

"Reeleegious Deefeculty" on Lonely Rock of St. Kilda.

Parishioners on the Sea-Girt Outermost Isle of the Stormy Hebrides Have Set About Starving the Parson Into a More Orthodox State of Mind, While the Meeneester Thunders to Empty Benches Against a Stiffnecked and Perverse-Generation.

ON the lonely rock of St. Kilda, fifty miles beyond the outermost isle of the stormy Hebrides, a religious warfare is in progress which takes one back to the days when men gave up their lives for their consciences' sake. The pastor of the little community of about eighty souls has had a serious disagreement with his parishioners upon a point of doctrine, and the St. Kildians have set about starving the parson into a more orthodox state of mind, while he, poor man, thunders from his pulpit against a stiff-necked and perverse generation. No food will the stanch Free Kirk people give or sell unto the man who, according to their views, has gone after strange gods and worships in the house of Baal.

Neither will they let supplies be sent to him from the outside world, and as the lonely island is now cut off until next spring from all communication by vessel with the mainland, it seems as if the "Meeneester" must starve or come again into the Free Kirk fold. This little "releegious deefeculty" all came about because of the recent ecclesiastical arrangements in Scotland by which the Free Kirkers were united with the Presbyterians. All Scotland and the islands thereof accepted the new arrangement, excepting only the people of St. Kilda. The Rev. Mr. Fiddes accepted it, and not only that, he commended it. Thereupon the parishioners arose and condemned him. They denounced the union of the churches as a league with the powers of the bottomless pit, and gave their pastor fair warning that he must renounce the union and all its work or suffer the consequences.

Rather would he bring the proud and stubborn people back to their allegiance to their spiritual ruler. He would lay on the rod without sparing. And he been able to would have been a material rod with which he would have chastened their spirits, and he would have laid on and spared not. But, being so greatly outnumbered, the Rev. Mr. Fiddes had to resort to the use of the spiritual rod, which, we may be sure, he wielded with all the grim power of his theology. So the St. Kilda people cut off all his supplies.

Fasting, they said, might bring the pastor to a better state of mind. But the hungerier the Rev. Mr. Fiddes got, the more set in his opinions he became. To be a martyr for conscience's sake is something which a true Scotch dissenter enjoys with a grim satisfaction. Hearing of the minister's plight, some of his sympathizers on the mainland sent out some supplies for him on a steamer sailing from Glasgow. When the steamer arrived at St. Kilda the men came off in their boats and took ashore the goods consigned to them, but refused to touch any of the supplies for the minister.

The minister sent word to the steamer that he would have a boat and men ready at a secluded cove in another part of the island to take off his supplies; but when the steamer went to the designated place to boat or men were there, the St. Kildians had got wind of the minister's intention and had seen to it that the supplies were not taken ashore. So the steamer returned to Glasgow without landing the things sent to the Rev. Mr. Fiddes and left him to his fate.

There was some talk of organizing a relief expedition in Glasgow, but so far as is known, nothing has been done in that direction, and it seems probable that the fight will be fought out without any outside interference. Mr. Fiddes might have left St. Kilda in the steamer which went out with the supplies for him which were not allowed to be landed, but he seemed to do such a thing. He would starve first.

For generations the people of St. Kilda have been ministered to by a succession of devoted pastors, who have acted also as schoolmasters and doctors. Mr. Fiddes has an assistant who has taken upon himself the duties of the schoolmaster. This assistant is standing by his chief nobly, and has elected to starve with the minister rather than accept food and heresy. The pastor has a little globe which he cultivates, and the products of this land are now gathered and stored in the manse. But the land yields little in rugged and rocky St. Kilda, and the product of the globe would not be enough to support the minister and his assistant through the winter. Their only hope of holding out until spring is in catching fish and sea fowl to supplement their stores. The situation has its humorous side, but also its tragic one, for there is no doubt that the minister will starve, and that his parishioners will allow him to, before either side will yield to the other.

St. Kilda lies fifty miles northwest of the outer Hebrides and is in communication with the mainland only from the beginning of June to the end of August. In these summer months it is visited by excursion steamers perhaps half a dozen times; for the rest of the year the inhabitants of the island know as much

of the affairs of the outside world as the Eskimo in northern Greenland. The St. Kildians have a quaint method of their own by which they communicate with the mainland, but which can convey to them no letter in return. When they want to send a letter to the mainland they put it together with coals for the postage, into a tin box or bottle, which is inclosed in a tiny, roughly-shaped boat, with the words, "Please open" cut on the top, and an inflated bladder attached.

This is thrown into the sea at certain tides and so carried by the ocean currents over to the coast of Scotland, or, perhaps, to the coast of Norway. It is sometimes, but not often, picked up at sea. Whoever finds the little boat opens it and forwards the letter as requested. The dwellers along the coast of Scotland and Norway all know the little St. Kilda boats when they sight them, and, though a letter from the island is sometimes a long time on the way, it is seldom that one of them does not reach its destination ultimately. Sometimes they do so in remarkably quick time.

The people of St. Kilda form one of the most picturesque little communities in the world.

The men of the little island are all strong and sturdy, deeply religious according to their lights, and much attached to the cliffs and barren shores of their far northern home. Some of them spend all their lives on the island or the waters which sweep around it, and have no desire to go beyond the islands and seas their fathers knew. They fish and gather the sea birds and their eggs for their livelihood. The eggs of the sea birds they gather at the imminent risk of their lives, from the cliffs of the vast crags which rise perpendicularly from the waters, hanging over the face of the crags by ropes made largely of hair. A youth of St. Kilda considers himself rich if he has a rope into which is woven hair from the head of his "best girl."

All the women of St. Kilda save their "combs" in order that they may be woven into the rope by which their husbands are saved from the dizzy heights when they go to gather the eggs of the sea fowl.

Around the crags of St. Kilda wheel in flocks thousands of "the fulmar flying free," and these birds are captured in great numbers by the St. Kildians. From the sale of their feathers a considerable profit is derived, that is, considerable to the St. Kildians, for their wants are simple and few, and they are not so greedy as some of the hard and gloomy as their native crags and as unlovely as their sterile shores. Perhaps it is their wild and rugged surroundings, the constant dwelling in a place where the nature is so wild and terrible that it takes on the semblance of the supernatural, that affects their minds and tincture their religion with these somberness and hard and unbending characteristics. When, after their hard, rude lives, the people of St. Kilda come to die, their bodies are buried in burying grounds as unlovely as can be imagined. Round places on the barren hillsides, where an opening in the cliffs makes a little place for a cove and a sloping bank, are encircled by rude stone walls, and there these people lie, awaiting that final trump in stern and gloomy majesty.

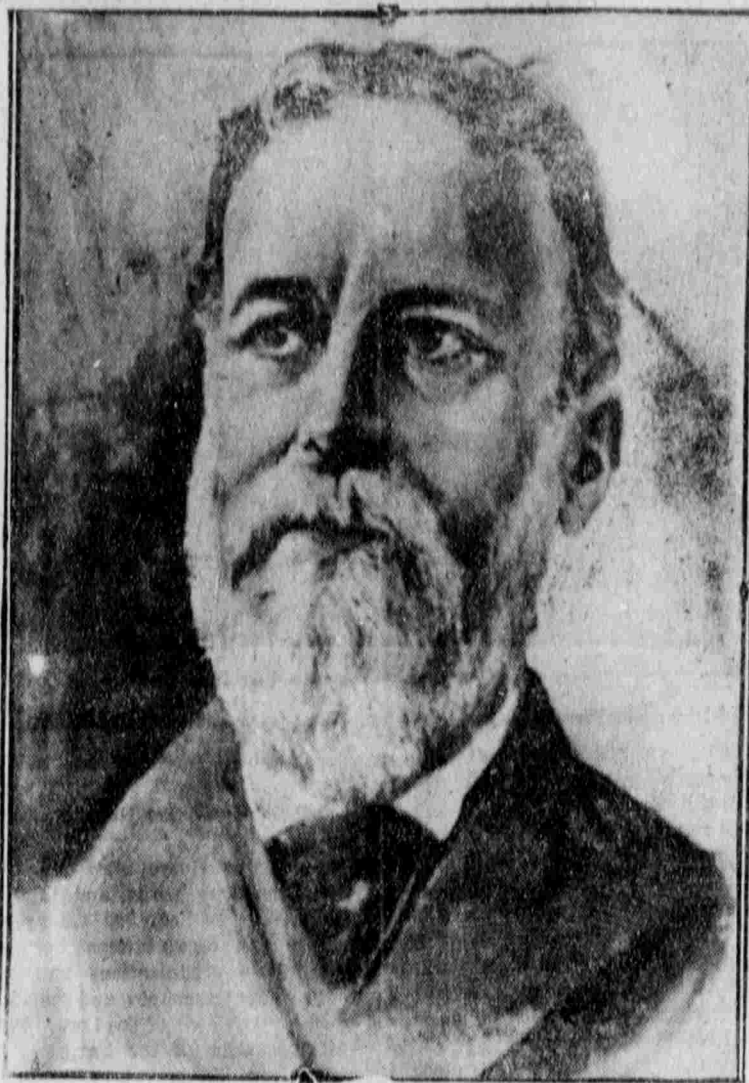
All the world will be interested to know the outcome of the present situation in St. Kilda. It is such a unique situation, and so out of gear with this age and its prevailing spirit, that it attracts with an irresistible fascination. It seems as if the story of the "releegious deefeculty" in St. Kilda ought to be written by Ian Maclaren. He never imagined, even in his best moments, a situation which had more possibilities in it for a man of his peculiar genius than is afforded by the situation in St. Kilda.—Washington Post.

A "JUDICIOUS" BUYER.

One of the younger proprietors of one of the big department stores up town, that advertises "bargain sales" on a special pronounced day every week, has been winning all his expenses by betting with his coterie in Delmonico's that Russell Sage would be one of the first to arrive at his store on the morning of the marked down disposals. He knew from experience that the veteran financier rarely in the spring and fall misses one of these "clearings out." Mr. Sage picks up bargains in all sorts of things which he can find use for, from a pair of trousers (\$3.50—original price \$7) to a small kitchen utensil marked down from 5 cents to a penny apiece.

"If every one would be as judicious in their buying as I am," Mr. Sage once observed to the narrator of this true story, "there would be less poverty and the mortification and suffering resulting therefrom. Nearly every one is living beyond his means."—New York Times.

HAS CONFIDENCE IN NEW GOVERNOR.



President Roosevelt places great confidence in Thomas B. Ferguson when he has appointed governor of Oklahoma. Major Ferguson is a strong Democrat, and was appointed minister to Norway and Sweden by President Cleveland. He is widely known and honored in the capital.

IF YOU CAN'T SLEEP,

TRY SOME OF THESE SUGGESTIONS.

If people can't sleep these scientific bits of advice may aid them. Drugs should be taken only when all natural methods fail.

First comes the digestion. Any disorders affecting it should be attended to before the sleeplessness question is taken

up. Then come the simple, so-called home remedies that are not always thought of at home, but which are frequently sufficient.

First of all should be mentioned a well ventilated room, not heated above 50 degrees Fahrenheit; 55 degrees is better for an ordinary adult. Old people require more heat. The bed clothing

should not be too heavy. Use blankets rather than quilts and comforters. They do not weigh as much for the same amount of warmth.

Try counting plain numbers or when leaving over a wall or repeating over and over again some meaningless phrase.

If this is insufficient try bathing. Either a hot or a cold plunge is frequently efficacious. Care must be taken not to prolong the bath too much. If the sponge bath or the foot bath. The latter is frequently of use when made hot with a draught of tea or mustard water. Then, after a brief rubbing down, the patient is ready for bed. Bathing should be absolutely the last thing done. There should be no further duties of any sort, not even to go to see if the front door is locked, if the windows are properly arranged in case of an unexpected shower, if the furnace is in proper condition for the night.

Again, some people will sleep if they simply change their room, or by sleeping alone if they have been sleeping with someone else, or by having a faint ray of light instead of absolute darkness.

Then massage is useful. If there is a competent masseur or masseuse at hand he or she may be employed to give a regular course of treatment, care being taken to insist on the movement being made slowly. If there is no trained assistant at hand there may be some one who can be taught how to rub the head and feet. As a hypnotist rubbing the face very slowly and evenly is about as good as anything. It may take a long while—even an hour—but as a rule after a hot bath, if it is done slowly and evenly, the patient will sleep in a very few minutes, and will sleep in from a quarter to half an hour. Or about the same efficacy is rubbing the head, but it is harder to do well. It must be insisted upon that there be no conversation, laughing or anything like that. The process need not be funeral, but it should be quiet, with little or no light in the room.

Coming now to a little more medicinal treatment, it is found that a copious hot drink of almost anything may be useful—for example, hot milk or beef tea. In the a.m. a cup of black coffee of caffeine, one-half to one grain at tea time or on retiring may improve the cerebral circulation so as to induce sleep. Where the sleeplessness is due to over-fatigue one may be able to convert the fatigue into plain natural tiredness by a little stimulant.—New York Journal.

Stood Death Off.

E. B. Munday, a lawyer of Henrietta, Tex., once fooled a grave-digger. He says: "My brother was very low with malarial fever and jaundice. I persuaded him to try Electric Bitters, and he was soon much better, but continued their use until he was wholly cured. I am sure Electric Bitters saved his life." This remedy expels malaria, kills disease germs and purifies the blood; aids digestion, regulates liver, kidneys and bowels, cures constipation, dyspepsia, nervous diseases, kidney troubles, female complaints; gives perfect health. Only 50c. at Z. C. M. I. Drug Dept.

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