

A STRANGE FERRY.

BY R. GRAY, M. D.

If one should find himself on the banks of a swiftly flowing Himalayan river, too deep to ford, too full of rocks to be crossed by a boat, the current too strong for any swimmer to breast unaided, too wide for a temporary bridge, and yet men, women, and children, as well as goods, to be carried over, he would naturally stand nonplussed as to how it could be done. This very problem, however, confronts the villagers who live on the borders of these rivers, and their ingenuity has contrived a ferry, safe, sure, and quite rapid in its operation; and since ingenuity is at a premium everywhere a short account of this ferry will not be out of place in this land of bridges over the water, ferries on the water, and tunnels under the water.

During my travels in the interior of the Himalayas I found myself, one day in May, on the banks of the large river Kali, which is the boundary between English territory and the native State of Nepal.

Many miles to the south of my position was a fine iron suspension bridge, which had been built by the two governments, and with this exception no other had been allowed, so that the collection of custom duties might be the more easily made. But in addition to the aversion inherent in every man to custom duties there was also this difficulty in using this solitary bridge, that a long journey was necessary to reach it. Apparently the people were helpless, for the Kali was just such a stream as has already been described, but they had found a short cut and at the same time made smuggling easy.

As I sat in front of my tent on this May morning I was surprised to see a man appear on a large rock almost immediately opposite and wave a flag. That it was a well-known signal I had evidence at once in the sudden activity in the village, which was but a few hundred yards distant from my tent. The country on the opposite side of the river was a dense jungle, and it flashed upon my mind that this was one of the ferries used by the people in crossing the river, and that a rare opportunity was presented to see the manner in which it was conducted. Smuggling was carried on only at night, with great secrecy; but as there was no restriction upon the carriage of passengers concealment was unnecessary at this time. I, therefore, at once descended from the bluff on which the tent had been pitched, to the bank of the river.

Reaching the shore I found that several men had already come from the village, in response to the signal, and had brought with them a large number of gourds, tied together in bundles of considerable size. These gourds were of a peculiar shape and enormous size, having long curved necks and rounded bodies. They had been dried with great care, so that the shells would not crack, and were now fastened together by their necks in such a manner that they could not be broken by coming into contact with each other.

When the gourds had been collected on the bank of the river, a loose bag of strong cloth was fastened firmly to the necks of the gourds in such a manner that, when in the water, the weight of a man would drag the necks down and enable him to stand erect in the bag, while the bodies of the gourds floated on the surface of the water above him. The adjustment of the gourds to the weight was so arranged, by adding or diminishing the number of gourds, that the passenger would sink to the armpits in the water. This effectually prevented all chance of a sudden somersault into the river and made the whole arrangement quite steady.

One of the men from the village at once prepared to cross the river by stripping himself of all superfluous clothing, as he would do for a bath; and, the gourds having been brought to the water and launched, he took his place in the bag, fastening so many pieces of bamboo in its sides so that they would remain open. Then he fastened a light but extremely strong rope about his waist, giving the other end into the hands of those on shore. A second rope of the same sort, that he had fastened about his waist, was carefully coiled to carry along with him. These simple arrangements being completed, he was pushed from the bank by those on the shore. The current at once seized him, he was conveyed rapidly down and somewhat across the stream, aiding his course across meanwhile by his own efforts.

Those on shore carefully watched him as he rushed along on the current and paid out rope so long as they saw that the swimmer was out of the way of any rocks. It was not long before they perceived, however, that he would certainly strike a large rock near the center of the stream if allowed to go on as he was then going. This was a critical moment, for if the man had struck the rock it would have ended beyond a doubt in the gourds being broken and his life endangered, owing to the great force of the current. He was rapidly approaching it, and I held my breath, thinking they had miscalculated and he must be dashed on the rock in one moment more.

But those on the shore had been through the same experience many times before, and knew just what to do and when to do it to avoid the danger. At the very moment when some interference was needed they ceased paying out rope, and, bracing themselves, held firmly to it. The rope grew taut at once, and the swimmer was thereby made to swing round the arc of a circle, which changed his course sufficiently to carry him below the rock in safety. The rope was then loosened and allowed to run out, while the man renewed his efforts to make a passage across the stream, and after several such experiences he was safely landed on the opposite shore, though at a considerable distance down the stream.

When I saw the exceedingly dangerous character of this first crossing and the means that were taken to avoid rocks I naturally wondered how they were avoided in the night, when smuggling operations were carried on. Inquiry on this point brought out this information: that on these occasions the swimmer took but two gourds of small size as life preservers, and depended on his skill in swimming to make the passage across. However, it happened at times that men were drowned in this work.

On emerging from the water the man who had crossed took the coiled rope which he had carried with him, and, tying it to the rope which had been fastened about his waist then tied both securely to the bundle of gourds. When this was done he made a signal to those on the opposite shore to pull on the rope which they had retained. His voice could not be heard because of the roar of the water, but the village men understood the signal and commenced to draw the

gourds back across the river, the man who had already crossed meantime paying out his rope. When the gourds had been safely returned the man on the opposite side made his way up to a point nearly opposite the starting place.

It was decided to send across another man to aid the one already over, and this individual started as the other had done, and was immediately hurried down the stream by the current. But as he started on his rapid course down those on the side he had just left kept the rope in their hands fairly taut, allowing it to run out slowly, while the man on the opposite side pulled away manfully at his. The result was that in a very short time he was pulled across, and that with very little loss in descending the stream. There were now two men on the opposite side to pull, and the added strength would enable the passage to be made much more rapidly.

The ferry was now in full working order and the passengers made their preparation to cross. There were two women and three men in their party, and the women were sent over first. Their few goods were made up into small bundles which they placed upon their heads. This they could easily do, for they were not required to make any effort themselves in crossing, and they were soon pulled over. The gourds were then returned, and one by one the men were safely brought over.

Under ordinary circumstances the man who had crossed from the village would now return, but my own curiosity regarding this novel ferry had risen to such a height that nothing short of an actual trial of it would satisfy its demands. I therefore asked if there were any objections to my making a trip across, and being assured that it would give them great pleasure to ferry me over and back I at once made my preparations for the attempt.

Stowing myself in the bag I raised my hand as a signal to the two men on the opposite side to pull on their rope. They did so very vigorously, and the result was that I took a sudden plunge which nearly deprived me of my breath. Then I realized for the first time the peculiar feeling of helplessness one has in the grip of a powerful current; it seemed as though great powerful hands had seized me and were trying to pull me down, down, into the depths of the water.

There was, however, another and more trying reason for my loss of breath. I had not supposed that the water would be very cold at that season; but this was a snow stream, and the water just at that time was for the most part melted ice and snow, so that, coming as it had but a comparatively short distance, it was almost as cold as ice-water and into this I had plunged. What wonder was it that I had nearly lost my breath and shrieked with the sudden plunge? I had wondered why the men on the opposite shore had kindled a fire soon after they had landed, but a few moments' experience in this ice bath made me long for a share of the warmth of the fire.

The men pulled vigorously, the stream dashed up into my face, the roar of the water was almost deafening, I was growing colder and colder every moment, and the trip, which was made in a short time, seemed to occupy an hour. At last I landed; the fire was blazing up, and it was not long before my circulation was restored and the warm glow that succeeds a cold bath followed. In a short time I was ready to try the return journey, which was made safely.

One of the men on the opposite side followed me, and then the remaining one was pulled over in the same fashion that had been used in getting him over in the first place. It was an experience never to be forgotten, and many times since my mind has gone back to that Himalayan ferry, and the verdict has always been that for novelty it has never, probably, been equaled.

Dishorned Cattle.

William Horne, V. S., in *Country Gentleman*:—We are getting the fruits I said would surely come. One stockman had 60 cows dishorned, and in seven weeks the milk fell from thirteen to nine pounds, and he says that many of them are ruined altogether. I know of quite a number of animals whose heads are nearly rotted off. Five absolutely breathe through the enlarged apertures whence the horns came off. I know of 27 animals which were dishorned; five of them came near dying, two did die, and all the rest degenerated. There is no doubt of the prepotent powers of both cows and bulls being injuriously affected by dishorning. I challenge any educated veterinarian in the country as to whether or not the vital forces are destroyed to a great extent. The whole animal economy suffers by the cruel practice.

The Two Words.

One day a harsh word, rashly said,
Upon an evil journey sped,
And like a sharp and cruel dart,
It pierced a fond and loving heart;
It turned a friend into a foe
And everywhere brought pain and woe.

A kind word fell: used it one day,
Flew swiftly on its blessed way;
It healed the wound, it soothed the pain,
And friends of old were friends again;
It made the hate and anger cease
And everywhere brought joy and peace.

But yet the harsh word left a trace
The kind word could not quite efface;
And though the heart its love regained
It bore a scar that long remained;
Friends could forgive but not forget,
Or lose the sense of keen regret.

Oh, if we would but learn to know
How swift and sure our words can go,
How would we weigh with utmost care
Each thought before it sought the air,
And only speak the words that move
Like white-winged messengers of love!

Life.

BY EMMA SCHILLING, AGED 16.

There's a time in life at the rising sun,
When our life is all before us,
When its rays look out on the world to be
Known naught of the world of yore.

There's a time of life when the sun is high,
For our present joys and cares,
When its rays look down on the world as it is,
And its present sorrow bears.

There's a time of life at eventide,
When our life is all of yore,
When the sun looks back on a day that is past
And returneth never more.

There's a time of life, a sad, glad time,
When we've done with the cares that have vexed,
When our sun has set on the world that is past,
To rise again in the next.

There gloweth the golden sunset,
Love's endless, downy rest,
Where bliss clasps the soul and folds it,
Close to the Saviour's breast.

FLORICULTURAL.

FLOWER CULTURE.

One of the largest industries of Southern France is that of the cultivation of flowers for the manufacture of perfumes. The flower harvest covers three-fourths of the year, but the season of greatest activity comes in May and June, when the roses and orange blossoms are gathered. The violet, jonquill and mignonette appear in February, March and April, although in mild, moist winters, the violet comes as early as December; jasmine and tuberose belong to July and August; lavender and spikeard to September, and the acacia to October and November.

Thyme, rosemary and lavender are grown chiefly by small farmers of the grape and olive, who manufacture from them an inferior sort of oil, used to dilute and adulterate the superior essences made by large establishments.

The *Journal of the Society of Arts*, from which these facts are taken, also describes the method of harvesting blossoms. During the busy season, traders go about from farm to farm, collecting flowers, which are then hurried to the nearest manufacturer, and delivered while they are still fresh and crisp.

The making of perfumes includes also the processes of manufacturing pomades and essences. Pomade is used as a vehicle for absorbing and transporting to a distance the perfumes of certain flowers. A square frame of wood is set with a pane of strong plate glass, and on each side of this is spread a thin layer of grease, which has previously been refined and purified by boiling.

Thus prepared, the frames are piled up to await the season of each special flower. When the blossoms arrive, their petals are stripped from the stems, and laid upon the grease of the frames, and thus, as the frames are again packed together, supported upon their wooden edges, a series of close chambers is formed within which the grease is constantly absorbing the perfume.

The supply of flower petals is daily renewed, and the process goes on for four or five months, at the end of which time the pomade is removed from the glass, with wide, thin spatulas, and packed in cans for transportation. The perfumed grease is treated with alcohol, which extracts its sweetness, and forms the floral waters and extracts of commerce.

The process of preparing perfumed oils is somewhat similar, except that superfine olive oil is used, instead of grease. Pieces of coarse cotton fabric are saturated with oil, and stretched upon wire netting held in wooden frames.

Essences and distillations are produced by boiling the flowers in water, and the vapor which carries away the perfume is condensed in copper tanks. Some of the retorts used for this purpose are of sufficient size to receive, at one time, a half-ton of fresh flowers, with the amount of water necessary for their distillation.

The work in perfume manufactories is largely done by women, who earn from tenpence to a shilling for a day's labor of ten hours, and who make half as much more during the busy season of orange flowers and roses, by working until midnight, or even later.

HARDY BORDER PLANTS.

Those not having the time or inclination to fuss with a class of plants that will not take care of themselves, can select such as will stand out of doors all winter. These, with a sprinkling of the common annuals, if properly selected, will furnish flowers continuously from the first Spring day until frosts in the Fall. Commencing in the Spring, all that perennials usually require is a cleaning up of old decayed foliage and a spading and raking of the ground around them. Such plants are benefitted by a division of the roots every three years or so, and this is the general method of propagation; although first to obtain them, most can be raised from seed. If sown at the close of Summer, any of them will flower the next; while with rare exceptions, and among those called biennials, a few will flower the first year, planted early enough in the Spring.

TREATMENT FOR POT FLOWERS.

Take a clean pot and make very rich soil with a little silver sand, or drift sand found after a heavy shower. Then take bone or some red brick and fill the bottom of the pot. Lay some burnt bone beaten fine over this. Fill the pot with soil and make firm. Plant the bulb so that the top of it will be one inch below the surface. Stand the pot in a pan of water; wash the pan often and be sure to use soft water or water that has been boiled. Occasionally use a little washing soda and a little cold tea; keep the pan full of water. Never water on top of the pot, and every year your plant will improve.

NOTES.

Dipping the roots of plants in clear water is just as effective as the often recommended method called "pudding"; also generally less inconvenient, and in most cases preferable. This applies with equal force to vegetable and to small fruit plants. Most persons dislike to handle puddled plants.

Several of our native Lilies make capital border plants, easy to grow and conspicuous when in flower. Those curious in the Lily family have an immense variety to choose from, including several grand California species. The old longifolium, such a favorite with florists for cut flowers, is one of them. The common Lily and the longifolium can be obtained almost for a song, from the florists, after they have flowered them.

The culture of flowers is not, strictly speaking, a part of domestic economy. The writer has cared for flowers a considerable part of her time for the past 15 years, and there is no other occupation that has given her more downright pleasure. Our home without flowers would scarcely seem like home. We fancy that the children would be less contented, and that summer would be deprived of an essential charm. The culture of flowers may not be a part of domestic economy in a technical sense, but it promotes domestic joy and contentment—and is not this economy?

Spring bulbs are among the earliest to flower, and generally go by the name of Dutch bulbs. The Snowdrop is first to open; then comes the Crocus, Narcissus, and ending with the late Tulip. The Crown Imperials are also quite early in flowering and have a strong, quick growth, almost before frost is out of the ground. All of this class of plants are better planted in the Fall, their growth being so early in the Spring, that to transplant them breaks the young tender roots, and checks the flowering. They commence to grow early, have finished

by July, the foliage dried up and no more is seen of them till their time of growing the ensuing Spring. The Lily family, provided they are moved early enough, may be transplanted in the Spring. The old white garden lily, *L. candidum*, is a splendid hardy border plant. *L. auratum* is an immense flower and makes a grand show. The several kinds of lancifolium are charming plants. The old Turk's cap, the tiger, and the tennifolium, are well worth growing.

Where is Stanley?

The precise whereabouts of Stanley, the explorer, is now a subject of anxious discussion among European newspapers and geographers. Ten months ago he left the last point from which news of him was received, that is, the camp of Yambunga. On the 19th of August, 1887, he wrote to this post, asking that fresh supplies of provisions might be sent him. Since then nothing has been heard of him. Between this point and Wadelai, the first station at which he would strike the territory of Emin Pasha, he had about 600 miles to travel through a swampy, but not impassable country. In Stanley's last letter he fixed August 15 as the date at which he would get into the Lake Nyanza country, where Emin Pasha would have been sure to hear of him, but Emin Pasha wrote November 2 that he had heard nothing of him. Sir Francis Winton, an ex-Governor of the Congo Free State, suggests that he has met with obstacles on the road which may have compelled him to go a great way round. The *London Globe* says that in making his way northward on the west side of the great lakes he may have missed Emin Pasha, who was going to meet him along the eastern shore; but the *Paris Temps* suggests that it would hardly be possible for an expedition of the size of Stanley's to be on one side of the lakes without news of its getting across to the other. Nor is it likely that Stanley has fallen into an ambush and been massacred. He has 484 men, what with carriers and soldiers, who are well armed, and he is himself in this sort of warfare an experienced commander. Still another hypothesis has been propounded, namely, that having fully satisfied himself of Emin Pasha's safety and unwillingness to be "rescued," he has turned southward to do some more exploring on his own account, and will come out in the direction of Zanzibar. Everything that is said about him is thus far mere guesswork.

Catch Questions.

It is always a delight to a school-boy to propound to his teacher "catch questions" in mathematics that the teacher cannot answer. Usually these catch questions or propositions are of little importance, and the object of them is simply to elicit absurd replies from those to whom they are put. *Temple Bar* gives several such questions, a few of which are new and the others as "old as the hills," but new, probably, to some school-boys and girls.

If a goose weighs ten pounds and half its own weight, what is the weight of the goose? Who has not been tempted to reply on the instant, fifteen pounds?—the correct answer being of course, twenty pounds. Indeed, it is astonishing what a very simple query will sometimes catch a wise man napping; even the following have been known to succeed:

How many days would it take to cut up a peice of cloth fifty yards long, one yard being cut off every day?

A snail climbing up a post twenty feet high, ascends five feet every day, and slips down four feet every night. How long will the snail take to reach the top of the post?

A wise man having a window one yard high and one yard wide, and requiring more light, enlarged his window to twice its former size; yet the window was still only one yard high and one yard wide. How was this done?

This is a catch question in geometry, as the preceding were catch questions in arithmetic. The window was diamond-shaped at first, and was afterward made square.

As to the two former, perhaps it is scarcely necessary seriously to point out that the answer to the first is not fifty days, but forty-nine; and to the second, not twenty days, but sixteen—since the snail who gains one foot each day for fifteen days, climbs on the sixteenth day to the top of the pole, and there remains.

A man walks round a pole, on the top of which is a monkey. As the man moves the monkey turns on the top of the pole so as still to keep face to face with the man. Query: When the man has gone round the pole, has he, or has he not, gone round the monkey?

The answer which will occur at first sight to most persons is that the man has not gone round the monkey since he has been behind it. The correct answer, however, as decided by *Knowledge*, in the pages of which this momentous question has been argued, is that the man has gone round the monkey in going round the pole.

Justice Triumphant.

From time to time the press of the United States unite in lamenting that crime is on the increase in the large cities of the Union. The reason should not be difficult to find; if the following case is a sample of the justice of the courts. Before Justice Haight, of Buffalo, the Everests, father and son, were indicted for conspiring to commit an act injurious to trade and commerce. The precise offence, committed in 1881, for it has taken seven years to bring these wealthy men to justice, was enticing a workman away from the Buffalo Lubricating Oil Company and attempting to blow up the machinery of this important rival of the network of Standard works. The trial was long, and the Everests were able to use all the legal defence wealth could procure. The evidence was overwhelming and the verdict a righteous finding if there ever was one. The penalty fixed by law is a light one at best, \$250 fine or imprisonment for a year, or both. The judge fixed the lightest sentence he could, \$250 fine, which for a wealthy man was nothing.

Salaries of Judges.

England has thirty-four judges who are each in receipt of a salary ranging from \$25,000 to \$50,000, and together draw \$910,000 a year from the treasury. The eighty judges in the courts of the United States are paid from \$3,500 to \$10,000 a year, an aggregate of \$318,000.

NOTES ON CURRENT TOPICS.

No satisfactory reason has so far been offered to account for the remarkable falling off in the attendance of church-goers in the State of Maine. It is stated that one-third of the churches in the State of Maine are closed on account of lack of support, and that one-half the people are non-church-goers. Out of 1,362 churches in the State 417 are vacant.

It is satisfactory to note that the species of gambling known as lotteries will in future be discouraged as much as possible in the Province of Quebec. Hon. Mr. Mercier, in a circular letter to the editors of the provincial journals, has intimated his intention of prosecuting, according to the statutes, any person who may hereafter advertise, print or publish notices of lotteries.

The necessity for either high or low level railway crossings at the Esplanade in Toronto is made more apparent by what has happened in Philadelphia. In ten years no fewer than three hundred and seventy-five persons were killed on the level railway crossings within the limits of the city of Philadelphia, and during the same time about the same number of persons were killed on the railway lines within the city.

About two years ago Patterson Bros. were given a heavy bonus to induce them to remove their agricultural works to the go-ahead town of Woodstock. The bonus took the form of \$35,000, free water and exemption from taxes for a term of years. Now it is found that the condensers of the firm's engines use so much water that the fire pressure is reduced to a dangerously low point. The city disputes the right of the firm to free water for condensing purposes, and a very pretty lawsuit is the result.

The New York World states that the Western Union Telegraph Company have an arrangement with Edison by which the company pay him a certain sum yearly for the right to suppress any of his inventions if the company chooses. It is said that under this arrangement the company has already suppressed two important inventions which would have revolutionised and indefinitely cheapened telegraphy. Apparently there is nothing a monopoly will not do, from dynamiting a possible rival to obstructing human progress.

The abolition of slavery in Brazil will it seems be peacefully brought about much sooner than was expected even by sanguine philantropists. The Chamber of Deputies has passed a bill providing for the immediate emancipation of all persons held in slavery, and the sanction of the Senate is the only act required to knock off the shackles of a million of bondsmen.

The Libel Law Amendment Bill having passed to its third reading in the Commons last night, we may take it as settled that hereafter journalists will not be dragged out of their own Province in order to be tried. The thanks of all journalists are due to Hon. Mr. Thompson for his attention to the subject, and journalists will owe it to themselves to see that no mean advantage is taken of the amendment.

Horse-Breeding.

The stunting season for horses is now in full swing and our farmers need to pay the greatest attention to their breeding stock. The raising of first class horses is going to be the key note to successful farming in Ontario. Our good horses are eagerly sought after all over, and command the highest price. There is a steady market both in England and the United States for all the saleable horses we have; and if the horse production were expanded 100 per cent, there is plenty of room for them in the world. But horse breeding here requires to be more systematic to produce the best results. There is altogether too much haphazard breeding, or breeding to no definite purpose. It is too often the case that cheap sires are used for the sake of saving a little, and the consequence is the production of an inferior, nondescript horse, which finds no place in the market except as a "plug." These cheap stallions have been the ruin of a goodly number of our Canadian horses. Only to a limited extent are undersize and pony horses required, and this for mere local purposes, such as running a grocery wagon or a light buggy around a city; but for the export trade they have no place at all. We have a number of first-class stallions in nearly every class, but this is not the only requisite to successful horse-breeding. There must be good mares and adaptability in crossing and breeding to a purpose. We may import all the best horses from England and France, but until proper mares are selected horse-raising cannot be a success. And it is too well known that the greater part of the brood mares in this country are animals that are unfit for work, old, blemished and just on their last legs. To produce the best results in horse raising the mares should be strong, vigorous, sound, and roomy.

Another great cause of the poor stock raised in this country is the fact that many farmers pay no attention to the adaptability of the animals in crossing. Small-sized, fine-boned females are put to heavy-boned, large-bodied Clydes and Shiro horses with the idea that the production will be a model horse. There never was a greater mistake. There is too sudden a descent, too abrupt a change, and in seven cases out of ten such an amalgamation—small mares, large horses—produces a lack of symmetry and frequently malformation. Nature is uniform in her operations, and horses of about the same build and type should be mated together to produce good animals. Strong, bulky mares are required to create heavy, bony offspring. If the horse-market be studied at the present time, it will be noticed that horseshoe goes by the pound the same as beef; for horses are most in demand that will come up to a certain weight. It is well known that a draft colt—Clyde or Shire—from most of the imported horses now in Ontario can be raised to 1,500 lbs, or more, at 3 years old more cheaply than a three-year-old steer of the same weight, and will sell as readily for cash at three times the price. Then the last year's use of such on the farm will amply pay for any other difference. First-class carriage horses and saddle horses will pay equally as well as the heavy classes if bred for a purpose and mated and bred to produce the desired results of coach and saddle horses. The production of good horses is a business in which any farmer may engage in Ontario with Albert's consciousness that he is doing a work an ex-llit add to the wealth and general prog on the ity of the country, and producing an illia, which requires no sharp practice illia into honest money, and one which a very nearer having a fixed value than a Beeton product upon the farm.