ORIGIN OF BAGPIPES

IT IS FOUND IN THE ANCIENT REED, OR SHEPHERD'S PIPE.

In Early Times There Were Many Different Kinds of Bagpipes In Use In Europe—The Highland, Lowland and Irish Varieties.

According to the encyclopedia, the bagpipe is a wind instrument the fixed characteristic of which has always been two or more reed pipes attached to and sounded by a wind chest, or bag, which bag has in turn been supplied either by the lungs of the performer or by a bellows. The original instrument was presumably the simple reed, or shepherd's pipe, which was well known to the Trojans, Egyptians, Greeks and Romans. But the strain of blowing these ancient pipes was so great that some genius conceived the idea of having a reserve supply of wind in a bag attached to the pipes, and hence the bagpipe. The first real instrument is believed to have been a skin of a goat or kid, with two pipes, through one of which the bag was inflated, the other emitting the sound.

In early times the bagpipe was common in Great Britain and abroad. At one time there were five different kinds known on the continent, some inflated by the mouth and others by bellows, while in the British isles three kinds were known—the great highland bagpipe, the lowland bagpipe of Scotland (which closely resembled the Northumbrian) and the Irish bagpipe.

In the great highland bagpipe, which originally had but one drone, a valved tube leads from the mouth to an air tight bag, which has four other orifices, three large enough to contain the base of three fixed long tubes, termed drones, and another smaller, to which is fitted the chanter. The three are thrown on the shoulder, while the latter is held in the hands. All four pipes are filled with reeds, but of different kinds. The drones are tuned by means of sliders, or movable joints, and this tuning or preparation for playing, which generally occupies a few minutes of the piper's time before he begins the tune proper, is heard with impatience by those not accustomed to the instrument. Indeed, it gave rise to the saying, applied in Scotland to those who waste time over small matters, "You are longer in tuning your pipes than in playing your tune."

The Scottish lowland bagpipe, like the Northumbrian pipe, was in two forms, one consisting of a smaller and milder toned edition of the highland instrument and the other a miniature of this and having the same relation to it as the fife has to a German band. Its great drawback, from the point of view of the devotees of the highland bagpipe, is that it is unsuited to perform what they consider the perfection of pipe music—the pibroch. These small pipes were, however, gentler than the highland, having the same tone, but less sonorous. It was to the strains of such a bagpipe that Chaucer tells us the company of pilgrims left London, and it is the same instrument that is alluded to in Shakespeare as the Lincolnshire bagpipe.

The Irish bagpipe is the instrument in its most elaborate form and is supplied with wind by a bellows. The drones are all fixed on one stock and have keys which are played by the wrist of the right hand. The reeds are soft and the tones very sweet and melodious, and there is a harmonious bass which is very effective in the hands of a good player. The Irish instrument is fast dying out.

The bagpipe, though at one time fairly common, never obtained a firm hold in England. It lost favor and gradually deteriorated until it is now practically extinct. The average Englishman neither appreciates nor understands it. A famous poet irreverently once compared its notes to "the shrill screech of a lame goose caught in corn," while another heretic writer likens its sound to a "horrible, noisy, mad Irishman" or to the cries of the "eternally tormented." To the Irish people it appeals more strongly. They still possess in a degree the feeling of attachment to the bagpipe which is so general among Scotsmen. But it is undoubtedly more closely associated with Scotland, both in the highlands and lowlands, than with any other country, the particular instrument in use being the great highland bagpipe, which, as already explained, consists of three drones, including the big drone, which was added about the beginning of the last century. It is this type which has gradually superseded the lowland pipe. There is no doubt that the bagpipe was in use in Scotland from a very early period, and it is in Scotland that it has been brought to the highest degree of perfection. Its music distinctly connects it with Scotland, as is clear in the pibroch, the strathspey, the reel, the march and other popular melodies. There are proofs that the instrument was cultivated in Scotland certainly in the twelfth century and of its universal popularity as early as the fifteenth century, while in the seventeenth century nearly every town in the highlands and lowlands boasted of its piper.—London Globe.

Trusting to Appearances.

"A photographer is really among the most trusting of men."

"How do you make that out?"

"Doesn't he always take people at their face value?"—Baltimore American.

A Relief.

Mother—Do you think it is a good thing to spank a child? Doctor—Well, it often relieves the parent of a bad fit of temper.—Detroit Free Press.

[illegible] mother's tears are the same in al [illegible]

AN ODD SEA FOOD.

Virtues of the Gigantic Marine Snail Known as the Abalone.

Though the flesh of the abalone is a nutritious and wholesome article of food, highly esteemed by the Chinese and Japanese, few people in the United States know anything about the abalone except that it has a large shell with a bright, pearly interior. The abalone is a gigantic sea snail, whose natural home is the deep water off a rocky coast. The whole coast of central and lower California, from Cape Mendocino to Cape St. Lucas, abounds in abalones, the supply being absolutely unlimited. As fast as an area of fishing ground is depleted it is repeopled by full grown abalones coming in from the ocean. Three months after a piece of ground has been thoroughly cleared by the abalone fishers the supply is as abundant as ever. The contents of the large abalone shell weigh as much as two pounds.

Long ago the Chinese and Japanese discovered the value of the meat as a wholesome and digestible food. The supply of abalones in Chinese waters is, however, small, and the fishing grounds off the coast of Japan were so heavily drawn upon that they became exhausted. The people are forbidden by an imperial edict from taking them. The Japanese and Chinese in California dive for the abalones, which crawl about the rocks at the bottom of the sea in deep water outside the surf. The divers bring them ashore and spread them out in a sunny place to dry. This process reduces the abalone to about one-third of its original bulk, leaving a tough, horny product. The dried abalones are sent to the orient, where they are soaked and stewed or ground into powder and used for making soup.

In the pure, deep water of the ocean the abalone lives, and as it is a clean feeder its flesh is always sound and wholesome, being superior in this respect to that of oysters and clams, which live near shore and are often contaminated by sewage and other impurities. The viscera of an abalone, unlike those of the clam or oyster, which must be swallowed whole, are quite separate from the muscular or edible part and can be detached by a single stroke of a knife.—Chicago News.

A BUNCH OF FLOWERS.

In Palestine and Persia the "sorrowful mycanthus" droops in the day, being apparently about to die, but revives as evening comes on.

Tulips are so sensitive to the light that during a cloudy day they will often close their petals and remain shut up until a return of sunlight.

Lilies of the valley in France are called "virgin's tears" and are said to have sprung up on the road between Calvary and Jerusalem during the night following the crucifixion.

The night blooming sereus blossoms about an hour before midnight, but by the approach of daylight the flower is a complete wreck, having lost all its beauty and fragrance.

The four podded lotus in an exposed situation makes a cover for its flower by drawing one or more of the leaves over the blossom and keeping them there during the heat of the day.

Wagner and Schumann.

Wagner, writing in 1846, said of Schumann: "He is a highly gifted musician, but an impossible man. When I came from Paris I went to see him. I told him of my Parisian experiences, spoke of the state of music in France, then of that in Germany, spoke of literature and politics, but he remained as good as dumb for nearly an hour. One cannot go on talking quite alone. An impossible man!" Schumann gave an account of this interview, which practically agrees with that of Wagner. "I have seldom met Wagner," he said, "but he is a man of education and spirit. He talks, however, unceasingly, and that one cannot endure for long together."

The Term "Prime Minister."

"Prime minister" is one of the many terms in English which seem to have been slang at one time. It was first applied to Sir Robert Walpole, but in a reproachful sense. Feb. 11, 1742, after twenty years' tenure of office, Sir Robert resigned all his employments. "Having invested me," he remarked, "with a kind of mock dignity and styled me prime minister, they impute to me an unpardonable abuse of that chimerical authority which they created and conferred." Such a personage as the prime minister or the premier is not even mentioned in the official table of precedence and is unknown to the written constitution of Great Britain.

The Live Sponge.

When the sponge is in the sea alive the inside of the pores is covered with a soft substance like the white of an egg. This appears to be the flesh of the animal, and currents of water may be seen running into the sponge through the small pores and out of it through the large ones, and it is supposed that while the water is passing through the sponge the nourishment for the support of the animal is extracted from it.

Both.

"Do you ever swear when your collar buttons roll under the bureau?"

"I keep a man to attend to such things," answered young Mr. Nuritch haughtily.

"The buttons or the swearing?"—Pittsburg Post.

Good News.

Cashier—Have you heard, sir, that John Jones is a bankrupt? Banker—Well, that's good news. We'll now get a fifth of what he owes us, whereas, if he had remained in business, we'd never have got a cent.—Fliegende Blatter.

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But that is not all, we make another offer that every body can get and that is that every worker, who will send us six subscription at one time accompanied by $6.00, we will give a fine porcelain, 30 piece breakfast set or for five subscriptions we will give a handsome stereoscope and 48 colored scenes from all parts of the world. This breakfast set never sold for less than $4.00 and it is worth $6.00 anywhere and the stereoscope and views are worth fully as much as the breakfast set, or if any worker will send us 10 subscriptions accompanied by $10, we will send both these handsome premiums.

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Asheboro, N C.

Rural Public Libraries.

A very interesting report on rural public school free libraries established under the act of 1899 has been prepared by Prof. R. D. W. Connor, of the office of the State superintendent of public instruction. It shows that to date the State has appropriated $15,000 for such libraries, of which $12,590 has been expended, that 1,500 libraries have been provided for and 1,259 established; that 97 counties have one or more such libraries, that 29 counties have the full number, 18, of such libraries. No county is without a library For supplementary libraries the State has appropriated $5,000, of which $1,035 has been expended. A thousand supplementary libraries have been provided for and 207 established, 66 of the counties having one or more of these, and 31 counties having none. It is reported that 107 libraries have been established without State aid. The total number of libraries in the rural schools in the State is 1,366. The total expenditure for libraries, exlclusive of private aid, is $40,875, and the total number of volumes is 1,113,208. The State gives one-third, $10, the county a like sum and the school district the same.

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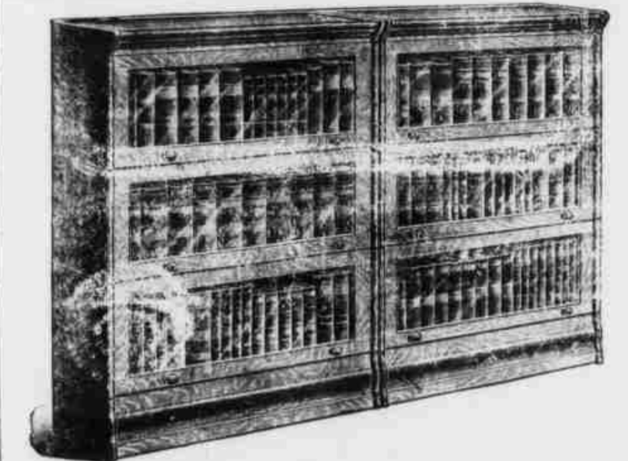

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