

THE BAY OF ST. IVES.

AND THE QUIET LITTLE TOWN BEHIND IT.

The Scene of Nursery Rhymes and the Home of Queer People—A Graveyard that Might Have Been Made Higher Than the Church.

In the tender realm of nursery-rhyme lore there is no pleasanter mysticism than that which clings to the pretty riddle:

"As I was going to St. Ives
I met a man with seven wives.
Each wife had seven sacks;
Each sack had seven cats;
Each cat had seven kits;
Kits, cats, sacks and wives—
How many were there going to St. Ives?"

So deep and lasting are the impressions of childhood, that as I tramped around the southern reach of St. Ives' bay from the pretty hamlet of St. Earth, I found myself unconsciously scanning the highway far ahead of this same wicked old fellow who has puzzled the heads of millions of little folk. But he was not to be seen any more than the "kits, cats, sacks and wives" are to be taken into account in the olden riddle.

In truth, no man, woman or child was visible upon the white and circling highway. St. Earth nestled there silent and apparently deserted against the cope and the hillside. Long reaches of sand showed here and there shining and brown, like the backs of huge marine monsters. Gulls wheeled lazily above. Land and sea foil chattered in the circling marsh edges, or dug in the sand and ooze. Only to the north, through the rift between the headlands, was there single sign of life. On the sapphire blue of the Irish sea there were two far, white sails.

But I knew the ancient city lay behind the huge headland, and quickening my pace I soon stood at its sea-face and its highest acclivity. Here the highway tumbles into one of the oddest old towns in all Europe. No wonder that Londoners are coming this, to them, tremendous journey of 280 miles for summer loitering, and the grand promontories behind the town are filling up with brilliant terraces; or that artists swarm to the remote place for its bits of antique in architecture, its quaint groupings of fisher folk, and its out-reachings of wild and glorious Cornish coast.

There are pictures and pictures of the Bay of Naples. But were I an artist, I would stake my hope of renown on the picture I saw as I stood above the bay and ancient town of St. Ives. The bay itself faces the north. At your feet are purple heather and waving ferns parted from the crystalline water by glistening sands. To the right and east the green hillocks of the Eastern Shore. Then the broad yellow beach of Porth-cocking, or the Fore-sand. Dominating this is the great headland of Pednolva. Beyond, gleaming like a field of gold, are the magnificent sands of Porthminster; and further still, the headland and rocky islet of Godrevy, with the latter's white lighthouse setting cameo-like between the purple of the sea-walls and the tremendous blue of the ocean.

Before you, the silent shimmering bay, with a few white-winged crafts scarcely moving, it seems, the distance is so great from the height where you stand; the ocean beyond, shining and blue and still; rhythmic reaches of incoming tide-waves, miles in length, advancing and retreating and breaking softly upon the shelving sands in tiny ridges of sparkling spume; and here, to the west, a great mass of jumbled gray—old St. Ives crouching in a little pocket of the rocks, like a mass of mossy stone in some shadowy glen, sleeping away the centuries, unconscious of the thunderous sea.

Up here among the terraced villas you can form little idea of the quaint old town. The great road jumps into it at a leap, and is broken by the fall into the oddest closes wynds of any coastwise nook in England. One could almost hurl a stone across its crowded tiled roofs; and yet it houses fully 9,000 people. The streets are so narrow, the pavements so meagre, such queer turns are made, such shadowy arcades are penetrated, that the sure-footed stranger pedestrian will meet many a bump and bang in most careful descent.

And then in what odd nooks the little shops will be found. There is not a single street one hundred yards in length where a half dozen shops are continuously located. Even in these you must needs often ascend or descend a story or more. The most are literally hidden or perched in outlandish and out-of-the-way spots, where, if not stumbled upon, one must repeatedly come with a guide or find re-discovery hopeless. Here will be one perched in a half-timbered Elizabethan projection, away up there three or four stories from the street, and you cannot find an entrance. And there one will be seen as many stories beneath a tiny esplanade way, but apparently you cannot reach it without rope and tackle. Others are where kitchens should be. And still others unexpectedly confront you from dormer windows. Everything of this sort seems bewilderingly reversed from its proper order. But nothing ever seems to be bought or sold in old St. Ives; the artists gloat over the curious jumble; and it is all most winsome and charming to the stranger.

Gray and old as is this Cornish fisher town but two bits of extreme antiquity remain. Just in the rear of the White Hart inn by the wharveside is a huge pile of greenish slate rock. Built upon this rock, which forms its basement, is a tiny ancient stone structure known as Carn Glaze House. It was the stronghold of a smuggling, free-booting family in Queen Anne's time, and the myriad weird fisher and sea-faring legends of St. Ives have nearly all had their origin in, or bear some reference to, this greswome old structure.

The parish church, built straight above the harboredge, its east window sprayed with the foam of the wild northern tempests which often lash the harbor furiously, was built in the sixteen years between 1410 and 1426, on the site of an older structure, founded by Saint Ivo, a Persian bishop, who came over from Ireland in the ninth cen-

tury to preach the gospel to the Cornish Britons.

Some stone carvings and a most beautiful and curious font of the old St. Ivo chapel are still preserved. Perhaps the quaintest carvings in England are to be found in the present church. They were the work of the then village blacksmith, "a handy and devout man," who carved the oak of the benches and choir stalls, not omitting to carve the forge, the bellows, hammer and nails and pincers of his own sturdy craft. He threw in a fair supply of Tudor roses, monks and angels, but, as Saints Andrew and Peter are appropriate patrons of the church where countless thousands of fisher folk have worshipped, the good smith also put them into every conceivable beneficent attitude, and, as if to intensify their protection of the town of St. Ives and its people, also wove fishes, saints and arabesques into most generous and profuse relationship.

If these wood carvings are curious studies some of those in stone are equally outlandish. They are stone grotesques whose equals in strange and meaningless hideousness can hardly be found elsewhere in Europe. Seven represent mocking, leering faces of men and beasts. Two are distending their mouths with their fingers and protruding their tongues. One is a most horrible figure of an ape; and another wears a fool's cap of the period.

The stranger will be impressed with the extraordinary elevation of the soil of the tiny churchyard. When the place was first quite filled with the dead, the burial-place was covered over with several feet of sand, and interment went on anew. Three times this was done; when it was finally found that to have repeated the process would have been to bury the church itself, when a cemetery was secured upon the heights.

History, tradition, and legend have carved some grim pictures upon the dim background of the past in this old Cornish fisher town. One historical fact will be sufficiently illustrative. In the Cornish uprising of 1649, its object being the restoration of the catholic religion, to which Cornubians remained greatly attached long after the Reformation, John Payne, Portrieve of St. Ives, was one of the interior leaders. After the defeat of the Cornish, Sir Anthony Kingston, with a royal commission, was seeking out and punishing the rebels. He hung the mayor of Bodmin before his own door. St. Ives' Portrieve received Sir Anthony humbly and prepared a great dinner in his honor at the venerable "George and Dragon" still standing in Market square.

During the dinner the Portrieve heard the sound of hammering outside and being disturbed was quieted by Sir Anthony with the remark that they were only about to hang a rebel. Dinner over, history relates, the commissioner invited the Portrieve outside to inspect the gallows.

"What say you, Master Portrieve?" quoth Sir Anthony. "Is yon gibbet duly furnished for the hanging of a traitor?"

"All seems ready, a'nt please you," was the prompt reply.

"Then," said the commissioner turning to a man-at-arms, "secure Master Payne and hang him straightway, for such is the Protector's pleasure!"

Master Payne was hung straightway; but the Cornish, who are Celts, like the Celtic Irish and Celtic Welsh unpleasantly remember these little after dinner jests of English Protectors and kings.

Great was the olden fame of St. Ives as a metropolis of fish and fishermen. It is still the most important of all Cornish fishing ports. Five thousand folk live here on what is harvested from the deep. For a thousand years or more, from father to son, from mother to daughter, the line has remained unbroken, has steadily increased, and so narrow is the life horizon of all these fishermen and families that not a score of them, it is said, ever see other English land than the hills and headlands of St. Ives' bay, save when at sea in their own boats.

During August they will be found along the east English coast in the neighborhood of Whitby, Scarborough and the Yarmouth of Dickens' "Peggottys"; but are always back to St. Ives for the autumn St. Ives herring fishing, and a large number of their fleet are home in time for possible runs of "pilchards," (pilchards) the "Fair Maids of St. Ives," for which the ancient seaport has been famous for half a thousand years.

The St. Ives fisher folk are noted for their simplicity and piety. They are nearly all fervent Methodists, honest, superstitious humble and good. They live in as great comfort as the fisher-folk of New-haven in Scotland; and the man is more the master of his home and belongings. They are the most scrupulously clean and thrifty folk of this sort I have ever met. The women though strong and brawny, have few of the Billingsgate characteristics of the fishwives of the English east coast, of Scotland and of Galway and the Irish west coast. They mend the nets, and "bulk" or pack the pilchards. They are very domestic, and their prayer-meetings and strict Sabbath keeping, though they are wofully ignorant have done these St. Ives fisher folk no hurt or harm.

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

Read the article "What Do You Think?" on the fourth page. It will interest you.

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A MAN WITH MONEY.

Baron de Hirsch and How He Succeeded Where Others Fail.

Baron de Hirsch, the Jewish millionaire, has been very ill. An ugly rumor of his death on Monday spread through the London clubs with the rapidity of a forest fire. Had he died, facts would have come out which would have set the world wondering that they did not recognize him as he is before he died. Perhaps the keynote to his character is chivalry. It is told in Paris how, when he and another Jew, who was his enemy's son, were blackballed for a certain club, he bought the building for an enormous sum. The club committee, loth to leave their old quarters, offered to elect him if he would relinquish his bargain. His reply savoured of the fourteenth century: "Keep your club, but elect a Jew. I name the gentleman who was blackballed in my company." The club, accordingly, accepted these terms, and took back their lease from Baron de Hirsch at the price he paid for it. They elected his enemy's son. The only detail that remains to chronicle is that to this day that enemy's son does not know that he owes his election to the chivalry of Maurice de Hirsch, and that the vindication of the dignity of his co-religionists was to the latter a dearer object of life than his own exaltation.

It is sometimes said, and more often hinted, that the way in which Baron de Hirsch has made his fortune will not bear the light of day. This is not true. He is the grandson and son of rich men. He married a lady with a very large fortune. Everything he has touched has turned to gold, mainly in consequence of his skill in the choice of men. He makes appointments that other men would deem wildly unwise. It is but rarely, however, that his choice is not vindicated by successful results. Insight into character is necessary to those who wish to get on in the world, and Baron de Hirsch has this faculty developed to a singular degree. His first great coup was the purchase of a Belgian bank with all their depreciated assets. This bank proved a mine of gold, and made him one of the first financiers of Europe. Then came a period of railway contracts. It is currently but erroneously believed that the bulk of the Hirsch fortune was made out of the Turk, and under circumstances over which it is better to draw a veil. The Baron was one of three contractors for the Bulgarian-Constantinople line. Lots were cast for the most remunerative portions. After the decision was made it was found that the Hirsch section was the worst. All three went to work, and two out of three lost money. The third made £800,000. His name was Hirsch. The successful contractor attributes his success to a mastery of detail, to his German engineers, and to economy in small things.

Curiosities of Partnerships.

From the English directories may be culled some amusing facts with reference to the junction of names in partnerships—as, for example, Bowyer and Fletcher, Carpenter and Wood, Spingale and Lamb, Sage and Gosling, Ruffitt and Cutwell (tailors), Pipe and Tabor, Greengoose and Measure (another firm of tailors), Single and Doublet, Foot and Stocking (hosiery), and Wright—late Read and Wright. Adam and Eve were for some time surgeons in partnership in Paradise Row, London. In Holborn, Byers and Sellers live in close proximity on opposite sides of the street.

Sometimes the occupations of persons harmonize admirably with their surnames—a fact particularly apparent in the case of London keepers. Gin and Ginman are innkeepers, while Mr. Alehouse follows the same calling. Seaman is the landlord of the Ship Hotel, and A. King holds the Crown and Sceptre resort in the City road. Portwine and Negus are licensed victuallers, one in Westminster, the other in Bishopsgate street. Corker is a potboy, whose name affords a hopeful omen of his one day rising to the rank of a butler.

Mixwell's country inn is a well known resort. Again, Pegwell is a shoemaker; so are Fittal and Treadaway, likewise Punch—the latter rather uncomplacingly so; another, Tugwell, is a noted dentist, so is Gunn, though he uses none but the ordinary arm in his practice; Bird, an egg merchant; Hemp, a sheriff's officer; Captain Isaac Paddle commands a steamboat; Mr. Punt is a favorite member of the Surrey Wherry club; Laidman was formerly a noted pugilist; and Smooker, or Smoker, a lime burner.

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French Shop-lifters.

The offence of shoplifting is the one most on the increase in France. The ministry of justice has instructed the correctional judges to be less lenient for the future on rich women, and to regard kleptomania in most cases as simple theft, giving only to well established cases of neutrophathy the benefit of the Berenger law. Judges used to be lenient, they have ceased to be so, and do not listen to medical reports on the state of the accused parties' nerves. All the large shops have now a system of putting marks scarcely perceptible on merchandise that has been sold. If a lady is caught stealing and a consequent search made in her house, and a number of new things not thus marked are found in her drawers, she will have little to hope for.

Read the article "What Do You Think?" on the fourth page. It will interest you.



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