

As to Family's Origin They Are Long Both in Age and Interest.

"It may be generally noted," says Mr. Compton Reade, author of "The Smith Family," "as regards the great genius Smith, that the prime foundations of their opulence have been laid in some one of the forms of Protestant dissent. Upon this I make no comment, simply these pages attest the fact. These tradesmen Smiths, whose patient labor and willing self-denial have so largely assisted in the creation of a national reserve of wealth, have often been accused of serving Mammon, rather than God, while their phase of religion has been denounced as hypocritical. Consistent lives, philanthropic zeal, above all, the blessing which has attended them to the third and fourth generation, afford a rejoinder to any such calumnies." Unbiased evidence this, when one remembers that Mr. Reade himself is a Church of England rector.

It is curious, Mr. Reade continues, how the little letter "y" has proved a huge differentia. For, whereas, the "Smiths," as a rule, have been money-making, the "Smythes" have shown themselves chivalrous and aristocratic. While the Smiths were blundering, the Smythes suffered for Tory or Jacobite principles.

Apocryphal variations in the spelling of the great patronymic, Mr. Compton Reade propounds a theory which should prove of comfort to both branches of the family. He hotly combats the notion that the Smythes, Smythses and Smyths have assumed a variation of spelling to blend an aristocratic flavor to a homely name. "Nothing," he declares, "can be further from the truth. The original form was Smyth, just as the modern 'cider' is a corruption of the ancient 'cyder.' So far from the Smythes having Smythed themselves, I can discover hardly one notable instance of the change from 'y' to 'i.' But I can trace numberless instances of Elizabethan Smythes having become Victorian Smiths. The rocco spelling of the word Smith is apparently due to the ingeniousness of some mediaeval clerk who in writing 'Smyth' took upon himself to dot both points of the 'y,' thus producing 'Smith.'"

But what is the origin of this great family? The following couplet furnishes the answer:

Whence cometh Smith, he be knight or  
be he squire.

But from the Smith that forgeth at the  
fire?

Not that this is any disgrace. The name is old enough, at any rate, Professor Mahaffy has discovered that a man named Smith lived in the days of Ptolemy III, B. C. 227, and the occupation from which the name is derived was originally one of great honor. David was armourer to King Saul; Vulcan was a person of distinction in Olympus. In the days of Ther, when none but the mightiest could wield the hammer, he was a cynosure; in the heroic days of gallant little Wales he sat upon the right hand of the King.

But from his high estate he fell to become a mere mechanic in Norman times, only, however, to blossom into the gold-storing goldsmith of Queen Anne's days, from which trade sprang the great industry of banking. It was, indeed, a gentleman of the name of Smith, a banker of Nottingham, who was the founder of the present noble house of Carrington.

With the association of the names Smith and Carrington there is bound up a highly interesting romance. Briefly, it is this: A certain Sir Michael Carrington was standard-bearer to Richard I. A descendant of this same standard-bearer espoused the losing side in the latter stages of the Wars of the Roses and had to fly the country. He returned disguised as "Smyth" and, as the story goes, his descendants gradually reassuming the name of Carrington. Finally Charles I. created a Carrington viscountcy, but the house, however, came to a violent end.

Then in 1796 Mr. Pitt, in spite of the opposition of George III., succeeded in getting Mr. Smith, banker and member for Nottingham, raised to the peerage. Mr. Smith, a very honest and worthy gentleman, under the impression that he was a descendant of the Carrington who had been forced to disguise his aristocratic identity beneath the name of Smith, chose the name of Carrington—spelt with two "r's"—for his title. Later, this son, in perfect good faith, eliminated the second "r" in the name of the new title, and restored the ancient Carrington monuments in Ashby Folville Church, with the idea that they were those of his ancestors. This was a delusion, which Mr. Augustus Smith, M. P., of Trescow, in his "Stemmata Ferraria," rather rudely disposed of, nor does the present holder of the Carrington title—with the second "r"—restored—believe in the theory of the Nottingham banker.

With the assistance of pedigree writers, Mr. Reade sets to work to prove the doctrine of hereditary characteristics: "For the ranks of these descendants of primitive iron workers," he says, include scarcely a poet or an idealist, while in matters practical they stand pre-eminent.

Whatever we are, we are,  
And whatever we were, we are,  
And whatever we were, and whatever we were,  
That name shall we always be.

Certainly Mr. Reade's pedigrees and the list of celebrities which he gives at the end of his book contain the names of many well-known men of affairs, not to mention lawyers, sailors and soldiers. Charitable Smiths without number have proved the old proverb, "There is that scattered, but yet increased." From "Land's End to Berwick Bounds" in institutions in remote towns and obscure village testify to the good heart of Smith.

Her Hunting Mistake.  
Mabel—And, during the hunting trip, did you ever mistake the guide for a bear? Blanche (coolly)—No: but I did Harry Huggard once!—Melbourne Weekly Times.

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TITLES WITHOUT MONEY.

Owners of Patents of Nobility on the Wages of Workingmen—Some Very Striking Instances.

It is remarkable how many people prefer to work for a living rather than be endowed with a title and untold wealth, but there are quite a number of peers who have discarded vast fortunes in favor of £1 a week.

Several peers have displayed a liking for a seaman's life, and Lord George Drummond, who died in 1887, was one of these. He was heir to the earldom of Perth, but pining for adventure he renounced his claims and secured a berth as steward on a vessel bound for New York. He subsequently spent 23 years in roving about the high seas as a common sailor before the mast, till, seeking a change, he became a porter on the elevated railroad in New York at a wage of \$9 per week. But the hardships he had suffered undermined his health, and, becoming a confirmed invalid, he was supported until his death by Lady Drummond from her earnings as a seamstress.

The late Earl of Aberdeen also preferred a sailor's life to one of the most renowned titles in Scotland. When quite a young man he shipped as a common sailor and by his abilities rose until he became a certified mate, and afterward captain, of a merchant vessel which subsequently foundered at sea, carrying down its aristocratic skipper with it.

Likewise, the present Earl of Lovelace had an elder brother who favored the life of a Deal shipwright above that of a British peer, and who worked in a shipbuilding yard there on a salary of £2 a week until his death a few years ago.

It is not often that man prefers his position as a turnpike gatekeeper to an earldom, but the last Earl of Kent was one of these. When his predecessor died in 1855 he was a gatekeeper near Dudley, and although his claim to the title was recognized by law, much to the surprise of everybody he stoutly declined to accept it.

His reason for this strange refusal was that, being an old man with no heir, his wage of 30 shillings a week and a cottage was quite sufficient for his needs without being encumbered with an extensive estate. Accordingly, for some years the strange sight was witnessed of an earl gathering up the stray coppers passengers threw to him for opening the gate for them, with his salary and a ton of coal every winter, composed his sole means of subsistence. When he died he was buried in the vault of the Kent family with all the honor due to an earl.

For a prince to aspire to the life of a railway porter is distinctly unique, but Prince Chilkow, the Minister of Russian Railways, though possessed of untold wealth, preferred to work as a railway servant at Liverpool for many years in order to gain a thorough knowledge of all matters pertaining to the iron road.

He entered the locomotive works there on a salary of 18s. a week, and worked his way up until he ultimately became a guard, and then the stationmaster of a small station outside the city. The position he attained holds in his native land proves that the experience he thus gained has stood him in good stead.

Another prominent Russian who served in the same capacity is Count de Witte, for many years Minister of Finance.

Only one peer has wooed fame as a jockey, a distinction owned by the followed his romantic calling in pre-earl of Buchan, who for many years ference to his earldom; and the Marquis of Normanby, though possessed of 8,000 acres and a magnificent ancestral residence, elected to labor for 15 years as a curate on £160 a year, a vocation he not long ago abandoned in favor of teaching.

The Earl of Seafield waived his title in favor of hedging in New Zealand, and is at present the owner of a lucrative business in that country, while the Earl of Cameron is now a village doctor in Virginia.

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### SLATES VS. SCRIBBLING BOOKS.

A Racy Description of an Old Time Institution in Canada.

School children of the twentieth century may have the road to learning smoothed out for them. They may be handled psychologically, and not have their little memories strained with tasks beyond their capacity. But with all their advantages, we distrust a method that affords them, for they no longer have that instrument of instruction and fearful pleasure—the slate, writes H. F. G. in Toronto to Star.

Modern educationists have condemned the slate as a dirty, noisy, smelly institution, and have chucked it out ignominiously. They are for scribbling books, than which nothing stupider was ever invented. One of the favorite themes for anybody writing about the little red school-house used to be the "busy hum," and of that busy hum, the click of the pencil against the slate, and the scrunch of it when it came to a hard spot, were at least seventy-five per cent. The rest of it consisted of the whirring of the thought wheels and the rapid, under-the-breath calculations of the pupils who wanted to see if the ear agreed with the eye in the answer. The hum was a natural accompaniment of so much mental industry, and the teacher that dared to be annoyed by it was given short shrift by the trustees. As well might a boilermaker object to the sound of hammering rivets, or the factory boss to the jar of machinery. In those days, it was considered that every business had its small voice just as bees buzz, flies drone, crickets chirp, frogs croak, and mosquitoes shrill. But now it's "Go to the ant, thou sluggard. Don't make a row. Work like a nigger. Bottle up your steam." Even recess is an orderly, disciplined thing, with no joy in it. There is no distinguishing note of the schoolroom nowadays. If a bad boy disturbs the awful silence by dropping a pin, he is kept in after four.

All this came in with the scribbling book, which is cheap, clean, but uninspiring. It is subject to daily inspection, and as marks of erasure mean demerits for untidiness, the schoolboy is at once deprived of much entertainment that might reconcile him to his hard lot. If the teacher is a crank you can't worry him by making a pencil scream, and certainly, in the olden times, that delightful form of revenge kept many a boy in mind when he might have been playing hooky. And, then, what a handy medium the slate was for caricatures of the teacher, for doggerel rhymes, printed in large, bold letters that could be seen six seats back! What fun it was to raise a laugh that way, and then, with one lightning stroke, to expunge the offence when the master said, "Tommy, bring that here." And Tommy would hold up a blank tablet and a face shining with innocence. Ah, yes, the slate was indeed a fine thing for pictures and lampoons, and for the tender messages the boy would show chivalrously to his little sweetheart across the aisle! The scribbling book is no place for these stealthy pleasures because the schoolma'am can keep tabs on every line in it.

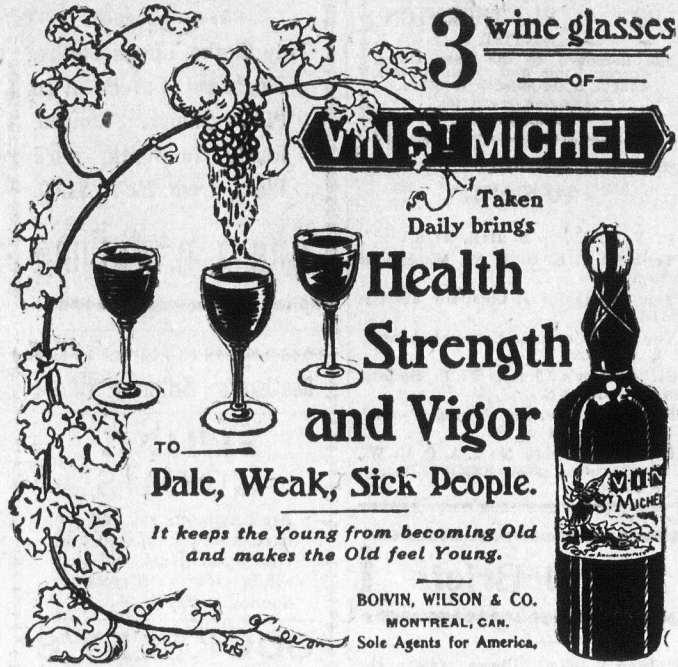
And with the slate went a lot of gear that a scribbling book knows nothing of. There was the sponge, for instance, neatly tied to the frame. And, best of all, the water bottle, where little girls had a chance to display the art feeling in the color and fragrance of the cleansing fluid. We look back twenty-five years and wonder at the splendid effects produced by soap, water, cologne, and indigo or cochineal shaken up and imprisoned in a common bottle. Some of it looked good enough to drink, and smelt good enough to eat. Of course there were dirty boys, even in that golden age, who preferred to use nature's weapons—the salivary glands and a coat-sleeve. But even that was an indication of character. It showed they didn't care how they got at a thing, and some of these dirty urchins have since become millionaires. We can't turn back the universe and have yesterday, but while the sun shines we give our voice for slates as against scribbling books.

### The Lost Sixteenth of a Second.

If one grain of sand on the shore of the ocean were lost and scientists were to spend years in trying to find it, they would be attempting a task resembling that to which leading astronomers of England and France are now devoting themselves. One-sixteenth of a second is missing, and no one can tell where it has gone. Between the sun's time as recorded at Greenwich and as understood at Paris there is that brief and seemingly unimportant discrepancy. No expense is being spared to trace the missing fraction. A special building has been erected at Paris, costly instruments installed, a corps of mathematicians engaged and a process that may take years to complete has been commenced. The discrepancy is more important than will appear to the lay mind. Longitude is calculated on the basis of Greenwich time. It determines the boundaries of many countries. A slight variation of time may change the nationality of thousands of people. The pursuit of the missing fraction of a second is therefore of worldwide importance. We shall all be much relieved when it has been found, for then not a grain of the sands of time will be missing. —Toronto Mail and Empire.

### The Smallest Visible Things.

Few persons would guess that the smallest things visible to the eye are the stars. Yet Dr. Edward Dwyer was no doubt correct in declaring such to be the case in his address before the chemical section of the British Association at Belfast. Great as many of the stars are in actual magnitude, their distance is so immense that their angular diameter becomes insensible, and they approach the condition of geometrical points. The minute disks that they appear to have are spurious, an effect of irradiation.



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