

BEAUTY OF MARS.

Wonderful Color and Grandeur Revealed by the Telescope.

Viewed under suitable conditions, few sights can compare for instant beauty and growing grandeur with Mars as presented by the telescope. Framed in the blue of space, there floats before the observer's gaze a seeming miniature of his own earth, yet changed by translation to the sky. Within its charmed circle of light he marks apparent continents and seas, now ramifying into one another, now stretching in unique expanse over wide tracts of disk and capped at their poles by dazzling ovals of white. It recalls to him his first lessons in geography, where the earth was shown him set ethereally amid the stars, only with an added sense of reality in the apotheosis. It is the thing itself, stamped with that all pervading, indefinable hall mark of authenticity in which the cleverest reproduction somehow fails.

In color largely lies this awakening touch that imbues the picture with the sense of actuality. And very vivid are the tints, so salient and so unlike that their naming in words conveys scant idea of their concord to the eye. Rose ochre dominates the lighter regions, while a robin's egg blue colors the darker, and both are set off and emphasized by the icy whiteness of the caps. Nor is either hue uniform. Tone relieves tint to a further heightening of effect. In some parts of the light expands the ochre prevails alone. In others the rose deepens to a brick red, suffusing the surface with the glow of a warm late afternoon. No less variegated is the blue, now sinking into depths of shading, now lightening into faint washes that in places grade off insensibly into ochre itself, thus making regions of intermediate tint the precise borders of which are not decipherable by the eye.

Superimposed upon its general opaline complexion are now and then to be seen ephemeral effects. At certain times and in certain places warm chocolate brown has been known to supplant the blue. Often, too, cold white dots are scattered over the disk, dazzling diamond points that deck the planet's features to a richness beyond the power of pencil to portray. So minute are they that good seeing is needed to disclose them. It is at such moments that color best comes out. To those who know the sun only as golden and the moon as white, even in its color scheme Mars would stand forth a revelation.—Percival Lowell in Century.

Maiden Speeches in the Lords.

By waiting twenty-four years before making his maiden speech Lord Langford exercised an oratorical restraint as rare as in some cases it would be commendable.

The Earl of Rochester in the days of Charles II. was not equally modest, for he took an early opportunity of addressing the house of lords, with disastrous results. "My lords," he began, "I rise this time for the first time—the very first time, my lords—and divide my speech into four branches." Here he paused for a few seconds, grew purple and confused and finally blurted out, "My lords, if ever I rise again in this house you may cut me

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off, root and branches and all, for ever."

Lord Byron was more fortunate, for his maiden effort was declared by Sir F. Burdett to be "the best speech by a lord since the Lord knows when."

Lord Rosebery's maiden speech after three years of silence was a model of modest oratory, opening with a plea for that favor and indulgence which the house always shows to those who address it for the first time, "even in a larger measure on account of my extreme youth and inexperience."—St. James' Gazette.

Not Even "Just as Good."

When it became necessary during the civil war to resort to the draft in order to provide recruits for the Union armies, many men who did not care to go to the front or could not afford to do so organized themselves into clubs or groups for the purpose of mutual protection. When one of their number was drafted an assessment was made upon all of them, and the money thus raised was used in hiring a substitute.

An organization of this kind was formed in a small town in Illinois, and one of the members, a stalwart, fine looking man, was drafted. With the money raised by the stipulated assessment he procured a substitute, a little, wizened faced chap, who looked like a scared rabbit. He took him to the office of the provost marshal.

"Mr. Marshal," he said, "here is my substitute."

"I see," answered the officer dryly as he looked at the two men. "Funny how people like to get the best of the government in a bargain!"

Curious Marriage Customs.

Among the East Indian Gondas a bride is carried on her brother-in-law's back to the house of her friends and is

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made to weep with each of them, while they give her small presents of money. When the ceremony is about to be performed at the bridegroom's house the bride hides in another house and calls "Coo!" and the bridegroom's brother in-law searches for her. As she enters the bridegroom's house two spears are planted before the door to make an arch, and the bridegroom pushes her through, the girl hanging back.

On the day after the wedding the bride and bridegroom throw mud at each other for sport.

Among the Marars all the women of the bridegroom's party are shut up in house with the bride's sister's husband. They all set upon him and beat him, so that he is usually glad to escape as soon as possible.—Pioneer of India.

The Notary in France.

The notary is a most important person in all small country towns in France. Everybody consults him, from the big landowner when he has discussions with his neighbor over right of way to the peasant who buys a few meters of land as soon as he has any surplus funds. We were constantly having rows with one of our neighbors over a little strip of wood that ran up into ours. Whenever he was angry with us, which happened quite often (we never knew why), he had a deep, ugly ditch made just across the road which we always took when we were riding around the property. The woods were so thick and low, with plenty of thorns, that we could not get along by keeping on one side and were obliged to go back and make quite a long detour. The notary did his best to buy it for us, but the man would never sell—rather enjoyed, I think, having the power to annoy us.—Mme. Waddington in Scribner's.

Naturally.

Towne—Sleep well?
Stubbs—Like a top—never lose a wink.

"Great Scott! What do you take?"

"An alarm clock to my room and them set the alarm for half an hour after I go to bed. As soon as it rings I naturally roll over and go to sleep!"—Pick-Me-Up.

Helping Him Out.

Borrow—I say, old man, I wish you would help me out today.

Busman—Haven't time to do it myself, but I'll call the porter. John, open the door and help the gentleman out.—Chicago News.

"The best lightning rod for your protection," says Ralph Waldo Emerson. "Is your own spine."

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