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LYNDON OF HIGH CLIFFE

AN OLD SOLDIER'S LOVE STORY.

By G. Despard, Author of "When the Tide Was High," "The Artist and the Man," "Into a Larger Room," Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER XII.

A LITTLE BOOK OF FEARLS.

Business had called Colonel Lyndon from Castle Ettrick. His solicitor, the head of a firm that had managed the High Cliffe property for many years, had written, requesting his presence, if possible, to meet him there. Business was more important to Colonel Lyndon than it had been, for he had, for as he hoped and believed, he would soon have the interests of another besides himself to consider. He saw Lady Flora, who begged him to return as soon as he was free, and travelled south.

It was partly the somewhat mysterious purport of the lawyer's letter, and partly a fear of being premature, that prevented him from speaking to Letty before he started. He still thought of her first, and he would not, for the mere sake of setting his own mind at rest, have raised the danger of losing her confidence. But her friendly way of bidding him farewell, with the frank pleasure which had shone in her sweet blue eyes when he told her that he would certainly return to Castle Ettrick in a few days, encouraged him to hope that, when the right moment came, she would say "Yes" to the entreaty that was trembling on his lips.

The business at High Cliffe was soon transacted. Colonel Lyndon took the opportunity of looking more closely into his affairs than he had previously done. He found that the value of his property was increasing, that he could afford to make good settlements on a wife, and that a little painting and redecorating would make High Cliffe a delightful summer residence. These he set on foot at once, to the great satisfaction of his man of business, who had been fearing that he would never settle at home.

"Lyndon of High Cliffe is going to marry; you mark my words," he said to his wife that evening.

His suspicions would have confirmed if he could have followed his client to London the next day.

The colonel had one intimate friend living there; she was the daughter of their nearest neighbour at High Cliffe, and she had married a man who was kept in London by his business the greater part of the year.

Immediately on his arrival he called at her house, and was shown into the drawing-room, where she was sitting over fancy-work.

"Elizabeth," he said, "I want you to put on your bonnet and come out with me. Will you?"

"Certainly I will," she answered. "Where do you want to go?"

"To a jeweller's; one who may be depended upon."

He smiled, and she shook her finger at him.

"At last," she said. "I prophesied it."

"Prophesied what?"

"That you would fall in love before the year was out."

They went out together. The colonel hailed a hansom driver who took them to a jeweller on whom his friend said he could depend, and they spent an hour at his counter. He made his choice at last—a small hoop of pearls, exquisite in form and color, and a necklace of the same beautiful stones, enclosed in a casket lined with pale blue velvet. Should they be sent? the seller of the gems asked. No, he answered. He would pay for them at once, and take them away.

Outside the shop he thanked his friend for coming with him, and said good-bye to her.

"You will let me know?" she said, looking at him affectionately.

"If there is anything to tell," he answered, with a curious smile.

"The woman that you love, and that does not love you," said the lady, "would be——"

"Hush, hush!" said the colonel hurriedly. "Remember my age."

Without waiting for another word, he hastened off, made business arrangements, and, with the little ring, of whose possession he was never for one moment unconscious, in his breast-pocket, took the night mail for Scotland. At Edinburgh he remained for an hour or two. Mr. Winstanley having requested him to see to some business of his in passing, and this brought him to Ettrick at about the same hour as on the former occasion, when Milly and Letty had been his travelling companions. Wishing to give a pleasant surprise to his friends, he sent round the carriage containing his traps by the back way, and walked up to the house.

It was a dark night for the time of year. The sky was covered with clouds and occasionally there could be heard in the distance the low rumbling of thunder. The colonel saw no one in the grounds, but he heard voices which made him suppose that some of the party were out of doors. With a quick, swinging step he walked along the avenue, and ran up the steps that led to the terrace. Lady Flora, who was alone in the drawing-room, saw him, and gave a little cry.

"Oh, colonel," she said, "how glad I am to see you! We did not expect you so soon."

"I thought I might venture to steal a march on you," he said. "How are you all? It seems ages since I went away."

"It seems ages to me," said Lady Flora, with a sigh. "Everything is as it was."

"Letty Miss Morison, I mean——"

"I believe she is in the school-room. I will send my maid to tell her you have come."

The maid, who was rung for, went in search of Letty and returned with the news that she was neither in the school-room nor with Miss Milly.

"Then she must have gone out. Foolish child—and the weather so threatening!" said Lady Flora. "If you are not too tired, colonel——"

"I will go in search of her with pleasure," he answered.

At the moment Mrs. Wilson, Lady Flora's daughter, and two or three other ladies came into the drawing-room, saying that the rain had begun. Colonel Lyndon, who stood in the shadow while they were in the light, made sure that Letty was not amongst them, and then hurried away to look for her.

After her little supper with Milly in the school-room that evening, Letty had stolen down into the garden. She was dressed in the dainty white robe that she had worn when she took, for a few moments, the character of Marguerite at Deep Deane, and that Veronica had insisted upon giving to her; for, had was without covering of any kind, and as she walked slowly across the green sward, with her hands crossed in front of her and her eyes cast, she looked as the failing light like a beautiful phantom. Meeting no one, she walked on to the summer-house—a little rustic lodge, which crowned a low hill beyond the shrubbery, that bounded the lawn.

In the entrance to the summer-house she stopped and looked back. Her heart was beating much faster than usual, but her face was pale, and her feet and hands were as cold as ice. Seeing no one she breathed a deep sigh, which was partly of relief and partly of trouble, and was about to retrace her steps towards the house, when a rustling sound amongst the shrubs to the right of the summer-house struck her ear, and she hesitated for a moment.

In the next moment she heard a familiar voice saying:

"I beg your pardon for disturbing you, Miss Morrison, if it is really you——"

At the sound of the voice Letty trembled, and every particle of colour left her face. The moment she had been at once dreading and longing for had come then! She was bound to speak.

"Captain Winstanley," she said, in a low and tremulous voice, which had a most curious effect upon him, "I want to speak to you. Will you be angry with me if I say exactly what I think?"

"Angry with you?" he exclaimed.

She interrupted him hastily. "Oh! please—please, do not speak in that way. You would have every right to be angry—and—but I know I have no right to say anything. But there is no one else," cried poor Letty piteously; "and I love them all so. And I thought if I told you—I, who have no interest in anything but seeing others happy—that——"

Poor child! she had undertaken a task that was almost too much for her strength.

"Sit down," said Percy, drawing her into the summer-house; "you are trembling. Ah! there is the thunder. We shall have a storm. And you have nothing on your head, nothing on your shoulders."

"Pray—pray—do not mind me," said Letty earnestly.

"But I do mind you. Who could help it? I mind you so much——" and there he broke short, awed, it might be by the startled expression of her face. "I mean," he said seriously, "that I am ready to listen to whatever you have to say."

The poor child rewarded him with one of her sweetest smiles. "Thank you," she said; "that makes it easier for me to speak." And then she poured out what, for so many days, she had been hoarding up in her heart; told him, in so quaint a way, that he was acting selfishly; begged him not to go into a foreign army; said that if he did so it would break his mother's heart, and end in sorrow for him in a few words her simple little creed. "We were not put into the world to live for ourselves. I am certain of it," said Letty. "If we live in that way, we are going against our nature, and we must—we must—be unhappy. God wills us to have pleasure, but only so—oh! I am sure of it—I am sure of it—only in making happiness and good for others. If it is for those we love," she cried, her sweet voice thrilling with a passion which she could not restrain, "then we may suffer—yes—suffer until we die, and yet count ourselves blest."

To all this what could Percy say? They were new thoughts to him. Letty had judged him rightly. It was no mere selfishness of character; it was thoughtlessness or inability—only too common, alas!—to enter into and understand the feelings of others, that had been the cause of his unconscious cruelty. Brought face to face with Letty's simple creed of life, she saw his own life as he had never seen it before.

When, after a brief pause, during which one of them could have heard the beating of the other's heart, Percy spoke, there was no trace in his manner of the airy gallantry that, had not Letty been the most innocent and simple being upon earth, might have alarmed her at the beginning. He was too deeply penetrated with respect and admiration to be able to speak to her lightly.

He merely thanked her for speaking to him with so much frankness, and said that he would consider what she had said. In the meantime, he hoped she would believe that he did not wish to make his mother and friends unhappy. Then—for the threatened storm had not come—he walked by her side as far as the terrace steps, and bade her good night with the respect he might have shown to a queen.

* * *

When Colonel Lyndon left Lady Flora, he took the direction of the summer-house, which he knew to be one of Letty's favourite haunts.

The little hoop of pearls was in his pocket. He took it out of its case, and held it in the hollow of his hand. Would it, or would it not, be transferred presently to the little hand which was so dear to him? This was the question he was asking of himself as he walked slowly across the shadowed sward.

He approached the summer-house from the left. It was surrounded on both sides by the trees, so that he was not seen. This was the moment when Letty was standing in the entrance of the summer-house, and when Percy, who had come up from the opposite direction, was looking at her.

It was usual in the evening for the summer-house to be lighted by a swinging lamp. This lamp swung over the entrance, and as Letty stood, its light shone full upon her. Both of the men, who, being each unconscious of the other's presence, had their attention fixed upon her, noticed the wistful eagerness of her face. One was on the point of speaking; the other, as we know, spoke. When Percy Winstanley's voice fell upon the silence, and when, with the air of one whose expectation is fulfilled, the young girl in the white dress went out to meet him, the second watcher turned away, breathing heavily for a moment like one in physical pain. He shot into a side path and walked on aimlessly, until he reached the outer gate of the pleasure-ground. Then, remembering that the hour was growing late, he retraced his steps. He had not gone far before he knocked up against Percy Winstanley, who was strolling in the opposite direction. Percy had not heard of the colonel's arrival. He gave him an overflowing welcome, to which there was scarcely any response; and they walked on together towards the house in silence.

Presently he made the colonel start by saying, "You take an interest in Miss Morrison, don't you? I have just been seeing her in."

Colonel Lyndon made a vague remark about the weather being doubtful for evening rambles, and Percy further surprised him by saying—

"She braved the weather, poor little thing! braved it, I believe, on purpose to speak to me. Colonel, I tell you the truth: I could not have believed it unless I had seen it with my own eyes. That timid girl has the heart of a hero. She puts my own people to the blush. My mother would have spoken to me as she did."

"Your mother!" said the colonel huskily. "What do you mean?"

"I don't wonder in the least that you are astonished," said Percy. "I was, so much so, that at first—but it would be cruel to her even to mention what I thought." He laughed as he went on. "She gave me a regular sermon. I have never been so preached to in my life: told me I was a fool, begged me not to make my people unhappy, gave me one or two of her opinions. Upon my soul!" cried Percy, carried away by his enthusiasm, "if a man was to follow them he would be a hero—a saint; the world would not be worthy of him."

He stopped, and for the space of five seconds the colonel was silent, then he said, in his ordinary tone of voice.

"And what did you say, Percy?"

"I scarcely remember. You see, I was a little taken aback. To be lectured by a young girl—and such a girl! Have you found out that she is lovely—exquisitely lovely?" cried Percy.

"I always admired Miss Morison," said the colonel. "But here we are at the house. Good night, Percy."

When the colonel went to his room that night, the little pearl that he had taken out of its case was still in the hollow of his hand. He looked at it, pressed it to his lips, and sighing deeply, put it away in the bottom of his portmanteau.

"I must wait," he said to himself. "The time has not come yet."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A GHASTLY FIND.

A Man Half Eaten by Vermin Found in the Woods.

Three boys, out in the woods near Crawfordsville, Ind., hunting the other afternoon, found the body of a man who was, to all appearance, dead and badly decomposed. Word was sent to the Poor Farm, a mile away, and men came out with a wagon to get the body. When they arrived it was found that the man was yet alive. On attempting to put him in the wagon his clothes fell from his body, so rotten had they become from long exposure to the rain. The man's body presented a horrible appearance. It was covered with wood ticks and all kinds of vermin which had feasted upon the flesh of the live man, unable to offer the slightest resistance. To his skin were clinging several large leeches and altogether the condition of the man was sickening. He was taken to the Poorhouse and a physician summoned. Here it was learned that his name was James Crook and that he was an inmate who had suddenly disappeared April 28. He had wandered away to the ravine where he was found. He had been partly paralyzed, and being in an unfrequented place could not give an alarm. There in the woods he had laid for thirty-six days without food or water, exposed to the action of the elements and unable to prevent the vermin from preying upon his body. He was being slowly and surely tortured to death. Parts of his body were decayed, and a loathsome stench arose from it. To-day the man seems to be reviving, but he can hardly recover from the shock of his five weeks' exposure.

The Charge Against Parnell.

Meanwhile The National Press in Dublin has been now for a week daily charging Mr. Parnell with having stolen some $75,000 of the funds belonging to the public purse of the Nationalist movement, and in plain English reiterating that he is a thief and challenging prosecution for libel. When it is borne in mind that this is a country in which you can mulct an editor in damages if he so much as suggest in his paper that you are bandy-legged, it will be seen that this open accusation marks a very grave stage in the factious fight Mr. Parnell is striving against hope to maintain. How he can remain silent under it, no one sees; but then no one saw how he could wriggle out of his challenge to contest Cork with Maurice Healy, or how he could do any one of a score of other incredible things he has done since his downfall. To sue himself to be called a thief may, after all, be a matter which the House of Commons may easily feel bad upon to ask one of its members to explain.

IN THE ELECTRIC WORLD.

Some Drawbacks About Telegraphy in Mexico—Heat and Thought.

Mexico is not a telegrapher's paradise. When the line is erected, however, the troubles of the telegrapher have only just begun. Travelers in Northern Mexico, passing on horseback over the vast, treeless and melancholy plains, stop at night to camp, and finding the telegraph poles accessible and admirably seasoned, cut them down for firewood. The rancher, too, goes with his peon servants and calmly cuts down a mile or two of wire wants to fence in an inclosure. The inspector of the line sees wireless and, again, long stretches of wire withole poles, he has a shrewd guess as to the source of the depredations.

Man, however, is not the only enemy of the telegraph pole in Mexico. Besides a tiny worm, called the "jengen," which insidiously honeycombs the poles until they crumble into dust, there is a woodpecker which sits up near the top of the pole and amuses himself for days in pecking round the pole until the top and wires and cross-arms come tumbling down. The linemen are almost afraid to shoot him for they say that where one dies forty come to the funeral.

In some parts of the country, especially in Tabasco, the woods are full of monkeys, whose favorite diversion, when not in quest of food, is to betake themselves to the telegraph line for gymnastic exercise, and hundreds of these able-bodied animals may sometimes be seen swinging on the wire, perfectly weirdly with the parched and barren aspects of the great alkali sink known as Death valley—a narrow strip of salt and alkali crust extending north and south between two precipitous walls of mountains, the Amargosa and Panamint ranges. Those who have visited it say that it is beyond human powers of description. There are vast stretches of white plain, variegated with black lava, the alluring mirages, the strange appearance of the towering hills outlined like the backbones of monstrous beasts against the yellow sky, the total absence of trees, the dearth of animal life, and the intense heat from which there is no escape. Here and there, too, are pebble-beds miles in extent, made up of agate, mossagate, chalcedony, jasper, and obsidian.

This astonishing desert, however, is by no means so devoid of life as its aspect by daylight would lead the observer to imagine. As soon as night falls it is all aswarm with creatures of various sorts. Countless lizards come out of their burrows to look for insect prey; snakes wriggle across the alkali crust, horned toads creep about, and scorpions and tarantulas of enormous size sharpen their claws for combat. Rats, mice, and squirrels trot about seeking food, and wildcats and coyotes go forsake their lairs on the mountain sides and roam over the plain in pursuit of all sorts of smaller animals. It is a nocturnal population, simply because the heat is so great as to forbid going out in the day time.

The Death Valley expedition has not attempted to encamp upon the desert itself for the sake of securing specimens. It has been obliged to content itself with pitching tents about the edge, at the feet of the mountains, making brief expeditions across the torrid plain, setting traps, and returning as quickly as possible. By this method the traps could be emptied and set again without much loss of time. Time is of consequence in Death valley, where a man requires two gallons of water daily to keep him from dying of thirst, and even then he is a sufferer. Little trails of very simple and most admirable pattern are employed for catching the small animals. Two or three dozen of these traps can be conveniently carried in the pockets of one's coat, and the game coveted can enter from any side. Each one is hardly more than a wire spring, ingeniously contrived, so that the victim is not obliged to enter a hole, sees no danger, and does not dream of peril until it is caught. Corn-meal is employed for bait and is found most fetching. For the large mammals the gun must be brought into requisition, while the reptiles, usually slow of movement, are readily gathered in. Of birds there are very few in the neighborhood of Death valley, though the raven, that funeral fowl, is very plentiful in the woods that skirt its edge, crying with mournful notes for the many travelers whose dried corpses are scattered over the burning level.

As quickly as possible after they are caught the animals trapped and shot are skinned by the explorers, all of whom are skilled taxidermists. No great pains are taken with the stuffing. A lump of raw cotton supplies the place of the vitals, and the tail is extended by a wire thrust through its length. Arsenic is sprinkled all over the inside for preservative purposes, and the specimen is stretched with four pins on a board to dry. As soon as they have thus been made ready the preserved creatures are forwarded to Washington. A great many individuals of each species found are killed and forwarded because individuals here and there differ, and it is necessary to determine where these individual differences end and new species begin. For example, one kind of rat may have years of various sizes and different lengths, but it is requisite to find out the line of demarkation which separates this animal from another species. Among the specimens collected are large species of ground-squirrels, which live in burrows and feed at night upon roots, leaves, and soda plants. One of them often climbs the stalk for the purpose of getting at the seeds. At other times it stands on its hind feet, clasps the stem with its fore paws, and bites off the seed-pods, distending its cheek pouches enormously with the food. One fellow shot by Dr. Hart, chief of the expedition, had thirty-nine unbroken seed-pods in his pouches.

Another most interesting animal that inhabits Death valley is the "kangaroo rat," which makes its way about by jumping. It has long and powerful hindlegs and a surprisingly long tail. Its coloring varies from light gray to dark brown, according to whether it frequents alkali or the lava, nature intending to protect it from capture by the likeness of its hue to its surroundings. The Kangaroo rat lives in burrows, as does likewise a smaller kind that is common called the "kangaroo mouse." But neither is an imaginary sense a mouse or a rat, but belongs to families quite different.

Nevertheless, there are plenty of real rats in Death valley, as the expedition has found. One kind, that lives in the chapparal, with bore tails and exquisite soft fur, is the staple food of the Digger Indians who dwell in the mountains thereabout. The latter catch the beasts with dogs, frightening them out of their nests, which are made like those of squirrels, of great size, in the bushes or bunches of cactus. With respect to the kangaroo rats, one extraordinary point should be mentioned, relating to a certain development of their skulls, which bulge out at the sides in a surprising way. In fact, no such big bulges as these, which contain the hearing apparatus, are to be found in any other known animals.

One of the most curious sorts of rodents common in Death valley is the "scorpion mouse," which lives almost wholly upon scorpions. By instinct it has learned which end to tackle its prey by. Another creature in the same region that likes scorpions also is the "chapparal cock," which gobbles them by thousands, and is not less fond of centipedes, tarantulas lizards, and horned toads. The last named are too big to swallow at a gulp, and so the fowl tears them to pieces before devouring them. Perhaps the most beautiful mouse in existence is found in Death valley, known as the "grasshopper mouse." It is a lovely beast, fawn colored in the back with a snowy belly and sides, a short tail, and pretty little ears. Other animals forwarded are "pocket mice," with pouches outside their throats to stow provisions in, gophers, weasels, shrews, and a newly discovered species of lavender-gray fox with long ears. A wonderfully big species of coyote has been found in the valley. One odd thing about this kind of animal is that it is enormously fond of watermelons, but it has to starve for them out there.

Too Many for the Landlord.

An Irish landlord, who is now on a visit to London, relates that one of his tenants came to him before his departure and asked to have his cottage enlarged.

"Sure," he said, "it do be too small already, an me family does be needin' more room."

"But, Francis," replied the landlord, "you've not been married very long. How old is your eldest?"

"Faith, they're eight years."

"They?"

"Yis. Two av them. Twins."

"Ah! And what's the age of the next?"

"They're six, yer honour."

"They?"

"Yis, Twins."

"Goodness! Have you any more?"

"Yis! The next do be three years."

"Boy or girl?"

"Both, sor. Twins."

"Francis, this won't do."

"So I thought, sor, but there were only wan in the last lot. He's a year ould."

"Well," sighed the landlord, "I'm afraid I shall have to enlarge your cottage."

AN ACCURSED PLACE.

Death Valley, a Desolate Domain of Stunted Vegetation and Venomous Reptiles.

Lizards, Snakes, Scorpions and Tarantulas Infest Every Crawling Bed of Lava.

The U. S. Government expedition to Death Valley is pushing north its first trails. Large consignments of dead creatures, illustrating what it has thus far accomplished in the study of the life of that amazing region have reached the department of agriculture at Washington. The collections received include 2,368 mammals, besides numerous birds, reptiles, insects, and other specimens. It is desired by the scientific authorities in charge to find out just what animal and vegetable life is able to preserve its existence under conditions so extraordinarily unfavorable as are found in this desert of horror, the like of which is not found anywhere else in the world.

Of plants there is scarcely anything to be discovered except cacti, which only represent a sort of vegetable half-life, and clumps of chapparal that are gray instead of green. One sort of cactus that grows to be five or six feet in height, with extended branches, is called the "Dead man," because each stalk in the night looks like a corpse by the wayside. In the rare spots where water has gathered may be seen a singular fleshy bush without leaves and with thick green stems. Such vegetation as exists is rank and spiny, and for dull olive hues harmonizing weirdly with the parched and barren aspects of the great alkali sink known as Death valley—a narrow strip of salt and alkali crust extending north and south between two precipitous walls of mountains, the Amargosa and Panamint ranges. Those who have visited it say that it is beyond human powers of description. There are vast stretches of white plain, variegated with black lava, the alluring mirages, the strange appearance of the towering hills outlined like the backbones of monstrous beasts against the yellow sky, the total absence of trees, the dearth of animal life, and the intense heat from which there is no escape. Here and there, too, are pebble-beds miles in extent, made up of agate, mossagate, chalcedony, jasper, and obsidian.

This astonishing desert, however, is by no means so devoid of life as its aspect by daylight would lead the observer to imagine. As soon as night falls it is all aswarm with creatures of various sorts. Countless lizards come out of their burrows to look for insect prey; snakes wriggle across the alkali crust, horned toads creep about, and scorpions and tarantulas of enormous size sharpen their claws for combat. Rats, mice, and squirrels trot about seeking food, and wildcats and coyotes go forsake their lairs on the mountain sides and roam over the plain in pursuit of all sorts of smaller animals. It is a nocturnal population, simply because the heat is so great as to forbid going out in the day time.

The Death Valley expedition has not attempted to encamp upon the desert itself for the sake of securing specimens. It has been obliged to content itself with pitching tents about the edge, at the feet of the mountains, making brief expeditions across the torrid plain, setting traps, and returning as quickly as possible. By this method the traps could be emptied and set again without much loss of time. Time is of consequence in Death valley, where a man requires two gallons of water daily to keep him from dying of thirst, and even then he is a sufferer. Little trails of very simple and most admirable pattern are employed for catching the small animals. Two or three dozen of these traps can be conveniently carried in the pockets of one's coat, and the game coveted can enter from any side. Each one is hardly more than a wire spring, ingeniously contrived, so that the victim is not obliged to enter a hole, sees no danger, and does not dream of peril until it is caught. Corn-meal is employed for bait and is found most fetching. For the large mammals the gun must be brought into requisition, while the reptiles, usually slow of movement, are readily gathered in. Of birds there are very few in the neighborhood of Death valley, though the raven, that funeral fowl, is very plentiful in the woods that skirt its edge, crying with mournful notes for the many travelers whose dried corpses are scattered over the burning level.

As quickly as possible after they are caught the animals trapped and shot are skinned by the explorers, all of whom are skilled taxidermists. No great pains are taken with the stuffing. A lump of raw cotton supplies the place of the vitals, and the tail is extended by a wire thrust through its length. Arsenic is sprinkled all over the inside for preservative purposes, and the specimen is stretched with four pins on a board to dry. As soon as they have thus been made ready the preserved creatures are forwarded to Washington. A great many individuals of each species found are killed and forwarded because individuals here and there differ, and it is necessary to determine where these individual differences end and new species begin. For example, one kind of rat may have years of various sizes and different lengths, but it is requisite to find out the line of demarkation which separates this animal from another species. Among the specimens collected are large species of ground-squirrels, which live in burrows and feed at night upon roots, leaves, and soda plants. One of them often climbs the stalk for the purpose of getting at the seeds. At other times it stands on its hind feet, clasps the stem with its fore paws, and bites off the seed-pods, distending its cheek pouches enormously with the food. One fellow shot by Dr. Hart, chief of the expedition, had thirty-nine unbroken seed-pods in his pouches.

Another most interesting animal that inhabits Death valley is the "kangaroo rat," which makes its way about by jumping. It has long and powerful hindlegs and a surprisingly long tail. Its coloring varies from light gray to dark brown, according to whether it frequents alkali or the lava, nature intending to protect it from capture by the likeness of its hue to its surroundings. The Kangaroo rat lives in burrows, as does likewise a smaller kind that is common called the "kangaroo mouse." But neither is an imaginary sense a mouse or a rat, but belongs to families quite different.

Nevertheless, there are plenty of real rats in Death valley, as the expedition has found. One kind, that lives in the chapparal, with bore tails and exquisite soft fur, is the staple food of the Digger Indians who dwell in the mountains thereabout. The latter catch the beasts with dogs, frightening them out of their nests, which are made like those of squirrels, of great size, in the bushes or bunches of cactus. With respect to the kangaroo rats, one extraordinary point should be mentioned, relating to a certain development of their skulls, which bulge out at the sides in a surprising way. In fact, no such big bulges as these, which contain the hearing apparatus, are to be found in any other known animals.

One of the most curious sorts of rodents common in Death valley is the "scorpion mouse," which lives almost wholly upon scorpions. By instinct it has learned which end to tackle its prey by. Another creature in the same region that likes scorpions also is the "chapparal cock," which gobbles them by thousands, and is not less fond of centipedes, tarantulas lizards, and horned toads. The last named are too big to swallow at a gulp, and so the fowl tears them to pieces before devouring them. Perhaps the most beautiful mouse in existence is found in Death valley, known as the "grasshopper mouse." It is a lovely beast, fawn colored in the back with a snowy belly and sides, a short tail, and pretty little ears. Other animals forwarded are "pocket mice," with pouches outside their throats to stow provisions in, gophers, weasels, shrews, and a newly discovered species of lavender-gray fox with long ears. A wonderfully big species of coyote has been found in the valley. One odd thing about this kind of animal is that it is enormously fond of watermelons, but it has to starve for them out there.

On Treating the Apparently Drowned.

The bathing and swimming season is at hand and also is the season of many deaths from drowning. If every man of fair intelligence were familiar with the most approved method of reviving vital action in persons who had been a dangerous time under water, many lives might be thereby saved. With the literal dissemination of instructions on the method many persons would learn and remember the process and would employ it in emergencies. A new method which has been medical journals, Washington. A great many individuals of each species found are killed and forwarded because individuals here and there differ, and it is necessary to determine where these individual differences end and new species begin. For example, one kind of rat may have years of various sizes and different lengths, but it is requisite to find out the line of demarkation which separates this animal from another species. Among the specimens collected are large species of ground-squirrels, which live in burrows and feed at night upon roots, leaves, and soda plants. One of them often climbs the stalk for the purpose of getting at the seeds. At other times it stands on its hind feet, clasps the stem with its fore paws, and bites off the seed-pods, distending its cheek pouches enormously with the food. One fellow shot by Dr. Hart, chief of the expedition, had thirty-nine unbroken seed-pods in his pouches.

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An Empress in Distress.

The story of a very curious misapprehension at the Russian Imperial Court when the news of the attempt upon the life of the Czarowitch was received has just leaked out. Among the despatches received by the Czarina was one from the Empress of Japan beseeching her to set her mind at rest, as the Czarewitch was not seriously injured, and was being well taken care of. This telegram was signed "Haru-Ko." The first question her Imperial Majesty asked was, "Who is Haru-Ko?" Nobody present was able to answer the question, but someone knew just enough to assure her Majesty that Haru-Ko was the name of a woman. The immediate effect of this information was to convert a message which was meant to be a tranquilising one into a communication full of disquieting suggestiveness. Under the impression that her son had fallen into the hands of some designing Japanese priestess, adventuress, or worse, her Majesty's distress was greatly augmented. At last it occurred to someone to refer to the "Almanach de Gotha," when the mystery was immediately solved, and Haru-Ko was found to be none other than the Imperial Consort of the Mikado.

A wise son knoweth his own father, and a smart daughter findeth out her pepper.

"It is a very commendable thing, no doubt, for a donkey to endeavor to talk himself horse."

Recipient's Favors.—"Your back air is coming down." "Thanks, your front teeth are dropping out."

"Cribbins takes a good deal of interest in his business." "Never loses than 10 per cent.," replied Charlie Cashgo with a sigh.

FEARLS OF TRUTH.

Tyranny often accompanies an evil mention on the part of the actions and makes them sins.

An evil mention on the part of the actions and makes them sins.

To love is to admire with the heart; to admire is to love with the mind.

True economy is not found in the purchase of a thing that can be bought for the least money.

True politeness consists in being easy one's self, and in making everybody about as easy as one can.

The heroism that can wear old clothes until able to buy new, is said to be the most lonely feeling on earth.

Do not talk about the lantern that holds the lamp but make haste, uncover the light, and make it shine.

Never trust a man who pretends to have no faith in women; either he is a fool who talks for effect, or he is a libertine who is to be shunned.

Further Exploration in South America.

There are portions of South America which are unknown and inaccessible, but explorers of unquestionable ability and veracity have let in floods of light upon regions which the public is prone to believe have never been trodden by anyone the savage Indian. Stieler's maps of South America show at a glance what is known, and what unknown. The continuous lines of rivers, for example, are plotted from the mathematical observations of competent travelers. The dotted lines indicate suppositional courses. The accuracy of these maps is astonishing. At a distance of a thousand miles on the upper Amazon, there exist only about a dozen trifling errors, such as a little town placed on the wrong side of a river, a secondary channel mistaken for the main channel around an island, and a river emptying into the Amazon at the middle of a big bend instead of at its end. The town had once stood where once represented on the map, but being burned had been rebuilt across the river; and as the river is subject to rapid changes, owing to the erosion of its banks, it is possible that the other errors would, upon investigation, prove correct according to the latest observations available at the date of publication of the map. A few suggestions will show where and how the love of exploration and adventure may be gratified with profit to the explorer and to the world. Eastern, western, and southern Peru are well known. So is western, middle, and the more important portions of eastern Ecuador; all of Bolivia, except the extreme northern part; all of Colombia, except the southeastern portion; all of Venezuela, except the southwestern and southeastern corners; the whole of British and French Guiana; all of Brazil, except that portion north of the Amazon between the Rio Negro and the Rio Paru. While there are many extensive areas in the other portions of these countries which are only indifferently known, the information at hand concerning them is sufficient to render possible very accurate reasoning regarding the means of developing their resources. Their general physical aspects are comprehended; we know their natural products, the number and extent of their navigable rivers, the ordinary facilities for communication, the character of their inhabitants, and the presence or absence of organized government. Southern Colombia and southern Ecuador, however, offer a rare field for intelligent exploration. Although a mule road has been in use between Popayan and Quito for over 200 years, our knowledge of this region is most obscure. It has lain out of the route of ordinary travellers; land-locked, it has preserved its secrets of opium passes, of mineral riches, and romantic landscapes, unbroken to the present day. It is destined to assume, in importance as the encroaching links in that system of railroads, which will eventually make the dream of a Pan-American railroad a fact shall have left only this space to be traversed. A knowledge of its topography and resources would be of the utmost value. It is a journey which could be made in a single summer, but which would be full of adventure. The route lies by way of Panama, Buenaventura on the western coast of Colombia; thence by rail toward the mountains, and across the western range to Cali, in the valley of the Rio Cauca. Mule trains are constantly passing back and forth from Cali to Popayan, which latter town is near the Cauca valley, in the extreme south of Colombia. It is the capital of the great state of Cauca, has long been a city of no little commercial consequence, and boasts of a cathedral and such other public buildings as are insepurable from a South American town of 20,000 inhabitants.

Big Pafts in Little Space.

About 450 B. C. the Ionians first introduced the present system of writing from left to right; previous to the above date, from right to left prevailed.

There are at least ten million nerve fibres in the human body.

Three and a half millions of people are always on the seas of the world.

One-half the people that are born die before the age of sixteen.

A recent survey has established the number of glaciers in the Alpsat 1,155, of which 249 have a length of more than four and three-quarter miles.

A grain of musk will scent a room for twenty years and at the end of that time will not show it has diminished in the least.

A grain of carmine or half a grain of aniline will tint a hogshead of water so that a strong microscope will detect coloring matter in every drop.

A luminous buoy has been invented