

AUCTION SALE ROMANCE

SMALL FORTUNES HAVE BEEN MADE.

Articles Knocked Down for a Song Which Proved to be Very Valuable.

"Of course I have met with a good many interesting experiences during my career as an auctioneer," relates Henry Stevens in the Strand Magazine, "but the most striking of them all occurred, I think, in connection with a great auk's egg."

Some years ago a young fellow rode over to an obscure furniture sale at the country village in the hope of securing a bargain to help in furnishing a home in view of his intended marriage. And a bargain he did get, though not of the kind he originally thought of.

"One of the lots put up for sale was a basket full of shells, eggs and other oddments which had attracted the attention of an old lady who happened to be present. Just as they were on the point of being knocked down to her the young man was struck with the appearance of two large eggs in the basket, and thinking he might as well have them as curiosities he started to bid, with the result that the lot was knocked down to him for \$9.

VALUABLE EGGS.

"Upon examining the eggs it occurred to him that he might be able to make a slight profit on their sale. He accordingly wrapped them up in a handkerchief and brought them home."

"As soon as I washed off the grime which covered them I discovered that they were eggs of no less a bird than the great auk, and as the result of their sale a few weeks later, I handed the astute young bargain hunter a check for \$2,000, which was sufficient to set him up in business."

"Another sale which I conducted there was an old picture so covered with dirt and grime that it was almost impossible to see what it was like. This was hung upon the wall in a prominent position, but did not apparently find favor in the eyes of any of the dealers who were present. No reserve price was placed upon this picture, which had been put into the sale by a local pawnbroker, to whom it had been pledged and not redeemed."

"In spite of every effort on the part of the auctioneer it was eventually knocked down to a young man who had looked into the sale quite casually in order to waste half an hour during which he had to wait for a train. Taking a great fancy to the frame, which was of oak,

BLACKENED WITH AGE,

he hazarded a bid of \$5, at which price it was knocked down to him without any competition."

"As he did not want the picture he asked the auctioneer whether he would mind trying to get a bid for it if he cut it out of the frame; and being answered in the affirmative, he took out his knife and neatly cut through the canvas all round the edge."

"Imagine the astonishment of himself and all present when hidden behind the canvas he discovered five bills for \$100 each. Evidently the picture had been used to conceal the savings of some previous owner who had died without disclosing the secret and whose hard won fortune thus came into the hands of a total stranger."

"I should quote as very interesting a sale at Rutland Gate, where there were only the remains of the furniture of a firm having been allowed to take what they chose to their rooms. It was accordingly after the nature of a rummage sale, but in one cupboard, which had been overlooked, were what the junior clerk described as

THREE SILVER CUPS.

The auctioneer was sitting in his office when a gentleman drove up in a hansom cab, anxious to speak about these cups, for which he offered no less than \$1,500."

"The auctioneer was so much surprised that he thought his visitor must have some reason for this high bid, and he wisely determined not to take the first offer he received."

"Oh, I don't think they will take that," he said, and with this answer the gentleman had to be content. An expert was called on to examine the so-called cups, and he discovered them to be in reality sixteenth century chalices for which he himself made an offer of \$2,100. The three cups were subsequently sold for \$6,750, but it was only by the slightest chance that they had not gone for a mere song."

"I shall never forget an incident which occurred in connection with the sale of some valuable shells. The bidding for one large shell in particular was much more brisk than I had anticipated, but the reason for this became apparent when at last it was knocked down to a gentleman in a very excited condition, who directly it was handed to him, flung it upon the ground and trampled it to atoms, at the same

time shouting out in a loud voice that now that one was destroyed he possessed the only specimen in the world."

HOW THEY WORKED IN JAPAN

Before the Factory System Was Adopted.

When Japan was opened to trade, its manufactures were all such as the world itself indicates—hand-made. This was favorable to artistic accomplishment, and to a degree it accounts for the perfection of Japanese work before the factory system was adopted. Mr. Lewis Wingfield, in his "Wanderings of a Globe-Trotter," tells how the work used to be carried on in the homes of the people. The account will remind some readers of what domestic life was here in earlier days.

"Families of artificers work together at home on a common object, which, when completed, will find its way to the storeroom of the middleman. But it is more amusing and instructive to penetrate into the remote homes of the work-people than to sit sipping the tea of the shopkeeper. It is interesting to watch the progress of the work, to mark how happily and sociably each family, squatting in a circle on the floor, performs its labor."

"A young man is busily and deftly fashioning wooden trays; a little boy at his elbow rubs them smooth with sandpaper. Two daughters, chatting and laughing merrily, are laying a foundation layer of a glutinous substance which shall render the wood unporous and prepare it for the many processes that end in gold lacquer. The wife with skillful fingers draws designs, the husband inlays upon them pieces of mother-of-pearl or ivory; the ancient grandfather critically frowns, and bestows sage counsel begot of long experience."

"Thus each article passes from hand to hand, an object of pride to all, since every member of the family is responsible for some part of its successes. A common interest and constant intercourse bind them together."

"I was anxious, I see, to possess myself of a metal dish curiously wrought, but I demurred somewhat at the price."

"Remember," observed the father of the family, with a smile, "that this dish occupied all of us whom you see sitting here for a period of eight months. Rent and clothes, the modest sustenance of myself and wife and of these my dear children, are represented by that work of art. If you consider the matter in this light, you will not find that the dish is dear."

AN ARISTOCRATIC BEGGAR.

Mexican Mendicant Would Not Accept Less Than Ten Cents.

Even a beggar may have pride—at least in Mexico. At a railroad station in that country, says Mr. W. E. Carson in his book, "Mexico," he noticed, standing a little removed from the motley throng of mendicants, a melancholy-looking Mexican, wearing a rather battered brown felt sombrero, his limbs encased in skin-tight trousers of thin gray cloth, adorned with numerous patches. Over his shoulders was a bright red blanket. He was strutting away at an old-fashioned mandolin and singing some mournful Spanish song.

Catching sight of me, he stopped playing and lifted his sombrero. I went out on the car platform and handed him five cents. To my astonishment, he politely declined my humble offering.

"Senor," said he, in choice Spanish, with some emotion, "you must pardon me for being unable to accept your gift, but I am a ten-cent beggar, senor, and never, never accept a smaller gratuity."

Drawing himself up with an air of pride, he continued, "I shall be honored to sing for your entertainment a song of old Spain or one of our noble Mexican airs, but always for a fee of ten cents, never for less, for I am a ten-cent beggar, senor, poor as I am."

It was impossible to resist this touching protest, so with an apology I handed the courtly vagrant his proper fee, which he acknowledged with "a thousand thanks" and a graceful bow.

At the other end of the car the mob of beggars were scrambling for copper coins thrown to them by my fellow passengers. The melancholy minstrel glanced at them, shrugged his shoulders, and waved his hand deprecatingly.

"Ah, senor," he observed, "those poor people! They have to work hard to earn their bread; good folk, worthy folk, well deserving of your charity; but they give you a very bad impression of Mexico. Pray, senor, do not class them with poor musician like myself."

With these words he commenced twanging his discordant instrument again, and once more burst into a song so dismal that it seemed to make the gloomy weather even more depressing.

The King has power to dissolve Parliament even before it has attempted any business.

IN MERRY OLD ENGLAND

NEWS BY MAIL ABOUT JOHN BULL AND HIS PEOPLE.

Occurrences in the Land That Reigns Supreme in the Commercial World.

A cowman named Robert Collard was killed at Worthing by the kick of a cow.

Of the 381 species of birds found in Great Britain only 140 are residents of England all the year round.

The Rev. Conrad Noel, the Socialist speaker and author, has accepted Lady Warwick's offer of the living of Thaxted.

The strike of winders at Stalybridge has been mutually settled; the operatives accepting a reduction of 6 per cent.

Great Britain has taken possession of Heard's Island, in the South Indian Ocean, discovered by Capt. Heard in 1853.

A Tibbury woman informed the local magistrates that when her husband struck her she sent for the police, the doctor, and the vicar.

Lying in the middle of a bush in a road at Woodhall Spa, Lincs, Mr. Sidney Steele found a live baby boy about seven months old.

A deputation from the Grimsey Chamber of Commerce is to wait on the Admiralty to urge the claims of the port as a site for a naval base.

It was stated at a meeting of the Chichester Guardians that a man who was removed to the workhouse to die had not been washed for twenty years.

The condition of Mr. Raitton and Miss Curtis, the Chelsea couple who were blown over Dover cliffs and sustained extensive injuries, is still very grave.

The Lord Mayor of London presided at the opening of a new Salvation Army home which has been erected in Great Peter street, Westminster, at a cost of \$21,500.

Two officers of the Italian navy left Liverpool for Quebec the other day in the Allan liner Virginia, with the object of studying the vessel's turbine engines.

Ancient Peruvian pottery valued at about \$25,000 has been presented by Mr. Henry Van den Bergh to the British Museum through the National Art Collections Fund.

Further union relief paid to the Northumberland strikers brings the total amount expended by the Miners' Association since the passing of the Dear Coal Act to nearly \$40,000.

The revival in the shipbuilding, marine engineering, and allied industries at Sunderland has led to a decision to close the test labor yard opened by the Guardians to relieve distress.

The Duchess of Norfolk has presented a bell, weighing 53 cwt., for the St. Edward's tower of Westminster Cathedral. The bell will be solemnly blessed in a few weeks' time.

FRENCH DOGS OF WAR.

Value as Carriers to be Tested at Coming Army Manoeuvres.

Dogs of war will be employed on a large scale for the first time in recent history in the coming French army manoeuvres, and military men are interested in the question whether the experiments will meet with sufficient success to warrant the enlistment of army dogs as a regular branch of military equipment.

The duties of the army dogs will be chiefly to carry ammunition and provisions to the troops on the firing line, to convey despatches to outposts and to seek out wounded soldiers who might otherwise escape the attention of the medical corps.

Military writers recall the fact that war dogs were used in very remote times. The chronicles of Pliny and Plutarch tell of dogs used by King Agesilaus in Greece more than three centuries before Christ, and Cambyses the Persian also employed them in his Egyptian campaign. The Cimbrians, and Teutons, possessed trained dogs whose ferocity was said to be dreaded by the Roman invaders.

In the Middle Ages fighting dogs were spiked coats of mail armor, and are said to have taken no mean part in the battles of Granson and Murten between the Burgundians and the Swiss in 1476. They were especially effective in attacking horsemen. Charles Quint had a pack of 4,000 fighting dogs which served in his wars in France.

More recently, in the Mexican campaign, the French forces found trained dogs useful in scouting expeditions, and the last Russo-Turkish war trained dogs accompanied the Czar's forces. The present French experiment will put the dogs to a more severe test than before, but in these days of machine guns it is obvious that they can only serve in the minor capacity of despatch carriers and for watching purposes.

BABY OPIUM EATERS.

Accusation Made Against Mothers and Nurses in England.

It is charged that many English babies are unconscious opium eaters. The habit of giving drugs to infants of the well to do class as well as to the children of the poor is declared to be a menace to the national health of Great Britain.

Writing in the Contemporary Review, Mrs. Campbell Dabney says that although it is usually the very poor who are spoken of as needing lessons in the care of children the ignorant of the proper diet for babies which exists among the rich and middle classes is incredible. Then after charging well to do mothers with the responsibility of allowing their children to be drugged with sedatives administered by ignorant or lazy nurses she goes on: "If once you know the traces of opium you may take a walk in Kensington Gardens and see the white writing upon a hundred little white faces."

As this article caused something of a stir the London Daily Mirror sent a reporter to interview a physician on the subject. The doctor heartily approved the views of Mrs. Dabney.

"In the form of opium, chloral or bromide," he said, "the child of well-to-do parents gets through quite a large amount of the most potent drugs in its first few months of life nowadays, just as poorer children get gin and brandy."

"There are exceptions of course, but in the vast majority of cases both drugs and alcohol are administered for precisely the same purpose—to stop a child crying at night."

"To save herself the trouble of correcting the real cause of a child's tears (and there always is a real cause) a certain type of nurse assumes that it cries for the joy of keeping her awake and proceeds to rub opium under its fingers nails."

"The infant sucks its fingers and well it sleeps. That is all the nurse's concern, and the fact that six months of this treatment must inevitably result in making the victim nervous, listless, wild eyed and neurotic for the rest of its life does not seem to worry her."

"I would warn every mother against the nurse in whose charge baby never cries and always sleeps."

FAMOUS AS FISH EATERS.

Greeks and Romans Fond of Sea Food.

Many famous persons, both in modern and ancient times have been known as devoted fish eaters.

Cicero, Queen of Syria, was so fond of fish that she ordered all caught within the limits of her kingdom to be brought to her in order that she might be continually supplied with the choicest quality. Philoxenus of Cythera on learning from his physician that he must die of indigestion from having eaten excessively of a delicious fish said: "Be it so, but before I go allow me to finish what remains."

Athens was a city of fish eaters and its cooks were famous for their knowledge of cooking fish. The wise writers of the day spent much time in recording recipes for preserving fish in salt, oil or herbs.

There was a law in the city that forbade a fish-monger to sit down until he had disposed of all his stock on the ground that a standing position made him more submissive and inclined to sell at a reasonable price.

The Romans inherited from the Greeks their love for fish. Her soldiers were fed on fish, her generals ate fish, her Senators were epicures in fish and her Emperors recognized no dish more desirable than fish.

Lucullus caused a canal to be cut through a mountain near Naples to bring up the sea and his fishes to the centre of the gardens of his sumptuous villa. The love of fish in those days was a mania. The red mullet was prized beyond all food. A sauce called garum, made from the entrails and blood of mackerel and other fishes, brought high prices, and great prizes were offered the man who could make a similar sauce out of the liver of the red mullet.

In more modern times King Louis XIV. was so fond of fish he appointed six fish-mongers to supply his table. Francis I. had twenty-two and Henry the Great twenty-four.

Under the reign of Louis XIV. fish eating became a popo French court as it had been in Rome. A story is told of a fish failed to arrive at the coast in the night where being the teacher was to the Tommy stimping illustrated by the artist's heart of St. Barter Cap...

Send poultry you may out Commercial Hotel offices.

GROPS AND THE CLIMATE

CHANGES DUE TO OTHER THAN CLIMATIC CAUSES.

Investigations Show That One Does Not Depend Upon the Other.

That considerable changes in climate during past ages are revealed by the abandonment of cities or of whole regions, once inhabited, and by alterations in cultivated plants over large districts, has long been a widespread popular belief. If we are to credit recent investigations, however, there is really no reason for thinking this to have been the case. Such changes have uniformly been due to other than climatic causes. Says a writer in Cosmos, Paris:

"Explorations in Central Asia have revealed to travelers once flourishing villages now ruined and abandoned. Mr. A. Bouquien shows in 'Ciel et Terre,' by historic evidence and by the scientific observations of recent centuries, that the abandonment of these regions by man is not due to such meteorological variations as the general cooling of the climate or a progressive drying-up of the globe. His investigation extends to other countries than Asia. Here are some of his remarks concerning Europe and the neighboring regions:

"A sensible variation of the temperature and a diminution of precipitation—rain or snow—would bring about a marked and continuing retreat of the glaciers. Now facts collected during more than two thousand years support this."

NO SUCH HYPOTHESIS.

Helm has proved that in the Middle Ages the Alpine glaciers occupied a much smaller area than during the second half of the nineteenth century, during which they have been retreating."

It has long been asserted, the writer goes on to say, that the west coast of Greenland has not always been uninhabitable, owing to a former more favorable climate, whence the name given to the country. But the historical investigations of Rink and Von Maurer have established the fact that the disappearance of the settlements founded by the Norsemen was due wholly to the introduction of a contagious disease and to an unfavorable governmental policy on the part of Norway, which provoked the hostility and the attacks of the Eskimos. Similarly false statements have been made regarding Iceland. Moreover:

"Wheat was formerly much more cultivated in the north of the British Isles than at present, but simply because this crop was then more remunerative. It lessened when the importation of foreign grains lowered the price. Nevertheless, it has required a struggle to enforce belief in this elementary truth; the belief in a change of climate or of weather has long been much stronger than the evidence. The same is true in Belgium and other countries, where the crops have changed almost entirely under the influence of

ECONOMIC LAWS, of better management of the soil, or of a more intelligent selection of products to be cultivated."

"In the Middle Ages, and up to the fifteenth century, the vine was cultivated in Bavaria and in the other regions of Germany, as in Belgium; it has almost entirely disappeared in our own day. Climate has nothing whatever to do with the change. The wine produced was generally of mediocre quality, and taste having improved, consumers preferred imported wines or the good beer that brewers had learned to make."

"In Belgium there are still vineyards. Many persons doubtless do not know that the vine is still cultivated at the Abbeys of Averbode and Tongerlo where the wine as obtained is used in the celebration of the mass."

"The investigations of Dufour have also established that, contrary to the general belief, the olive has been raised in Switzerland, although they grow only in gardens and there are still only a few orchards, which would die if not carefully cultivated. In regard to all other cultivated plants, the situation has not varied.—The Literary Digest.

Half summer com- (Gep) whether sick or nervous, take Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People.

EXIT THE JAUNTING CAR.

Invasion of Taxicabs Threatens Its Existence.

The Irish jaunting car, the delight of tourists, threatens to become extinct as far as Dublin is concerned. The "Harper's Weekly" has to en-

FROM BONNIE SCOTLAND

NOTES OF INTEREST FROM HER BANKS AND BRES.

What Is Gaining in the Highlands and Lowlands of Auld Scotia.

In Paisley day nursery the children were looked after last year. Extending the Paisley reservoir at Rowbank will cost \$25,000.

A young couple were married in a cage containing millions in Glasgow recently.

The consumption of apples in Saltcoats during the past year decreased by 2,000 gallons.

An outbreak of anæmia has occurred at the farm of Bogdun in the parish of Rathlaw.

Sannockburn feels that it has the dignity of a town, and numbering of houses has been started.

While fishing in the Lassic the other day, Mr. George Walker, 45, Glasgow, landed a brown trout of 4 1/2 lbs.

Dundee tramway use this year valued by the assessor at near \$2,700 for assessment purposes.

The (old) Edinburgh Company, Dundee, have booked an order for a steamer of 500 tons for foreign owners.

Weighing 35 lbs., the largest salmon for this season, has been caught by Tweed net fishers in the Northham district.

A Spokenet crew is adding to the dear golf ball difficulty by picking up balls from the course and dropping them over a lands cliff. Greenock burgh police passed their annual inspection on the 14th ult. The population is 72,000 which gives an average of 663 for each of us.

A Keith postman, who has retired, in course of his duties, walked about 200,000 miles, or more than eight times the circumference of the globe.

The output of the Great shipbuilding yards during April totalled twenty vessels and 6,000 tons, which is the largest tonnage recorded since July, 1907.

The Dumfries Town Council will confer the freedom of the burgh upon Sir James Crisp, C.B., in recognition of his eminent services to his native town.

The War Office propose to proceed with the erection of buildings for militia stores on their land at Harnahfield, and retain the headquarters in Dumfries.

At Dumfries the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Northern Society has been formed, with Mr. C. S. Flynn, the procurator-fiscal of the county, as chairman.

The marble statue of General Lord Saltoun, of Waterloo, fame, at Fraserburgh Town House for nearly 50 years, is to be removed, and a replica substituted.

Boring operations in the Island of Bressay have been commenced by a firm from the south of Scotland.

The islands of Bressay and Rous contain iron and coal. A new bridge will connect the northern district of Paisley, meantime separated by the river Cart, and will be of great advantage to the inhabitants of those localities.

A rare event—a funeral on a Loch Lomond Island—took place recently when the remains of the only son of Mr. D. McLarnie, yachtman, were interred in Auch Gallach, better known as the "Burying Isle."

In one of the largest shipbuilding yards in Port Glasgow the working hours have been re-arranged for the summer. The men start at 6 a.m. and knock off at 3.15 p.m. On Saturdays the closing hour is twelve noon.

The cosmopolitan nature of the classes at the Glasgow University is shown by some of the names of successful students, Sheikh Saïch Ahmad, Mohammed Ahmed, Mostafa B. Nossat, Shok Lee Wang, Chetai Yu and Chen Tank Shen.

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