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Birds with Large Appetites

Despite the fact that "the appetite of a bird" has become a common phrase for light eating, investigations show that birds are tremendous feeders. The diet of the average kestrel (a small European hawk) is calculated at 1,000 mice a month, to say nothing of insects and worms. The barn owl is as voracious as the kestrel. An investigator, after caging one of these birds, gave it seven mice one after the other. The first six immediately disappeared, each with a gobble and a gulp, and the owl did its very best to treat the seventh in a like manner. Limitations of abdominal capacity, however, prevented, and though the gobble came off the gulp did not, so that for twenty minutes or so the tail of the seventh mouse dangled from the corner of the bird's beak. But in due course it swallowed the body, and three hours later the pangs of hunger reasserted themselves and the owl ate four more mice.

Experiments with a caged robin led to some surprising results. At the end of three weeks it was found that in order to keep up its weight the bird required about fourteen feet of earthworms a day, or an equivalent in other solid food. A robin in good condition weighs as nearly as possible one ounce. Fourteen feet of earthworms weigh two ounces and a half. In other words the bird devours, in health, about two and a half times its own weight of solid food in the course of every twenty-four hours. A man of 168 pounds, if he were to equal this performance in proportion to his size, would require a daily allowance of forty large legs of mutton.

Four pounds would be a heavy weight for a heron. Yet one of those birds, which was trapped in England in 1890, disgorged two recently swallowed trout, one of which weighed two pounds and the other one and one-half pounds. Another, captured in 1893, had contrived to put away three trout averaging three-quarters of a pound apiece, although it was only 4 months old, and another had dined upon seven small trout, together with a mouse and a thrush.

Among the greediest birds are wood pigeons, which will continue to gulp down food until their crops are almost at the bursting point. From one of these birds, shot as it was returning from a raid in the fields, no fewer than 800 grains of wheat were taken. Another had contrived to cram down no fewer than 600 peas. A third was endeavoring to sustain nature with 180 beech nuts and a fourth with sixty acorns.

Early Days in California

In his "Gold Hunters of California" Thomas E. Farish tells some interesting anecdotes of the men of the early days. The following concerns "Fighting Jack" Hayes, the first sheriff of San Francisco county: "Hayes never drilled his command; with him it was 'Come on, boys,' and they followed where he led. After the battle of Monterey, in which his gallantry was conspicuous, a number of young lieutenants, graduates of West Point, visited his camp to pay their compliments to 'Fighting Jack.' They found him frying bacon, surrounded by soldiers, with nothing to distinguish him from those about him. 'Where can we find Col. Hayes?' inquired the spokesman. 'I think you will find him over yonder,' pointing to a group of men about a hundred yards away. Riding over to the group indicated the young men made the same inquiry. They were informed that the man with the frying pan was the officer they were in search of. They rode back to their headquarters without further effort to make his acquaintance."

Speaking of Henry Miller, a western cattle king, Mr. Farish says that none knew better than he the value of a reliable, efficient man. "Once, on one of his Kern county ranches, he had a foreman with whom he quarreled. The foreman said: 'If it were not that you are a smaller man than I, I would beat you half to death.' At this Miller threw off his coat and went for the man. The foreman succeeded in giving him a good trouncing, then demanded a settlement, which was made. Then all over with, Miller apologized and hired the man over again, with an advance in wages. He knew he had a good man."

Another story of Miller: "I remember Miller once at Firebaugh's ferry, on the San Joaquin river, when he was buying so much land. It was at breakfast and a man called 'Hog' Johnson began to criticise Miller's purchases, when Miller turned to him and said: 'Hog, you knows dere iss more peoples born into de world effery year dan dies out of it, don't you?' 'Yes,' admitted Hog. 'Vell, dey all haf to lif off de land and dere iss no more land borned every year.'"

Captain Nick's Queer Dream

During one of those religious revivals at Searsport for which that Maine town is famous, while Capt. Nick, with others, was sitting by the stove in the country store, toasting his shins, and telling stories, the village preacher entered, and, being desirous of converts, drew into the circle of story-tellers. A momentary silence followed and then Capt. Nick remarked: "I had a dream last night. I dreamed I died and went to heaven."

The preacher asked to have the dream told, and the captain proceeded: "Having died, I was directed to go to heaven. I started, and, after traveling some time, came to a fork in the road, nor could I remember the directions as to which fork to take. I chose the left-hand fork and, going on, came to a large iron gate, from which arose wailing and sounds of gnashing of teeth. I hesitated, but, not daring to turn back, went up to the gate and knocked.

"It was partially opened, and out stepped the devil, tined fork in hand, his horns poised ominously, his eyes bloodshot.

"'Who are you?' he said, savagely.

"'Capt. Nick, from Searsport, Me.,' I made answer.

"'Get yourself away from here, then', said the devil, 'we are chock full of Searsporters now.'

"Right glad was I to get away, and hurrying back, I took the right-hand fork, which soon brought me to a beautiful marble palace, wherein was music and song.

"The gate swung gently open, at my knock, and the good St. Peter said, in a soft, sweet voice, 'Who art thou?' I answered as at the first gate, 'Capt. Nick from Searsport, Me.'

"'Walk in,' said he, 'thou good and faithful servant; thou art the first one we have had from Searsport, Me.'"

With the Advance Guard

In the dream of the northern poets,
The brave who in battle die
Fight on in shadowy phalanx
In the field of the upper sky;
And as we read the sounding rhyme,
The reverent fancy hears
The ghostly ring of the viewless swords
And the clash of the spectral spears.

We think with imperious questionings
Of the brothers whom we have lost,
And we strive to track in death's mystery
The flight of each valiant ghost.
The northern myth comes back to us,
And we feel, through our sorrow's night,
That those young souls are striving still
Somewhere for the truth and light.

It was not their time for rest and sleep;
Their hearts beat high and strong;
In their fresh veins the blood of youth
Was singing its hot, sweet song.
The open heaven bent over them,
Mid flowers their lithe feet trod,
Their lives lay livid in light, and blest
By the smiles of women and God.

Again they come! Again I hear
The tread of that goodly band;
I know the flash of Ellsworth's eye
And the grasp of his hard, warm hand;
And Putnam, and Shaw, of the lion heart,
And an eye like a Boston girl's;
And I see the light of heaven which lay
On Ulric Dahlgren's curls.

There is no power in the gloom of hell
To quench those spirits' fire;
There is no power in the bliss of heaven
To bid them not aspire;
But somewhere in the eternal plan
That strength, that life survive,
And like the files on Lookout's crest,
Above death's clouds they strive.

A chosen corps, they are marching on
In a wider field than ours;
Those bright battalions still fulfill
The scheme of heavenly powers;
And high brave thoughts float down to us,
The echoes of that far fight,
Like the flash of a distant picket's gun
Through the shades of the severing night.

No fear for them! In our lower field
Let us keep our arms unstained,
That at last we be worthy to stand with them
On the shining heights they've gained.
We shall meet and greet in closing ranks
In Time's declining sun,
When the bugles of God shall sound recall
And the battle of life be won.

—From "Poems by John Hay," published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Poor Opinion of Parsons

The Rev. Appleton Grannis, of St. Michael's, is a member of a certain New York club largely made up of clergymen, and is perhaps the only member thereof who would be willing to divulge the following sad story:

"Our club-house was torn up for repairs last summer," he said the other day, "and another club near Central Park kindly offered us hospitality until our building should be again tenantable. This second club was made up of men more famous in worldly than clerical circles; yet they were very polite to us and only out-of-town members raised their eyebrows at sight of the numerous cassocks and white ties which were so plentifully sprinkled among the summer costumes of the regular habitues.

"There was only one hint at unpleasantness during our entire stay, and that occurred one very rainy afternoon. An elderly and somewhat choleric military man who shall be nameless was scolding the hall porter as I entered the building.

"'I tell you,' he shouted, 'I left my overshoes right here in the hall not ten minutes ago, and now they aren't here.'

"'I'll—I'll make inquiries, sir,' pleaded the attendant, 'the overshoes are probably mislaid, and'—

"'Mislaid?' snorted the old gentleman; 'nothing of the sort! They're stolen, sir, stolen!'

"'Oh, no, sir!' remonstrated the porter, "I think not. I'—

"'Don't contradict me! I say they are stolen! And, what's more, I'm not one bit surprised. It's just what might have been expected since we let all that indiscriminate mob of parsons in!'"—New York World.

OLDEST CITY IN THE WORLD

Adab, Located in Region Where Tradition Has Always Placed the Garden of Eden

The discovery of a lost city of antiquity in the land where tradition has located the Garden of Eden in the plain between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers is the first great achievement of the Chicago University exploring expedition in Babylonia.

The ruins that have been unearthed by Prof. E. J. Banks and his one hundred and twenty native workmen are identified by him as the remains of the city of Adab, possibly the oldest city in the world, certainly one of the group of the oldest cities of which there is any knowledge or tradition.

Prof. Banks began work on the mounds at Bismya early in the present year. The location and vast extent of the ruins, as indicated by the tumuli that rise above the level plain, promised from the first rich fruits to the explorers. This, with the nearness of the ruins to Nippur, which have yielded the most splendid results of modern research into the ancient history of this land where civilization if not humanity first dawned upon the world, and their almost equal proximity to the ruins of the city of Ur of the Chaldeans, whose temples and palaces buried for thousands of years still sleep beneath the hillocks that rise on the banks of the Euphrates, excited the hope of the explorers that within these vast mounds they will find records of history that will antedate any that are now known to the world.

The ruins of the ancient city are almost in the center of the great alluvial plain between the Tigris and Euphrates, 140 miles south of Bagdad and 22 miles south of the mounds of Nippur, the site of the explorations of Dr. John P. Peters of this city, a decade ago.

The evidences of ancient human habitation that led the explorers to work at Bismya consisted of a series of mounds from 35 to 40 feet high that extended in a line along the valley plane over a distance of three-quarters of a mile. From these mounds to the ruins of Nippur directly north are the remains of a very ancient canal known as Shatt-el-Nil. This connection of the two cities by an extensive waterway is proof of their intimate relation.

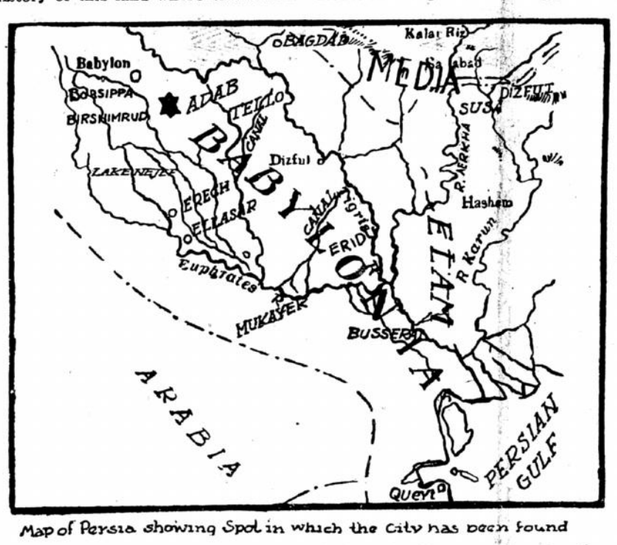
It is the peculiar location of Adab that lends expectation of discoveries of extreme importance to the work of uncovering its ruins. At Nippur the cuneiform inscriptions on some of the earlier tablets found by Dr. Peters indicated that the city of Bel, the "lord" of gods, was a great city, the home of kings, more than 4,000 years before the birth of Christ. But south of Nippur is believed by Oriental scholars to be the seat of primitive human habitation.

A mound 70 feet high, on the banks of the Euphrates thirty miles south of the ruins of Adab, marks the site of the Temple of the Moon at the city of Ur of the Chaldeans, where in the reign of Khammurabi, king of Babylon in 2400 B. C., Abraham, the father of Israel, set forth on his journey into Canaan. And for centuries before this had been the capital city of Babylonia, while Babylon was not yet known to fame.

All about Adab are the relics of a most ancient civilization.

To the east lay the ruins of Shirpuria (now Tello) on the canal that 5,000 years ago connected the Tigris and the Euphrates. Here recent explorations brought to life a library of 30,000 in scribed tablets. To the southwest are Erech and Ellasar of Biblical fame, the later the seat of the worship of the sun god.

The discovery of the city of Adab is an almost marvellous sequel to the finding of the code of King Khammurabi. It forms a new link in a chain of remarkable revelations of long hidden secrets of the past, its unfolding due to the activity and intelligence which have marked the work of exploration of recent years in Babylonia. It is a record of achievements in a sequence that suggests the fictions of fable more than the chronicles of historic fact.



Map of Persia showing Spot in which the City has been found

M. de Morgan, a French explorer, late in the fall of 1901, began work at the site of ancient Susa, the capital of the kingdom of the Elamites. He was led to this place by inscriptions found in the ruins of Babylon, from which he learned that many of the most important monuments of the Babylonian kings had been carried off as trophies of war by the Elamite knigs to their capital city. He soon discovered the stele of Narem Sin, who was king of Nippur in 3800 B. C., and shortly afterward startled the world with the news that he had found the great tablet on which King Khammurabi had inscribed his code of laws.

Khammurabi (the King Amraphal of Genesis xiv. 1) reigned in 2400 B. C., nearly 1,800 years before the time when Daniel read the mysterious handwriting on the wall at King Belshazzar's feast in Nebuchadnezzar's palace at Babylon, when Cyrus and his Persians captured the imperial city.

In the introduction to his code Khammurabi extols his own achievements as the first king who ruled at Babylon, though he was the sixth of the first dynasty of the monarchs of Babylonia. Among his titles to fame he declares he was "the king who lent life to Adab," from which it is understood that Adab was one of the towns looted and wrecked by the Elamites in their early raids, and that Khammurabi restored the ancient city.

From the inscriptions on the bricks of the buildings first uncovered Prof. Banks learned that the ruined city was named Udnunki. But, as was the case at Nippur, the city was built upon the ruins of another city, and that still upon another. Deep down in the soil beneath the ruins were other ruins centuries older than those above them, and from these Udnunki was identified also as the Adab that far antedated the days of Abraham. Adab was old when Babylon was in its infancy. It was, like Ur of the Chaldeans, a city of the fabled olden times, when Khammurabi began his reign in Babylon 2 400 years before the birth of Christ.

For years—back, in fact, to 1877, when the work of exploration and discovery began to give startling results at Babylon and Nineveh—the field of more ancient human occupation in Southern Babylonia, down near where the remains of great canals and colossal mounds mark the sites of vast creations and activities, of which there is no historic chronicle, has been the desire of all explorers. Since the brief work at Ur a score of years ago that yielded priceless treasures, the mounds at Mukayer have possessed an intense allurement for oriental scholars.

But the very eagerness with which they sought permission to uncover buried walls of Ur and unearth its hidden secrets has defeated the aims of the explorers.

For fifteen years Prof. Banks has been one of those who desired to probe the mysteries of the mounds of Ur. In 1891 he secured the position of United States consular agent at Bagdad, in the hope that it would bring to him the coveted opportunity. To his disgust he found that members of the consular service were forbidden to do work of exploration within the Turkish dominions. He therefore returned to this country.

Three years ago Prof. Banks went to Constantinople to seek authority from the Turkish government to open the mounds at the "Moor city," having organized many influences in support of his petition.

It was only after two and a half years of waiting and striving that Prof. Banks was able to get a permit through the intricate channels of officialdom in Turkey and Mesopotamia, to work on the unidentified mounds south of Nippur.

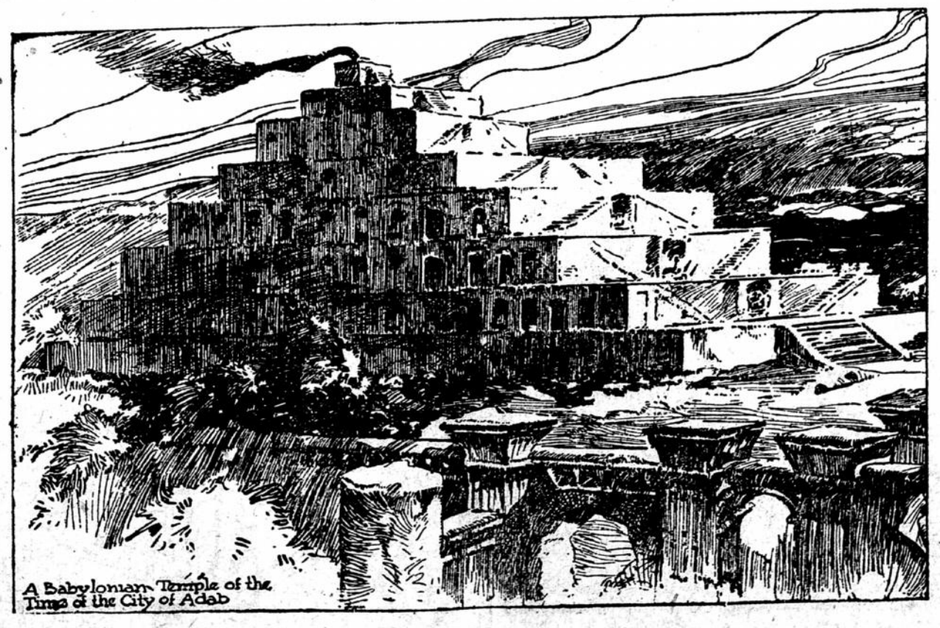
Here he has now made the discovery of perhaps surpassing importance in uncovering the temple of a city that was closely linked to ancient Nippur, and which lies further south within the narrow circle of the earliest known civilization of the world.

In fact, Prof. Bank's discovery is of four temples, one superimposed above the ruins of the other, indicating the immense antiquity of the city as well as the vicisitudes it underwent in the contests of ancient sovereignties in this valley of primitive communities.

From the brief descriptions received it is known that the temple unearthed by Prof. Banks is in all essential respects similar to those brought to light elsewhere in Babylonia—in fact, similar to the "Tower of Babel," the ruins of which were identified as the mound Birs Mimrud at Borsippa, and the ruined building at Babylon now fully exposed that Nebuchadnezzar named the "Tower of Babylon," the great Temple of Belus.

The temple consists of several solid brick platforms, reared one above the other, each successive story being smaller than the one beneath it. A staircase or inclined plane leads from the shelf of one story to the next, with shrines on the shelves or in niches in the walls, the shrine of the chief deity being in a small building at the top. To give beauty to the structure the exterior was coated with enameled brick and roofs were supported by tree trunks sheathed with burnished metal. Buttresses and palisades supporting the platforms gave further variety to the architecture.

The work has but just begun at Adab. In the debris of the older temples have been found marble statues, onyx and sandstone lamps and many bronze articles, but when the earth has been removed from some palace of the city, of which the eloquent mounds indicate there are many, the disclosures it will yield of the life of this remotely ancient people can be hopefully conjectured from the wonderful discoveries and achievements of recent explorations in this land of the dawn of humanity.—New York World.



A Babylonian Temple of the Time of the City of Adab

Airships Valuable for War

From the moment that M. Santos-Dumont alighted softly on the sward of the Bois de Boulogne, after encircling the Eiffel tower, a new era began in the man-conquest of the atmosphere, says the Grand Magazine. The aeronaut had succeeded in solving the problem he had set himself and thenceforward had merely to perfect the details. Assuming, as we are entitled to do, that M. Santos-Dumont's new ship proves a success, and that, in addition to carrying a crew of eight or ten, it will have a lifting power for a small cargo, see what a powerful and novel weapon of offensive warfare is at the disposal of the nations.

In the next continental war it is unconceivable that the effectiveness of such a mode of attack will not be utilized. After the lessons of the recent siege of Port Arthur any one can realize the immense service a practicable war airship of sufficient size would have been to the operations if, instead of the enormous labor of having to bring immense siege guns from Japan in order to destroy the ships in the harbor, lyddite could have been dropped upon the vessel's decks from above. Unquestionably the cheaper form of attack in this instance would have been by airships.

"It will perhaps be urged that the gasbag of a large airship would offer a comparatively easy target, but, at a sufficient elevation, I think this is by no means the case. During the siege of Ladysmith I myself saw our captive balloon brought slowly to the ground by Boer fire alone, but then it must be borne in mind that the balloon was stationary and at a low elevation, very little higher than the hill from which the firing came. A moving airship at a considerable elevation would form a very difficult target, and if only slight damage were inflicted, there would always be the chance of being able to get away outside the enemy's lines before having to come to earth. Shrapnel fire will probably be found the most effective against such vessels, but there must always be the difficulty of getting the proper elevation for the guns, and they could not be fired vertically with out the chance of the projectiles on their return doing more harm to the side that fired than they inflicted on the enemy.

Maria Used Dead Language

The gloomy looking man walked slowly up the dingy flight of stairs that led to the abode of the successors to the oracle at Delphos. He was immediately ushered into a darkened apartment fitted with Oriental draperies and was greeted solemnly by a seeress in white samite.

"What would you of the mystic beyond?" she asked.

"Well," said the man, "I'll give you $10 if you call up the spirit of my deceased wife, Maria."

"Have you the money? Yes, thank you, you may place it here. You know," went on the medium apologetically, "I wish to have filthy lucre and all sordid mundane things off my mind before I plunge into the world of shades."

The medium mumbled with wide staring eyes, while the two able-bodied stage assistants waved phosphorescent draperies with telling effect.

"Ah," droned the medium, "I see Maria, beautiful and happy. She points to you and smiles."

"All right," said the business man in a businesslike tone of voice. "Now ask Maria what is the combination of the safe in my store. When she died the secret numbers of the combination died with her, and I can't open the blamed thing."

"But," faltered the seress, "perhaps she's forgotten the combination in the abode of bliss."

"Not on your life," said the man. "Maria had a good memory, and she'll tell the combination all right. Just ask her."

"Maria will tell you the combination—listen. She says: 'Hocus pocus nil desperandum veni vidi vici sic semper tyrannis."

"Hey, what's that?" asked the man. "I can't make head or tail out of it. It sounds like Latin."

"It is Latin," said the medium.

"Gimme back my money, you fake!" yelled the man, "Maria never knew a word of Latin in her life."

"But she is dead, and Latin is one of the dead languages, isn't it? Show him out, John!" And that was the end of the seance and of his $10.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Precise Moment of Death

In the first place, there is no definite moment of death. We all are gradually dying for years, says the World of To-Day. The moment which is ordinarily ascribed to death is when the breathing stops, but this is purely arbitrary and the survival of an old belief that life was drawn in in the breath and the soul passed out with the breath. The heart may continue to beat many minutes, and in animals under experimental conditions even for hours after respiration has stopped, the muscles are still irritable, the nerves are still able to carry nerve impulses. But, while the cessation of respiration cannot be called the moment of death, it is the cause of it, because the body cannot live without air; the heart, accordingly, stops and the tissues die of suffocation.

How arbitrary it is to call a man dead when the heart ceases to beat and he no longer breathes will be apparent when it is remembered that dogs may easily be revived after they have lain in this state for six or more minutes. If the dog's chest is opened and artificial respiration begun, and if the heart is taken in the hand and rhythmically squeezed, gradually it begins to beat again, the dog begins to breathe—in fact, he recovers normal life. I believe the same experiment has not been tried in men, for the reason that in illness the system is generally so posioned by the toxins of disease as to make it impossible spontaneously to recover, even though the heart should be kept beating. The heart of a man may in some cases be made to beat again outside the body if defibrinated blood is circulated through it.

We cannot, therefore, answer the question. When does a man die? If we mean by a man his body, this dies piecemeal, one organ after another; if we mean the man's personality, this evidently disappears when he loses consciousness; and from this point of view he may be said to die when he falls in deep slumber, certainly when he is anesthetized.

End of Strenuous Discipline

"My father changed his methods of discipline instantly and radically when I was about half grown," said Martin W. Littleton, president of the Borough of Brooklyn, the other day in telling of his youth.

"He had always been noted as a hard hitter and severe disciplinarian, and we boys had taken measures accordingly.

"One day I misbehaved at the table and he told me to go upstairs. I knew what that meant. It meant that he would be around after a while with a paddle. So I got busy as soon as I reached the bedroom.

"When he came up he dumfounded me by saying briefly: 'Take off your pants!' I hesitated and began to whimper. 'I don't want to,' said I. He inspected me narrowly, 'Strikes me you look rather stout,' said he.

"Executing a flank movement, he caught me over his knee and stripped down my trousers. Under the first pair he found another. Under the second pair he found another. Under the third pair he found another. When he got to the fourth pair he stopped and said gravely:

"'How many pairs of pants did you put on?'

"'I dunno; I put on all of mine and all of Jim's,' said I weakly.

"He burst out laughing, and from that day on I never got a licking. But he used to talk to me when I was bad, and it wasn't long before I would have taken half a dozen lickings thankfully rather than one of those grave, earnest lectures that made me feel ashamed of myself for hours and hours afterward."—New York Press.

Words That Are Obsolete

The number of obsolete words that are to be found in Webster's Dictionary is considerably larger than people have any idea of. The following letter, written by an alleged poet to an editor who had treated his poetry with derision, furnishes some idea of them:

"Sir—You have behaved like an impetiginous scrogle! Like those who, envious of any moral celsitude, carry their ungicity to the height of creating symposically the fecund words which my pollymathic genius uses with uberty to abligate the tongues of the weetless! Sir, you have crassly parodied my own pet words as though they were trangrams. I will not coascervate reproaches—I will oduce a veil over the atramental ingratitude which has chamfered even my indiscerptible heart. I am silent on the tocillation which my coadjuvancy must have given you when I offered to become your fantor and adminicle. I will not speak of the lippitude, the oblepsy, you have shown in exacerbating me, one whose genius you should have approached with mental discalceation. So I tell you, without supervacaneous words, nothing will render ignoscible your conduct to me. I warn you that I would vellicate your nose if I thought that any moral diarthrosis thereby could be performed—if I thought I should not impignorate my reputation. Go, tachygraphic scrogle, band with your crass inquinate fantors; draw objectations from the thought, if you can, of having synchronically lost the existimation of the greatest poet since Milton." And yet all these words are to be found in the dictionary.—London Tit-Bits.

Defective Page