

## BALDUR, THE GOOD.

"Before Christianity was brought to Denmark," said the old Danish housewife, "the people believed in strange goddesses, who were called the Asar. Many stories were told about them and their doings, but the best of all is that of Baldur the Good."

"He had been very happy until he began to dream that he was about to be killed, and he told his fears to the Asar, who held congress to decide what to do, and how to ward off the danger that threatened him."

"Where would this danger come from? From fire or water or iron? From bird or beast or flower? At last they decided to wait on Baldur's mother, old Frigga, and get her to beg of all things not to harm her beloved son."

"The mother was glad to be sent on such a mission, though to compass it she must go all around the world."

"So she started on her journey, and the first she came to was Fire."

"Fire, Fire," said she, "I am Frigga, the mother of Baldur the Good. He dreams dreams and sees visions, and they portend him danger and me sorrow. Will thou take an oath, oh, Fire, not to harm Baldur the Good?"

"Fire listened and answered:

"I can be fierce and cruel but will not harm Baldur the Good."

"Then Frigga thanked him, and went to Steel."

"Oh! Steel," she said. "I am Frigga, and I come to beg thee to take an oath that thou wilt not harm Baldur the Good, who is in fear of danger for he has dreamed woeful dreams."

"I take the oath," said steel. "I can be sharp and dangerous, but will spare Baldur the Good."

"Then Frigga went to Water."

"Oh, Water," she said, "will thou take an oath to me to spare Baldur the Good? I, thy mother, Frigga, implore you."

"And Water replied:

"I can be cold and I can destroy, but I will spare Baldur the Good."

"And so old Frigga went to all the metals, to all the trees, to all the flowers, to poisons, to snakes, to wild beasts of the forest, to volcanoes, to thunder and lightning, to the earthquakes, until she had seen them all; and they all took the oaths, and Frigga returned to her son and told the Asar that he was safe, for everything that could do harm had promised to spare Baldur.

All were convinced and happy but Baldur, who still dreamt dreams of ill-omen.

"So, to convince him that nothing could harm him, the Asar led Baldur the Good to a great hall, and there tested all the things that had vowed to spare him."

"They shot at him. They threw stones at him. They cast him into flames. Nothing touched him. So all were laughing and merry, while Frigga sat at her door resting. And up the road came an old woman, very feeble and poor, as it seemed who said to Frigga:

"Welcome, after thy journey."

"And Frigga did not know her for a wicked and cruel Asar, who hated Baldur the Good."

"I am returned, good gossip," Frigga said, "and I have done my work well. Nothing harms my Baldur. They have tested the faith of all things, and I am happy. I rest, as you see, after going around the world."

"Cannot steel or flame hurt him?" asked the old woman.

"Not they," said Frigga. "Oh, I did my work well! All things have sworn, even birds and beasts, and the snakes and bugs. I begged an oath of everything but a little green wifie of mistletoe that grows close down here; an innocent young thing, not worth offering an oath to—not old enough or big enough."

"The wicked old Asar wanted to hear no more, but went her way, looked for the wifie of mistletoe, found it, and went to where the Asar were collected, amusing themselves with proofs of the safety of Baldur the Good. She dared not enter, but she saw at the door a young brother of Baldur's who was blind."

"Why are they all throwing things at Baldur? Why do they fire at him?" she asked. "Do they wish to kill him?"

"No," said the youth. "They rejoice that all things have taken an oath not to harm my brother, Baldur the Good. They are testing the oaths. All keep them,"

"Why do you not join them?" asked the old woman.

"I am blind," said the boy. "I might hit some one else, or be hit myself."

"Poor child!" said the cruel old Asa. "But take part in the sport. Here I have a little innocent green wifie of mistletoe. Throw it over the heads of the others at Baldur the Good, so that you may say you also rejoiced and tested the oaths of all things not to harm him."

"The boy laughed and held out his hand.

"The wicked Asar laid the mistletoe in it."

"Cast it, she said."

"The boy hurled it merrily through the air. It struck Baldur the Good just above the heart and pierced it. Yes, the little wifie passed straight through him, and his life blood began to flow."

"It is as I dreamed," he cried, and Baldur the Good was dead."

Mr. Dozier, of St. Louis, the baker, has been rolling the French bread as a sweet morsel under his tongue ever since he arrived in Paris, and wondering "how in thunder they make it so crisp and put that glaze on it." "I went into the bakery to-day and found out all about it," he now declares, his face beaming with happiness; "and I'll make bread just like it in America. It is simply a matter of allowing a spray to fall upon the dough as it goes into the oven."

A thing some time ago made his confession to an English officer. He had committed 700 murders, but plaintively said: "Ah, sir, if I had not been a prisoner twelve years the number would have reached a thousand."

The divided skirt is becoming more popular in London every day. It is only worn beneath the ordinary skirt.

## How Bowser Shaved Himself.

"Mrs. Bowser, do you know how much time the average man consumes per week in getting shaved?" queried Mr. Bowser, as he entered the house the other evening with a parcel under his arm.

"I do not."

"Well, I figure at an hour and a half, to say nothing of the expense. One runs many risks by shaving in a public place."

"And?"

"And I shall hereafter shave myself. I can do it in seven or eight minutes, at a cost of less than two cents, and I run no risk of having my throat cut by some lunatic."

"Well, I hope you'll make a success of it, but—"

"There you go! Did I ever attempt anything you didn't discourage?"

"But you know you tried it twice and gave it up, and threw your outfit away in disgust."

"And why? Because some one used my razors to cut kindling wood!"

"Mr. Bowser!"

"At least it appeared that way to me, and I got a lame arm and we went off on a visit, and there were several other reasons. From this time forward I shall shave myself, and I shall begin after supper."

After supper he prepared himself with three towels and a quart of hot water, and went up stairs to begin operations. I crept softly up and took a seat on the landing just as Mr. Bowser had removed coat and vest and collar, and was mixing the lather. While he was soaping his face I heard him growl several times, and afterwards ascertained that it was caused by his jabbing the brush into his mouth and eyes by mistake. About one-half of the lather was deposited on his shirt front before he got through. He was just seventeen minutes getting ready for the razor, and when he took it up I heard him mutter:

"This thing handles mighty awkward; if that fellow has gone and sold me a left-handed razor I'll prosecute him to the last ditch!"

He held it in various positions to get "the hang," and when he finally got it he made a careful motion along his right cheek. To his great delight he didn't cut his head off. On the contrary he shaved off a whole spoonful of lather, and I heard him chuckling:

"Egad! But I'm getting there with both feet! No barber could beat that!"

Mr. Bowser wears a mustache, and is proud of it. At the third or fourth shave along his cheek one end of the mustache got in the way of the razor, and a share of it was carried overboard, so to speak.

"By thunder," gasped Mr. Bowser, as he regarded the damage, and he carefully washed all the lather off that side to closer inspect the calamity. Investigation proved that the damage was not beyond repair, and he renewed the lather and I heard him chuckling:

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Mr. Bowser must have removed as many as two hairs from his face, and he uttered fully 100 sighs and grunts. He made a careful motion along his right cheek. To his great delight he didn't cut his head off. On the contrary he shaved off a whole spoonful of lather, and I heard him chuckling:

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The mound builders, the predecessors of the American Indians, were a civilized and commercial race. They dressed in woven cloth, and had a wide trade.

Copper from the Superior mines was exchanged for staples from the Atlantic and Gulf States. There is a mound at Cahokia, Ill., 600 feet square and 100 feet high.

The long clam has no head. That curious flexible muscle which he sticks up through the sand is not a head, but merely a pump with which he feeds himself. It possesses two canals or tubes, through one of which the clam draws in water, which, after depositing whatever nutriment it contains, is expelled through the other.

Geologically America is the oldest continent, older than Europe, Asia, or Africa. The first earth that appeared above the surface of the molten globe is the Caenian ridge of granite stretching from Newfoundland to Lake Superior.

A patient German professor reports that he has numbered the hairs of the head, with the following average: Blonde head, 140,000 hairs; brown, 109,440; black, 102,963; red, 88,750; A woman's hair weighs fourteen ounces.

## INTERESTING SCIENTIFIC POINTS.

Zoologists, whose study it is to compare the structure of different animals, tell us that the butterfly and lobster are so nearly alike that the former might be called the lobster of the air and the latter the butterfly of the sea.

Human life is increasing in length over the world as sanitary conditions are better understood. In England 200 years ago the mortality was one in thirty-three each year; now it is only one in sixty.

There are stars in the sky that are rushing directly towards each other at the rate of fifty miles a second, but seem no nearer each other than they did 300 years ago. This shows how enormously distant they are.

In Zambesi, in Central Africa, mosquitoes are so large that the inhabitants tame them and yoke them to a plough and compel them to perform manual labor. They sing cheerfully at their toil and are fed on cheap captives. (N.B.—This item is intended to be read only by Jerseymen.)

Snow is not white. This may seem a strange assertion, but it is true. In a room entirely dark snow is perfectly black. It is composed of crystals which seem white by the manner in which they reflect light.

The celebrated cliff builders whose ruined homes are still found in caves along the sides of the Colorado canyon, built some stately mansions. One, now in ruins in Chico canyon, was four stories high and 600 feet long, and must have been as imposing as any building in this country except the capitol at Washington.

Brehm asserts that wild baboons were caught in Africa by being made drunk on rum exposed in pans in the woods. "On the following morning they were very cross and dismal; they held their heads with both hands and wore a most pitiable expression." A man ape in the London zoological garden has learned to do this.

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## CONCERNING WOMEN.

Miss Otilie Thomas, stenographer and typewriter, is said to be the only American girl who had charge of an exhibit at the Paris exposition.

There are 815 women who have obtained the LL. D. degree of St. Andrew's university since 1857, and there are more candidates this year than ever before.

There are many more applicants for admission to Smith College for Women at Northampton, Mass., than can be accommodated. It is a melancholy fact that nearly all the professors of the gentle sex at this college are unmarried.

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Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds, prominent members of the First Baptist church of this city, say the Minneapolis Journal, are telling an amusing story in which the two were the chief characters. The scene is laid in Paris. Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds recently made a lengthy European trip. While in Paris, they were patrons of a fashionable hotel. Several months before leaving for the tour abroad Mrs. Reynolds assiduously applied all her energies to studying the French language. She was an unusually apt scholar. When the time for leaving home came Mrs. Reynolds' teacher congratulated her upon the rapid manner in which she had mastered the language, and Mrs. Reynolds personally believed she was proficient enough to cope with the Parisians in their own tongue when the great metropolis should be reached.

Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds spent many a pleasant day in Paris, and only have in remembrance one brief half day of agonizing misery. It happened this way:

In Parisian hotels the attachés are suave and obliging. One afternoon Mr. Reynolds journeyed down town alone. When Mrs. Reynolds found herself ready to leave her apartments, she turned to the bright-eyed waiting maid, and with the best French at her command told the girl to tell her husband, when he returned, that she had gone down into the public parlor, where she would wait for him.

"Oui, madame," replied the girl with a knowing smile and a low courtesy. It was evident the girl had had such commands given her before.

Mrs. Reynolds passed down to the public parlor. She waited a full hour for her husband, and by this time became very nervous over his non-appearance. She went up stairs and went out upon the verandah. When nearly opposite her apartments she heard strange sounds from within. Passing quickly to the window, she was thunderstruck to see her husband pacing the floor at a lively gait, gesticulating wildly with his hands, and muttering savagely. Even ananon he would try the door. It would not open. Mrs. Reynolds ran to his assistance; opened the door; the girl was found and then followed general explanations. Mrs. Reynolds had tripped him up, so to speak. The girl understood her to say she should lock her husband in when he returned, and she obeyed orders. Both Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds afterward enjoyed the joke lighly.

Thereafter, however, Mrs. Reynolds insisted that the language of her forefathers was good enough for her.

## SAVED A LIFE.

Solomon Isackson—Haf you heard the news, Shaboc, dot I hav saved dose lifes of Rhuben Cohen this morning airtry?

"Nein, mein frenkt, how was dot?"

"He fell off de dock end couldn't swim."

"Und you schumped in und hellupped him out."

"Ach, du lieber! I schreams: 'Come und und I pay you dot ten dollar I owe you, and I climb dots water out like a doock.'—Time."

He Had Degenerated.

"My dear sister, you should make a point of blushing when the duke speaks to you."

"But I can not."

"Then the duke is not the man he used to be."—[Pick-Me-Up.]

## A Toss-Up for a Nomination.

Judge Elijah Robinson, of Louisville, Ky., is at the Midland, says the Kansas City Times. Judge Robinson is one of the best-known politicians in Central Missouri. He has twice made the race for the Democratic nomination for congress in the seventh congressional district, and each time missed it by but a scratch.