

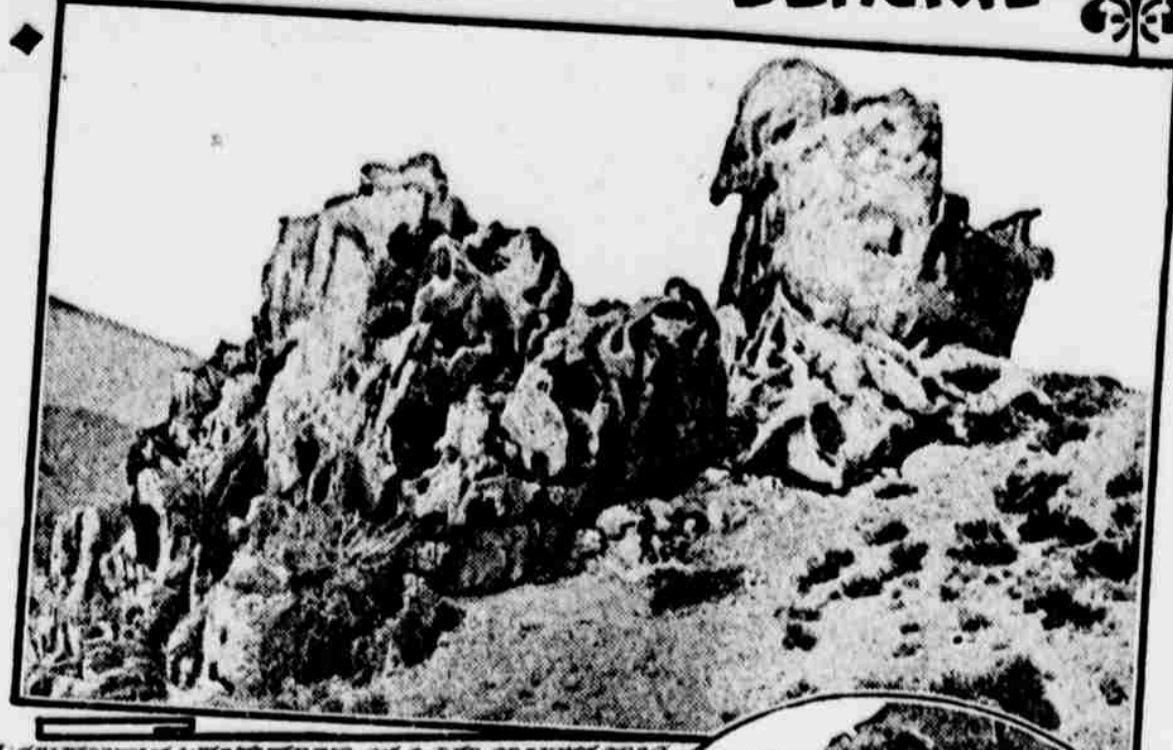
# GROTESQUE HANDI-<sup>6</sup>WORK OF NATURE

A. AND A. J. BLACKIE

EVER since man developed the faculty for carving or molding representations of the objects around him, much of his ingenuity has been devoted to the production of grotesque forms and faces, as may be seen in the strange collection of gargoyles and other fantastic decorations to be found so plentifully in the architecture of all countries. Yet long before man began toiling with chisel and hammer Nature was at work with very different tools, carving even more interesting shapes in her mountains and rocks, and today she is still at work adding to the collection.

When rambling about one winter in Corsica I came across many striking examples of her handiwork, remarkable not only for their quaint forms, but as examples of a very peculiar process of weathering. In one district where the rocks are principally gray granite, my daughter and I were attracted by the curious appearance of some rocks sharply outlined against the sky on a lonely mountain top, so we started off to investigate.

After a stiff climb through the "maquis," during which the summit of the hill was hidden, we arrived at an open space and were almost startled as we found ourselves suddenly confronted by a sort of nondescript hippopotamus with a most evil leer in his eye, and who cocked his little ear as if to ask what right humans had on the enchanted ground over which he stood sentry. For, indeed, he was only an advance guard, as a little further on a giant sea-lion reared up in indignation to a height of twenty feet with projecting tusks and threatening aspect, while just beyond stood a whole company of weird companions.



1 CAVERNOUS WEATHERING OF A RED GRANITE CRAG



CAVERNOUS WEATHERING IN GRAY GRANITE



3 A SORT OF NONDESCRIPT HIPPOPOTAMUS



A GIANT SEA-LION REARED UP IN INDIGNATION



HARDENED CRUST LEFT BY CAVERNOUS WEATHERING 5



A COUNCIL OF THE ANTE-DILUVIANS 2

We were not to be daunted, however, and essayed to pass the sentry, when he unmistakably and undoubtedly rolled his eye and blinked at us. We both stopped short and stared, but his eye, which had at first been wide open, remained closed in a wicked wink. Had he been superstitious we certainly should not have stayed to investigate. As it was, we found the eye was formed by a hole worn right through the granite, with a projecting piece in the interior forming the eyeball, and as we moved our position the change of angle gradually cut off the light which shone through the eyehole and produced this startling effect. Reassured by this explanation, we braved the sea-lion and approached the main company. "Surely," I exclaimed, "this must have been a council of the antediluvians!" for there on the left was some ancient species of owl ruffling up his feathers and looking askance at something beyond him. On the right, perched on a higher rock, stood a dragon or pterodactyl, while extended on the foreground was what might well pass for a recumbent plesiosaurus.

The sight of this strange assembly, however, had given my daughter a very different idea. She declared it only proved the truth of the old northern legends which tell how "dwarfs" and "trolls," if caught out after sunrise, are turned into grotesque rocks. This mountain top was clearly a place where these weird people held their mighty revels, and, judging from the company around, many reckless revellers had evidently been "caught out late" and had paid the penalty. And here let me say that none of the photographs is "faked" or altered in any way. They represent the rocks exactly as they existed, without any alteration whatever. The mere outward forms of the rocks shown in the first three photographs are indeed remarkable, but we became fascinated with the desire to discover what agencies Nature had employed in producing such results in this hard granite. It was at first very puzzling, but light seemed at length to be thrown on the problem by studying the forms of other rocks in the island.

but not to such an extent, and it is evident that the wasting is taking place most quickly in an upward direction. Now how are we to account for the formation of these caverns?

Among the most common and powerful agents causing the weathering of rocks are rain, frost, and wind, but at those levels in Corsica where the rocks photographed occurred the climate is comparatively dry and hot. There is little rain, and practically no frost. It is clear that what rain there is cannot to any extent gain access to the interior of these caverns, and the same remark applies to the wind. In fact, it was our regular practice to make use of these hollow rocks as shelters in which to sit when out sketching, and very welcome they were when wind and rain assailed us. We often came across a great boulder, hollowed out with just a side entrance, which had been appropriated by a shepherd and made into a convenient hut by building up part of the entrance with a few stones. In the neighborhood of Calvi such rocks were in great demand as pigsties. A little yard ward built round the entrance and the piggies, like the conies, "had their houses in the rocks." More than once we met with cases where a front of masonry had been built onto a large cavern, with windows, doors and all complete, and modern man had again become a cave dweller.

Now this curious weathering, I think, explains the production of the animal forms of our first three photographs.

Turning to No. 4, the sea-lion, it seems practically certain that this was once solid from the lower part of the rock down to the toes, and the remains of the tusks which have eaten this portion away are clearly to be seen on the front of the neck and chest, while the tusks are formed by persistent fragments of hard crust. Similar causes have contributed to the formation of our hippopotamus, No. 3; and the eye itself is a miniature cavern, while several small ones are seen to be commencing on the face and neck. The process will of course go on, and who knows but that it may eventually result in a new instance of the evolution of a horse from the hippopotamus. The same process can likewise be traced in the members of the council in No. 2, and the constitution of the committee will no doubt vary as time goes on.

**PETRIFY WITH THE HANDS.**  
Strange Claims of Paris Woman Is Being Tested by Doctors.

A recent issue of the Paris *Matin* described experiments in the mummification of such things as meat, fish, oysters and oranges, which is claimed can be done by the laying on of hands. A few months ago at Bordeaux Mme. Raynaud is said to have petrified fish, oysters, pieces of meat, oranges and other perishable matter which would soon become putrid. This alleged mummification of matter, which was witnessed by several doctors, is said to have been done simply by the laying on of hands.

A test, the result of which is expected to be decisive, has now been undertaken by Dr. Gaston Durville of Paris. Dr. Socquet, a well-known medical criminologist, gave Dr. Durville the other day a hand cut from the body of a man who had been asphyxiated. Dr. Durville says that he expects within a fortnight to petrify this hand so as to prevent putrefaction.

Three persons—Mme. Raynaud, M. Picot and Dr. Durville—have been endeavoring to "magnetize" the dead hand by the process of imposition of hands. Three senneces, each lasting forty-five minutes, have been held.

Professor Dastre has examined certain matter said to have been mummified at Bordeaux and says it still reeks with microbes of all kinds. Dr. Durville, however, is certain that development of bacteria in dead matter can be retarded by the imposition of hands, which will prevent typhoid fever germs from multiplying.

Mme. Raynaud's first exemplifications of her curious powers are said to have been the petrification of fish, oranges, meat and other perishable matter merely by pressing them between her hands. She is a normal, healthy woman, and her hands show nothing unusual in their appearance.

## MURDER CULT IN AFRICA

Long Juju Is Again Revived by an Aro Chief, Who Defies British Officials.

Cape Town, Africa.—An appalling story of tribal savagery comes from southern Nigeria, where the dreaded Long Juju of Arochoku, which was thought to have been stamped out by the British expedition of ten years ago, has been revived with all its hideous accessories of murder and slavery. Probably on account of the fact that the Long Juju, with its human sacrifices, was thought to have been permanently wiped out after the British expedition, the cult was never declared illegal, and gradually and secretly a powerful Aro chief named Kanu Okoru collected the scattered remnants. He organized a staff of 1,500 messengers, who were perpetually traveling up and down over hundreds of miles of territory.

On arriving in a town the secret messenger would inquire if any of the people were accused of witchcraft or



Typical Believer in Long Juju.

other crime, or if any desired to invoke the aid of the chief oracle, Chuku. Those consulting the oracle were first taken before the head chief, and, after payment of rods equaling in value about \$6.25, were passed on to the officiating priests, where further payment was exacted.

Any townsman nourishing enmity against another bribed the Juju messenger, who thereupon ordered the man to go before the oracle, and the wretched victim went unresistingly to death or lifelong slavery.

In spite of the vigilance of the government, until recently the Aros made most of their wealth through the slave trade. Such was the power of the Juju emissaries that if they only pointed a finger at a man, woman or child the wretched creature had to follow them without thought of hesitation or resistance.

Closely as the dread secrets of the Long Juju were guarded, rumors at length reached the government, and the district commissioner, at great personal risk, made inquiries. Though baffled for a time, he was determined to stamp out the movement, and the cult was made illegal. As a result further arrests were justified, and several of the chief priests were sentenced to death.

In order to avenge their kin relatives of the condemned men poisoned the commissioner's food, but luckily antidotes were at hand and the attempt only resulted in a severe illness. The chief, Kanu Okoru, had safeguarded himself with such skill that it was found impossible to convict him of murder, so while subordinates suffered the extreme penalty, the arch conspirator, who has amassed a fortune of at least \$2,000,000, could only be condemned to three years' imprisonment.

## SENTENCED TO LOVE TEST

Boy and Girl Who Loved at First Sight Ordered by Judge to Woo for Six Months.

Chicago.—Love at first sight and all that sort of thing is romantic, but sometimes the vision is clouded. Judge John R. Newcomer of the municipal court says so. That is why he sentenced a young couple to six months of courtship.

The judge looked benignly down from the bench of the Sheffield avenue court. Before him were Loretta Brown of Kankakee and John Carr, who resides at 6108 North Paulina street.

Cupid had shot his arrows in a street car and they had pierced the hearts of this young couple. It was a case of a glance, a smile and "let's get married." The judge wanted to know all about it.

"Loretta," he said, "would you like to marry Mr. Carr?"

The prospective bride blushed and murmured in affirmative. She started toward her sweetheart, who was smiling and holding out his hands toward her. Then she stopped, for the judge kept on asking questions.

When the questioning was over the smiles had turned to tears. Judge Newcomer was talking about new laws.

"Hasty marriages," he said, "almost always result in hasty divorces. I don't like them. So I sentence you to six months' courtship. The proposed new marriage laws advocate such a plan and I think it a grand idea."

The decision was a shock to Carr. He knew that his was true love, for he was agreeing to marry Loretta regardless of the fact that she had just come from the bridewell.

John could not possibly court Loretta at the prison, so the judge arranged to obtain for her a position as stenographer. Both will begin to serve the courtship sentence.

## MONASTERY OF ZICA

Ancient Edifice in Servia That Was Built in 1207.

Small Chapel of Tenth Century Contains Many Frescoes Perfectly Preserved, Except That Turks Shot the Eyes Out.

Tachatschak, Servia.—The following narrative was written by a woman, who was the first of her sex to visit the Monastery of Zica, near this city. She tells of her experiences in the ancient edifice. It follows:

We got away from Tachatschak at two o'clock for the Monastery of Zica, pronounced Schitscha, which stands high amid the mountains, five kilometers from Kraljevo. It was built in 1207 and is the monastery in which Servian kings are crowned, a special door being made for each and walled up after the ceremony. It was here that King Alexander Obrenowitch, poor unfortunate, was crowned in 1892, and the present King Peter in 1904.

Two hours more of climbing and we arrived at the Cabana of Studentiza, before the monastery gates. Inside, to our surprise, all was clean and well kept—the paths, the green turf, the trees laden with fruit and well cared for, and the beautiful marble church itself with its fine doors and dome. We were immediately received by the archimandrite (bishop), the head of the monastery, who seemed most delighted to see us and told me I was the first stranger woman he had ever received. We were at once taken upstairs into the guest rooms of the convent—a long corridor of clean boards, the only clean rooms I had seen since I left home. Here we took the inevitable slatko and very good silovitz and cabowitz, which is a liquor made from grapes, and then went into the churches—the first and oldest, a small chapel of the tenth century, full of old frescoes, in a perfect state of preservation—except that the Turks shot out the eyes of the saints when they occupied the convent.

There are fourteen or fifteen small chapels—step behind the cathedral built by Opan Urosch, grandson of the holy Simeon, who founded the convent in 1314. The cathedral, of white marble, built in the twelfth century, is the most beautiful monument of old Servia and well worth the long journey to see. Owing to a stupid addition, the beautiful old carved doors



Monastery of Zica, Near Kraljevo, Servia.

are now inside the church, but the entire interior is covered with frescoes depicting the birth of Christ and scenes from the lives of the saints, all very brilliant in color and (owing to the high, dry air, they say) in the most wonderful state of preservation.

The church was built by Stephan Nemanja, king or emperor of Servia in the twelfth century. His son, the holy Sava, brought his bones from the monastery of Chilender on Mount Athos, where he had been buried, and was known by the name of Saint Simeon, and they now repose in a much locked metal casket which the archimandrite, with quite unknown amiability, unlocked for us. First, he laid upon the breast a very holy cross, which he kisses, and kissed what I suppose was the head, for it was covered with an embroidered cloth, and we did likewise. Then we each laid a contribution in the casket, which, as Studentiza is very rich, it probably did not need in the least. It was quite a solemn ceremony, for after we came all the escort, and even the coachman, who as a devout herb had the chance of his life, and afterward regarded us with quite another eye and much added respect.

## FINED FOR TELLING TRUTH

Russian Newspaper Editor Is Fined as Government Aids Famished Sufferers.

London.—The editor of a newspaper in Tomsk, Russia, has been fined \$150 for publishing an article dealing with the destitution of the inhabitants of the district of Tomsk, where hundreds of persons are on the verge of starvation as a result of failure of crops. He was notified that a repetition of "such false reports" would bring three months' imprisonment, without the option of fine. The Russian minister of the interior has approved an appropriation of \$650,000 for the relief of the famine sufferers of Tomsk.