

PITCAIRN'S LONELY ROCK.

Letters From a Bright Young Woman Who Describes Life There.

The Homes and Occupations of the Sons and Daughters of Famous Mutineers—A Peaceful, Happy Existence on One of the Smallest Islands in the Pacific.

Every one who has read the romantic and remarkable story of the Pitcairn Islanders is always glad to hear of the prosperity and happiness of this simple and pious people. Their fathers were the band of desperate sailors of the ship *Bounty* who set their Captain and a part of the crew adrift in a small boat on the Pacific Ocean, and then sought refuge from the vengeance they feared upon the almost unknown rock of Pitcairn. The islanders of to-day sprung from the union of the mutineers with the women of Tahiti, whom they took from their native island when they sailed into the unknown. When news comes from Pitcairn the names of the people who are mentioned never fail to recall their unhappy ancestors—Christian, Young, McCoy, and the others who perished, all but one of them, in their prime, most of them by violence, the victims of their own strife or of the treachery of the few Tahitian men whom they had taken with them.

Only one of them was saved, John Adams, to be the redeemer of his people. With the wives and helpless children of his brothers in crime all around him, John Adams discerned the noble mission before him and eagerly embraced the opportunity to wipe out his past. He pored over the books that had been saved from the *Bounty*, adding to his own meagre knowledge that he might the better instruct his little people. He taught them to read and to love morality and religion. As he grew in years the graces of perfect simplicity, unselfishness, and loving kindness more and more possessed him, and were reflected in the character of the little band who revered and cherished him as their father and guide. But for his nurturing hand Pitcairn Island would never have become the "Garden of Eden," as it was described by the early visitors there after the world had heard the story of the mutineers.

Sometimes a whole year elapses without any news from Pitcairn Island, though the inhabitants always watch their chance to send letters by the ships which happen to be passing. The September number of the *Overland Monthly* publishes a number of letters written by Miss Rosalind A. Young to a friend in this country. They are very interesting, because they picture in the language of an educated young woman the present life of the islanders, of which we have had no detailed account for many years. The islanders are said to be fonder of Americans than of the British, whose protection they enjoy. They, however, have good reason to entertain the kindest feelings toward Queen Victoria. Here are extracts from Miss Young's letters:

"We have had a new organ," she says, "as a present from our Queen. An inscription is written on a heart-shaped silver plate above the keyboard. This is the inscription:

"A present from the Queen to her loyal and loving Pitcairn Island Subjects, in appreciation of their Domestic Virtues."

"It is a gift of which we are justly proud, and the instrument is a splendid one."

Miss Young is the schoolteacher on the island. Her ancestor, Edward Young, was one of the two mutineers on the island who died a natural death. He succumbed to asthma in 1800, leaving Adams as the only survivor of the mutineers.

Every one, Miss Young writes, addresses the others by their Christian names. "For that matter," she says, "we are like one family. Thus my father is Simon, my mother Mary, and so on. All are like brothers and sisters." Then she describes the way in which the islanders spend their time.

"On Sunday," she says, "after family prayers, all the young people prepare themselves for Sunday school. The teachers are five in number—my father, Mr. V. Young, Miss Mary Ann McCoy [McCoy was one of the most ignorant and depraved of the mutineers. He found a root from which he was able to distil an intoxicating liquor, and his last years were spent in almost incessant intoxication. In a fit of delirium tremens, in 1798, he threw himself from a rock and was killed], Mrs. Sarah Young, my sister-in-law, and myself. Father has a class of the oldest of the young people, and V. Young the larger boys, and Miss McCoy the young girls in their teens. Mrs. Sarah Young has the younger boys a I have the youngest children, boys and girls. The average attendance is about forty."

Of the work on week days she writes:

"The men are usually employed in field work, planting, weeding, and supplying the food thus produced for home. When the weather has continued for a long time dry, and after the rain has come to water the ground, the women generally help their husbands and brothers in field work, as that is sometimes heavy, and also it is necessary to have your crops planted before the ground becomes dry again. Such work is always helpful, invigorating, and mostly pleasant, though for truth's sake I must say I seldom do it. I am generally employed assisting father [her father is the clergyman of the little settlement] and sometimes alone in our simple school work; besides which I have to do the family washing and ironing and most of the mending, all handwork. [In another letter Miss Young writes that they have recently received a sewing machine from Tahiti] My sister, Mary Ann, does the sewing for our boys and I for our girls, mother, Mary Ann, and myself. That is I make most of our dresses. Our women employ their time doing housework, sewing, washing, ironing, cooking, and every one likes to spend a day fishing now and then. If you want to be properly tanned the most effectual way to do it is to spend a day on the rocks fishing in the hot sun, and having a salt water bath after you have done. Sleep after a day so spent comes so naturally, and is so refreshing."

The little island where this young woman is spending her life is only a mile and a half long and a mile wide, and yet she finds unending pleasures in the varying aspects of the little rock, and in the different moods of the ocean which stretch away on every side. She has an eye for the picturesque.

"Come ashore with me," she writes, "and let us go up the hill from the landing place. It is an ascent of about 200 or 300 feet, somewhat steep, but not an unpleasant

walk, as the pathway is all well shaded by trees. The house you see at the top of the hill was built for the storage of cotton for sale. You will find this pathway pleasant and delightful, as it winds through the coconut groves. When you are about half way through the grove, turn around and look at the peak above the landing place. Do you see the exact representation of an old man's head? That is what we call the 'Old Man's Point.' He is a venerable looking gentleman, and is really so, having been there since the formation of this island. We will go on again; the road is wide and clear just now. After we have gone on for a few minutes longer we will see the first dwelling house on the way. In front and around it looks gay with scarlet geraniums, acacias, and other flowers. Our garden fences are made of pine apple plants. As the plants, which are about two feet high, are prickly, they afford an effectual barrier against the invasion of the fowls which sometimes prove troublesome.

Miss Young describes the house in which her family lives. It is a plain little cottage gable roofed and thatched. The interior is divided into four rooms. The house being small, the sleeping rooms are mere nests. "Let us step inside," she says. "Under the eaves of the thatched roof hangs an empty cage. The dear little birds all died last year, over whose death I shed many a bitter tear. Now for an introduction to our family. This dear, noble-looking man, with snowy beard and hoary hair, is father. Mother is this lively old (no, not old, only growing in years) woman, who is so very glad to see you and make you welcome. Her hair is very black still, with a very thin sprinkling of silver in it. She is a hard working woman, as her hands betoken. This pale, quiet girl is my sister, Mary Ann, two years younger than I; and the other young woman of my own age is Holman, my brother Ben's wife. The little children, five in number, are theirs."

There are four other members of the family whom she describes; and in her various letters she takes her correspondent through the valley, rich with coffee trees, whose burden of green berries will soon ripen, and tells her about the people who live in the various cottages.

"As regards the furnishing of our homes," she says: "We do it in the best manner our limited means will allow, but some of the cottages are bare and totally devoid of any pretension to beauty."

The unpretending little church has only three windows of glass. It contains the Queen's organ, as the islanders called it, a reading table and a desk, enclosed by railings, the church library, well stocked with reading matter abundantly bestowed by kind friends in distant parts of the world, and twelve family seats. The walls are painted white, and the only ornaments are illuminated cards with Scripture texts. The building is seventy feet long by twenty feet wide. Its west end is the schoolroom, separated from the church by a thin wood partition.

"You could not fail," says Miss Young, "to admire the view from my home, especially when the golden sunlight tinges the feathery leaves of the coconut grove on your left in the early morning. How often have I exclaimed, 'How perfectly beautiful!' as I have gazed on the surrounding trees and plants; and surrounding the view like a picture frame stretches the beautiful blue waters of the vast Pacific. I wish you could see it as I saw it this morning."

The island, she says, is full of hills and valleys. The trees are not many in kind, but there are a great many of them. Flowers are few, and what they have are mostly sent to them. Now and then they receive newspapers from passing vessels, sometimes only a month old. So they have a very fair idea of what is passing in the outside world. The arrival of a ship is usually a holiday time, if strangers from the vessel land on the island. All the people on the island go barefoot, and they never catch cold and are hardened to all sorts of weather. They have never had any contagious diseases and seldom have dangerous sickness. Most of the people die of old age.

"In your letter," Miss Young says, "you ask if our climate is so marvellously healthy that our children escape all the ills of childhood. Perhaps your question can best be answered by my telling you that measles, whooping cough, croup, scarlet fever, and a long list of diseases, incident to childhood, are names to us of which we scarce know the meaning. Our island being so high, and surrounded as it is with the purest air blowing from the ocean, the climate is peculiarly healthy."

Miss Young says she often thinks she would enjoy a trip abroad, but she does not think her father would ever consent. She has several times mentioned the subject to him, always receiving the answer, "I think you are better where you are." As an evidence of the interest these people take in the affairs of the world, this extract from one letter will suffice.

"You mention about your recent elections. So far, how does President Cleveland proceed in his administration? Satisfactorily, I hope. I am sure we were all most sorry that the Republican party failed to win in the last election. I wonder if I ever told you that I first heard of James A. Garfield from a letter of yours to me. Since then I have read so much about him and learned to admire and love the truly noble man, that even yet, when I think of the cowardly act of the assassin, I feel that such a loss to the nation is one that will need years to heal over."

Miss Young says that Thursday October Christian is now the oldest man on the island. Many of the islanders bear the names of the day and the month they were born in. This man, who is 82 years old, is a grandson of Fletcher Christian, the only educated man among the mutineers. It was he who furnished the brains for the enterprise, and upon him rested a large part of the responsibility for the crime. His years at Pitcairn Island were very unhappy. He brooded over his crime, and the fact that the fatal act of a passionate moment had deprived him forever of the society of his loved friends in England. He was killed by the Tahitian men and not one of the Pitcairn Islanders knows to-day where he was buried. One woman is now over 90 years old. She is the oldest person on the island, and is the only representative left of the first generation after the mutineers.

On Jan. 23, 1890, the Pitcairn Islanders met to celebrate the first centennial of their history on that lonely rock. They had a remarkable history to recall, and it was for them a most impressive occasion. Miss Young wrote a hymn to be sung on that day. It alludes to the dark crime of their fathers, to the tragedies that followed, to the rock where they sought refuge, and

to the providential favor that finally brought peace and blessings to the island. Here is one of the stanzas:

We own the depths of sin and shame,
Of guilt and crime from whence we came;
Thy hand upheld us from despair,
Else we had sunk in darkness there.

A Uniform Law.

A movement designed to bring about a uniform law of marriage and divorce for all the States of the Union has recently been started by the American Bar-Association. No one familiar with the present state of affairs will question the desirability of the change, for truly the marital laws of the republic furnish an anomaly unparalleled by any other nation of the world. Instead of one law of marriage and divorce, which would seem to be the proper thing for a single people, there are no less than forty odd codes, each State being a law to itself in these matters. In some States a marriage in order to be valid must be performed by a properly authorized person, a clergyman, magistrate, etc., in others, no such ceremony is required, a mere agreement of the parties being sufficient. Troublesome doubt has by this diversity arisen as to what constitutes a valid marriage, while it has given rise to an endless number of cases in which the courts are called upon to decide whether a woman is a wife or a mistress, a widow or a false claimant, whether children are legitimate or otherwise, whether certain persons are heirs entitled to inherit or not. Nor are the evils less grave which grow out of the diverse divorce laws. In some States the laws are so rigid that it is difficult to sever the marriage tie. In others it is as easy to throw off the marital obligation as it is to take it on. In New York, for instance, there is but one ground of divorce, infidelity of husband or wife. Elsewhere a dozen may be found including the most trivial things. In one State the applicant must show a year's residence. In another six or even three months will do. In some divorced defendants are forbidden, in others, they are free, to marry again. Thus it will be seen that the work which the Bar Association has undertaken is a much needed reform. It is a reform moreover that is sure to receive the hearty sympathy of right minded men and women all over the world.

Unsafe Buildings.

It is not a pleasant thought to contemplate that for the sake of gain any person could be induced to scamp his work when by so doing he endangers the lives of scores of his fellow beings. And yet this is the only reasonable conclusion one can come to concerning those responsible for the New York building, whose collapse a few days ago resulted in the death of some fifty persons engaged in the building. At the preliminary trial before the District-attorney abundant testimony was brought out to show that the building was known to the inmates to be unsafe. Certainly one or two of the renters and the builder denied any knowledge of this fact, or that they ever felt the vibration of the structure. But against this negative testimony stands the positive statements of many others that they had felt and been alarmed by it. One of the tenants swore that he thought the building very weak. "It often shook and scared me, but I did not think it would fall in all at once," was his declaration at the trial. It was also stated that the globes on the chandeliers were some times "shaken off and broken." It will be a crying shame, and an outrage upon society if those responsible for the proper construction of the ill-fated building should be allowed to go unwhipped of justice. Never were criminals more guilty or more clearly deserved their punishment.

Two New Steamships.

Two ocean steamships, named respectively the Numidian and the Labrador, have just been added to Canada's merchant marine. The former is an addition to the Allan line; the latter to the Dominion line. In dimensions and capacity there is not much difference between the two vessels. The figures in the case of the Numidian are: Length 415 feet, breadth 45 feet, depth of hold 33 feet, and registered tonnage 3,181. The corresponding dimensions of the Labrador are: Length 400 feet, breadth 47 feet, depth 32 feet, and tonnage 2,998. The ships are built with a view to be used in both the passenger and cattle trade and are admirably adapted for their purpose. The *Globe* in describing the Labrador says: "A special feature of the new steamer, Labrador, is that the saloon and staterooms for first-class passengers are contained in a house erected on the bridge deck, being thus entirely isolated from other departments of the ship and securing perfect ventilation in all weather. Provision is also made for the safe carriage and comfort of animals in accordance with the new regulations of the British Board of Agriculture and the Canadian Government. Protection against fire is provided by steam pipes connecting with each separate compartment, by which steam can be turned into any part for extinguishing fire, the valves for the same being placed together on deck, where they are easily accessible. The Labrador will be classed on the Admiralty list as a transport, being admirably adapted for troops and cavalry."

To Preserve Wooden Posts.

Many a farmer loses money that ought to be in the bank through not knowing how to preserve wooden posts. The post should be bored with an inch and a quarter auger from the butt to a distance that will be six inches above the ground when the post is set. Then char over a good fire for a quarter of an hour, so as to drive all moisture out of the heart of the butt through the hole bored, fill the hole with boiling coal tar, and drive in a well-fitted plug, which will act as a hydraulic ram, and force the tar into the hot pores of the wood, which will thus become thoroughly creosoted, and last sound for twenty years instead of four. As in ordinary cases, a four-inch post should have one hole in its center; six-inch, two, side by side, eight-inch, three; 12-inch, four. Posts which are already in the ground may be bored diagonally, filled up with hot tar (in the dry summer time), plugged up and repainted.

Manager Joseph Frank, of Jacobs & Sparrow's Opera House, has become the owner of the celebrated Gelding Chester. His sire, the famous Rifleman, and dam Lady Clarion. Mr. Frank purchased this fast and stylish Gelding from Mr. Paxton, of Port Perry. The horse was entered at our Toronto exhibition and is styled by the knowing ones as a great horse.

CASTAWAY ON ALASKA'S COAST.

Sufferings of the Men Lost by the Sealing Schooner *Beatrice*.

The schooner *Aida*, which has arrived at San Francisco from Cooper River, brought down two of the crew of the sealing schooner *Beatrice* who had been reported lost in Behring Sea, where they were separated from the vessel by a gale in July.

On the afternoon of July 10 Harry Mandon, hunter, W. H. Doyle, sailor, and Scott, boat steerer, were hunting in a small boat a short distance from the schooner, when a fog settled down and they lost sight of the vessel. After rowing for some time in a vain attempt to find the schooner, they concluded to make themselves as comfortable as possible and wait for the fog to lift. When night came on the wind began to rise, and to keep the boat's head to the weather they made a drag by lashing the carcasses of two seals and a pair of oars together. The wind increased to a gale during the night, but abated in the morning. At daybreak the schooner was not to be seen, and hoisting sail the three men headed to the north, skirting the shore of Alaska to find a landing place.

The wind arose again, the mast and sail were carried away, and the boat drifted into the breakers where she capsized. Scott was drowned, but Mandon and Doyle clung to the boat and finally scrambled ashore, clad only in their underclothes. The boat was soon cast upon the beach, and the men secured a rifle, two shotguns, and some cartridges that had been lashed. All the provisions were spoiled, however, and the castaways had nothing to eat but a raw seagull.

They turned the boat over and camped under it during the night. In the morning they set out to find some habitation, and for four days they trudged barefooted along the rocky coast, subsisting on grass, roots, and one raw duck. On the fifth day they had to swim a river, and lost the shotguns. An exploded shell in the chamber of the rifle made that weapon useless, and they could not secure any more meat.

An extensive mud flat forced them to leave the coast and take to the mountains, and after eight days hard climbing, with no sustenance except roots, they came upon a deserted Indian village and were rejoiced to smell the odor of putrid salmon. They started a fire with cartridges and cooked and ate some of the salmon spawn. They resumed their terrible journey, and they thought it providential good fortune when they were able to vary their menu with stale eggs from an abandoned duck's nest.

After many days of suffering, the castaways came upon an Indian fisherman, who fed them and nursed them for a week and then took them to an Indian village on Martin River, where they were found by a trading steamer.

The *Beatrice* arrived at Victoria only a few days ago, and Capt. Keefe reported that the men were lost. Telegrams announcing their rescue were sent to their relatives.

Toronto and Montreal.

The fact that Toronto during the last decade has made more progress than Montreal and that the Queen City bids fair to soon eclipse her powerful rival which until now has, in point of population, maintained her position of supremacy among the cities of the Dominion, is not particularly realized by our contemporary, the *Montreal Gazette*, which sets itself to reduce the effects of the unfavorable comparison brought out by the recent census. After pointing out that the population of that city and her suburbs has grown from 168,922 in 1881 to 245,971 at the present time—an increase of 77,049 or 45 per cent., the *Gazette* continues: "As compared with Toronto our city is fairly holding its own. Ten years ago Toronto had a population of 96,196, while it has now 181,220, showing a growth of 85,024, but Toronto has in the meantime absorbed all of the surrounding villages, and, of course, the large and gratifying increase in her population has been to some extent brought about in this way." It is open to question whether many Montrealers will share the opinion of the *Gazette* that "as compared with Toronto our city is fairly holding her own," when they consider that the increase of their city was only 45 per cent., while that of Toronto even according to the figures used by the *Gazette*, has increased more than 89 per cent. But the *Gazette* is in error in stating that the large and gratifying increase in Toronto's population has been to some extent brought about by the absorption of the surrounding villages which have been taken in by the city during the ten years past; for as the *Mail* points out "the 96,196 which the recent census gives as the population of Toronto in 1881 includes the population at that time of the suburbs since absorbed. Toronto's actual population in 1881 was 86,145, and her increase over this figure is 108.6 per cent. The increase of 89.4 per cent. given by the census was not brought about to any extent by annexation."

What Labor Can Do.

Horace declares that life gives nothing to man without great labor. Labor sows the good seed, and gathers the ample harvest. Labor builds the seething forge and turns out the needed iron. It levels the forest, it builds the city, it bridges the river, it tunnels the mountain. It reaches from the plowshare up to the grandest machinery, and from the alphabet up to the highest learning. From huts of clay it passes to gorgeous palaces and splendid cathedrals, from vehicles of crudity it enters magnificent steamers. It brings all science and philosophy to the doors of the rich and the poor, and makes the universe unravel her mysteries and glories. It opens avenues of inspirations and power to every conscientious toiler and determined thinker, and places the wreath of attainment and honor above the brows.

Appreciative.

Miss Rhapsody. "You are fond of music, Captain?"
Captain Barnes (of the Toronto Field Battery). "Well, yes; in fact, I think I may say I like noise of any kind."

Inappropriate Simile; Lieutenant (to elderly lady). "Madame, you look as fresh and blooming to-day as a rose of twenty summers!"

"This world makes me tired," said Pawkins. "A man does something odd or queer and everybody talks of it from one end of the land to the other. But if he only does some good, decent action, it is never heard of." "Oh come now!" said his friend Hawkins, "don't be so discouraged. Just try it once and see!"

TIT BITS.

Sweet to the Sweet.

"You don't mean to say she threw you over and took up with a candy-maker, do you?" inquired his bosom friend.

"Yes," answered the gloomy youth. "I didn't stand any chance at all. He seemed to have more of a—er—pull, you know."

She Wasn't Afraid.

"Now, I tell you, Minnie, I wouldn't go out buggy-riding with Dick Whitesley for anything. Why, the last time I was out with him he hugged me till I screamed, the impudent puppy!"

"Well, there won't be anything of that sort if I go with him."

"There won't?"

"Not much. I've never screamed yet."

He Knew a Better Place.

Mr. Johnson—"How'd yo like to waft yo'self away in a bl'oon, Mistaw Samson?"

Mr. Samson—"Huh! wouldn't mind if ef I had a good place ter light."

"Whar'd you like ter light, Mistaw Samson?"

"On a haystack, I guess."

"No'n deed; no haystacks fer me: I know 'betta place to light dan dat."

"Wheah be it, Mistaw Johnson?"

"Watahmelon patch."

Interpreted the Dream.

A Dundee navy, on awakening one morning, told his wife of a curious dream that he had during the night. He dreamed that he saw a big fat rat coming towards him, followed by two lean ones, and in the rear one blind one. He was greatly worried over it and swore that some great evil was about to fall upon him. He had heard that to dream of rats foreboded some dire calamity. In vain did he appeal to his wife, but she could not relieve him. His son, who, by the way, was a bright lad, hearing the dream told, volunteered to interpret it and he did it with all the wisdom of a Joseph. Said he: "The fat rat is the man who keeps the public house where ye gang to see after, and the two lean ones are me and me mither, and the blind one is yersel, father."

Waxing Them Together.

Many of the first settlers of Illinois were rude in speech and rough in manner. Money was scarce with them and service was paid for in produce. General Bruce used to illustrate these incidents of frontier life by the following anecdote:

One day when he was a Justice of the Peace there came to his office a young man, accompanied by a young woman.

"Be you the squire?" asked the manly youth.

"Yes, sir."

"Can you tie the knot for us right away?"

"Yes, sir."

"How much do you charge?"

"One dollar is the legal fee, sir."

"Will you take your fee in bees wax?"

"Yes, if you can't pay cash."

"Well, go ahead and tie the knot and I'll fetch in the wax."

"No," said the squire, thinking there was a good chance for a little fun; "bring in the beeswax first and then I'll marry you."

Reluctantly the youth went out to where was hitched the horse upon which, Darby and Joan fashion, the pair had ridden, and brought the wax in the sack. On being weighed its value was found to be only about half a dollar.

"Wall," said the anxious groom, "tie the knot and I'll fetch more wax next week."

"No, sir; I don't trust; that's against the rules of this office."

Slowly the disappointed youth turned to go out, saying:

"Come, Sal; let's go."

"I say, mister," answered Sal, with a woman's wit, "can't you marry us as far as the wax will go?"

"Yes, I can and will," replied the squire, laughing, and he did.—[Louisville Courier-Journal.]

Just Like A Boy.

"Papa?"

"Well dear?"

"Will you please untie this string for me?"

"Yes, in a moment."

"I want the string now."

"Well, papa's busy and you must wait a few minutes."

"Can't you do it right away?"

"No, I can't."

"Why?"

"I told you I was busy."

"But I want the string to put on my little wagon."

"Well, I'll get it for you in a minute or two if you keep still."

"I can't draw the wagon without a string to it."

"Well, what if you can't?"

"But I want to draw it."

"I can't help it if you do. I'm busy now."

"It's more than a minute since you first said you'd do it."

"It will be a good many minutes before I untie it if you don't stop teasing me."

"But I want the string."

"Well, wait until—"

"I've waited a long time now, papa."

"You'll wait longer if—"

"Can't you untie it now, papa?"

"No, I cannot."

"Why?"

"Don't you see that papa is busy writing and—"

"It wouldn't take but a minute to untie the string, and—"

"Harold, I tell you—"

"There's the string, papa."

"Did you hear what I said?"

"I want the string to put on my little wagon."

"Go away and—"

"I can't draw the wagon without a string."

"Now you run right out of this room."

"What for?"

"Because you're bothering me so I can't write."

"If you'd untie the string I wouldn't bother you any more."

"I tell you that—here, give me the string. I declare, you might as well try to dam Niagara as to stop a boy's tongue. There's your old string, you take it and get right out of here."

"Yes, papa—thank you for untying the string."