

THE GIANT PURSE CRAB.

He Climbs Coconut Trees and Cracks the Nuts Against Stones.

In the mining bureau may be seen a very fine specimen of the remarkable large land crab known as the purse crab, or Birgus latro, which is well preserved in a glass jar. This is one of the largest species of land crab known. It is sometimes found from 18 to 24 inches in length when fully stretched out, and is capable of erecting itself to the height of nearly a foot from the ground, which it readily does if irritated, retreating and exhibiting to the utmost its powers of offense and defense.

It is somewhat allied to the hermit crab, but having the abdomen or tail shorter, yet very large, on the under side of which it carries its eggs in immense quantities. Its under side is soft and membranous, its upper surface covered with strong plates, which overlap one another as in lobsters. The first pair of legs have large and powerful pincers; the second and third pairs of legs are terminated by a single nail; the pair next to them are a little smaller, with small pincers; the pair of legs nearest to the abdomen are very small, but terminated by rudimentary pincers.

When teased this crab is so powerful in its first claws and legs as to be able to cling to a stick, and can hold its own weight to be carried for over a half hour before letting go. It can travel about as fast backward as forward if pursued. It is generally of a yellowish brown color, its limbs being, however, covered with little blackish projections.

It is never found far from the sea, to which it is said to pay visits in order to moisten its gills, but it always resides on land, and is generally found in holes under the roots of trees, especially of coconut trees, which it prefers, and where it accumulates great quantities of the fibers of the coconut husks, as if to keep itself warm or for a soft bed. As a general thing the purse crab stays in these holes during the daytime and comes out at night.

Its food generally consists of coconuts, also the nuts of a species of palm known as Pandanus odorotissimus, and other nuts, which it climbs the trees to procure, cutting the coconut from the tree with its heavy claws, and after it has cut down two or three it descends and commences to pull the husk from them.

In its manner of dealing with coconuts it exhibits a remarkable instinct, as it always begins to tear off the husk at the end where the eyes are. It then makes a hole through the eye from which the nut would germinate. This is done by striking the fruit with its heavy claw and breaking it sufficiently to admit one of the small legs, by which it scoops out the nut with its small pincers. Sometimes it seizes the nut by one of its great pincers and breaks it against a stone.

The purse crab is found in the mountains and in the more eastern islands of the Indian ocean, as well as on some of the islands of the South Pacific, more especially in the Caroline islands, which are a low coral group.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Hats and Heads.

It has been noticed by Mr. Henry Heath, who sends hats all over the world, from Calcutta to Peru, that different nationalities possess heads of distinctive sizes and shapes. For instance, Germans have very round heads, a peculiarity shared by our own royal family. The average English head is what hatmakers call a good shape—that is, rather long. The Scotch, one is not surprised to learn, are very long headed. Canadians are distinguished by exceptionally large heads. South Americans by very small ones. Australians, again, have rather small heads. The subject is an interesting one, and worth pursuing further if space allowed. The heads of individuals also vary a good deal from time to time, shrinking during illness or mental worry, and generally becoming smaller with advancing years. As to shape, there is such a thing as fashion, but it only affects men; men stick to much the same shape year after year.—Pall Mall Gazette.

Detecting a Thief.

"John Napier," Miss Warrender tells us, "pursued his studies and researches in Merchiston. He was supposed by the vulgar to be deeply versed in magic, and to possess a familiar in the shape of a jet black cock. The story goes that once when some petty thefts had been committed in the castle, of which one of the servants was suspected, Napier brought them all up the winding stairs into a darkened room, where the cock was placed. He commanded them to stroke its back, declaring that it would crow at the touch of the guilty person. During the whole ceremony the cock remained silent, but afterward the hand of the culprit was found to be free from the soot with which the bird's feathers had been liberally sprinkled."

How the People of Sangir Keep Time. The people of Sangir, an island of the Malay Archipelago, keep time by the aid of an hour glass formed by arranging two bottles neck to neck. The sand runs out in half an hour, when the bottles are reversed. Close by them a line is stretched, on which hang twelve sticks marked with notches from one to twelve, with a hooked stick, which is placed between the hour last struck and the next one. One of these glasses keeps the time for each village, for which purpose the hours are sounded on a gong by a keeper.—London Tit-Bits.

A Lucky Boy.

A lad at Annapolis was lying on a lounge reading a novel, when a bullet, fired a quarter of a mile away, came through a door, fell upon his chest and slipped down into his vest pocket, where he found it half an hour later. He thought his brother had hit him with a spoon.—Detroit Free Press.

The Prevailing Ennui.

"You look tired." "I am." "Too many social dissipation?" "No. Not enough."—Puck.

OLD LONDON PICTURED.

COMPARED WITH THE CITY OF TODAY 'T WAS A SORRY SIGHT.

Its Houses Were Dwarfed, Squalid Structures and Easily Pulled Down—The Climate Then Was Colder and More Unbearable—Famine and Pestilence.

Who can rebuild before the eye of the mind a single ordinary dwelling of the vanished London of the middle of the Thirteenth century? It was a dwarfish, squalid structure of such crazy unsubstantiality that, with a stout iron crook and two strong cords, provided by the ward, it might be pulled down and dragged off speedily in case of fire; a structure of one story jutting over a low ground floor, with another jut of eaves above, its roof perchance engrafted with gables, its front bearing an odd resemblance to the back of a couple of huge stairs, and the whole a most rickety, tumbledown, top heavy, fantastical thing. Chimneys were fairly in vogue then, so it had them—squat, square, wide mouthed, faced with white plaster, red tiles or gray pebble work.

Red tiles covered its roof. Its walls were rough planed planks or a wooden framework filled with a composite of straw and clay, buttressed with posts and crossed this way and that with supporting beams, the whole daubed over with whitewash, of which the weather soon made graywash. In front was a stairway—sometimes covered, sometimes not—or a step ladder set slantwise against the wall for an entrance to the upper story.

The doorways were narrow and low, the windows also, and the latter, darkened with overbrows of wooden shutters, propped up from beneath and sticking out like long, slender awnings, were further darkened by shades of parchment, linen or thin shaved horn, for glass came from Flanders, and was costly and rare.

ROMANTIC BUILDING.

Such, joint and seam and tile being loosened into crack and cranny and crevice everywhere, was the dwelling of the London citizen as the eye might see it in the middle of the Thirteenth century. Multiply that dwelling into a tortuous and broken perspective of like buildings, some joined by party walls, some with spaces between, all pent roofed or gable peaked, heavy eaved, stub chimneyed, narrow latticed, awning shuttered, stair-cased, post buttressed, beam crossed, dusky red roofed, dingy white walled, and low under the overhanging vastness of the sky, and you have an ancient London street, which shall be foul and narrow, with open drains, footways roughly flagged and horseway deep with slushy mire, overstrewn with ashes, shards and offal, and smelling abominably.

There were indeed at that period, thinly interspersed here and there, houses of somewhat better description, solidly built of stone and timber, though at best strangely deficient in comfort and convenience, according to the fashion of that most inconvenient and uncomfortable age. Here and there, too, for those were the times of the feudal soldier and priest, rose in dreadful beauty, contrast with the squalid city the architectural grandeur of church and cathedral, or the stately house or palace of bishop or earl. But all around stretched dwellings which our poorest modern house excels, and on those dwellings all evils and discomforts that can befall had their quarry.

Light came dim and sunshine dimly glimmering into their darkened rooms. Summer heats made ovens of them. The old gray family of London fogs rose from the marshes north of the city walls, from the city's intersecting rivulets, from the Thames below, and crept in at every opening to make all dark and chill within. Down their squat chimneys swept the smoke, choking and blinding. Rains such as even rainy England knows not now soaked them through for weeks together.

A TERRIBLE PICTURE.

Cold such as English winters have forgotten now pierced with gripping blast and silent sifting snow to their shivering inmates. Foul exhalations from the filthy streets hung around them an air of poison, or rising from the cesspools, of which every house had one within, discharged themselves in deadly maladies. Lightnings stabbed their roofs or rent their walls, hunting for those they sheltered. Conflagration, lurking in a spark, spread in dragonish flame and roared through them devouring.

Whirlwind swept through them howling, and tossed them down by fifties. Pestilence breathed through them in recurring seasons, and left their rooms agast with corpse. Civic right or intestine war stormed often near them and brought them death and sorrow. Famine arose every few years and walked through them on his way to England, leaving their tenants lean and pale, or lifeless. Often into them broke the midnight robber, singly or in gangs; often to them came the gatherer of taxes or of tithes; upon them hung perpetually all the bloodsuckers, every vampire which an age of ignorance and tyranny could spawn, and in them perished fiendish bigotries, crazy superstitions, brutish illiteracy, and all that darkens and depraves the soul.

For that was the mournful midnight of our mortal life centuries ago. The old, sad stars that governed our conditions still kept their forceful station above the brawl of brutal and internal dreams, and one alone, now risen from Geber's east, hung dewy bright with the world's hope and promise, while science, builder of life that is holy, beautiful and gay, was but a wondrous new born child in Roger Bacon's cell, dreaming of things to come.—Atlantic Monthly.

Drawing the Line.

A native New Zealander was induced to wear a shirt, a paper collar, shoes and a hat, and he almost concluded to eat with a knife and embrace Christianity. Then they asked him to wear suspenders, and he went out, and hanged himself. It was pushing civilization too fast.—Detroit Free Press.

An Innocent Question.

Clockmaker—Why, my good woman, if your clock doesn't go, you must bring me the whole of it; I can do nothing with the pendulum alone. Woman—Ale prosim! Why the whole clock? The clock is all right; it's only the horrid pendulum as won't work.—Wiener Figaro.

The Laborer Should Be Honored.

The real dignity of labor is well symbolized and set forth in those single acts at the beginning or end of a great work which represent to the imagination the whole enterprise.

The corner stone of a great building is generally laid by some official dignitary who, in an unaccustomed apron and with a trowel which he uses clumsily, makes a pretense of doing the actual work of putting the stone in place. Crowds stand about to witness the work, and orations are made and hymns sung.

The knocking away of the prop which sends a vessel off the ways and into the water is an event of equal consequence and interest, because it represents the noble task of constructing a great ship.

When one of the greatest engineering works of all time was completed—the construction of the Pacific railroad—it was regarded as a great honor to drive the last spike that bound the last rail to the earth, and the spike which served at least temporarily for the work was made of silver.

Emperors, kings and presidents start with their own hands the machinery of great industrial exhibitions, themselves typical in a high degree of the importance of manual labor.

In a certain sense it would be more fitting that these ceremonies, which concentrate into a single instant's act long periods of hard labor, should be performed by one of the real workmen who are engaged upon the enterprise. It is they who do the work, and they might well claim that the honor of the key ceremony belongs to them.

This was what was done, indeed, when the first blow of the pick was struck in the construction of the buildings for the World's Fair of 1893 at Chicago.—Youth's Companion.

Where Gold Goes To.

A considerable part of all the gold which goes to India never returns. Having been obtained in the west by the sale of exported productions, it is retained in the east as realized profits, wealth stored up, and to a moderate extent for use in the arts, for the rest as a representative of value on the credit of which traders buy and sell with the bills of exchange they issue and the book credits they open, and settle up the differences with the silver money of the country.

But the vast stock of gold accumulated there undergoes no diminution. There is no ebb and flow under the reciprocal action which commerce enforces in the case of countries trading together on a common metallic basis. The three millions sterling (or thereabout) of gold which India annually adds to her store are, under the monetary law of that country, just as much lost to the nations of the west, by being withdrawn from the general commerce of the world, as if the money had been lent to a South American republic.

Between the years 1835 and 1889 (April) this depletion amounted in value to £130,392,758. Between that date and the month of September, 1890, a further accumulation, to the value of £5,069,272, took place, bringing this portion of the gold treasure of India up to a value exceeding £135,250,000.—Blackwood's Magazine.

Ibsen's Curious Figure.

I cannot recollect having ever met a man of more peculiarly striking appearance than Mr. Ibsen. He reminded me to a certain extent of those fabulous creatures the gnomes, who play such an important part in Scandinavian mythology, and are vividly described in the old songs of the Edda. He is a man of less than medium size, but very heavily set. The upper part of his body is very large in proportion to his lower limbs, but still small in comparison with that immense head, which, with its bushy hair, white as snow, overtops the compact bodily frame.

A heavy beard of the same color would encircle the face if it was not for the fact that Ibsen keeps his chin shaven, a distinction also enjoyed by the upper lip. I wonder if Mr. Ibsen knows that by wearing his beard in the manner described he shows a very strong chin and a mouth of classic delineation. Irresistible is the charm of his eyes, which are of a deep blue, like the color of the sea on the shores of his beautiful native north land.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

A Glance at London Society.

Take the vast London society. It is a stiff-necked dress parade in which one meets one's best friend once a fortnight and strangers in proportion. People never know each other well and are almost suspicious of those they do know. Invitations are sent out from one to two months ahead and people come and go without making a visible impression, and there is none of that merry familiarity which makes American life so enjoyable.

A dinner is a set affair, with no general conversation and a total absence of what the French call esprit; in fact, most of the Englishman's pleasures are of the macintosh and umbrella kind. The Londoner is always guarded and suspicious of the stranger, and I don't wonder, considering some of the Americans he has had shoved upon him. But, after all, there are too many people in London; it is impossible to expect freedom, familiarity and hospitality among such a multitude.—Cor. Chicago News.

It Can't Be.

A New York surgeon who has made a specialty of nerve centers says the music of a hand organ is pleasant to at least ninety-nine out of every hundred people, falling upon the nerve centers and tympanum of the ear with soothing effect. He says that when you meet a person that cries out against this sort of music you can safely put him down as a falsifier and deceiver.—Detroit Free Press.

As you walk upon the streets how many people you meet that are troubled with boils, pimples and eruptions on the skin, experience has shown us that no remedy on the market will remove them so quickly and improve the complexion as Haller's Sarsaparilla and Burdock's Compound. It will cure nervous debility, Erysipelas, biliousness, female weakness, scrofula Syphilis and all kindred diseases. For sale by all druggists.

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OPERA HOUSE CORNER

F. S. White, the new deputy oil inspector, went to Omaha to-day.

The P. E. O. society will meet at Mrs. J. P. Young's to-morrow afternoon at 2:30.

John Duke went to Omaha this morning to visit his brother Elbert for a few days.

Mrs. Judge Vinyard and Mrs. Robt. Falkner of Hastings are visiting Mr. and Mrs. Fred Latham.

"The Fair" has the reputation of being the cheapest place in town—on ribbons, laces and embroideries.

Frank Ellenbaum of the Sixth street meat market is in South Omaha to-day looking after some fine beef cattle.

The young folks social at the Presbyterian church last night is spoken of as a very pleasant affair which was largely attended.

Uncle Frank White was down at Steve Davis' oil warehouse this morning smelling the coal oil barrels in order to get himself in trim for his new duties as inspector.

Bock beer day is being celebrated by all the devotees of gambrinus in the usual fashion. Bock beer is on tap at all the saloons and a rushing business is done in this olden time beverage.

You ought to see Dave Babbington's new Gem ice cream freezer, a daisy and can be carried in a fellow's pocket, that is if the pocket is large enough. If the girls get onto the fact that Dave has ice cream in his pocket, he will be more popular than ever with the fair ones.

Mr. T. C. Shepherd, with a force of men, has been busy for the past week planting shrubbery and making flower beds for Ed Oliver, which has turned his handsome grounds into a veritable park. Mr. Shepherd is an artist in this line and ought to devote all his time to landscape gardening.

L. E. Karnes sent a copy yesterday of his book, on the D. of R. degree of odd fellowship to a prominent member of the craft at Arcata California. Mr. Karnes' book is one of the neatest volumes we ever saw, all the diagrams and printing being pen work of a work of a very artistic kind.

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Rock Bluffs.

George Churchill keeps a grocery store, and though of no large proportions is doing a satisfactory trade.

But little remains of this once flourishing little village to indicate the importance of its former self, yet there is some business carried on.

Dr. Reynold's looks after the physical maladies of the people, and eleven years' practice has established him in the confidence of the people.

The mental training of the youth is under the direction of Professor Knott, who is an excellent teacher and has the school in good working order.

Fred Patterson is the post master and runs a grocery store in connection. Fred is an old settler, having grown from boyhood days here, and holds the office of justice of the peace.

Your correspondent visited the antiquated village of Rock Bluffs and found a number of readers of THE HERALD. We say antiquated, not out of derision, but because it is one of the oldest landmarks of Nebraska, having been an important town in the territorial days.

The spiritual welfare of the people is cared for by Rev. Nichols, pastor of the M. E. church at this place and Union. Taking it all in all the people here are of a contented mind, and seem to live easily and undisturbed by anything. THE HERALD is read of course by all and they are consequently posted on the current events of the day.

Joseph Shera is the pioneer merchant of the place. He began business in the identical building he now occupies twenty-six years ago. He is now doing a good business, carrying a large and complete stock of general merchandise, and as he pays no rent or clerk hire he is able to duplicate Plattsmouth prices. Mr. Shera shows his appreciation of THE HERALD by continuing his patronage year after year.

Cough Syrup.

Koch's Lymph is good in its place but no remedy has been put on the market and had such marvelous sales in so short a time as Haller's Sure Cure Cough Syrup. We guarantee it to cure any cough, cold, bronchitis or sore throat. For sale by all druggists.

Will you suffer with Dyspepsia and Liver Complaint? Shiff's Vitalizer is guaranteed to cure you.

Liniment

There are many liniments on the market now that are good for some purposes but only one that will heal barb wire cuts effectively, and that is Haller's Barb Wire Liniment. If your horse or stock is cut buy a bottle and witness the wonderful results. For sale by all druggists.

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