

# THE ISLAND OF SARDINIA

A Paradise for Sportsmen and Anglers—Curious Monuments That Are Believed to Antedate the Pyramids.

Caprera, Sardinia, Special Correspondence, April 3, 1881.—It is an unaccountable fact that while scientists and antiquarians have for centuries been searching far and digging deep for curious things, they have passed almost unnoticed this easily accessible island with its prehistoric monuments and "tombs of the giants," and scattered all over Sardinia are thousands of nuraghi, or aboriginal sepulchers, which are unquestionably among the oldest structures in the world—the works of races which vanished from the earth so long ago that even their names are forgotten.

That this insignificant island in the Mediterranean should possess a class of monuments peculiar to itself is an illustration of the fragmentary nature of society in the ancient world. The talayots of the near-by Balearic islands, the aboriginal monuments of nearer Malta, Sicily, Italy, the Celtic remains at Stonehenge and Avebury, and other relics of early European races—all differing from each other, but bearing some points of resemblance—are none of them in the least like the nuraghi of Sardinia. They crown the summits of natural hills and artificial mounds, hundreds and hundreds of them; and to describe one is to describe all of them, as, except in size, they vary in no single particular.

A nuraghi is always a round tower, in the shape of an immense bee hive, or truncated cone, with sides sloping at an angle of 10 degrees to the horizon. Its dimensions vary from 20 to 100 feet in height, with precisely the same measurement in diameter. It is composed of rough masses of the large stones peculiar to the locality, placed in regular horizontal layers, the largest boulders at the bottom, and gradually diminishing in size as they mount upward. The stones bear no marks of the chisel, but they appear to have been rudely wrought by some heavy blunt instrument (perhaps another stone), which served the ancients for a hammer. The inside is always occupied by circular chambers one above another, according to the number of stories, constructed of projecting stones, forming a dome, with the section of an arch. The chambers occupy only one-third of the interior space, the rest being taken up with double walls, between which a ramp staircase ascends to the top of the tower. Each nuraghi was originally surrounded by a high wall, of which now only fragments remain. Generally it stands alone, but occasionally they are found in groups, to which access is gained by a doorway in the central tower. They are absolutely without any architectural ornament or image, sculpture, inscription, to indicate their origin and purpose.

The pyramids, whose mysteries are partially unveiled, the nuraghi furnish not a single hint by which their age or history may be discovered. It is certain, however, that they are of great antiquity, because in several places the piers of Roman aqueducts and bridges, themselves now in ruins, rest upon the stumps of desecrated nuraghi, and the earliest classical writers allude to them as unguessable mysteries even in their day. Some of the stones in the lower courses weigh many tons each, yet are arranged with perfect accuracy. Sardinians believe them to have been the

## Work of Giants

who are said to have once inhabited the island; but more probably the monuments are the results of unpaid labor, exacted by despotic chiefs or instigated by religious devotion. At any rate, their rude but massive cones have survived those shocks of time and vicissitudes of empire which destroyed the magnificent edifices of Babylon and Nineveh, Tyre and Thebes.

There are a good many of these nuraghi in the neighborhood of Sassari, and we prolonged our visit another day in order to explore the most perfect specimen, which stands, a mute and solitary sentinel, on its mound about four miles from the city. The method of transit was a Sardinian carriage—a ponderous sort of Black Maria, drawn by three mules harnessed abreast and wonderfully hedged with gaudy tassels and jingling bells. The well-kept road winds between olive groves and the best cultivated fields of the island.

Nowhere in Sardinia are the native costumes seen in all their original picturesqueness as in the suburbs of Sassari. The corsets of the women are bright with rainbow colors, gold embroidery and silver buttons; and the men wear a black jacket over a long waistcoat reaching to the knees, white trousers, black gaiters and long hanging cap like an exaggerated Phrygian bonnet.

We found the tomb rising out of a dense thicket of shrubs, with tufts of grass growing in the crevices and crannies of its old, old walls. Its entrance is so low that one is obliged to almost crawl in on hands and knees, the lintel being a single stone, weighing at least two tons, supported by protruding jambs. This nraughi is of only one story, twenty-five feet high, tapering upward till its apex is formed by a single stone. The interior is in perpetual shadow, no light being admitted except through the low passage in the double walls. Around the sides of the chamber four recesses are worked in the solid masonry, each about five feet high, three feet deep and three feet wide. Not a vestige of bone or dust remains to show that the dead slept in those gloomy cells before the dawn of history. How strange it is that the work of man endures ages after the hands that wrought are turned to dust—after even their dust has disappeared!

At no small risk we scrambled between the crumbling walls, up heaps of stones that once were stairs, to the top of the sepulcher—marvelling by what means that ponderous slab was raised which caps the cone. The view is fine from the summit—of the green Sassari plain, the gray battlemented walls of the ancient city; its towers and domes and tall white houses rising out of dusky olive groves, and away to the west the shimmering Mediterranean and the bold outlines of Asinari island.

Among many other relics of antiquity in Sardinia are the monoliths, or stone obelisks, known to the natives as *pietra-fixa* and *corda-lunga*. They are from

six to eighteen feet high, of conical outline and swelling gradually in the middle; not unlike the Celtic remains, except that these never had any impost horizontal stone, like the trilithons of Stonehenge. Probably they are the relics of phallic worship, that of the sexes—the creed held by all the heathen Syrian-Arabian peoples.

Most interesting of all are the sepulchres de los gigantes, or "tombs of the giants," found everywhere in Sardinia. These are a series of large stones, placed together without cement, so as to inclose a trench from fifteen to forty feet long and from three to six feet deep, covered with immense slabs of stone. The trench is always dug from northwest to southeast, and at the southeast end rises a large, upright headstone from ten to fifteen feet high, varying in form from square, elliptical or conical to that of three-fourths of an egg, and always near the base is an aperture about eighteen inches square. On each side of this strong headstone commences a series of separate stones, irregular in size and shape, but forming an immense arc. No doubt these were graves in some forgotten time, but what manner of people made them none can tell. The earliest forms of sepulcher of which we have any knowledge are of upright stones with superincumbent slabs, such as the Dravidian *kstuvams* and the ancient tombs of Greece. As to the story of giants, there are many traditions concerning the former existence of a colossal race in Sardinia, as well as in the neighboring islands.

Its scanty population and rugged mountain ranges, with dark forests between, make Sardinia a very Paradise for Hunters:

While its many rivers and salt lagoons, and the deep, still channels between the islands that line the coast, abound in fish, Railroads and well-kept highways connect the towns and cities, but one has not far to go in any direction from the beaten paths to enter primeval wilderness. Beyond the vineyards and cultivated plains are vast upland plateaus covered with tall myrtles and heaths and branching arbutus, interspersed with magnificent groves of cork trees, festooned with blossoming creepers.

Then comes the forests, the pride of the island—chestnuts, oaks, beeches, larches—with dense thickets beneath and interlacing vines above, making perpetual twilight which no ray of sunshine penetrates. Higher and higher climb the forests to the central region of mountain ridges, which inclose a sublime amphitheater of shelving and precipitous cliffs, rocks and pinnacles, brawling torrents and hanging woods. This is the haunt of red deer and mouflon, both lovers of lofty solitudes. The forests are full of partridges and many kinds of birds, and the barren plateaus are literally alive with hares and wild boars—the latter fattening upon the long, fibrous roots of the aspidi, whose beautiful yellow flowers flourish where nothing else will grow. Were it not for its undeserved reputation for unhealthfulness, Sardinia would be thronged with sportsmen from all parts of Europe.

The story has gone abroad that its climate is deadly to foreigners. The truth is that from June till October the coast districts of the southeast should be avoided on account of malaria—here called intemperie—which resembles a double distilled combination of Roman fever, Michiganague and Santiago calentura. The strange thing about it is that while adults who have become "seasoned" to the marshy districts can remain in them with impunity the whole year through, children and newcomers invariably fall victims to intemperie; and then the matter of life or death is a question of survival of the fittest. But this occurs only in a small portion of the island and during the few months above named. The malaria is caused by overflowing mountain torrents in springtime, which bring down immense quantities of vegetable matter to ferment and decompose in the coast lagoons.

Northern and Central Sardinia remain exceptionally salubrious the year around, with dry, transparent atmosphere and really delightful climate. Owing to the latitude, the winters are never severe, even in the mountains; and the summer heat is less excessive than that on the neighboring coast of Italy. Especially during December and January the traveler finds here the very perfection of weather. February is apt to be a month of continual rain. Spring manifests itself with full luxuriance toward the end of March; and from that time till midsummer nobody need complain of the healthfulness of Sardinia.

The least important of this too long neglected country is the small islets that cluster close around it, like buds on the parent stem. There are hundreds of them, from the size of a bed blanket to a respectable farm; and though comparatively few of them are fit for cultivation, all are of some use, as pasture ground, salt beds or the homes of fishermen. The largest and most fertile island, and naturally most populous, is San Antonio, on the southern coast of Sardinia, where it forms the western wall of the Gulf of Palmas. So very narrow is the deep-sea passage which separates it from the mainland that it is crossed by a Roman bridge and an ancient aqueduct. San Antonio is only about eight miles long by three wide, but it supports three or four thousand people—the majority of whom turn their honest pennies in the time-honored occupation of smuggling and wrecking.

The Buccinelli islands, on the northeast of Sardinia, are rocky, waterless and barren, but of considerable importance as commanding the Strait of Bonifacio. They have no land worth cultivating, nor even pasture for cattle, but are famous hunting grounds for goats and rabbits, chief among the Buccinelli are the historic islets of Maddalena and Caprera, the latter famous as

## Garibaldi's Home

In exile, the Italian patriot bought the island and built a home on it, early as 1854, and twenty years later it became his prison. During his ill-starred attempt to stir up revolt in the papal states he was wounded and taken prisoner at Asina-Langa, and soon afterward was banished to Caprera and forbidden to leave it without express permission from the Italian government. Here he spent the evening of his life in contented simplicity, and died in June of 1882. It is characteristic of the Latin temperament that after his death the Italian nation made a saint and hero of him, gave him the most imposing funeral that could be devised and honored his memory in every possible way. Our last glimpse of Sardinia was of the little home in which the modest patriot spent so many years. A garden of artificial soil surrounds the house, and from a great rock behind it

may be had a beautiful prospect of shining sea and encircling mountains. A few years after Garibaldi's death his family ceded Caprera to the state, on condition that a hospital for seamen be erected upon it and the home of the original owner be forever preserved.

—Fannie H. Ward.

## FOR THE HORSE-BREEDER.

### Points From a Sound Minnesota Authority.

Dr. Currier of this state is one of the soundest authorities in the West on practical horse breeding. In a recent talk he said he is a believer in something of the nature of a kindergarten for young colts. He liked to begin the education of the colt when not more than a day old.

First, catch the colt and hold him by putting one arm in front and one back of him. The pivotal point of action is the center of the body, raise him in front and he tries to go backward. Fasten him at the rear and he tries to go forward. We should understand the law, which is a part of the nature of the colt, when we try to govern him. You can easily hold the colt if you place one arm under the neck the other under the ham. Handle the colt first on one side, then on the other, then give him a lump of sugar. He may not eat it at first, but pass it across his mouth and he will soon learn to like it.

You have now shown the colt your power over him, and that you do not wish to hurt him. Next give him a lesson in the use of the halter. If you put the halter on him and pull, he goes back. To counteract this, place a strap around his body just in front of the hind legs. Attach a rope to this and run it through a ring in the halter. When the colt goes back, pull him up to you, then give him some sugar.

When you are able to handle the colt well with the halter, give him some lessons in driving. Let the old horse teach the colts their first lesson, and to do this I take a pair of old carriage wheels on an axle. To these are clamped two wooden bars, fourteen feet long, about two feet from the ends; the longest ends, extending in front, make the thills for the old horse. A cross-bar is placed just in front of the wheels, extending out far enough to hitch the colts on either side of the old horse. The colts are hitched to light bars placed in front of the horse, with ropes arranged at the side to keep the colts in place. They soon learn from the old horse what to do, and they get used to hearing the wheels roll behind them, so that they are not afraid when hitched to a wagon.

Stallions should not be tied by the head in narrow stalls, or even kept continually in box stalls or small yards, but should be worked or driven daily, to sustain the vigorous digestion that comes from muscular exercise, and get the fresh air and sunshine, all of which are as necessary to the health of the horse as for the human family. All the usefulness of the horse consists in his action, movement and work; they are comparatively worthless when idle boarders on our hands—feed, care and muscular energy are thrown away. It would be far better if stallions were kept at work every day, out of season. If owners of broad mares would insist on patronizing only the sires that are in the harness and kept at work daily, the result would be profit to the owners of stallions and also to the partners, as the offspring would be stronger, and there would be an improvement in the feet and legs of our horses; also in endurance and constitution.

## Anecdotal.

"I find myself too poor," faltered Sir Walter Raleigh, "to keep a servant!"

"Well?" rejoined the good Queen Bess, with frondeur, for she chanced to be closer than two sticks that day.

"Your majesty," quoth the courtier, "if I have no servant, who, pray, is to throw an ever of water over me as I enjoy my pipe, exclaiming: 'Where there is smoke there is fire?'"

Even the Tudor could not find it in his heart to stand in the way of Sir Walter's having an anecdotal side to his character, accordingly, albeit, it was with no very good grace, she drew an order upon the royal exchequer.—Detroit Journal.

## The Immortal Hawes Inn.

It was at the Hawes Inn that Scott's learned hero of "The Antiquary," while he waited for the tide of ebb and the evening breeze, to enable him to cross, regaled himself in the sanded parlor on the appetizing bill of fare of "Cullen haddies," mutton chops and cranberry tart.

The Hawes Inn has been immortalized in two romances, for Stevenson made his hero in "Kilmarnock" first smell there the salt of the sea, and started him on his unpremeditated voyage in the "Covenant," which threw them that stolid youth, David Balfour, into the enlivening company of Alan Breck.—Chambers' Journal.

## To Catch 'Em on Both Sides.

Alpine Guide—Here at this cross is the place where the guide Peter fell and was killed. Don't you want to give me a little money for his poor wife and children?

"Oh, yes; but how is it that yesterday, on the other side of the mountain, they showed us a cross for the same guide?"

"That is all right; that is for the travelers who go up on the other side."

## Frank and Free.

"Excuse me," said the very new reporter, getting his notebook and pencil ready, "what is the first thing you would do if you had an income of \$50 per minute?"

"Take another breath," replied the leading citizen. "Say, send me a marked copy of the paper containing this interview, will you?"—Chicago Times Herald.

## Depth of Misery.

"The saddest, most blighted-life case I ever knew," said the major, "was that of a man who received a life-pass over a new railroad."

"How was that?" asked the colonel.

"Why, that pass was issued before there was a rail laid—and then the road was never built. He has felt swindled ever since."—Indianapolis Press.

## A Practicat Juliet.

Reginald—"I love you, Madeline. For you I would give up family, position, wealth—"

Madeline—"Hold, Reginald! Give up family is all right—I fair would be spared a mother-in-law; give up your position if you can get a better one, but please hold on to your wealth. We may need it."—Chicago Times Herald.

## NO PAIN IN DEATH.

### In Man's Last Moments He Has Peace of Mind and Body.

More material than was the psalmist, who asked, "O Death, where is thy sting?" the physician of to-day not only asks the same question, but answers it. "He has none," says Dr. C. Pruyne Stringfield, who has made extended observations on the phenomena of death in its many forms. "In his last supreme moments man has no need for spiritual or physical comfort. The peace of mind and body are his without the aid of priest or physician, either."

Dr. Stringfield holds that dissolution not only is painless, but that the dying—conscious at all—becomes reconciled to the approach of it. This welcome to the destroyer may be extended only a minute before life goes out, or the patient may have been awaiting his coming for weeks and months.

"I have found that most persons under thirty-five years old make a fight for life to almost the last moments," said Dr. Stringfield. "Beyond thirty-six and forty years, something in the contemplation of death reconciles them to it, or else they welcome it as a release from cares and responsibilities. The strong young nature, making its instinctive fight against death, may be in mental protest almost to the last moment, whereas a man of fifty years probably would realize his position and await the end calmly, perhaps for hours. But in that supreme moment of passing, each would find the peace of leaving life."

"Right there is one of the great mysteries of death. Even when the mind has become completely reconciled to death, we find the whole physical framework fighting it. There is the muscular struggle for breath, sometimes to the last. Even when a man has been dead for hours his muscles will twitch and react from the irritation of electrical currents. Yet the mind of the dying one may have welcomed death as a boon."

"Long sickness and intense suffering may have much to do with reconciling a person to death long before it comes. Then many persons in normal health tire of living. Not for any one reason, but because they have figured that life would come to-morrow. There is every reason for their living, too. They are wealthy, move in good society and are unusually intelligent.

"Take those two women, and other conditions being equal, they will die much more easily than one who has never thought of death. No acute disease, either, could shake them in their desire for death. The mind is dominant over the body."

Illustrating this fact, Dr. Stringfield told of a case a few years ago which had impressed him deeply. He was in general practice at that time, and was called to see a woman supposed to be dying. Her husband was rather dissolute, and often had ill-treated her. On that morning he had been harsh with her, and when the doctor arrived he found the woman in only a semi-conscious condition, with a three-year-old daughter looking on in wonderment and awe. The mother's one fixed idea was that she wanted to die.

"She was close to it at that moment," said the doctor, "but I fixed my eyes on her and slowly and distinctly kept repeating to her: 'No, you must not die; you must live for your little girl's sake.' She was better when I went in, and she grew better and finally well."

"A year later she came to my office, deeply in earnest, saying she wanted to tell me something. She asked me if I recalled leaving the room that time when she was near death. I told her that I did; also that I had heard her say she wouldn't die. She seemed pleased that I remembered, and she told me that while I was out a small, bright light had come through the wall at the foot of the bed and came closer and grew larger until the figure of Christ had stepped out of it in blue flame, beckoning her to come. It was to this figure she had spoken."

"It had stood for just a moment in sorrowing posture, then had stepped into the cloud of fire and disappeared as it had come. The woman said she had often wanted to tell me of the incident, but was afraid to, and to show how earnest she was, even a year after the incident, she thanked me with tears in her eyes for not laughing at her story of what she believed was a divine manifestation."

Dr. Stringfield believes that a person may die in full possession of his faculties, up to one minute or less, of final dissolution.

"In the case of the man Rigby who died in the Grand Pacific hotel a short time ago, he was conscious to the last moment. He talked of Yorkshire, of his wife, and of half a dozen other things. He could have been asked a question concerning any period of his life and he would have been able to answer it five minutes before he died. His was no unusual example, either. Sometimes it looks as though there was a clearing up of the brain of a man until his faculties are keener than normal when he is on the threshold of life."

"No doubt there are visions and hallucinations just at the point of death. Things get far away. They see trees and streams and meadows. I recall the case of a woman who was dying. Her husband was at the foot of the bed, crying, when I spoke to him telling him if he wished to have a minister present he would better send for one."

"But the woman heard me. She started up in fright, exclaiming that she was not going to die; that I had no right to frighten her so. She was shaking with the fright of the suggestion. I tried to soothe her, but she kept crying out that she was not going to die—that she did not want to die."

"But suddenly she lay back with closing eyes, sighing that she had found such peace. Only she was uneasy that Alphonse, at the foot of the bed, was getting so far away. She saw beautiful meadows and flowers and birds, but she was uneasy that Alphonse would come.