

## CEREMONIES AT WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS ARE RELICS OF THE PAGAN AGE

They Are Considered So By "Observer" Who Is Giving His Views in These Columns

"Observer," who is running a series of articles in The Daily Mail, from day to day, expresses his views on affairs in general. These views have called forth discussion and may bring forth more.

### BARBARIC SURVIVALS

In this so-called age of progress in which we live, and of which we are so fond of boasting, how many of us ever stop to think that we are not so completely modern as we might like to think? Woven through the web of our civilization there are many customs and habits of life which are survivals of a more remote age. Certain habits and customs which are everyday occurrences are not apt to impress us with their inherent absurdity, but nevertheless absurd they are, and while they may have had some meaning at the time they were instituted, they have none today. Let my readers may think I am about to embark upon an academic discussion which has little or no practical value let me hasten to state that the two matters I have in mind are weddings and funerals.

Yes, weddings and funerals, that is, the ceremony surrounding them, are relics of an age in the history of the human race when superstition was rampant in the land; an age when it was thought necessary to propitiate the gods with ceremony and ritual lest the angry deities punish the impious human in ways too dreadful to describe. Let us take the sadder subject first and get it over with.

The funeral today is hedged about by various ceremonies which tend to prolong the affair unduly, and to impose a totally unnecessary strain upon the already ravaged feelings of the relatives. That there should be

some brief religious ceremony, no one is prepared to deny, except in the case of a person who has led a notably irreligious life. To have to listen to a eulogy upon the imaginary merits of the dear departed in a case like this is certainly an ordeal for the relatives and the spectators, but for different reasons. Again, although one does not like to consider the question of expense at a time like this, yet the money spent in the purchase of flowers is certainly one of the most useless customs that have survived to a more enlightened (?) age. This custom is on a par with the barbaric rituals that have accompanied the burial ceremonies of the human race since that race began. The Egyptians used to bury with their dead the objects most prized by the deceased during life. The idea was that the departed one would need them on his journey to the other world. The Chinese place a bowl of rice upon the grave. One thinks of the historic reply made by the Chinese to the facetious inquiry of the Westerner as to when the dead person was expected to eat the rice. The Chinaman said he thought about the same time that the dead Westerner would come up to smell the flowers placed upon his grave. It is a good sign that we see quite often now the notice, "No flowers by request."

It is not the intention of the writer to trifle with nor make light of the natural feelings of the bereaved. It is rather his intention to point out the absurdity of present customs. Would it not be kinder to all concerned to cut out all this mummerly, even though it deprives the morbid curiosity seeker of a free show?

In regard to weddings we have an occasion at which even more absurd

## SOCIAL HAPPENINGS

Miss Dorothy Burpee is visiting friends in Campbellton.

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Mrs. J. B. McNair was hostess at the tea-house yesterday at D-Coy Inn in honor of Mrs. A. P. Paterson of Saint John.

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Mrs. Helen Hubbard and daughter Miss Kitty Troy are spending the summer at Newcastle and other points on the North Shore.

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Miss Jean Ramsay who has been the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Rae Williston at their home 'Raegrove' at Bay du Vin Beach, is expected home on Monday.

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Mrs. H. F. McLeod was recently the guest of Mrs. Charles L. Fenserson, Jacquet River. Mrs. Fenserson entertained at luncheon in honor of her guests.

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### Engagement Announced

Major and Mrs. James Pringle announce the engagement of their daughter Georgie Mae, to Mr. Harold Perley True, son of Mrs. True and the late Howard P. True of Oromocto. The marriage will take place early in August.

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### To Murray Bay

QUEBEC, July 11.—Prime Minister King returning from the funeral of former Postmaster-General P. J. Veniot at Bathurst, N. B., left today for a week-end at Murray Bay, Que. before proceeding to Ottawa.

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Mrs. Whitman A. Haines again entertained at an enjoyable bridge party last evening, in honor of Miss Nellie Blair and Miss Margaret Miles, who are to be married in the near future. Bridge was played at four tables and the prizes were won by Miss Alice Bird, Mrs. Delmas Olt and Mrs. Wm. Manzer, and guest prizes were presented to Miss Blair and to Miss Miles. The hostess was assisted by Miss Gertrude Davis, Miss Excy Brannen and Miss Jean Miles.

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Robert McFarlane, of the Harkins Vocational teaching staff is in New York where he is continuing his studies at the Teachers' College at Columbia University. Mr. McFarlane is working towards his Ph.D. in commercial work.

rol-de-rol takes place. Here we can be more unrestrained in our language, because no delicacy of feeling need make us fear to hurt the feelings of bereaved and heartbroken people. Let us consider what takes place previous to, and attendant upon, a so called "fashionable" wedding. Of course, the girl friends of the bride-to-be know a long time ahead that this particular marriage is to take place. But polite custom makes them ignore the fact until the engagement is announced. When the prospective bride's parents have at last published the formal notice of the option that has been taken out on the young lady, her girl friends get busy and hold a multitude of "showers," teas, and what-nots, the expense of which are protestingly defrayed by the fathers and husbands of the girl friends. A chosen few of this group of girls will be selected for the sacred office of "bridesmaid." It devolves upon the bridesmaids to be even more lavish in their entertainment for the bride to be, and their male relatives are quite often driven to the verge of bankruptcy. Finally the long-awaited day arrives. The church or house has been most elaborately decorated for the occasion, and if it is to be a "church wedding" the building will be thronged with a mob of sensation seekers mainly to see what the females concerned in the affair "wore." This will provide material for backyard gossip for weeks to come. Then the elaborate ceremony gets under way. When the officiating clergyman comes to the query, "If anyone knows why, etc., etc., let him speak now or forever hold his peace," everyone has a sneaking hope that someone will arise and throw a monkey wrench into the works. At the close of the ceremony the contracting parties affix their signatures to certain official papers (which is all that needed to be done in the first place), and the terms of the sale are completed. The only difference between this and any other business transaction is that it is the seller who pays and not the buyer. It is "papa who pays," and after a fashionable wedding in his family "papa" usually has to place a thumping big mortgage on the family mansion.

Now, all this flappoodle is a survival from the marriage customs of primitive peoples and some not so primitive, as the Greeks and Romans, when it was thought necessary to get on the good side of the gods so that the young people might enjoy a life of uninterrupted bliss. Alas, this has proven to be beyond the capacity of even the most obliging gods, yet this touching faith in the efficacy of the formula has never weakened. Truly, we are still a most primitive people in many ways.

OBSERVER.

Miss Anna Marie Poirier is spending several weeks in Shediac, the guest of friends.

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Mrs. Bruce Simmonds and her daughters, the Misses Bernice and Eileen are spending the summer at Savoy Beach.

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Miss Grace Palmer has arrived from Toronto and is the guest of her sister Mrs. W. A. B. McLellan and Mr. McLellan.

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Mr. and Mrs. Jas. A. Hughes left yesterday for Savoy Beach where they will spend a few weeks. They were accompanied by their son Harold and daughter Miss Florrie Hughes.

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Mrs. H. H. Hunter, Mrs. Martha Gunter and Mrs. C. C. Camp were recently guests of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil R. Mersereau, Perth, who recently entertained in their honor at a luncheon bridge. There were three tables in play. Prize winners were Mrs. Harry H. Hopkins and Mrs. Martha Gunter. Mrs. Mersereau was assisted in serving by Mrs. Harry S. Wade and Mrs. J. LeBaron Hopkins.

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### Delightful Birthday Party

About 25 friends of Miss Laura Johnson gathered at the home of Miss Jennie McFarlane recently and held a delightful birthday party in her honor. Miss Johnson received a number of beautiful gifts accompanied with suitable verses.

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### Visitors from Houlton

Mrs. F. Orval Troy and daughter Charlotte Anne are guests of Mrs. R. B. Dayton of this city. Mrs. Troy will return to her home in Houlton, Maine, today, while Charlotte Anne will remain in Fredericton for the next two weeks.

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In honor of B. C. Gardiner, assistant manager of the Bank of Montreal for Canada, who is in the city this week, Mr. A. Johns, manager of the Bank in the capital entertained at a delightful luncheon yesterday at D-Coy Inn. Covers were laid for eight, summer flowers being used as floral decorations on the table.

### York Council

(Continued from Page One)

provincial government should do something about bears. He moved that the council urge the provincial government to restore the bounty on bears. This was seconded by Coun. Wright and the council voted unanimously for it.

Ex-Warden W. C. Whipple of Saint John spoke briefly.

### Presentation Made

Coun. Dobie on behalf of the council presented a travelling bag and a set of military brushes to Warden Howard Cameron. He said that his fellow councillors appreciated very much the warden's services during the year. The warden thanked the councillors for their thoughtfulness.

Coun. Saunders moved that the delegates to the Union of New Brunswick Municipalities be heard. Councillors Malone, Gould, Gaynor and Morrison presented a report of the Union. Coun. Malone said he could not see how the construction of hard-surfaced roads was helping the unemployment situation. He said something should be done on secondary roads.

Coun. Wetmore thought that the provincial government should pay more attention to secondary roads. Road construction companies bring in their own men and do not employ local parish men.

Coun. Wright brought up the matter of an accusation by Councillor Doherty in the January session that certain things had been taken from the county jail. Councillor Morrison presented a report of the building and finance committee wherein it was stated that by accident a lawn mower was taken but has since been returned. This explanation was satisfactory to Coun. Wright. Coun. Doherty said that when he made a statement he did so after ascertaining the facts. The council authorized the appointment of another councillor to the hospital board and Councillor Malone was named.

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## Dogs and Burdocks

A correspondent says "Observer" left out these important items of Town Topics.

The first half-holiday of the summer of 1936 was yesterday, and "a good time was had by all," as the old-time rural correspondent used to report to her newspaper. Well, I couldn't do any shopping; even if I had the money. So I did some window-shopping, then I strolled about a bit. It is a quiet little town, this Fredericton. At least I always thought so until yesterday when I took a walk up town on the back streets. Why, that part of the town has gone to the dogs. It used to be "God's Country," but now it is "Dogs' Country," sure enough. It has gone to the dogs, by the sound of things. Not all the blasts come from the dynamite that is being used on the railway bridge salvage work. In one residential section uptown I counted and encountered almost a dozen or more dogs to a block (almost every family seems to have one of these pets). An acquaintance who resides up there told me that the neighbors who don't own dogs are not inclined to call them "Pets," but "Pests," and while we sat there talking I came to the conclusion that my friend and his dogless friends were perfectly right, for never did I hear such a din in a civilized community. How the people tolerate the practically continual blasts that emanate from the dogs I am at a loss to know. My friend tells me that day and night the dogs are permitted, by their owners (but not the law) to annoy and disturb the residents. He said that "Observer" had omitted mentioning the worst Racket of all, in his articles in "The Daily Mail." The "Dog Racket" is surely the worst and the most intolerable that the citizens of this town have to contend with. Personally, I am fond of dogs, that is, decent, obedient, well-behaved dogs. My friend told me that just about half-past seven at night, when Mousers are trying to put their kiddies to sleep, is a favorite time for some of the dogs to exercise their lungs. Eleven o'clock is chosen by other dogs, for that is the time that some adults retire to their downy couches, but no sooner do they get down than they have to get up to chase some lawless and vociferous dog from the premises. I told him that the dogs are not lawless; the Owners are, though, for they should know that the law forbids dogs running loose, and it forbids dogs barking and otherwise disturbing neighbors.

"Well," said my friend, "it IS the law, but who knows it? Why do not the authorities publish the gist of the law, and make dog-owners abide by it? But they should not only publish the points of law; they should see that those points are obeyed by Every dog-owner, not just some."

"Certainly," I replied. "There should be every effort made to see that the law is enforced; otherwise it is a farce. Publish the law, and if any dog-owner disregards it and fails to respect the rights of his neighbors, let the authorities give him a firm but gentle word of WARNING. If he again defies the law, take his dog or make sure he sends it to the country." But my friend told me there is nobody on the City's pay-roll whose particular duty it is to see that every dog is licensed and controlled, and so the City loses many a dollar in tax money and the neighbors lose many a full night's sleep. The old saying is that "What is anybody's business is nobody's business."

"They would make it their business if they lived here," said my uptown friend. I asked him if he thought it would be a sound proposition to put before the S. P. C. A. He replied, "I don't care who takes up the cudgels, so long as the cudgels are good and strong. In summer almost every window is up, and the yaps and barks of those dogs pierce the ears of the people for three or four blocks rounds. Take is up with the Y. M. C. A., the A. O. H., the L. O. A., the Ministerial Association, the Firemen, the I. O. D. E., the School Board, the Police Commission, the A. and B. Club, the M. M. A. or the Maritime Electric Company." "There, you've struck the right spot; it is certainly a current topic, and you're a live wire." Then I left him, with a suggestion that perhaps a diet of freshly-cut burdocks would appease the noisy brutes. "Freshly-cut?" he said surprised. "Who cuts burdocks on the streets of Fredericton?" I retraced my steps to ask him what kind of dogs infest the community. "They are not kind dogs; otherwise they would let the kiddies get their proper rest. As to breed, there are so-called Police dogs galore, though nobody knows why these unnecessary evils are allowed to exist, and then there are several Genuine Mongrels. And the noise keeps up almost constantly. We welcome the nights when it 'rains cats and dogs,' for then the dogs are under cover, indoors somewhere, asleep. And so are we mere humans."

Yours Truly,

OPTICS.

## CARD OF THANKS

Mrs. Ruel B. Grasse (nee Dorothy A. McKeen) wishes to heartily thank Mrs. Walker's Beauty Salon, Shute & Co., Mrs. Thomas Kane and R. L. Black for the articles given as second prize for the Three Lucky June Brides contest, also The Daily Mail as sponsors.

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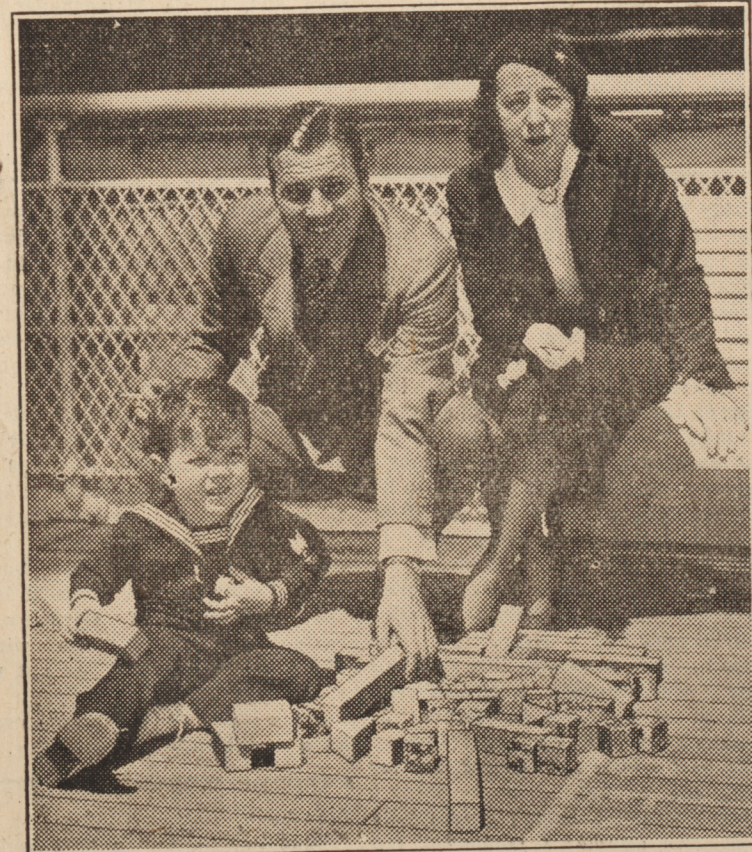
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Richard Arlen, Hollywood movie star now making "The Great Barrier," epic of Canadian Pacific Railway construction days, with the Gaumont-British Corporation, arrived in Canada recently on the Canadian Pacific liner "Empress of Britain." The popular movie star is now on location with his unit in the Canadian Rockies. Mr. Arlen is taking the part of a Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman. In the picture above he is seen with his well known wife Jobyna Ralston, and their young son Richard Jr. They are shown in a happy family group just before reaching Quebec.