

LAWS OF WARS.

The Code Now in Use Among All the Civilized Nations.

The "laws of war" as at present formulated by the civilized nations forbid the use of poison against an enemy; murder by treachery, as, for example, assuming the uniform or displaying the flag of a foe; the murder of those who have surrendered, whether upon conditions or at discretion; declarations that no quarter will be given to an enemy; the use of such arms or projectiles as will cause unnecessary pain or suffering to an enemy; the abuse of a flag of truce to gain information concerning an enemy's positions; all unnecessary destruction of property, whether public or private.

They also declare that only fortified places shall be besieged; open cities or villages not to be subject to siege or bombardment; that public buildings of whatever character, whether belonging to church or state, shall be spared; that plundering by private soldiers or their officers shall be considered inadmissible; that prisoners shall be treated with common humanity; that the personal effects and private property of prisoners, except their arms and ammunition, shall be respected; that the population of an enemy's country shall be considered exempt from participation in the war, unless by hostile acts they provoke the ill will of the enemy.

Personal and family honor and the religious convictions of an invaded people must be respected by the invaders and all pillage by regular troops or their followers strictly forbidden.—New York Herald.

KEEPING TAP ON THE CROPS

The Way the Agricultural Department Gets Its Information.

The details of the comprehensive system employed by the department of agriculture in gathering the crop information from all over the country are interesting. There are 30,000 township correspondents scattered all over the Union, whose duty it is to go carefully over the territory and submit each month concrete information as to the condition of all kinds of crops. In addition to this branch, 3,000 "county correspondents" send in separate reports from those of the township men. A state agent makes a further report direct from his agents, and an organization in direct communication with the department, comprising seventeen traveling "field agents," go about the country and make separate reports for groups of states. Special cotton correspondents are also employed to furnish accurate information concerning the cotton yield. Five different reports are sent to Washington each month by five different sets of correspondents. This safeguards the government crop reports for accuracy in local crop reports and keeps the great crop account and cost estimates for the millions of American farmers. These reports are sent to the agricultural department. Officials of the bureau of statistics and a board go over all the five reports from five distinct groups of correspondents, and from all the figures a crop report estimate is distributed to 70,000 post-offices throughout the country every month.—National Magazine.

The Electric Fan.

Back in the early eighties Dr. S. S. Wheeler, an electrical engineer of New York, was experimenting with a small electric motor. In the course of his experiments the doctor conceived the idea that steamboats might be run with electricity if the propellers could be directly connected to high speed electric motors, doing away with all the gears then in use in steam propulsion. With this idea in mind he had a small screw propeller constructed and fastened it to the armature shaft of his small motor. To his surprise the experiment resulted in a fine breeze of cooling air which more than delighted the experimenter, for the day was decidedly hot. It is needless to add that the experiments with screw propellers ended right there, and the engineer took up the study of the electric fan, with the result that he soon perfected the device until it was a commercial success.

Bonnyclabber.

New drinks have sometimes a glorious and brief popularity. Lord Stratford, writing to Lord Cottington in 1835, extols "bonnyclabber," which he says "is the bravest, freshest drink you ever tasted. Your Spanish don would, on the beats of Madrid, hang his nose and shake his beard an hour over every sop he took of it and take it to be the drink of the gods all the while." No one, however, seems to know the exact composition of the seductive "bonnyclabber," although from an allusion to it by Ben Jonson it would seem to have been a mixture of beer and buttermilk.—London Chronicle.

When you make one mistake don't make another by trying to lie out of it.

The Fateful Message.

Hubby—Didn't I telegraph you not to bring your mother with you? Wifey—I could not help it, Frank. She insisted on coming after she'd read your telegram.

Genuine benevolence is not stationary, but peripatetic. It goes about doing good.—Nevins.

THEY EAT NO BREAD.

Places Where the Poorer People Have to Use Substitutes.

There are regions wherein the poorer classes or peasantry eat little or no bread. Baked loaves of bread are practically unknown in many parts of southern Austria and Italy and throughout the agricultural districts of Roumania.

It is said that in the village of the Obersteiermark, not far from Vienna, bread is never seen, the staple food being sturz, a kind of porridge made from ground beech nuts, taken at breakfast with fresh or curdled milk, at dinner with broth or fried lard and with milk again for supper. This dish is also known as haiden and takes the place of bread not only in the Austrian district named, but in Carinthia and in many parts of the Tyrol.

In northern Italy the peasants affect a substitute for bread called polenta, a porridge made of boiled grain. Polenta is not, however, allowed to "granulate," like Scotch porridge or like the Austrian sturz, but is boiled into a solid pudding, which is cut up and portioned out with a string. It is eaten cold as often as it is hot and is in every sense the Italian's daily bread.

A variation of polenta called mamaliga is said to be the favorite food of the poorer classes in Roumania. Mamaliga is like polenta in that it is made of boiled grain, but it is unlike the latter in one important respect—the grains are not allowed to settle into a solid mass, but are kept distinct, after the fashion of oatmeal porridge.—New York Herald.

COMPRESSED ICE.

Sinks in Water and Crumbles into Powder When Warmed.

All know that ordinary ice will float. This relative lightness of ice with respect to water is due to expansion of the water at the moment of freezing. If water is frozen under immense pressure it seems that this expansion is prevented and ice heavier than water is produced.

G. Tamman has prepared this modification, which he calls ice III, as follows: He compressed water to 3,000 kilograms (6,614 pounds) and cooled it in solid carbon dioxide snow and finally in liquid air. Under these conditions a colorless, transparent ice is formed. It is much denser than ordinary ice and heavier than water; consequently it sinks when placed in water. Ice III is very unstable, and on slight warming it swells out and breaks up into a dense white powder. The volume of the resulting powder is apparently four to eight times that of the original ice. This powder formed by the breaking up of the dense form is nothing more than ordinary ice in the form of fine crystals, which, of course, on further warming melt at zero degrees centigrade.

Experiments on Ice III show that it is impossible to obtain it by separation from water at atmospheric pressure and then suddenly cooling. There would never be a possibility of this unstable form of solid water being formed in nature.—New York Tribune.

A Prosaic Interpretation.

Professor Brander Matthews of Columbia in one of his brilliant addresses on the drama said of an unimaginative and prosaic dramatist: "He it was, I am sure, who in his youth on being asked in examination what Shakespeare meant by the phrase 'sermons in stones' wrote in reply: "'When passing by a tombstone you may learn the name and the dates of birth and death of the departed one and also from the inscription a valuable moral lesson from his or her life. Walking along a road you may see from the milestones the number of miles to the nearest towns and thus acquire geographical information. Heaps of stones by the roadside indicate that repairs are to take place and so indicate a lesson in neatness.'"—Detroit Free Press.

An Author's Insight.

There is no surer mark of genius than the intuitive insight into characters and social conditions of which the author has no personal experience. "What does Ben know of dukes?" asked homely old Isaac Disraeli when he heard the title of his son's latest novel. Trollope wrote imitatively of bishops and deans when he had never been in a cathedral close in his life. Young Disraeli wrote so well about the great ones of the earth whom he had never seen that the critics busied themselves in finding "keys" to "Vivian Grey" and "The Young Duke."—London Saturday Review.

A Touch of Family Life.

When the country youth proposed to the city girl he received the conventional assurance that she would be his sister. It happened that this youth had sisters at home and knew exactly his privileges. So he kissed her. At this juncture she availed herself of the sisterly right to call out to father that brother was teasing her. Father responded in good, muscular earnest. Then the new brother and sister relation was dissolved by mutual consent.—Judge.

Only That.

"I don't know whether I ought to recognize him here in the city or not. Our acquaintance at the seashore was very slight." "You promised to marry him, didn't you?" "Yes, but that was all."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

The only failure a man ought to fear is failure in cleaving to the purpose he sees to be best.—George Elliot.

BUSINESS LETTERS.

Write to a Man Just as You Would Talk to Him at Your Desk.

Business letter writing is no longer merely "correspondence," but "literature," and the correspondent who formerly wasted his precious breath on such inanities as "Yours received and contents duly noted" is now relegated to the "old school" class, and unless he is willing to adopt the new rules of letter writing he is likely to change not only his position, but find it necessary to change his vocation as well.

The up-to-date business man does not waste time indulging in the preliminaries of "I beg to acknowledge receipt" or "In reply would say," but goes straight to the subject at issue firmly, without frills, even eliminating the time worn advice, "Awaiting your early reply," and closing without the absurdity of "Bidding to remain."

"Write to a man exactly as you would talk to him if he were sitting at your desk," is the maxim of one of the best authorities on letter writing in Chicago. By eliminating useless phrases having no bearing on the subject the business man not only saves his own time in dictating, but that of his stenographer in transcribing the notes. By the old method of letter writing the opening and closing of letters contained almost five lines of useless "form" matter which would average on 100 letters just 500 lines of superfluous effort.—Chicago Tribune.

THE CRESCENT.

Legend of Its Adoption as an Emblem by the Turks.

The crescent has been known since time out of memory. In ancient mythology it decorated the forehead of Diana and of Astarte, the Syrian Venus. In the days of Rome's greatest glory the ladies wore it as an ornament in their hair.

Since the foundation of Constantinople, the ancient Byzantium, it has been the emblem of the city and as such adorns its walls and public buildings, besides being stamped on its coins and postage. The legend which accounts for its universal adoption in Turkey, and Constantinople in particular, is as follows:

Philip of Macedon laid siege to the city in the year 340 B. C. He chose a night of unusual darkness for the proposed assault, but was followed by the moon suddenly breaking from behind a cloud. In commemoration of this providential deliverance the crescent was adopted as the symbol of the city. The Mohammedan sultans were slow to assume this emblem until some one mentioned that it was the symbol of increasing greatness, power changing as rapidly as the phases of the moon.—Westminster Gazette.

Federal Homestead Laws.

The federal homestead laws begin with the act of 1862, now a part of the United States revised statutes. Their policy is to give portions of the public lands to those who will settle, cultivate and make permanent homes upon them. Any person who is the head of a family or who is twenty-one years of age and is a citizen of the United States or who has filed his declaration of intention to become such may acquire a tract of unappropriated public land, not exceeding 160 acres, on condition of settlement, cultivation and continuous occupancy as a home by him for the period of five years and the payment of certain moderate fees. It is expressly declared that no lands acquired under this statute shall in any event become liable to any debt contracted prior to the issuing of the patent therefor by the government to the settler.—New York American.

Cheap Family History.

Even in political defeat there are compensations. A Washington heights man who aspired to office tells of one that he discovered.

"I had to pay you a pile of money to run, didn't it?" a friend asked. "About \$1,600, but still I came out \$400 ahead."

"How?" said the friend. "On genealogical research. My wife has a society in her bonnet and had about an oed to pay a man \$2,000 to look up my family history, but when I became a candidate my opponents did that for me and saved us the money."—New York Times.

Eight Lions.

There are eight lions known the world over—the lion of St. Mark's in Venice, the four lions at the base of the Nelson monument in Trafalgar square, the lion of Waterloo, the lion of Lucerne and the lion of Chaeronea. Ruskin in his "Stones of Venice" said that the lion of St. Mark's was the one lion he had ever been able to reproduce. The best of bronze has the distinction also of wearing a pair of wings.—London Graphic.

Why He Left.

Long—Why did you leave the place where you formerly boarded? Short—Because the landlady had too much curiosity.

Long—In what direction? Short—Oh, she was continuously asking me when I was going to pay my board bill.—Chicago News.

The Next Question.

"Dora's invited to a swell party," said the mother. "How much will the gown cost?" asked the father, who knew what was coming.—Detroit Free Press.

Not a Freshman.

Caller—I didn't know your son was at college. Is this his freshman year? Mrs. Bunderby—Oh, no, indeed! He's a sycamore.—Boston Transcript.

Saved by Her Voice.

When traveling to Paris with some other ladies on one occasion Mme. Gris had a thrilling adventure. At a small wayside station a man entered the carriage, and it soon became evident from his threatening gestures and eccentric behavior that he was a dangerous lunatic. Though her companions were panic stricken, Mme. Gris retained complete presence of mind and with the utmost composure began to sing. At once the maniac was quiet. His whole attention was riveted on that magnificent voice, and he remained the most appreciative of listeners until the train reached the next station, where he was secured. It transpired subsequently that he was a maniac with homicidal tendencies who had escaped from an asylum.

Well Settled.

Riggs—Did your wife's father settle anything on you when you married his daughter? Briggs—You bet he did. He settled himself on us, and we can't get rid of him.—Boston Transcript.

Fashion's Whirl.

"How long do we stay at Jupiter Junction, John?" "Twenty minutes, my dear. You won't need over two gowns."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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