

KILLING SAURIANS.

FIERCE BATTLE WITH ALLIGATORS IN PANAMA.

Hundreds of the Reptiles Slay by Party of Englishmen—Savage Attack of the Creatures—Hunters Save Their Lives by Desperate Fighting.

One tropical day, when a fierce sun was beating down upon the picturesque city of Panama, two young men were lounging in wicker chairs under the spreading branches of a guava tree in the cool, inviting patio of the Hotel Inglaterra. The young men were sons of the British nobility, named Harry Forbes and Frank Winters. The commodious suits of the young men concealed splendid physiques, hardened by roaming dispositions, which led them into all quarters of the globe in search of adventure and sport that could not be found within the confines of the tight little island. They had come to the isthmus simply for the purpose of assisting in the extermination of the alligators, with which the rivers of that narrow neck of land teem. Between puffs at their indispensable pipes, they laid out a general outline of the plans of an alligator hunt which they intended to follow on the succeeding day. They had secured the services of a half-dozen stalwart peons insured to the threatening dangers of the swamps that line the rivers. The peons were trustworthy fellows and could be depended upon in an emergency requiring nerve and quick wit. They were to be useful in poising the cumbersome canoe up the rivers and branches, in which capacity they cannot be excelled.

The next morning, bright and early, the young adventurers repaired to the Nachina wharf, where they found the canoe and the peons waiting. The latter had carried down the necessary paraphernalia for the hunt. Both men were armed with Winchester repeaters of 45 caliber, a gun which is most effective in ending the existence of a grinning gator. The sail was run up and the canoe skimmed lightly over the whitecaps to an island about three miles distant from Panama. The air was clear, cool and sweet, and the exuberant vegetation of the coast on the left fairly sparkled with radiant brilliance and extended its luxuriance right to the edge of the blue and crystal water.

Life on the Island.

Then the party crossed over to Flamingo Island, which is small and fairly overrun with humming birds, iguanas and snakes. The stop there was enlivened by a peon killing a large tree snake over thirteen feet in length. Having exhausted the beauties of Flamingo the canoe set sail for another of the interminable islands that dot the dimpled surface of the bay. A very different spectacle was now before them. There was a hulk used as a lodging house for the Chinamen employed by the Pacific Mail Company. Off the island was anchored her majesty's steamship Pelican. By a pre-arranged plan ten of the officers and ensigns joined the original crowd. The sailors had equipped the small launch of the cruiser that took in tow the lumbering canoe of the young Englishmen. The officers, besides carrying Remingtons, were armed with revolvers. These small weapons, as it turned out, were quite indispensable, and certainly saved some of the party from a horrible death. Before arriving at the bar at the mouth of the Rio Suelo a good twenty miles had to be covered, which was done without noteworthy incident. The river narrowed gradually, its banks clothed with gorgeous tropical vegetation and indented by little backwaters, which seemed to be the abode of myriads of solemn cranes and flamingoes. The hunters heard the strange cries of brilliant plumaged birds, and passed close enough to see the humming birds darting like scintillating rays of light in the foliage. An occasional alligator could be seen basking in the mud of the banks. When fired at the ungainly reptiles would plunge into the river with a tremendous splash, and a few minutes later an ugly snout would protrude out of the murky river and give a snort of defiance. As the boats ascended the gators became more and more plentiful, and some of them were twenty feet in length—veritable monsters. The river was now not more than thirty yards wide.

Hundreds of Alligators.

The hunters presently reached a kind of open pool, with small streams and backwaters radiating in every direction. The air was heavy with the sickening, heavy smell of musk, which indicated the close proximity of the haunts of the saurian. Guided by the directions of a peon the boats turned up a small creek, and upon rounding a sharp bend, the hunters were greeted with a wonderful spectacle. A vast stretch of mud was entirely covered with a living mass of basking alligators. There were hundreds of the repulsive reptiles. The place was literally paved with scaly saurians, big and little. A person could have walked all over the island without touching the mud, itself. In attempting to get closer to the vast herd, both boats grounded. The occupants were so excited that the grounding was considered a small thing. With one accord the men stood up and began pumping lead into the unconscious gators. The scene that ensued is beyond the power of words to adequately describe. Up to this time the hunters had not realized the gravity of their predicament in being aground. The unpleasant fact dawned upon them that the boats were between the hundreds of angry alligators and the river behind, so that in order to escape the reptiles were compelled to

pass them by some means. No sooner had every rifle been discharged than the whole hideous herd made a dash for safety, which was right over the boats. It was a question of courage and promptness then. Death stared them in the face. The barking guns poured a deadly hail of lead into the advancing saurians. To the horror of the hunters, the brutes did not seem to care for the hot fire, notwithstanding that numbers of them were already dead on the river bank. Hundreds and hundreds of the repulsive creatures were crawling down upon the boats, their long tails trailing in the mud as they advanced. On the right hand side of the boats nine or ten of the largest gators lay in their death throes, lashing the reeking mud with their tails and hurling the stinking filth high into the air. The monsters crawled over one another in their hurry to escape. There was a wilderness of snapping jaws and catapultic tails before the hunted hunters. The revolvers came into active play, and the spiteful barks of the weapons were mixed with the hoarse roars of the maddened brutes. It was a perfect avalanche of alligators.

Canoe Is Upset.

At the critical moment an accident occurred which for the moment palsied the nerves and froze the very blood of the men, whose eyes shone with the light of battle. Several of the brutes dived into the mire under the canoe, which had the effect of heaving the little craft over. The sudden movement threw Winters, who was standing in the bow, into the semiliquid mud with a tremendous splash. The gators snapped at him from all sides, but he was rescued only after a terrific and well directed fire had created a diversion in the unhappy man's favor. Presently the saurians began to whip the mire with their tails. There was a general tattoo, and as a result of the tremendous blows it raised fowl-smelling, green and black mud. In a minute or two the boats were nearly half filled with blood and water, and the men's clothes were covered with the loathsome mixture. A peon was in a stooping posture slashing at the brutes with his machete, when his arm was nearly broken by a blow from a swinging tail. There were numerous accidents that heightened the excitement of the struggle. The greater number of the reptiles had got past the crafts. As a result of the unprecedented battle there were about 150 dead reptiles. It was a hunt that will never be forgotten by those who participated in it. The boats started back for Panama the next morning, a night being spent on the bank upon which they were aground. The night was not one of rest, made so by the festive mosquitoes, which arose in clouds from the adjacent swamps. After an absence of thirty-five hours the young men got back to Panama, surfeited with alligator hunting. The clothes of each were torn and covered with the malodorous slime. Their eyes were swollen, their noses twice their ordinary size owing to the attacks of the mosquitoes. The sun had peeled off the skin, and both were suffering from ague and fever through breathing the tainted atmosphere of the churned-up mud. But they endured all with stoical British fortitude, and were happy in the enjoyment of a day's good sport.

Her Ready Wit.

Though he had long adored her in secret—worshiped, in fact, the ground she pressed beneath the soles of her dainty little number three—he had never yet been able to screw up courage to put his fate to the test. Poor fellow! he was one of those shy, modest, self-deprecating sort of chaps that are growing rapidly scarcer, or he would have tumbled months ago to the fact that he had only got to go in and win. Gertrude Alca knew the state of his feelings right enough, but it had pleased her hitherto to keep him dangling in attendance; at last, however, she had made up her mind to land her fish as soon as a favorable chance presented itself. And the opportunity came at the Smythington's little soiree, when the bashful swain, entering the conservatory, discovered his innamorata looking her loveliest amid the palms and flowers. "Are—are you alone?" he questioned, timidly. In a moment the fair and ready-witted girl saw her chance, and took it then and there. "A loan, Hen—er—Mr. Pinnikin," she said, with lowered eyelids, "a loan, certainly not—I'm a gift." And fifteen minutes later, when they emerged from their retreat, Henry was asking himself how he could have been such a Juggins as to postpone his happiness so long.—Ally Sloper.

An Extraordinary Vegetable Product.
We find in a Canadian medical journal a description of the laughing plant and its effect upon man. It grows in Arabia and derives its name from the effects produced by eating its seeds. The plant is of moderate size, with bright yellow flowers and soft velvety seed-pods, each of which contains two or three seeds resembling small black beans. The natives of the district where the plant grows dry these seeds and reduce them to powder. A small dose of this powder has curious effects. It causes the soberest person to dance, shout and laugh with the boisterous excitement of a madman, and to rush about cutting the most ridiculous capers for nearly an hour. At the expiration of this time exhaustion sets in and the excited person falls asleep, to wake after several hours with no recollection of his antics.

Spain's Reward to Veterans.
As a recompense for soldiers who have been wounded in battle and discharged on this account, Spain allows such men to beg in the public streets.

GENEROSITY AMONG SOLDIERS

Military Profession Does Not Encourage Brutality, Says This Writer.

The sight of the war cured the writer of one notion—that the military profession may tend to make those who follow it brutal and cruel, says the Boston Transcript. On the contrary, it seems to make them more generous and kind. It is not to be supposed that it is war that makes them so; it is probable that removal of the professional soldier from the field of competition for existence among independent workers and "business men" leaves him little chance to fall into that hungry and fox-like instinctive hostility to one's fellows that is developed by the social struggle for existence. All soldiers, whether officers or privates, seem to be engaged, on the other hand, in a kind of competition of generosity. It is a great point with them—a kind of invariable rule of conduct—to be ready to share what they have with others. This rule of generosity does not, of course, save them from doing cruel things occasionally. They have not ordinarily a very delicate sensibility to one another's pain; they do not seem to waste much sympathy on one another's physical sufferings. They bear their own without complaint, and seldom ask favors when they are suffering. But when it comes to "grub," or "shelter," they will give a comrade, or even a stranger, better than they have themselves, if they possibly can. And the work of an officer, even in the most active and terrible campaigning, seems to be easily consistent with the finest manliness and most delicate sympathy. And yet we should not encourage war in the expectation of cultivating fine sentiments any more than we should invite yellow-fever epidemics simply because a yellow fever epidemic develops fine cases of heroic self-sacrifice.

A TOUCHING INCIDENT.

Hunger in its acute stages is said to destroy natural affection and all the humane instincts, leaving nothing but selfish animal frenzy. This effect of famine is, of course, the same in very young victims as in adults. Occasionally the finer feelings seem to remain unbrutalized. When these are manifested in adults, both admiration and pity are aroused in the observer; but there can be no more appealing sight in all the terrible phenomena of starvation than the altruism of a child. A writer in Our Young People relates what he saw in one of the Cuban cities.

In a recess of the wall between two angles of a public building crouched some twenty or thirty miserable human beings, in all stages of emaciation. They were "reconcentrados."

A lady with a bright smile upon her face came down the steps of a large hotel nearby, and passed along the street. Her smile faded when she caught sight of the hopeless group, and the stood still in pained and silent pity. The poor wretches stretched out their hands, and the little ones ran to her and lifted up their pinched faces, begging for a coin "in God's name."

Centivos and pesetas were bestowed freely from the lady's purse; but what distressed her more than all was the despair stamped upon the face of one little girl, not more than seven years old, who did not move nor speak. She sat near a woman and two smaller children who lay on the ground, apparently helpless.

Drawn by her great, pleading eyes, the lady went to the child and offered a coin. The haggard little creature glared at it a moment, and then snatched the money with a wild shriek, darted across the street to the nearest store.

Directly she returned with a loaf, smelling it ravenously and almost licking it with her long tongue; but she did not taste the bread. Running to the wretched woman lying on ground with her little ones, she thrust the loaf into her hand and then threw herself on her face in the dust, sobbing and shivering with utter grief. The lady was deeply affected, and seeing a soldier who seemed not wholly unsympathetic, she asked him to bring the generous little daughter and her starved family to the hotel. "They shall be cared for," she said. It was a pitiable sight, but it gave a refreshing view of the supreme power of love even over mortal anguish.

Peculiar Letters to the Public.

Letters to the editor are an institution in Italy, as well as in more civilized countries, and one which has just appeared in the leading papers of Palermo is worthy of note. It bears the signature of Candino, the most feared and murderous of Sicilian brigands, and is destined to inform the readers that he has expelled from his band a notorious robber named Galbo, as having been guilty of "discourteous and unmannerly conduct in his dealings with the public." The letter ends with the words, "kindest greetings of friendship" for the editors.

He Got Her.

"Humph!" growled the multi-millionaire, "so you want my girl's hand, do you? Have you lots of enterprise?" "Well," retorted the hardy swain, "I'm after the only daughter of just about the richest and meanest man in these parts."—New York World.

Artificial legs and arms were in use in Egypt as early as B. C. 700. They were made by the priests, who were the physicians of that early time. A whale yields 45,000 pounds of trails oil.

OVER STATELY PEAKS

DARING FEAT CARRIED OUT AMONG THE ALPS.

Railroad Thousands of Feet in the Air—Trains Driven by Electricity Generated from the Torrent That Flows from the Findelein Glacier.

(Zurich, Switzerland, Letter.)

The daring engineer who has for years endeavored to bring within his grasp dizzy Alpine heights has apparently at last succeeded in forcing the iron bounds of his ubiquitous railroad upon the highest of the Alps' stateley peaks. After years of effort spent in trying to solve the problem how to obtain an economical plan by which he could add the Alps to his domain, he has forced his way to the top of Gornegrat, a hitherto virgin height. While Gornegrat is not the highest of the Alps, the difficulties presented by it to the railroad engineer are such that, having conquered them, he is reasonably assured of success anywhere. In fact, so certain is he of success that he has already planned to extend his roads to Mont Blanc and other of the highest peaks, and will begin at once their construction. Within two years we may expect to be whirled to the top of Mont Blanc or any other of the Swiss Alps in a car providing all the meagre comforts of European travel. The road up Gornegrat has been completed, and trials successfully made over it. Indeed, it is to be opened to public travel during the coming week, and before a month is gone will be in regular operation. It comprises a ten-mile length and rises by a gradient of about one foot in five during most of its ascent, reaching its highest point at Ryffelalp Station. This is situated on the ridge and is over 10,000 feet above the level of the sea and lies between Findelein and Gornegrat glaciers. From Gornegrat the traveler has a view unrivaled throughout the Alps. It has long been the favorite excursion of Swiss travelers, who ascended it to Zermatt by

able Italian workmen engaged upon it made a strong contrast in appearance and speech to the inhabitants of the valley. The bad weather has greatly hindered the work, as even at the end of June there were several feet of snow on the summit of the Gornegrat. Work was begun each year in April or May, and deep cuttings in the snow added to the difficulties and dangers. However, energy and perseverance have conquered every trial and successfully carried out what deserves to be called the greatest engineering feat ever undertaken. The highest railroad in the Alps heretofore has been that at Reke. This, however, was scarcely more than half so high, while the natural barriers obstructing its passage were much less serious. In fact, when the present road was proposed its projectors were laughed at, but their indomitable will and courage turned ridicule to admiration. When Blanc is saddled by the iron tracks Switzerland may well boast one of the world's greatest marvels.

TOO BRAVE TO BOAST.

Scribner's Magazine tells a story of that reckless daring and cool disregard of chances which seems so typical of the American character. In 1880 a coaster bound to Boston from the East came to anchor off Pigeon Cove in the teeth of a howling gale. She rode heavily, and the break-water to leeward, like a diabolical magnet, dragged the reluctant vessel ever closer and closer.

The men who were watching on the shore saw that it could not be long before the boat would break up, and started to Rockport for a life-boat to rescue the crew; but there were three fishermen who saw at a glance that the life-boat would never get there in time, so George Saunders and the two brothers, Zacharie and Constance Sorette, started on the run for the schooner Cora Lee, tied up safely at the wharf. From her they borrowed a dory and rowed out, all the while talking cheerfully.

"Hurry, boys! We musn't let those

PICTURES FROM A LAND OF GOLD.

An artist and correspondent, at present in British Columbia, investigating the gold deposits of that country, and at the same time studying the several routes to the Klondike, sends the accompanying pictures, made from sketches, and he describes the scenes as follows:

Starting early on the road to Telegraph Creek (illustration No. 1) we found the trail hard, and the ice, so far as it appeared through the snow surface, completely covered the dangerous torrent below. We had heard so much about its uncertain condition, of open water, brittle ice, and other unfavorable features, that we were agreeably disappointed to find that our teams passed through easily with half-loads in the course of the morning.

"After we had thus speedily and easily crossed the little canon on the Stikine river, the slush became worse and worse; our teams splashed along through the water which ran over the surface of the ice, making good time until within a mile and a half of Telegraph Creek, at which point the river was open, with broken masses of ice

a mule path with comparative safety and comfort. Beyond a foot path ascends almost to the top, but its dangers and difficulties forbid its ascent to all but the most intrepid mountain climbers. These are well repaid for their efforts, however. The new road, however, brings it within the reach of all. It has about one metre gauge, a roadbed being cut out of the rock in the dangerous passes. Near the top it passes through a tunnel nearly two hundred yards in length and semi-circular in shape and emerges right at Ryffelalp. Ryffelalp there overlooks the entire Findelein Valley, and the traveler might be well satisfied to return by the way he came. However, the engineer has been even more considerate. By reversing the direction of his train he carries you right down into and through the valley, bringing you back after a beautiful circuitous route to Zermatt. The trains will be driven by electricity, generated from the torrent that flows from the Findelein glacier, a huge pipe down the mountain side carrying the water at a high pressure to the dynamos beneath the bridge. The dynamos are capable of developing 1,500 horse-power, and the current will be conveyed by overhead wires to the motors attached to the carriages. The bridge across the Findelein is unique, as it is 164 feet above the river, or sixteen feet higher than the bridge at Fribourg, hitherto the highest railway bridge in Switzerland. The electrical motors will drive on to a central cogged rail, between the two ordinary rails, as the gradient is much too steep for the train to be driven by simple adhesion. The line has been building for the past three years, and the many hundreds of vol-

luted up by the surging current. A way was, however, found on the slanting surface of the thick ice hanging to the bank, pegs being driven into the cracks to prevent the sleighs skidding down the incline. At last we reached Glenora (illustration No. 2), a little cluster of log cabins along the bank under a precipitous slope. Squalid and meagre as these shacks looked, they were welcome signs of human life, as were the piles of cordwood for the steamers seen stacked at long intervals on the river bank." The spot marked X is a little ravine which is the only trail over the mountain.

"As soon as we got out of Telegraph Creek we got into a narrow, steep trail (illustration No. 3) and had to a summit estimated at from



1,400 to 1,700 feet above the level of the Stikine river."

fellows in the lifeboat get ahead of us."

"Won't they feel cheap? See!"

They had passed the breakwater, and were facing the furious gale. The three men could hardly hold their oars; it was difficult to keep the dory from swamping.

After almost superhuman efforts they reached the schooner, which by this time was riding bows under and drifting rapidly. It was so rough a sea that the men on board had to leap into the water and be picked up.

Every one was saved, and none too soon. There was a desperate backing of water, a perilous turning, a pull to the harbor, a magnificent bending to the oars, and then came the dull crash upon the rocks.

In five minutes after the men had been rescued the vessel was kindling-wood. When they were safely landed, one of the three heroes said:

"That's a good joke on the life-boat crew!"

This was their only comment upon the situation, and so far as can be learned, no one ever bragged about the exploit, or even mentioned it again. The fishermen treated it as if it had been an every-day occurrence.

The life-boat, it is only fair to add, was doing her best. She was simply too far away to get there in time.

WOMEN OF NOTE.

Some Brief Comment on the Fair Sex Here and Abroad.

A Virginia woman who owns a little land has gone into the business of raising sheep. She spent \$25, paying \$3 a head for ewes, and then turned her flock into her pasture land. She raised what she could care for on her land, selling the rest as soon as they were of marketable age. She gave only about one hour a day to them, and paid a boy 50 cents a week to keep the sheep sheds clean and fodder cut up. She has been in the business about five years. The first year she came out \$40 ahead of her experiment. At the end of the fourth year she had a flock of sixty ewes, all she could keep with her pasturage, and in wool and mutton she found she had a clear yearly income of \$450, says the Philadelphia Times. Hindu women in ancient India enjoyed a state of complete independence, perfect liberty. They were highly respected and encouraged to pursue the life they deemed best. They were not even compelled to marry. There was evidence that ladies cultivated literature and philosophy, and in the humbler walks of life wives walked side by side with their husbands and male relatives in agricultural pursuits. And to this day the women agriculturists of India enjoy greater freedom than their sex in urban centers. Altogether, in the ancient times the position of women in India was superior to that of her sex in probably any other part of the world, even in learned Greece or Rome. A western railroad has taken a stand against feminine clerks and stenographers, having already discharged a number of them. As there are about 200 women employed in the different offices, all giving general satisfaction, it seems heartless to deprive them of a living simply because the men employed with them do not work as well. If their presence is so disturbing to the weak male clerks, it would seem to be fairer to discharge such poor material and replace it with women and have none but feminine workers, in fact. Miss Marie Barie, who is at present right in the swim at Newport, owes her success in the "400" to her ability as general secretary and manager for the "smart set" in New York. She writes invitations for many large functions and attends to the domestic details of several large establishments.

PEN PORTRAITS OF NAPOLEON.

He was dressed in a blue coat faced with white, two gold epaulets, white waistcoat, etc., and English riding boots, no ornament in his hat; he is a very dirty (illigible) and his hair looks as if it never was combed.

I ought to give you a description of his person, but I don't know anybody he resembles unless it is my uncle a little, I think. He is under the middle size, has light gray eyes, brown hair and light-colored eyebrows sallow complexion, and nearly a straight nose. I think he would be goodlooking if he had complexion. He has, in my opinion, the air of a gentleman, and certainly the manners of one.—Sir Augustus Foster.

The true expression of his countenance is a pleasing melancholy, which, whenever he speaks, relaxes into the most agreeable and gracious smile you can conceive. To this you must add the appearance of deep and intense thought, but above all the predominant expression a look of calm and tranquil resolution and intrepidity which nothing human could discompose. His address is the finest I have ever seen, and aided by those who have traveled to exceed not only every prince and potentate now being, but even all those whose memory has come down to us. He has more unaffected dignity than I could conceive in man. His address is the gentlest and most prepossessing you can conceive, which is seconded by the greatest fund of levee conversation that I suppose any person ever possessed. He speaks deliberately, but very fluently, with particular emphasis, and in a rather low tone of voice. While he speaks his features are still more expressive than his words.—John Leslie Foster.

Pawning the Fashion.

But it is not those who are frankly poor who are the pawnbroker's best customers, says the Westminster Budget. Pawning is on the increase; one might almost say it is the fashion. The jeunesse doree comes in fur coats and gold pince-nez "popping" its watch and here is another story: A crack regiment gave a dance, and one of its officers paid much attention to a young lady. While chatting in a cozy corner she bemoaned the straits to which poverty had reduced her. "But I don't suppose you have ever been so hard up as this," he said, drawing from his pocket a green card and handing it to her. It was a pawn ticket for a dress shirt. "Pretty near it," she replied, coolly handing him a similar piece of pasteboard for a silk undershirt. This "popping" habit of the upper ten explains the extraordinary collection of articles to be seen in the windows of west end pawnshops.

Use for Sardine Boxes.

In Paris the thousands of sardine and other tin boxes that are thrown away every month are stamped by machinery into tin soldiers and sold so cheaply that the poorest children can buy them, while the manufacturer makes a fair profit.

What Others Say.

Miss Scott—"Yes, she has been saying all manner of wicked things about me." Friend—"You should not heed her, dear. She merely repeats what other people say."—Tit-Bits.