THROUGH BLACK CANON.

FIVE MEN WHO WENT WHERE NO MAN EVER WENT BEFORE.

Twenty-one Days in a Frightful Chasm Half a Mile Deep—Queer Animals Found in the Dark Depths of the Gorge—Difficulties of the Journey.

From the San Francisco Call.

At last the Black Cañon of the Gunnison—the most frightful gorge in the geological wonderland of the West—has been conquered by man. A party of bold explorers has passed through it and emerged in safety, climbing over almost vertical walls half a mile in height. They have done what no other human beings have ever accomplished. The story is the narrative of a trip by river far beneath the surface of the earth—a river unlighted by the sun, which flows through a chasm of appalling profundity, where only bears and mysterious night-loving birds find a home.

A ghastly gash ripped through a desert tableland is the Black Cañon. Some monstrous Titan in a vanished epoch might have cut it with a jagged knife—cut through the strata of the plateau to a depth of half a mile, as one slices a layer cake, but awkwardly, so that the gap produced is irregular and torn. Black it is called because its extreme narrowness in proportion to its profundity makes it a chasm of perpetual gloom, the river at its bottom running through a sunless avenue of towering walls of everlasting rock.

Through caverns heretofore deemed measureless to man the rapid Gunnison, itself in reality the carver of this wonderful cañon, pursues its course. From time to time adventurous persons have thought of trying to make the trip from end to end of the gorge in boats, and one attempt of this kind was actually made a few years ago by a surveying party sent out by the Denver and Rio Grande Railway to examine the cañon and determine whether a road could be built through it. On the first day out the boat, which carried the expedition, was swamped, all the provisions being lost, and the voyagers, fortunate to escape with their lives, abandoned the project.

The successful accomplishment of the feat was reserved for five men, who set out on Sept. 10 last with a determination to go through the cañon or perish in the effort. Their names were John H. Pelton, J. A. Curtis, M. F. Hovey, W. W. Torrence and E. B. Anderson. Pelton had been a pioneer in the Yukon country in early days, long before the gold discoveries, and his companions, with the exception of Curtis, who was a civil engineer and relatively a tenderfoot, were likewise hardened adventurers, afraid of nothing in the way of danger or difficulty. Two boats were loaded with provisions, a cooking outfit, surveyor's instruments, a camera and other necessaries, and thus equipped the explorers set out upon their perilous journey.

It was by no means a spirit of mere daredevil adventure that inspired the expedition. The object of it was to find out if there was not some path by which the waters of the Gunnison River could be conducted out of the tunnel and made to irrigate the drought-parched farms of the neighboring region. It was a question whether a "hillside ditch" might not be built in the chasm, so as to bring a portion of the descending stream near the tops of the cliffs, and so save tunnelling three and a half miles through the mountains—a costly enterprise which the residents of the Uncompahgre Valley are determined to undertake if it is proved that there is no other way to get water.

Before going further, it may be well to state that the exploration yielded conclusive evidence of the impracticability of the ditch plan. It was found that the walls of the cañon became steeper as its depths were reached. The party was twenty-one days in making a journey of fourteen miles from the junction of the Cimarron River with the Gunnison, near Cimarron station, and in that distance there were only five points at which it would be possible for even the most expert cliff climber to scale the rocky walls and get out of the gorge. The walls, while only thirty feet apart in places, are from 2,100 to 2,600 feet high, and as a rule are nearly perpendicular. In many places there is not so much as a foothold to be had, and were a ditch to be built, the workmen would have to begin at the entrance of the cañon and cut it out of the solid rock all of the way.

The Gunnison River pursues its tortuous way along the bottom of the Black Cañon, eventually joins the Grand River, an affluent of the mighty Colorado. It was the project of the expedition to follow the current of the stream through the gorge until, if they were successful in making the passage, they should reach Delta station, beyond the further end.

The party had two boats of very ordinary pattern, which were provided, however, with extra keels to strengthen the bottoms and enable them to withstand collisions with rocks, while, for an additional precaution, the sides were ribbed with iron rods. At the bow and stern of each boat were iron loops through which a rope could be run for letting the craft down rapids. The larger of the boats, named the City of Montrose, was 18 feet long and 3 feet beam; empty it weighed 400 pounds. The other one was called the John C. Bell.

On the second day of the voyage the John C. Bell was wrecked. The larger boat had been successfully "whipped" through a narrow rapid, when it was hauled up on a bank, and the explorers returned to bring the other one through. They had let it down almost the full length of the cable when suddenly a cross current caught it, swinging it around in such a manner that it fetched up fore and aft upon some bowlders between which the current ran. In an instant its sides were crushed and the fragments of the wreck, with one-half of the provisions and outfit, were carried away. Not the slightest trace of the wreckage or of the lost articles was found during the rest of the voyage.

In several places the river disappears entirely from sight, flowing under huge piles of bowlders, which have fallen from the cliffs. Tearing beneath the rocks unseen, the water makes a deafening roar, at times so loud that two men standing with hands clasped cannot make their voices audible to each other. In other parts of the cañon the stream flows on in awesome silence, the rock walls rising so steeply and so far aloft as to exclude the rays of the sun.

The explorers' sensations were as if they had been in the depths of a mine, and, looking up toward the sky at full noonday, they could see the stars shimmering overhead as if it were midnight.

At one spot it was necessary to haul the heavy boat for a considerable distance at a height of 130 feet above the river, which was there rushing at terrific speed under the rocks. Again, there would be a short space of water in which the craft could be launched, though it had to be let down the rapids by means of a rope. The boat was used chiefly in crossing the stream from time to time, but where possible it was floated with the outfits on board. It would be let down with the utmost carefulness, one man aboard, standing in the middle with a long pike with which he kept it from being pounded to pieces on the rocks. At other stages it was not safe to trust the precious outfit in the boat and the men would strap the instruments, bundles of provisions, &c., on their backs, treading their way along the narrow rock's shelf beside the torrent.

From the beginning of the trip to the end only a few animals were seen, though an occasional bear or a mountain sheep was espied. During the first few days the bears were comparatively numerous, those creatures having long made the entrance to the cañon their home, and they seemed to resent the intrusion of the strangers, growling savagely. But as the depths of the gorge were reached it became too wild for the bears though not for the mountain sheep—timid brutes which have been hunted from every spot that man can reach, rifle in hand. The bears were of the black or cinnamon species which find a congenial home in such inhospitable regions.

One reason for the apparent scarcity of animals was that most of the creatures which make their abode in the cañon are appropriately enough nocturnal in habit. Even in that gloomy abyss the day is too light for them. There are woodchucks and various queer kinds of rodents, including jumping mice, kangaroo mice and pack rats—those curious and highly disputable relatives of the common house rat, which make a business of stealing from travellers' camps whatever they can lay paws upon, from a spoon to any small article of merchandise, their only object in view apparently being mischief. High up on the mountains, too, occurs the pika, otherwise known as the "little chief," which is a relative of the rabbits and one of the least known of American animals.

A peculiar and quite unfamiliar bird was found in the cañon, which excited the curiosity of the members of the expedition. They describe it as a weird sort of feathered creature, which sought the solitude of the very darkest part of the gorge. What it actually was nobody can say, though the abyss is known to be inhabited by several species of owls—long eared owls, little screech owls, big horned owls, and the great saw-whet owls, which last get their name from their strange cry, which sounds like the sharpening of a saw. Another bird that finds its home in the cañon is Townsend's Solitaire, which has a peculiar and melancholy note. A notion of the tumultuous character of the Gunnison River is obtained from the fact that its waters, as they flow through the gorge, are without fish, being too rough even for the hardy mountain trout, which are supposed to revel in any torrent.

The first fourteen days of the trip were the easy ones, relatively speaking, ten of the fourteen miles being covered in that period. Seven days were consumed in travelling the remaining four miles. Only one serious accident occurred, and this happened on the seventh day, when Hovey fell from a bowlder, striking on his head and receiving a severe scalp wound.

On one day during this last stage of the journey the explorers were able to travel only 1,500 feet, nearly all of the distance being over rocks where the boat had first to be unloaded and then dragged. Into this part of the chasm it is impossible for any human being to enter alive except by the way these five men came. The walls rise to a height of just about half a mile almost vertically, and often there is no footing on either side of the river. One or two of the party would go ahead, examine the prospect in front of them for a few yards and then return to assist in moving the boat. At every 100 or 200 feet, sometimes, the boat had to be unloaded and the outfit carried on the backs of the members of the party, but now and then it happened that they could on longer find any foothold, and under such circumstances there was nothing to do but to trust entirely to the boat, taking the chance of what a sharp turn in the stream a short distance ahead might reveal.

On the day before the last of the journey the whole party got a ducking, the boat being caught in a whirlpool and submerged. Similar accidents happened more than once on the trip, making it necessary to land, build a fire and dry the clothes and bedding. Most unfortunately, many photographs which had been taken were destroyed by the wetting of the films.

The last day was the saddest. When undergoing hardships men of the kind that composed this party are not down-hearted and the greatest danger is regarded with a smile. Any one's mishap, if the result is not serious, is a subject of joke, and the accidents which befell Curtis, the only tenderfoot of the expedition, gave rise to much amusement, his inexperience in boating causing him to be called the "landlubber," a strange title for a man to win 1,400 miles from the sea and more than a mile above sea level, but on the last day, when it became obvious that the trip could not be completed and must be abandoned, there was genuine sorrow.

After the hardships that had been endured and which would have disheartened less seasoned men, they realized that there was one part of the cañon through which no means men can command could possibly carry them. They had come to a cataract sixty feet in height, between precipitous walls of solid rock of an altitude so tremendous as to exclude the sunlight at noon. On neither side was there a possibility of gaining a footing by which to make the descent. Even if they could manage to lower the boat in safety, they would be unable to follow it.

Nor was there any certainty, if they passed the falls, that they could escape. To return the way they had come was impossible. The boat could not be forced back against the current, and it was out of the question to carry their provisions, even if they had had enough to last them on a return trip. The cañon was only thirty feet wide at the bottom, and above them loomed the nearly vertical walls which seemed likely to hem them in forever.

The situation seemed desperate enough. To scale one of the walls was their only salvation, and they did it. Everything was left behind. The boat was abandoned, and with it the outfit, including provisions and water. There was not a dry eye in the party as the explorers, just at daybreak, bade farewell to the sturdy little craft that had brought them through such difficulties and dangers, and turned their faces to the east wall of the gorge. Stripped of all but necessary clothing, they began a climb which lasted from daybreak to 11 o'clock at night, at which hour they had made the ascent to an elevation of 2,600 feet (just about half a mile) on a 600-foot slope. That is to say, they were but 600 feet back from the river and 2,600 feet above it. All of these hours they had neither food nor water.

At the top they found friends, who provided them with everthing they needed.

Not yet daunted, they tried to ascertain if it would not be practicable to approach the impassable falls from the other end of the cañon—i. e., from Delta Station. This, they learned, would not be difficult up to a point within one and a half miles of the cataract—the Falls of Sorrow, as the explorers named them—but there again was a stretch that could not be passed. They have not yet given up the enterprise, and this winter they will make another attempt to reach the falls from the Delta end of the gorge, when the river is frozen, starting out with ice hooks and spiked boots, and carrying their outfit on a sled.

BROTHER SPEARS'S SINGING.

A Bit of Evidence That Acquitted Those Who Laughed in Church.

From the Macon Republican.

Col. C. C. Fogle, attorney-at-law of Lancaster, Mo., related the following incident: "One of the most original lawyers I ever met in my life was Sam Dysart, who some twenty years ago was a resident of our county. Sam, when he lived up our way, engaged to defend a lot of boys and girls charged with disturbing a religious assembly out in the country, by 'laughing and giggling.' The case attracted an immense crowd from the vicinity. T. C. Tadlock prosecuted, and he was instructed by the church people to spare no pains to convict the disturbers, who were of good families and it was their first offence. They candidly admitted they laughed out in church, and the State insisted that by their own mouths they were condemned.

"Brother Tice Spears, a righteous man of Puritanic type, was the main prosecuting witness. He had conducted the services, and he testified that his peace was sadly disturbed by the unseemly behavior of the 'rioters.' After he told his story in chief he sat down with clasped hands waiting for the defendants' attorney to begin on him. He didn't have long to wait. The examination went like this:

"'Brother Spears, you led the meetin' last night?'

"'I did, sir.'

"'You prayed?'

"'I did, sir.'

"'And preached?'

"'I tried to.'

"'And sung?'

"'I sung.'

"'What did you sing?'

"'There is a Fountain Filled with Blood,' sir.'

"Here Mr. Dysart pulled a hymn-book from his pocket and handed it to the witness with the remark:

"'Please turn to that song, Brother Spears.'

"The witness did so.

"'That's what you sang last night?'

"'It is, sir.'

"'Well, stand up and sing it now, if you please.'

"'What!'

"'You heard what I said, Brother Spears.'

"'But I can't sing before this sort of crowd.'

"'Brother Spears,' with much apparent indignation, 'do I understand that you refuse to furnish legitimate evidence to this jury?'

"'No—no—but, you see——'

"'Your Honor,' said Dysart, 'I insist that the witness shall sing the song referred to just as he did on the night of alleged disturbance. It is a part of our evidence, and very important. The reason for it will be disclosed later on.'

"There was a long jangle between the lawyers, and the Court finally ordered the witness to get up and sing.

"'And, mind you, Brother Spears,' said Dysart, seriously, 'you must sing it just as you did that night; if you change a note you will have to go back and do it all over again.'

"The witness got up and opened the book. There is a vast difference between singing to a congregation in sympathy with you and a crowd of court room habitués. Brother Spears was painfully conscious of the fact. You know how those old-time hymns are sung in the backwoods settlements? You begin in the basement and work up to the roof, and then leap off from the dizzy height and finally finish the line in the basement. That's the way the witness sang. He had a good voice—that is, it was strong. It seemed to threaten the window lights.

"The crowd didn't smile—it just yelled with laughter. The jurymen bent double and almost rolled from their seats. The Court bit his cob pipe harder and looked solemn. It wasn't any use. There were only two straight faces in the house. One belonged to a deaf man and the other to Sam Dysart. The singer finished and sat down. He looked tired. Sam immediately excused him. When the time for speechmaking came, Sam remarked to the jury:

"'If you gentlemen think you could go to one of Brother Spears's meetings and behave better than you have here, why you may be justified in convicting these boys and girls.'

"That was all he said, but the jury brought in a verdict of not guilty, with the request that Brother Spears sing another song. But that gentleman had gone home, and court adjourned."

DR. DECKER'S SHAKE NO MORE
CURES MALARIA

THE SHARPSHOOTERS' DUEL.

A QUESTION THE SURVIVOR HAD NOT THE HEART TO ANSWER.

How a Yankee Marksman Got "Suredeath," a Johnny Reb, and the Pathetic Sequel of the Shot He Had to Fire.

From the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

At Lincoln, Neb., lives H. Masterman, aged 88. He is one of the few, possibly the very last survivor of the body of men who acted as the guard of honor at the marriage of the late Queen Victoria. As a British soldier he reached America in 1850, soon after bought his discharge and became a citizen of the United States. At the outbreak of the Civil War he enlisted in the Union army in the same company with his son, and served to the close.

His mature judgment and unerring marksmanship brought him under the notice of his Colonel, who asked him to volunteer for sharpshooting duty. On account of the extreme danger attendant upon this class of work, men were not ordered to perform it, but volunteers were called for. Masterman promptly offered his services and became a Union sharpshooter.

The peculiar nature of the case makes it necessary that a sharpshooter be under less physical restraint than probably any other man in the army, with the exception of the spy. While on duty his life is in constant danger, and its preservation depends entirely upon his own discretion. His time is by no means occupied in picking off important officers from among the enemy, but more often in duels with sharpshooters on the other side, who are his equal in cunning and skill.

It was while the war was raging along the southern boundary of Tennessee that the wing of the army in which Masterman belonged was sorely beset by the enemy's sharpshooters. Most of these Confederate riflemen were well known by the Union soldiers. There was some peculiarity in mode of operation or sound of the gun which distinguished one from the other, and as time went along glimpses of them were caught, so that even the rank and file of the Federal soldiers had a good idea of what these dangerous men were like.

One of them was dubbed "Suredeath," and there was good reason for giving him the name. He was the prince of Confederate sharpshooters. At any hour of the day the clear crack of his rifle might sound, and the men always looked to see who the victim was, for there was always one either killed outright or mortally wounded. When the battle was on he fired his fatal shots at none but officers, but between whiles a common "doughboy" made him a good target. The Yankees soon had so high an opinion of this man's ability that when any important officer fell the loss was forthwith charged to "Suredeath."

One evening the Colonel sent an orderly to the company quarters with instructions for Masterman to report at once at his tent.

"Sergeant," said the Colonel, "this man 'Suredeath' must be stopped. Not a day passes but he gets some of our men. The next thing he'll do will be to kill the General himself. Now, I'm going to depend upon you—do you understand?—upon you, to silence that murderous gun of his."

Masterman went back to his quarters turning the situation in his mind. He was acquainted with the habits of the Confederate, for he had tried to bag him before this time. He made up his mind that the following day would see the end of either "Suredeath" or himself. He told his son, who slept near, of his orders from the Colonel and his determination. He gave the young man a few trinkets to take home as keepsakes in case he did not return, crept under his shelter tent and slept like a log.

He awoke in the early morning before either the soldiers in blue or gray were astir. He prepared his breakfast of bacon and black coffee. After eating he put some hardtack in his haversack, filled his canteen from a nearby spring, slung his rifle over his shoulder and set out through the wet grass in the direction of the hostile army.

About 9 o'clock the mists had rolled up the hills and the sun was shining brightly. Lying hidden behind a fallen tree entirely screened by a clump of bushes Masterman caught a flitting glimpse of his enemy creeping along the ground, but no shot offered itself. "Suredeath" was safely stationed in a tree before the Union man again found out where he was. The familiar sound of his gun and the smoke floating away from the tree then disclosed his whereabouts. Masterman watched closely. After a time he saw the muzzle of "Suredeath's" rifle protruding just beyond the leaves. The man was again taking aim at some Union soldier. The blue-coated veteran lying behind the log aimed his gun as a point where he thought "Suredeath's" body was and fired, instantly shifting his position away from the smoke made by the discharge. It was probably a surprise to the Confederate, although nothing on his part betrayed the fact. His rifle muzzle disappeared among the leaves.

The presence of each was known to the other, and the sharpshooting duel began. Masterman had a slight advantage, for after a shot he could change his position slightly, while his opponent was forced to stay upon the same limb behind the same part of the tree trunk and could not descend. Each employed the usual tactics of drawing the other's fire by holding his hat as if the owner was peeping out and of letting an empty coat sleeve peep innocently from cover.

The Confederate certainly realized that he had no ordinary sharpshooter opposed to him. Sometimes a half hour would go by with no perceptible movement on the part of either. At one time an hour passed in absolute quiet. When that silence was broken, however, it was by "Suredeath" pulling the trigger, and the bullet made a flesh wound in Masterman's hand and cut a jagged hole through the stock of his rifle. The duel lasted four hours before Masterman finally sent his lucky shot, and saw the other man tumble from the tree.

At this sight all Masterman's hatred vanished. It was no longer the murdering rebel sharpshooter, but a dead or wounded man. If the latter, humanity called upon him to do something. He made his way to the base of the tree. He went cautiously, for the man might still be able to fight, or there might be other sharpshooters watching. His first view of the Confederate told him the shot was fatal. It had gone through the body. The unfortunate soldier was lying on his side, and when Masterman came up was searching for an inside pocket.

"What is it, Johnny; what do you want?" asked Masterman, kindly, kneeling beside him.

"In there—letter—my little girl," was the almost inaudible reply.

Masterman put his hand inside the man's blouse and brought forth a letter. The envelope was red with blood.

"Is this it, Johnny?" he asked.

The Confederate nodded.

"Is this from your little girl, Johnnie?"

Again a nod. The union man, with tears in his eyes, drew the letter from its stained covering. A curl of brown hair fell to the ground. The dying father tried to speak, but only gurgled instead, and died before Masterman could raise the canteen to his lip.

Chattanooga had been fought. Sherman had backed Johnston into Atlanta, defeated him, and was in control of Georgia, "the workshop, granary and arsenal of the Confederacy." The march to the sea was on.

A small division of the great army that was devastating Georgia camped for a few days in one spot. Masterman was with this body of men. Sharpshooters were not so much needed during that memorable trip of "fifty miles in latitude, 300 to the main," and he had been relieved of special duty. The name of the village near by reminded him of a blood-stained letter which he carried in his haversack. Inspecting it, he found he was near the very Post Office from which it had been mailed.

White persons avoided the Union army, but negroes were plentiful, and from them Masterman learned that a family named Brower was living on a farm close by, and hired a black to take a message there for him.

The next day an old man, dressed in homespun, came to the Yankee camp and asked for Sergt. Masterman. The latter was easily found. Masterman discovered the visitor was the father of the Confederate sharpshooter who, under the exigencies of war, had died at his hands. He did not explain the details of the soldier's death, but told the gray-haired man his son was no more and gave him the letter he had carried from Tennessee.

"And the little girl," asked the sergeant, after they had talked a while, "is she alive and well?"

"Yes, well in body," answered the man, "but many an hour's cry has she had because her dad never answered the letter. It's been a long time, sir, since we heard. Even his own comrades didn't know what happened to him. They wrote us he'd gone. We knowed he hadn't deserted, and we hoped he hadn't been killed. If he'd been took a prisoner, you know, he might get back to us some time."

"Had he family?" inquired the sergeant.

"Only his wife and baby. The wife had died since he went and the little gal's alivin' with us—we're her grandfolks. Every day she wants to know if he ain't a-comin' home, and when you all come along she made sure it was her dad's regiment comin' back."

Masterman asked the grandfather to bring the child to see him the following day in case the army did not move on. No change in location was made, and it happened the next day that Masterman was sergeant of the guard. His duties kept him at the outposts. In the middle of the forenoon he saw the old man and the child coming across a wasted field. The little girl was dressed in tattered calico, a sunbonnet upon her head, and she was barefoot. She walked slowly and kept a firm grip upon her grandfather's hand.

The sergeant hailed them, passed them through the lines and took them inside the guard tent. He found a seat for the man and talked with him about his son. The little one on her grandfather's knee sat with curious eyes looking out through the tent opening at the pacing sentries, the sleeping forms of the men off duty and the quiet camp scenes. She turned her head and watched the kindly-looking man who sat before them. Then her eyes rested upon a rifle leaning against the tent wall. Masterman grew uneasy. It was the same weapon that had killed her father. It seemed to fascinate the child. She looked at its owner as if to make an inquiry, but Masterman, anticipating her, went on talking. A moment later, when he stopped, she asked:

"Mister, how did yore gun git broke?"

Masterman made no reply. He could not tell her it was her own father's bullet that had broken the hole in the stock. Again she asked the question, but the sergeant pretended not to hear. Her interest in the weapon was too much for him. He arose as a hint to the old man that the interview must close. He took them to the lines and passed them out. As he told them good-bye the sunbonnet was pushed back from the brown curly head and in a disappointed voice the girl said:

"But, mister, you hain't tole me how yore gun got broke."

The pleading voice of the little Southern orphan still sounds perfectly plain in the ears of the old man of 88, and if he should tell you the story he would close it with those words.

A GREAT FUN MAKER.

The Big West India Seal, Now Starring at the Aquarium.

Easily continuing to be the star attraction at the Aquarium is the big West Indian seal that squirts water on the unsuspecting to the rapturous enjoyment of those who know its tricks. The big seal appears clearly to have increased in intelligence by its enforced association, in captivity, with the human kind. This is shown by its general conduct, its coming when called, as a dog does, and so on; and it grows slyer and slyer all the time.

It used to rely mainly for success in hitting its object upon unexpectedness and suddenness of attack; to these methods it has now added what appears to be deliberate deception. Aiming at and seeming about to discharge a stream of water at one person it will suddenly shift its aim and fire at another.

The only thing to do, as those familiar with the seal's antics very well know, is to stand back when the seal raises its head. But those unfamiliar with the seal's ways don't do that, and sometimes when a man has been wet he is so flustered, or so occupied with drying himself that he doesn't stand back far enough even then, and gets wet a second time. This happened to a man one day last week.

This visitor, a stranger to the Aquarium, who evidently had never heard of the seal, stood looking down at the big fellow, swimming smoothly and silently around, with great interest. Pretty much everybody else drew back, but this visitor remained, and presently, on one of its turns, the big seal lifted its head quietly above the surface of the pool and discharged a stream of water square in this man's face.

Then the man jumped back, as they all do, but only a step; and bending forward he held his face down to let the water run off, while he felt for his handkerchief. And while he was drying and wiping his face with his head and body still bent forward toward the pool, the great seal, coming silently around again, raised its head above the water once more and threw a stream of water, this time squarely down the back of the man's neck. And then the onlookers did explode!

There are signs on the pool cautioning visitors, and the attendants add their warnings; but strange visitors either don't realize what it all means, or they don't like to be told what to do, seeming to think that they are able to look out for themselves. Almost invariably the victims take their wetting down with real or assumed good humor; and after being thus initiated they take their place with the throng always found watching the seal.

THE FLORIDA BEDBUG IN JERSEY

He Gets in His Work in Great Shape and Escapes Identification.

From the Philadelphia Public Ledger.

A peculiar insect, of a species almost wholly unknown to naturalists hereabouts, except that its home is believed to be in a tropical clime, recently had a brief, but none the less noteworthy, stay at Laurel Springs, one of New Jersey's well known settlements within ten miles of Philadelphia, on the Atlantic City line of the Reading Railroad. It came in the night, both literally and figuratively speaking, and made its presence known—not its appearance, because it could barely be seen by the naked eye—by attacking the residents and visitors and leaving uncomfortable and annoying flesh wounds somewhat like unto the bites of mosquitoes. At first its manifestations on the body were regarded as something akin to the rash, and no particular attention was paid to its presence except by those suffering from its attack. Finally the complaints from those staying at the Laurel Inn became so general that the authorities were called in to make an investigation.

Samuel S. Cord, general manager of the Laurel Spring Realty Company, realizing that drastic measures must be taken, secured the services of Dr. Hurf of the Health Board and of Dr. Wright, physician in Gloucester township. As most of the complaints came from the inn a thorough inspection was made of that building. At first the searchers were baffled in their attempt to discover the cause of the complaints. They found many insects peculiar to such resorts throughout the East, but to none of them could the complaints of the residents be traced. When the search had been all but given up one of the physicians, in looking at a picture in one of the rooms, to which his artistic eye had been drawn, noticed a small red speck moving rapidly across the glass. With the sharp end of a toothpick he impaled the object, and after a microscopical inspection the cause of all the trouble was known to have been found.

So small was the insect and so important was the question of getting thoroughly rid of it that every room in the house was stripped entirely of all its furnishings, even to scraping off the paper on the wall. The rooms were then made airtight, and formaldehyde, in the form of a gas, was forced into them through the keyholes. After this had been done the same chemical solution, in the form of a liquid, was used in washing the wainscoting and other woodwork of the apartments. It is believed that the small but pestiferous invader has now been conquered.

When the first insect was discovered the physicians began to watch for its appearance on any persons that complained of suffering from its bites. Its favorite time of attack seemed to be at night, when a person was asleep. The wound inflicted, as has been said, resembled that resulting from a mosquito bite, except that in every case the insect died soon after the attack. In some cases it was found in the wound itself, in others it was discovered an inch or so away from the bite, always under the skin and always resembling a very small red spot on the surface. It never attacked the face or hands, but always some part of the body protected by the clothing.

All speculation as to what the insect is and where it came from have not resulted in any satisfactory conclusion among the investigators. Naturalists from Philadelphia, particularly from the Academy of Natural Science, visited the place, and saw the insect, but, it is said, could give no name to it nor any idea of what it was except that it was of a tropical species. It was hardly discernible to the naked eye, but when placed under the microscope was seen to have a crab-like appearance, with rows of legs on either side of its body. Its color was red, resembling more a minute blood speck than anything else. It could travel "like lightning," as one of the residents described its motions.

Its introduction into Laurel Springs is as mysterious as is the insect itself. Some believe it came from Cuba with some United States army material that was brought to the place last year. Others think it came to this country in the shape of eggs hidden in the African fibre that was used in some of the mattresses at the inn.

Municipal Ownership.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* A correspondent signed "X" a few days ago said, "The present condition of the Brooklyn Bridge is a delightful evidence of what occurs in municipal ownership of public utilities." The Tay Bridge disaster in Scotland, the Ashtabula disaster in Ohio, the Tehachapi disaster (twice); people burned to death on a train in California, the sinking of a ferryboat in this harbor a few weeks ago, all except the latter involving the loss of scores of lives, is a delightful evidence of what occurs in private ownership of public utilities now.

NEW YORK, Aug. 6. Y.

NORWAY'S STEAM KITCHEN.

THE GREAT SUCCESS OF AN INTERESTING EXPERIMENT.

Thousands Fed Daily at a Cost of Nine Cents a Meal—Good Food in Generous Portions in Cleanly Surroundings.

From the Chicago Record-Herald.

CHRISTIANIA, July 6.—A unique institution in Norway is the "Steam Kitchen," which was established in 1858 by benevolent people to provide wholesome food for the poor at low prices. There are similar restaurants in some of the manufacturing cities of France, but none has been successful.

The charter granted to the company limited its profits to 6 per cent. of the capital invested, with a provision that the balance, if any, should be paid into the poor fund of the city. There was a hard struggle at first to make both ends meet, and an annual deficit for many years, which was made up by the stockholders, but at last the "kitchen" became so popular that it began to pay dividends, and the stock has since been watered four times until now it pays what is equivalent to 24 per cent. annually upon the original investment with a surplus larger than the capital on which it was started. It is one of the most profitable enterprises in Europe for the amount of money involved, but that fact does not diminish the benefits conferred upon the public and the generosity of the company to the poor, particularly in times of labor troubles and financial depression, cannot be questioned. Hundreds of bachelors and single women take their meals their regularly, and hundreds of families obtain their entire supply of food, wholesome and well-cooked, at nominal cost.

It is called the "Steam Kitchen" because it was the first institution in Norway in which steam was ever used for cooking purposes. There is a long official title to the company, but nobody ever mentions it. It occupies a two-story building covering nearly half an ordinary block. The location is convenient to the business portion of the city, the docks and the market place. There are two large halls, one above the other, containing five long tables, seating thirty persons each, thus accommodating 300 customers at a sitting. In the upstairs room it costs 11 cents in our money for a good dinner; in the lower room it costs 9 cents. There are no tablecloths and no napkins, but the tops of the tables have been scrubbed until they shine and everything is spotless. The whole institution is a model of neatness. It seems remarkable how it can be kept so clean with so many unwashed customers and so much business. The windows are large and let in plenty of light. The walls are covered with bright tints, and the waitresses wear white caps, aprons and oversleeves. At each chair is a knife, fork spoon, drinking glass, cup and saucer, and a hunk of bread about three inches square. Dinner is served from 10 o'clock in the morning until 7 in the afternoon to an average of 2,500 persons daily. Some of them come twice. They take a cup of coffee and eat a piece of cheese and bread at their homes early in the morning. Then at 10 or 11, and again at 4 or 5 o'clock they come to the "kitchen" for a square meal, which costs them not more than 25 cents a day all told for their food. The superintendent told me that during the last ten years they have never served less than 1,500 persons a day, and that on market days and holidays they usually feed about 3,000.

The bill of fare varies from day to day. When I was there the 11-cent dinner consisted of a large plate of barley soup, wholesome and nourishing, a ball of hashed meat about as large as your fist, with potatoes and rice, or boiled salmon, potatoes and turnips. Beer, milk or coffee is served for 2 cents extra.

The 9-cent dinner was pretty much the same, with the exception of the soup; boiled beef, potatoes and rice, or boiled salmon, potatoes and turnips. A plate of soup alone, which in itself would be more than a meal for most people, being filled with chunks of meat and vegetables, was served for three cents.

The same dinners are furnished to the public to be eaten at their homes for 9 and 7 cents respectively, and usually contain enough food for two or three women, although the Norwegians have stalwart appetites. The outdoor service is conducted in another part of the building, upon another street. The patrons procure tickets at an office and then form in line—men, women and children, each with a bucket or a basket, or both in hand. Many tickets are given gratuitously, but it is impossible to distinguish the paying from the charity customers. Benevolent people throughout the city purchase bunches of tickets, which they give to the poor, and sometimes in lieu of wages. If you hire a man to clean up the yard, you can give him so much cash and so many meal tickets, or if a person appeals to you for relief it is always better to give a ticket to the "Steam Kitchen" rather than money. Many customers buy two portions, which they take home and warm up at meal time for the whole family.

In the centre of a large room are rows of immense caldrons with coils and steam pipes embracing them. The air is filled with pungent odors from the bubbling soup and clouds of steam arise from the other cookpots. On a long table are pyramids of bread cut into cubes three or four inches square, usually rye or black bread, such as the natives of Norway prefer. Along the walls are deep cupboards containing the linens, the culinary supplies and utensils. In an adjoining but detached building is a furnace and boiler room which furnishes the steam, and, beside it, a laundry and a dish-washing establishment larger than an ordinary house. It requires a good many dishes to serve 3,000 persons, even in a simple way. In an annex the finer qualities of beef, mutton and other meat are cut off and sold to the public from an ordinary butcher shop, which in Norway is called a "bazaar." Here, also, all kinds of sausage and force meat are made and sold to the general public, thus utilizing all the supplies, which are bought in large quantities, the beef by the carcass and the vegetables by the carload. The sausage of the "Steam Kitchen" is said to be the best to be found in Christiania. During the fruit season the company runs a canning factory upstairs, preserving all kinds of fruits, jellies, pickles, and that sort of thing. At the baking department bread is sold to the general public at wholesale and retail, and small retail establishments are supplied with all sorts of groceries, as well as meats and other edibles. Thus the restaurant is only a part of a large business from which the company derives its profits. There is naturally a good deal of jealousy among the competing small dealers against the "Steam Kitchen," but it serves a benevolent purpose and there is no disposition among its customers to question its business methods or reduce its profits. It has succeeded in abolishing the cheap restaurants such as are found in all large cities, in which wretched food, generally the scrapings from the high-class hotels and eating houses, is worked over and sold to the poor.

It was an interesting sight—the bucket brigade that stood in line and passed slowly by the serving windows, which were attended by half a dozen brawny Norwegian women with bare arms, big breasts and broad faces. They wore neat white aprons and caps and handled the food with ad exterity that showed long experience. They seemed to know most of the customers and carried on a familiar conversation with them while filling their orders. When a bucket and a ticket were passed up, blue for a 9-cent and red for a 7-cent dinner, the waitress would first plunge a huge ladle into the soup pot and empty its contents into the bucket; then passing along the rows of kettles she would harpoon at hunk of meat with a long two-pronged fork, scoop up a quart of rice with a wooden shovel, and then, adding a portion of potatoes, would slam on the cover, and, grabbing a cube of bread, would pass it over to the purchaser with a joke or a few pleasant words.

Many of the customers seemed to be well dressed, according to the Norway standard, but no people in the world seem to care so little for their personal appearance, except on Sundays, when you can scarcely recognize men and women you have been familiar with during the week. No matter how poor or humble, every Norwegian man, woman and child, has a Sunday suit, carefully kept, sponged and brushed, and worn only on important occasions. Fashions do not change, except among the upper classes, where both men and women are as particular about their attire as in other countries. Among the common people, with their homemade and often homespun garments, the same gown, the same coat and trousers and hat will outlast the vanity of its owner, and with good care may be kept until it is needed to be worn in his coffin. The women of the working classes do not wear hats or bonnets. The maidens go bareheaded; the married women wear a little shawl of figured or embroidered stuff over their heads.

In the restaurant my cicerone pointed out at the dining table two professors of the university faculty, a lawyer of good standing, a photographer and a sub-editor of one of the daily papers, who were his personal acquaintances. The remainder of the customers appeared to be professional men, clerks, bookkeepers, and a good many laborers, many of them coming to their dinner without removing the evidences of toil from their hands and faces. At one of the tables was a group of students who were inclined to be boisterous and were evidently enjoying themselves. The "Steam Kitchen" is the favorite eating place for the undergraduates of the university, and the manager told me that during the term time he usually served from 400 to 500 every day. They have apartments throughout the city, as their are no domitories connected with the institution, take their coffee in their rooms in the morning, get their dinner at the "Steam Kitchen" and go to a beer garden in the evening, where they eat bread and cheese and drink a glass of beer for their supper.

Such an institution as the steam kitchen is especially suitable to a Norwegian city where a portion of the population work for very small wages, the average income of the wage-earner being less than $100 a year—so small that measured by the American standard, it would seem a difficult problem to find food, clothing and shelter for a family. Such a kitchen might be introduced into Chicago or New York with equally good results. The experiment is at least worth trying.

POLYGAMOUS MONKEY PACKS.

How They Are Broken Up by Humiliating the Simian Brigham Young.

From the Strand.

Monkeys in India are an unmitigated nuisance, especially in the country. I have often come across in the jungles adjoining the villages of Northern Bengal whole troops of them, whose depredations in fields and orchards were the despair of the unfortunate villagers. These troops always consist of one huge male and about 100 females. The fact is, when a little monkey is born in the pack, it is suffered to live if a female, but instantly killed by the father if it happens to be a male. The mother, however, sometimes manages to hide the little one until he is able to get about, and then sends him away before the big male catches sight of him. In this way it often happens that individual males are to be found living by themselves in single blessedness. Now, getting tired of solitude after a time and perhaps believing in union as a source of strength, these bachelors often join together and form a pack of their own—a sort of club.

Then the fun begins. They want wives—very naturally. But how are they to get them? All the female monkeys of the country belong to the harem of some big brute or other. Clearly, the only solution is to attack such a harem, kill the gotha (the aforesaid big brute), and then divide the spoils. So an ultimatum is sent and rejected. War is declared. The battle is a fierce one and often lasts several days. The party attacked always tries to retreat and often traverses several jungles, fields and even villages. But the pursuit is hot and vigorous, and at last a stand has to be made—sometimes in a village green or even an orchard of some country mansion. In the actual fight the females generally remain faithful to their lord and master and help him fiercely against his numerous assailants. But the result is a foregone conclusion, and the several widows, after a very short period of mourning—usually manifested by a show of ill-temper—are consoled by the victorious males.

Now, these battles cause sad havoc to the fields and orchards of the