THE BABIES OF PLOUGASTEL

A Part of France Where the Birth Rate Stays Up.

PLOUGASTEL (Finistere, France,)—"No, this part of France, especially the Finistere peninsula, the westernmost point, is not included when they talk about declining birth rate and dearth of babies," said Monsieur le Cure with a smile, tapping his snuff box thoughtfully, "and I doubt if Prof. Charles Richet and M. Leroy Beaulieu had us in mind when they were planning to give bonuses for big families."

The priest had just changed his vestments and had come from the old church after a christening service. It was a strange sight, this ceremony in the gloom of the ancient chapel with the rays of light from the windows overhead falling upon the bowed heads and somber black coats of the men and the mites of creation in their brilliant christening dresses. The bells in the tower were still ringing, and one of the grandmothers on the steps of the church was holding the baby so that all might see it, the mother standing smiling behind and the father proudly distributing sugared almonds and centime pieces to the children that flocked around him.

The sweetmeat stand at the church gate was doing a lively business, and further down the street crowds were gathered around the big red and blue umbrellas of the itinerant dealers in gewgaws for grown-ups and playthings for little ones. The day had been made a Breton holiday, and the women in their brightest shawls, their newest caps and their inky petticoats of varying colors, and the men in knee trousers, coats rich with gilt embroidery, waistcoats in number from two to seven, and in colors from purple and red to orange and yellow, and low black hats gorgeous in red and blue streamers, had all come from miles around to see their own babies and those of their friends christened. A baby was a good institution, and they were all going to see it well started in the world, for christening to these impressionable strongly religious people was its true start.

"We are fond of children here," the priest continued as little ones crowded around him for his blessing, "and although we are perhaps the poorest of the French peasantry, the good Lord has blessed many of the fathers and mothers with large families.

"They are mostly fishermen and sailors those that live along the coast, and further inland small farmers, who wrest a living from the poor soil. The people observe strictly the customs of the past, many of their usages coming from the Middle Ages.

"One of these customs is that all the marriages, or very nearly all, are celebrated on the same day, usually the second Tuesday in the year. Sometimes as many as 75 couples are united on that day, and the church will scarcely hold the bridal parties with their numerous attendants and relatives.

"A great feast follows, and then the gravotte, danced to the music of the bagpipe and the flageolet, continues in the streets and in the houses for days. Then they settle down to the lives that their forefathers for generations have led."

The child occupies an important position in the somber Breton life. Just at the foot of the hill is a little chapel, a place for pilgrimage of those whose babies are weakly, and around the altars are many images of wax, some scarcely more than candles, fashioned by the mothers' own hands, as offerings to the saints, put there by women pleading for strength for their babies.

Near by is a spring where the anxious parent endeavors to discover if her prayers have been answered. She places upon the water the little one's tiny shirt. Should it sink she is filled with sorrow, but if it floats all is well, the child will be strong and healthy.

You will find too simple votive offerings at the roadside shrines or clustered beside some deep wood fountain to which in their simplicity the people ascribe some miraculous power. On the night of St. John's day, when fires blaze on every hilltop, the mothers gather around the crackling branches and wait until the flames have died down. Then they wave their little one over the embers with a prayer that it may be strong if a boy and beautiful if a girl.

But there is enough of sunshine and light in little ones' lives to make Brittany a child's own land. From out of a little stone hut that looks not overclean, there will come as if a cupid from one of Rubens' canvases, the sturdiest-looking little chap imaginable.

You may wonder from what you know of the frailty of child life how he could exist in such surroundings. He waddles over the roadside from the mud and dirt around the door among the pigs and chickens, a rosy bright-eyed picture of health. He runs around as he pleases, plays in the dust of the road, paddles in the water or waits until father comes in with the sardine boat and then romps among the nets and sails.

You may be sure that his mother after her day's work in the field or on the docks with the fishing boats is not going to bother about his dirty face or soiled hands. He doesn't have to sneak off to bed for fear she will call out: "Now, Jean, did you wash your face? Just look at your feet, and you were going to bed in that condition!" His bed is like a clothes press, close up against the wall, with a carving on the front, a hole to let in the air, and a crucifix, and he crawls in with the other little ones and closes the door with never a thought if his face is clean or not.

And, then, just think of all the child lore and child stories that have come from Brittany. If he wants to, he may play in the very castle where cruel Gilles de Retz, whom every French boy and girl believes is the real Blue Beard, killed his wives and did many other wicked things. He can clamber over the ruins and into the very dungeon where the monster imprisoned his victims, but of course he would not wish to go there at night, for old Gilles' ghost haunts the ruins looking for little boys and girls who would pry into secret places.

He has, too, such great rocks and stones to play upon, dolmens and lines of menhirs of whose origin even antiquarians know nothing and which fill all the grown-ups with so much awe. There are wonderful stories told by the old grandmothers of almost every one of these mysterious relics of a forgotten people. If you only know the right stone to go to you can get almost any gift, at least that is what the elders say.

If when father comes home the next morning after being out all night and says that one of these big stones opened and a giant held him prisoner until daylight and mother believes him, should she not also believe a little boy whose hair is wet and his shirt or wrong side front when he says that a sea nymph grabbed him by the foot and dragged him in swimming? And Breton mothers often do believe both of these stories, the father's and the boy's.

The dwarfs that built these menhirs dance about them on starry nights and sing a song which runs "Monday Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday—" but just what was going to take place on all these days no little boy or girl ever found out, since the song must always come to an end after Friday, for Saturday and Sunday are holy days in Brittany, and must not be named by pagan dwarfs.

The devil, the Loup Guillou, hides in lonely woodland paths and chants vespers so drearily that any child passing yawns himself to death—a clever trick of the devil. Lonely pools are haunted by korrigans, the wraiths of heathen princesses who refused Christianity, and however merrily they may be dancing they have got to scurry at the sound of a church bell.

King Arthur and his knights, some people say, had their adventures in this part of the world; but the good priest said that this is a mooted question.

"But," he added very seriously as if not to deprive Breton childhood of any of its legends, "the towers of Lancelot's castle, or Joyous Garde, are still to be seen, as well as the islet of rocks where Tristan hid from his wicked stepmother, and the forest of Broceliande, where Merlin even to this day lies bound in enchantment.

"The peasants call the constellation of the Dipper Arthur's Chariot. His knights still flit through the passes of the Montagnes Noires and some day they will come back under Arthur's own leadership to rescue the Bretons from the hated French rule. His bride sleeps in the Isle of the Golden Apples off the coast, guarded by lines of spouting reefs and watched by the spirits of Breton maids in cap and coif.

"The stories of the pardons, which form such an important part of his parents' life, he learns with all their mysticism and symbolism early in life. He is carried as a babe in arms to his first pardon, and as soon as he can walk tramps happily along in the strange processions with his playfellows. Next to the pardons come the great family reunions. The child goes to the first of these as to the pardons, a babe in arms, and then he continues going until perhaps he is the last of his generation.

"The Breton family reunions seem to express as well as anything the love of Bretons for large families, and the more children that attend them the merrier the occasion. Not long ago a birthday party was celebrated in one of the Finistere villages in which 150 direct descendants of the woman in whose honor it was given were present. Almost all of these descendants lived in the same neighborhood, and they made up about a third of the population of one village. The people early in life have a strong family feeling and a love for home.

"Of the couples that were married a year ago last winter in this old church, forty-seven I think was the number, all have homes of their own, poor even though they may be, and I may add that not one is childless; besides in two homes there were twins and in another triplets.

"In face of this I don't see that the scheme of the learned gentlemen of Paris to give a bonus of 500 francs for a second child and of 1,000 francs for a third and so on to help France on to the desired 1,000,000 additional population yearly had any application to this western province. We might, though, get a good full share of the bonuses."—N. Y. Sun.

HENRY CROSBY EMERY.

Chairman of Taft's new tariff board. He is a professor of political economy at Yale.

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The directory of the Authorities of the Church, just issued. Free at the Deseret News Office, or sent to any address upon receipt of 2c postage.

JOIN IN THE GREAT BARGAIN EXCITEMENT
WHICH THESE PRICES ARE SURE TO CREATE

Monday will be a day of unexampled Business Activity in the Auerbach's Store A day of Wonderful Selling, if we have our way about it and we usually do. :: :: ::

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ONE PRICE TO ALL. NEVER UNDERSOLD.

MONDAY
60c Tapestry Table Covers
4-4 size—greens and reds predominating—Special for Monday—1 to a Customer at each—
29c

MONDAY
35c Hemmed Turkish Bath Towels
Extra heavy, 22 inches wide—54 inches long—Special for one day. Limit 6 to a Customer at each
18c

MONDAY
10c Bleached Shaker Flannel
Double napped—1,000 yards will go Monday. Limit 15 yards to a Customer at a yard—
6½c

MONDAY
The Best $1.00 Hemmed Bed Sheets
None better at any price—2½ yards long and 2¼ yards wide—Special for one day. Limit 6 to a Customer at each—
72c

MONDAY
The 25c Govenor Cotton Batts
Known as a 25c leader everywhere—16 ounce rolls, very fine and fluffy. Special for one day. Limit 6 to a customer at a roll—
19c

MONDAY
$4.00 Satecn Covered Comforts
Beautiful in appearance and finish—new colorings and designs—filled with extra fine cotton—fancy quilted—special for one day. Limit 1 to a customer at each—
$2.28

MONDAY
The 20c Arnold's Superfine Flannelettes
Double fold, the finest made—in swell bordered designs—paisley printings, Japanese, Persian and floring printings—also striped and dotted designs—Special for one day—Limit 8 yards to a Customer at a yard—
12c

MONDAY
35c White English Nainsook
1¼ yards or 45 inches wide—the soft and clingy kind—made of finest Egyptian yarns—Special for one day—Limit 12 yards to a customer at a yard—
17½c

MONDAY
$1.25 and $1.50
Mexican Drawn Work Tray Cloths size 18x27. Hemstitched All Linen Squares size 36x36. Hemstitched Linen Dresser-scarfs, size 18x44. Special for Monday—one each to a customer at each—
77c

MONDAY
65c White Fish Net Curtains
with detached figure in center and an attractive border, 2½ yards long. Special for Monday, 2 pair to a customer at a pair—
36c

MONDAY
Children's UNION SUITS
Up to 85c values at 49c
Children's natural gray or pure white ribbed Union Suits, medium heavy fleeced, regular price according to size up to 85c on sale Monday, all sizes at—
49c

MONDAY
Children's Gowns
Up to 60c values at 35c
Children's Outing flannel gowns in neat pink or blue stripes, regular price according to size up to 60c all on sale at—
35c

MONDAY
Infants' Leggins
60c Values at 35c
Infant's knitted wool leggins in white or cardinal, the best 60c grade on sale Monday at—
35c

MONDAY
Infants' Leggins
Best 75c Grade at 49c
Infants' fancy knitted wool leggins in white or cardinal, best 75c value on sale at
49c

MONDAY
Ladies' GOWNS
Best $1.25 Grade at 75c
Ladies' outing flannel gowns, an excellent heavy quality in all sizes, cut full length and width, best $1.25 grade on sale at—
75c

MONDAY
Ladies' Corsets
Best $1.25 value at 75c
Ladies' C. P. "Justrite" Corsets in this season's best model, all sizes, best $1.25 Corsets on sale Monday at—
75c

MONDAY
Ladies' GOWNS
Best $2.00 Grade at $1.85
Ladies' gowns of fine quality damaskcloth, white ground with neat pink or blue figures, silk feather stitched on collar, yoke and sleeves, all sizes on sale Monday at—
$1.45

MONDAY
Boys' Blouses
35c and 50c Values
—madras, percales and black sateens included—sizes 4 to 14. Special at only—
25c

NEXT WEEK
$1.75 Gray Sheet Blankets
72-4 size—100 pairs in our special sale at a pair
$1.18

NEXT WEEK
$20 BRUSSELS NET CURTAINS And $20 IVORY GENOA POINT CURTAINS
2 magnificent styles—24 pairs in our Special sale at per pair
$10.85

NEXT WEEK
35c and 40c WHITE INDIA LINON
The best ever shown at the above prices, 20 pieces of each in our special sale at a yard
21c

NEXT WEEK
$7.50 and $8.00 White Marseilles BED SPREADS
The finest and largest made—fringed and cut cornered—3 yards long and 2½ yards wide—in our Special sale at each
$3.85

Unmatched and Unmatchable Values in Ladies' Ready-to-Wear GARMENTS and FURS

Special bargains for Monday. New lots that have never been shown before. The whole department bristling with the best garment ideas. Every garment a bargain and many bargains such as these specials:

$35.00 Tailored Suits at $23.95
Unmatchable values in tailor-made suits of chiffon broadcloth, serge, cheylots and homespuns, new long coats, pleated and plain skirts, all the new shades and black. Positively worth $35.00. Special at
$23.95

$22.50 Long Coats $15.00
Unmatchable values in up-to-date long coats of medium and heavy weight kersey, some made plain, others with new pleated effect. Positively $22.50 values, special at
$15.00

$7.50 Silk Waists $4.95
Unmatchable values in handsome silk waists of taffeta and messaline. Taffeta comprise beautiful plaid effects and black, messalines, come in all the new shades, elaborately trimmed with lace to match. Positively $7.50 values, special at
$4.95

$12.50 FUR SETS $8.00
Unmatchable values in mink fur sets, large muff in the pillow variety, long throw to match, beautifully striped, lined with guaranteed satin. Positively $12.50 values, special at
$8.00

NEXT WEEK
25c "Idealean" Flannels
The ideal fabric for suits, pajamas, outing frocks, dressing sacques, wrappers, children's and Misses dresses—non-shrinkable, fast in color—you can't tell it from the Viyella Flannels—50 pieces in our special sale at a yard
19c

NEXT WEEK
Ladies' Knitted Skirts
$1.50 Grade at 99c
Extra good quality wool mixed knitted skirts in black, white and colors, plain or with border, best $1.50 grades at
99c

NEXT WEEK
Ladies' Union Suits
Best $2.50 Value at $1.85
Harvard Make silk and wool mixed hand finished cream white Union Suits, all sizes, best $2.50 grade on sale next week at
$1.85

NEXT WEEK
Neck Ruching
At 25c a Box
Ruchings, 6 neck lengths in fancy box, all white or assorted, best 50c box value on sale at
25c

Extraordinay Sale of all Pure Silk Dress Satins.

85c and $1.00 Quality ALL SILK DRESS SATINS 48c
Monday morning we place on sale 100 pieces of colored, also black cream and white All Silk Dress Satins, our buyer having bought these Silks at Prices away below what it cost the manufacturer to make them, no such values have ever been offered in Salt Lake or elsewhere.
This is a high class all Silk Satin, very firm quality, rich lustrous finish, 19 inches wide in all the new and staple colorings, including rose, catawba, mulberry, smoke, tan, brown, green, cedar, navy, light blue and others and is suitable for gowns and waists. Here is an opportunity to get a high class silk for little money. A Silk worth 85c to $1.00 Monday the sale price per yard
48c

Elegantly Trimmed Hats
Large Hats Small Hats **$7.25** Black Hats Colored Hats
A rich gathering of stylish hats—every one hand-made—Trimmed in the newest and most fetching manner. As there are no two alike, detailed description is impossible and we must therefore, ask you to come and see for yourself what a treat we have in store for you.
Don't care where you look, you'll find nothing to equal them under $12.00 and many stores ask even more for equal style and quality.

A Short List of Surprises to the Consumers of Extra Fine Table Napery
10 pieces of the finest full bleached German Satin Damask Table Linen—will outwear any Damask made. The American Beauty Rose, chrysantheum, fleur de lis, spot, scroll, daisy and empire designs—2 yards wide—Value $2 special for next week, per yard
$1.29
5 Pieces Reed's Celebrated Bleached Double Satin Damask Table Linen, 72 inches wide in single and double borders—in sweet pea, scroll, wild rose, shamrock and ribbon designs—Value $2.25. Special next week, per yard
$1.44

Dress Goods Selling Extraordinary
A couple of Items chosen here and there will prove of Unusual Magnetic Power.

Black and Colored Dress Goods
Twenty pieces of black and colored all wool Dress Goods, comprising Satin Prunellas, striped Prunellas, diagonals, herringbone, serges, shadow stripes, corded venetians, panamas and others, odds and ends closing, values up to $1.25 on sale at per yard
88c

Colored Wool Rainier Cloth
Colored all-wool Rainier Cloth, elegant soft and clingy fabric in self colored shadow stripes in all the new shades, a few of which are Betunia, Burgandy, catawba, cedar, smoke, and others, suitable for gowns and waists, regular value $1.50 on sale, per yard
$1.05

NEXT WEEK
Children's Fleeced Hose
Best 15c grade at 10c pair
Children's fast black heavy fleeced cotton hose in all sizes, the best 15c value on sale at
10c

MONDAY
$9.00
GENOA POINT CURTAINS, BRUSSELS NET CURTAINS, IRISH POINT CURTAINS AND BATTENBERG CURTAINS in our Special sale at a pair
$4.85

MONDAY
$15.00 White All Wool California Blankets
12-4 and 13-4 sizes—extra heavy qualities—In our special sale at a pair
$9.60

MONDAY
$12.50 Silk Mercerized Tapestry Portieres and French Tapestry Portieres
14 styles—rope finished, gimp and tassel finished—In our special sale at a pair
$6.90

Youths' and Boys' Clothing
At Unprecedented Prices
Too large a stock—too little Room—that's the whole secret of this tremendous price cutting in a nutshell. Let the boy miss his school Monday if necessary, such values as these are not given every day.
$3.00 Boys' Suits $1.95
Knickerbocker, Russian Blouse and other styles straight knee pant styles, sizes 6 to 16 in a great variety, also Russian blouse Suits, sizes 2½ to 8. $3.00 values go at
$1.95
$5.00 and $6.00 Boys' Suits $3.35
in all sizes—suits of superior quality and finish, made of the nobblest of fabrics. $5 to $6 values reduced to
$3.35
Youths' Long Pants Suits
300 Suits—sizes 14 to 20 years including values up to $15.00, a limited number of sizes in each of many patterns. Largest quantities in sizes 17 and 18. Your choice of the lot at only
$6.95

The Season's Greatest and Best
Hosiery Values For Ladies and Children
Ladies' silk Lisle Hose, a very fine excellent wearing quality in all the new fall and winter shades, splendid 50c value, our price a pair
35c
Ladies' full fashioned fleeced fast black Cotton Hose in all sizes, the best 35c stocking on sale, at
25c
Ladies Extra fine quality full fashioned black Cashmere wool Hose with gray merino heels and toes, best 75c grade. Special next week at
50c
Children's Saxony knitted fast black hose with merino heels and toes, the best wearing stocking made, regular 35c grades at
25c
Children's fine ribbed Cashmere wool Hose, in an extra durable quality, all sizes, the special price, next week, a pair
35c

FOOTWEAR
of the highest Grade—faultless in fit, finish and fashion—full of service and new values of most unusual types:
Ladies' Kid Shoes
Heavy and light soles, patent tip, blucher cut, sizes 2½ to 8 at per pair
$2.35
Ladies' Kid Shoes
Patent tip, extension sole, military heels, sizes 2½ to 8 at per pair
$2.10
Ladies' Kid Shoes
Extension and light soles, patent tip, sizes 2½ to 8 at per pair
$1.95
Ladies' House Shoes
Plain toe, rubber heels, turn soles, sizes 3 to 8 at per pair
$2.10

NEXT WEEK
The Best $1.00 Quality White All-Wool Flannel
Yard wide and Bellerdyale finished, 10 pieces in our special sale at a yard
69c

NEXT WEEK
Dressing Combs
Best 40c grade at 19c
Large dressing combs in ivory shell, amber, etc., best 40c combs on sale at
19c

NEXT WEEK
Ladies' Gloves
Regular 50c grade at 25c pr.
Ladies' black cashmere gloves, silk lined, all sizes, the best and warmest 50c gloves on sale next week at a pair
25c

NEXT WEEK
LADIES' UNION SUITS
Best $2.00 Grade at $1.39
Fine cashmere ribbed natural gray wool union suits, a fine non-shrinking quality in all sizes, best $2.00 value on sale at
$1.39