

Blocks Cupid's Plans

French Law Places All Power in the Hands of the Parents.

WHEN a Frenchman proposes for the girl he thinks he might love, the first question is: "Are there things against him?"

It is understood that sowing wild oats never makes part of the category, except in the case of a possible disturbance at the church door.

To furnish one's certificate of birth seems a most innocent requirement of French marriages; yet young men on the eve of wedding have shot themselves in dread of a discovery its scrutiny must lead to. "Acknowledged child" burns upon its surface—the French law will never let bygones be bygones. Then, as the birth certificate gives a direct clue to the father's secret dossier, the errors of two generations are at the disposal of those who can show a right to know them.

The girl's parents have such a right. The young man cannot, dare not, refuse investigation. In the social and administrative arms of the French government, the details of one's errors are writ out with such minuteness that in a recent cause celebre a witness of importance was confronted with proofs that when he was 18 he pawned his college books; that he dodged a cab fare when he was 23; that he owed money for his morning coffee at the age of 25, and that at 26 he gambled in a tripot (purely gambling club).

Now you must know that the French father's inquisitiveness grows out of a duty to his daughter absolutely unknown to the fathers—and the daughters—of America. In France the average marriageable girl says to her father:

"I have always been obedient; I have effaced myself; I am entitled to a husband. Find one for me!"

These extraordinary details of French marriage law ought to be known to the girls of other countries when young Frenchmen court them.

(a) Up to the age of 25 years in-

the scene of many a "decisive meeting."

The mother has her daughter sitting by her in the box which she has taken. Between the first and second acts the young man is brought to them by the common friend, ostensibly to pay an offhand visit and inquire about their health. They stay five minutes, speaking of the play, the weather, and the Parisian season, and then retire.

When they have gone the mother ought to make some tentative remark to the girl on the young man's looks, position, fortune, manners and so on, endeavoring to fathom the impression he has made.

It is admitted that mothers ought not to instruct their daughters previously for this encounter. For if



The Young Folks Are at Last Confronted with East Other.

the girl has been catechised beforehand she will be so filled with apprehension as to risk losing grace and naturalness. So she may not have sufficient self-possession to observe if the young man be pleasing to her or the contrary.

She ought not to know the object of his coming to the box, because, if she fails to please, it is distressing to be told so. She would be humiliated and lose confidence the next time.

The common friends meet again, in their frock coats, to let each other know what the effects have been. If, as happens very rarely, the girl has failed to please on close inspection, nothing will be said. The two friends simply talk about the weather. But if it be the youth who has been found lacking, the truth is declared, and his friend breaks it to him later. Sometimes, and there are those who declare it should be always practiced, a girl favorably enough impressed demands nevertheless to see more of the youth before she gives her word. Then it will be arranged that she shall meet him often, but not intimately.

On his side, good taste demands that he should not show himself conscious of the fact that he is being studied. He goes through his paces, social, intellectual and physical, as if he did not dream of her inspection.

The next step is the proposal.

The father of the aspirant, his brother or his uncle does it for him.



His Father Takes a Bath, then Goes to See a Friend of the Girl's Family.

The girl's father or her other legal guardian should give him an immediate response. At this interview questions of fortune and the like are discussed in more detail; and notes of them are made to form the basis of the marriage contract.

Immediately he has been accepted, the young Frenchman must get into his dress suit and call on his future mother-in-law. He ought to thank her warmly, but without exaggeration. Then he may ask to see the girl.

Art Relics to Order.

In Rome and Naples there are factories in which "ancient" art relics are made to order. Statuettes of Aphrodite in bronze are manufactured there by the gross, and recently several worthless objects were palmed off on unsuspecting tourists as being priceless relics which were unearthed in Macedonia. One factory even succeeded in selling an unusually curious relic to the museum at Athens. Unfortunately for the unscrupulous manufacturers, when the experts examined it they at once discovered that it was bogus and notified the Italian authorities.

Method of Inducing Sleep.

Dr. Steiner observed in Java a method employed to induce sleep. It consists in compressing the carotid arteries. The operator sits on the ground behind the patient, whose neck he seizes with both hands. The index and middle fingers are then pushed forward into the carotids, which are compressed toward the spine. The method is absolutely harmless, anaesthesia is rapidly obtained, and the patient wakes promptly, with no symptoms of nausea or malaise.

HINTS ABOUT HOUSEKEEPING



For Clam Soup.

Chop fine a cupful of clams and add to them their own liquor, strained. Put in one cupful of water, one slice of onion, a blade of mace and simmer for thirty minutes. Thicken two cupfuls of milk with two tablespoonfuls of flour and two tablespoonfuls of butter. Strain the liquor from the clams and stir it slowly with milk. Season with salt and a dash of paprika. Just before the soup is sent to the table, and as it is removed from the fire, stir in the well beaten yolks of two eggs.

The Mending of China.

Time and patience are both quite necessary factors in the successful mending of broken china, crockery or glass. Any such article that has sustained a sort of compound fracture must be mended one piece at a time. For this reason those who make such repairing a matter of business require a long time in the work, letting one piece harden in place before another is added. For mending broken crockery there is nothing better than white lead. It is one of the few cements that resist both water and heat. Smear it thinly on the edges of the article, press them together and set it aside to dry.

A waterproof glue for repairing marble or porcelain may be made by mixing plain white glue and milk. Into two quarts of skimmed milk put half a pound of the best white glue. Put the basin containing this into another basin of hot water. Cook until the milk has evaporated to such an extent that the mixture is like ordinary glue or even thicker. When dry, this cement is one of the hardest, with the clearness of ivory.—Boston Post.

To Remove Stains From Old Lace.

The indications are that the winter will see garments trimmed with pretty appliques, insertions and ruffles of lace in greater numbers than heretofore. Sometimes a piece of old lace carefully treasured is disfigured with yellow stains and mildew. If carefully treated these may be made to disappear without having recourse to the cleaner.

The way to remove yellow stains from lace is to place the stain on a hot iron covered with linen, and moisten it with diluted oxalic acid. The lace must then be put in lukewarm water, and when any gummy substance is thus removed fine white soap must be used. No hot water must be employed, and it must be rinsed very carefully afterward in tepid water. You must never wring lace, but press out the moisture with the hand through a clean towel. You must straighten it out well when it is damp—the best way is to pin it out on a cushion—and any ironing must be done from the back. Mildew may be removed by moistening a piece of blotting paper with rarefied spirits of wine and placing the stain between three folds of paper. So treated, it is pretty sure to disappear.



Renovate brass chandeliers which have become dirty and discolored by washing them with water in which onions have been boiled.

If a chimney catches fire throw a handful of sulphur into the grate. As the sulphurous fumes ascend the fire in the chimney will die out.

To set the color of print dresses soak them in very hot brine, let them remain until the water is cold and then wring out and wash in the usual manner.

Before attempting to turn out a jelly place the mold for a few seconds in hot water. You will then be able to turn out the jelly without the fear of breaking it.

When cleaning wall paper use a dough made of flour mixed with water containing a little washing soda. The soda will not injure the paper and the work will be done more quickly.

White spots on furniture may be readily removed by rubbing quickly and evenly with a rag dipped in spirits of camphor. Afterward rub over the spot thoroughly with furniture oil.

Rusty fire irons should be rubbed well with sweet oil, left wet for two or three days, and then rubbed with unslaked lime. This will remove the rust and then the irons may be polished as usual.

Towels should be dried thoroughly before being put away. If consigned to the linen closet after being ironed before they are thoroughly aired a mould called oldium forms on them, giving rise to a parasite which is liable to produce skin diseases.

Art ticking in pink finished with a narrow border of white denim decorated with floral pattern in delicate rose coloring makes a lovely cushion cover and possesses the advantage of being able to stand laundering. Light blue ticking can be effectively utilized in the same way.

The under dog doesn't always deserve our sympathy.

BULLET IN THE BRAIN.

Its Presence There Not Always Attended by Fatal Results.

The idea that the human brain is an organ so extremely delicate in structure that it cannot bear the slightest physical hurt sometimes appears to receive a contradiction in the experience of people who have met with peculiar injuries to the head. The history of brain surgery presents some remarkable facts in regard to the extent to which the thinking organ will sometimes resist the effects of external injury. It has been shown that in some cases quantities of its substance may be removed without appreciably diminishing the normal intelligence of the patient; while some have been known to carry the most extraordinary foreign substances imbedded in their skulls for years.

Finds of the most singular kind have been made in the interior substance of the living human brain. The strangest things have been known to find entry there through accident or design.

In one case it was the blade of a pen-knife that was carried about in the brain for half a lifetime without the patient being in the least aware of it; in another it was a penholder that had somehow found its way there and remained in its living hiding place without apparently interfering with the thinking power of the organ; while only a week or so ago a piece of slate pencil was recovered from a boy's brain after it had been hidden there for several years.

It is, therefore, perhaps none the more surprising that many a bullet which has found its billet in a human brain has proved no more than a temporary inconvenience.

A French soldier who received a bullet in his head during the Franco-German war of 1870 carried it there for 27 years, and was said to have felt no ill-effects till 1897, when it one day worked its way downward into the mouth and so rid him of its presence.

In the case of a German soldier who was shot in the head during the Sonderbund war, he lived to carry the leaden souvenir in his brain for 43 years, and it was not extracted till after his death.

These two remarkable cases, however, seem to be beaten by another that has quite recently been brought to light, the case being that of an old soldier still living at —, who for over half a century has carried in his head the bullet received during the Austrian rebellion in 1848.

Would-be suicides have occasionally put bullets into their brain to no purpose; and perhaps one of the most astounding cases of recent years was that dealt with at the Richmond hospital only a year or so ago.

The patient had in vain tried to take his life by shooting himself in the head, and after thus placing two bullets in his brain he was immediately conveyed in a cab to the hospital. But he was so little affected at the time by the presence of the bullets in his head that he actually alighted from the vehicle, walked along the garden path and up the steps of the hospital, and was then able to give an intelligent account of what had taken place.

In a similar case of self-inflicted injury that came before the doctors at Guy's hospital a few months later the would-be suicide, after firing a revolver bullet into his head, was discovered smoking his pipe as if nothing very serious had happened, and though the bullet had penetrated the skull to the depth of three and a half inches he was able to walk part of the way to the hospital and there undergo himself without assistance previous to undergoing examination.

The effects of removing bullets from the brain are sometimes as remarkable as any of the foregoing, and perhaps in this connection mention may be made of a case of a military cadet operated on by a doctor of Vienna just recently.

On removing the bullet a small quantity of brain had also to be taken away, the peculiar result being that, though unaltered in any other respect, the patient irrevocably lost all his good manners for which he was noted. The eminent surgeon therefore suggests that the portion of the brain removed with the bullet corresponds to what he describes as the "bump of good manners."—London Tit-Bits.

The English Rat-Pit.

The old English rat-pit is the latest Parisian craze, writes a correspondent of the London Sketch. It is not hidden away in the cellar of a disreputable maitre-que, but flourishes in all its pride at the Chalet du Cycle, one of the most fashionable rendezvous in the Bois de Boulogne. The results of the day's sport are duly recorded, and there is heavy betting at the present moment over two dogs who killed 35 in identical time and who are to be matched early in August. For years there has been a cock-fighting club near the Odéon, and the membership is as aristocratic as that of the Jockey or the Escrimé. Speaking of rats—although it may be argued that it is not the liveliest subject to harp upon—a barbarous custom prevails at the Halles. At the opening of the wine shop the patron goes to the cellars and brings up the trap with its victims in it. Following the traditional rite, he opens it out and sets fire to them. It is a ghastly sight, but I am sorry to say that I have seen men and women in evening dress who have supped late at Barratt's looking on applauding.

Many Smoke Clouds.

For every time he fills a pipe of medium size a smoker blows 700 smoke clouds. If he smokes four pipes a day for 20 years, he blows 20,440,000 smoke clouds.

Got Soldiers' Guns

Clever Trick Played on British Troops by Heroine of the Revolution.

"Gurdie" has not been quite fairly dealt with by history. The name is seldom heard nowadays, but it belonged to an energetic, brave woman who, in revolutionary times, had the applause of her country for cleverly outwitting a part of the British army.

"Gurdie" lived at Union, N. J., in those days a place aspiring to be the capital of the state. One finds it today fast asleep, away from railroads, and even trolley cars. Her husband was known either as the man with the stovepipe hat, a mark of aristocracy then out of the ordinary, or as the man with the stumbling tongue. His most salient characteristic was his admiration for Gurdie.

When the British came up the little elevation known as "the hill" at Union and entered the precincts of the sacred First Presbyterian church, taking the hymn books and Bibles from the pews and ruthlessly tearing them to use as wadding for their guns, it was Gurdie who boldly spoke up and asked "Is that the way you're going to give us Watts and the Bible?"

The fight which followed was stiff and long; the power of the young American cannon, placed nearly opposite the church, was taxed to its utmost. To-day any one passing the spot can see this cannon preserved as a relic where it then stood, looking the very baby it is in the face of modern warfare.

The enemy proved over-strong; but winning men must eat, and of the rich farms then lying about Union, none were more likely to repay ransacking than that of Gurdie and her spouse. One of this stalwart woman's strong points was her excellent housekeeping.

Near her great brick oven stood al-

ways a huge pot of indigo ready to dye the wool from the shorn sheep. Clean, smooth and in order, the loom also awaited her pleasure at weaving. Her water from "the north side of the well" was cooler than could be had elsewhere; her cream invariably turned to butter; Gurdie could smooth out most folks' wrinkles.

When the muddy, swaggering feet of the British despoiled her polished floors she made it understood that they should rest in the cellar, where home-made wine was in casks, until she had prepared their meal.

Leading to this place was a narrow flight of steps and an old-fashioned trap-door. It was, however, light and spacious, and the men cracked many a joke over their entertainment.

At last Gurdie called to them that their supper was ready. "Leave your guns stacked in the cellar," she said; "there's no room for them above." This they did and came tumbling up the stairs.

Gurdie then closed the trap door with a spring, which only she knew. The men, suspecting nothing, fell eagerly to eating. To her stuttering husband, outside the window, she quickly passed the word; and thus a short while later a goodly number of unarmed men were carried off as prisoners by the American boys.

The signal which her husband gave about the town as he passed from man to man, and which has come down to us through history, was simply the record of his clever wife's deed: "G-Gur-Gur-Gurdie's g-g-got th-th-the gu-gu-guns."

It sometimes costs a man six months of rheumatism to catch one little six-inch fish.

Cocoanuts as Fuel

They Are Likely to Prove of Great Value in Naval Warfare of the Future.

Copra consists of dried cocoanuts. In view of the enormous tracts of land throughout the tropic zone that have lately been planted with cocoanuts, it is remarkable that copra has maintained its price.

From both coasts of Africa and from the West Indies the export has been steadily increasing, and yet, though the world seems to be easily satiated with every other kind of tropical product of copra it never seems to have enough.

Handicapped by a sea carriage of 12,000 miles, the South Sea island copra has always commanded a local price of from \$40 to \$55 a ton, and now that a soap and candle factory has been established in Australia, it is more likely to rise than fall.

Ten years ago most of the copra went direct to Europe on German sailing ships, which came out to Australia with a general cargo, and loaded copra in the islands. In the long homeward voyage of from four to six months the rats and the little bronze copra beetles tunnel through the cargo, destroying large quantities.

On arrival at the oil mills it is crushed by rollers, and the refuse,

after every drop of oil has been squeezed out of it, is pressed into oil cake for fattening cattle. The oil is then resolved into glycerin and stearine, from which more than half the candles and soap used in the world are made.

At first sight it would seem more economical to press the oil on the spot and so save the freight upon the waste material, but the explanation is that oil must be shipped in tanks or in casks. Ships fitted with tanks would have to make the outward voyage empty, and casks, if shipped in "shooks," require expert coopers, and when soaked in oil become a prey to borers.

It is possible that a new use may be found for copra as fuel for warships. It burns with a fierce heat. It is very easily stored and handled, and it is only one-third more bulky than coal, its disadvantage in this respect being more than compensated by its superior heating qualities and its freedom from ash.

It is expensive, but in naval warfare where quick steam is everything, the dearest fuel may often be the cheapest.—Savage Island.

A "Wildcat" Mine

Dynamite Used to Dislodge Ferocious Felines from Their Stronghold.

Several mining men who had chanced to meet in a hotel lobby in this city were discussing the various mines in a certain district, when one of them spoke of a "wildcat" mine.

A logger who was sitting near pricked up his ears at this and chipped into the conversation. He said that there was the most productive wildcat mine he ever heard of near the logging camp where he had been working on the lower Columbia. One of the mining men remarked that his idea of a wildcat mine was one that yielded nothing but assessments and asked what this wildcat mine produced.

"Why, wildcats, of course," replied the logger. He then proceeded to explain that many years ago someone had run a tunnel into the side of a hill in search of coal and had run a number of short branches and had gophered about generally in the bowels of the hill, but finding no coal had finally abandoned the workings.

There were wildcats in that section and the parties who had been prospecting for coal left several cats at their cabin. The wildcats and the

tame cats had affiliated and had taken up their abode in the tunnel and had increased in numbers.

Finally a celebrated bear hunter of that region discovered the half-closed entrance to the tunnel, and, thinking that perhaps some wild animals might be occupying the place, sent his dogs in to investigate. In a few minutes the dogs came rushing out, literally covered with wildcats and howling like lost spirits. While the fight was going on the old hunter took a hand to help his dogs and killed twenty-seven wildcats.

Dynamite was put in the tunnel at night when the cats were out seeking food and next day the fuse was lighted. As it burned some cats came out and were shot down. The shooting of the dead cats terrified those in the rear and they held back till the tunnel was fairly choked with a gurgling qualling, spitting army of cats, and then the giant powder exploded and several tons of cats were shot out of the hole.—Portland Oregonian.

The coal miner kicks because he is kept down in the world.

Not Easily Produced.

John H. Converse, president of the great Baldwin Locomotive works, not long ago submitted himself to some prosy interviewing by one of those would-be philosophers who are fond of talking of abstract matters. Along in the course of the conversation, the interviewer inquired:

"Now, Mr. Converse, tell me—what is it you find most difficult to get out of your men?"

"A day's work!" grimly and promptly replied Mr. Converse.

Fertile Fields of Africa.

Proof of the great grain-producing capabilities of the Zoutpansberg is afforded by the fact that 40,000 bags

of mealies have been sent since October last to the military authorities in Pretoria and Johannesburg.

The Impossible.

"This young man," said the city editor, "won't do, I'm afraid."

"Why not?" asked the desk man. "He brought a good report of that convention in to-day."

"Yes, but in one place I see he writes, 'Silence reigned for ten minutes.'"

"Well, what's wrong?"

"Great Scott, man! It was a woman's convention."



Good Taste Demands That He Should Not Show Himself Conscious That He Is Being Studied.

ished, i. e., until he has reached his 26th year, no young Frenchman can become a husband without furnishing to the civil functionary, who alone can marry him, the written act of consent of his father and mother. In case of dispute, the father's consent is sufficient; but not so the mother's, whose sole consent is good, however, when she is a widow. When both parents are deceased, the man must have the consent of his grandfather or grandmother in the same way, lacking whom the duty of consenting falls upon the family council composed of his nearest relatives.

It is a subtle law. Three times, at intervals of a month, a whole machinery of stamped paper and its legal service must be set in motion. This gives parents four months more time. If they choose to dodge the service, as the widow of a millionaire distiller did for eighteen months on board her yacht not long ago, the balked young folks have nothing to do but patiently pursue their rights through "the swamp of procedure," as they say in the Salle des Pas Perdus—"the Hall of Lost Footsteps" of the Palace of Justice.

When a young Frenchman, therefore, sees a girl well suited to him, he does not go to her and say: "I love you."

(a) It would be dishonorable.

(b) It would make her faint; and

(c) He would not get the chance to try it.

Instead, he goes and tells his mother.

His mother tells his father. His father goes to see his brother, or his business partner, or a friend.

Then both of them, wearing their



The Opera Comique Has Been Used Long for This Purpose.

best frock coats, call on some friend of the family of the girl in question. The proposed match is talked over and a rendezvous is made to hear this friend's report on how the family of the girl receive the proposition.

It is at some dance or dinner or reception that the young folks are at last confronted with each other. Failing such facilities the Opera Comique has been immemorably for this purpose by Parisian families of the middle classes. Like most European playhouses, all its parquet circles and its galleries are cut up into little boxes. Each of them has been