

YOUNG FOLKS COLUMN.

INTERESTING AND INSTRUCTIVE READING.

Cabeza de Vaca, the First American Traveler--A Curious Pig--Sporting Rules for Boys.

Cabeza de Vaca the First American Traveler.

As explorers we cannot give Vaca and Docampo great rank; though the latter's explorations were not contemptible, and Vaca's were of great importance. But as physical achievements the journeys of these neglected heroes can safely be said to be without parallel. They were the most wonderful walks ever made by man. Both men made their records in America, and each made most of his journey in what is now the United States.

Cabeza de Vaca was the first European really to penetrate the then "Dark Continent" of North America; by centuries the first to cross the continent. His nine years of wandering on foot, unarmed, naked, starving, among wild beasts and wilder men, with no more company than three as ill-fated comrades, gave the world its first glimpse of the United States inland, and led to some of the most stirring and important achievements connected with its early history. Nearly a century before the Pilgrim Fathers planted their noble commonwealth on the edge of Massachusetts; seventy-five years before the first English settlement was made in the New World; and more than a generation before there was a single Caucasian settler of any blood within our area, Vaca and his gaunt followers had trudged across this unknown land.

It is a long way back to those days. Henry VIII. was then king of England, and sixteen rulers have since occupied the throne. Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen, was not born when Vaca started on his appalling journey, and did not begin to reign until twenty years after he had ended it. It was fifty years before the birth of Captain John Smith, the founder of Virginia; a generation before the birth of Shakspeare, and two and a half generations before Milton. Henry Hudson, the famous explorer for whom one of our chief rivers is named, was not yet born. Columbus himself had been dead less than twenty-five years; and the conqueror of Mexico had seventeen yet to live. It was sixty years before the world had ever heard of such a thing as a newspaper; and the best geographers still thought it possible to sail through America to Asia. There was not a white man in North America above the middle of Mexico; nor had one ever gone two hundred miles inland in this continental wilderness, of which the world knew almost less than we now know of the moon.

The name of Cabeza de Vaca may seem to us a curious one. It means "Head of a Cow." But this quaint family name was an honorable one in Spain, and had a brave winning; it was earned at the battle of Naves de Tolosa in the thirteenth century, one of the decisive engagements of all those centuries of war with the Moors. Alvar's grandfather was also a man of some note, and conquerer of the Canary Islands.

Alvar was born in Xeres de la Frontera, Spain, toward the last of the fifteenth century. Of his early life we know little, except that he had all pull on some consideration wh dudes 27, a mature man, he ca long sailing from Spain as te decades sheriff of the expedition

of six hundred men with which Pantofo de Farvaez intended to conquer and colonize the flowery Land, discovered a decade before by Ponce de Leon.

They reached Santo Domingo, and thence sailed to Cuba. On Good Friday 1528, ten months after leaving Spain, they reached Florida, and landed at what is now named Tampa Bay. Taking formal possession of the country for Spain, they set out to explore and conquer the unguessed wilderness.—C. F. Lammis, in June St. Nicholas.

Sporting Rules for Boys.

WHALING.

I. Never fish for whales in trout streams, unless you have a good strong derrick with which to land such of the monsters as may nibble at your hook.

II. Never attempt to catch whales with hooks made of bent pins. They only aggravate the whales, and are not strong enough to land any but the smallest of leviathans.

III. Angle-worms are not considered good bait for whales, but if you can find no other bait, see to it that the worms are at least sixty-eight feet in length, and weigh not less than two tons.

IV. When you have landed a whale, do not, under any circumstances, attempt to preserve it alive by putting it into a pail, which only unnecessarily prolongs its sufferings.

V. Whales weighing under four tons should be thrown back in order that they may grow larger. The reason for this is that the larger a whale grows, the more valuable he becomes. It is permissible for you to fasten a tag bearing your name upon them, so that those who may chance to catch them later will know that they belong to you.

VI. If a whale when about to be landed manages to get away from you, do not try to restrain him by throwing a net over him, or by jumping into the stream and climbing on his back. A course of this kind is apt to be attended with very great danger.

VII. When a whale blubbers, do not think he is crying because he is afraid of being caught. That isn't why a whale blubbers at all. It is only a sign that he is laughing at you. Boys blubber when they are unhappy. Whales do it because they are amused.

VIII. Do not go hunting for whales simply because you are out of kerosene oil. There are no kerosene-oil whales, and if this is your purpose, you are simply wasting time that might better be spent learning how to read Latin and Greek.

IX. Do not think because a whale wags his tail that he is pleased to see you. Just as his blubbling is a sign of his amusement, so is his wagging tail an indication of his wrath.

X. To attempt to catch whales with a lasso is great folly unless you are anxious to get a bath, and know that you will never enter the water of your own accord.

XI. Don't fish for whales, anyhow. It is dangerous sport for boys.

CARLYLE SMITH.

A Curious Pig.

An account of a curious pig comes from Australia. A Mr. LeMortemore, living at Seriana Creek, Queensland, has lately shot an animal which he describes as a sort of tree-climbing pig. For a number of years wild pigs have been numerous in that locality, and his theory is that the original or common pig has been changed, partly by the necessities of his wild life, into the variety he has discovered.

The captured animal weighs about a hundredweight, and is pretty fat, with bristly brown fur, small black spots, snout and ears like a pig; but the jaw is furnished with front teeth like a rodent; and has also large

canines and powerful back grinders.

"The fore feet are furnished with hooklike claws, but the hind ones with only two hooks upon each hoof. The tail is thick, about a foot long, and highly prehensile, and in a state of rest it is usually carried by the animal in what is known as a 'Flemish coil.' A Flemish coil, I believe, somewhat resembles the figure 8.

This last item about the new Australian pig is impressive. It shows that this pig's ideas about the proper arrangement for a tail are novel and striking, and that he must have devoted some attention to the subject.

This Australian animal has other peculiarities. It is furnished with a pouch, which it appears to use for carrying a supply of food while traveling or migrating to fresh pastures. "In drought the animal climbs trees, and hangs by its tail while it gathers its food by its hook claws."

Mr. LeMortemore intends ensnaring more of these pigs. He declares that the flesh is excellent, "resembling veal and ham pie."

A pig that climbs trees, carries his tail in a Flemish coil and his dinner in a bag, and whose flesh furnishes veal and ham pies, is certainly a novelty, even in Australia, the land of novelties.—Harper's Young People.

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Every European government, except Russia, has already announced that it will participate in the coming international monetary conference. Senator Jones of Nevada will be one of the American conferees.

Anna Hinks, the young daughter of Madam Hall, an Atehison, Kan., fortune teller, disappeared from home, and a grocery clerk, Andrew Tomlinson, was missed at the same time. It is thought that they have eloped.



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