whole jar. If they are gritty wash them quickly, before removing the hulls. Put only a few at a time in a colander into a pan of clear water, toss them about carefully, drain, and turn on to a clean towel to dry. Pull off the hulls with the little pinners which come for that purpose, and put all the perfect and largest berries by themselves. Mash the smaller berries with the sugar, allowing one cup of sugar to each pound of the fruit. The fruit should be weighed in the beginning. Cook these mashed berries with the sugar until the juice flows freely, then strain it through cheese-cloth, and squeeze till dry. Put the syrup on to boil, add the large berries, and boil fast about three minutes. Keep the fruit under the syrup, but do not stir or break it. Skim out the berries into sterilized jars, boil the syrup down, then fill to overflowing and seal.

TONIC FOR HAIR.—It is said that the frequent sun baths are the best known tonics for a woman's hair. The Greek maidens of old, who sat on the walls of the city and combed their hair owed the beauty of their tresses to the sun's rays. When the hair is washed sit beside a lowered window, as the sun shines

stronger through glass, and allow the hair to dry as it is being brushed. No bleach has been found so successful as the sun, which strengthens and beautifies generally. When the hair shows a tendency to fall out, the very best thing to stop its coming out and promote its growth is the abundant use of genuine olive oil. Saturate the hair thoroughly, and keep it saturated for a week until the dry scalp has absorbed all it will, then wash with pure soap and water. If this operation is repeated every two or three months, the effect is said to be marvelous.

St. Peter's Chair.

Twice a year, in January and February, the people of Rome observe the Feast of the Chair of St. Peter, and this year additional interest attaches to the occasion owing to a discovery recently made by Prof. Marucchi. He has shown that the first "Seat of Peter"—that is, the place where he exercised his apostolic ministry in Rome—was in the ancient Church of St. Priscilla, and not at the catacombs of St. Agnes, as hitherto believed. The question is a very interesting one for those who have studied Christian archaeology, and the traditions concerning St. Peter's life and work in Rome; but for the general reader it can hardly be as interesting as an account of the chair itself in which St. Peter taught and which has for ages symbolized the infallible teaching of the Roman Church and Pontiff.

A tradition dating back to the earliest times supported by the most illustrious doctors of the Eastern and Western churches, tells us that St. Peter used the chair which is contained in the great bronze frame, which rises in the apex of the extremity of St. Peter's. Ancient documents prove that the Chair of Peter used to be exposed for the veneration of the faithful in the century in which liberty was granted to the Christians of the Roman Empire. Everything goes to show that previous to that time it was kept concealed in the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles. In the succeeding centuries it was moved from one part to another of the great Basilica which Constantine erected to St. Peter on the very site of his crucifixion, until, in the seventeenth century, it found a permanent resting place in its present prominent position at the end of the majestic temple, lighted from above by the aureole of the Dove, who seems to brood upon it, crowned by a host of joyous bronze angels, lightly supported by St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Athanasius and St. Chrysostom, and raised above an altar dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and all the sainted Pontiffs.

For several centuries the Popes have ceased to use it on solemn feasts, principally, no doubt, because use would wear out or damage a relic too precious to be lost. But anybody who likes may see a copy of it in the Vatican sacristy. It is made of wood, and richly decorated with ornaments in gold and ivory, executed with a perfection which enables us to date its origin to the best days of Roman art—that is, to the age of Augustus or Claudius. The little ivory sculptures which adorn it represent the labors of Hercules and prove that it is of pagan origin. A glance serves to show that this chair was originally used for carrying a distinguished personage from one place to another.

St. Peter came to Rome under the reign of Claudius, and received hospitality from the Senator Pudens, whom he converted to Christianity. In the house of the Roman noble were held the first meetings of the faithful, and here doubtless the Prince of the Apostles was presented with the chair from which he taught them. The chair in those days was

an emblem of authority, the sedes gestatoria being eminently so and reserved for the emperor and the great functionaries of the empire. Hence the pagan ornaments which decorate the chair now held in veneration throughout the whole world.

From the purely archaeological point of view it is interesting to find a chair made of wood which has been preserved practically intact for over eighteen centuries. Even the veneration due to precious relics can hardly be regarded as an adequate explanation of the phenomenon in the case of the Chair of St. Peter. All the chairs of the other Apostles have perished either by the hands or by the negligence of men, while that of the Roman Pontiff has been preserved in a providential way. During the four centuries between Alaric and Totila the Eternal City was served in a providential way. During the Great Constantine put himself at the head of barbarian kings to destroy the Imperial city, and then bade adieu forever to the Eternal City, carrying with him an immense quantity of booty, ranging from precious Greek statues to the bronze tiles of the Pantheon. In the eleventh century the Emperor, Henry IV., had just ravaged the part of the city known as the Leonine Borough, which contained the Basilica of St. Peter, when the army of Robert Guiscard, which came to expel him wrought even greater havoc. The sack of Rome by the Lutheran hosts under the constable of Bourbon destroyed an immense number of religious treasures which had escaped preceding invaders. During these disastrous epochs Rome saw her sacred treasures pillaged, her sacred relics scattered to the winds, her columns of granite lying broken in the dust—and yet the fragile seat in which St. Peter taught the infallible truths of the Catholic Church has come down to us through all the ages to represent Catholic truth.

Torrigni, who examined the chair carefully in 1637, and who measured it exactly on all sides, has left us the following description of it: "The front of the chair is four palms broad and three-and-a-half high; its sides are a little more than two-and-a-half in breadth; its height, including the back, is six palms. It is of wood with small columns and little arches; the columns are one palm and two inches high, and the arches two palms and a half; on the front part of the chair are chiselled eighteen subjects in ivory, executed with rare perfection, and mingled with little ornaments very delicately worked. All around are a number of figures in ivory. The back of the chair is four fingers thick." The Roman palm was equal to about nine inches of our measure.

Before the time of Alexander VII., who transported the chair to its present position, it was venerated in the chapel which is now used as the Baptistry of St. Peter's. Previous to this it had been in the Chapel of Relics in the old sacristy; and there are documents to show the Pope Adrian I., in the eighth century, had it placed in the chapel dedicated to his patron St. Adrian. In the early centuries the Pope always sat in the Chair of Peter during the solemn services celebrated on the Feast of the Chair in January and February. Peter Manuilus, in the thirteenth century, relates having read in an earlier author how the Chair of Peter had been respected during a fire in the Basilica. From chronicles belonging to the eighth and ninth centuries we learn that a newly elected Pope was first conducted to the Pontifical throne, and that on the following Sunday he proceeded to the Vatican Basilica, robed in the Papal mantle and accompanied by sacred chants, and that there he took his place on "the Apostolic and Most Holy Chair of Peter." In still earlier times the neophytes, robed in their white baptismal robes, used to assemble before the chair to venerate it and the Prince of the Apostles. In short, we have authentic documents referring to the chair, dating from the fourth century down to our own time.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the custom of attaching importance to a chair as an emblem of authority is confined to the chair of St. Peter. From the very beginning of Christianity the bishops occupied special seats as a mark of honor and a token of authority. At their death their chairs were sometimes placed in their tombs. The early Christians entertained the highest respect for the chairs of the Apostles, which were carefully preserved by them. In the second century Tertillian wrote: "Go through the Apostolic churches in which thy very chairs of the Apostles reside in their place, and where their authentic epistles are read aloud."

Eusebius tells us that in his time the Chair of St. James the Less was still to be seen in Jerusalem, and had been preserved by the Christians through all the disasters which overwhelmed the Holy City. We also

know that the Church of Alexandria preserved for long ages the chair of its first bishop, St. Mark. The Church of Rome naturally was very anxious to retain intact the Chair of the Prince of the Apostles, and in the catacombs they had a safe hiding place during the ages of persecution for this and other precious relics.

IRISH LITERATURE.

Writing to the American Catholic press Mr. M. J. Murphy, of New York city, a well known Irish scholar and writer, says:—

The lamentable dearth in our public libraries of works written on Irish subjects by persons competent to take up such material and do it justice, prompts me to offer a suggestion. Let us effect a national organization throughout the country that will demand of the public libraries that such works be placed upon their shelves, and then read them. In most cases where the public library is supported by a municipal fund or endowment, these books will be placed upon the shelves at the request of one or more citizens. Therefore, such an association as that suggested, is not handicapped by the necessity of raising any fund; organization is all that is necessary. Librarians usually complain that when some patriotic Irishman has a number of Irish works placed on the library catalogue, they remain untouched and unread; proving that such purchases are a useless expense. This is an evil that our association can prevent by furnishing readers for the books as soon as they are available.

While good, wholesome Irish fiction is always welcome, it should be the aim of the association to see that the major portion of the books thus placed is Celtic in spirit and comprises works on the arts, sciences and literature of ancient Ireland. These should be chosen very carefully by a committee of able Irish literati, chosen for their knowledge of such subjects as well as for general literary ability. It may be difficult to select a large committee of such men at first, but after a while they will readily be found and there is no doubt that all such men will heartily enter into the work and serve such a cause with all their hearts. The nucleus of such an organization could be formed in each town with five or ten people. Several small circles would, indeed, be more effective than one large one, as the facilities for meeting often would be better.

Summing up the foregoing, briefly, the objects of the association should be:

- 1.—To select at regular intervals a national committee or advisory board which shall select a certain number of works each year for the purposes of the organization.
- 2.—To meet once every month, at least, to discuss current Irish literature and receive reports from the advisory board, in reference to works on Irish subjects.
- 3.—To see that approved works are placed on the shelves of every public library.
- 4.—To have these works read when they are thus placed, each member pledging to read as many of them as feasible during the year, and then interesting as many acquaintances as possible outside of the association.
- 5.—To interest the newspapers of the country in Celtic, particularly Gaelic literature, so as to bring the publication of such matter prominently before the public.
- 6.—To encourage the production of all new works on important Irish subjects and give moral support to researches into Irish antiquities.
- 7.—To study the Irish element in American history and bring into prominence the part taken by the Irish race in the founding and maintenance of the American Republic.

For this apathy the Irish people, however, are not wholly to blame, as it is a product of English misrule over their native land. Dr. Sullivan, the erudite editor of O'Curry's "Lectures on the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish," in writing on this very subject says: "During the first part of the eighteenth century the possession of an Irish book made the owner a suspected person and was often the cause of his ruin. In some parts of the country the tradition of the danger incurred by having Irish manuscripts lived down to within my own memory; and I have seen Irish manuscripts which had been buried until the writing had almost faded, and the margins rotted away, to avoid the danger their discovery would entail at the visit of the local yeomanry."

The number of books required to furnish the public libraries of this country would make an edition of

sufficient size to amply repay any author for spending months on a work. The ancient manuscripts would be brought into English for the world to read, and reproductions made of the originals. Ireland's great epic poems would be popularized; and the revelations of her ancient arts and sciences would startle the world. Our ancient literature is a field that is yet unexplored, and the person who knows only the frothy tales of Lever, Carleton and others, as Irish literature, is ignorant of that wonderland of story and song which is alone worthy to be called Irish. All this splendid work is within the possibilities of such an organization as that suggested.

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