

NO BIG ANIMALS.

WHAT VAST AREAS OF LAND IN TORRID COUNTRIES LACK.

Some Districts in Which There Are No Wild Animals of Considerable Size. Islands of the West Indian Archipelago Called a "Gameless Country."

A Russian naturalist, Professor Maflay, who passed several years in the interior of Papua, describes the highland district of the great island as a region as remarkable for its scenery and productivity as for its salubrious climate—a perpetual May in the terrace lands, with March and April plateaus here and there in the highest mountains. The area of the whole island exceeds that of Texas, but its population hardly aggregates a million, nine-tenths of the aborigines being lowland settlers, black idlers gorged with the yam roots and wild hog steaks of the coast plain. The uplands, too, abound with game and fish, and the only conceivable reason why the natives should limit their hunting grounds to the sweltering coast jungles is their preference for a climate that enables them to dispense with dry goods the year round.

In the Torres range there are summits towering to the height of 11,000 feet, but the close proximity of the equator has covered the highlands with a luxuriant vegetation. Snow is hardly ever seen, but chill nights—light frost even—occur now and then, and the frizzle haired coast dwellers avoid the mountains as the Indians of Mexico avoid the lowlands. The West Indian archipelago, with its four magnificent islands and countless islets, has been justly termed the "gameless country," a region of more than a hundred thousand square miles, monopolized almost entirely by birds and insects (even reptiles being scarce), as if the archipelago had been somehow overlooked on the last two days of creation, and left to be settled by such creatures as could reach its coasts swimming or flying. There are forests teeming with spontaneous fruit, but no monkeys, no wild hogs, no bears or raccoons. The larger mammals are not represented by a single species.

No pumas or jaguars (though both are found on the coasts of the neighboring mainland), no panthers, lynx or wildcat. Foxes, wolves and jackals, too, are conspicuous by their absence. The caves of the limestone Sierra would seem to be admirably adapted to marmots and woodchucks, but they are tenanted only by bats. On the fine highland pastures there are no bison, no deer, no antelopes, and, strange to say, not even rabbits. Sheep, goats, horses, donkeys, cows, hogs and even dogs were introduced after the Spanish conquest, and the only domestic mammal kept by the natives at the time of discovery was a small kind of wolf (prairie wolf) imported from Mexico, and a few species of squirrels, which the Cubans fattened for culinary purposes without knowing anything about a classic precedent—the gliraria (rat kennels) of the ancient Romans, who preferred dormouse on toast to the best Syrian pheasant pie.

Dogs and cats were unknown, and that lack of household pets seems to have driven the aborigines to strange expedients, for in "Ogilvy's Voyages" there is an account of a San Domingo cacique who kept a tame manatee that made its headquarters in an artificial pond and was so well tamed that "when called by its name, Matoom, it would come out of the water and go directly to the cacique's house, where, being fed, it returned to the pond, accompanied by men and boys, who seemed to charm the manatee by their singing, and it often carried two children at a time on its back. Being once, however, struck by a pike in the hands of a Spaniard it would never after come out of the water if a clothed man were near.

Manatees have become rather scarce on the coast of San Domingo, but are often seen near the island of Pinos, northwest of Cuba, where shoals of the strange creatures may be seen sporting about the reef like the sea lions below the Cliff House. Of all aquatic mammals the manatee, however, can claim the championship in the art of dodging a sudden attack; a leveled harpoon is enough to make them plunge under with a "no you don't" snort, and then pop up again at unexpected times and places, waving their flippers in derision, and ready to disappear for good at the first suspicious motion.

The luxury of the Dominican cacique was therefore not apt to be shared by many of his subjects. Puppies and kittens were never seen in their cabins, and the largest land animal of the island was an overgrown rat, known as the hutia, and measuring about eighteen inches without the tail. Its caudal appendage is a compromise between that of the true rat and the California gopher, whom it resembles in its fondness for grain and in its burrowing mania, one pair owning often as many as four different dens, more or less connected by subterranean tunnels.

With the exception of that shy rodent, Cuba, San Domingo, Jamaica and Costa Rica have no land creatures deserving the name of a game animal, for even the omnivorous appetite of the Haytian darkies draws the line at the musk scented giant rats of the coast forests.—San Francisco Chronicle.

The Most Costly Book. The most costly book in the world is declared to be a Hebrew Bible now in the Vatican. It is said that in 1512 Pope Julius II refused to sell the Bible for its weight in gold, which would amount to \$108,000. That is the greatest price ever offered for a book.—New York Sun.

A Dangerous Question. Little Girl—How old are you? Miss Antique—I—er—how old do I look? Little Girl (after reflection)—Bout a hundred.—Good News.

Davy's Researches. Sir Humphry Davy was so much interested in electricity that he made many experiments which have become historical in their utility. His brilliant discoveries so excited him that he could with difficulty leave them for needed repose. He would have killed himself by his constant experiments and steady application to the science had he not become prostrated and his life endangered thereby. His remarkable experiments, brilliant and triumphant, are yet to be outdone by more modern philosophers. Sir Humphry Davy's great battery, composed of 2,000 cells, became world wide and historically honored. It was the origin of the first flashes of what is now termed the electric arc. That was eighty years ago, and note the grand discoveries since then:

The idea of two pieces of charcoal, one about an inch long and one less than a sixteenth part of an inch in diameter, being brought near to each other, till they produce a bright spark, for so they did. One part of the coal was immediately ignited to a whiteness, and by removing them apart Davy found a constant discharge of electricity took place sufficiently strong to heat the air in a given space three times their size. He caught the idea in a moment and studied out the mystery which the two pieces of coal had produced, a grand scheme and discovery. He saw the most brilliant ascending light, like a glowing arch, broad and perfectly conical in the middle.

The philosopher experimented to his heart's content, each day bringing forth new discoveries, and there is now no higher scientific name known to men or more honored for his great works and discoveries than Davy, who, like Franklin, lived in his scientific experiments and for humanity.

He, too, saw glorious discoveries to be made, and hoped to live to witness the result of many of his own discoveries.—New York Telegram.

Strange Indian Heats. Among the Indians of North America many strange beliefs are held respecting demon heads that wander about, sometimes harmlessly and at other times for malignant purposes. Some of them are of gigantic size, with wings, while others have faces of fire.

There used to be a society among the Iroquois organized for the purpose of propitiating these extraordinary horrors. The latter, according to popular conception, most commonly moved about from tree to tree in solitary places, where they were apt to be encountered, much to the discomfort of hunters and women who chanced to be alone in the forest. Few things can be imagined more disagreeable than to meet unexpectedly in the woods a great head six feet high, without legs, arms or body.

Occasionally these remarkable creatures would talk, but it was chiefly at night that they had a fiery aspect, their favorite nocturnal haunts being marshes and pools. Members of the exercising society wore masks in imitation of the heads when they performed ceremonies for the purpose of driving such demons away. Of course the fire faces were invented to account for the jack-o'-lanterns or "ignes fati" which haunt moist places.—Washington Star.

Kitchen Work a Proud Occupation. Kitchening seems to be the only species of work that no one need blush for, and, after all, does not hunger justify the means? In the midst of that period of the French revolution known as the reign of terror, did not the ex-Capucine monk, Chabot (an expert in the science of good living) invent the "omelette truffee aux pointes d'asperges," and also "a la puree de pintades"? Did you know that it was to the elector of Bavaria that we owe the "bavaroise," which was prepared and made under his own eyes for the first time at the Cafe Procope?

Modern history also offers noble examples to our admiration. The Empress Elizabeth, of Austria, that accomplished horsewoman, that sovereign of a court where aristocratic prejudices are of the strongest kind, glories in her talent as a pastry cook. Her daughter, the Archduchess Valeria, boasts of having penetrated all the secrets of the ancient and modern cuisine. Queen Victoria is very fond of making omelets, and it seems she has several recipes. Her daughter-in-law, the Princess of Wales, excels in preparing tea and buttered toast.—Paris Intermediaire.

The Design of a Jewel. The design of a jewel should be such that we can take pleasure in the idea of its permanence. We associate permanence with a star, and therefore a star form in jewelry is agreeable. But transient forms, like flowers or ribbon bows, unless they are much conventionalized, present a disagreeable congruity. They ought to change with time, and they do not. Imitations of such objects may please for a moment the curiosity of the vulgar, but interest in them, even for such, is exhausted as soon as they have been examined, and the cultivated taste finds them intolerable. Interest in an object of true art, on the contrary, never grows less.—Harper's Bazar.

When They Became Acquainted. "I know that woman when she lived in an attic." "Yes, I can remember that time perfectly. It was when you were living in the basement of the same house." Then there was a silence, and the waves gossiping to the beach had it all to themselves.—Boston Saturday Gazette.

A Sensitive Family. July 16, 1876, Jean Lafargue, his wife, and a daughter nineteen years of age committed suicide by hanging themselves in the dining room, all because a neighbor had accused them of stealing vegetables from her garden. This at Oise, France.—St. Louis Republic.

In the recent elections in England no fewer than six members of the Society of Friends were candidates for parliamentary seats in the tract of north eastern country between the Tees and the Tyne.

The Centenary of Coal Gas. It is just a hundred years since William Murdoch discovered that coal gas might be used as an illuminant. In his Cornish home he heated coal in an iron kettle and applied a light to the end of an iron tube coming from the kettle. How many people today have ever heard the name of this William Murdoch? Watts, with his kettle, discovered the use of steam, which has effected the greatest peaceful revolution the world has ever seen. Murdoch, with his kettle, also made a wonderful discovery, the value of which it is impossible to overestimate. Electricity as an illuminant is now fast replacing its elder brother, but it is quite young.

For sixty years and more gas has been a familiar friend, and its civilizing influence has been enormous. Feeble as its flame is compared with the brilliant arc light, those few among us who remember the old wooden posts with their sickly oil lamps that did duty in our streets, and served only to make darkness visible, can testify to the gratitude we ought to feel to the Cornishman. Nothing has helped more to repress the ruffianism in our streets than this lighting up of dark places. It has in every sense been an enlightening power, and it is not exactly to our credit that we have forgotten the man who gave it us.—London Public Opinion.

A Wonderful Music Box. An interesting arrangement of pneumatic mechanism for the production of high class music has recently been exhibited. The instrument has two and one-fifth sets of reeds, the regular action of the air grooves being located above, and on top of the board containing these is a row of small pneumatics corresponding in number to the keys of the instrument; underneath this board are four rows of large pneumatics, one beneath the other, and from an arm on each of these pneumatics hangs a wire attached to a lever operating on the coupler buttons on the pitmans or wooden rods connecting the keys of the instrument with the reed board valves.

By means of these levers, operated by pneumatics, the movement of the valves becomes automatic, subject to the passage over the air board of perforated paper. A peculiar characteristic of the motor which operates the music roll, which distinguishes it from all other appliances of the kind, is its adaptability to running to the right to wind music and the left to rewind, or vice versa. When the instrument is in operation the keyboard becomes a thing of life, keys dropping with the exact rapidity required by the selection rendered.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Young Love's Dream and Awakening. Harry Hamilton, aged sixteen and Annie Mead, aged fifteen, went to the same school in Philadelphia. They became attached to each other, and about a year ago became engaged to be married. Owing to their youth, however, the engagement was kept a secret, and the parents endeavored to keep them apart.

Monday Hamilton succeeded in getting a note to Miss Mead in a grocery package. The young girl escaped from home and joined Hamilton. They went to Camden and were married. They then took the train for Wilkesbarre and secured board at Mrs. Reeves', on Union street. Hamilton had a ten dollar note. He gave it to the landlady, saying, "We are solid for one week, anyhow, and can spend our honeymoon in peace."

The young husband endeavored to secure employment as a clerk, but as he was not known he failed. His father arrived and took him home by the ear. The young wife's sister came here on Saturday and marched her back to Philadelphia.—Wilkesbarre Cor. Philadelphia Record.

California's Jelly Palace. The jelly palace which the women of California will prepare for the World's fair exhibit will be 16 by 20 feet and 25 feet high, with two open doors approached by three marble steps. The framework will be of wire. On this will be firmly placed several thousand and jelly glasses—cups, globes, prisms, etc.—filled with jelly of many shades of color, arranged in artistic and beautiful designs. The interior will be brilliantly illuminated by electricity. The cost of the framework and glasses alone is estimated at \$2,700.

Danger in Ice Water. Many people owe summer sickness to the too free use of ice water. It is a question if any real ice water is safe. That which is cold without coming directly from the ice is quite as satisfying and is not dangerous. Strong men have died in fifteen minutes from the effects of drinking copiously of ice water while highly heated by hard work or the sun.—New York Press.

Feeding Cattle with Asparagus. It is not often that asparagus, the daintiest and most expensive of vegetables, is used as food for cattle, but the asparagus crop has been so large all over Brunswick, Germany, that in some villages nobody could be found to pay a cent for a pound, and whole baskets were given to the cows and sheep.—Chicago Herald.

It is proposed spending \$900,000 in enlarging the docks at Liverpool. Eminent shipbuilders recommend that to prepare for the future it will be necessary to consider that vessels will be 700 feet long and that the docks should be 100 feet wide.

What is now North Berwick, Me., was known as Doughty falls thirty years ago. A postal clerk says that occasionally letters are even now addressed to Doughty's falls, and that he has had one such in his hands within the last month.

Eclipses are everyday affairs on Jupiter. Three of its satellites are eclipsed at every revolution of that mighty globe, so that a spectator there might witness during the Jovian year 4,500 eclipses of moons and about the same number of eclipses of the sun by moons.—Providence Journal.

Testing Counterfeit Coins. "Here's the way we test coins in the treasury." And the expert swiftly poised the dollar piece horizontally on the tip of his forefinger, holding the thumb a quarter of an inch away from it and gave it a brisk tap with another coin. A clear silver ring sounded out. "Good, but here; listen!" and he repeated the operation with another coin that gave out a dull, heavy clink that ceased almost as soon as it began. "Type metal and lead; molded too. That is a wretched counterfeit." "How do you tell that it was molded?" He held the two coins so that the light struck on their edges.

"Just compare the reeding, will you, or milling, as most people call it? In this genuine coin this is very clear and sharp cut, in the counterfeit it is coarse and dull. That is because it is folded instead of being stamped in cold metal like the government coins." "Why do the counterfeiters not use the same cold process?" "It costs too much and makes too much noise. With a mold, you see, a counterfeit can carry on his work in a garret and if a policeman comes in he can shy the whole outfit out of the window. But it takes great power to run a die. Still some high flying counterfeiters do use them, and their work is usually harder to detect, though it is never so perfect as that of the government mint."

"What is the surest test for counterfeit coin for popular use?" "The looks of the reeding, as I was telling you—the milling, by the way, is on the face of the coin and not on the edge, as most people think. That's the surest and easiest thing, but of course other tests have to be used, especially for weight and thickness."—Springfield Republican.

Marriage Experiences. It was the lot of a young parson to be embarrassed by the appeals of two young women who wanted to marry the same bridegroom. The first comer of these had scarcely told how her faithless lover had actually put up the banns in the East End parish when the delinquent turned up with an idiotic grin on his face and a gayly apparelled young woman on his arm. What could the parson do but invite the trio into the vestry room, there to discuss the business. Luckily for him, it speedily leaked out that there had been no legal residence in his parish, which afforded him at once a sufficient ground for declining to perform the ceremony.

On another occasion the awful discovery was made that the bride had by accident been described in the marriage license by her pet name. It was suggested that an affidavit of identity sworn at a neighboring police court might repair the blunder. This was done just in time to complete the ceremony within canonical hours, but the accommodating clergyman afterward received a stern admonishment from high quarters "not to do it again."—Cornhill Magazine.

The Care of Brushes. Do not neglect your paint brushes. Dip them in an old can containing benzine, kerosene or turpentine, then wash thoroughly with soap and hot water. Pearline is even better than soap; it removes the color rapidly and does not injure the bristles if they are well rinsed in clear water afterward. Put your brushes in a jar, handles down, and leave them to dry. One of the oddest sights in an artist's studio is the number of brushes disposed in various artistic bits of pottery in nooks and corners.

Some painters pride themselves on owning many hundreds of brushes of every possible style and size. Handsome brushes are ruined if left dirty; it makes the hairs come out, but the large brushes used in common work will not be injured by being left in water over night if you intend to use them for the same colors next day.

King Humbert's Stables. The stables of King Humbert of Italy are exceptionally fine, and contain at present nearly 150 horses, chiefly English bred. The double row of stalls forms a regular street, so beautifully kept that it is a pleasure to walk through it, and each animal has his name printed in large letters on a little board above the manger. Among the English horses may be noticed such names as Flirt, Milord, Lawn Tennis, Epsom and Gentleman.

Up stairs are the state carriages and those used on special occasions. Some of these are magnificently upholstered in white satin. The carriage in which the queen drives every day is very plain, but this simplicity is counteracted by the brilliant scarlet liveries of her coachman and footmen.—London Tit-Bits.

The Lady Was Not the Ghost. An Irish family once had a ghost so troublesome that they sent for detectives. One of these men late at night fell asleep in his chair. The lady of the house chanced to come into the room and could not resist the temptation to groan and rattle her keys. She had never played ghost before; it was a momentary indiscretion. But the policeman did not, and could hardly be expected to believe this. He said it was hardly worth while to bring him from Dublin, and he withdrew in dudgeon. Yet the lady was not really the ghost. He was sulking in retirement. Hence doubt has been cast on the ghosts of haunted houses, even among reflecting minds.—London Illustrated News.

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Photographic Paper. Photographers were obliged until recently to import from Germany the paper used in their work, our own manufacturers being unable to furnish the necessary conditions of material water and workmanship for the production of paper suitable for silver printing. A process has now been perfected in this country whereby a very ordinary paper is coated with a thin surface of sulphate of barytes and answers admirably for photographic use, bringing out in the finished picture a wealth of detail formerly unknown in the art, it being lost in the texture of the paper employed.—Engineering Magazine.

A Clever Bit of Workmanship. In a museum of curiosities at Salem, Mass., there is preserved a common cherry seed or stone hollowed and fashioned like a basket. Within the basket are twelve tiny silver spoons, the shape and finish of which cannot be distinguished with the naked eye. The name of the artist who constructed this little wonder has been lost, but the actual existence of the thing itself will not be questioned by any one from the old wick headquarters of the Bay State.—Chicago Herald.

A Clever Retort. A legal dignitary, who had risen from an humble rank of life, was twitted by an opponent for "having begun life as a barber's boy." "It is true that I did so," was the answer; "and if you had begun in a similar station you would have remained there till the present day."—London Standard.

Not at Home. Stranger—Is your father in? Boy—Nope. Stranger—Where can I find him? Boy—Dunno. North Pole, I guess. Mom's cleanin' house.—Good News.

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