CLIMBING THE MATTERHORN

A Feat Requiring on Abundance of Strength Wind and Nerve.

BEARDING DEATH IN HIS

The Descent Easier on the Mules Harder on the Nerves Than the Ascent-Thrilling Description of the Towering Peak.

(Copyright, 1894, by S. S. McClure, Limited.) Eight times Edward Whymper strove to ascend Matterborn, and eight times he failed, The ninth time he succeeded. That was on July 14, 1865. But the cost of success was appalling. In the little Zermatt churchyard last summer I saw the graves of three of the victims; the mountain crags never surrendered the bones of the fourth.

Until Mr. Whymper's successful ascent no foot, except perhaps an eagle's, had ever pressed the proud head of that incomparable the Alps had in vain essayed to win and Mr. Hadow. Near them, side by side in the strife to be first at the summit. But no experience taught sufficient skill and no courage ws complete enough to achieve vic- and ranged along its west wall is still a third tory over the giant. Prof. Tyndall, whose summer playground was Switzerland, had more than once made the attempt, but, recoiling from the menace of the final precipice, had at last given it up.

Ten thousand feet that wonderful peak towers above the high green meadows of Zermatt and 14,800 feet above sea level, and in every foot of its stature there is defiance; defiance to gravitation to pull it down-but gravitation will do it in the end-defiance to its gaunt shoulders, defiance to man and the mountain goat to scale its precipices; yet the former has accepted the challenge and won, though the latter is too wisely prudent

FIRST ASCENT OF THE MATTERHORN. I shall not undertake to recall here the story of the first ascent of the Matterborn; I merely wish to recall the circumstances of the dreadful accident that attended it, the most tragic in the force of its appeal to the imagination that the annals of mountaineer-The party consisted of seven nen-Edward Whymper, then already well tnown as an Alpine climber; Rev. Charles Hudson, vicar of Skillington, Kent, a cele-brated amateur mountaineer; Lord Francis Douglas, who was not without considerable experience in mountain work; Douglas Robert Hadow, a young undergraduate of Cam-bridge university, whose greatest feat of mountaineering hitherto had been the ascent of Mont Bianc, a tiresome but not a difficult undertaking; Michael Croz, one of the best guides of his day; Peter Tangwalder, also an experienced guide, and young Peter Tangwalder, then comparatively new to his pro-

On attempting to descend, after enjoying their well-won triumph on the summit, and when they had arrived at a point just above the brink of the awful precipice that falls three-quarters of a mile down to the cradle of the Matterborn glacier, Mr. Hadow, it seems, lost his nerve. Croz, the guide, was below him cutting steps, and then taking hold of Mr. Hadow's feet in order to set hem, one by one, into their proper places. All seven were tied together with a rope, and those above—the last one being Mr. Whymper, who was about 100 feet behind were waiting for the leaders to descend a step or two before moving down As Croz turned, after placing Mr. Hadow in position, the latter slipped and knocked Croz from his foothold. The and knocked Croz from his foothold. The lerk on the rope instantly dragged Rev. Mr. Hudson and Lord Francis Douglas from their places. Croz in falling uttered a warning ery, and Mr. Whymper and the two Tangas were within their reach, and braced them-

"For a few seconds," says Mr. Whymper, "we saw our unfortunate companions sliding downward on their backs, and spreading out



DANGEROUS POSITION. their hands endsavoring to save themselves They passed from our sight unintured, dis appeared one by one, and fell from precipice to precipice on to the Matterhorn gletscher below, a distance of nearly 4,000 feet in height!"

The survivors, appalled by what they had beheld, remained for half an hour motion-less and clinging to the face of the mountain. The guides, Mr. Whymper says, were unnerved and afraid to descend further. Finally they cautiously moved downward fixing ropes to the rocks to aid them, but for two hours they were in constant peril of death. Several times, Mr. Whymper says, "old Peter turned with ashy face and faltering limbs and said with terrible empha-

hodies of Croz, Rev. Mr. Hudson and Mr. Hadow were found on the Matterhorn glacier, but that of Lord Francis Douglas renained somewhere among the precipices

Peter Tangwalder (the young Peter of Mr. erly man, and with the exception of Mr. Whymper the only remaining survivor of the famous catastrophe) pointed out to me the place where, twenty-nine years ago, the fatal slip had occurred, while we clung to the same grim brow of the mountain on the 6th of

A CEREMONIOUS GETTING READY. I had arrived in Zermatt on Saturday night, August 4. Early on Sunday morning as I came from the breakfast room of the Mont Cervin, I met the concierge of the hotel, and said to him:

"I am going to climb the Matterhorn.
Where shall I look for guides?"
He stared at me for a moment, and then,
pointing to the hotel office, said: "Oh, you'll
have to see Mr. Seiler about that."

Evidently he did not regard me as a prom-ising candidate for Alpine hoonrs, but having pretensions in that direction I was not ended. Entering the office I found Mr. Oesch, the secretary, who at once took an interest in my project. He laid it before Mr. Seller, and the latter, leaving his breakfast, came to cross examine me. He began by

ica, which was almost as lofty as the Matterhorn. I di not add that I had ridden up Pike's Peak in a railroad car, and that people ascend it every day on mule back. If I had told him that, perhaps I should not have climbed the Matterhorn. But it was not with any intent to deceive him that I withheld the information, for I supposed that he only wished to know if I could endure the effects of the rare atmosphere at great ele-

Still he demurred a little, and advised me to try some less difficult peak at first, and so approach by degrees the attempt on the Matterhorn. But I insisted that I had no time to wait to be trained, besides, the air had just cleared after two or three days of rain in the valleys and snow upon the mountains, and the opportunity of good weather should not be thrown away. The beauty of the morning was perfect.

The little valley was a cup of sunshine. The white peaks on its brim stood out against the bright blue sky in silhouettes of snow. I strolled along the narrow, stony street to the old church where worshippers were thronging in, and the sound of solemn music stealing out floated sweet upon the quiet knees, and sometimes outside I got across. air. Conspicuous among the tombstones on THE WORST OF ALL THE PRECIPICES. one side side of the church yard was a granite cross bearing the name of Michel Croz, erected to his memory, as the inscrip-tion recorded, by his fellow guides and cantonmen of Valais. On the opposite side of the church, in a sunny nock of the The best and bravest guides in wall, I found the tomb of Rev. Mr. Hudson Switzerland was pitted against Italy are buried three other victims of the precia grassy knoll surrounded with a garden of Alpine plants, stands the English church row of tombs commemorating other adventurers who aspired to scale those mighty eternity.

MAKING A START. Returning to the hotel I found my guides stout young mountaineer of growing reputa-tion. We started off at once for the hotel The startled ear heard frequently the jingling line of vegetation and well within that of per-petual snow, and fire would be indispensable. The Hornli is a kind of projecting foot of lons had vanished from the living world, the Matterborn. From it a shattered ridge And when at length we reached a place of runs down toward Zermatt, dividing two deep of stone, and stands amid snow on the verge of a precipitous slope. Its elevation is about woolen blankets. At the cabane, which we reached about 5:30 p. m., the guides made tea and we partook of a frugal supper. It was too chilly to linger long outside studying the magnificent view, and before 9 o'clock I was wrapped in my blanket and trying to sleep. But sleep was not easily wooed with the ice-cold air pinching one's nose and thoughts of the morrow rising unbidden in

Shortly after 2 o'clock in the morning the guides were astir preparing breakfast and at 2:30 we stepped out upon the snow, the rope was unrolled, and the middle of it was tied around my waist. Each of the guides then attached himself to one of the ends, Tangwalder before and Graven behind me. I don't how a criminal led to execution feels, but I know how I felt when this suggestive

There was as yet no indication of coming day. The heavens were cloudless, and the Matterhorn, rising athwart the Milky Way, seemed to hang in the sky, blotting out the stars. Picking up a lantern Tangwalder led the way around a corner of the stone hut and out upon an almost level stretch of snow, from which our feet awoke a low musi cal humming in the tense, frosty air. Al-most before I was aware of it we were treading on the edge of a precipice which seemed in the darkness of abyssmal depth, while the crusted snow that curled over its brink fre-quently broke under our weight. The first time this thing happened the impression selves for the shock. The rope being taut between them, the strain came upon the three together and they held fast, but the rope broke in middir, between the elder Tangwalder and Lord Francis Dougias. tilted in such a manner that on the opposite side it ran steeply down into a gulf of

ON THE FACE OF A CLIFF. Presently we turned to the left, quitted the snow, and in a moment were out on the face of a cliff, clinging to crags and ledges with the upper edge of a glacier dimly visible far beneath us. I had been in a rather jaunty mood heretofore, but this experience sobered my mind in an instant. We worked our way diagonally across the cliff until we reached a higher part of the glacier that rose to our level, and then stepped out upon the ice. Here for the first time I heard the the first shot of the enemy to a new recruit. This portion of the glacier was stee and smooth, and the lamplight occasionally revealed a huge crack, or one of those round holes called moulins, into which a person failing would disappear as in a well. siderable distance we ascended on the back of the glacier, but presently the mountain became too steep for the ice to get a grip upon it, and then we took to the crags now climbing directly upward, now working to the right or left around vertical

My inexperience made the rope a source considerable perplexity to me, for it was continually getting tangled with my feet, while my hands were fully employed above. Then in crawling sideways on the front of a precipice it was sometimes inecessary,, while hanging on with fingers and toes, to crouch against projections above. At such times I found the rope particularly troublesome, al-though it would have afforded my only chance for life if I had fallen. But after an hour or two I acquired a little skill in

Climbing in such places by the dim and incertain light of a lantern was also somewhat trying, and I was glad when, at last, a gray dawn broke upon the rocks, and Tangwalder blew out his lantern and placed it in a crevice to be picked up on our return. Now, at least, one could see what was below

When day began we were high up on the eastern face of the mountain, that which is castern face of the Riffel, and the Gor-THE HARDEST CLIMB STILL TO COME. seen from Zermatt, the Riffel, and the Gorbefore us. Glancing up at the peak I say it shining in the morning sun, and apparently was visible far, far below on the Swiss and, but Breuil, at the Italian foot, was under a cloud. The immense cloud. Most of the plain of Lombardy was buried in mist, and a very remarkable that runs down like a great wall between the Furggen glacier on one side and the white clouds from Italy over the mountain the Theodulhern. Thousands of feet beneath the Theodulhern is a billowy clouds rose from the Value of the Company of the Italy over the mountain the clouds from Italy over the clouds from I heads 1,000 feet above. It was hard to persuade one's self that they were not about to fall headlong and involve the entire mountainside in their ruin. Yet I knew that that and Theodul ridge, hacked and split and wrenched into fantastic and terrifying shapes, would presently become our only pathway to the top of the Matterhorn. It was just under this ridge that we passed the cld cabin of the Alpine club, now abandoned and

filled to the door with blue ice.

Higher, we left the face of the mountain and got upon the crest of the arete. Here were places where one had to bulliuse himto say the least, increase one's control over his muscles. It is a simple matter to stand on a ledge only a few inches broad when it is near the ground; but put your ledge above cloud level, get up on it out of breath, let void space your around your feet, and recollect that it is only the friction of your fingers against the projecting rocks beside you and above your head that retains you where you are several and the situation was not enhanced for me of the situation was not enhanced for me of the fact the fact the fact the situation was not enhanced for me of the summit. Even the most experienced guide cannot enter lightly upon a descent from the Matterhorn, and for a beginner the mere idea of going down some of the places we had come up was a thing to be banished from the done, but it was not to be thought of in advance of the doing. The cheerfulness of the situation was not enhanced for me of the fact. self carefully, while the fatigue resulting from the constant use of every limb did not. you and above your head that retains you where you are, and you will find that a very entertaining metaphysical element has en-tered into the problem of how to keep the center of gravity within the base.

"Where is the worst place?" I inquired several times. "Not yet, not yet," was the reply; "the shoulder is the worst."

THE FEARFUL "SHOULDER."

tain, being dark underneath and white with snow on top. The guides call this the "shoulder." It is a fearful spot. We approached it by ascending a steep slope of snow resting upon ice, which, in turn, lay upon rock that seemed too smooth to hold it. Having clambered upon the end of the shoulder overhanging the tremendous precipies seen from Zermatt, we were compelled to turn to the left, for ahead of us everything dropped out of sight. This maneuver brought us upon something that I can only describe as a great knife edge of the moun tain, rising sheer out of precipitous depths and connecting the arite we had just quitted with the main mass of the upper part of the peak. This marvellous ridge, which is also a portion of the shoulder, is composed of broken rock, cemented with ice, and tipped with scallops of snow as translucent as porce-lain and beautifully molded by the wind. The rock on the top was in some places but a few inches wide, and the hard snow capplaces but ping it ran to a sharp edge, and had frequently to be broken off in order to make room for the hands and feet. Sometimes on my feet, sometimes on my hands and knees, and sometimes outside I got across.

But when we had attained the further end of the ridge our situation was not improved. We had come up against the face of the worst of all the precipices, that which runs like a coronet round the very brow of the mountain. Here the rock had very few projec-tions upon it, nothing that could be called and to the eye glancing upward it seemed impossible that anybody could climb so smooth a wall, and one, moreover which glistened in many places with a covering of thin, transparent ice. Yet climb it we did. The fingers, the toes, the knees, the elbows, needed no separate urgings to work together for the common safety, but all instinctively found indentations, rugosities, cracks, and frictional surfaces to which they ould, more or less effectively, cling. I had before, in less trying places, learned to pull ready to depart, and was delighted on learning that Peter Tangwalder was to be the ferring, when every movement might involve leader. The other guide was Emil Graven, a the question of life or death, to trust the suhotel The startled ear heard frequently the jingling on the Schwartzee highland, where I was of loosened ice beginning a downward jourto procure provisions for the party and woolen ney of which it would not do to think. It stockings and mittens for myself. On our would have been just as well, perhaps, not arrival there the guides provided themselves to have known that the all-swallowing abyss, each with a bundle of fagots, for at the which I rather felt than saw, was getting cabane on the Hornli, where we proposed to more and more squarely beneath us, as, pass the night, we should be far above the sloping toward the right—we slowly crept upward—was the 4,00-foot horror, over whose brink Michel Croz and his doomed companvalleys choked with ice. The cabane, erected avoid a momentary reflection on the fact that by the Alpine club on the upper extremity of the Hornli ridge, is constructed of slabs of stone and stone comparative security it was not possible to his will it would seem like the infliction of the cruelest torture. The Matterhorn 10,800 feet above sea level. It is furnished teach more self-mastery in a day than the with an old stove, sleeping platforms, and ordinary mortal acquires in a lifetime. Forunately there was little time for meditation. No sooner was one breathless scramble finished than another determined effort had to e put forth. And still the far-off summit rode the sky like a cloud.

Soon after leaving the Shoulder we began to find, here and there, pieces of rope about as large as a clothesline dangling from the rocks above. They were blackened by the weather, stiffened with ice, and frayed by the switchings of tempests, so that altogether their appearance was uninviting. I was warned not to bear too strongly upon them. but always to keep a grip on the rock and put most of the weight there. In one or wo instances small chains took the place o ropes, and these, though covered with rust, looked safer; but I am inclined to think that t would be better if they were all away.

THE PERIL OF FALLING ROCKS. One of the perils of the Matterhorn come rom falling rocks. Starting high aloft, they can find no stopping place. Their first touch s like the crack of a gun; the second is an explosion! In great parabolic curves they eap and soar until they burst into shivers. There is nowhere so magnificent an object lesson in the law of gravitation as that pre-sented by these falling stones of the Matterhorn. Above the Shoulder we came upon one of the most perilous localities for falling rocks, and hurried over it, yet none fell while we were there. More than once, when ompletely out of breath with the unacous med exertions I had put forth, I begged for a moment's respite to recover my wind, guides would not allow a pause, saying that a shower of stones might assail us at any instant. There is no question that they were right; yet, as a matter of fact, no stone fell-near us during the entire ascent and the subsequent descent. Indeed, I do not re-Matterhorn a single one has been killed by a falling rock. But a guide once had haversack cut in two by a flying stone that just missed his shoulders, and climbers have been injured by such missiles Ordinarily these projectiles, like great shells give abundant warning of their approach.

The arrival on the summit was as sen sational an experience as any one could wish for. We had got upon another spindling and pieces of frostwork cornice fell at touch and shot downward in a manner that made one exceedingly careful of his footsteps. The precipice under this ridge on the left hand side was not merely vertical, it absolutely overhung, and the necessity of caution kept my attention fixed upon the work immediately at hand, so that before ! was fully aware how near we were to the end I suddenly heard Tangwalder shout: "The top!"

"Yes, monsieur, the top!" called Graven behind me. I took three steps—and another would have sent me whirling 6,000 feet down into Italy!

THE SUMMIT AND A LOOK ABOUT. Although the summit of the Matterhorn gradually changes in shape, partly through disintegration of the schistore rock, but mainly in consequence of variations in the amount of snow resting upon it, it has alseen it from time to time since Mr. Whym-per's vision, as a narrow ledge between 300 and 400 feet in length, and in some place not wide enough to stand upon. That was also its appearance as I saw it. At the highest point a comb of rock projected highest point a comb of rock projected through the snow, and I knocked off a piece

and put it in my pocket.

The view ranged over the whole of Switzerland (except, of course, that some of the surrounding mountains hid one another as well as the valleys between them) and over snowy dome of Mont Blanc rose high above But the hardest work was yet great glaciers were spread out like floors on Glancing up at the peak I saw the east, the north and the west. Zermatt then tumbled in a cateract down into Switzerland. Swirling and tossing they swept a short distance across the Furggen and Theodul gaciers and then, in midair, vanished. There was no cessation in the advance from the Italian side, no thinning out of the clouds behind, yet beyond a certain line they could not go, could not exist, but on reaching it melted instantly into nothingness.

THE DESCENT.

A wind that would hardly have been noticed below proved disagreeable here, and we re-mained but a short time on the summit. Even the most experienced guide cannot terhorn, and for a beginner the mere idea of going down some of the places we had come up was a thing to be banished from the mind as quickly as possible. It was to be done, but it was not to be thought of in advance of the doing. The cheerfulness of the situation was not enhanced for me by the fact that during the latter half of the climb I had been suffering from mountain sickness, brought on by the combined effects of strong tea, rare air and exhausting mussickness, brought on by the combined effects of strong tea, rare air and exhausting muscular labor. It is as hard an ill to bear as seasickness, but luckily it does not affect the head—at lenst it did not in my case. If it had done so I should have been unable to proceed, for on the Matterhorn vertigo is entirely inadmissible. If you cannot stand unmoved with your toes over the margin of dications of the character reading that may a precipies, you have no business there. I

ridge, and one who had not command of all his faculties could by no possibility descend from it. Some years ago a guide, seized with sickness at the hut of the Italian side, nearly 2,000 feet below the summit, was left alone by his comrades while they went down after help. When the rescuers arrived the man was dead. A subsequent writer declared the sick man had been condemned to death by the mere act of leaving him there. But, in any case he could hardly have been taken down alive, although he was below all the most difficult places.

Carefully treading once more the snow-

topped ridge we began the descent. Its worst feature immediately became manifest.; the eyes could no longer avoid the vacuity that gaped beneath us. Tangwalder, in virtue of his greater experience, now assumed the last place, where he could lend the most effective aid if a slip occurred f remained in the mid-dle, and Graven led. Constant vigilance was the price of life. Theoretically, and I believe practically as well, the rope by which one is fastened to his guides is an assurance of com parative safety for all three; yet there were many points where I could not be p wen lering whether if I should slip Tangwalder, man o on though he was, would not come tumbling after me, and where I was mortally certain i one of the others fell I should go along with him into the depths. Fortunately there was no test case; I did not make a misstep or a slip at any critical point. In the most dangerous places only one person moved at a time. The leading guide went on until he was so placed that he could get a good grip on the rocks, or a safe hold with his ice ax. Then I followed and took his place, while he pushed on to another holding, and then the last man joined me, and it became my turn to move again. FISHING WITH THE TOES FOR INVISI-

BLE LEDGES. It was with a peculiar sensation that one approached the verge of a precipice, and, turning on his face, began to let himself down backward, feeling with his toes for ledges that he could not see, and that might not exceed a fraction of an inch in width, but to which he must intrust as much of his weight as his fingers, clutching similar projections above, were unable to support, while, with one leg dangling, he reached down for another precarious foothold. And whenever he glanced between his body and the rock to see what his feet were about he caught a thrilling glimpse of precipice below precipice and crag under crag, whose plaything he would become if his head dizzied, his eyes swam, or his if his head dizzied, his eyes swam, or his muscles refused instantly to perform their whole duty. Such are some of the joys of the Matterhorn! I do not say it mockingly.; I am giving a record of psychological impres-sions, and these things, like any mastering of human weakness, are a joy in recollection. Burke proved that terror is a source of the ablime, and sublimity is certainly a source work of descent was not as exhausting

to the physical forces as that of ascent, but it was even a heavier tax on the nerves, and required an equal expenditure of time We had been about seven hours in climbing from the cabane to the summit, a distance but little exceeding a mile in an air line, and we were long in getting back to the cabane again. The guides, of course, could have made the round trip much quicker, perhaps in half the time, but not being trained in such work I required frequent stops to re-cover my breath, as well as to struggle with the nausea which did not leave me when we got to the top, but accompanied me down to the Schwartzse bottal where the the Schwartzsee hotel, where it finally yielded to a good night's sleep. I would not, however, convey the impression that the guides, if unaccompanied, would be in any degree careless, although they might travel degree careless, although they might travel more rapidly. There are no more careful men in the world. They consider the con-sequences of every step before they take it, for they know better than anybody else that their lives depend upon their caution. GOING DOWN BACKWARD ON ALL

On the ice slope, covered with snow just below the shoulder, we went down backward on all fours, thus distributing our weight as widely as possible, in order to prevent the loose snow, now softening by the sun, from starting an avalanche, which would have carried us to investigate the sun of ried us to inevitable destruction. When we ried us to inevitable destruction. When we reached the glacier above the cabane, which had witnessed the beginning of our adventures before daylight, it was not without deep interest that I saw its surface dotted with fragments of rock that had fallen during our absence, and some of which had plowed and gouged the ice right in our track. When we passed before sunrise the cilffs above were hard frozen. Later the morning sunbeams falling upon them had released the rocks pried loose by the frost over night, but held until then in the grip of the ice, and sent them spinning downward. On our return in the afternoon the sun had left the cliffs again, and the falling of rocks

We paused to make a cup of tea at the cabane, and while Tangwalder and Graven were building a fire I stood outside, the spectator of a curious phenomenon. The sun was hidden behind the Matterhorn and an immense beam of light, 40 degrees in length like the tall of a gigantic comet, extended straight out from the apex of the peak and seemed to be brandished over Switzerland. It required but little imagination to picture a mighty angel standing there to guard the paradise of snow against the intrusion of mortal footsteps from the lower world, and I could readily understand how such meteorological wonders as this must have been potent in producing those early traditions which proclaimed the Matterhorn a sacred

mountain whose secrets were forbidden to When we reached the Schwartzsee the magnificent mountain had rolled a cloudy turban about its head, and an Englishman with his guides, whom we met on their way to the cabane, returned the next forenoon reporting that upon ascending to a point be-low the shoulder they had been driven back by hail. When I again saw the sun shining the peak its terrific precipices had their brows encircled with chaplets of new-falle;

DOES A CLIMB UP THE MATTERHORN

I have been asked twenty times if th view from the top of the Matterhorn repays one for the effort expended in climbing it. But, then, it is not for No, it does not. the view that one climbs the Matterhorn. Some of my friends appear to think that I had an idea of establishing an observatory on the top of the mountain. An observatory would be useless if it could be placed there. The atmosphere of the Alps is not the kind of air the astromer is in search of. I had no ulterior purpose whatever. Do you not know that there are some things which are worth doing for their own sake GARRETT P. SERVISS.

TELL TALE SHADES.

Character of the Inmates Told by the Window Blinds.

"I don't know anything about the front ofhouse that more clearly indicates the character and condition of the inmates than the widow shades," said a young woman of observation to the New York Sun. "If you see the shades all drawn down to precisely the ble-looking turrets which, at first glance, us these billowy clouds rose from the Val once that the house is occupied by a single seemed actually to be hanging over our Tournache, surmounted the lofty walls, and orderly spirit. There'll not be a thing out of its accustomed place in that house you can rest assured. If the shades of all the upstairs windows are drawn down to the top of the bottom sash, while those of the parlor are drawn clear down, you can safely judge the family of that house to be one of those essentially domestic ones that live mostly up-stairs; where the bedroom is at once the wife's sewing room and the husband's library. and where the parlor is only opened on state occasions. If the bedroom window blinds in the middle story are half way down while these on the top floor and of the parlor are away up, you won't be wrong in saying that that house is ruled by the young folks. who are going to have a flood of sunshine in their bedrooms even if it does fade out the

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JOHN JAMES AUDUBON. Remarkable Work of the First American

Naturalist. In the days when Louisiana was a province of Spain, a little dark-eyed boy used to wander among the fields and groves of his

father's plantation studying with eager delight the works of nature around him. Lying under the orange trees watching the mocking bird, or learning from his mother's lips the names of the flowers that grew in every corner of the plantation, he soon came to feel that he was part of that beautiful whose language was the songs of birds and whose boundaries extended to every place where a blossom lifted its head above the green sod. No other companions suited well, and no roof seemed so secure as that formed of the dense foliage under which the feathered tribes resorted, or the caves and rocks to which the curlew and ormorant fetired to protect themselves from the fury of the tempest. In these words we read the first chapter of the life history of John James Audubon, the American naturalist and the author of one of the early classics American literature.

In those early days his father was Audubon's teacher and hand in hand they searched the groves for new specimens, or lingered over the nests where lay the helpless young. was the father who taught him to look upon the shining eggs as flowers in the bud and to note the different characteristics which distinguished them. These excursions were seasons of joy, but when the time came for the birds to take their annual departure the joy was turned to sorrow. To the young naturalist a dead bird, though beautifully preserved and mounted, gave no pleasure. It seemed but a mockery of life, and the constant care needed to keep the specimens in good condition brought an additional sense of loss. Was there no way in which the memory of these feathered friends might oe kept fresh and beautiful? He turned in his anxiety to his father, who in answer laid before him a volume of illustrations. Auduoon turned over the leaves with a new hope n his heart, and although the pictures were oadly executed, the idea satisfied him. though he was unconscious of it, it was the oment of the birth of his own great lifework. Pencil in hand he began to copy nature untiringly, although for a long time he produced what he himself called but a family of cripples, the sketches being burned regu-larly on his birthdays. But no failure could stop him and he made hundreds of sketches of birds every year, worth less almost in hemselves because of bad drawing, but valu-

Meantime for education the boy had been taken from Louisiana to France, the home of his father, who had wished him to be-come a soldier, sailor or engineer. For a few hours daily Audubon now studied mathematics, drawing and geography, only to disappear in the country when study hours were over, and return with eggs, nests or curious plants. His rooms looked like a museum of natural history, and the walls were covered with drawings of French birds.

For one year he wrestled dutifully with problems and theorems, counting himself happy if by any chance he could fly to the country for an hour to take up his acquaint-ance with the birds; and then the father admitted the son's unfitness for military purof some property.

Audubon was then 17 years of age and had but one ambition in life—to live in the woods with his wild friends. He was the best skater in all the country ide; at balls and parties he was the amateur master of ceremonies, gayly teaching the newest steps and turns that he obtained in France. In the hunt it was Audubon. dressed, perhaps, in satin breeches and pumps, for he was a great dandy, who led the way through the almost unbroken wilder-Add to this that he was an experswimmer, once swimming the Schuyikill with a companion on his back; that he could play any one of half a dozen instruments for an impromptu dance, that he could plait a set of picnic dishes out of willow rushes: train dogs and do a hundred other clever things and it is easy to see why he was a general

favorite. His private rooms were turned into a The walls were covered with festoons of birds' eggs, the shelves crowded festions of birds' eggs, the shelves crowded with fishes, snakes, lizards and frogs; the chimney displayed stuffed squirrels and opossums, and wherever there was room hung his own paintings of birds. It was the holiday of his life for the young lover of nature and he enjoyed it with good will.

Here suddenly the idea of his great work came to him as he was one day believe as came to him as he was one day looking over his drawings and descriptions of birds.
Suddenly, as it seemed to him, though his
whole life had led to it, he conceived the
plan of a great work on American ornithology.

He began his research. his gigantic undertaking as master in the school of nature, wherein he had been so faithful a student, for he now saw with joy that the past which had often seemed idle had been in reality rich with labors that were to bear fruit.

Season after season from the guif to Canada and back again these winged creatures of the air wedded their way, stopping to hatch of the air wenter their young, becoming acquainted and breed their young, becoming acquainted with Louisiana orange groves and New England apple orchards, now fluttering with kindly sociability round the dwellings of men and again seeking lonely eeries among in-accessible mountain tops, pursuing their mountain tops, pursuing course at all time almost without the thought

and cognizance of man.
It was Audubon who was the conqueror if not the discoverer of this aerial world of song, of which he became the immortal historian. It was his untiring zeal which gave thus early to American literature a scientific work of such vast magnitude and importance that it astonished the scientists of Europe and won for itself the fame of being most gigantic biblical enterprise ever ertaken by a single individual. To do this meant a life of almost constant change and Audubon can hardly have had an abid-ing place after his first serious beginning. The wide continent became his home and he found his dwelling wherever the winged tribes sought shelter from the wind and atorm. His pursuit was often interrupted by occupations necessary for the suspect of by occupations necessary for the support of his family, for at his father's death he had given to his sister his share of the estate and so became entirely dependent upon his own efforts for a livelihood; but at all times, no matter what his situation, his heart was in the wild retreats of nature. Traveling in the wild retreats of nature. Traveling through the west and south in search of fortune, as well as of specimens, his experi-iences were often disenchanting. At Louis-ville and New Orleans he would be forced to make crayon portraits of the principal citizens in order to raise the money for family expenses. Again he taught drawing; away. The freedom of bird life, its happines served as tutor in private families, and in order to secure funds for the publication of his work, he earned \$2,000 by dancing lessons, the largest sum he ever earned. Many business speculations enlisted Audubon's hopes, but all failed utterly. Once he embarked his money in a steam mill which, being built in an unfit place, soon failed. At another time he bought a steamboat was that rare specimen, the gerfalcon. came to cross examine me. He began by saking me if I had had much experience in the high Alps. I replied no, but I had spent the high Alps. I replied no, but I had spent the upper part of the Matterhorn, which appears to project from the side of the mountain. There is no shelter and are the eyes of a house the shades are the sold to a shrewd buyer who never paid the

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Again he was cheated in

he needed boots, he obtained them

of material for his work were

wrapped in a buffalo robe, before the great

grease and opossums. Here he made studies of deer, bears, cougars, as well as of wild

bottomed boat, searching the uninhabited

shores for specimens and living the life of

forests of the west, where the white man

had never trod, and the only thing that sug-

gested humanity, would be the smoke rising

miles away form the evening camp fire of some Indian hunter as lonely as himself.

the place and watching like an Indian in ambush until it dropped to its nest, Audu-

bon found it to be a sea eagle. He named it the Washington sea cagle in honor of George Washington. Waiting two years

George Washington. Waiting two years longer he was able to obtain a specimen, from which he made the picture given in his

work. This is but one example of the tireless patience with which he prosecuted

his studies, years of waiting counting as nothing if he could but gain his end.

Some of his discoveries in this kingdom

of the birds he relates with a romantic en-thusiasm. Throughout the entire work

there runs the note of warmest sympathy with the lives of these creatures of the air

and hoves and interests, from the time of the nest-making till the young had flown

and sunshine.

He tells us of their hopes

the frontiersman, whose daily food must be

turkeys, prairie hens and other birds.

days he drifted down the Ohio in a

surchase money.

the clearing of a tract of timber.

But his studies in natural history always went on. When he had no money to pay went on. When he had no money to pay his passage up the Mississippi, he bargained his passage up the captain of th to draw the portrait of the captain of the steamer and his wife as remuneration. When W. H. BOOTH & CO.,

Weights and grades guaranteed, maker, and more than once he paid his hotel bills and saved something besides by sketch ing the faces of the host and his family. WM. LOUDON. On the other band, his adventures in search Commission Merchant enough to satisfy the most ambitious traveler Grain and Provisions.

Private wires to Chicago and New York, il business orders placed on Chicago Atlantic to the then unknown regions of the All business orders placed on Chicago Board of Trade. Correspondence solicited. Office, room 4. New York Life Building, Omaha. Telephone 1308. Yellowstone he pursued his way, often alone, and not seldom in the midst of dangers which threatened life itself. He hunted buffalo with the Indians of the Great Plains,

and lived for months in the tents of the fierce Sioux. He spent a season in the the raind dripped down from the rigging winter camp of the Shawners, sleeping above, Audubon sat for hours making a above, Audubon sat for hours making a sketch of this bird and feeling as rich as if camp fire and living upon wild turkey, bear's he had discovered some rare gem. twenty years the work was published. Every specimen, from the thy humming bird to the largest eagles and vultures, was sketched life size and colored in the tints of nature. There were 475 of these plates, furnishing a complete history of the feathered tribes of North America, for they showed not only supplied by his own exertions. Sometimes the his studies would take him far into the dense also the oppearances of the birds, but represented also he manners and home life of this world of song. The humming bird poised before the crimson throat of the trumpet flower, the whipp or will resting among the leaves of the oak, the bobolink singing am Once as he lay stretched on the deck of a small vessel ascending the Mississippi, he caught sight of a great eagle circling about his head. Convinced that it was a new species, he waited patiently for two years before he again had a glimpse of it flying, in lazy freedom, above some butting crags, where its young were nested. Climbing to the place and watching like an Indian in ambush until it dropped to its nest, Audu-

The work was published by subscription in London in 1829 under the title, "The Birds of North America." The price was guineas. Later on a smaller and cheaper edition was issued. The work is now very rare. Audubon had the gratification of knowing that his labors were understood and appreciated by the world of science. When he exhibited his plates in the galleries of England and France, whither he went to obtain land and France, whither he went to obtain subscriptions, crowds flocked to see him, and the greatest scientists of the age welcomed him to their ranks. "The Birds of America" was his greatest work, though he was interested somewhat in general zoology and wrote

on other subjects HENRIETTA C. WRIGHT.

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