Extinct Cats.

We can never be too thankful that we did not live in the pliocene or miocene periods. We may think that there are a good many cats at the present day, and that we suffer a good deal from them, but both in quantity and quality the pliocene and miocene cats must have been frightful. Prof. E. D. Cope has recently written a paper on the "Extinct Cats of America," which is enough to make one's flesh creep with horror, while at the same time it fills the heart with gratitude.

Prof. Cope has found the fossil remains of no less than forty-seven distinct species of cats, almost any one of which was larger, fiercer and louder than any modern cat. The very names of these atrocious animals fill the mind with awe. Fancy the noise that a *Hoplophoneus oreodontis* must have made when indulging in tones of endearment toward another cat of the same style. How tough and impossible to slay with ordinary boot-jacks must have been the *Nimravus gomphodus*, and what a dangerous brute to meet with in a dark pliocene cellar was the *Smilodon fatalis!* These were only a few of the forty-seven kinds of cats which made life a burden to unhappy men with whom they were contemporary; and in all probability Prof. Cope will find a large quantity of additional cats before he gets through with his investigations.

These cats are found chiefly in the neighborhood of fossil back fences, a fact which proves that their habits were essentially the same as those of existing cats, although, of course, they were more offensive, for the reason that the larger any bad habit may be the more objectionable it is. No boot-jacks or beer bottles have, however, been found by Prof. Cope in either pliocene or miocene strata. This does not prove, as the Professor seems to imagine, that boot-jacks and beer bottles did not exist at the periods in question, but it rather indicates that the contemporaneous men and women were so awed by the size and ferocity of the cats that they did not have the heart to throw things at them.

We can readily understand that it is not safe to throw boot-jacks at all sorts of animals. Take, for example, the *Nimravus gomphodus*. He was "as large," says Prof. Cope, "as the full-grown panther of the large varieties." He wore his upper canine teeth outside of his mouth, which gave him a terribly fierce and bloodthirsty appearance. His "sectorial apparatus"—which he appears to have constantly carried with him—was "especially effective," and he also had "compressed mandibular zami," which must alone have stricken terror into the observer. Now, who would risk irritating such an animal by shying a boot-jack at him? He would probably have jumped from the fence into the back window and clutched his pliocene insulter at a single bound. It is all very well to throw things at the modern degenerate cat, but the man who fooled with pliocene and miocene cats deserved the fate which he undoubtedly experienced.

Another leading cat was the *Pogonodon brachyops*, and fully deserved the name. This formidable beast possessed "the biting functions" in a high degree of efficiency. Among his most remarkable peculiarities were "the truncate triangular post-tympanic process"—a process of which he is believed to have been especially fond, and which was indescribably painful when applied to a human victim; "the transverse fronto-maxillary suture," which greatly irritated his naturally bad temper; and his "preorbital impressed depression"—a state of feeling quite in keeping with the sullen and morose humor for which he was noted. It is very clear that when such a cat lifted up his voice in the back yard the only thing for a prudent man to do was to close his shutters and say his prayers. As for attacking a cat accustomed to the infliction of "the truncate triangular post-tympanic process" on his victim, it would have been safer to have attacked a grizzly bear.

The *Pogonodon platacopis* cat was about the size of the jaguar and twice as wicked. It was, in Prof. Cope's opinion, "a great destroyer of contemporary mammalian life"—meaning chickens and such—and it is only too probable that "the largest ungulates of the Truckee fauna were among its victims." We thus see that neither strength nor skill availed against this devouring pogonodon. The ungulates of Truckee were undoubtedly the leading citizens of that locality—men respected for their courage and admired for their strength. If even the brave ungulates were killed and eaten by the pogonodon, what chance had weaker men or defenseless women and children? It is probable that these extinct cats rendered the other inhabitants of the country extinct at an early date, and afterward died of starvation because there were no more dinners to eat.

Well may we be ashamed of the murmuring and repining in which we have occasionally indulged when the contemporaneous cat has mewed at unseemly hours. Our cats may howl and swear, but they can not walk into our houses, seize upon the fattest member of the family, and then and there devour him or her, as the case may be. The world has improved since the pliocene period, and there is nothing which more forcibly illustrates this improvement than the fact that the extinct cats were infinitely worse than are the most depraved of the cats of the present era.—*N. Y. Times.*

England's Domestic Troubles.

The calling together of the English Parliament a month earlier than the date to which it had been prorogued is undoubtedly caused by the Irish disturbances. Mr. Gladstone's circular, summoning the M. Ps. to meet on January 6, announces that important business will be entered upon as soon as they assemble. The session promises to be the most momentous one since that which saw the repeal of the corn laws. The Government will at once grapple with the Irish question, and will unavoidably get into stormy waters. It is certain that nothing it can do will placate the Land League, and it is not probable that any measure the Ministry may propose will receive the hearty support of the Conservatives, unless, indeed, it be in the direction of coercion. Mr. Bright has expressed his opinion that "force is no remedy." It may be no remedy for bad harvests and discontent, but it is a most effective remedy for assassination and "Boycotting." Moreover, it seems to be the only practicable remedy.

Another and not less difficult problem will be forced upon the attention of the Government. There can be no doubt that Parnellism is spreading in England. The hard times have forced farmers to seriously consider their position, and their ideas on this subject have been freely expressed at the agricultural meetings, which took place all over the country early in December. It is plain that both landlord and tenant are in a quandary. In the midland, western, and southern counties there are thousands of acres which can not be rented on any terms. In the County of Essex alone fifty thousand acres are left untilled; the farmers have gone to London and hired out as helpers in the stables of London horse-owners at $5 a week. In view of these facts, it is not surprising that, at the recent meeting of the Farmers' Alliance, a delegate was for adopting some principles of the Land League. There seems to be no probability of any "let up" for these tillers of the soil. The cause of the stringency was clearly set forth by Messrs. Read and Pell, who visited this country last summer to inquire into the prospects of the United States and found them to be enviable. The commissioners were agreed that, so long as this country enjoys its present prosperity in grain and cattle, the English producers will have difficulty in making a living. Mr. Read was not afraid of the competition of European countries; "what with their overwhelming armies, their worn-out soil, and their debts, the British farmer has nothing to fear from them, but from the ingenious and industrious people of the West a serious competition has to be met, and the question is how this can best be done."

To this question no satisfactory answer has yet been found.—*New York Sun.*

The Skunk-skin Harvest.

While strolling along the streets of Indianapolis the other day a *News* reporter, in a dusty, cobwebby window, saw a piece of cardboard four or five inches square, on which was written, "Pure skunk oil and 'coon oil." A moth-eaten, weather-beaten 'coon skin hung above the door which the reporter entered, following his nose, which immediately put itself on the defensive. "What do people buy skunk oil for?" said the proprietor, in his answer repeating the question. "Why, they buy it for rheumatism, and, I say, it never fails to cure. The reporter desired to see some pure skunk oil, having heard there were many worthless imitations abroad, and was shown a pint flask of oily liquid of the color of linseed oil. He applied his fingers to the cork, and his nose rose in apprehension. The fluid had no more and no worse odor than lard oil, and the alarmed organ came down again. "We sell to all sorts of people, white, black and yellow, the richest and the poorest," the proprietor continued. "This oil we get from the skin—that's as much of the skunk as I get—and the yield is usually about four ounces to the skin. Sometimes we get half a pint, and sometimes, though seldom, as much as a pint to a pair. There is not more than one skin in a thousand that'll yield a pint of skunk oil. The animal is thin in flesh in summer, but very fat in winter. Skunk hides last year, the best quality, were worth from $1.75 to $2.00 each. They will not be worth much more than half as much this year. I handled 20,000 skunk skins last year, nearly all of which were caught in Indiana. The animal abounds in Southern and Central Indiana. There are a few in this county, not many. The skins have been worth as much as $3.50, but they'll never see that price again—not very soon, at least." "How are the skins classed?" "Well, first comes the A No. 1 star skunk, selling at $1.75 last winter. This skunk has a star-shaped white spot on the top of the head, and no more white about him. The next quality, $1.25, we call the 'short stripe.' This has a white stripe running from the white star along each side of the head down the neck to the shoulder. The next is the 'narrow stripe.' This has a narrow white streak that runs along each side of the backbone (which has a black stripe) to the root of the tail. This sort of skin brought 40 cents. The fourth grade has a broad white stripe on each side, the entire length of the body, three inches or more in width, and is worth only 20." Is there any any danger of the skunk crop in this State being exhausted?" "None at all. A skunk will have from three to seven young at a litter—usually about five. I've been a fur buyer for forty-two years, and there are more skunks in this State than ever there was. There is a prejudice against the animal, which makes it necessary to sell the fur, to ladies who wear it, under several pretty aliases, among which are 'fitch' and 'American sable.' Besides being made into muffs and trimmings, skunk-skins are extensively used in making fine carriage robes." Mr. Lewark said there hadn't been a skunk in the house for months, the trade only continuing during the winter, but the mephitic odor, like scent of the roses round the shattered vase, clung lovingly about the place during the entire year.

Living in Perpetual Daylight.

I had been out some hours when I met my companion, and hailed him with "Good morning." He answered with "Good evening." We both agreed the hour was seven, but differed as to its being a. m. or p. m. I was convinced it was the morning of the morrow, whereas Brown was persuaded it was yesterday evening. A never-setting sun plays strange pranks with one's reckoning of time.—*Seebohm's "Siberia in Europe."*

Thomas C. Wales, a Boston merchant, who died recently, aged 75, failed in 1837, and settled with his creditors for 50 cents on the dollar. In 1859, after some years of prosperity, he paid the remaining 50 per cent. of the principal to his creditors, and in 1866 he paid the interest of twenty-two years on that principal.

Children's gardens have just been established at Amsterdam for the reception between school hours of working people's children, and have proved highly successful.

FARM AND HOME.

Ladies, in altering over old black sick dresses, will find it greatly to their advantage not to use a hot iron on them; sponge the pieces with a large sponge dipped in clear coffee, and then fold and lay away under as heavy a pressure as possible. The silk will come out looking almost like new.

Rock Cream.—Steam one cupful of rice in new milk until tender, sweeten with white sugar and heap on a dish; lay over it small slices of jelly, or any preserved fruit, beat the whites of eggs to a froth with a little white sugar, and flavor with vanilla; add one tablespoonful of rich sweet cream and lay over the rice with a spoon, giving the form of a rock of snow. It is both ornamental and delicious.

Cold Bedrooms.—It is always a matter of great moment to maintain an equable temperature in the bedrooms. A bedroom the air of which is subject to great and frequent and rapid changes of temperature is always a trap for danger. To persons who are in the prime of life, and who are in robust health, this danger is less pronounced, but to the young and the feeble it is a most serious danger. It is specially dangerous to aged people to sleep in a room that is easily lowered in warmth.

Waffles.—One pint of sweet milk, one square inch of compressed yeast, two eggs, one ounce of butter, salt to taste, flour to make batter. Mix the milk and flour to a stiff batter. Dissolve the yeast in a little lukewarm water, and stir into the batter. Set in a warm place to rise, six hours, or over night if for breakfast. Beat the eggs light, and add with the butter and salt. Beat all well together. Have the waffle-iron very hot and well greased, and bake quickly. Serve with powdered sugar, mixed with grated nutmeg or powdered cinnamon.

Some one may be glad to know how to make a delicious lemon pie which is not too rich to be enjoyed. Prepare a crust for the pie in a deep plate, then stir one tablespoonful of cornstarch into a little cold water, add one cup of boiling water, let all come to a boil, then add seven tablespoonfuls of sugar, the well-beaten yelks of four eggs and the grated rind and the juice of two lemons; while this is baking beat the whites of the four eggs and one heaping tablespoonful of pulverized sugar to a stiff froth; when the pie is baked spread this smoothly over the top, then set it in the oven for two or three minutes; this is long enough to give it the desired golden brown color.

Aromatic Mustard.—One quart of good pure cider vinegar, two tablespoonfuls of ground allspice, two tablespoonfuls ground cinnamon, one tablespoonful ground cloves, three tablespoonfuls of brown sugar, four tablespoonfuls of salt and three large onions cut fine; put all into a two-quart fruit-can and set in cold water, putting on the cover lightly, and boil one hour. Then strain the vinegar and heat again boiling hot; pour slowly on one pound of best English mustard that is fresh and not bitter. Stir until perfectly smooth, but if not thin enough add vinegar to the same spices and boil to thin it. Keep in the fruit-can and make air-tight. It improves very much by age.

Care of Winter Fodder.

A good deal is now being said through the agricultural press about "silos" and the preservation of winter fodder in a green state. But while this new matter is agitated, there are doubtless some who fail to take proper care of their corn-fodder when preserved in a dry state. Cornstalks make excellent feed when preserved in a fresh and bright condition; but when allowed to become weather-beaten and black they are very inferior. No thrifty farmer cares to have his hay spoiled by exposure; and any person who properly appreciates the value of cornstalks will see that they are well harvested and stored.

Some of the causes which tend to render corn fodder less valuable than it might be otherwise are the neglect to cut the corn when green enough, the injury sustained by leaving it exposed to the weather, and from feeding it in a long or uncut state. The advantages of cutting corn sufficiently early need only be seen to be appreciated. When cut sufficiently green, and stored as soon as possible, the leaves remain almost intact, and of a bright, inviting color. They are then readily eaten, and relished by stock. But when the stalks are allowed to remain until dry before cutting, the leaves become detached and discolored with the weather, and they are not relished nearly as well. The value of stalks kept under shelter will readily be seen after a trial.

The use of a fodder-cutter in preparing stalks for feed, especially when they are long and coarse, is a great advantage and a source of economy, and also adds greatly to the ease of handling the manure. Stalk-cutters are now made in many styles, and are well suited to the purpose, cutting fast and evenly.

The practice of husking corn while it is standing in the field, and allowing the stalks to remain until late before cutting, is one always to be deprecated when good fodder is wanted.

When the fineness of the fodder is an important consideration in raising a crop of corn, it is doubtless a great advantage to plant a variety which produces small stalks. In that case, when a small-stalked variety can be found that will give satisfactory results in the yield of grain, we should say it was worthy of a trial. But of course where the grain is the main object in view, it matters but little about the stalks. Large stalks are a decided disadvantage in feeding, being hard to cut, and the large, heavy butts, often one-and-a-quarter inches in diameter on rice lands, are of but little use as food.

The eminent Dr. Nichols, of New England, once said that one bushel of New England corn on the ear, ground, is equivalent in nutritive value to one bushel of shelled Western corn, ground. This would seem to be an argument in favor of the production of the New England corn, if it would in all cases yield as well as the coarse-growing varieties. But the fact that nearly or quite all the large corn-producing sections grow the latter varietes would seem to prove that they are, on the whole, the most desirable and profitable.—*Cor. Examiner and Chronicle.*

—A Baltimore detective was singularly fortunate while he was out hunting for a man who tried to wreck a freight train recently by means of a cross-tie. He dressed himself up as a tramp, and as he was walking around in that character at night he was stopped by a genuine tramp with a revolver and a demand for his money. The detective recognized in the tramp the criminal he was looking for, and, pretending to be scared, he replied: "Why, you don't think I've got anything worth robbing me of, do you? I've been on the road for four months. I've come all the way from Ohio, and I want to git to New York. I ain't as well fixed as you, though I'm on the same lay. I had a revolver, but I had to sell it to git grub." The tramp agreed to temporary partnership, and pocketed his pistol, and the detective, seizing his arm, presented his pistol and handcuffed him.

—Capt. John N. Bofinger is a steamboat man and well known throughout the South and West. Lately he has been devoting much time to the history of steamboats. He has found that steamers, and especially Western river steamers, whose name begin with "M" are very unlucky. If they have not been sunk, burned or destroyed by boiler explosions, their owners have met with financial disaster through their means. As proof of what he avers to be true, he cites innumerable Magnolias, Missouris, Magentas, Marys, Myrtles, Massachusetts, Metropolises, Marigolds, Mississippis, Mayflowers, Monitors, Monticellos, and others with initial "M," all of which have come to grief.

—It is related that on the occasion of a large party Mrs. Chase Sprague sent for her coachman and told him that she expected him either to open the door or assist in the cloak room. The coachman impudently answered that he was hired to drive the horses and not to help in the house. "Very well," said Mrs. Sprague, "have my carriage at the door at 8 o'clock." At 8 the carriage drove up. "Blanket the horses and wait until I send further word." From 8 o'clock of a chill winter evening until 2 o'clock of a colder morning the coachman sat with stiffening arms on his box, and when the last guest had gone his orders came to drive to the stable.

—We ask sympathy for John W. Cobb, of this State. Being in jail, he worked eighty-four days to dig out, and then rose up in the Sheriff's bedroom, in front of a tickled audience of a dozen persons.—*Detroit Free Press*

—A Detroit lady called at a drug-store the other day and said, "I want a tooth-brush—a real nice one. I want it for a spare bed-room."—*Free Press.*

[La Fayette Daily Journal.]

Anxious to Rise.

There's plenty of room up stairs, as Daniel Webster said to the young lawyer anxious to rise, but despondent of his chance to do so; but no one need injure himself either in climbing the stairs of fame or those of his own house or business place. The following is to the point: Mr. John A. Hutchinson, Supt. Downer's Kerosene Oil Works, Boston, Mass., writes: Mr. Patton, one of our foremen, in walking up stairs last week sprained his leg badly. I gave him a bottle of St. Jacobs Oil to try. He used it and an almost instantaneous cure was effected.

A wild bull can easily work himself into a scarlet fever.

[Chicago Tribune.]

Thomas O. Thompson, Esq., the Mayor's Secretary, who, some few days ago, slipped on a banana peel and sprained his knee, writes that St. Jacobs Oil "acted like a charm."

The mince-pie for the season of 1880-81 contains fewer raisins than those of last winter, but more bits of leather and nerve fiber. The leather accessories may be chewed for hours after the rest of the pie is gone, thus affording a safe and healthful substitute for chewing tobacco and gum.—*Burlington Hawkeye.*

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"To sum it up, six long years of bed-ridden sickness, costing $200 per year; total, $1,200—all of this expense was stopped by three bottles of Hop Bitters, taken by my wife. She has done her own housework for a year since, without the loss of a day, and I want everybody to know it for their benefit."—*N. E. Farmer.*

An ancient proverb slinger has said that "It is hard for an empty bag to stand upright." It is easy enough, however, for a full man to tumble down.—*N. O. Picayune.*

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COTTON—Middling	....	@	11¼
FLOUR—Good to Choice	4 60	@	4 75
WHEAT—No. 2 Red	1 18¾	@	1 19
No. 2 Spring	1 12½	@	1 13
CORN—No. 2	56	@	57
OATS—Western Mixed	42	@	44½
PORK—Standard Mess	12 75	@	13 00
ST. LOUIS.			
COTTON—Middling	....	@	11¼
BEEVES—Choice	5 25	@	5 50
Fair to Good	4 40	@	4 75
Native Cows	2 25	@	3 40
Texas Steers	3 00	@	4 00
HOGS—Common to Select	3 00	@	4 75
SHEEP—Fair to Choice	4 50	@	5 00
FLOUR—XXX to Choice	4 40	@	5 15
WHEAT—No. 2 Winter	1 03	@	1 03¼
No. 3 "	98	@	98¾
CORN—No. 2 Mixed	39½	@	40
OATS—No. 2	31	@	33
RYE—No. 2	81½	@	87
TOBACCO—Dark Lugs	3 75	@	4 00
Medium Dark Leaf	6 00	@	7 00
HAY—Choice Timothy	16 00	@	16 50
BUTTER—Choice Dairy	23	@	24
EGGS—Choice	26½	@	27
PORK—Standard Mess	12 50	@	13 00
BACON—Clear Rib	07½	@	08
LARD—Prime Steam	08¾	@	08¾
WOOL—Tub-washed, Med'm	44	@	45
Unwashed, "	26	@	28
CHICAGO.			
CATTLE—Native Steers	5 00	@	5 70
HOGS—Good to Choice	4 50	@	5 00
SHEEP—Good to Choice	5 25	@	5 60
FLOUR—Winters	5 00	@	6 25
Springs	4 50	@	5 50
WHEAT—No. 2 Red	97½	@	98
No. 2 Spring	99	@	99¼
CORN—No. 2	37¼	@	37½
OATS—No. 2	31	@	31½
RYE	88	@	89
PORK—New Mess	13 00	@	13 25
KANSAS CITY.			
CATTLE—Native Steers	4 25	@	4 55
Native Cows	2 50	@	3 25
HOGS—Sales at	4 35	@	4 50
WHEAT—No. 2	88¾	@	89
No. 3	81	@	81½
CORN—No. 2 Mixed	30¼	@	30½
OATS—No. 2	31	@	31½
NEW ORLEANS.			
FLOUR—High Grades	5 25	@	6 25
CORN—White	63	@	64
OATS—Choice	55	@	57
HAY—Choice	26 00	@	27 00
PORK—Mess	12 75	@	13 50
BACON—Clear Rib	07½	@	08
COTTON—Middling	....	@	11¼

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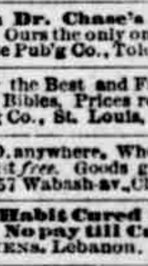

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