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PROFESSIONAL.

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WE are still at the old stand, West Main street, and are prepared to give you a clean and comfortable shave.

FOR RENT—Two comfortably furnished rooms in a desirable part of the city.

LOOKING BACKWARD. May be a pleasing pastime, but we take more pleasure in looking forward.

Looking Forward. To the time when the Retail Grocers of the City and surrounding country will have become convinced that the best place to buy TEA, COFFEES, SYRUPS, MOLASSES, TOBACCOES, CIGARS, HIGH GRADE FOURS and in fact everything in the staple and fancy Grocery line is at Bowling, Spotts & Co's.

What is CASTORIA? Castoria is Dr. Samuel Pitcher's prescription for Infants and Children. It contains neither Opium, Morphine nor other Narcotic substance. It is a harmless substitute for Paregoric, Drops, Soothing Syrup, and Castor Oil. It is Pleasant. Its guarantee is thirty years' use by Millions of Mothers. Castoria is the Children's Panacea—the Mother's Friend.

Castoria is also well adapted to children that are afflicted with Colic, Worms, Diarrhoea, Biliousness, etc.

For several years I have recommended your Castoria, and shall always continue to do so as it has invariably produced beneficial results.

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WALKING ON STILTS.

A DISTRICT IN WHICH THIS IS DONE FOR SUBSTANTIAL REASONS.

The Herders and Peasants of Landes Use Stilts in Their Operations—In Belgium They Had a Festival Which Bore Some Resemblance to Our Football Game.

The curious district of the Landes between Bordeaux and Bayonne mainly consists of heaths and pine woods interspersed with a few patches, growing barley and a little maize.

The surface of the ground is a dull gray or ash colored sand, and over this unpromising pasture various scattered flocks of local coarse woolled, ill-conditioned sheep, tended by shepherds, who from time immemorial have been noted for walking on stilts, by the assistance of which they are not only able to stalk over the prickly bushes and avoid the disagreeable contingency of filling their shoes with sand, but they attain an elevation not afforded by the ground, and thus are enabled to reach their artificial altitudes can overlook their flocks and prevent their sheep from straying. They also carry a long pole that, when stuck into the earth, forms a support against which the sheep can rest and knit stockings all day long. Altogether the appearance of this extraordinary tripod, of which the apex is a human something in a sheepskin, is weird, not to say alarming.

By the aid of their wooden legs the peasants of the Landes, with very slight exertion and without an exceptionally rapid movement, will go over the ground at a pace which would keep a horse at a hard trot. Nature, however, is a power not to be trifled with and which sooner or later visits with visible censure the violation of biological laws. Consequently the artificially long limbs of the Landes are somewhat diminutive in stature and are said to be a not very long lived race. These poor people have to endure severe privations, among which chronic want of water is the cruellest, but of late years steps have been taken to remedy the evil arising from the circumstance that all the streams in the Landes are brackish.

The railway through this desolate region was built by English engineers, who imported a contingent of English navvies to assist in the most laborious part of the work. Obviously a navy on stilts would be a grotesque anomaly. The English workmen, therefore, wore French wooden shoes, or sabots, which they carefully stuffed with wool or straw to keep out the sand, but the contractors took care that their employees, when they had finished their toil, should not be constrained to walk long distances through the sandy wilderness, and the men were lodged in a kind of straw huts which were built on trucks and pushed on the rails day by day as fast as the line advanced, food and fresh water being sent to them from a distance sometimes of 40 or 50 miles. It was not long, however, before the custom of walking on stilts is a custom indigenous to the French Landes. In the middle ages laborers from Flanders were imported to the Landes for the purpose of draining the marshes, and their presence in this part of France is commemorated in a place still known as Brant or Bruges. These Flemings probably brought with them their stilts, the ancient Flemish name for which was "schakels," which would in process of time be naturalized as the French "chausses."

There was formerly an annual festival at Naur, in Belgium, called the battle of the stilts, and which, to all seeming, was unique in Europe. The youth of the town were divided into two amiable hostile camps under the respective names of "Melans" and "D'Arennes," each to represent two ancient families of Namur, the relation between whom in bygone times was of the nature of that which existed between the Capulets and Montagues in Verona. On each side there were from 600 to 800 combatants, all mounted on stilts. Each army had its commander and its regimental officers, though with its distinctive colors, flags, and banners, and the army which was to strike the first blow was to be the first to strike.

This fantastic exhibition was witnessed in the course of generations by the Emperor Charles V. by Peter the Great of Russia and Napoleon I. and the magistrates of Namur toward the close of the eighteenth century suppressed the battle of stilts as a yearly custom because it frequently led to a slightly undesirable occurrence of cracked skulls and fractured arms and legs. France and Flanders cannot, however, lay claim to a monopoly of stilt walking. It is indeed a very ancient manner of locomotion, but in countries not abounding in marshes or in extensive sandy wastes stilts have not been turned to any practical use and have usually only formed the means of amusement for the frequenters of fairs and village festivals.

Boys at all times have been accustomed to improvise stilts by means of a couple of poles with a thong of leather or cord, through which the feet could be passed, and their progress on these artificial supports has led to their being rewarded by the most awful look of horror and of fright that I ever saw upon the countenance of the dead. I believe she had died of sheer terror and nothing else. What had happened in these stills during that terrible night hours, by what ghastly agency she had been dragged to the scene of the tragedy, how the end had actually come, God only knows.

We were too anxious to get away from this dreadful place after such events. We buried the body and skeleton together and trekked out as fast as the oxen could travel, never stopping till we had struck the road and reached Solo Pass.

That, gentlemen, is my solitary experience of spooks. I never want to have another. I was a scoffer before, I am a believer now. And if you told me that in the bush I speak of there was no standing ready for me as a free gift—why, I should decline the offer. "Never would I be induced to enter the veil again."—H. A. Bryden in Pall Mall Gazette.

"You were born in America?" "Dennis—Yes, sir."

"Parents foreign?" "Dennis—No, indeed! They were Irish—Christian World."

A smart little boy calls himself com because he is boxed so often.

"And when I had discovered

DE IN A DESERT.

One of the cheeriest Christmas days that was spent on the pleasant banks of the Limpopo river not many years since. Two hunting friends were trekking through Bechuanaland toward the Zambesi, and it happened by good good fortune that just at the junction of the Notwani and Limpopo rivers they found on the banks of the Limpopo a party of traders and traders bound from the far interior. These men were traveling down country with heavy loads of ivory, ostrich feathers, skins and other products, and they had with them a big troop of cattle, obtained in barter. In these fitful encounters in the African wilderness men are always well met, and it needed no pressing from the new found acquaintances to induce them to outspan together and combine forces for Christmas cheer and Christmas chaffer. A brief council of war soon settled the all important question of commissariat, yamsheld, and the younger of the traders, had shot a good rookbook the evening before, which furnished venison for all, and they had already baked a store of bread from fresh Borer meal. The newcomers, on their side, freshly equipped from Kimberley, could provide tinned plum puddings, tinned tomatoes, peas, jams and other luxuries, including dried onions, most precious of vegetables in the wild, and they had further, some excellent Scotch whisky. They had besides half a dozen brace of guinea fowl and pheasants, shot during the day in the jungles bordering the river, so that all the necessaries of a capital African banquet were ready to hand.

Just at sundown the preparations were complete, and no merrier party, you may swear, ever sat down to their Christmas meal. They supped by the light of a roaring campfire, eked out by a lantern or two placed on the cases that served for tables. The servants were enjoying themselves at another fire a little distant; the oxen lay peacefully at their yokes; the wagons loomed large alongside, their white tents reflecting cheerfully the ruddy blaze of the fire. The night was perfect, still and warm, and the stars, like a million diamonds, sparkled in the intense indigo of the dome above. What wonder, then, that all fell happy and contented?

Supper at length was over. The coffee kettle was washed, the obsidian and the whisky produced. The travelers lit their pipes and toasted their absent friends and each other, and then ensued a long and delightful evening.

The traders were two capital, manly fellows, well versed in the sports and toils and pleasures of the far interior. The newcomers themselves had been in the hunting field before, and they had all twenty many things in common. Many and many a yarn of the chase and adventure they exchanged; many a head of gallant game they slew again by the cheerful blaze. The up-country trekkers mentioned that they thought of getting a new bit of velvet rather away from the beaten track, if they could but find water in the desert and good guides and spotters. They were bent on entering the wild and little known tract of country north of the road to the Mababeveld.

"Well," said the elder of the two, "Kenstone was his name—"you'll find game there after the rain-gate, gamsbok, hartbeest, eland, koodoo, roan antelope and perhaps a few elephants or a rhinoceros or two. But it's a wild, barren veldt. The country as you go north is a good deal broken, and unless the rains have been good water is terribly scarce."

"As for myself," gazing rather moodily at the campfire and stroking his thick brown beard, "I once went into that veldt and never wish to go there again. I had a most uncanny adventure there, an experience I never again wish to repeat if I live to be a hundred. In all the years that I have been close to five and twenty now I have been hunting and hunting wild I never spent so uncomfortable and horrible a time as the few days I am thinking of. Ugh!" and the big man shivered as he spoke.

Naturally the curiosity of the audience was at once excited. The younger trader, Smallfield, spoke first.

"Why, George," he said, "I never heard you speak of that country. I never even knew you had been in it. What's the yarn? It must be something out of the common if it gives you the blues. You're not sentimental as far as I remember."

"No, Jim," returned Kenstone. "I never mentioned the thing to you or to any one else, but perhaps two or three folks. It's 11 years gone since it all happened. My old partner, Angus (he's down in the colony now), who was with me at the time, knows all about it, and I reported some of the circumstances to a Transvaal Landroest when we got back. Otherwise I have never talked about the matter. It should only be chaffed, and it's not a pleasant topic at the best of times. It gave me a very nasty fright at the time, I remember. However, it's all far enough away now. If you and these gentlemen would like to hear the yarn, why, I'll break my rule and tell you all about it. And, mind, what I tell you are solid facts. You know, I don't blow, Jim, or sport tall yarns for the benefit of down country folks or bar loafers at Kimberley. What I saw I saw, and please God, never to see again."

All were as keen as mustard for the story, and Kenstone went on:

"Well, let me fill my pipe, and here goes:

"It was in 1874 that Angus and I were hunting our third trip to the Lake Ngami country. This time we had got leave from Khama to trade and hunt in Mababe and the Chobe river country, and we meant to push even beyond to the region between the Limpopo and

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