

ON MT. ETNA AT NIGHT.

HOW THE HEAVENS APPEARED TO A DARING TRAVELER.

Ascending the Dreaded Volcano in the Darkness—Waiting Near the Crater for the Sunrise—How the Ascent Was Made. Faithful Notes.

The story of the ascent of the mountain from whose summit Plato, in his serene and thoughtful time, and Mr. Gladstone, in our troublous days, have among many great men, in great wonder-watched the sunrise, has a strong fascination because of its wide contrast, its stern exaction of strength and endurance and its supreme, awe-inspiring reward, the realization of that which inspired the ancients and the poets of the Middle Ages.

From the banana and the orange groves, from the vineyards and the palms, through the seven botanical regions to the snow-capped crust that spreads for ten square miles between the awful depth of unquenchable fire and the blue heaven that suddenly seems to be brought near, the traveler mounts with an ever increasing sense of the vastness beyond and around him.

When twelve miles of the ascent from Catania have been accomplished the summit looks as far off as ever. When Mr. Rodwell made the ascent, in August 1875, no rain had fallen in Sicily for three months, and along the eastern sea line of the mountains the mean temperature was 82 degrees. From the starting point was Catania; his first halt at Nicolosi, a little town consisting of one long street, bordered by one storied palace of lava. Nicolosi had more than once been shaken to the ground by little quakes. From there he began the journey, on foot, by a dangerous path, over a vast tract covered with lava and ashes, with here and there patches of brown. The mules know all about it, and wise travelers trust them as they deserve.

Around the district of lava and ashes lie forests of small trees, and at a height of 4,316 feet is the Casa del Bosco, where men in charge of the woods live, and whence the start for quite the upper regions of the mountain—where cold surpassing that of the higher Alps has to be encountered—is made. There, Mr. Rodwell records, "the air was so extraordinary still that the flame of a candle placed near the door did not flicker." At 6,300 feet the Regione Deserta is entered. Lifelessness is all around. Silence broods over the waste of black sand, ashes and lava; ants are the only living creatures in the crater region. A little lower down Spaltanzani found jays, thrushes, ravens, kites and a few partridges.

There was no moon on the night on which Mr. Rodwell made the ascent, but as the desolation deepened, and the earth became more arid and more void and mute, the heavens "took up the wondrous tale." "The stars," he says, "shone with extraordinary brilliancy and sparkled like particles of white hot steel. I have never before seen the heavens studded with such myriads of stars. The milky way shone like a path of fire, and meteors dashed across the sky in such numbers that I soon gave up any attempt to count them. The vault of heaven seemed to be much nearer than when seen from the earth, and more flat, as if only a short distance above our heads, and some of the brighter stars appeared to be hanging down from the sky."

A hundred years ago Brydone, beholding this same wondrous spectacle of "awful majesty and splendor," records how he and his companion were "more struck with veneration than below," how they exclaimed together, "What a glorious situation for an observatory! Had Euclid had the eye of Galileo, what discoveries must he not have made!" and how they regretted that Jupiter was not visible, as he was persuaded they might have discovered some of his satellites with the naked eye, or at least with a small glass which he had in his pocket.

At 1300 a. m., with the temperature at 4 degs. Fahr., Mr. Rodwell reached the welcome shelter of the Casa Inglese, and rested there until 3 a. m., when, the brighter stars having disappeared, he started for the summit of the crater, 1,000 feet above him, in order to witness what Brydone calls "the most wonderful and most sublime sight in nature." There was no strong wind; the traveler did not suffer from the sickness of which travelers constantly complain in the rarefied air of the summit.

He reached the highest point at 4:40, and, cautiously choosing a coolish place among the cinders, sat down on the ground, whence steam and sulphurous acid gas were issuing, to wait for the sunrise. "Above the place where the sun would presently appear there was a brilliant red, shading off in the direction of the zenith to orange and yellow; this was succeeded by pale green, then a long stretch of pale blue, darker blue, dark gray, ending opposite the rising sun with black. This effect was quite distinct; it lasted some minutes and was very remarkable. This was succeeded by the usual rayed appearance, and at ten minutes to 5 the upper rim of the sun was seen over the mountains of Calabria."

So simply does Mr. Rodwell record the guerdon of his toil, for, as he says truly no one would have the hardihood to attempt to describe the impressions which are made upon the mind, while the eyes are beholding the sunrise from the summit of Etna. How greatly the isolation of the awful mountain adds to the incommunicable effect Brydone implies when he dwells upon "the immense elevation from the surface of the earth, drawn, as it were, to a single point, without any neighboring mountains for the senses and imagination to rest upon and recover from their astonishment, in their way down to the world." It must be a wonderful experience to turn from such a contemplation to gaze into the vast, precipitous abyss of the great crater, even when it is quiet, as on this occasion.—Philadelphia Telegraph.

A Perpetual Memorial

One hears so often in these days of other memorials than costly marble, one wonders if the fashion of piling dollars over the graves of our loved ones in the shape of rich carvings and polished shafts will not some day have gone out entirely. It is the persons of wealth who do these things and it is they who are finding a more satisfactory way to honor their dead.

In one of the beautiful homes of northern New York there lived until the morning of the 31 of July a dear little fair haired girl, whose Parian name, Priscilla, fitted well with her quaint and demure faintness. She was a joyous child despite her gentle ways, and the Fourth to her was full of delightful anticipations. As usual, fireworks had been ordered from New York and every preparation made for a specially gala day to celebrate the recovery of a younger brother from a serious and threatening illness. But on the Thursday before little Priscilla was suddenly stricken with malignant diphtheria and Sunday she died, her last prattle full of the glories of the Fourth which would never dawn for her.

Instead of lavishing money over the soulless body of her little daughter as it lies in the village graveyard, the stricken mother has taken another way to perpetuate her memory. There is in St. Christina Home for Sick and Convalescent Children in Saratoga a Priscilla room and a Priscilla bed, perpetually endowed. The little girl's playthings and belongings, her books and many of her little gowns have been taken there for the comfort and pleasure of its occupants as they come, and 20 cents brought from the room to Priscilla's own room beyond the grave and others out again into the world for a time. And in coming pleasures for the sister and brother, which Priscilla has left, the share that would have been that little middle-aged, were she here, to claim it, is to be paid for the young sufferer who will be in the Priscilla room at the home. Could any "sister" be so lasting and beautiful a monument as this?—Her Point of View in New York Times.

Recent German Political Plays.

Some months after Bismarck's dismissal a historical play called "Der Neme Herd" was performed at Berlin. The subject was the clarification of the young elector of Brandenburg, known to history as the great elector, who, on ascending the throne of his fathers, dismissed his father's wicked minister. Of course nobody could fail to notice the singularly ill chosen historical parallel, but it did not end there. The emperor visited the performance night after night, applauding vociferously, and even went out of his way to confer marks of distinction on author and actors.

This episode was in general discreetly passed over by the press at the time; the fruit was not ripe, the cup not yet full. But for all that it wounded the feelings of many who, whatever their party, had retained unshaken the sentiments of chivalrous gentlemen. A more recent attempt to propagate political ideas by means of a stage play, which also found demonstrative patronage from the emperor, was choked at its birth by the apathy of the public, who sat on the half empty benches in distasteful silence and the hoarsest applause of the emperor.—Contemporary Review.

Communication with Stranded Ships.

Some months ago, when the Kiler was stranded of the Isle of Wight, the proprietors of The Graphic offered a prize of £100 for the best invention for enabling ships to communicate with the shore. In all 2,200 competitors entered for the prize, and the award has just been given to Messrs. Thomson and Noble, of Southampton. The best means of communication is considered by the judges to be a rocket, and the prize winners' rocket has about it a novelty which has been proved to work admirably. It is fitted with a strong grapnel, and carries of course a rope, single or double, according to distance.

The grapnel remains closely shut while the rocket is in flight, but the moment the ground is reached it opens and clings on to whatever it touches. The rope may then be made taut from the ship, and the passengers and crew landed in the ordinary way. The advantage of this arrangement is that the work of rescue can be performed in the absence of assistance from the shore end.—London Tit-Bits.

Crops After the Recent Floods.

It seemed impossible two months ago for any corn to be raised on the flooded bottomlands of the Mississippi valley, but the indications now point to a very fair crop. As soon as the water receded most of the farmers lost no time in securing seed, and the extreme moisture in the soil is bringing on this corn very rapidly. Had the drought predicted for July set in early in the month, the gloomy predictions of the early part of June would have been more than fulfilled, but the very moderate weather has come to the rescue of the flooded farmer, who in many cases will be able to realize nearly as much from his crop as he could have hoped for had the river not left its channel at all.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

A Monument for Behring.

That lonely speck in Behring sea where Commander Behring, of the Russian navy, the first efficient explorer of those waters, lies buried beneath a rude cairn, will presently have a monument to the navigator's memory. The Russian man-of-war Alceot recently visited the spot, and will return with a metal cross inscribed to the memory of Behring and his followers and proclaimed as the tribute of the Alceot. Behring was wrecked on the island in 1741.—New York Sun.

Employment for the Wagoners.

It is proposed to introduce a new species of vermin into this country. The people of California are plagued with gophers, and they propose to bring the wagoners to war on the gopher.—Chicago Herald.

A Cold Day in the Senate.

Celebrated though it may be for the dignity of its proceedings, the senate occasionally affords rare amusement to those who are compelled to attend its sessions. Friday it furnished an incident which is still being laughed about. There is a new reading clerk in the chamber. He has a good voice, but has not "caught on" to the ins and outs of his position. Vice President Morton laid some executive communications before the senate, among them, by mistake, a treaty negotiated by this government with Great Britain for the improvement of the condition of sailors on the high seas. Some time ago the London papers announced that this treaty had been perfected, but not even a whisper concerning it has been dropped in the public ear by the president or those associated with him.

The new clerk seized upon this message and began to read it. "Herewith transmit to the senate for ratification," he began. Instantly the experienced employee next to him grasped his arm, the ancient Captain Bassett shot out of his chair, and the mercury in the thermometer hanging near dropped 30 degs.

While the senators looked helplessly around the treaty was rescued and a document containing no executive secrets was placed in the clerk's hand. His voice was husky for the next hour, and the temperature in the neighborhood of the clerk's desk continued low until after the adjournment.—Washington Letter.

A Story About Disraeli.

Lord Bencinfield once delivered a famous speech in Edinburgh, which was not reported in its entirety, at all events out of Edinburgh, for the very good reason that it could not be done. It was the occasion in which he boasted of having educated his party—a stinging reminder for which his aristocratic following did not thank him. On this occasion hangs a tale. It was delivered at a banquet, and the flower and chivalry of the Tory party were around the premier at the head table.

By some mistake a decanter of good port instead of light claret was placed in front of the mystic statesman when he rose to speak, and every time he took a sip he felt rejuvenated, and the more he took the more he felt inclined to talk in radiant spirits. With his arms folded, his eyes glowing and his manner unusually sprightly, Disraeli poured forth column after column for hours, and the reporters were turning on the "copy" with manufacturing rapidity far beyond the abilities of the telegraphists to cope with.

The wires were gorged, the great speech only reached the newspapers in a mangled form, and wherever it was read there was mystification and a considerable row. But it may be added that some of the reporters on that occasion had looked upon the wine when it was red, and their pens were taking exercise on stilts when they came to decipher them.—San Francisco Call.

Indiana Has No Cause to Complain.

Indiana was first represented on a national presidential ticket in 1852, when George W. Julian was the candidate of the Free Soil Democrats for vice president. The ticket received no electoral votes. Indiana's next representative was Schuyler Colfax, who was elected vice president along with General Grant in 1868. In 1872 no Indiana name was on any of the regular tickets. But after Mr. Greeley's death, the Democratic electoral votes were most of them cast for Thomas A. Hendricks, and a few vice presidential votes were cast for George W. Julian. In 1876 Thomas A. Hendricks was the candidate for vice president on the Democratic ticket. In 1880 William H. English played a similar role. In 1884 Thomas A. Hendricks resumed his place as second on the Democratic ticket. In 1888 Indiana for the first time had the first place on the presidential ticket. Benjamin Harrison was placed in the White House. This year he is on the ticket again. It is thus seen that in every presidential campaign since 1868 Indiana has had vital interest in the result.—Indianapolis News.

Three Black Crows Again.

The growth of a "hue and cry" was well illustrated the other day on the banks of the Seine. Two fishermen in a boat got into an altercation with a woman engaged in washing a poodle on shore, splashed her with water and fled from her wrathful shrieks. A crowd collected, the cry was raised that a woman had been drowned, and scented by the success of their joke the two fishermen attempted to escape the river.

They were finally arrested at some distance on the charge of having murdered a woman and her baby for the sake of the rings worn by the former, and of having thrown the bodies into the water, and it required all the energy of the police to save them from the 2,000 people who had followed them along the shore in order to lynch them.—London Globe.

They'll Not Starve.

There will not be a fall crop of peaches this year, but the Maryland packers are not going to stop work. The blackberry and the whortleberry are right here in all their beauty, the tomato is on the way, and the crab never fails to crawl about the Chesapeake bay bottom. Counting in the potato crop and not forgetting the watermelon, there will probably be something to eat in Maryland this year besides terrapin and canvasback duck.—Baltimore American.

California (Mo.) young ladies have organized a cooking club, and the young men, in retaliation, have established an eating club. Reciprocity has been determined on.

A lady in Passaic, N. J., is reputed to have been literally talked to death by two rival sewing machine agents recently who were struggling for trade.

Beating His Way Around the World.

An American from Boston has reached Paris on a voyage around the world, "personally conducted" by himself under entirely novel circumstances. His avowed object is to complete the whole trip without the expenditure of any money whatever, and, according to his own statement, he has already crossed the ocean and visited England and Germany in accordance with the conditions of his self imposed task, which also contains the stipulation that he must do no work on the voyage. Needless to say that our traveler's rather unusual methods do not meet with the approval of all the hotel keepers whom he honors with his custom, and in Berlin he underwent one month's imprisonment for failing to pay his bill.

The only wonder is that this unusual kind of traveler does not spend most of his time in jail, but, needless to say, he is gifted with an unlimited supply of what may be best described as "self confidence," and is a past master in the peculiarly American art of bluffing. As he himself puts it, "If I can only make a man laugh I've got him!" and certainly there is a sublime assurance about his system which must force a smile even from his victims. Our circumnavigator has, of course, not set himself any particular route for his voyage, as he is dependent on "free passes," and has to be content with what he can get in that direction. Thus, to reach Paris from Berlin—as the railway companies declined to oblige him—Mr. Cook traveled via Bremen and London. He is now hoping to reach the Riviera, but what his itinerary will be is a matter of conjecture even to himself.—Paris Cor. London Telegraph.

Killed by a Skyrocket.

An impromptu celebration, that was held in honor of the arrival of a detachment of Turner's from Freeport, Ill., was suddenly brought to a close by the almost instant killing of a man. A skyrocket, supposed to have been set off by a crowd of young boys, penetrated his forehead, and part of the stick was broken off and left imbedded in his brain.

As the procession reached the corner of Blue Island Avenue and Polk street Philip Knopp, who had been watching the parade from the sidewalk, was struck by a skyrocket. The man's head and face were covered with blood, and Officer Halle, calling assistance, carried him into a neighboring drugstore. Dr. Lahey was summoned, and Knopp was sent at once to the county hospital. On the way Dr. Lahey extracted part of the stick, eight inches in length and three-eighths of an inch square. It had entered just above the right eye, and had gone through the brain until the end was blunted against the back of the skull. Knopp lived only a few moments.—Chicago News Record.

Cowboy Sailors Not Just the Thing.

Captain Hanson, of the new schooner Spray, on her maiden voyage from the Suislaw river, in Oregon, had a divinely experience with cowboy sailors. With six of this new variety the captain put to sea. Hardly had he got outside when a strong southeast gale came up. The schooner rolled fearfully and the cowboy boys became terribly sick and lay in a heap in the forecabin perfectly helpless. The captain and his mate succeeded in lowering the foremast, and with the mainmast and jibs set the schooner was driven before the gale at a terrific rate. Several seas were shipped and one of the cowboys was washed against the lumber on deck, breaking his leg. When the weather moderated the captain put into Fort Townsend, where the injured cowboy sailor was sent to the Marine hospital. Two sailors were engaged and the schooner made the trip down in twelve days. The five cowboy sailors have decided not to go to sea any more.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Big Bills for Witnesses.

Dr. G. De F. Smith has filed a claim against the city for \$500 for services as an expert witness for the people in the trial of Carlyle W. Harris, the medical student, for the murder of his wife Helen Wilson Potts Harris.

Professor Wittnans, the chemical expert who made the analysis of the contents of the dead woman's stomach, has filed with the district attorney a bill of \$5,000 for that service.

Dr. Allan McLane Hamilton, another expert witness in the case, has collected a bill of \$1,500 for his services, and other bills from expert witnesses have been filed which bring the total cost of the expert testimony for the people up to \$9,000.

The bills of the medical experts who testified in the trial of E. M. Field aggregate \$4,000, and none of them has yet been paid.—New York Evening Sun.

A Queer Story of Two Apple Trees.

About sixty-four years ago Thomas Carr, living near Medora, in Jackson county, set out an apple orchard on his farm, about one-half mile southwest of Milledville, and having two apple trees left he gave them to his sons, John F. and G. W. The boys set these trees out along the fence, near the orchard, and they both grew well. John was the first to die, and on the day he died his tree fell. G. W. lived to be an old man, became known as a colonel, was chairman of the convention that framed the present constitution of Indiana and died only a few days ago at Crawfordville. It is a coincidence that his tree also fell on the same day he died.—Cincinnati Journal.

Food for Hot Weather.

The foods that are converted into heat—that is, keep up the heat of the body—are starches, sugar, and fat; and those that more particularly nourish the nervous and muscular system are the albumen and salts. The largest proportion of summer food should consist of green vegetables, cooked or as salads; white or lean meats, such as chicken, game, rabbits, venison, fish, and fruits.—Dr. N. E. Yocke Davies in Popular Science Monthly.

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