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MONKEYING WITH NATURE.

Far, far removed is the time when we thought in our ignorance that one couldn't improve upon Nature. We are past the era when Luther Burbank's feat of crossing a watermelon with a hop vine to produce a tree bearing bottled beer seemed a phantasy, the rarebit dream of, so to speak, a hop fiend.

Now they are proposing to turn the course of things that be upside down and cata-cornered, start a colony of lobsters in the Pacific and import a school of salmon to the mermaid-infested watery precincts of Atlantic City. It is about time for some one to repeat the experiment of raising camels in Death Valley or import giraffes to pluck the beans off the topmost boughs of the luxuriant Rio Grande bean-tree.

There is really no limit to what a man in his egergious self confidence will attempt. It is proposed now to attempt nothing less than the diversion of the Gulf-Stream, that mighty, 75-degrees-Fahrenheit ocean river which makes habitable the city of London with a latitude the same as Vladivostock, Siberia, and make possible the raising of oranges and pineapples on the rock-bound coast of Maine while rank jungles of tropical plants will cover the ice-ribbed wastes of Labrador. And they actually claim, the wise scientists do, that the thing is possible. A cable will be anchored to the ocean's bed in the path of the Gulf-Stream; a tiny jetty of sand will form; the cable will gradually raised, gathering more and more sand, until a great sandbar has been built flush with the sea level to drive the climate-making river to where it will undo the work done by the icy currents of the North.

It does sound like a roseate vision, but the fact remains that Science seriously contemplates the plan and is making a thorough investigation of its possibilites; and to science and modern brains and inventive genius and persistance nothing is impossible. In the early days it would have sounded foolish to make the statement that men could cut the Western hemisphere in two from east to west and make two continents where only one grew before; yet we have practically completed the job.

There is no limiting man's interference with the hitherto supposedly unchangeable ways of Nature. The younger generation may live to see Vesuvius turned into a steam heating plant to warm the chilly purlieus of Copenhagen, or the Maelstrom's whirling energy utilized to turn the wheels of industry in Boston, or the heat of Yuma transferred to the poles to melt the eternal ice and start roses growing on Baffin's bay.

Nature is a back number nowadays. Her ways of doing things are out of date, even if there are some old-fashioned folks among us who prefer eating a plain ordinary strawberry under its proper name to one crossed with a tomato and designated in the terminology of super-Nature as a tomberry.— Albuquerque Evening Herald.

HE GOT HIS CHANCE

Young Fireman Charged With Cowardice Makes Good When Test Came.

The chief had sent for John Harrigan. John knew why he was summoned. He left the fire station under the disapproving looks of his companions. Nobody spoke to him; that was far harder than if they had reproached him. Reproaches are forgotten, but they had given him the silence.

The old chief turned round at his desk.

"Sit down, Harrigan," he said, glaring at him under his busy eyebrows. There was a tense silence. Harrigan sat upon the edge of his chair, fingering his cap.

"What's this I hear about your being a coward, John?" asked the chief, yet so mildly that Harrigan took courage to glance up at him. Chief Bethany had the reputation of being a martinet. The least infringement of discipline meant one of those never forgotten talks. For any serious offense the penalty was dismissal. Bethany would have none but the best men under him.

"They say," said Bethany mildly, "that at the fire in Winpole street last night you hung back instead of going up the ladder."

"Yes, sir," said John and began stammering out his excuses. It was

"What's This I Hear About You Being a Coward?"

his first big fire, and the sight of that flaming hell had paralyzed his limbs, although his heart was brave enough. He had only wanted someone to lead him, some word of encouragement to do heroic deeds. But alone, he could not take the initiative.

"John Harrigan," said Bethany, "I've been on the force for seven and thirty years. When I was a youngster I was a coward. At my first fire I hung back. Because of that a woman died. I've never told anyone but you, Harrigan, because I've never met another coward but you. John," he continued, "go back to your company and act like a man."

Harrigan found the tears running down his cheeks when he got outside. Chief Bethany a coward? Why, everyone knew that he was the bravest fireman in the country. Well, if he had done that and yet redeemed himself, Harrigan could.

The fire men received the news of his reinstatement badly. Some voted for hazing him, others for blackjacking, but finally they agreed to give him rope. "He'll do worse for himself than that," was the general verdict.

Harrigan could endure their silence. He knew that, if only his chance came, he could redeem himself. But Mary Connor, his sweetheart, was told of the affair by a rival. She wrote him a curt little note of dismissal. "I don't want to marry a coward," she said. When he met her on the street she cut him dead. Soon he heard that she was engaged to another.

And his chance never came. That was the crown of his tragedy. He was put on detail work, set to copying documents in the sub-chief's office. He was never allowed out again. There was the Fourth avenue fire, when three men were killed by a falling beam. If he had had the chance—but it never came. For a whole year he did not don fireman's clothes.

One day he walked into Bethany's office.

"Chief," he said, "I haven't had my chance. I have been doing a clerk's job. Give me my chance to show that I'm a man."

Bethany looked at him, looked under his beetling eyebrows clear into his heart.

"I thought you'd resign, Harrigan," he said. "We don't like cowards on the force, but we hate more to put a man off for cowardice. You'll have your chance now. Report back for duty."

For a whole year he had seen nothing of Mary. Somebody told him that she was married. He knew that her family had moved away. He never expected to see her again. He longed now for his chance, not that he might regain the esteem and friendship of his comrades, but so that he could die worthily.

His chance did come about three

VARIED LENGTH OF INFANCY

Period of Helplessness Seems to Coincide with the Size of the Animal.

It is often remarked that the infancy of human beings today is longer than it formerly was. This seems to be inevitable, owing to the higher state of society. In a general way the more highly developed an animal is the longer an apprenticeship it will have to serve before it is ready to cut loose from parental and other restraints and shift for itself.

Two interesting books have recently been brought out, which treat of this matter in infancy as applied to the various animals. The period of infancy varies very widely. Mice have practically no infancy, but at six weeks are parents of more mice. Human beings are helpless at birth and for years after. The horse is "grown up" at three years, while the elephant requires seven or eight times that length of time to develop fully. Thus the elephant is just entering upon life when the horse is ready to die of old age.

In a general way, says the Pathfinder, the length of infancy tends to run parallel with the relative bulk of the animal—the larger animals requiring more time to grow and develop their full vigor. In some cases lower animals attain maturity only by a succession of curious stages. The shell of a crab when once hardened cannot grow and the crab is forced to molt or cast off his outgrown shell from time to time and grow a new one a little larger.

A crab when growing this new shell is known as soft shell or "soft" crab, and at such times he is, of course, especially subject to attack from his enemies, as the shell, which is the natural armor, is wanting. In museums there are exhibits of as many as fourteen castoff shells of a single crab, beginning with a very tiny one and each one just a size larger than the last.

Shellfish have their skeletons outside them in the form of their shells instead of inside them. But what a waste of material is involved in a system which requires them to manufacture a new skeleton every new moon or at other short intervals, only to be thrown away as soon as it is finished.

The state of development of animals when born depends a great deal on the conditions that are to surround them during infancy. Young rabbits, which are born in an underground burrow, are blind, naked and helpless at birth; the young hare, which is own cousin to the rabbit, is born with its eyes open and covered with fur, and this because it is born above ground, where it is exposed both to the inclemency of the weather and predatory foes. Thus in a measure each is suited to its surroundings.

Latest About David.

A London teacher who has been examining the papers sent in by boys of ten or eleven for a Scripture examination sends a few of the choicest efforts:

One day David saw ten leppards, and they were calling out unclean. One of them turned back and started to come towards him and he was clean.

A Pharisee and a publiccon went up into a temple to pray. One liked it, the other did not, so one stoped and the other didn't. This teaches us to be kind and not unkind.

A giant named Goliath, the man of the Phyistins, was going to fight Israinel. A young boy name divid herd him. He said to himself, "I'll have a go at him." He went to the Israelits' camp. He said, "I'll have a go at him."

The Pharisees are frods and donot keep the law. The Publicans are the tax corlectors. They do not take what they haft too. They made there selves more money. That learns us not to thief.

Expensive Boat Race.

A writer in Bailey's Magazine of England has been figuring on the cost of the annual boat race between Oxford and Cambridge, and says the expense to each crew may be approximately estimated at $3,000 for each. He then says that as the contest rarely takes more than twenty minutes, the cost works out at about $300 per minute, or about $8 every time the oars dip into the water. The cost of the boats is placed at $250, and the oars at $70, the rest of the money going for preparation from October until the day of the race. The writer seems to think that $3,000 is a good deal of money to spend on a college crew (observes the New York Evening Post). It would be interesting to know what he would think of many times that amount spent upon the American college crews for the annual races.

Literary Evening.

The man was one of the sort that thinks it is a grand thing to educate his financee by reading poetry aloud to her.

The girl was one of the sort—well she was a girl. That is, having decided that she was for the man, she pretended to fall in with his literary taste; nay, even tried to keep up an interest in it. So, well, the other evening he was reading Tennyson to her. He read this line:

"Of love that never found his earthly clos—"

When the girl interrupted.

"Isn't Tennyson just grand? You can always learn something from him. Now, for the first time I understand why Cupid is always represented without anything on. But please go on reading—your voice has so much feeling in it!"

IT'S A WOMAN'S WAY

They Are Sometimes Puzzling, but She Usually Knows How to Manage Man.

Bessie Thurston had two lovers, and therefore two rivals, practically enemies. It had come about through a rude disturbing influence in a clear field for Rodney Thorne. He had fondly considered Bessie his own until Willis Gould appeared upon the scene. Given a bewitching young lady and a newcomer, the latter good-looking, with superior prospects, and feted and petted by all the other young ladies in the town, and naturally all that was vivacious in Bessie's nature was aroused.

Gould was "a jackanapes," according to Rodney's prejudiced ideas. He was the scion of a wealthy family, had never worked a day in his life, and was shortly to go abroad as secretary of a consulate. This gave Gould "high diplomatic ideas," and the apparent right to wear a semi-military coat with two gilt buttons on the neckband, which some of his girl admirers designated as "too cute for anything!"

"It's got to come to an end," said Rodney, definitely, one balmy evening. "And now's my chance to end it," he added, as he reached the Thurston home to find Bessie alone in the garden.

If Rodney had appeared as the placid, contented suitor of ante-Gould

Clinging to Either Side of the Craft

days he might have won his way. He made the jealous lover's mistake, however, of preluding his suit with his own peculiar ideas of his rival. Then he ridiculed and censured Bessie's indulgence for "the spoiled society pet," as he denominated Gould.

"I won't hear a word against my friends!" declared the aroused Bessie.

"A fine friend for nobody to claim that jackanapes!" snapped out the irritated Rodney.

"I think we had better meet later, when you are more rational," suggested Bessie.

"No, you shall hear me now," declared Rodney, determinedly, choosing the very worst moment to appeal to an offended deity, and putting his plea more in the form of a complaint than a true and tender confession of love.

He managed to get hold of her hand, and she was more than interested. A proposal of marriage was a serious, solemn thing to Bessie. Just then some girl friends came into the garden. She feared ridicule and drew her hand away. Rodney's brow darkened.

"I must have my answer—yes or no?" he persevered.

"Later in the evening."

At that moment Gould came sauntering up the walk.

"No—now!"

"Then—no!"

Rejected! Rodney was positively rude as he brushed by the newcomers. He made no allowance for his own faulty impetuosity. He had made an honorable offer of marriage to the woman he loved, and she had refused him.

After that he evaded Bessie, and her friends as well. One evening he made a wide detour to evade Gould and Bessie, who were idly drifting in a frail rowboat and, Rodney fancied, looking serene and happy.

It was a rapid, torturing flight. Rodney finally seated himself on the banks of the river three miles down the stream. The moon came out brightly, the night was full of sweet sounds, the soft drone of the rapids further along would have lured a sentimentalist to sleep. Rodney, however, cherished only bitter, gloomy thoughts.

Perhaps an hour went by when a cry caused him to look up. The river was broad and deep at this point, and its center held patches of little islands. The wider part of the stream lay beyond these. Suddenly he saw a boat skim through the channel separating two islands and bear down directly to the spot where he was.

It seemed as if some giant force nerved him to mighty strength as he saw in the approaching boat, tossed like a frail feather from side to side, a female form. And then—

"Bessie!"

He saw her shapely hands clinging to either side of the craft. Her terrorful eyes were fixed tensely ahead. Rodney threw off his coat, kicked off