

WONDERS OF NATURE.

Some Creatures of the Lower World That Are Marvelous in Their Ugliness.

While the "devil may have made the cooks," and while a supper of cheese, beer, and cold pie may be productive of visionary creatures too horrible of shape to be committed to canvas or to verse, it is quite as certain that at least one of nature's moods was a nightmare mood in which her visions became realities.

Nothing in the dreams of man has exceeded in repulsiveness some of the creeping things of the earth; things, too, which seem to have their being and their enjoyment of life and liberty and sociability as if nature had framed them in aesthetic mold, instead of fashioning them as if to show to man how puny are his creations of indigestion and even of intoxication. To-day an up-to-date menagerie may have creatures to which delirium tremens may not aspire.

For example, it is doubtful if any dream of indigestion could conjure up the figure of an ursine howler clambering over the footboard of the bed without awaking the sleeper in a cold sweat. Certainly, travelers in the Amazon country prefer any kind of nightmare to the long, wakeful nights which this creature causes them. The howler is of low intelligence, and difficult to tame. It has enormous eyes, with an ugly gleam in them, teeth that protrude with frightful significance, a low, repulsive forehead, and a bristly beard. Its night cries vary from sounds as of a man in dying agony to the long roll of a drum, some of these sounds carrying full two miles through the woods.

Three or four bearded lizards in one's bed, seen only in fancy, should bring a man up standing on the dressing table in fifteen seconds after the attack. His coloring, the hideous pouch under his muzzle, the ridge of spine down his back, and his colossal proportions make it hard to believe that he is quite innocent and harmless. His cousin, the frilled lizard, too, is hideous beyond dreamland, often three feet long, with an eighteen-inch frill around his neck, and capable of running upright on his hind legs for fifty feet at a stretch. He has something of the kangaroo construction and is a native of Australia.

To one unacquainted with the dainty, well-bred, silky tamarin, that spider-like member of the monkey family is capable of inspiring "the creeps" in even strong constitutions. It is a native of South America, is long and skinny, with spidery arms, enormous eyes, prominent teeth, and covered over all with soft, tousled hair. It looks to be some monstrous insect, yet it is the best tempered, cleanest, quickest, and most affectionate of all the monkey tribes.

As to insomnia, an imaginary wart-hog, coming up to nature's specifications, should be an unfailing recipe. The wart-hog seems to be that particular branch of the family into which the devil was conjured in scripture times. Explorers in central Africa, who have had this creature charge them from morasses, its bristles raised, its red eyes blazing, and its hideous tusks flashing white and foam-flecked, declare that the conventional Satan would be tame by comparison. Its tusks, in proportion to its body, are larger than those of the Asiatic elephant, the warts which dot its head are repulsive, and the wicked, blood-shot eyes of the creature, set almost on top of the head, lend further viciousness to its make-up.

The Indian gaviel, with its distended jaws and exaggerated nostrils, is one of the ugliest of the crocodile family. The gaviel, of all the members of the crocodile species, however, is the most dangerous, beyond all comparison, having the longest jaws of the crocodile family and the record of 120 teeth. It grows often to a length of twenty-five feet.

So far the snake has not been considered, and while there are links of sinuous beauty and colors that pale those of the spectrum in these reptiles, nature has made nothing that comes more closely to inspiring the nightmare effect than do these cold-blooded, creeping things of the earth.

The gila monster of the arid west of America is a hideous thing that would be avoided instinctively by both man and beast. A hundred other creatures on the globe are made in monstrous shapes, manifestly that things not of

their kind shall avoid them, because of evened bite or sting.

KEPT TIME BY HIS BELT.

New York Workman Had Unfailing Method of Measuring Hours.

"I've heard of many strange timepieces," said a buyer for a New York ice company, "but I ran across something entirely new in that line last week. I went to a lake back of Newburg to estimate the ice crop. Among the men working there was a heavy set fellow who was dressed in blanket clothes. He kept his trousers in place with a narrow leather belt, and several times in course of the morning I noticed him tighten it a hole at a time.

"What time is it?" I asked him, for my watch was not running.

"He glanced at his belt and answered promptly, '11:30.'"

"Seeing that he had no watch I asked him how he knew, and he explained his system of telling the time by his belt. After breakfast, which was eaten at 6 o'clock, the belt was set at the last hole. Every hour during the morning he was forced to take it in a hole. He knew it was thirty minutes after 11 because he had taken in five holes and the belt was just beginning to slacken. After dinner he would let it out again to the last hole and it would mark off the hours during the afternoon. He said it was as trustworthy as the best watch he had ever owned, and several tests proved that he was right."

Wyoming Has Found Two Bibles.

Two valuable bibles have been discovered in Wyoming among old papers in the last week. One was printed in Germany in 1734, sent to John Vroom of Rawlins with a box of heirlooms from his family's former home in Amsterdam.

The other is a copy of the celebrated "Breeches Bible," found in a case of forgotten books by Judge Alfred Heath of this town. This is an English Bible printed in 1606. It is bound in oak boards, covered with leather and reinforced with heavy brass clamps. The leaves are yellow with age, but the printing and numerous illustrations are still perfectly legible. It contains the old Testament, the Apocrypha, a table of proper names, the Psalms, the Lord's prayer, the Commandments, and the Catechism, all set to music. The feature of the book that makes it valuable is the following verse:

"And they sewed figge tree leaves together and made themselves breeches." Few copies of this edition are known to be in existence.

Cremated in Molten Gold.

At the recent disastrous train wreck near Uplands, Cal., where two main line trains attempted to pass on the same track, and where five persons lost their lives, a great mass of coin in the express car was melted. Piles of \$20 gold pieces came tumbling down on the head of one of the messengers, crushing and completely burying him. Later the wrecked trains caught fire and the money was melted into a solid mass, in the midst of which the cremated body of the messenger is supposed to lie. The gold was inextricably twisted and melted and is to be sent to the smelter to be melted down. Had it been paper money not one vestige to show its value would have remained, says Leslie's Weekly. This accident at Uplands resulted from the carelessness of an engineer who forgot his orders and ran past the switch. His excuse was that his engine was behaving in a refractory manner, and all his attention was given to that.

Longevity in the United States.

A recent bulletin of the United States census compares the mortality of 1890 and that of 1900, and shows that there has been a diminution of something like 10 per cent in the death rate. In 1890 the average longevity in the United States was 31.1 years; in 1900 it is 35.2 years. The increase is 13 per cent. This is the conclusion, at least, so far as cities of over 8,000 inhabitants are concerned, and it represents the facts for the whole country approximately. In 1894 245 persons died of consumption in every 10,000; in 1900 only 190. The case is similar, though not so marked, for other diseases—diphtheria, bronchitis, typhoid, cholera infantum and the like. The main causes are a perfected hygiene of towns and the progress of medicine. Pneumonia, however, claimed 192 victims per 10,000 in 1900 and 187 in 1890.

Ancient German Clock.

An interesting exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution is an old German clock that was ticking about fifteen years before the birth of the great American republic. It keeps good time and is 140 years old. It is made of hardwood and the work was all done by hand. Every piece of the mechanism is highly polished and it is put together with hand-wrought rivets of brass. The parts show very little wear and the timepiece is so carefully constructed that it does not vary a second in time during twenty-four hours.

Anxious to Pay Their Fines.

Among the anomalies which the prohibition law has given rise to in Kansas is a fervent desire on the part of certain law breakers to pay the penalty of their crime. At Wellington the temperance folk started to get out an injunction prohibiting the city treasurer from accepting the fines which were imposed on jointkeepers every month. And the jointkeepers beat this game by rushing in and paying their fines, \$300 each, six months in advance.

NEW LIGHT ON "UNCLE TOM"



It will be remembered by the millions who have read "Uncle Tom's Cabin" that Mrs. Stowe opens it with the expression, "In the quiet little town of P—." This means Paint Lick, a village on the Louisville and Nashville railroad, in Garrard county.

Mrs. Stowe many times confessed that the groundwork of the plot was laid there, on the farm and among the negroes owned by Gen. Thomas Kennedy, who was Garrard county's first representative in the General Assembly of Kentucky. Many friends of the Kentucky generations that have come into prominence since that legislature at the close of the eighteenth century feel that Mrs. Stowe did Gen. Kennedy an injustice in the way she mixed fiction with fact, coupling his name to each Garrard county's wealthiest citizen and largest dealer in race horses and slaves, Gen. Kennedy, was not the persecutor of the black man that Mrs. Stowe has led thousands to believe.

This is not hearsay evidence, as there still lives at Paint Lick the link between the fading past and the fleeting present—a diminutive negro who was one of Gen. Kennedy's slaves, and who remembers him as a kind-hearted man. When the traveler reaches Paint Lick the first person he meets is this same little creature, black as the proverbial ace of spades, three feet nine of stature, and sixty pounds of weight. He always meets all trains at the village station.

"I've old Norman Kennedy Argo; I knowed Uncle Tom," is his invariable introduction to a stranger, winding up with, "What's yer name?"

He tells the stranger in the first breath that he knew Uncle Tom, because he is justified by years of experience in surmising that it will be the next question he has to answer. His life story is told by him in a darky dialect, peculiar to the ante-bellum black man of the South. With the dialect eliminated Argo said:

"I am the only survivor of the 161 slaves left by Gen. Kennedy. One hundred were willed to the old general's son, Thomas Kennedy, Jr., while I

who was one of the general's house boys, was given to Robert Argo. That's where I got my last name. The general was always kind to us slaves, and I used to ride his race horses. He won the girl 'Eliza' in a race I rode for him."

Norman is now over 100 years old, having been born in the eighteenth century. He vividly recalls slave life and the characters of Mrs. Stowe's novel. Frequently he slept and worked with Lewis George Clark, the prototype of George Harris, the most prominent person in the novel. Clark was a weaver, knitter and sewer, and cooked well when he was young. While Gen. Kennedy was alive the young slave was not sent to the fields, and Norman, being house boy, grew to know well the hero of the novel. Young Tom Kennedy did not long survive his father, and Clark thought he was about to be put up for sale with the other negroes when he determined to gain his liberty. He confided his plans to Norman. One detail was to bleach himself from a mulatto to a fair-skinned white man. He wore gloves and a big hat about his work, Norman says, and in a few months carried out his declaration by stealing a mule and going North. Margie, the Eliza of the story and Clark's wife, was left behind, but she soon ran off to Louisville.

The story of the trip across the ice, as told in the novel, is exploded by Norman, who says Margie remained in Louisville until her husband returned for her from Ohio and the two went to Cincinnati on a steamboat. Eliza was an octonoon. Clark met Mrs. Stowe in the North and gave her the plot and characters for her great work.

Uncle Tom of the story, old Norman says, was not a sensitive, persecuted darky, as pictured, but a worthless, lazy, "no-count nigger," disliked even by his own race. The Little Eva of the story did not die and go to heaven, as indicated, but is still alive and now a grandmother.

Gen. Kennedy's home was known as "Poplar Hill." It still stands and is



still occupied as a residence. The cabins on the Kennedy place formed a little town where the premises were neatly kept and everything was convenient. There was a front yard and a small garden attached to each cabin and much was done to make the life of the slaves pleasant. Many of Gen. Kennedy's slaves showed their attachment for the place by wanting to stay with his children when the war came and set them free.

"Poplar Hill" was a typical Southern home, with its thousands of acres of rich land, its deer park, and its orchards. At the time young Tom Kennedy came into possession of his portion of the estate Clark was made almost a free man. His young master provided him with a horse and light wagon and permitted him to go through the country trading. Clark was bright and intelligent and did well as a trader. He was often taken for a white man.

Object Lesson in Cruelty.

A novel yet vigorous war against the docking of horses' tails has been begun in Baltimore by the Maryland Society for the Protection of Animals, says the Philadelphia North American, and the methods used to educate the people regarding the enormity of the offense has aroused the ire of every "chappy" who considers himself a whip.

On sunny afternoons, when the shopping district is crowded with women, an agent of the society leads a sorrel horse up and down the streets, and lest it shall fail to be remarked that the

animal has been shorn of his tail, a blanket is strapped about him, on which is painted in big red and blue letters this inscription: "Tail docked. Mutilated for life, for fashion's sake."

Consumption of Dutch Cheese.

The Germans consume annually about 12,000,000 pounds of Dutch cheese. The Dutch exporters of that article are at present dreading the proposed German tariff. If that measure is passed they will have to pay an additional import tax of \$1,000,000. The English are now buying less Dutch cheese than ever and Germany is the only good foreign market. The cheese manufacturers are therefore petitioning the minister of foreign affairs to do all he can to prevent the passage of the German tariff bill.

Population of Kentucky.

Ten years ago the total population of Kentucky was 1,800,000; now it is 2,100,000, a gain of 300,000 in ten years, or one-sixth. Ten years ago the colored population of Kentucky was 268,000; now it is 284,000, a gain of only 16,000 in ten years.

Unproductive Land in Italy.

There are 13,958,622 acres of uncultivated land in Italy, which might be developed and made productive by the application of ordinary enterprise.

In captivity, the fad of the famous Apache chief, Geronimo, is the culture of watermelons.

Need of Rehearsals.

Some recently published recollections of the coronation of Queen Victoria, have given occasion for a demand in London that King Edward's forthcoming coronation be prepared for by full-dress rehearsals. Neither the young queen, it seems, nor the clergy, had been sufficiently coached. "Pray tell me what I am to do," said the queen at one solemn moment to a lay official who stood near her, "for they (the clergy) don't know." Again, the orb which was unexpectedly put into her hand was so heavy for her to hold. The ruby ring had been made for her little finger. The archbishop forced it on her fourth finger and the queen nearly cried out with pain.

Pharaoh Entered as Dried Fish.

The story is told of a French savant returned from Egypt bringing a royal mummy with him, and the case was opened at Marseilles. Being told that it contained a Pharaoh the officer looked up Pharaoh in the tariff, but no mention could he find of such an article. Then it occurred to him that a nice, high duty was on dried fish, and the savant had to pay as if for that commodity.

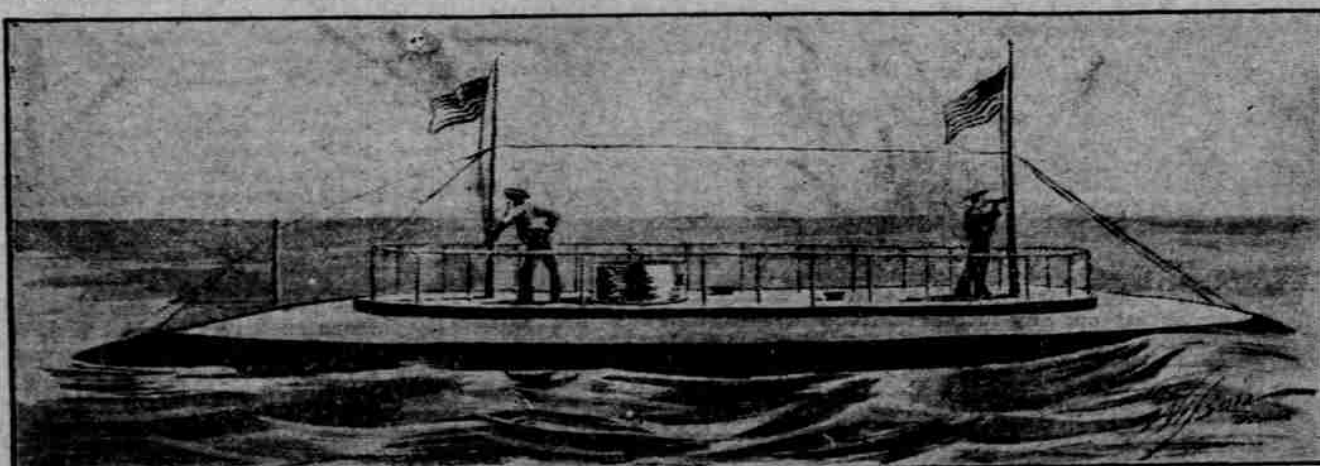
uncertainty justifies us in depending on the wet sponge or the office boy's tongue—until further particulars are received.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Electricity Helps Italy.

The recent remarkable advance in the industries of Italy is owing largely to the development of electricity as a motive power.

To-morrow is the refuge of the indolent.

WONDERFUL SUBMARINE BOAT



It is said the engineers of the Adder are able to bring it into position, fire a torpedo, and sink the boat in ten seconds. Five minutes has been considered good time for this evolution, and the performance of the Adder makes it the superior of any submarine boat in the world. The official trial of the Adder is to take place within the next two weeks.

KEEP YOUR TONGUE CLEAN.

London Lancet Points Out the Danger of Licking Postage Stamps.

The London Lancet says that it isn't safe to lick postage stamps with your own tongue. The stamps in themselves are not poisonous, but they may pick up septic matter that will work considerable mischief in the interior departments of those who do the licking. The Lancet says it knows of cases where the septic matter made a

lot of trouble for the lickers, and incidentally proved a good thing for the doctors. This shows a commendably unselfish spirit on the part of the editor, because he depends largely on the medical men for his bread and butter, to say nothing of jam.

At the same time it would be gratifying to know how many stamps can be licked with impunity. And does the denomination have anything to do with it? And if a man coaxed his mother-in-law to lick a lot of stamps and she

incurred fatal results could the man be held as an accessory to a homicidal act? And suppose a man was in a burning desert without a drop of moisture within a day's journey and he wanted to hustle a letter away to a scientific journal informing the editor that he had discovered a new order of sandflies could he be charged with criminal negligence by any well-regulated life-insurance company?

It is a pity that the Lancet doesn't make itself clearer, but perhaps the