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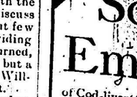

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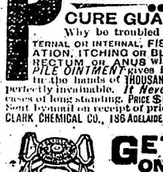

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CHAPTER LI.

[LEARN THE TRUTH AT LAST.

The gate was unfastened. It opened noiselessly under my hand, and I passed into the garden. Following the path I approached my wife unseen, as she stood on the terrace with her child looking out to the sunset. The glory and majesty were reflected on her calm, grave face. Nothing had shaken the evidence against her yet. I stopped abashed, with a sense of my own iniquity in suspecting her. An air of purity enveloped her—a god-like peace from which the shafts of doubt rebounded on myself. Holding for support to the ivied balustrade of the terrace beside me, I stood gazing at her in awe, like a guilty wretch in the presence of an offended angel at the gate of heaven, whilst a voice within me said, "What are you that you should slight this woman?"

And I was, indeed, but a faulty creature just emerging from the condition of a brute, more or less hideous than the average layer on the pedestal which supported my unnerved frame?

A sound in the house caught the child's ear. She slipped from Hebe's hand and ran indoors. Hebe stepped forward. Turning coldly my wife saw me, and the angel became human, in a moment she ran down the steps to meet me with a cry of delight. Then she checked herself, when she was almost in my arms, and catching my two wrists held me away, whilst her eyes looked into mine with painful, strenuous keenness.

I could easily have detached her little hands and drawn her to my breast, but I held her from me; she held me from her, fearing that the supreme moment had come that was to decide my fate, and with aching hope in my heart I also strove to find the soul in those searching eyes and read it.

"Hebe," I faltered, "tell me that I am not guilty—of what?"

"Of doubting the purity of the soul I am looking into now."

"And if you are not guilty," she whispered with feverish eagerness; "if my soul is pure to you?"

"Then God forgive you, and God help me!"

She released her hands away with a cry of joy, and flinging her head on my neck drew my head down and kissed my face and lips. Then she began to sob, clinging to me, and uttering incoherent sentences, broken by sobs.

"Oh, my darling! my darling! I knew it would be worth coming back a hundred times for! Poor love! I forgave and loved till even your manhood gave way to weakness and faith and courage all seemed out of the suffering heart. But you are safe, dear one. And the life strength—and all that was good in it came back with a little, like the beauty and sweetness of tender plants in a garden after they have been beaten down by a storm. Oh, I knew it! and the knowledge gave me vigor and brought back the life that had fled."

She paused a moment, as if she found it hard to plead for the fervid eloquence of her past love. Then she resumed in a calmer tone.

"I told me, love, that if I were impure you would order me to die here upon your feet, you would throw me away, you said with this pure love that clings to you what is good in my being."

"I knew that I knew her innocent, I stood in imagination figure the abandoned wife. She, quickly reading the words of doubt recognized my weakness, bowed her head, bound words where I stood.

"You would cease to think of me even," I cannot say that. Your heart is too tender. You must still have thought of me with pity and sorrow, though you never once stopped the degradation of adding your life forever with mine. Is what you meant when you asked me if I were wicked, and to forget you alone again, poor darling?"

I was silent, sinking, she whispered, "some darling! kiss me! By Heaven, since impurity of you!"

She lifted her up from her feet that I might kiss her as mine. And her cheek lay against mine when my lips parted.

Hebe's face was pale as the bottom of a cuckoo's nest in the form of a chalet.

"But tears," she said, nodding to it as we ourselves to earth, so to speak, closely side, yet knitted together.

"I have been all the morning preparing—I Take me in there that we may be alone; I have so much to tell you."

"We are young lovers again as we stole into paradise with a backward glance, as if we were coming to break in upon happiness."

Her face was soft and gentle as a June rose, and sweet with an odor of myrtle from the bouquet.

The open windows looked over the bay where capped mountains beyond Sardinia. The foliage of the roses trained upon the wall made a garland to the picture, and stood out in dark relief against the pale sky. Oh it was a fitting scene for my dear wife, and I held her closer upon her beauty.

"It is not only for my prettiness you love me, darling, is it?" she whispered with a look like the wife, you loved me, what seemed to your eyes beautiful. You love with your very heart now; you gave me I loved you with my heart, and I trusted to my heart, and you must have patience and wait. Then I thanked God that I waited. And I proved to you that I was true, your love could not have been false."

"No," said I; "it was not time. But I see the wisdom to see that."

"Dear wisdom, love. It was just the endurance of my inner heart; and that is the secret." I exclaimed; "I attended to my feeble reason—you to a confidence."

"Over the stars coming out over you know. I have been in the garden all afternoon waiting for you?

"I thought you expected me to come to-night, and I—"

"And hateful old man told me you would not to-night. But I knew you would come."

"Was your heart told you that also?"

"Oh, love, I would sooner trust to anything else."

"Again love, again kiss me. Now let me tell you. What were we talking of, I know that dreadful Beeton, who compromise herself; then, with an air of disdain, 'How can one believe a man as that—'"

"Hush up to the very day," said I with a groan.

"Why, so have I. Oh! my heart was nothing. It betrayed me that when he came and told me you had been taken by the police."

"Next morning," I asked in astonishment.

"In the morning after we had parted for the last time—when you went over to Newcastle."

"And you had been nearly taken prisoner?" I said in amazement.

"Yes; and that he had helped you to fly, and come here to Ajaccio."

"But was an explanation I had never dreamed of."

"Have not told you that?" she asked.

"How what could you have thought of me to make me confess that. Do you not see my folly and my crime. Do you not know what happened to you."

"You had gone to Ajaccio, I believed him; for I did not then know your innocence had been proved, and your wife no longer in danger. Dear, I thought that you would need your jewels and money in the drawer where you had told me to get them, and went to London as he said, and from there I came on here quickly as I could. And it was at the hotel when I asked about the English in Ajaccio, that I learnt our dear friend, the traveller, was here. You may think I was surprised he was to see me, and yet I was not at once; and I should certainly have returned to England at once to find you, but that the wicked old man came to me and finished breakfast, and let us know that you were here."

"Oh, love, love!" And I had dared to think dear creature base enough to rob me—not enough for worse than that.

"Tell me more," I cried, eagerly, craving to take upon myself the shame I had given my wife.

"Hebe saw through it all. He said, the villain has hoodwinked poor Kit, and led him to believe that you had run away from him to come to me. And your husband has followed you with the intention of taking your life.' I was glad to hear that, for I knew you must love me with your heart then. Oh! I would rather that you killed me than lived believing me wicked. You can never believe that again?"

"No; I, too, can trust my heart now."

"Then at last you will let me speak about the past?"

"I could forbid you still, but not for that reason which made me shun it before. Look you, dear one; put me to the test. Say not another word about the past, and see how by my life I shall believe you pure and guiltless, though all the world should condemn you."

"But I don't want all the world to condemn me," she said, smiling. "Your wife, like Cæsar's, should be above reproach. I will have all she world to know that she is. All that little world will be here to-night, and they must know all. There is still another and better reason, love; from now until the end we shall be only one in heart and soul, and this dear right hand," said she, taking mine and laying hers in it, "must know all this little left hand doeth. I will never close my eyes at night till I have confessed myself to you, and even my dreams shall be told to you in waking."

I do not remember what reply I made to this speech, in which tenderness alternated with prride, and every sweet word was accompanied with gentle gesture; I only know that my reply was less worthy of remembrance.

"There is still one more reason," she continued, "why every one should know the truth. It is a debt we owe to George—our brave, true, constant, and dear friend, the major. For our sake he has done that which he would not have done to save his own life—he has told a lie."

Her voice faltered as she spoke. I saw a tear roll down her cheek.

"I cannot help it," she said; "I cannot think of his devotion, his steadfast love, his fearless chivalry unmoved. And Helen too what other sister would have made the sacrifice with which she shielded me? Oh, who can say that men and women have fallen away in nobleness? You can guess dear love, what lie it was that George told for my sake; he told the world I was his wife. The wife he married was Helen."

"The children are hers," I gasped.

"The boy is hers; the girl, dear—is yours."

The shock took my breath away; a sweat burst out from my temples and crisped hair.

"Mine!" I said, beneath my breath.

"Ours, my husband. She was born at very eight months after our separation. When I found that I was to become a mother, I had to confess all to Helen. She told Major Cleveden, who had then offered her his hand. To save me and child from disgrace, he gave me his name at the same time that he made Helen his wife. She, too, for my sake, gave me the name she was entitled to—"

I could hear no more. My agitation was uncontrollable. I dropped my wife's hand, and rose to my feet from the seat in which we had been sitting hand in hand. A feeling of infinite shame and remorse overpowered me, as I thought of the wrong I had done my wife and this noble friend, and I covered my face with my hands.

"Kit, dear Kit!" murmured my wife, in a tone of expostulation as she took my nerveless hand; sit down again."

"No, no," I cried; "the only place for me is here," and I threw myself upon my knees at her feet.

She sank down at my side, and slipping her arm round my neck drew my cheek to hers as she murmured—

"And mine, too, dear love! For we have both to thank God!"

CHAPTER LII.

THE LAST ACT.

"Hark!" whispered Hebe, raising her finger, a new delight brightening her eyes.

There was a light step outside; her quick ear detected whose. Then the handle was tried, and following a tap on the door, a young voice cried.

"Mima dear, are you in there?"

"Who's there?" asked she, squeezing my hand.

"I."

"I! Why, who can that be?"

"Hebe—Hebe Wyndham!" said the little voice.

My dear wife caught up my hand to her lips in an ecstasy of joy, saying that I had two Hebes now, and then quickly opened the door.

The same child I had seen standing beside my wife on the terrace stood before me—a tall graceful girl; her soft glistening hair curling low over her forehead; her big eyes fixed on me.

"This is papa, Hebe, dear," said my wife.

She looked at me timidly at first; but suddenly, finding in my face something that overcame her fears, a smile lit up her face, and with the warm impulsiveness of her mother, she ran into my outstretched arms.

I caught her up and held her close to me, whilst my heart throbbed with a strange new happiness, and the likeness to Hebe that I found in her complexion; her deep soft eyes and her mouth became blurred through the tears that sprang into my eyes.

"Isn't she sweet, dear?" whispered my wife.

"She is like you, love," I answered. But I could say no more. A feeling overcame me like that a man might have in finding himself on the edge of a precipice from which he has escaped by a miracle. For, recalling the events of the night on which I had taken my wife from the Hermitage, I suspected that it was this my own child whose life I had been tempted to take away.

Going up to the house, my wife on one side of me and my daughter on the other, we came, at a turn of the path, suddenly face to face with the major. He had been prepared for a change in my appearance, and, after a start of surprise, he held out his hand to me with a smile that showed I had changed for the better in his eyes.

We stood holding each other by the hand in silence for a moment; then he said—

"I did you an injustice eleven years ago; I am glad to acknowledge it now."

My reply was not heroic; I fear it was incoherent. The acknowledgment I owed him was not to be made in a few words.

In the evening I told my story, omitting nothing that could set the conduct of my wife and my friend in a true light. Knowing the motive that had brought many people here, I tried to confine myself to a simple narrative of facts and avoid any evidence of feeling; but my subject betrayed me into enthusiasm when I spoke of the major's chivalry, and my voice failed me from emotion when I told of my wife's patient love.

EPILOGUE.

TO MADAM HELEN CLEVEDEN,
Villa Ballastrino, Adjaccio.

MY DARLING SISTER,—We found your welcome letters and the photographs on the table when we came in from our drive this evening. It is strange to think that we are henceforth to live so far apart after living so long together. Almost as hard to realize as the fact that dear George is devoting himself to the business of growing oranges and lemons; but we are very glad that you have found a home so delightful, and an occupation that, as it interests your husband, must add to your happiness. Only, as you see, my gladness is just a tiny bit dashed with selfish regrets. I would have all whom I love close to me. But my dearest Kit consoles me with the promise that we will most certainly spend the winter months with you—if you will have us.

I remember Ballastrino quite well, with its lovely terraces, where the deep-green foliage of the lemons and oranges spread thick inlaid with patinas of bright gold," and the beautiful bouquet of palms rising beyond; all compassed about with the amphitheatre of olive-covered hills, facing the ever-blue Mediterranean. Or shall I not forget those olive woods, where my dear husband and I wandered away from you in the spring seeking ferns, and heath, and myrtle, and cistus, and cyclamen? The very memory makes me cry with its excess of joy. Donot for a moment, dear, think that I am one whit less happy now than then. No! no! The delight is calmer; that is all. My life is full of real, real happiness; and each day I find myself richer than yesterday by some fresh added joy.

Last week I was seized with a desire to go back to the little cottage on the moor, and my dear husband, yielding to my wish, took me there. It was just as we had left it. I expected to feel a desire to live the old life over again there? to renew the many joys I felt as my dear Kit came back little by little to his nobler self. But the charm was gone, and I think we were both glad to leave it and return to our home here. I know the secret now; it is because my husband is nobler and wiser and better than in those old days.

He is sitting here with me writing to your husband. George did well to consult him about the new house you are going to build; for Kit—I think I may say it without boasting—understands such subjects better than any man in the world.

Our dear child adds to our joy; she is devoted (as she may well be) to her father, and has the greatest admiration for his genius. She is learning to draw and model in clay, and I am proud to say she shows a heritage of his wonderful skill and fine taste. Ah, how I wish I could do something in that line! But my husband would not have me forsake music for any other art, even if I had the ability; and in playing to him while he carves I find my solace for having no higher gifts.

Now, darling, I must say good-bye, for dinner is served.

Ever your loving sister,
HEBE WYNDHAM.

P.S.—I cut out a paragraph from a newspaper to send you, but it is mislaid; it was the last we shall ever hear of that horrible old man, Beeton. It seems he was arrested in London for a most impudent forgery, and seeing that there was no hope of escape he ended his days in the police cell by suicide.

H. W.

Watersweet, Linton, Devonshire.
July 8, 188—

[THE END.]

SNAKE CHARMING IN HINDOOSTAN.

Ingenious Tricks Played by the Professional Fakir of the Orient.

"I can tell you something interesting about snakes in India," said Capt. W. Tottenham of the British India army to a reporter. "I have made a special study of snakes in that country. As a result I got at the bottom of the great snake-charmer frauds, and also, I think, made an important discovery in connection with the cure of venomous snake bites. A least I never failed in my experiments.

"When I was stationed at Kurmaul, in the northwest provinces of India, I occupied the usual officers' bungalow, with a large garden around the building. One day my servants complained of the snakes in the garden, and asked if they might send for a snake charmer. Of course I agreed. The usual professional appeared and consented to the usual terms—50 cents a head for each snake caught. Then he set to work and I followed and watched him closely.

"He went into the stable first and commenced blowing a horn. Presently a snake came crawling out of a hole and made toward him. He suddenly grabbed it by the neck and put it into a basket. This was repeated three times. Once he got a bite on the knuckle. They were all cobras from three to four feet long, and I watched for results. He pulled a pebble from his pocket, mumbled some incantations over it, and then bound it over his wound, which he showed me. I only chuckled. Two things had struck me forcibly. One was that cobras do not climb of their own accord. They are ground snakes. Again it struck me that he seemed to know where to go for his snake every time. I determined to catch some more, but he declared that was all. I insisted on his trying and he marched around blowing his horn, but no more snakes came.

"Then I thought it time to turn the tables. I paid him over the 3 rupees and seized the basket with the three snakes. He looked alarmed. I sent for my sword and a block of wood. He asked me what I was going to do. I told him that the snakes were mine by right of purchase and I was going to cut off their heads. He fell on his knees and writhed at my feet as only a Hindoo can, imploring me to have mercy upon him. I consented to give him back the snakes if he would make a clean and open confession to me. He did so. He said it was their custom in the trade to go out at the proper season and hunt a mother cobra with her brood.

"They kill the mother and capture the fifteen to twenty little five-inch snakes which constitute the brood. They are too young to be harmful. Then they pull out the two eye teeth, which are the fangs that kill. Then they set to work to train the snakes. They feed them on a basin of milk, and blow the horn when feeding time arrives. After three or four months the snakes get to understanding the signal and come from all parts of the room to feed at the basin. By this time they are grown up to the decent size and all ready for business.

"The charmer goes round (the night before) and plants his snakes in different places. Next day he approaches the premises casually and offers to rid the place of snakes at 50 cents a head. Invariably his offer is accepted, as you can understand. Then he goes and blows his horn. The snakes which are all starving with hunger, promptly come to the well-known call for food, and then he catches and pouches them. No one wants snakes particularly, and his humble supplication to take away the snakes for taming purposes is invariably assented to by the good-natured Anglo-Indian. In the course of a week he makes a good deal of money."

ATTACKED BY MOSLEM MOBS.

They Create a Reign of Terror Over the Americans.

A Constantinople, despatch says:—Moslem mobs have possession of Cæserea. They have established a reign of terror over the Armenians, have robbed hundreds, and have killed many. During services in three Armenian churches the mob burst into the doors, stripped the women of their jewelery, and beat and cut the men. After the Armenians fled the Moslems sacked the churches.

They afterwards went through the streets attacking all the Armenians they met, bursting into private houses and sacking shops. All places of business are closed and trade is utterly stagnant. Violence and theft continue day and night. Christian caravans are being robbed and the merchants murdered. The prisons are crowded with Armenian prisoners. Most of the conspicuous Armenians of Cæserea and Marsovan have been imprisoned. A few escaped by paying high ransom.

Flooring An American.

Some American gentlemen visited Cardiff a short time since, and, happening to pass the fire-engine station, stopped inside.

After they had a good look round, one of them turned to the engineer, and said:

"You know, in New York they use 9-inch hose, not 3-inch as you have here."

"Oh!" said the engineer, not to be beaten, "that small hose is only used for laying the dust in the station. This hose," pointing to a piece of suction-pipe about twelve inches in diameter, "is what we use at fires. It saves us using the fire-escapes," continued the engineer, "for when we want to send a man to the top of a building, we just set him on a jet, and send him up."

"But," said one of the visitors rather incredulously, "how does he come down again?"

"Why, he puts his arm around the jet, and slides down," replied the engineer.

The Americans gazed a few moments, first at the hose and then at the engineer, and then left in a hurry, one of them murmuring:

"I guess that man has been connected with a newspaper!"

One Man in a Million.

"Hello, Rivers! You have a bad cold." "Worst I ever had Banks." "I'm sorry for you, old fellow. Wish I knew of something that would cure you, but I don't."

With tears in his eyes—"Give me your hand, Banks! You're the only man I've seen for three days that hadn't a sure cure!"

Off Duty.

First Stranger—"What business are you engaged in?"

Second Stranger (pompously)—"I'm engaged in minding-my-own business. If you are out of employment I can recommend it."

First Stranger—"Thanks! How long does your vacation last?"—[Puck.

No Chance.

Mr. Billus—"Seems to me, Maria, the children don't speak half as good English as they did before they began to go to school."

Mrs. Billus—"For mercy's sake, John, how can you expect them to learn everything at school? I wish you would quit harping on that English-language fad of yours!"

When people are hired to be good, they quit work as soon as the pay stops.

POETRY.

Winter Nightfall.

The rose has faded from the western sky
Behind the lazy mill.
The snow's wind-graven drifts in beauty lie
Where all is gray and still.

Now dim and faint the distant steeple grows
While night's drear shadows creep
Across the land, and dull the weird repose
Of silence wood and steep.

Above the fields a great enamelled star
Is sparkling cold and white;
The deep dark curtains of the east afar
Shine with a sudden light.

And in a moment, with a silver flood,
The full moon rises chill
Behind the tangle of the sombre wood
That crowns the distant hill.

—[Harper's Weekly.

The Owners of the Universe.

Let us cover up the sunbeams
Lying all around our path
Get a trust on wheat and roses,
Give the poor the thorns and chaff.
Let us find our choicest pleasures
Hoarding bounties of to-day.
So the poor shall have a scant measure
And two prices have to pay.

Yes, we'll reservoir all rivers,
And we'll levy on the lakes.
And we'll a lay a tax a trifling poll tax
On each poor man who partakes;
We'll brand his number on him
That he'll carry through his life;
We'll appoint all his children
Get a mortgage on his wife.

We will capture e'en the wind-god,
And confine him in a cave;
And then through our patent process
We the sunbeams will save;
Thus we'll squeeze our little brother
When his lungs he tries to fill,
Put a meter on his wind pipe
And present our little bill.

We will syndicate the starlight;
And monopolize the moon;
Claim a royalty on rest days,
A proprietary soon.
For right of way through ocean's spray
We'll charge just what it's worth;
We'll drive our stakes around the lake—
In fact, we'll own the earth.

—[Great Thoughts (London).

Common Things.

Give me, dear Lord, thy magic common things,
Which all around me, which all may share—
Sunlight and dewdrops, grass, and stars, and sea.

Nothing unique or now and nothing rare.

Just daisies, knapweed, wind among the thorns;
Some clouds to cross the blue old sky above;
Rain, winter fires, a useful hand, a heart,
The common glory of a woman's love.

Then, when my feet no longer tread old paths
(Keep them from fouling sweet things anywhere).
Write one old epitaph in grace lit words:
"Such things look fairer that he sojourned here."

—[The Spectator.

The Old Front Walk.

I'm dreaming oft of the old front walk,
Which led from the gate to the door,
Its borders rich with old-fashioned bloom;
I'll see it, alas! nevermore.

Bright posies mother cared for and loved,
Blooned cheerily midst its mossy grass;
The bachlor's buttons, white, pink and blue,
And marigold golden and gay.

The fringy poppies, quaint four-o'clocks,
And hollyhocks, unmoved and tall,
The larkspurs blue, and clematis vine,
All over the old garden wall.

The tulips bright, near the spicy pinks,
Sweet rosemary, thyme, nigmonette,
The lilacs tall, and syringia blooms—
Sweet entrance to dear to me yet!

The pungent dill I more prized for church,
Than modern—smilling sloty at Nature—
O rare, O blest: the soft Summer nights,
To linger with him at the gate!

The zephyrs wafted a sweet perfume,
When slowly we sauntered to talk;
But sweeter far was the story old
He told low on the old front walk.

—[Fanny L. Fancher.

I Should Forget.

If I could know that o'er another sun,
My task on earth were ended and my lifework done,
Methinks I should forget to chide
For every act remiss—of selfish pride,
My thought would be, O Lord with me
abide.

I should forget the years of toil and strife,
In reaching out to grasp eternal life.
I should forget the lonely years,
The days so full of tortuning fears,
The weary nights of bitter tears.

All wrongs I should make haste to set aright;
Bury the past in darkness deep as night.
I should forget the taunts and sneers,
I should forget the jeers and jibes,
Which I met these many years.

The loves and hates of earth I'd lay aside,
Why should I choose to bear them o'er the tide?
I should forget the loves of earth
And every hate which had been given birth.
All, I'd forget, but heavenly work.

—[Lydia A. Riches.

BIGGEST OF WAPITI.

An American Army Officer Shoots a Monster Bark in the Wilds of Montana.

Several months ago Lieut. G. P. Ahern of the United States army was in the wildest, least visited part of Montana, pursuing his mission of mapping the mountains of the State for the War Department. He had got 100 miles from Deer Lodge into a region so secluded that in all probability no white man had ever been there before. As he was toiling ahead of his men, he came upon a sight that made him, veteran hunter though he is, feel like a boy with the buck fever. Before him, not many yards away, was a mighty wapiti, the mightiest he had ever seen.

It was lying down and, as he stopped, it arose slowly, but neither turned to fly nor advanced to fight. It looked straight at him, and the Lieutenant thought its eyes were trying to express to him an utter weariness of life and a desire to have the end come as soon as possible, for he could see that this buck was very old. As he advanced toward it it made a feeble effort to turn away. He raised his rifle and shot it behind the ear. It fell dead with scarcely a quiver.

When the Lieutenant came to examine his prize he was more astonished than at first. For he saw that he had killed the greatest wapiti of which there is any record, and also the oldest. Erect the wapiti stood nearly ten feet from the ground to the top of its great antlers. From the ground to the base of the antlers was six feet. The head was over two feet long from the base of the antlers to the end of the nostrils. The body was as large as the body of a big horse, and the head was much larger. The antlers themselves had fifteen prongs, one less than that sixteen-pronged pair of antlers which is regarded as a unique curiosity, and had not nearly so large as this pair.

The teeth of this old buck were worn down below the gums, so that it would have been impossible for him to bite anything, and, as an index to his long and varied career, there was hardly a square inch of his hide that did not bear the mark of bullet or arrow. Lieut. Ahern's Indians hauled the body down to Deer Lodge, and there hunters, white and Indian, from all parts of the world crowded to see the wonder.

Lieut. Ahern sent the head and the hide on to Mr. Julian Ralph, the author, and Mr. Ralph took them to a taxidermist and animal dealer, in New York. This man has had thirty years' experience, and has stuffed all sorts of things, both great and small. He had never seen anything like this monster. When he came to examine the teeth he could hardly believe his own eyes. He said that the buck was at least eighty years old, and perhaps was over a hundred. He thought that no one in historic times had killed such a great creature, greater than any animal supposed to exist on this continent since the white men began to explore.

When you think of this creature, who was born in the last century, long before any white man had penetrated the fastnesses of the Rockies; when you think of his hide, scarred in a hundred places by arrow and by bullet, you realize what a wonderful career Lieut. Ahern's bullet ended.

As Mr. Ralph says, away back, before Washington was President, this buck was leading a herd of does, and was the proudest of his kind. When he fought to assert his supremacy and the right to an inviolate harem the issue of the battle could never have been uncertain. Many an Indian hunter he has laid low in the days when he could look out over vast plains, dotted thickly with ten thousand buffalo.

But as decades and quarter centuries rolled by he began to grow old, still ruling by reason of size and strength, but inevitably nearing the time when age would make him too feeble to rule any more. But he saw many, many generations of proud bucks rise and grow old and die before even the first signs of great age began to appear. It must have been less than five years ago that he went out to join battle with a buck who had sent him a ringing challenge, that he lost the fight and was compelled to fly for his life. He saw his harem, the last of many he had had, file away meekly behind the conqueror, with not one look behind.

Then he realized that his long day was at the setting, and he wandered off alone to wait for death. It was months before the end that he lost the power to take food properly. For the taxidermist found that his skin was as thin as a piece of brown wrapping paper instead of an eighth of an inch thick, as it would have been had he not been starving and living off his tissues.

SHOES FOR THE DOGS.

Esquimaux Wake Them for Protection Against Sharp Ice.

No wonder most people like dogs; they are such noble, faithful creatures.

I admit, says Col. Gilder, the Arctic traveller, that my own regard for them amounts to affection. I never seen a poor forlorn, tramp of a dog limping along the street and casting furtive glances around for his natural enemy, the small boy with a tin can and a string, without wanting to do something for the miserable outcast; to feed him if possible, and, if not, then just to pat him on the head so he may know some one cares for him.

Dogs have been to me such firm and useful friends in the past, and have carried me safely through so many perils that they have well earned my everlasting esteem.

When after dragging my sled all day over the frozen Arctic wastes, I would lie down upon the snow for a few hours' oblivion, they would huddle as close to me as possible, to keep me warm, and incidentally, perhaps, to share what little heat might be provided by my own body.

I believe in treating all animals kindly, but particularly dogs, for they seem to appreciate kindness more than others. A man who would abuse a dog is too low a fellow to associate with such a noble animal. Indeed he is not fit to tie a dog's shoe.

"A dog's shoe!" How ridiculous!" you say. "Why, dog's don't wear shoes."

You are mistaken about that, my young friend. In this country perhaps they do not but in arctic lands they do.

MADE OF TANNED SEALSKIN.

A dog's shoe is made of tanned sealskin, shaped like a bag, and is tied around the ankle with a drawing string. It is large enough at the bottom to allow the foot to spread, and, though sometimes very useful, is never ornamental. It looks very much like a rag upon a sore finger, and it is just as necessary. During the spring, when the snow melts in the mi iday and hardens again as the sun gets low, it is often very sharp and cuts the dogs' feet like glass. Then they would soon become lame and be rendered useless. But a careful driver is always provided with a few shoes for his team, and as soon as he sees a dog limp or notices a spot of blood in the track upon the snow, it indicates to him that one of his dogs has cut his foot, and then he puts a shoe upon the wounded member.

When the team stops to rest the driver must keep a sharp lookout upon those dogs that are shod, for, as they are always hungry, they are apt to devour their shoes.

A good dog is very careful to keep his feet in proper condition, and every time the sled is halted he chews off the ice and snow that has gathered upon his feet and is frozen to the long hairs between his toes. No matter if it does hurt when he pulls at it with his teeth—for that part of a dog's foot is very sensitive—he "knows he must get rid of those icicles, and, though it sometimes makes him cry out with pain, he pulls away, whining, until his feet are free once more. Then, after licking them all over with his pliant tongue, he curls them under him and lies down upon the snow to sleep.

LIVELY SPIN BEHIND DOGS.

If you would like a real live sleigh ride, take spin behind a team of five strong dogs, with a light load and smooth snow. It would give you more intense gratification than any other ride you ever had. You may have had a good time with a handsled on a well-iced hillside, but there is the long walk back to make you wish you hadn't ridden so far. Behind a dog team, however, there is, beside the exhilaration of rapid motion, a charming uncertainty as to where you are going and whether or not you will reach your destination without an upset.

A ride behind a dog team is not an occasion for quiet reflection; your attention is too much occupied by what is transpiring.

I once took a long ride in a Spanish diligencia, drawn by fifteen mules and a horse, and sat b side the driver on the front seat. We travelled over the Alhama range of mountains in Andalusia, from Loja to Alhama. The driver, who, by the by, had but one arm, had not only to guide the whole team, by the reins, which he held between his knees, but also to manage the brake, and, as much of the way was over hilly country, he had his hands—or rather his one hand—full. The double string of animals led by a postilion on the horse, always rushed madly down hill, anxious only to keep out of the way of the great, lumbering vehicle that came rattling close behind them. Notwithstanding the fact that in the southern part of Spain, I was constantly reminded of a sleigh ride, behind dogs, and the resemblance was heightened by the constant stream of personalities poured out over the team by this one-armed driver. Each particular animal was repeatedly called upon by his individual name, and adjured by his own special saint to exert himself more and more, and when this method failed to move him, a man armed with a long stick jumped down from the steps behind the conveyance, and, rushing to the front like a sprinter, belabored each mule as it passed near him until the whole team was scampering for dear life. As the coach whirled by the whipper sprang nimbly to his perch in the rear.

USES HIS WHIP FREELY.

A dog driver, too, is always harassing his team. Each dog is add