The Eisteddfod: Its Origin and Etymological Meaning ...

The Robert Morris Eisteddfod, Frothingham, May 11, 1897.

Morris lodge, a grand elsteddfod will be held at the Frothingham next Tues-

The elsteddfod is one of the most

form, from the Welsh only,
As early as the time of the tyrant
Dionysius of Syracuse, great assemblies of international contestants met to vie with one another in public sports and contests. At times they were exalted in nature, and of a distinctively literary character, It was one of the redeciding traits, if he had any, of that strange monarch, that he loved to excel in literature,

The Stuarts of England devoted much time to literary attainments, (udeed there have been many instances of lit erary monardis, and many princes have given their aid and encouragement to the eisteddfods held in the once proud Celtic kingdom. The fiterary festivals in which monarchs have participated in the contests have been frequent; and, either the Weish nation has been the progenitor of the exalted custom, or it may have been simply imitator of the ancient game and liter ary contests of primitive times. However this may be it has survived the ravages of time, the rise and fall of nations, the disintegrating force of revclutions, and has been a nucleus around which have gathered the morally good, the intellectually great, and the religiously devous of the sons and daughters of Gwalia and others.

Time has rather brightened the ancient and holy custom of the fathers, and Tuesday next in the metropolis of the anthracite coal regions of Pennsylvania, once the beautiful home of the red man, the Welsh nation-Damascus of the Plains is to crystalize the custom with a celebration full of ancient and aesthetic accomplishments It has required labor and expenditure of money to keep alive this most ennobling national institution.

ETYMOLOGICAL MEANING.

The etymological meaning of the word elsteddfod is 'a sitting,' a sion," a "synod," a "convention;" and the more modern significant definition "a literary and musical festival." The word, so difficult to most persons of pronunciation, is a compound word. composed of two words, "eistedd," to sit, and "fed," to be; which rendered In the compound meaning means "a sitting to be." Its primitive meaning was a sitting or synod composed of bards and minstrels.

The so-called Gorsedd of the Bards is usually regarded as one of the relica of the Druldic period, and is mentioned in the Weish Triads as the highest assembly of the lele of Britain. This is a strange ceremony, yet not more so than what may be seen within the THE CYMRIC LANGUAGE LIVES. gan Stone" (Maen Llog), the arch Drugd stands. Twelve stones and twelve bards at stations in a circle first chant the Gorsedd prayer, which is feebly expressed in the English as fol-

And in protection, strength; And in strength, understanding; And in understanding, knowledge; And in knowledge, knowledge of the just: And in knowledge of the just, the love of

And in that love, the love of all existence And in the love of all existence, the love

God and all Goodness,"

SACRED CIRCLE. There is a sacredness about it that is ec-ordinate with the religious pathos of the Welsh life and habits. The ritual is completed in the hour devoted to this mystic rife, and then the "Sacred Circle" is broken.

This language, that has surprised linguists, and served to connect the remote ages to this, by its strange construction, has, unlike its immediate sis ter tongue, survived in its primitive purity. It is the language of song and poetry; and the institutions of the Welsh will survive so long as their wonderful speech exists.

The institutions of any nation ar known much in traditions, more or less correct; and quite the greater weight of good things come from the remote East. Then come chronicles more certuin, yet fallible,

Tradition gives the Welsh nation four great elsteddfods; one in the sixth century, one in the seventh century, one in the ninth century and one in the eleventh century. It is quite certain that they were more frequent than tradition has recorded, else time must have erused them forever, as they could not have survived two conturies apart. The eisteddfod was given Its Welsh characteristics and name from the assemblages of bards for competition in national minstrelsy. Synods or convenings of bards were known to the Romans 200 years B. C., by which name the Gauls and other Celtic people designated their minstrels. Prior to the year 1284 A. D., in the reign of Edward it was the custom for the Welsh Princes to appoint the judges, or adjudicators of the national eisteddfods, thus proving the great Interest taken by the national rulers in the festival. Subsequently to the reign of the first Edward, eisteddfods were repeatedly held under royal commission down to the reign of Elizabeth, which celebra: ed monarch contributed largely to the great festival, by giving her presence and patronage at the great National festival at Caerwys, Wales, in A. D.

Once in the reign of Henry IV, a re striction was placed upon this wholesome amusement. This is the only time in recorded history wherein a ruler has ventured to molest this pure Celtie institution. It was, perhaps, the result of a condition of unrest-the year 1403. But there could be no lasting prejudice, and in due time the most jealous monarch saw that nothing but good could come of this happy assem-

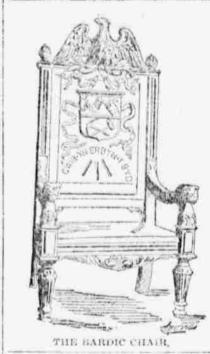
FIRST HELD IN 1166, A. D.

Popular opinion has encouraged the eisteddfod. Authentic history gives its origin in the year 1166 A. D., when a convention was held in Cardigan cas-This event was held under the worthy of the attention of the chron-

It is difficult to tell when and where

Through the efforts of the Robert | years and more. Its aims have been one of the most prominent young | Scranton. When living in Aberdare he elevating, and its purposes good,

ation from a more remote nation than the Celtic Cymri-Greece, Rome or Syracuse, possibly, but in its present the Central Wales bardic elsteddfod



motte, is a sample of linguistic perfection and combined devotional concep-

The purpose, largely, of the elsteddfods in the United States, and other countries foreign to Wales, has been to preserve a perfect mother tongue, among all nationalities without reference to tongue or creed. The pride of a Welshman in his language is remarkable. A celebrated philologist has said of it: "The language or, rather, the structure, of sentences, and the phrase ology exhibits a certain stateliness, o even grandiloquence, characteristic, in The language, while national supremacy is virtually gone, still survives, the oldest spoken language now used in literature and business,

There is a triune relation in the eisteddfod, in the Triads, in the language and in the "sacred sign," each suggest tive of the three letters of the bardic alphabet (Coelbren y Beirdd), which forms the name, God.

Another of the mottos of the five phob Daloni," (God and all that is good), again, like most of the proverb and mottes of the people, accord to vir tue and Supreme Sovereignty the mas tery of men and things

National physical strength may be

the pure institutions of a devoted peo ple. The language of Cambria lives, though something, history records, has suppressed her autonomy of government, for the time being,

Sophoeles, the second of the great tritrilogy of Greek tragic artists, says; 'No ordinance of man shall override The rettled laws of Nature and of God; Not written these in the pages of a book

We know not whence they are; but this

we know, That they from all eternity have been, And shall to all eternity endure."

POET LAUREATE,

The picture below is that of the Rev DePuch Griffiths, of Binghamton, N. Y. Mr. Griffiths won the chair and thre hundred dollars for the best original



REV. DEPUGH GRIFFITHS.

poem at the Denver elsteddfod of 1897 He will be at the Robert Morris eiseddfod at the Frothingham next Tuesday and will act in the dual capacity of president of the sessions and adjudicator of the poetical composiand a gentleman of superior culture

The pleture below is that of William R. Lewis, esq., chairman of the Robert Morris elsteddfod committee of 1897, Mr. Lewis is assisted in his arduous



duties by Mesers. J. H. Phillips, E. D. Jones, E. E. Robathan, Howell Harris, patronage of the Prince of South Roger Evans, J. J. Davies and D. the mines since he was 12 years of age. Wales; and it was reported as an event Phillip Williams, and the work that When a young man he went to Aberhas been accomplished will bear abun- dare, then the musical paradise of old dant fruit on Tuesday nixe. Mr. Lewis Gwalia. He was engaged as check-is a well-known figure in our criminal master at the Dyffryn colliery for

Language has, perhaps, more effect leading member of the Robert Morris on a people than religion; and the lodge. He possesses splendid executive strong perfect speech of the Weish has abilities and is an indefatigable workancient institutions of the Welsh na- given the people characteristics akin to er. With Mr. Lewis at the head of the tion. It may have received its inspir- the philological contour. The motte: executive department of the eisteddexecutive department of the eisteddfod success is assured.

MUSICAL FEATURES.

The musical features of the eisteddfed will be unusually interesting and the competitions more than ever excellent and spirited. The chief choral prize, "Teyrnasoedd y Ddaear," which is the composition of the immortal John Ambrose Lloyd, is, and will always be considered the most musical glee that was ever written by a Welshman. It is always new, and its rendition never falls to warm the Welsh heart. We anticipate an elegant and spirited con-

The male voice competition will probably be the best from a musical standpoint. Greater attention is paid to correct reading, interpretation and shad-The voices are better, as a rule, and the tempo more strictly adhered to. This, undoubtedly, will be a great centest, as some of the finest male voices will participate in the affair. The quartettes, trios and duets and will be hotly contested by some of the best singers of Wyoming and Lackawanna valleys. Many will enter on the piano solo In the literary department of the els-

teddfod the standard will be much higher than in previous eisteddfodau. Messes. Twining and Morris have received thirteen essays on "International Arbitration." Mr. Richard, of The Tribune, has received eight short sto-ries of great merit and Mr. Caborne and Rev. D. Push Griffiths, the adjudicators of poetical compositions, are well supplied with the effusions of some of the best poets.

laurels of success. That it will be the and to encourage literature and art musical event of the summer season among all nationalities without referat the Frothingham, the magnificence of which is known all over, and its



PROF. POWELL JONES.

oustic properties such as will give the singers and their efforts an effect rarely realized. GREAT QUARTETTES.

It will be worth going a hundred miles to hear the quartette of "Teyrnasoedd y Ddaear," as sung by the different quartettes of the several choirs hat will compete at the eisteddfod next Tuesday. Dan Thomas' choir will be represented by Liew Herbert, basso; Mrs. Lewis, of Providence, soprano; Johns, of the Penn Avenue Baptist church choir, tenor, and Mrs. Frank Beck, alto. Harry Evans' choir will be epresented by John Jones, basso: Mrs. Brundage, soprano: Edwin Bowen, tenor; Miss Maggie Jones, alto, Thomas Evans' choir will be represented by Philip Warren, basso; David Stephens, -, soprano; Mrs. Boston-Williams, alto

Never in the history of eisteddfodical music has this most sacred and inspirng quartette been sung by such beautiful, melodious and accomplished sing-No Weishman or Weishwoman should miss this opportunity, and, indeed, the committee may well be proud of their good fortune, and every opportunity should be taken advantage of to herald this fact to the world. This charming, soul-inspiring glee has been sung by the famous choirs of Wales and America, but the quartette was never sung by such incomparable voices as those that will be ngaged in the great contest on Tuesday next.

KILSBY JONES.

For the benefit of the Rev. Vyrnwy Morgan, author of the "Kilsby Jones diography," we would now gladly inform him how the subject of his blography came to adopt "Klisby." Of urse, Mr. Morgan informs us that Kilsby is a town in England, and that the late Welsh wit was at one time paster of one of the Congregational hurches of that place. Correct. But this is the way it happened: Brutus and tions. He is a poet of decided abilities | Kilsby were bosom friends, The "Haul" was printed at Llandovey, and the renowned Archdeacon Williams, of Cardigan, who, by the way, was one of the treatest Greek scholars of his time, was headmaster of the Welsh Collegiate institution of Llandovery at the time, and Brutus and the archdeacon were bosom friends also. Meeting the archdeacon one day, Brutus asked him if he had ever met the Rev. James thusiastic over Kilsby's genius, and promised the archdeacon to bring his friend around. Brutus was a very forgetful man and did not take Kilsby to see the archdeacon. The archdeacon good elergyman sent him a pair of his thusiastic over Kilsby's genius, and and Brutus met again, and the former reminded Brutus of his promise. The latter did not understand and the archdeacon reminded him of his promise to introduce to him his friend, the "Rev-tut, tut-that man-you knowthat man --. Yes, yes, you know-that man Kilsby, That's it-the Rev. Kils-by Jones." That's the way it came around. The late Kilsby considered this the greatest honor of his life, and he immediately added the name Kilsby to his other names. MR. THOMAS SAMUEL

The picture below is that of Mr. Thomas Samuel, of Bellevue Heights, a veteran musician and a composer of sacred music. Mr. Samuel was born 58 years ago at Ystradgynlais, South Wates. He has worked in and around

Welshmen on the West Side and a became acquainted with some of the foremost musicians of the place and soon became very much interested in music. Notwithstanding his many disadvantages, principal among them being lack of time and money and earlier educational opportunities, still n a few years he filled a prominent place in the musical rank, and, again,



THOMAS SAMUELS.

isteddfodic contestant of much promise. In this field-sacred music more particularly-he has won many imortant prizes. He has been succ ful under Dr. Joseph Parry. To be suc-cessful under a musician of such eminence is a distinction Mr. Samuel may well be proud of, Last New Year's day his musical competition won chief prize at the Utica eisteadfod, at which place many of the foremost men of the na-It is to be hoped that the efforts of tion had sent in compositions. He is the committee will be crowned with the a plain, every day man, loves music. and is always ready to impact that which he knows to those who are anxicus to sojourn in the fascinating fields of music.

Welsh Notes.

The most expensive book ever published was the "Gwyddoniaudr Cymreig" (Encyclopedia Cambrenais), by the firm of

One of the oldest amusements of the Vaynor people was badger hunting, and a long poem by a local poet describes the sport. It appears that the people had a strong antipathy against the badger, as it burrowed its way into the graveyard and made free with the remains. The only remedy against this was utter anni-bulleties and the animal has long been a strong and the animal has long been a strong and the grave a hilation, and the animal has long been

'How can we make bricks without straw?' "

A local tea merchant may almost be pardoned for thinking he is in some way connected with royalty. His father and mother were married on the day the Prince Consort died; he himself was born on the day the Prirce of Wales was mar-ried; his eldest son was born on the birth-day of the late Duke of Clarence, and was called Eddie; his eldest girl was born on the Prince of Wales's birthday, and his name is Albert, and the second girl was also born on another royal birthday. The merchant is in some tropidation as to what may happen this year.

The healing waters of St. Winifredo of miracles have greatly diminished. This may be partly due to the cold weather, and a profune writer has suggested bealtures to say that "she is a living power amongst us," and makes his supplication as follows: "Glorious St. Winnifridet fairest flower of the British nation, de-clare thyself; make good the word of thine unworthy servant!"

John Jones, the renowned parish clerk of Transfynydd, Merioneth, has just died, in his eighty-third year. John had served in that capacity for 44 years. He was a emarkable character-a man of wit and ecsource. A few years ago the dead body of an unknown tramp was found on the roadshie in the parish, and, as the rector was from home, some difficulty was experienced in getting a cleray and to of ficiate at his funeral. Fulling to get anybody, John decided to perform the cere-mony himself, in the following terms:-"Gwr dvelthr o wlad bell, Tase'r person yma, fuaset ti ddim gwe'l:

Claddwn di yma gyda'n tadau, Pan godant hwy, fe godi dithau.'* An incident is related in the life of the own, but was a little nonplussed on Sun-day morning to find that it was his best, A similar story is related of Archdeacon Davies of Brecon, who, finding a man in bed one day while the wife was husily washing, rated him for his luziness, but discovered that the poor fellow had but one shirt, and this had to be washed and dried before he could get up. Hearing this, the archdeac in marched home, made up a parcel of shirts, and took them back to the woman as a present. Unfortun-ately, it was found on Sunday morning

According to what he told a friend 'Gwilym Cowlyd," Chief Bard Positive has had a presentiment that the world shortly to experience a great commotic which will strike at the very roots of so-ciety, and that he is already preparing to put his house in order, hence the interesting sale which is to take place for two days next week at "Cowlyd's" home at Lianrwst. He is going to dispose of, not only his printing plant and the ordinary household goods, but also of quite a man-ufacturer's stock of grandfather's clocks the first eisteddfod was held. It has and civil courts, being one of the most eighteen years. He emigrated to Americal poli-paintings and many rare books and have no civil courts, being one of the most eighteen years. He emigrated to Americal poli-paintings and many rare books and have no critical policy. There is one painting by Critical policy.

David Cox advertised, as well as a presenration portrait in oils of "Teuan Gian Getr-ionydd." The collection of books includes a copy of Bishop Morgan's Bible, two copies of Dr. Purry's Bible, and a copy of Salesbury's New Testament.

In Pembrokeshire there is a small vil-lage called Tref Arres, the birthplace of the famous Arres Menevensis, the reputed tutor of Alfred the Great. Arres was educated at St. David's Cathedral, then the Athens of Britain. On going to Alfred's court he was loaded with honors, and some writers claim that it was he who founded Oxford.

At Arthog, a wild district in the moun-sins of Meirioneth, where churchmen and Pories do not exist, it was still necessary to have a political division over the parish council election. So it was decided to nominate a number of the backers of the "Metrioneth Liberal Association" and a similar number of members of the Cymry Fydd" society. At Lilandysii, in Cardiganshire, the distinctive names of the two parties who went to poll were "short-horns" and "longhorms."

An incident handed down from the Mid-dle Ages in connection with the life of Giraldus Cambrensis proves that even at that time Breconshire had a good repute for its ale. Giraldus was on his journey from Aberyskir to Lianthew, when he was met by a messenger with the news that his lands and revenues would soon be selzed by the king, and he himself put in prison. "Come on!" cried Giraldus; "have we not some good ale at home? Come, let us go and drink it before it is all gone."

Since Adam cut his initials in the bark of the tree of Eden boys of every generation have done the same. In the neighbor-hood of the once famous "Ffrwdvale col-lege," in the top end of Carmarthenshire, there can be seen the initials, "D. L. P." and "T. D. Dowlals." These were cut half a century ago by Mr. D. Long Price, the present Curmarthenshire county treasthe present Carmarthenshire county treas-urer, and the Rev. Thomas Davies, who recently retired from the pastorship of Sdoah Chapel, Llanelly. The two were fellow-students at the famous old semi-

In the colliery districts a touching record exists which no one appears to have taken as the subject of tale or poem. A collier, who had a wife and two children of tender who had a wife and two conderes of tender years, intringed the law, and had, first to conceal himself and then abscond for a lengthened period. Rather than sock par-ish relief, the wife put on her husband's working clothes, sought a fevel where she was not known, and worked as a man for years. Her husband died in a foreign land, and after she had received the assurance of this she married a "butty who had discovered her secret.

Margan had its man cook nearly thre centuries ago, and John Brown, a chef at the Abbey, left in his will, dated 1608 a bequest directing the distribution of a certain number of loaves annually among the poor of the parish. The gift got abused, and scandal was rife, and, though the bequest fell into desuctude, the Talbot family exceeded in their generosity its terms. As the result of the commission into Welsh charities, reference was made to the John Brown charity, which Miss Talbot now wishes to refund,

Gee & Sons, Deubigh.

Still another way of settling the battle of sites for the Websh University effices has been suggested, "Why not leave of talking," asks the London Daily News, "and let the choirs sing for it."

Rural choirs have difficulties of their own, Last year, the Talley, Llansawel, and Crugbar United choir, under the leadership of Mr. Tallesin Hopkins, com-Rural choirs have difficulties of their own. Last year, the Tailey, Llansawel, and Crugbar United choir, under the leadership of Mr. Tailesin Hopkins, competed at two citeddfordan, and came out victorious at both. Some of the choisters had to walk, ride, and drive the distance of ten miles to attend the practices. The choir intends competing this year again, they render by protecting impulsive ora-tors from the possible consequences of their rash outpourings,

service. After a couple of years in North America the regiment landed in Galipoli, in 1854, and went from there to Varna An antiquarian rambler believes he has hit upon a curious similarity between Egyptian customs and some old-world Hughes also fought at Inkermann, and habits at Rhos in Pembrokeshire, "On the mountain sde at Rhos," he writes, "I found that the inhabitants were accustomed to tack on the cemetery. At the outbreak was present throughout the siege and fall of Schastopol, and was engaged at the atmake walls for enclosures or hurs of chopped straw and mid. After being well died, the mixtures stood well, and was as compact as co several minor operations on the road t Lucknow, and as a non-commissioned of floer in the light company of his regime: saw some stirring times while bringing siege train from Agra to Cawnpore. H took part in the capture of Lucknow, w der Sir Colin Campbell, After fourtee years' service the old soldier was grante; a free good conduct discharge. He was session of three medals (one being th Turkish medal), with clasps for Alma, In kermann, Sebastopol, and Lucknow, Since leaving the army, Sergeant Hughes served in the Cardiganshire and Carmarthen bo rough police, and was superannuated from the latter force six years ago. Mr. Thomas Gee, the veteran Welst

fournalist and champion of Welsh gover

ment rights, was presented recently with a curse containing one thousand pounds and an illuminated address by 2,000 of his fellow countrymen. The chairman of the occasion was Mr. Herbert Roberts. member of parliament. The glat of h speech was as follows: "Mr. Ge had led the mation, and durin ing the past year especially, the people of Holywell and Finishire generally have taken up an attitude of partial hostility to the great St. Whitfride." But he ventures to say that "she is a living property of the past to say that "she is a living property of the proper hoped the conor would derive some c fort and satisfaction from the fact the came right from the hearts of the Wel-poople. When they thought of Mr. Go-public career it was hard to realize the he had taken a large part in all the leating public movements in Wales for tillast fifty years. He appeared now us he was endowed with the gift of perenui youth. He then referred to the pa played by Mr. Goe in the political develo ment of Wales during the present centur the fact that Mr. Gee's courage and i domitable will had been devoted to the promotion of all political movements du ing the last fifty years Imving for the object the progress and freedom of Wales They remembered with gratitude who Mr. Gee had done for Welsh education ushout his long public career, no o having worked harder on behalf of intemediate and higher education for the youth of Wales. All lovers of temperance joined heartily in this national recognition of Mr. Gee's public life. He ha advocated the temperance cause at a tim when such advocacy had a special value. The one class in this country who wer under a duep dobt of gratitude to Mr. Gee were the furmers. He had made the championship of their cause one of the first objects of his life as a public man. To their service he had consecrated his best talents, and, undanned by difficulties and disappointed heres, he had led them and disappointed hopes, he had led then and taught them to strive for their rights as men and as citizens and a free country As to Mr. Gee's religious opinions his religion in all his service for the publi good, and they could never forget the im-perishable work he had done for religion in his unselfish devotion throughout many years to the instruction in thei Sunday schools,"

Matrimony in South Atrica. The following advertisement is from well-known South African paper: Matrimoniat-A gentleman of quiet tastes and retiring disposition wishes to respond, with a view to marriage, with a lady of refinement, possessing the accom-plishments that the poorer classes have not the means to acquire. Substantial in-

come imperative.

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MILLINERY AND DRESSMAKING. Mrs. Bradley, 206 Adams, opp. Court House,

MILLINERY AND FURNISHING GOODS. Brown's Bee Hive, 224 Lackawanna, MINE AND MILL SUPPLIES. Scranton Supply and Mach. Co., 131 Wyo.

MODISTE AND DRESSMAKER. Mrs. K. Walsh, 311 Spruce street. MONUMENTAL WORKS, Owens Bros., 218 Adams ave.

PANTS. Great Atlantic \$3 Pants Co., 219 Lacks-wana ave.

DAINTS AND SUPPLIES.

Jienoke & McKee, 305 Spruce street, PAINTS AND WALL PAPER. Winke, J. C., 315 Penn.

PAWNBROKER Green, Joseph, 107 Lackawanna. PIANOS AND ORGANS. Stelle, J. Lawrence, 208 Spruce.

PHOTOGRAPHER H. S. Cramer, 311 Lackawanna ave. PLUMBING AND HEATING. Howley, P. F. & M. P., 221 Wyoming ave.

REAL ESTATE Horatic N. Patrick, 526 Washington. RUBBER STAMPS, STENCILS, ETC. Scranton Rubber Stamp Co., 538 Spruce

National Roofing Co., 231 Washington. SANTTARY PLUMBING. W. A. Wiedebusch, 234 Washington ave.

STEAMSHIP TICKETS. J. A. Harron, 215 Lackswanna and Priceburg.

STEREO-RELIEF DECORATIONS AND PAINTING. S. H. Morris, 247 Wysming ave. TEA, COFFEE AND SPICE. Grand Union Tes Co., 103 S. Main,

TRUSSES, BATTERIES, RUBBER GOODS Henjamin & Benjamin, Franklin and Spruce. UNDERTAKER AND LIVERY.

Haub, A. R., 425 Sproce, UPHOLSTERER AND CARPET LAYER.

C. H. Hazlett, 226 Spruce street, WALL PAPER, ETC. Pord, W. M., 120 Penn

WATCHMAKER AND JEWELER. Rogers, A. E., 215 Lackawanna WINES AND LIQUORS. Walsh, Edward J., 32 Lackawanna.

WIRE AND WIRE ROPE. Washburn & Moeu Mfg Co., 119 Frankits