

ANCIENTS AND ANIMALS.

Fantastic Natural History of the Greeks and Romans.

The knowledge of animals and their habits which existed among the ancient Greeks and Romans was most fantastic.

Among other snakes described in the ancient natural histories, for example, was the basilisk, which Pliny called the "king of serpents." According to the description, it was six feet long, wore a white crest on its head and had a skin spotted with white. Such was the abundance of its venom, according to these reports, that it made the body shine all over. The air was poisoned where this vile reptile passed, and great plants were envenomed with its subtle and luminous fluid, while the birds in turn fell before the odor exhaled by the trees. But this monster was an easy prey to the weasels. The dragon was the largest of serpents and inhabited especially Ethiopia and Egypt. When he flew out of his cavern he furrowed the air with such violence that it gleamed with fire. His mouth was small, and it was not the wounds which it inflicted which made him so formidable, but the strangling power of his tail, which was capable of destroying even elephants.

It is interesting to notice that the mythical dragon was already evolving toward the boa constrictor. The real scin lived in Arabia and "was a sort of white serpent which ran so marvelously that most men say it flew."

Most of the facts which are recorded concerning birds are more accurate, for the sport of falconry only made men observers of their habits. Still there are a few strange myths concerning the eagle. He was said to seize his young in his talons and to make them fix their eyes on the burning rays of the sun. Those alone that could gaze without flinching were kept and nourished as worthy of life. "This is not cruelty," says the simple writer, "but judgment." The eagle had the power of renewing youth. Mounting higher and higher till his plumes were burned by the sun, he fell into a fountain, where he bathed three times and was thoroughly rejuvenated.

The habits of the ostrich, an old book said, were regulated by a star named Virgil. When the star began to rise the astute bird laid its eggs, covered them with sand and left their hatching to the sun. Another remarkable thing was the influence which the chalcideler exercised over the king of beasts. His shrill crow put him in full flight—even Pliny says so—but to do this his plumage had to be pure white.

It would not be doing justice to the middle ages if the account of the unicorn was withheld. It was the size of a horse, though its legs were shorter, and its hide had generally a tanned color. There were three kinds. The magnificent white unicorn had a purple head and blue eyes. The horn was a cubit in length, white in the lower part, ebony in the middle and red at the end. It had the head of a stag and the tail of a bear. The eglasseron was like a gigantic deer and had a very sharp horn. The monoceros was like an ox. The ordinary unicorn of the middle ages had a horn three feet in length and so sharp and hard that nothing could resist it. When he prepared to fight the elephant, the animal he hated most of all, he sharpened his horn against a stone and when the day of battle came dealt the enemy a fatal blow in the paunch. This noble animal fell an easy prey to the fascinations of innocence and virtue. In India, especially among the dwellers of the Ganges, when it was desired to tame a unicorn a young and virtuous girl was chosen and led to his cave. The animal at once appeared and did homage to the damsel and was easily caught and tamed by the engaging wiles of the maiden.

Cultivate Regular Habits.

There can be no question that men of regular habits are healthier, happier, live longer and do more than those who obey caprice and impulse. The adoption of hygienic habits saves the nervous system an enormous amount of friction and waste. It preserves vitality. Regularity economizes not only physical stamina, but time as well. The man who knows no system in the details of his life, who exhausts nature at the instance of a passing whim, who drinks and smokes to excess, who wastes the talents bestowed upon him, is the one who must sooner or later fall a victim to disease. Regularity with moderation in all things should be the motto of life, and it should be remembered that regularity does not necessarily preclude the enjoyment of variety. A certain amount of variety prevents man from becoming a mere machine, but variety should not interfere with those regular habits of life which are necessary to the maintenance of health.

The Caterpillar.

The caterpillar spends his life in trying to keep out of everybody's way. Some species hide on the under surface of leaves, others on the stems or blades of grass, which serve them as food; others again build little nests for concealment or else they lie snugly hidden between the curled edges of leaves, which they draw close together until the opposite edges meet. The caterpillar is a sociable creature in his own family. He knows that there is safety in numbers, and you will find whole companies feeding side by side while keeping a sharp lookout for their bird enemies, but when a caterpillar is by himself he scarcely dares to move for fear of attracting attention. Even when he is obliged to change his skin he doesn't venture to leave his old coat lying around. The moment that he takes it off he eats it. The caterpillars that live in companies shed their skin boldly. Only the poor solitary fellows feel forced to swallow their old clothes.

A Theatrical Superstition.

They were rehearsing a new play, and every one was nervous, for the first night was close at hand. The play was a tragedy, yet at its end the dying heroine, as the curtain descended, said: "Three beers, please."

Those words concluded the play. Yet they were entirely out of keeping. The concluding words should have been, "I die, but, since I have saved you, I die happy," or something to that effect.

A dramatic critic new to the business asked how it was that the tragedy ended with "Three beers, please," and the stage manager said:

"Superstition. It is always thought bad luck in rehearsals of new plays to speak the last sentence before the opening night. He who has the last sentence to speak substitutes some meaningless phrase for it. If he dared to speak the true phrase the prospects of the play would be thought doomed. Some playwrights won't even write the last line of a play. They whisper it to the assembled company on its first reading, and from that day till the actual production the line is never again heard."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Pet Boars.

The nicest pet the French forest affords is the marcessin, or baby wild boar. It is almost human in its cleverness, delights in funny pranks, has an evident sense of humor, makes friends of children and dogs and even lends itself to mimic hunts, playing the part of the hunted animal. Its antics are varied and original. The only creature to which the marcessin objects is its distant relative, the pig. Directly it sees that animal its back is up and its growing tusk is bared. In babyhood it has a lovely sleek coat of very dark brown and tan. When the silky hair is shed and bristles take its place the temper grows uneven. If marital and paternal cares come on, the wild boar puts away its childish ways and wants to take its family to the forest to feed there on acorns and beech mast. Woe to the hound or to the keeper who wants to keep him back. In the forest this paterfamilias may be called the first line of defense, the sow the second, and the little ones gambol round her.—Paris Cor. London Truth.

A Limited Vocabulary.

If a person's knowledge of English were confined to one word, which would be the most useful? This subject was once discussed in the presence of Queen Caroline, her majesty entering into the question vigorously, according to the Dundee Advertiser. The greater number of the company fixed on "yes." One lady decided on "no," for, she argued, "though yes never means no, no very often means yes." How many men will indorse this? After all, one word would be as a drop in the ocean of our English language. A young woman who had learned a few Irish words without understanding them lost herself in the mountains. Meeting a handsome young peasant, she tried her Irish on him. Pat looked astonished, then pleased, and, rubbing his sleeve across his mouth, said: "Ar-rah! Do ye mane it, miss?" The girl, in her ignorance, had asked him for a kiss.

A Gift of Solomon's.

In the ancient cathedral of Genoa a vase of immense value has been preserved for 600 years. It is cut from a single emerald. Its principal diameter is twelve and one-half inches and its height five and three-fourths inches. It is kept under several locks, the keys of which are in different hands, and it is rarely exhibited in public, then only by an order of the senate. When exhibited it is suspended round the neck of a priest by a cord, and no one is allowed to touch it but him. It is claimed that this vase is one of the gifts which were made to Solomon by the queen of Sheba.

Lope de Vega.

Lope de Vega, the famous Spanish dramatist and poet, lived from 1562 to 1635. His literary work began when he was about thirteen years old, and from that time until his death, a period of sixty years, he poured forth an enormous quantity of plays, dramatic compositions of all kinds, poems of every character, breathing every spirit from the strictest asceticism to the most unbridled license. Over 1,800 plays are credited to him, and the published collection, comprising about 300, is contained in twenty-eight volumes.

The French.

The French were first mentioned as the Franks, a tribe of warlike Germans in the northwestern part of the region now known as Prussia. They came into notice about 240 A. D., and with other German tribes invaded the Roman empire in the fifth century and settled in the country now known as France. The word Frank, or Frankman, means freeman. After their conquest of Gaul they named the country Frankencric, or Frank's kingdom.

Helping His Finish.

"You'll find I'm hard to discourage," said the persistent suitor melodramatically. "Some day I'll make you admit you love me, and then—and not till then—I will die happy."

"I'll say it now," replied the heartless girl. "I don't mind telling a lie for a good end."—Philadelphia Ledger.

More Than Foolish.

He—Do you think it would be foolish of me to marry a woman who was my intellectual inferior? She—I don't know that it would be foolish, but it would be a difficult thing for you to do.

Our Language.

M. De France—You wind up ze clock to make him go? English Tutor—Exactly. M. De France—Zen what for you wind up ze beesness? To make it stop?

THE MAKING OF GLUE.

MATERIALS WHICH PRODUCE THIS USEFUL SUBSTANCE.

Waste From Hides, Horns and Hoofs of Animals is Used, but the Sinews of Animals Slaughtered For Food Give the Best Results.

Few substances are more generally useful than glue. At one time or another nearly every householder has to use it, yet few persons know anything about the different kinds or which is best for the purpose in hand.

For ordinary repairs to articles of wood, especially if no severe strain is to be placed upon the object, the prepared glues are convenient and adequate. They are therefore often chosen in preference to the old fashioned sort. But for strength and durability no glue which is applied cold can compare with the kind that is first melted in a glue pot and then applied hot, and of this kind there are many grades, which vary greatly in quality.

The manufacture of hard glue, as it is usually called—that is, glue which is to be used hot—is to a large degree the utilization of waste products. The raw materials are pieces and scrapings from hides, chips and dust from horn working factories, parings from hoofs and, best of all, sinews from animals killed for food in the great slaughter houses.

The first process is a soaking in lime-water, made thick enough to be called "milk of lime." In this bath the sinews and other glue material remain for two weeks or more, in order that all the grease and blood may be eaten away, but immediately on removal the material is exposed to currents of air, which allow any adhering lime to absorb carbonic acid. This checks the action of the alkali on the animal matter and makes it possible to keep the material in the dry state for an indefinite period or until it is desired to use it.

Previous to boiling, the scrap is again immersed for twenty-four hours in a bath of milk of lime. It is then placed in a caldron built on the plan of the housewife's familiar double boiler. This kind of vessel is necessary to prevent "burning on." Water is added, and the mass is gently boiled until a firm gelatinous liquid results from cooking.

The clear portion is now drawn off from the first caldron into a second vessel and is known as "first run sinew glue"—the best of all. A small quantity of alum dissolved in water is added for the purpose of clarifying the glue by causing it to precipitate its impurities.

In a second double boiler the liquid remains several hours, till it is perfectly clear, and is then run off into the congealing boxes, over the bottoms of which it spreads out in thin sheets. The boxes are run into the cooling rooms, where they remain until the glue has hardened enough to be removed in sheets, but not enough to be brittle. In this state it is ready to be cut.

The sheets are laid upon boards which have previously been wet to prevent the glue from sticking. Here the cutting is done with tightly stretched brass wires, as a firkin of butter is cut by the country grocer.

After a further drying on revolving nettings the sheets are dipped in hot water and rubbed with a brush to give them a polish. They then pass to the kilns for the "stove drying." This removes all moisture and leaves what appears to be a sheet of translucent yellowish brown bottle glass. Indeed, the best sinew glue seems on casual examination to be nearly as hard as glass, and a quick, sharp blow will produce a fracture that is clean cut and vitreous. The best of this glue is light in color.

The residuum left in the caldron when the "first run" of glue was drawn off is boiled and boiled again, so long as any gelatinous matter can be extracted from it. The product is glue of inferior grades, of course, but useful as sizing and for other purposes in various arts and industries. Although still classed as sinew glue, the later "runs" have not the strength of the first run. They are darker and less translucent.

Not many years ago nearly all the best glue was sold in sheets. Today by far the greater part is ground at the factories to the fineness of ordinary sawdust. Since in this form it dissolves more quickly, it is so preferred by woodworking factories, which use large quantities, but as the chances of adulteration are greater when the glue is ground the purchaser who wishes to be sure of strength and durability will choose the sheets.—Edward Williston Frenz in Youth's Companion.

Why Dreams Come True.

There is a scientific explanation of the fact that illness, at least, can be foretold in dreams. The theory is that when a man is dreaming his mind is more sensitive than in his waking hours, for the simple reason that his actual surroundings are not engaging to the mind's attention. Thus it happens that when some disease has set in, the man awake does not feel it in its earliest stages, although the active mind in a sleeping body does feel it. The sleeper dreams, let us say, that he is suffering some complaint of the leg, and two or three days later, the disease having developed, he finds that he really has got a bad attack of rheumatism. Harvey, who discovered the circulation of the blood, records having had a dream in which a bee stung him in his left thigh, on a place where a couple of days later appeared an ugly ulcer. The ulcer must have been developing, of course, at the time of the dream, but what the man in full consciousness could not perceive the man with only an active mind—i. e., dreaming—easily notices.

A Queer Play in Baseball.

Here is a play in baseball that happened long ago. Perhaps it never will happen again. Did any one ever hear of a base runner scoring from first base on a line drive that was caught by a third baseman and when the ball never left the third baseman's hand?

The play happened in this way: Andy Moyulhan was playing third base for the Pastimes of Chicago in 1898 when a tournament was held. The Occidentals of Peoria were the opposing team. In the first inning, with a runner on first, the batter drove a liner straight over third. Moyulhan shoved up his hand, the ball struck it and stuck fast in the hand. The crowd cheered. An instant later they saw something was wrong. Moyulhan, writhing with pain, was running around third base. The base runner at first saw something was the matter and ran down to second. Then he ran to third and finally trotted home unmolested.

The trouble was that the ball, striking Moyulhan's hand, paralyzed the nerves. The ball was stuck tight in his hand. It was five minutes before his fellow players could pry his fingers open and get the ball out.—Chicago Tribune.

Two Lads.

At one time, when De Quincey was living at Lasswade in simple and friendly relations with the people, who respected him not as a writer, but as a good neighbor, he formed a very delightful friendship with a little child, a boy of four years. This lad, a nephew of one of the householders, was the constant companion of the great man and would forsake any amusement for the pleasure of walking round a dull little garden with him. One day somebody heard this conversation between the two comrades:

"What d'ye call thon tree?" asked the child.

De Quincey considered and then said, with careful deliberation, "I am not sure, my dear, but I think it may be a laurustinus."

The child interrupted him with some scorn: "A laurustinus! Lad, d'ye no ken a rhododendron?"

At that time the "lad" must have been about seventy years old.

Made a Gorilla King.

The craze among society women for queer pets is an old story. It usually ends through being carried too far. There is the case of Andromeda, for instance, and there is that other affair of the decadent Roman emperor's daughter, who had a pet gorilla, procured for her at great cost by an Arabian trader who supplied strange beasts for the amphitheater. One day the Praetorian guard arose and murdered the emperor. The gorilla, who happened to be present, strangled the ringleader, who was by then assumed the imperial purple himself, with its bare hands. This so delighted the Praetorians that they unanimously elected the gorilla, whom they took for a barbarian from North Britain, to the vacant throne. On the mistake being explained by a zoologically minded patrician, the divus caesar had to be killed and another one chosen.—London News.

Artificial Snow.

White cotton slightly smeared with mucilage and sprinkled with common salt or diamond dust will make the best wintry effect. For store window or table decoration mirrors make good water imitation with small sized ducks placed on them. The effect of new fallen snow can be produced by taking the branches and dipping in gum arabic water and then sprinkling with flour. Snowball effect can be produced by taking toy balls and covering with cotton wool.—Bee Hive.

Some Christmas Quotations.

The quotations given below may be of some value to those who like to accompany a Christmas gift with an appropriate sentiment: With a calendar, "Write it on your heart that every day is the best day of the year;" with a book, "An old friend to trust;" with a pair of slippers, "We must go together;" with a pair of gloves, "We're a pair if ever there was one."

Medical.

SCROFULA.

It is commonly inherited. Few are entirely free from it. Pale, weak, puny children are afflicted with it in nine cases out of ten, and many adults suffer from it. Common indications are bunches in the neck, abscesses, cutaneous eruptions, inflamed eyelids, sore ears, rickets, catarrh, wasting, and general debility. HOOD'S SARSAPARILLA AND PILLS Eradicate it, positively and absolutely. This statement is based on the thousands of permanent cures these medicines have wrought. "My daughter had scrofula, with eleven sores on her neck and about her ears. Hood's Sarsaparilla was highly recommended and she took it and was cured. She is now in good health." Mrs. J. H. Jones, Parsippany, Ind. Hood's Sarsaparilla promises to cure and keeps the promise.

Somewhere. "Pardon me, madame. I think I have seen you somewhere." "Very likely. I go there very often."—Le Souris.

If thou love learning thou shalt be learned.—Socrates.

Medical.

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