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ADMIRAL W. T. SAMPSON.

MONKEYS OF INDIA.

THE HAVOC THEY CAUSE BY THEIR WARS FOR WIVES.

Laughable Tactics Employed by the Natives to Disperse the Belligerent Packs—Little Chance For Male Monkeys at Birth.

Monkeys in India are an unmitigated nuisance, especially in the country. I have often come across in the jungles adjoining the villages of northern Bengal whole troops of them, whose depredations in fields and orchards were the despair of the unfortunate villagers. These troops always consisted of one huge male and about 100 females. The fact is, when a little monkey is born in the pack, it is suffered to live if a female, but instantly killed by the father if it happens to be a male. The mother, however, sometimes manages to hide the little one until he is able to get about and then sends him away before the big male catches sight of him. In this way it often happens that individual males are to be found living by themselves in single blessedness. Now, getting tired of solitude after a time and perhaps believing in union as a source of strength, these bachelors often join together and form a pack of their own—as a sort of club.

Then the fun begins. They want wives—very naturally. But how are they to get them? All the female monkeys of the country belong to the harem of some big brute or other. Clearly, the only solution is to attack such a harem, kill the gotha (the aforesaid big brute), and then divide the spoils. So an ultimatum is sent—and rejected. War is declared. The battle is a fierce one and often lasts several days. The party attacked always tries to retreat and often traverses several jungles, fields and even villages. But the pursuit is hot and vigorous, and at last a stand has to be made—sometimes in a village green or even an orchard of some country mansion. In the actual fight the females generally remain faithful to their lord and master and help him fiercely against his numerous assailants. But the result is a foregone conclusion, and the several widows, after a very short period of mourning—usually manifested by a show of ill temper—are consoled by the victorious males.

Now, these battles cause sad havoc to the fields and orchards of the country and often prove a positive danger to the people, for, though monkeys seldom attack men, woe to the luckless one who ventures to come near them in their deadly struggle. Moreover, when pressed by hunger, these packs are not to be trifled with. You may not mind even the damage done to your orchard by hundreds of monkeys gobbling up everything they can lay their hands on, but it is quite a different matter when you have to shut your doors and windows and stay in for days at a time because of the army outside.

Consequently the object of the natives is to break up these packs by capturing their leaders. Killing is against the dictates of conscience, but capture is not, especially as the monkey is liberated in a short time, as will appear presently. So, when a pack is about, the natives employ the following method: Close to an orchard a bit of level space is selected and a hole dug in it, about 2 feet deep and 6 or 8 inches in diameter. A noose is made at one end of a long, stout cord and placed over the mouth of the hole. The cord is then passed through a pulley or ring attached to a tree close to the noose and the other end held some distance away by a concealed person. The noose and about 10 or 15 feet of the cord are covered with sand. Then a nice, tempting banana is placed in the hole, and a number of rotten ones—covered, however, with fresh skins—are strewn all over the ground near the hole.

When the pack comes, the females are too shy to venture out into the open space near the house, but the big gotha is a brave fellow. He sees the bananas on the ground, leaps down, takes up one, throws it away in disgust, then another, with the same result. Suddenly he notices the nice, tempting one in the hole, and plunges his arm in. Immediately the cord is pulled, the noose fastened on the arm close to the shoulder and the monkey dragged willy nilly to the tree where the pulley or ring is attached. Then the hiding shikari comes forth, and, circling round and round the tree with the cord held tight in his hand, binds the unfortunate monkey safe and fast, all but the head. The pulley or ring is introduced not merely to bind the monkey to the tree, but also because it would be highly dangerous to drag the infuriated brute right up to a person.

The monkey, however, is not killed. Instead they lather his head and face, no special care being taken in selecting the finest soap or the purest water. The operation is an interesting one and a source of great amusement—to the bystanders. The monkey, however, dodges his head about, only to get a good dose of soap in his eyes and mouth. Then he has enough of it, especially as he feels dreadfully achy all over and the cords cutting into his body every inch—to say nothing of the personal remarks and the highly adjectival language of the bystanders. He submits to his fate with eastern stoicism. His head is shaved clean as a billiard ball, and then the face as well, nice and smooth, like a baby's. Then they let him go. But alas, such is the vanity of life, his wives will not have him now that his beauty is gone. They disown him completely, cut him dead. Nay, they drive him away from the pack with contumely, with the ends of their tails—in the absence of domestic broomsticks. And thus, being without a leader, the pack is soon broken up.—Strand Magazine.

The earliest complete clock of which an accurate record exists was made in the thirteenth century by a Saracen mechanic.

THE SERFS OF RUSSIA.

Flogging Them Was One of the Duties of the Police.

Father will not be appeased, says Prince Kropotkin in The Atlantic. He calls in Makar, the piano tuner and subbutler, and reminds him of all his recent sins. He was drunk last week and must have been drunk yesterday, for he broke half a dozen plates. In fact, the breaking of these plates was the real cause of all the disturbance. Stepmother had reported the fact to father in the morning, and that was why Uliana was received with more scolding than was usually the case, why the verification of the hay was undertaken and why father continued to shout that "this progeny of Ham" deserved all the punishments on earth.

All of a sudden there is a lull in the storm. My father has taken his seat at the table and writes a note to the police station. "Take Makar with this note to the police station, and let 100 lashes with the birch rod be given to him."

Terror and absolute muteness reign in the house.

The clock strikes 4, and we all go down to dinner, but no one has any appetite, and the soup remains in the plates untouched. We are ten at table, and behind each one of us a violinist or a trombone player stands, with a clean plate in his left hand, but Makar is not among them.

"Where is Makar?" stepmother asks. "Call him in."

Makar does not appear, and the order is repeated. He enters at last, pale, with a distorted face, ashamed, his eyes cast down. Father looks into his plate, while stepmother, seeing that no one has touched the soup, tries to encourage us.

"Don't you find, children," she says, "that the soup is delicious?"

Tears suffocate me, and immediately after dinner is over I run out, catch Makar in a dark passage and try to kiss his hand, but he tears it away and says, either as a reproach or as a question, "Let me alone. And you, too, when you are grown up, will be just the same?"

"No, no; never!"

Yet father was not of the worst of landowners. On the contrary, the servants and the peasants considered him to be one of the best. What we saw in our house was going on everywhere, often in much more cruel forms. The flogging of the serfs was a regular part of the duties of the police.

LONG DISTANCE FIGHTING.

Impossible to Tell Infantry From Cavalry at Two Thousand Yards.

"Unless they have had experience," remarked an army officer, "people are very likely to have a very imperfect idea as to distances in army and field operations and as a result get things considerably mixed. When they read that armies are engaging with each other at 2,000 yards between them, they may think that they can see each other, but the reality is far different.

"At that distance, to the naked eye, a man or a horse does not look any larger than a speck. It is impossible to distinguish at that distance between a man and a horse, and at 800 yards less, 1,200 yards, especially where there is any dust, it requires the best kind of eyes to tell infantry from cavalry. At 900 yards the movements become clearer, though it is not until they get within 750 yards of each other that the heads of the columns can be made out with anything like certainty.

"Infantry can be seen in the sunlight much easier than the cavalry or artillery, for the reason that less dust is raised. Besides that, infantry can be distinguished by the glitter of their muskets. At 2,000 yards, however, everything is unsatisfactory, even with the aid of field glasses, for a marching column in dry weather raises a great deal of dust."—Washington Star.

A True Caballero.

Well in the middle of the grounds stands General Anderson's headquarters. As we went up the steps a tall man, rather shabbily dressed, preceded us. We noticed his military bearing and were told that he was the captain of one of the Spanish men-of-war which lies with projecting spars at the bottom of Cavite harbor. Following his footsteps, we of necessity overheard what he said to the general's aid:

"Senor, I borrowed, some time ago, $200 from Admiral Dewey to pay off my men. I have come to repay the debt."

He turned his profile toward us, and we noticed how thin he looked. He must have starved himself to collect the money. With a very straight back he counted out the Spanish bills and turned to go.

"Will you not take a receipt?" asked the aid of General Anderson.

"Never from an officer," answered the gray haired old gentleman, with a courtly old fashioned bow.

Here at least is a true Spanish caballero.—Harper's Weekly.

A Gorgeous King.

Luinaka, the king of Barotse Land, says a traveler, is held in great fear and respect by his people. His court has as much etiquette and ceremonial as that of Louis XIV. His band of musicians make both day and night hideous with their performances. The music is done to drive away evil spirits. Luinaka himself is an imposing spectacle.

The king wears a long blue dressing gown trimmed with red braid, trousers and shirt, and on his head a scarlet nightcap, and above it a black terai hat.

His Idea of Luck.

"We don't have no luck at our house like they have over to Jimmy Smithers'."

"Why, what kind of luck do the Smithers have?"

"Jimmy Smithers' father has dyspepsia, an there's always a piece of pie left over an Jimmy gits it!"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

TENNYSON'S FAITH.

The Problem of the Future Life Had the Dominant Interest.

A reader of the "Life of Tennyson," by his son, will be struck by the fact that no subject interested him so deeply as the problem of the future life. He will also observe that it was always a problem to him, one that he was constantly raising, that would not stay settled. To be sure, he was a believer in immortality, but not a restful believer. He was all the time digging up the roots of his faith to be sure they were alive. The old question would not stay unanswered. The reader of his poetry observes the same thing. He is always on the side of faith, but of a somewhat disturbed faith. He belonged to that "metaphysical society" which invited into its membership believers of all shades, with all shades of unbelievers, whose object was to raise and answer doubts about God and the future life. He was the spokesman of the scientific doubt of the age, fluttering over the dovecots of faith, but hardly settling and resting and nesting therein.

One observes the contrast with this fluttering faith who reads the poems of Milton, with their abiding faith in the future life. This is the spiritual contrast between "In Memoriam" and "Lycidas." In Milton's requiem, even under its paganized form, there is a robust and jubilant faith in God and eternal life. No question enters. The mind and heart are satisfied. The dear friend is beyond all doubt among the saints and choirs above. One regrets that Tennyson's mental structure perhaps could find positiveness and rest on questions of politics or poetry, but must perennially dubitate—to be sure, with the hopeful balance of probability—over questions of faith. "I believe I know," he once said, "the quantity of every word in the English language except scissors," but one seems to detect a tremulousness in his best expression of faith, "I hope to meet my Pilot face to face, when I have crossed the bar."—Independent.

HARNESS REINS.

Made From the Stoutest of Leather. A Word About Hand Holds.

The reins of a set of single harness are each about 13 feet in length, those of a double harness about 15 feet. For business harness reins are made of leather, tanned black; the reins of carriage harness are made of russet colored leather.

Reins require to be very stout, and they are almost always made of steer hide, the leather of which traces are made, these, however, being of more than one thickness. Occasionally lines for light or for cheap harness are made of cowhide, but not often. As a rule the best of leather is used for the reins, even in cheap harness. There can be obtained from the hides of leather suitable for reins strips from seven to nine feet in length, so that reins are always of necessity made in two pieces.

The loops, or hand holds, often seen on the reins of track or road horses are commonly made of lighter leather stitched together and then sometimes stitched to the reins, but more often secured to them in such a manner that they can be shifted on the reins to suit the convenience of the driver. The three loop hold, which is called the Boston hand hold, is commonly used for track driving. The single loop is the one used by most drivers on the road. There are patent hand holds made of metal. The wooden buttons sometimes seen on reins, used as hand holds, are made in pairs, one button of each pair having a stem, with a thread cut on it, which goes through the rein and is screwed into the other button of the pair on the opposite side.—New York Sun.

Sowing Pansy Seed.

During early October is a good time for sowing pansy seed for next spring's supply of plants for bedding out. The reason for fall sowing out of doors is that the plants are not then subjected to the hot, drying influences of the house, which are so likely to bring on red spider and other troubles.

Prepare a bed of very rich, porous loam on a well drained location. Place over it a frame to be filled with forest leaves as a protection to the little plants over winter. After sowing the seed in the bed sift a very light covering of soil over the seed, merely enough to hide them. During the process of germination never allow the bed to dry out, as moisture is essential to perfect germination of any seed.

As severe weather approaches cover the bed with a few inches of litter of some sort, forest leaves being preferable. At the proper time in the spring the seedlings may be pricked out of the soil in the seedbed and transferred to the bed in which they are to bloom.—Woman's Home Companion.

One Day at a Time.

It is a blessed secret, says the British Weekly, this of living by the day. Any one can carry his burden, however heavy, till nightfall. Any one can live sweetly, patiently, lovingly, purely, till the sun goes down. And this is all that life ever really means to us—just one little day. Do today's duty. Fight today's temptations, and do not weaken and distract yourself by looking forward to things you cannot see and could not understand if you saw them. God gives us nights to shut down the curtain of darkness on our little days. We cannot see beyond. Short horizons make life easier and give us one of brave, true, holy living.

Worth Discussing.

"Doctor, I don't know what's the matter with me. I can't sleep nights any more."

"Um! Let's see. What is your business?"

"I'm a night watchman."

"Ah, your case is a remarkable one. I must write it up for our Monthly Medical Record."—Chicago News

VENOMOUS SNAKES.

The Poison Machinery of the Reptiles and How It Is Operated.

Some years ago a physician undertook a series of experiments on snakes with a view to extracting a sufficient amount of their venom to form a basis for investigation, in order, if possible, to discover some antidote. His laboratory is a curious and somewhat uncanny place and one from which those with unsteady nerves instinctively recoil.

The apparatus for extracting the venom is a most ingenious and yet a very simple one. A bit of chamois is tied over the top of a funnel which leads to a bottle. Everything is secured very firmly. The snake is caught by the back of the neck and placed close to this chamois. He strikes his fangs through it, when tiny jets of venom are thrown from the fangs upon the glass sides of the bottle, trickling thence into the bottle. Again and again the snake is made to strike. If necessary, other snakes of the same species are used until a sufficient amount of the venom is collected.

The relative deadly qualities of the venom of snakes have also been the subject of experiments. It appears that the diamond back rattlesnake is the most to be dreaded. The next in order is the banded rattlesnake, followed by the copperhead and the water moccasin or cottonmouth.

The poison machinery of the snake consists of a pair of needle pointed fangs, which, when the creature is at rest, are folded back in the roof of the mouth. When it becomes angry, these fangs are thrown forward, and in the act of striking a tiny jet of poison is thrown from each. The poison is a thin, yellow fluid which upon exposure decomposes very rapidly. Snake poison, if kept from the air or dried, retains its full force for many years.—New York Ledger.

INDEMNITY AGAINST LOSS.

Some Ancient Instances of Insurance Can Be Easily Found.

Probably the first recorded instance of insurance was one mentioned by Livy. During the second Punic war the contractors for delivering corn into Spain stipulated that the government should indemnify them against loss by the enemy or tempest. Cicero, too, after his victory in Cilicia, seems to have obtained security against the loss of his booty during its transit to Rome. These instances, however, are not regarded as true cases of insurance by many authorities, who assert that only after the revival of commerce in the tenth century did it come into vogue. If this be so, the first mention of insurance is the establishment in 1310 at Bruges at the request of the inhabitants of a chamber of assurance.

"The contract of reciprocal insurance was known likewise in Portugal in the fourteenth century, and in the fifteenth (Sept. 10, 1436) King Edward of Portugal writes from Lisbon that the merchant vessels of the English, which had been chartered for the Tangier expedition, had not been insured, owing to the fault of their proprietors, while those of the Portuguese, even of the royal navy, were." It is probable, however, that insurance came into use in Italy early in the twelfth century and was by the Lombards transplanted into those countries with which they had commercial dealings. To them, therefore, the invention of insurance, as it is now understood, is generally conceded.—Exchange.

Testing Cornstalk Pith.

The American consul general at St. Petersburg gives this account of a trial of cornstalk pith made by the Russian admiralty board on the proving grounds at Peligon, near St. Petersburg:

"A cofferdam 6 feet long, 6 feet deep and 3 feet broad was packed with blocks of cellulose made from the pith of Indian corn stalks. The material was supplied by an American corporation. A 6 inch solid shot was fired through the dam, striking it about 20 inches from the bottom. The shot passed clear through both the iron walls and the cellulose packing. Less than half a pound of cellulose was carried out by the projectile. The water compartment of the dam was filled, giving a pressure of nearly five feet of water on the perforated surface. In just half an hour a moist spot began to show on the outer surface of the dam, but it was evident the moisture had come along the bottom of the packing and not along the path of the shot. In four hours no water had come through the shot's path.

"The experiment conclusively demonstrated that a ship provided with a cofferdam packed as was the one used in the experiment could be perforated five feet below the water line without the least danger of the entrance of water."

In the Museum.

"How many dollars a week does the fat lady get?" inquired the tattooed man.

"H'm!" sniffed the snake charmer. "She's English, you know, and gets paid by the pound."

"Is that so?" put in the living skeleton. "Thank goodness, I'm not English. I'd stand a slim chance."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Her View of Evolution.

When the late Professor Henry Drummond was giving a course of lectures on "Evolution" in the Lowell institute, he overheard two women, evidently much opposed to his views, discussing them. One of them said, "Mary, if what he says is not true, we can stand it, but if it is true we must hush it up."

It is said that there is in Sonora a tribe of Indians with yellow hair and blue eyes.

The three prime essentials in the nursery are fresh air, good food and pure water.

Japanese children are taught to write with both hands.