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CUSTOMS AND MANNERS OF THE WELSH NATION.

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One of the most historic, and surely one of the best defined nations in the world is this little productive Welsh nation; and yet, of all nations of historic note it is blessed, or shall I say cursed, with the least written history.

We look in vain over the tiers of books upon the shelves of our great libraries for a well finished and concise history of this nation. Perhaps its country having attached itself, and become identified with the dominating and aggressive English nation, as a principality, it has become overshadowed, amalgamated, and subordinated to the greater nationality.

Even the biographer is silent to an alarming degree as to the lives of eminent Welshmen. Men who could compete with the most famous in literature, art and war of all nations; men who fought in the Irish and Scotch campaigns; who distinguished themselves in the Peninsular war; and who repeatedly won renown on the continent in the armies of Wellington, the Duke of Marlborough and following other distinguished revolutionary movements, are scarcely mentioned in the chronology of events.

We would naturally look for some peculiar bias, neglect or ignorance; but we stop to advert to the interrogation:—Who writes history? Not he that made it. Save a few noted egotists like Napoleon and Alexander. The man that makes history seldom takes time to sit down and write it.

Will any one attribute this peculiar dearth in Welsh history to the customs and manners of the people? Such is unquestionably the case. This people has three great faults. How many more is a question for conjecture and may be a matter of opinion. But these three faults distinctively mark them as a people. The first is modesty; the second is jealousy, and the third is a self-decrying.

Naturally enough we would conclude that modesty is an excellent and an abiding quality. But to be so modest that we tell the literary and social pendant:—"As you now have stolen my coat, the great moral preceptor gives you license to take my cloak also," destroys every vestige of noble humanity, and individual self-reliant manhood and womanhood.

Modest childhood, and modest womanhood still suggests a charm that soothes, but a modest man, in the common acceptance of the term, is about as useless as an engine without motive power. He is as much the despised in business as he is the buffoon in society.

A Welshman loves approbation; but he sits in silence and hugs the delusive phantom of hope that some one, whose intellectual ken is superfine, will yet discover his great gifts, and be generous enough to give to the world the benefit of it. He forgets in his case that there was but one Elijah—that there was but one Paul. He will not learn that, "Root hog or die," has to a degree displaced the more euphonious motto, "E pluribus unum."

It was a very modest request, that made of King Edward of England, in the year 1282, when, after the death of that most puissant of Welsh heroes, King Llewellyn, in the last great decisive battle between the English and Welsh, and the subsequent beheading of David, the king's brother, the people asked, as one of the terms of peace, that they be governed by a prince of their own country. But when the condition was accepted the astute and not over-scrupulous English king presented the over-credulous and deluded Welshmen with his own son, who, by dint of the accidents of birth, had been opportunely born a few days before, in the Welsh castle of Caernarvon.

The accidental potentate infant was then and thereupon "dubbed" by this strange investment with the title of Prince of Wales; which inexplicable titles has ever since been borne by the eldest sons of the kings of England; and the Welsh have modestly accepted the conditions, until England has acquired a sort of kingly prescription of our country and its people. This failure to demand, and claim rights that are unquestionably one's own bears too close a resemblance to intellectual servitude.

Modesty! I repudiate the term. Is it, as Dr. Storr says, less modest to tell a man that, if he goes over the great falls of Niagara that he will surely drown, than to say to him that if he takes that terrible plunge he will surely get his feet wet? We are in the world to deal with truths, not with phantoms; and we are as much entitled to the rank of noblemen as the bedizened representatives of any kingly court. When it is said that God calls upon us to be kings and priests unto him forever, He means us; and He does not give us any credit for mock modesty in answering, "Here am I, send me," was not the answer of a modest man. It was the answer of a hero, who knew that he was called, and would let no man answer for him.

There is no element in human nature that works more baneful results, both to the one that entertains it, and to the one against whom it is directed than jealousy; and with the Welsh people this has ever been a crying fault and sin.

Like the idolatry of the Jews it confronts them in every enterprise. Bondage, freedom, paradise, all still marred by this manufactured sentiment of hatred for the success of one's own neighbors and countrymen. It is so strong in its irresistible effects that it creates in this people—the noblest hearted people generally—the spirit of ingratitude; and this vice has been denominated by the great English poet and delineator of character, as the "king of vices."

Not only was this one of the sad faults of the primitive Welsh, but it has forever permeated the entire national life of this people. Sir Watkin W. Wynn had no lasting renown among his people and kin; but abroad, and in the esteem of other men and nations he won a world-wide reputation; though, to the minds of some, this man has no honorable lustre, he should have the same credit among celebrated men, as other eminent butchers.

In military discipline and in state-craft none have excelled our people, yet it is painfully apparent that the old demon jealousy has worked to destroy the results and products of the most celebrated geniuses in the annals of human races.

The almost invincible King of the Britons, Caswallon, or according to Goldsmith and Hume, more properly named, Cassibelaunus, was defeated, not by the cohorts of Julius Caesar, but by the jealous quarrels of the Princes of the royal blood. Disintegration became manifest; and, to hasten the disorder, one of the disaffected sent a message to Caesar, when that great monarch had abandoned hope of the conquest of Britain, and promised him all the assistance in his power to conquer his own kinsman, the inveterate Caswallon. The ambitious Caesar needed no great inducement to attempt what once had been a total failure, and he saw that the man who had conspicuously made himself known to the world as his superior in military achievements in his power by the trick of a traitor. Envy and hatred prevailed where the sword could not, and Rome for the first time in her history stood "on her seven hills and ruled the world."

Our beloved country fell among the trophies of that hated power that knew no stronger passion than avarice.

It was, perhaps, from a scholastic point of view, a good result. Nations have imbibed good from the conquered, but usually the conquered receive the manners and customs of the victors. Welshmen soon became as conversant with the Latin language as the modern Welsh gentry are with the English. It served to enrich the already concise mode of speech known as the Welsh language. As experience increases lan-