The Witch of Cragenstone

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CHAPTER IV.

ABOUT twelve miles or so down the rough and stony mountain road below the village of Cragenstone two men on horseback were slowly ascending a steep defile. The former, having the face of an Englishman, but dressed in the extravagant fashion of the French nobleman of that period, looked about him discontentedly.

"By St. Peter of the Fetters," he exclaimed impatiently, "a more toilsome journey, worse roads or harder riding it hath never been my fate to experience! Gaston," turning to the man who rode after him, "what said that sour visaged callant we encountered just below about the road to Cragenstone?"

"Hang me for a witch if I could understand a word of his mumbling," the man replied. "Such suspicious looks he cast at us, as though we were highwaymen who would take his purse or run him through, roused my ire, Sir Godfrey. Certes, but I was tempted to slap his sour face!"

"Peace, Gaston!" Sir Godfrey La Fabienne, who had been looking intently at something in the distance, threw up his head with an air of pleasure. "Surely that rough structure of logs above our heads on the rocks is a dwelling house. Methinks I see signs of human habitation."

Spurring his horse into a gallop, he rode rapidly up the steep incline, halting abruptly when he reached the top to gaze about him.

"Quickly, Gaston!" he called cheerfully to his servant, who was following at a slower rate of speed. "At last we've reached a stretch of open country; also the two roads"—pointing ahead with his whip—"that yonder churlish fellow we encountered just below did mention. As we could not get his meaning, Gaston, perchance 'twould be better to make inquiries before we venture further, for, by heaven, I can think of no worse calamity than to go wrong on the rocky roads of this mountain wilderness. Follow slowly, Gaston, while I ride thither to ask our way of the people at the house."

The intense silence surrounding the lonely, desolate looking cabin was broken by the noisy clattering of a horse's hoofs as La Fabienne rode up to the door and knocked upon it loudly with the handle of his whip. For a moment there was no response; then a light footfall was heard, and a voice asked timidly, "Who knocks?"

"A traveler that would but ask his way to the village of Cragenstone," La Fabienne called in reply. "Open without fear."

At his bidding the door was pushed out an inch or two, and a girl not more than ten years of age peered through the opening. At the unexpected sight of the nobleman in his rich and handsome dress astride the gayly caparisoned horse before her door the mountain bred child was startled out of all composure. Gasping for breath, her mouth fell open and her eyes fairly protruded with awe and astonishment.

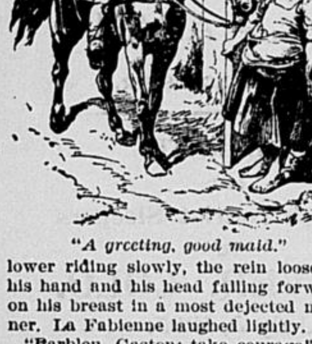
"A greeting, good maid," La Fabienne said, lifting his plumed hat and bowing. "Canst tell me on which of these two roads the village of Cragenstone doth lay?"

"Thou—thou canst go right on," the girl stammered in great confusion. "The—the other road leads to Sterndorf."

He thanked her with great civility and, beckoning to his attendant to follow, La Fabienne rode on rapidly.

"'Tis passing strange," he reflected, "how the impression was fixed in my mind that Cragenstone lay on the other road. Damme, 'twere well I asked the maid or 'twould have been tomorrow ere I would see Margaret. As 'tis, I shall see her soon, mayhap before darkness falls, and, by my troth, one glance from her bright eyes will cause me to forget the perils and fatigues of this journey."

With a sudden bright smile of happiness illuminating his countenance he looked over his shoulder to see his fol-



"A greeting, good maid."

lower riding slowly, the rein loose in his hand and his head falling forward on his breast in a most dejected manner. La Fabienne laughed lightly.

"Parbleu, Gaston; take courage!" he cried in gay tones. "Surely after this good news of Cragenstone so close at hand our hearts are light and we can ride perforce with better speed."

"Aye," the man grumbled under his breath, "'tis easy to have a light heart when thou dost carry a full purse, also the knowledge that at the end of this tedious mountain climbing thou hast for a reward the embraces of thy mistress, but with a man's throat athirst, having had naught but unwholesome water since breakfast, and a stomach groaning for bread and meat 'tis not so easy."

Just then some raindrops falling were swept into his face by the wind that had risen with sudden fury.

"Rain, more discomfort!" he exclaimed in great vexation. "Methought those low black clouds had a look of evil portent. By the memory of my mother I do swear it," he continued angrily, "that not for sums of gold, not in obedience to the commands of twenty La Fabiennes, would I leave Paris again to journey forth to any mountain village in this accurst country!"

Finding that his master was gaining on him, Gaston gave his horse the spurs and so suddenly that the startled animal fairly leaped into the air, then, running wildly, disappeared with its rider over the top of a sharp decline.

At about this hour in Cragenstone, when the heavy mist lay thick and white over the meadows, and the houses and trees were but indistinctly defined in the cloudy atmosphere, young Simon Kempster, his round face beaming with an expectant look of happiness, came across a meadow near the Taunston farmhouse. Suddenly the sweet notes of a woman's voice caroling gayly fell on his ears. Raising his head, he listened, then with a quick motion vaulted lightly over the stile and almost over Mistress Hetty Taunston, who at that instant passed in his direction from behind a clump of trees with a pail of fresh milk in each hand.

"Thou stupid Simon!" she cried out, greatly vexed. "With thy awkward, lumbering ways thou'rt enough to frighten one into a fit! See, now, all the good milk spilled upon the ground, and three cows gone dry since yestermorn! An' look, my clean frock is all bespattered! Ah, lackaday, 'tis well for me my mother is from home, since I would never hear the end o' her displeasure!"

Kempster, greatly abashed, turned from white to red and back to white again, shifting on his feet uneasily.

"Forgive me, gentle mistress," he said contritely. "Thou didst come so lightly, like a little gray shadow of the mist, that I was upon thee ere I saw thee."

"Today 'a gray shadow' and t'other eve 'as sweet and wholesome as a fresh new cheese,'" she replied petulantly. "I like not thy comparisons, Simon Kempster."

In silence he picked up the half emptied pails that she had set upon the ground, and they started down the long lane that led to the Taunston farmhouse together.

"Whatever I say or do, I ne'er can please thee, Hetty," he observed reproachfully as they walked along. "'Tis one day that my ways are clumsy and t'other that my words are coarse. What can I do or say that would win thine approval? For my happiness doth depend on thy smiles and favor, Hetty."

"Thou'rt happy only when thou'rt on thy farm among thy cows and chickens," the maid retorted, although the red in her cheeks had deepened at his earnest words. "Forsooth, thou canst see beauty in naught else but thy butter, thy cheeses or the last new calf or lamb that doth bleat about thy dooryard. What room hath thou in thy mind for thoughts o' pleasing a silly maid?" she concluded, with a pert toss of her head.

"I have room in my mind and in my heart for thee, sweet Hetty," he replied soberly, "and I would be happier could I please thee better."

They were startled by the patter of great drops of rain, and the wind, rising with a loud howl, caught up Hetty's light skirts and tossed her soft hair roughly over her face. Without stopping for more reproaches or explanations, they made what haste they could toward the house, reaching the long shed that projected from over the door of the dairy just in time to escape a drenching. At that moment Josiah Taunston, astride his horse and enveloped in a black storm cape, coming around the corner from the barn, caught sight of them.

"Good even, Simon Kempster." He spoke without smiling, in the stern manner habitual to him. "Hetty, I go now to fetch our mother, who sent me word by Brother Sparrow that the Lord in his wisdom had seen fit to take good Mistress Haggott, whom our mother hath been nursing for the last few days, and she would fain return before the heavy storm sets in that threatens."

"Hadst not better eat before thou goest, Josiah?"

"Nay, I'll not wait," he replied. "The storm is upon us now. Happen I'll take a snatch at Haggott's. We will ride in late. Keep a good watch on the house, Hetty."

Urging forward his horse, he rode rapidly away, and as the last sounds of hoofs pounding the ground passed beyond their hearing Simon turned to Hetty with a persuasive smile on his fair countenance.

"As night doth approach an' the storm will be a rough one, with noisome high winds," he said, "methinks 'twould be right fearsome for thee to sit alone."

Hetty appeared to deliberate the question carefully.

"Happen thou had better stay awhile," she said, with affected indifference, "but I warn thee if thou doth prate of nothing but thy farmyard wonders, thy churnings and thy chickens I shall send thee on thy way most speedily."

Then as she saw his happy face lengthen with soberness and a look of distress come into his eyes that told her that he could not understand what he lacked in his efforts to please her she added more kindly, "But, prithee, enter Simon, an' in passing do me the favor to bring in the milk."

He lifted the pails with alacrity, and Hetty, taking them from him, proceeded to pour the frothy liquid into the pans that lay in rows on the well scrubbed table, her companion standing silently at her side admiring wistfully the graceful turn of the small white wrists.

Having finished her task, the young woman lifted her eyes to Kempster's face, with roguish raillery in their bright glance.

"There," she exclaimed, "in my desire to fill the pans quickly I did forget to thank thee for carrying the milk. Forsooth, good Simon, lay such bad manners to thoughtlessness rather than an intent on my part to slight thee."

"Hetty"—he stepped closer and caught her hand in his—"at times when thy words sound trifling and thy manner seemeth hard and cold is't because thou dost not heed, that thou'rt only a bit thoughtless, or dost thou really feel the aversion ofttimes thy words and manner do express?"

She let her roguish glance turn into a kindly one and allowed her hand to remain in his as she answered softly: "Some apples, Simon, that are tart to the taste are sound at the core. Thou farmer, must I teach thee that? And for my words and ways, they are part of me that, added all together, make the whole."

She turned away her head, sighing gently, and Simon imagined that she pressed his hand. "Who doth like me," she continued pensively, "perforce must like them also, for so long ha' we been one naught now could separate us."

Simon, putting his disengaged hand under her chin, lifted her face to his. "God knows I like thee, Hetty," he said soberly, "an' thy words, hard or tender, so glad I am to hear them, fall on my heart gently, like the rain on the newly sown seed."

Matters having grown too serious for the trifling little maid, she drew away hastily, exclaiming, with a light laugh: "Thy farmyard comparisons again, Simon! Now, forsooth, my words are like rain falling on thy crops!"

It was several hours later when Mistress Taunston on horseback, seated on a pillion behind her son, rode into the farmyard. The storm had continued to grow heavier, and the rain was now falling in torrents. Despite the heavy cloaks they wore, the riders were drenched to the skin as a man, one of the farm hands, rubbing his eyes as if just roused from sleeping, opened the barn door for them to enter.

"Light the candle, Jacob, and I will hold it while thy master doth put up his horse," Mrs. Taunston ordered from her high position. "There, that is well. Now help me to alight."

When on the ground she lifted the light and, following Josiah, who was leading the horse to its stall, paused a moment to dismiss the man.

"Thou canst go now, Jacob, to thy bed. I would have a word in private with thy master."

Taunston paused in the act of lifting a measure of oats to regard his mother with surprise, thinking something of unusual importance must have happened that she made so much ado about it.

In her storm beaten, mud besmirched garments, holding the flaming candle above her head, she approached nearer, saying, "As brother Camett rode with us, Josiah, I had no chance to speak with thee."

He nodded a rough assent, and she, lowering her voice to a whisper, said, "My son, we spoke the other night of certain rumors current that thy cousin Margaret had left a lover in France that wast coming here anon to claim her hand in marriage."

Josiah's heart grew cold within him.

"I heard the idle gossip," he replied hoarsely, "but gave the rumor no credence, as my cousin in our frequent meetings hath made no mention of such a man. Why detain me here at this late hour, when I am already chilled to the marrow, to fash me with such unpleasant gossip? Margaret is so young, her aunt so strict, I much misdoubt me that she e'er hath had much converse with men, much less already a lover plighted and betrothed. Let's to the house. 'Tis a fitter place for converse, if thou hast aught to say, than this foul horse stall, with the wind blowing the flame of thy candle into a blaze."

He moved impatiently toward the doorway, but his mother sprang before him, laying a strong detaining hand on his arm.

"Hist! Hetty waits within and must not hear," she said in an impressive voice. "Josiah, methinks I saw your cousin Margaret's lover ride by good Brother Haggott's door late this afternoon!"

"Ha!" Josiah exclaimed sharply. "Why dost thou think so? What manner of man didst see?"

The two tall figures standing close together in the dark barn under a hanging loft of hay, with the spluttering candle throwing out faint, uncertain streaks of light, presented a weird picture. Suddenly the horse whinnied. Both started.

"Three hours after noon I closed Mary Haggott's eyes in death." She commenced her narrative slowly as one who knew that what she had to say would command attention. "And not an hour later, when I was still busying myself about the chamber of the dead, I heard sounds of horses' feet and the voices of men. Looking through the lattice, I espied a cavalier richly dressed and mounted, followed by a servant. They had reached the fork in the roadway just below Haggott's and, having pulled rein, there waited, undecided which road to pursue. With great interest I was still gazing from behind my place of concealment with wonder at the unusual appearance in these parts of a traveler so fashionably attired when with quick decision the knight rode up to the door and knocked upon it loudly. Little Abigail Haggott, who waited below, answered the summons.

"'Which road to Cragenstone?' he asked.

"A feeling like the sharp prod of a knife went to my heart. I knew at once that such a man as that—evidently a French nobleman or courtier—sought not the village of Cragenstone unless he were in quest of thy cousin Margaret. Not one of the plain people that bide about here, forsooth, was the magnet that was drawing that man so toilsomely up our rough hills. So I listened to their further converse with bated breath. Abigail, almost stunned with the shock and fear of her mother's death and surprised at the sudden appearance of such a man at the door, in her confusion and nervous fear instructed him to keep right on."

"Which road?" almost shrieked Josiah.

"The rocky, hilly, torturous ascent, with deep ravines, abounding in turbulent streams and containing precipices sharp and sudden, wherewith to menace and endanger lives of unwary strangers—that road he took—the one that doth lead to Sterndorf," she announced, with a grim calmness that did not conceal the note of triumph in her voice.

"At first when I did hear the timid Abigail give the wrong direction and I saw the men ride gayly forward methought to call them back, for mayhap"—

"An thou hadst," Josiah interrupted harshly, his face blanched with excitement, "I had ne'er forgiven thee! 'Twas a good hour when the maid met him at the door and missent the worldly gallant!"

For a moment he stood there deep in thought; then he added: "In truth 'tis a lonely road, and I much doubt that they will meet a traveler to give them other instruction. The Skollvent stream is greatly swollen. In their eagerness to reach what they think is Cragenstone they will make desperate efforts to ford it, and, once over, delayed in Sterndorf by this storm, that will raise the water to twice its height," he cried triumphantly, "no human being can return across that stream in less than seven days. Pray for a continual, steady downpour of this rain, good mother, and heaven give me skill to make the most of my time! Once her faithful promise given, Margaret is mine! And every ambitious wooer that cometh here after that may ride away down the mountain to seek a mate in other quarters!"

He appeared greatly elated.

"But yestermorn, mother, I was with my cousin for two hours, and methought her manner was less high and cold and that she did not regard me with disfavor."

"Josiah," his mother admonished him with more than usual seriousness, "have recourse to thy Bible and forget not thy prayers, for methinks the divine hand of the Lord is in this and doth direct our guidance. Hast thought of the awful pest of measles in Sterndorf that good Brother Sparrow brought us news of last Saturday e'en? Scarce man or child in the village but is stricken. He said it was a fell disorder that attacked one suddenly with high fever and frightful pains in back and head, stating further that some were blinded for several days!"

"Said he so?"

The red light from the dripping candle illumined Josiah's face, showing the exultant expression in his eyes.

"And well good Brother Sparrow knows, for his daughter dwelleth there. Mother, thou hast brought better tidings than I at first anticipated. And now"—with lowered voice—"no word of this to any other soul."

A sudden blast of wind, a sound of rain so heavy that it seemed as if a cloud had burst, and the flickering flame of the candle was blown out, leaving them in darkness. With an impatient exclamation Josiah drew forth his tinder box, and, after striking the flint and steel together savagely several times without being able to get a spark, he threw them into the corner angrily, and, taking his mother's arm, they groped their way out of the barn, splashing across the muddy roadway to the door, which was opened by the waiting Hetty, who, vexed with their long delay, greeted them grumblingly and with many complaints.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE ORIGIN OF BEDS

SLEEPING COUCHES CAN BE TRACED BACK TO 700 B. C.

They Were In Use by the Etruscans and Were Mostly of Stone, Terra Cotta and Marble—Bed Furnishings of the Ancient Greeks and Romans.

The oldest bed in existence is a bronze of Etruscan manufacture dating from the seventh century B. C. This was found in excavations made at Goridon, in Asia Minor, and from the fact that it is the only one of its age ever unearthed among the many other pieces of furniture found in ancient ruins the conclusion is drawn that beds at this early era were a novelty.

It is sure that previous to this there is no record of the existence of beds which may be taken as authority. Prehistoric man evidently got along quite well without any bed to lie in, and it was not until the life of Etrurians and Greeks began to verge into comparative sybarite luxury that the bed as a component part of the household was universally recognized.

Even then the bed was more kin to the modern couch than the article in which civilized man today takes his repose. According to Greek and Roman wall paintings, bas-reliefs and reproductions in sculpture, the original bed was a bench, often a beautifully carved and decorated bench and one covered with costly draperies, but still in form a bench compared to the beds of today. Many of them were made of terra cotta, some of marble, and then there is the bronze specimen which is still in use.

Etruscan wall paintings of the fifth and sixth centuries B. C. show that these couches were plentiful then. The Etrurians builded well when they came to make beds, for most of the pictures show them as made of stone, terra cotta and marble being favorite materials. In shape they were narrow, set on legs, much like the couch of today, and piled high with cushions. There were two kinds of beds or couches in this period, one for reclining upon at mealtime and the other for sleeping. In some instances the same couch was used for both purposes.

With the early Greeks and Romans the bed played a more prominent part in the life of the people than it does today. Paintings from these times show the bed or couch a prominent factor at all mealtimes and banqueting scenes, the persons participating reclining while they dined or carried on a conversation. Early scenes where the characters concerned are wholly mythological show them meeting death, delivering speeches or reposing idly, all on couches of a nearly similar design. The sleeping couch rarely occurs in this early sculpture or painting.

In form the bed of this era was based on principles much akin to those upon which our beds are now made. There are the body, legs and headpiece, all made much as they are made today. At first, so far as can be found, the body was only a slab of marble laid across two upright stones serving as legs. Later, however, there come to view a leg for each corner and a headpiece. The best examples of modern beds show the skill of the ancients in sculpture and painting and the importance with which they regarded the bed. The legs are often notable examples of the carver's art, and the sides serve as panels whereon the artist of the day depicted the life of the period.

Other Greek couches have legs made of blocks of wood mortised together. Later the entire bed was made of wood. Many of these specimens were of the costliest manufacture, the wood being inlaid with ivory and other articles of ornament. Tortoise shell as a means of decorating couches seems to have been introduced about 100 B. C. Later silver and gold were occasionally used.

In furnishings the ancients pursued about the same system as is in vogue at present. Mattresses, pillows, valances and loose draperies are shown in the early vase paintings. All couches had mattresses, but the thickness, quality and kind varied with the different periods. At first only a few skins thrown over the body of the bed were used.

The pillows were of various shapes, some being long and narrow, others approximately square and still others nearly round in appearance. The Greek or Roman of this period was a most luxurious personage, as he required at least three pillows to enable him to secure a good night's rest. There was one for his head, one for his elbow and one for his feet.

The mattresses and pillows were covered with linen or wool. Leather to some extent was used as a covering for the pillows. Rare instances are found where silk was employed as bed covering.

A great variety of materials was used in stuffing both articles. The commonest article among the Greeks seems to have been refuse wool torn off in carding or fulling cloth. Among the Romans wool especially prepared was the favorite article for this purpose. Straw and rushes were used largely by the poor classes. Feather pillows are first mentioned as being in existence in the fourth century. The draperies and hangings were in many instances rich tapestries.

In the representations of Roman beds the furnishings run generally to luxury and display, and the draperies are the parts given the most attention. The most striking colors to be obtained were used in their manufacture and decoration, and the looms of the east were scoured for the best examples of weaving. Purple was a favorite color, and the wealth of a person was often indicated by the excellence of the bed draperies in his house.

Bedmaking and bed furnishing had attained to this stage in the year 400 A. D. A painting of a bed of this period shows an article of manufacture and furnishings much like the bed of today. There are four legs, sides of wood and wooden slats or occasionally leather interlacing to furnish rests for the mattress. There are two headpieces, one at each end, suggesting that even at this late date the sleeper was accustomed to have a pillow for his feet. Of the furnishings the mattress and pillows are covered with a striped stuff not unlike many cloths of the present, and a blanket covering the mattress is tucked between it and the bedside, much as the neat housewife now tucks in her snowy sheet.

Here, however, the resemblance to the present style of bed ceases. The legs at the head are carved to represent human figures and mythological creations. At the foot a woman with surrounding "picture writing" holds forth. The sides are massive panels carved in a similar manner, and the structure of the whole marks it as an article made to be handed down from one generation to the other.—Chicago Tribune.

SOUTH AMERICAN ANTS.

They Are Perhaps the Greatest Road Builders In the World.

The greatest road builders in the world are a species of red ants found in South America. In building a road they carry minute particles of clay, with which they line all the roads as well as the galleries and passages of their nests till they look as smooth as if cemented by a master mason. Some idea of their number can be formed when it is remembered that the whole of this road to their tree, perhaps nearly half a mile long, is densely thronged with a multitude going out empty and coming back with their umbrella-like burdens, while thousands upon thousands swarm in the doomed tree.

That this vast army is under the best discipline can be proved by watching them for only a few moments. The drivers are constantly running up and down giving their orders to the workers, which they do by touching heads for a moment. The individual so touched will stop, turn back, hurry forward or show in some such way that he is following some command. But a better proof of the discipline is found in the fact that when the army meets with an obstacle, such as a log or a large stone, there is a jam of ants on both sides, and they run about in dismay and disorder. Instantly the drivers hurry up, showing the greatest excitement, and run over, around and under the impediment to find the best way out of the difficulty. When they have decided they lead off the line of march in the proper direction. But until they take this step the workers make no attempt to pass the obstacle.

When a selection of a level piece of ground has been made a perpendicular shaft some eight inches in diameter and six or seven feet deep is formed. This is for drainage and ventilation, never for ingress or egress. If the ground slopes the shaft is horizontal, the mouth, of course, being at the bottom of the hill. From the perpendicular shaft, commencing at the bottom, radiate galleries, like the spokes of a wheel set at a slight angle. At the end of each series of galleries' spokes a circular gallery is made, forming, as it were, a set of wheels one above the other. In, or, rather, above, these circular galleries the nests or dwelling places are constructed. These are oval in shape and about a foot long. The narrow end of the oval is downward and opens into the roof of the gallery, and as the spokes always slope slightly toward the shaft no tropical rains, no matter how heavy, can enter the homes and breeding places of the ants.

Rainless Regions.

The rainless regions of the globe owe their aridity to the fact that they are shut off from the influence of most winds by high mountain chains. The chief of these are upper Egypt, the Sahara, the desert of Gobi and the coast of Peru. The driest place in the world is probably that part of Egypt between the two lower falls of the Nile. Rain has never been known to fall there, and the inhabitants do not believe travelers who tell them that water can fall from the sky. The great trade winds at the starting points of their paths are the cause of drought and barrenness, but where they cross land at the termination of their course they give out bounteous rain supplies. The contrasts thus offered are very striking. Thus some parts of the Moroccan Sahara near the head of the northeastern Atlantic trade wind do not experience a shower for perhaps twenty years at a time, while the same wind when it reaches the coast of South America produces a rainfall representing a depth of twenty feet of water in a year.

Rats as an Article of Diet.

Rats have never found favor as a delicacy for the table in Europe or in this country, but in many lands they are relished as an article of diet. The negro slaves of Jamaica used to regard them as a dainty, their masters not providing them with any other meat. Their method of cooking the toothsome rodents was to impale each one on a long wooden skewer after cleaning the animal and cutting off the tail, turning it briskly around over a fire until the hair was all burned off. Then it was scraped until free from fur, and finally the end of the skewer was stuck into the ground, inclined toward the fire, until it was toasted dry and crisp, thus being made ready for the meal. Rats may commonly be seen for sale in the markets of any Chinese town, split and pressed under a heavy weight, so as to look somewhat like dried fish. In this shape the pigtailed oriental buys them, soaks them in water and then boils, roasts or fries them.

Schools of Mullet.

Mullet, the food fish which the larger portion of the game fish live upon and which they follow about, are found in enormous schools in the ocean. A small section—say 25,000 or 50,000—will find their way in the lake looking for food, and a corresponding section of the attendant school of bluefish will follow them. When these fish once get in the gill nets trollers can make no appreciable impression upon them, no matter how hard they fish, and this small detachment is not 1 per cent of the school from which it strayed.—Florida Times-Union.

THE PLAINS OF YUHA

SOME OF THE CURIOSITIES OF THE COLORADO DESERT.

Graves Each of Which Tells a Story of a Tragedy of Heat, Thirst and Death—Odd Stones and Shells That Strew the Barren Region.

There is a section of the Colorado desert where nature has left some remarkable records. She has visited the region alternately with fire and water and has left it with neither. It is the most desolate, wild, barren, forbidding part of the desert, says the Los Angeles Times, and it is shunned alike by man and beast. That there is good and sufficient reason for avoiding this locality is attested by numbers of graves, nameless for the most part, found in the terrible region.

These graves are simple affairs, merely mounds of earth with a border of stones about each and a pile of rocks two or three feet high at the head. Each tells the story of a tragedy of heat, thirst and death. Those items are about all that is ever known of the stories of those who perish. Their mummified bodies or bleached bones are found long after the struggle is over, and the finder, respecting the memory of the unknown, scoops a hole in the earth, lays the ghastly relic within and piles up the only monument available in that wild region.

The plain now lies nearly a hundred feet below the level of the sea, and the rocks of the plain and the bases of the mountains are washed and eroded in a wonderful manner. Mingling with the burnt stones and volcanic debris are rocks worn by the waves and shaped into hundreds of fantastic forms. There are many acres of these stone curiosities, and certain sections of the field seem devoted to certain shapes and figures.

For instance, one passes through a region which he at once names the cabbage patch, for it presents the appearance of a field of those vegetables which have turned to stone. The waves have worn the rocks into round bowlders about the size of the vegetable which they so much resemble and have cut into the globes, laminating them in perfect imitation of the leafy layers of the garden vegetable.

Another locality is devoted almost exclusively to dinner plates. Thousands of rounded, thin disks are scattered over the plain or are piled scores deep in singular piles, each piece shaped exactly like the crockery which adorns our tables and quite as thin and symmetrical.

Another section of this truly wonderful region is given almost wholly to dumbbells. These vary in size from pieces weighing one or two pounds up to those seemingly calculated for exercising the muscles of a giant and weighing thirty or forty pounds each. In almost every instance these natural dumbbells are well balanced, the balls at either end of the connecting piece being of the same size and weight.

There is in this plain an arsenal also. While guns and swords and bayonets and powder were not there to be found, there are thousands of cannon balls varying in size from two and three inch balls to those fit for the big thirteen inch guns of modern warfare. And all are of stone, all formed in nature's workshop.

There are other objects innumerable. There are stone roses, stone lilies, stone tulips, stone leaves, stone birds, stone animals, stone quoits, stone ornaments in varied and unique designs, stone canes—in fact, almost everything conceivable in nature or art imitated in stone on the plain of Yuha.

In one portion of Yuha rise two hills or small mountains. One might mistake them in the distance for ancient craters, but when he approaches the eminences he discovers them to be monuments to an ancient life—the records of species now extinct. They are shell mountains, great beds of prehistoric bivalves which were left stranded when that ancient sea swept back from the region and left a dry and desolate land.

One of these mountains, the large one, is composed wholly of large rough shells, much larger, but less elongated, than the shells of the modern oyster, which in some respects they so much resemble as to lead to the suspicion that they are the remains of the ancestors of our much prized bivalve.

The lesser hill is composed of tiny shells of a prehistoric type of brachiopoda. Like the larger shells, they are found except on the surface in an undisturbed state, both valves of nearly every shell being found in position. Although the mollusk dwellers of these shells vanished several centuries ago, so perfect are the shells one almost expects when he opens the valve of the shell to find the living creature within.

Fling Out Your Sunshine.

What a satisfaction it is to go through life radiating sunshine and hope instead of despair, encouragement instead of discouragement, and to feel conscious that even the newsboy or the bootblack, the car conductor, the office boy, the elevator boy or anybody else with whom one comes in contact gets a little dash of sunshine! It costs nothing when you buy a paper of a boy, or get your shoes shined, or pass into an elevator, or give your fare to a conductor, to give a smile with it, to make these people feel that you have a warm heart and good will. Such salutations will mean more to us than many of the so called great things. It is the small change of life. Give it out freely. The more you give the richer you will grow.—Orison Swett Marden in Success Magazine.

Long Lived Carp.

The ordinary carp, if not interfered with, will, it is said, live 500 years. There are now living in the Royal aquarium in Russia several carp that are known to be over 600 years old, and it has been ascertained in a number of cases that whales live to be over 200 years old. A gentleman in London has had an ordinary goldfish for fifty-three years, and his father informed him that he had purchased it over forty years before it came to the present owner's possession.

The "King's English."

The following appeared as a London coster tailor's advertisement:

"A slap up togs and kicksies builder, with upper Benjamins snipped on a downy plan, with moleskins of hanky-panky design, with a double fakement down the sides and artful buttons at bottom, with kicksies cut peg top, half tight or to drop loose over the trotters, with fancy vests made to flash the dickey or to fit tight round the scrag."

Comforting Him.

"And now," whispered the lover as he caught her in his arms, "what shall we do about the rope ladder? We shouldn't leave it hanging there."

"Don't worry about it," replied the eloping damsel. "Papa said he'd pull it up again so I couldn't get back."

DEATH DANCES.

They Form a Part of the Tibetan Mystery Plays.

The death dances of the Tibetan mystery plays, one of which is performed on the last three days of the year, are called "the ceremony of the sacrificial body of the dead year." The effigy of a man made out of dough as lifelike as possible and having inside a distinct heart and all the entrails filled with a red fluid is placed by four cemetery ghouls in sight of the numerous spectators in the center of the yard, and at once bands of skeleton ghosts rush upon the corpse to attack it. This is the time to display the necromantic power of lamaism over the evil spirits. Monks and lamas come forth and go through a series of ceremonies, the magic effect of which keeps the fiends away. But a more formidable devil, with great horns and possessed of superior powers, makes his appearance and takes the field, whereupon a saint of an incarnation of Buddha himself goes to the rescue, sprays flour on the enemy, makes mystic signs and utters incantations. The skeleton ghosts and the big fiend grovel before him and implore mercy. He graciously yields to their supplications and allows them to partake of a sacramental meal. While they kneel before him he gives to each one of them a little flour to eat and a drink out of a vessel of holy water.

SMART FOXES.

"Spelled" Each Other and Fooled a Pack of Hounds.

I have a near neighbor who is a close and intelligent observer of the ways of wild animals and a truthful and reliable man. He says that on one occasion he witnessed a fox chase in Maryland, standing on one side of a very high hill, while the dogs and fox were across a deep gulch about half way up the side of another high hill, for a good deal of the time in plain view.

As the chase proceeded he noticed a second fox seated on a log and apparently interested in the outcome. After some time, as the dogs were heard approaching, this fox ran down at right angles to the direction they were coming and met the running fox and took his place ahead of the hounds, while the tired animal sprang to one side and trotted directly up the hill and seated himself on the log for a rest.

The fresh substitute then led the dogs a lively chase for a long circuit and finally the pack again were heard approaching. This time Fox No. 1 was fresh and ready and ran down and met his fatigued brother and put himself before the dogs, while No. 2 went back to the log and took a breathing spell. This proceeding was kept up for probably two hours.—New York Times.

PAUL'S WALK.

A Favorite Promenade In the Old Days In London.

In the old days, especially during the reigns of James I. and Charles I., the nave of St. Paul's cathedral was popularly known as "Paul's walk," because it was the favorite promenade of wits, gallants and fashionable idlers, who met there to gather or retail the latest news.

The nave and body of a cathedral or church were then regarded as much less sacred than the chancel, and this explains, if it does not excuse, the fact that they were often given over to all kinds of profane and secular uses.

At St. Paul's there were stalls and bazaars with crowds of busy buyers and sellers, giving it the appearance of a fair. Usurers occupied the south aisle and horse dealers the north, making it, as Evelyn called it, "a stable of horses and a den of thieves." Shakespeare makes Falstaff buy a horse at St. Paul's as he would at Smithfield.

Courts of justice were held and funeral banquets and churchwarden's feasts were celebrated there, and, according to Stubbs, traces of these usages lingered on into the middle of the seventeenth century.—London Globe.

Daughter—Jack promised that if I accepted him he would mend his ways. Her Mother—Humph! I haven't much faith in this repairing done while you wait.

H. L. Main,

Hopkinton, Iowa.

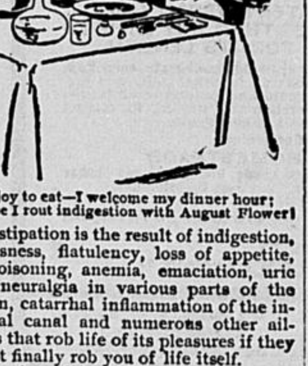
Oxfords and Sandals

We have just received the most complete line of Oxfords and Sandals ever before offered in Hopkinton. These are eastern styles and up-to-date in every respect. Come in and examine them and you will be pleased.

H. L. MAIN,

Hopkinton, Iowa.

A FOOLISH PLAN



'Tis a joy to eat—I welcome my dinner hour; Because I rout indigestion with August Flower!

¶Constipation is the result of indigestion, biliousness, flatulency, loss of appetite, self-poisoning, anemia, emaciation, uric acid, neuralgia in various parts of the system, catarrhal inflammation of the intestinal canal and numerous other ailments that rob life of its pleasures if they do not finally rob you of life itself.

¶"I'm bound in the bowels," is a common expression of people who look miserable and are miserable—yet who persist in "letting nature take its course."

¶What a foolish plan, when nature could be aided by the use of Green's August Flower, which is nature's own remedy for constipation and all stomach ills.

¶August Flower gives new life to the liver and insures healthy stools.

¶Two sizes, 25c and 75c. All druggists.

For sale by ANDERS & PHILIPP.

RAILROAD Time Cards.

Manchester & Oneida Ry.

TIME TABLE.

Train No. 2 leaves Manchester at 5:15 a. m. arrives at Oneida at 6:05 a.m. Connects with west bound C. G. W. No. 5. Returning leaves Oneida at 5:40 a.m arrives at Manchester at 6:05 a. m

Train No. 4, leaves Manchester at 7:15 a. m arrives at Oneida at 7:45 a. m., connects with east bound C. G. W. No 6. Returning leaves Oneida at 7:[illegible] a. m., arrives at Manchester at 8:[illegible] a. m.

Train No. 6, leaves Manchester at 8:45 a. m., arrives at Oneida at 9:24 a. m. Connects with the north bound C. M. & St. P., No. 22. Returning leaves Oneida at 9:25, arrives at Manchester at 9:50 a. m.

Train No. 8, leaves Manchester at 2:00 p. m. arrives at Oneida at 2:30 p. m. connects with C. G. W., No. 4, east bound, and No. 9, west bound Returning leaves Oneida at 3:22 p m. arrives at Manchester at 3:45 p m.

Train No 10, leaves Manchester at 4:45 p. m. arrives at Oneida at 5:15 p. m. Connects with south bound C. M. & St. P., No. 21. Returning leaves Oneida at 5:25 p. m., arrives at Manchester 5:45 p. m.

J. L. KELSEY,
Gen. Traffic Manager.

Through tickets for sale at Manchester to all points in North America.

—TRAINS WILL STOP ONLY AT—

Belknaps Crossing, Platform at Quaker Mill Switch, Franklin Street Crossing, Ely's Crossing, Miller's Crossing, Twin Crossing, West brook's Crossing.

ILLINOIS CENTRAL R. R.

TIME TABLE.

Main Line Passenger Trains.

WEST BOUND	MAIN LINE	EAST BOUND
No 1* 12:13 a m	..Fast Train..	No 2* 8:42 a m
No 3* 2:18 pm.	Thro Express..	No 4* 8:16 p m
No 33 †6:05 p m	....Clipper....	No 34†9:00 a m
No 5 †9:00 a m	Local Express	No 6† 8:40 p m
No 53† 2:00 p m	.Way Freight.	No 94 11:45 a m
CEDAR RAPIDS BRANCH.		
North Bound —Arrive—	Bet Cedar Rpds and Manchester	South Bound —Leave—
No.306 6:00p.m	..†Passenger..	No.305 9:10 a.m
No 334 8.40a.m	..†Passenger..	No.335 6:20 p.m
No. 360 1:00p.m	... †Freight....	No.3603:30 p.m

All above trains carry passengers.
*Daily.
†Daily ExceptSunday.
H. G. PIERCE. Station Agt.

No. 5 Runs to Sioux City only.
No. 3 Runs to Omaha only.
No. 1 has connections to Omaha, Sioux City and Sioux Falls and No. 2 from same points.

CHICAGO GREAT WESTERN RY.

"The Maple Leaf Route."

Time card, Oneida, Iowa.

Chicago Special, Daily, Going East.....7:47 a.m
Day Express daily.......2:30 p m
Way Freight daily ex. Sunday.... 11:30 a m
Going West, North and South.
Way Freight, daily ex. Sunday.........11:20 a.m
Day Express daily....... :16 p m
St Paul & Kansas City Exp, daily .....5:31 a m
For information and tickets apply to
C. A. Robinson, Agent, Oneida.

INVESTMEMTS IN SOUTHERN LANDS

Such investments are not speculative. The South is not a new country. Market and shipping facilities are adequate and first class. The climate is mild and favorable. Notwithstanding these and other advantages, southern lands are selling for prices far below their real value, and at present prices net large returns on the investment. For a free set of circulars Nos. 1 to 10, inclusive, concerning the possibilities of lands in Kentucky, West Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana, on and near the Illinois Central Railroad, for homeseekers and investors, address the undersigned. J. F. MERRY.
Ass't Gen'Pass'r Agent I. C. R. R.
Dubuque, Iowa.

Compound Vapor and Shampoo Baths.

Baths Vapor and Shampoo.

Most all diseases are caused by poisonous secretions, which clog the wheels of NATURE. The name and the symptoms may be different, but the cause of disease can usually be traced to the imperfect action of the millions of pores of the human body. A bath in accordance with scientific requirements is the best preventative and remedy known. The methods employed by me are the most scientific ever invented or discovered for dispelling disease. Results tell the story. Give me a trial. This is the Conant system of baths. A competent lady attendant in charge of the ladies department.

Office and bath rooms on Franklin street, opposite Globe Hotel.

6t G. D. GATES.

Why do you fret and grumble,
Why don't you take a tumble,
Use Beacom's Picnic Pills,
They will drive away your ills
Try them. 25 cents. All druggists. 50tf

Illinois Central Excursion Rates.

Excursion tickets will be sold by the Illinois Central, to the points, and at rates, as follows:

SUMMER TOURIST RATES.

Tickets on sale daily during the summer months to St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn; Hot Springs and Deadwood, So. Dak.; Denver, Colorado Springs Pueblo, and Glenwood Springs, Colo.; Ogden and Salt Lake City, Utah; and many other Summer Resorts both East and West, limited to Oct, 31st. Also to Yellowstone Park, limited to ninety days. Write for rates.

FARE AND ONE-THIRD ON CERTIFICATE PLAN.

Cedar Falls, Ia., Iowa State Normal Summer School, June 10, July 21. Tickets on sale only on certain dates.

ONE FARE PLUS $2.00.

Home-seekers' Excursions, West, South, South-east and South west.

Tickets on sale the first and third Tuesday of each month until October. To certain points in Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Canada and the Northwestern States. Tickets will be sold every Tuesday until October 31st.

Baltimore, Md., International Convention United Society of Christian Endeavor, July 5-10. Buffalo N. Y., Meeting Grand Lodge, B. P. O. Elks, July 11-13.

LESS THAN ONE FARE.

Portland, Ore., San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego, Cal.—Lewis & Clark Centennial Exposition at Portland, and other meetings at above points. Tickets on sale on certain dates every month until and including September, limited to ninety days for return, not to exceed November 30th. Write for rates and illustrated folders about the Portland Exposition.

Denver, Colo.—International Epworth League Convention, July 5-9. Through Tourist Sleepers to Denver July 3rd. Write for circulars quoting rates and giving particulars, also folders descriptive of Denver and other Colorado resorts.

For particulars as to dates of sale, rates, etc., apply to any Illinois Central Ticket Agent, or address the undersigned.

J. F. MERRY,
Asst. Gen'l Pass. Agent
Dubuque, Iowa.

Cheap Excursion to Chicago and Return, June 17, via the I. C. R. R. The I. C. R. R. will run an excursion to Chicago June 17th at a rate of $5.00 for the round trip. Tickets limited to return June 26. See regular newspapers notices and bills.
P. G. Pierce, Agt.

SUMMER EXCURSION RATES

Via the M. & O. to Summer Tourist Points, North, East, South and West.

Commencing June 1st and continuing daily thereafter until September 30, 1905, the M. and Oneida Ry. Co. will sell round trip summer tourist tickets good to return until October 31st at greatly reduced rates with stop over privileges on nearly all roads. For further information call on or address the undersighed at Manchester Iowa.

J. L. Kelsey,
Traffic Mgr.