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A PREY TO THE VULTURES.

The Terrible Death of an English Sahib in East India.

He was very drunk, says the *Irish Times*, lying out prostrate on the Nulla sward, slippery with fallen fir threads; his body inclined downward. He appeared unconscious; his head, nestling luxuriously upon a bed of wild scented violets, was laid stiffly back; his feet entangled propitiously in a low, prickly bush, while his arms, crossed protectingly over the upper part of his face, almost hid his features from the prying ray that stealingly poured in through a small gap in a huge fir branch overhead. Once turning unconsciously over on his right side he drew in with his heavy, repulsive breathing a breath of the violated flowers, but they, seemingly at variance with his intoxicated sense of fragrance, sent him back again, though uncomplainingly.

Many hours passed, leaving the prostrate man in an increased state of helplessness. An unusual chill setting in toward evening, quite consistent, however, with the changeful tenor of a November day, wrapt over him imperceptibly. Then, alone in the darkening branches, a gathering of those hungry, weird vultures of the "one hills" drew together in hungry discourse, evidently for a purpose.

At about this turn of the evening a small Mohammedan shepherd boy was passing on his way home with his father's flock of goats. Observing the vultures, he antagonistically threw up among them a shower of stones from a near brook and then perceiving the prostrate sahib, he set off at a frightened pace until, having gained sufficient time to give him the advantage of a probable chase, he turned about and pelted him.

The evening had grown into night, the night into gray morning, when the same shepherd returned with his flock along the same pathway, traversed by him backward and forward when no snow blocked the way. Passing the spot where he had left the sahib the night previous, he looked down and found him still there—a skeleton.

The Longest Day.

It is quite important, when speaking of the longest day of the year, to say what part of the world we are talking about, as will be seen by the following list, which tells the length of the longest day in several places. How unfortunate are the children in Tornea, Finland, where Christmas day is less than three hours in length. At Stockholm, Sweden, it is eighteen and one-half hours in length. At Spitzbergen the longest day is three and one-half months. At London, England, and Bremen, Prussia, the longest day has sixteen and one-half hours. At Hamburg, in Germany, and Dantzig, in Prussia, the longest day has seventeen hours. At Wardbury, Norway, the longest day lasts from May 21 to July 22 without interruption. At St. Petersburg, Russia, and Tobolsk, Siberia, the longest day is nineteen hours and the shortest five hours. At Tornea, Finland, June 21 brings a day nearly twenty-two hours long, and Christmas one less than three hours in length. At New York the longest day is about fifteen hours, and at Montreal, Canada, it is sixteen hours.—*Kansas Farmer.*

White Ants in Central Australia.

A traveler in central Australia has discovered that the surface of the country has been greatly changed by what may appear at first thought a ridiculous agency—the white ants. On plain and in thickets their nests are so numerous that it is difficult to drive among them. The clay with which the nests are built is, when cemented with resinous matter, as hard as brick, and when the nests fall to pieces they form clay flats, almost impervious to water and not easily cut up by traffic.

QUEER THINGS IN HORNS.

As Different from Cows' and Other Ordinary as from the Fabled Unicorn.

"There are a good many queer things to be told about horns," said Osteologist Lucas. "Take the horn of the rhinoceros, for example. It is nothing more than a protuberance composed of agglutinated hair. You cut it in two, and, examining its structure under the microscope, you find it is made up entirely of little tubes resembling hair tubes. Of course these are not themselves hairs, but the structure is the same. The horns of the African rhinoceros sometimes grow to the length of four feet. From them the Dutch Boers make ramrods and other articles. You may remember that the handle of the ax used by Umslopogaas in 'Allan Quatermain' was a rhinoceros horn. In old times rhinoceros horns were employed for drinking cups by royal personages, the notion being that poison put into them would show itself by bubbling. There may have been some truth in the idea, inasmuch as many of the ancient poisons were acids and they would decompose the horny material very quickly.

"Several species of rhinoceroses, now extinct and only found in a fossil state, used to exist which had no horns at all. The name, meaning as it does 'horned nose,' is rather a misnomer in their case. Several kinds of rhinoceros in Africa have two horns, one behind the other, but the extinct rhinoceros, known as the dyceratherium, had a pair of horns on its nose side by side. Many of the giant reptiles of long ago had enormous horns. The great lizard known as the triceratops had a big horn over each eye and a little one on its nose. The dinoceras and the tinoceras, gigantic mammels of the tertiary epoch, had three pairs of prominences on their heads which are believed to have supported horns. However, the material of which horn is composed of quickly decays, being largely composed of gelatine and other animal matter, so that these appendages are apt to be found absent when the fossil bones of beasts which had them are found.

"Some fishes have horns, which are actually outgrowths of bone on their heads. The box-fish, which inhabits the warm waters of the globe—a little fellow 6 or 8 inches long—has horns an inch in length. Birds have horns also sometimes. The horned screamer (which is related to the duck) has a single horn attached to its skull, springing from a cartilaginous base and curving upward. It is really a modified feather, though a true horn.

"Plenty of reptiles have horns. Lizards are very commonly provided with them. There are chameleons with three horns like the ancient triceratops. Horned toads have a sort of crest of four horns on the back of their heads. There is a small African snake which has two horns. No horned tortoise now exists, but a fossil specimen was found a while ago on Lord How's Island, in the Southern Pacific, which had four horns on its crest, and resembles a cross between a horned toad and a snapping turtle. Doubtless you have often heard of human beings with horns. Such appendages in their case are abnormal developments of bone."—*Washington Star.*

TEN DAYS OF HORROR.

A Miner, Working a Claim, Is Lost, Underground, Without Food or Light.

A miner by the name of Fraser had a fearful experience about a week ago, in an abandoned gold mine near Georgetown, Cal., in which he was working a claim alone. He was saved by a party of friends who had gone in search of him.

In telling of his mishap, Mr. Fraser said to a N. Y. *Journal* correspondent:

"At the entrance of the tunnel I lighted my candle and proceeded without any mishap to the claim, some 4,000 feet from the entrance to the tunnel. I commenced to drill a hole for blasting, but had worked only a short time when I accidentally knocked down my candle extinguishing it. I then attempted to right it, but the match would not ignite. I tried another, and another, with the same result, until the entire bunch was exhausted.

"I then knew I was doomed to remain where I was for at least a week before anybody would search for me. I was foreman in the same mine in 1859, and had worked there more or less ever since, so I was familar with its interior; but to reach an opening 4,000 feet distant through deviating tunnels, over excavations and piles of debris, without a ray of light, I knew was almost hopeless. It was also useless to remain where I was, and I felt I must be moving, so I set out.

"For the first four hundred feet I got along very well, but after traveling, or rather creeping, that distance, I fell into an excavation and lost my bearings, after which I wandered aimlessly about.

"I usually take my lunch into the mine with me, but that morning, not feeling very well, I took nothing. All I had was the piece of candle, and of this I nibbled sparingly occasionally, and felt no evil effects therefrom.

"Physically I suffered most from cold and thirst. What I suffered mentally I can not describe. Part of the time it seemed as if I were surrounded by hundreds of candles; then sometimes I could see the sky dotted with stars with occasional clouds floating by. While I knew this was false, yet it seemed so real that I was alarmed lest I was losing my reason. Altogether, there has never been gold enough taken from the hill to hire me to pass through such an experience again."

AT THE MOMENT OF DEATH.

Some Terrible Pictures of the Last Struggle in Doomed Pompeii.

Some years ago, in a small street, the workmen employed in the excavations at Pompeii discovered an empty space of an unusual form, in which were some skeletons, says the N. Y. *News.* Before disturbing them they called Signor Florelli, who was fortunately at hand. A singularly happy thought struck him. He had the empty space filled with liquid plaster of Paris and repeated the process in the case of some other openings which presented a similar appearance. As soon as the plaster was hardened the surrounding ashes were removed and displayed the perfect casts of four human bodies.

All four are now in the museum there, and a more singular and affecting sight is perhaps not to be seen in the whole world. The plaster was hardened around the ashes so perfectly in shape of what may be termed the mold formed by the fallen ashes round the living bodies that the whole aspect of the dying frame is preserved, even to the minutest details, except that here and there the bones of the skeleton within are partially uncovered. Egyptian mummies are bare, black and hideous, and arranged in an artificial posture for their burial, while in the exhumed Pompeiians we see human beings in the very act of dying.

One of them is the body of a woman, close to whom were found a large number of coins, two silver vases, some keys and some jewels, which she was carrying with her when the falling ashes arrested her flight. It is easy to trace her head-dress and the material of her clothing, and on one of her fingers are two silver rings. Her hands were so clasped in agony that the nail had pierced the flesh. With the exception of her legs the whole body is swollen and contracted. It is plain that she strove violently in her dying struggle. Her attitude is that of the last agony and not that of death. Behind her lay another woman and a girl evidently of humble rank.

The elder of the two, possibly the mother, has an iron ring on one of her fingers. The signs of a dying struggle are evident, but the death seems to have been easier than in the case of the victim last described. Close to her lies the girl, almost a child in age. The details of her dress are preserved with a startling faithfulness. One can see the material and stitching of her frock, the unmended rents in her long sleeves, her dress over her head, to ward off the torrent of ashes, and falling headlong on her face had rested her head on one of her arms, and so died apparently without a struggle.

The fourth body is that of a large and powerful man who had sat down to die with his arms and legs straight and fixed. His dress is completely preserved, his trousers are close, his sandals are laced to the feet, with nails in their soles. On one finger is an iron ring; his mouth is open, and shows that he had lost some of his teeth; his nose and cheeks are strongly marked; the eyes and hair have disappeared, but the mustache remains. The whole sight is tragic to the last degree. After the lapse of eighteen centuries the terrible death seems to be enacting itself before us with all its appalling sufferings.

The Beggars of Paris.

A clever Frenchman has just been taking the statistics of the charities of Paris, which are immense in volume, and he finds that three-fourths of the colossal sum which they represent is absorbed by professional beggars. He gives a very amusing account of the devices which they adopt for getting this enormous sum, and for living in idleness upon it, and his conclusion is that the whole system of almsgiving must be reformed. If something is not done soon he thinks that the deserving poor will be entirely crowded out by the fakirs. There are well-known mendicants in Paris who have plied the trade until they have become rich, and who are yet undisturbed by the police.

NAKED FIJIANS.

An Isle Where the Natives Retain Their Primitive Simplicity.

Though missionaries have been laboring for years on the Fiji Islands, and the large European settlement at Suwa has served to spread civilized customs, yet there is one of the islands, never visited by travellers, where the natives still retain their pristine simplicity. On this island, Lambesse, an English company has just secured 18,000 acres of land, which is being cleared for a sugar plantation. Lambesse lies back of Suwa, and to reach it a ship has to sail through a very difficult pass of the great sea reef. The schooner Corsair, which took a load of lumber from here to the sugar company, has just returned, and Capt. William Colby tells some interesting stories of these Fijians.

"We found them," said he, "going around just as Adam and Eve did—stark naked. So far as we could see, neither sex felt the slightest shame. Our vessel was a great curiosity, and as she lay in the harbor hundreds of them came swimming and clambered all over the deck and rigging. They would always come in a party of a dozen or more, and they would make a great splashing in order to scare away the sharks. These monsters will attack one man, but they are frightened away by the noise of many. Most of the men have but one wife, though the chiefs sometimes have more. The women are chaste. When they swarmed up the side of the vessel the sailors were much amused, but if any one attempted the slightest liberty with a woman she would jump over the rail and swim ashore.

"One day the Queen and a dozen of her court ladies swam out to us. She differed from them only in that she wore about her waist a girdle with a small apron woven of some sort of fibre. I offered her a pound of tobacco for it, and without the slightest hesitation she took it off and gave it to me.

"The natives are very fond of tobacco, and pay in that form is about the only thing that will induce them to work. There is no need of clothing, and if they open their mouths food will fall in. At first I was very conscientious about giving full pounds of tobacco, but when my supply ran short I began giving two plugs for a pound. I was surprised that no objection was made to the short weight until I found that the missionaries give only one plug for a pound.

"The missionaries have not produced any deep effect, though the natives are very pious and go to church several times a day. Church dues are collected, not in money, but in produce, and the church is known in the native tongue by the material in which the revenues are paid. Thus, the English Church is the cocoanut meat church; the Presbyterians have the cocoanut oil church, and the Catholics the dried shell fish church."—*St. Louis Globe-Democrat.*

PAP PRICE WAS PIQUED.

Had Lincoln Not Favored the Blairs the General Would Have Been Loyal.

"General Sterling Price would never have gone into the Confederacy if Lincoln had offered him a Federal command." Judge Charles D. Drake said this, and said it with a great deal of positiveness, according to the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat.* "Sterling Price," he continued, "was at heart a Union man. He presided at a strong Union meeting where I made a speech the year before the war."

"Why didn't Lincoln secure Price?" was asked.

"Because," replied Judge Drake, "he had bad advisers regarding Missouri affairs at the beginning of the war. He appointed Bates a member of his Cabinet, expecting to strengthen the Administration in Missouri. The President thought that Bates was a strong man when he wasn't. He was only an ordinary lawyer."

"How did Lincoln happen to make such a mistake, Judge?"

"He listened to the Blairs, I suppose. He ignored the real Republican element in Missouri."

Judge Drake is living in Washington. After the stirring times in Missouri he was appointed Chief Justice of the Court of Claims here, and served till long after the retiring age. He has retired, but, is the most vigorous man past eighty to be seen at the national capital. He has recently completed his recollections of the war period in Missouri, but when he is asked if he intends to publish them he says:

"I may; some time."

Much of the historical matter relating to the last year of the war in Missouri is now being arranged for publication at the War Department. There is nothing just like it anywhere else in the war records. "Only the men who lived through it have an appreciation of what the war was in Missouri," Judge Drake says. "It was terrible." And any one perusing the volumes about to appear will re-echo the Judge's words, "It was terrible."