

BUTTERFLIES AND BEETLES That paid for a farm.



CATCHING THE BUTTERFLIES THAT SOLD FOR \$575.

Miss Mary Yoemans of Humboldt County Found That It Paid Better to Raise Butterflies and Beetles Than to Raise Stock.

WOULD any one believe that a fortune could be made by collecting butterflies and beetles? Away up in the mountains in Humboldt County lives Miss Mary Yoemans with her three brothers. She owns a ranch well stocked and bringing in a large income, and all of it was paid for by butterflies and beetles.

It is now nearly thirty years since a gentleman died in England, leaving four children. They had been reared in luxury and highly educated, but at their father's death they found themselves possessed only of a few hundred pounds. They decided to come to America, as in their own country there seemed no opportunity for them to advance or even gain a livelihood.

One of the younger brothers knew something about botany and bulbs, while Miss Yoemans, the daughter, knew a good deal about bugs and beetles and butterflies, and so the four young folks set to work.

"Humboldt County is one of the richest countries in the world for collecting butterflies," says Dr. Fuchsil of the San Francisco Academy of Science, and this must be so, for the beetles and butterflies paid better than sheep or any other stock.

It is a modest home where the Yoemans live, but there is the air of refinement and culture about it which only much study and well used books can give. Books and pictures, a great fireplace and a grand piano (I wonder how it ever came there, ninety miles from anywhere), and a gentle old lady, with white hair and a soft voice, help to form their living room.

It is such a pleasure to me to talk about my 'bugs,' as my brothers call them, and Miss Yoemans told me more about butterflies than I can ever write down. The beetle is a symbol of the resurrection, and is found in all Egyptian tombs. Every one knows how often the butterfly is used to symbolize the resurrection.

Miss Yoemans possesses boxes and boxes of beetles, which she has gathered, but which she intends to keep for her own private collection. More beautiful than jewels they reflected the sunlight in a thousand colors as she shook them about. I asked her to tell me how she had collected them, and she said:

"When we first came out here we were very lonely away up here in the mountains, but we had to make our farming venture a success, for we had to live, you see.

"I had collected butterflies in England, and knew the rare ones. One day I was out on those mountains back that way," pointing to some high hills that were visible in the distance, "and I went up for four or five days at a time we all went up there together and camped. I was on the lookout for butterflies and had my net. That day I had my first real success. I saw a whole flock of butterflies, yellow, large, with white tracings on the wings, and I caught the whole flock of twenty-three.

"Such a chase as I had! I could run well, fortunately, or I would have lost them, for after I had caught one the flock flew straight down over a chemical covered mountain. I ran around the

brush and reached a ravine, only to see the flock wheel and fly back to the top of the hill again, where there were quantities of yellow flowers. I might have known they would come back to the yellow flowers, but I quite lost my head.

"At dark I had fourteen butterflies. The boys helped me to pin them on my sewing braids as we sat around the campfire.

"I knew that the rest of the flock could be caught in the morning, and I was out before the sun was up, for that is the easiest time to catch butterflies, for they are sluggish then and stick to the damp foliage.

"Yes, I caught the rest to pin down. Money was rather scarce with us then, and I was saving my postage, which meant a good bit of a sum, so, as a safeguard, I sketched my butterfly in water color and sent the sketch home to England.

"Such a long wait as I had and fancy my delight when word came to send my entire flock to London.

"You'll never guess what they offered me for them, even when I tell you they were rare specimens? Twenty-five dollars each. As there were twenty-three you see I had the tidy little sum of \$575, which I promptly invested in three very fine sheep.

"Well, that was the beginning. After that I worked in real earnest. You see California is very rich in new species both of butterflies and beetles.

Then Miss Yoemans showed me a catalogue of a firm in Paris which deals only in butterflies, and every butterfly or beetle has its marked value; some of them ranging as high as \$100.

In Europe many people in private life, who have plenty of money and nothing to do, make these collections and pay great prices for rare or beautiful specimens, so that it is a regular business to handle butterflies and beetles. There are at least three large firms in London and Paris with several hundred thousand dollars capital invested.

"Americans," continued Miss Yoemans, "use these specimens in their museums, and every college has its specimens for the students. They are my customers."

Miss Yoemans' cellar is not intended for vegetables or eatables, but for the rearing of beetles.

In one corner is a box filled with what looks like sticks of wood for the kitchen stove.

"This is my nursery and these my babies," she explained. "May be I am their Bluebeard, though, for I make out of this box the series of the life of a beetle from the time it is in the egg to maturity."

There it lay, to me a slender, black, long-legged bug half an inch long, for I am not one who, as the doctor put it, "know some things."

This doctor was a famous French scholar and was traveling in this country with his son. The latter, according to the farmers around Miss Yoemans' ranch, was also "a bug catcher. He carried back to France many entirely new species. The boy made enough out of the collection he made to pay all his share of the expenses of the trip across the ocean and across a continent. Dr. Le Fontani planned the trip to California because he was sure valuable specimens could be found out here. He could find no native Californians to make collections and he had never heard of Miss Yoemans, and he came out himself. Through his influence Miss Yoemans found better

markets for her specimens and he himself was able to make more extended research.

Miss Yoemans likewise can find no one to help her in collecting except a small Indian boy.

Four or five years ago a small, brown, barefoot boy emptied his pockets on her kitchen table. He had caught some rare butterflies which he called his flying flowers. His mother had washed for the Yoemans, bringing her boy with her. He had seen Miss Yoemans' cabinets full of butterflies, as boys will see things you never give them credit for. In running about the hills he watched the bugs and had learned a good deal of their habits. Whenever he found butterflies he had never seen before he caught them and brought them to Miss Yoemans.

"I could have cried when I saw those crumpled remains, for they were nothing," she said. "For so many years I had been a collector and the custodian of the Smithsonian Institution had asked me to try to find the very species. I told Joe I would give him a dollar if he would bring me some more. He could not find any, but brought me instead a big beetle. It was not one I recognized, for, you see, I know a great many beetles and can tell at a glance what they are. I killed it with ether and made a careful drawing of it and sent it to the custodian of the Academy of Sciences in Philadelphia, with a description of the place it had been found. I told him I had sent the same drawing and description to Washington. It is just as well to sell in an open market, you know.

"In a few days I was surprised to see our next neighbor ride into our ranch in a great hurry and give my brother a telegram. The neighbors were sure some one was dead, so my brother opened the telegram with a very serious face. As for me, I was near fainting, for telegrams are almost unknown in this corner of Humboldt County.

"Mary, he wants a bug," said brother at last.

"Who wants a bug?"

"This wise man of Philadelphia."

"He was afraid the other man might get the beetle whose picture I had telegraphed, and asked me to sell it to him at my own price."

"And what was your price?" I asked.

"Fifteen dollars, and it was the most valuable beetle I ever sold."

"I went with Joe to the place where he had found it. If there is one there are sure to be more, if you know where to look for them.

"When the reply came from the man at Washington offering me \$10 I sent him one. I sold four others—one for \$3, one for \$5 and one for \$5—and now I can get only \$1 each for them, because they are no longer rare. The species was supposed to live only in the Alps, and was very scarce.

Miss Yoemans goes through the redwoods every year to collect her specimens. Spreading a white sheet on the ground, she gathers up the refuse under the trees and scatters it on the sheet. When something moves she looks to see what it is, and if it proves to be a good specimen she places over it a wide-mouthed bottle having a sponge dipped in a solution of cyanide of potassium, which kills the insect instantly. This last year has been very bad for insects, for they demand moisture, and there has been so little rain.

A singular custom prevails among the Tartars or Kurds. If a man gets into difficulties, i. e., loses his cattle or other movable property, he pours a little brown sugar into a piece of colored cloth, ties it up, and carries one such parcel to each of his friends and acquaintances. In return he is presented according to circumstance, with a cow, or sheep, or a sum of money. He is thus at once set on his legs again. The same method is adopted

are mainly borne by three Norwegian capitalists, the same men who were the chief private contributors to Nansen's expedition—the two brothers Ringnes, brewers, and Consul Heberg. The Norwegian state has, besides giving the use of the Fram, which is state property, also directly contributed to the expedition.

This expedition is larger than Nansen's, consisting of sixteen members, including the leader, Captain Sverdrup, while Nansen had only twelve followers on his expedition. Outside of Sverdrup there is only one of the members of the old Nansen expedition participating in the present one, P. L. Hendriksen, from Tromsø, a skipper who for sixteen years has devoted his time and energy to Arctic travel, hunting and fishing. The vessel is this time commanded by Victor Baumann, a lieutenant in the Norwegian navy.

Fourteen members of the expedition

are Norwegians, one is a Swede and one a Dane. The Swede is H. G. Simonsen, a botanist, and the Dane Edward Bay, a zoologist. The physician and surgeon is Dr. Johan Svendsen of Bergen, Norway, and the scientific staff outside of the men named consists of one geologist, P. Schel, and one lieutenant of cavalry, G. I. Isachsen, who is to act as cartographer and attend to the magnetical and astronomical observations. The remaining members of the expedition are seamen, mechanics and sportsmen generally.

The Fram has, before starting on this expedition, undergone considerable alterations, the front part having been raised so as to be a little higher than the poop, which formerly gave considerably above the stern. Thereby has been gained considerable more space for staterooms, and the men now have very commodious quarters. The electric light plant carried by the Fram

on the previous expedition has been removed, on account of the unsteadiness of the Arctic winds, which had to furnish power for the electric plant.

There is nothing English about the expedition at all, and published statements to that effect must be due to the expedition being mixed up with the Antarctic expedition, which, under command of Carsten Borchgrevink, on the Southern Cross, is starting.

Expenses of that expedition are borne by an Englishman, Sir George Newnes, and its twenty-six members are about evenly divided between Englishmen and Norwegians.

The object Captain Sverdrup has in view with the Fram is to circumnavigate and explore the Arctic regions to the north and east of Greenland, but there is no intention of trying to find the north pole. The sole and only object of this expedition is scientific research.

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WONDERFUL SKELETON OF A DRAGON DISCOVERED IN ENGLAND.

THE complete skeleton of a dragon has at last been unearthed, lying just as it did when it breathed its last. This is one of the most important finds ever made in the way of geological remains.

It was in England that this valuable skeleton was found. The locality has long been famous for its bones and fossils, but has never yielded anything to equal this.

The little Warwickshire village of Stockton, plowed and excavated by three manufacturing cement firms, claims all the honor.

The late rector of that city educated the quarrymen by lectures and in conversation to understand and value the prehistoric bones and fossils that they constantly unearthed. With their help he formed a collection that now constitutes the nucleus of a county museum.

The saurian remains found in the vicinity of Stockton have always been fragmentary, a fact due, most likely, to the men's careless digging. To prevent any calamities in the future the rector instructed the men to send for an expert if ever they came across what appeared to be a large portion of a skeleton.

In the case of the dragon, the latest find, this was done.

One of the men says he suddenly struck a whole section of backbones. He laid down his pickax and called the foreman, who notified the expert.

It was a big job. The expert proceeded slowly and with great caution and in due time uncovered the remains of a noble ichthyosaurus. He lies forty-five feet below the surface; twenty feet in length, the head two feet across and three feet ten inches long. The paddles are unusually distinct. The front pair are two feet six inches and the hind pair one foot eight inches in length. The tail is abruptly curved and some of the lumbar vertebrae are slightly displaced. The pelvic ring is missing, removed, perhaps, before the nature of the find was guessed and still to be recovered.

The quarry where the find was made belongs to M. Larkin of Leamington, who intends to present the specimen to the South Kensington Museum.

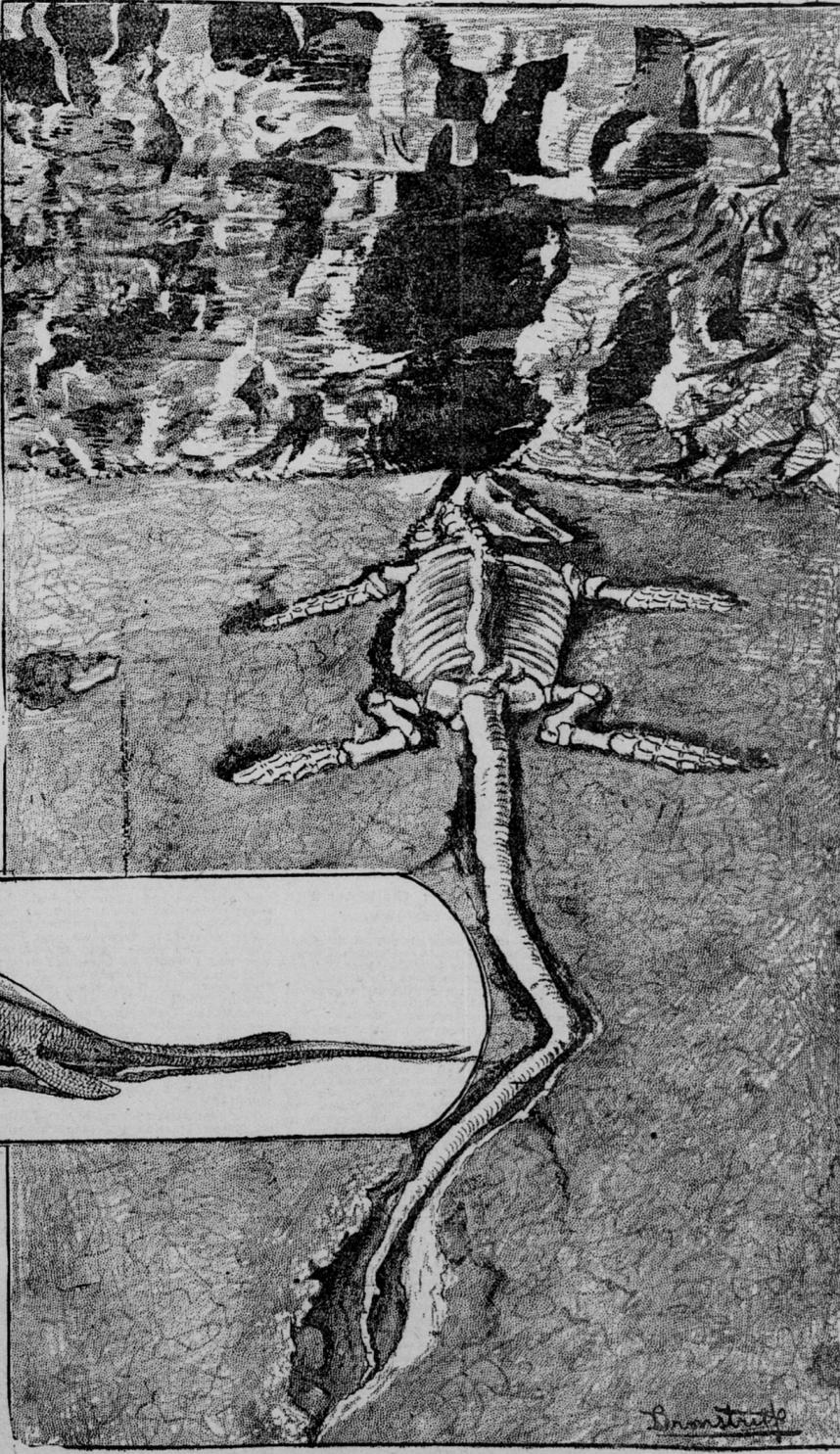
Crowds from all parts of the county throng to see the dragon's skeleton and not a little vigilance is necessary to protect it from dishonest visitors attempting to purloin teeth or fragments. It has been beautifully photographed by H. Elkington of Broadwell, Rugby, who will, on application, furnish copies to geologists and others desiring them.

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SKELETON OF A DRAGON FOUND IN A QUARRY AT STOCKTON, ENGLAND.

This is the most perfect skeleton of the extinct monster ever unearthed. All other remains that have been found have been fragmentary—a head here, a tail there and a leg somewhere else. These have been put together and an idea of the perfect monster formed. The ichthyosaurus is one of the most interesting of prehistoric animals. It has been classed as belonging to the stone age, which at the most reliable computation was about 50,000 years ago. Isothe fish-reptile sometimes attained a length of fifty feet. The one from which the above photograph was taken measured about twenty-five feet.



The Dragon, ichthyosaurus, as it Looked When Alive.

and my box has never been empty since then."

I was curious to see what manner of "beauty" it was. Miss Yoemans laughed and said: "You had better not."

"Why?"

"You are doomed to disappointment if you do," and poking about in the sawdust she raked out a dead beetle and put it into my hand.

There it lay, to me a slender, black, long-legged bug half an inch long, for I am not one who, as the doctor put it, "know some things."

This doctor was a famous French scholar and was traveling in this country with his son. The latter, according to the farmers around Miss Yoemans' ranch, was also "a bug catcher. He carried back to France many entirely new species. The boy made enough out of the collection he made to pay all his share of the expenses of the trip across the ocean and across a continent. Dr. Le Fontani planned the trip to California because he was sure valuable specimens could be found out here. He could find no native Californians to make collections and he had never heard of Miss Yoemans, and he came out himself. Through his influence Miss Yoemans found better

THE FRAM'S NEXT TRIP

JUDGING from the comments with which the American press recently accompanied a couple of telegrams about the Fram having been reported seen by different vessels since she started on her second expedition to the Arctic regions, it will not be amiss to give the American public a few data about the new Fram expedition. It is not a "private scientific expedition, chiefly English, under command of Lieutenant Johannsen," as the papers have repeatedly stated, but it is a scientific expedition, essentially Norwegian, under the command of Captain Sverdrup, the well-known commander of the Fram during Nansen's expedition.

Expenses of the present expedition