

LAND OF THE CROSSBOW.

The Deadly Poisoned Arrows of the Lissoo Sharpshooters.

On the wild frontier between China and British Burma is a barbarous tribe which has no civilized supervision. George Forrest, an English traveler, thus describes the chief weapon of these people: "If I had to suggest a title for a book on the upper Salwin I should call it 'The Land of the Crossbow,' which is the characteristic weapon of the country and the Lissoo tribe. Every Lissoo with any pretensions to chic possesses at least two of these weapons—one for everyday use in hunting, the other for war. The little children play with miniature crossbows. The men never leave their huts for any purpose whatever without their crossbows. When they go to sleep the 'nukung' is hung over their heads, and when they die it is hung over their graves. The largest crossbows have a span of fully five feet and require a pull of fully thirty-five pounds to string them. The bow is made of a species of wild mulberry of great toughness and flexibility. The stock, some four feet long in the war bows, is usually of wild plum wood. The string is of plaited hemp and the trigger of bone. The arrow, of sixteen to eighteen inches, is of split bamboo about four times the thickness of an ordinary knitting needle, hardened and pointed. The actual point is bare for a quarter to one-third of an inch, then for fully an inch the arrow is stripped to half its thickness, and on this portion poison is placed.

"The poison is invariably a decoction expressed from the tubers of a species of aconium which grows on those ranges at an altitude of 8,000 to 10,000 feet. The poison is mixed with resin, or some vegetable gum to the consistency of putty and is then smeared on the notched point. The 'feather' is supplied by a strip of bamboo leaf folded into a triangular form and tied in a notch at the end of the arrow, with the point of the angle outward. The reduction in thickness of the arrow where the poison is placed causes the point to break off in the body of any one whom it strikes, and, as each carries enough poison to kill a cart horse, a wound is invariably fatal. Free and immediate incision is the usual remedy when wounded on a limb or fleshy part of the body, but at Chengkia the uncle of the Laowo chief showed us a preparation which resembled opium dress and which he said was an effective antidote.

"With few exceptions the Lissoo seemed to us to be arrant cowards, but the crossbow and poisoned arrow are certainly most diabolical weapons. An arrow from a war bow will pierce a deal board an inch thick at seventy or eighty yards. Some of the Tsekou natives were so expert that they could hit a mark four inches in diameter repeatedly at sixty to eighty yards. As no one goes anywhere without his crossbow and his bearskin quiver full of poisoned arrows and as every village is at feud with every other village in open fight the Lissoo are usually careful to keep at a respectful distance from each other and behind oxhide shields which protect the whole of the body. But if battle is rare, murder and sudden death by ambush in the jungle are common."

Drank and Remembered. A porter in a big New York warehouse in Greenwich street was recently discharged for getting drunk and losing a valuable parcel. The discharge sobered him instantly, coming as a sudden hard shock. He said he would take the oath never to touch liquor again, but his pleadings for reinstatement were unheeded. He searched everywhere for the parcel, but could not recollect what disposition he had made of it. Of his honesty there had never been a question in twenty years. Overcome by the loss of his place, he got violently drunk and while in this condition recollected where he had left the parcel and went and recovered it.—New York Times.

Where Willie Was. The professor (at the dinner table)—Oh, by the way, Mrs. Chopsticks, have you seen your little boy Willie lately? Mrs. Chopsticks—No, professor, I have not seen him since 10 o'clock, and I can't imagine what has become of him. In fact, I am very much worried about him. Professor—Well, seeing Martha pour me out that glass of water just now reminded me of something that I had on my mind to tell you some time ago, but which unfortunately escaped my memory. It was just about 10 o'clock, I think, that I saw little Willie fall down the well.—Atlanta Constitution.

Sympathy For the Orphans. An elephant while stamping through the jungle one day quite unintentionally stepped upon a mother bird, crushing it to death. Hearing the cries of the little brood in the bushes near by, she sought out the nest and with a sympathetic sigh said: "Poor little things! I've been a mother myself. I'll keep you warm." And she then proceeded to sit upon the nest.—From George T. Lanigan's Fable, "The Kind Hearted She Elephant."

Modern Version. "Then you will be ever at my beck and call?" inquired Aladdin. "With the exception of Tuesday and Friday afternoons, Monday and Saturday evenings and every other Sunday," firmly replied the genie.—Washington Herald.

OLD TIME FORCEPS.

When the Thing Was Turned Something Had to Give Way.

And speaking of teeth reminds me that the country doctor had to draw them when they ached. The dentist's artistry had not attained the elevated plane it occupies today, when everybody's mouth shines like the inside of a communion cup. I honestly believe the modern dentist has more different kinds of tools than even a sanitary plumber, and that's a whole lot when you come to count them up. The modern dentist hates the worst way to draw a tooth. Nevertheless if the modern dentist must draw the tooth he has a particular forceps for a particular tooth, and a cruel hearted and cold looking thing it is too. It puts you so in mind of a successful financier. When you brace yourself in the iron chair and take a tight grip on the arms of it and make up your mind you'll try to stand it and he gets that forceps well under the gum and—wait a minute; I feel so kind o' faint! Laws! Why didn't I mind my mother when she told me not to crack hickory nuts with my teeth? Well, anyway, you know he'll get the tooth out without doing more than take the whole top of your head off, and that only in a figurative sense.

Uncle Doc had one implement that did for every tooth, big and little, front and back. It wasn't a forceps; it was a turnkey. The real old folks know what that is and will say so with the cold chills running over them. But you've never seen one, and many a man that you would call old has never seen one. It's something like a canthook. The loosely riveted piece that curves slips over the tooth and catches on the inside; the solid cam bears on the outside gum; the operator turns the handle. Let's not talk about it. Something has got to give. Maybe the tooth will come out; maybe it will break off; maybe the jaw will fracture. All those are details. The main point is that if the operator twists the handle something has got to give, and that's all there is about it.—Eugene Wood in Success Magazine.

A GENTLE REPROACH.

Telling Retort of the Lamblike, Violet Eyed Beauty.

There is a certain young woman who is beautiful, with that childish, wistful, innocent looking, violet eyed beauty which reduces one-half the feminine world to tears, the other half to utterly helpless rage. We all know the type, but it is seldom given us to see it in such perfection. We usually associate it with a lamblike, appealing mentality that permits itself to be ridden upon—as soon expect a wood violet to turn and rend you.

A short time ago she was asked to a woman's luncheon and got herself up for the occasion in a way that made the result of her efforts a thing not easily forgotten. She arrived looking so lovely that there was little said among the guests for a few moments after her entry into the room. Perhaps she felt the silence. At all events, she turned to the woman standing nearest her and said in a childish voice, with ever such a little lisp and pretty southern accent:

"How well yo' are lookin' today!" It was a well meant civility from a young woman to an older one, who seemingly was unable to accept it as such and put up her lognette, sweeping the speaker from top to toe. What she saw was enough to disconcert a younger and prettier woman than herself, but even so one finds it difficult to justify her next move.

"Wish I could say the same for you," she returned, closing her lognette with a snap. One or two of the guests were friends of the pretty woman and almost stopped breathing in order not to miss what they felt sure would come—and it came. The pretty one raised her eyebrows slightly, then said, with an air of gentle reproach: "Why don't yo' lie like a lady, like I do?"—Rehoboth Sunday Herald.

What He Needed.

A sovereign would tempt many men, and when Plinkins, making a few purchases at the stores, saw one lying on the floor just by the counter he quivered with excitement.

Glancing around to reassure himself that none was looking, he quite accidentally dropped one of his kid gloves neatly on the coin and then dived. He got the glove all right, but still the sovereign remained.

A shopwalker approached him. "Good morning, sir," said the man, rubbing his hands together in the approved style, "and may I show you a bottle of our celebrated liquid glue, which sticks?"—London Mail.

The Cellar Stairs.

A man who once had a bad fall when going down his cellar stairs now has a broad strip of white painted on the floor at the end of the last step. This is easily seen, even if the cellar be dark, and many a nasty accident is avoided. If the house is rented and you do not like to paint the boards a piece of white oilcloth can be tacked to the floor at the foot of the stairs. See that the tacking is securely done or a worse fall may follow than from a misgauged step.—Philadelphia Press.

Dodged.

"I got my wife through advertising." "Then you'll admit that advertising pays?" "I'll admit that it brings results," was the cautious reply.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

No man can be provident of his time who is not prudent in the choice of his company.—Jeremy Taylor.

RELIGIOUS ACROBATS.

Dangerous Aerial Slide Annually Performed in India.

India offers many curious things in the way of religion, and the strangest of them all is the aerial slide, which is performed annually at Kulu, in the Himalayas. At a point where there is a cliff overhanging a precipitous gorge several hundred feet in width and a hundred feet in depth a rope is made fast to the rock. The other end of this is carried across the gorge and there secured to a stake. The total length of the rope between the two points is when drawn taut 2,500 feet, and the end attached to the cliff is several hundred feet higher than that fastened on the opposite side of the ravine. Thus a slide is contrived, and it is a dangerous one to all appearance.

It is down this incline that the performer has his path. For the lofty journey a sort of saddle is provided made of wood, with holes in it, through which the rope passes. But before a start is made the whole length of the rope is wet to prevent the saddle from catching fire from the friction. The performer sits astride this seat, and to his legs are fastened bags of sand, which serve two purposes—they enable him to maintain an upright position during his lightning-like descent, and they increase the momentum. The lower end of the rope is carefully wound with bits of carpet to check the speed before the stake is reached. Without this precaution the performer would be dashed to pieces.

The terrific velocity of the descent for the first few hundred yards is shown by the stream of smoke that trails from the wake of the saddle, despite the fact that the rope has been wet. Afterward the incline diminishes somewhat, and the pace becomes correspondingly slower. By the time the goal is reached the jheri, as the performer is called, is able to come to a standstill without disaster.

This slide in the air is supposed to reveal the will of the gods as to the crops of the approaching season. If the perilous trip is accomplished in safety a plentiful harvest is assured. Naturally, therefore, every care is taken to minimize the dangers of the performance. The ceremony is of ancient origin, and those who engage in it as jheri form a small caste apart.—New York Tribune.

A MEDFORD STORY.

Legend of the Phantom Ship and Its Mad Pirate Captain.

The town of Medford, Mass., has a legend of a phantom ship beside which the Flying Dutchman is only a peaceful merchantman. The Medford story runs that a ship laden with rum and gold and silver bars put out from that place in the days when the Spanish main was infested with pirates. It was headed for a West Indian port, but got into the doldrums and was so long becalmed that water and provisions gave out, and all hands perished of thirst and starvation. When the wind came up again the ship sailed away with her ghastly crew, was seen by a buccaner, chased and overhauled.

The pirate captain made fast to his prize without firing a single shot, and, attributing the vessel's nonresistance to fear or lack of arms, he was the first man to leap on board. But the rope with which the captured ship had been carelessly lashed to his own parted under the strain of the seaway, and he found himself rapidly borne away from his comrades on what he soon discovered to be a floating coffin. A stiff breeze filled the sails of the derelict, and before his own vessel could overtake it night descended on the ocean, and the pursuing ship lost sight of it altogether. Left alone in pitch darkness on the grewsome craft, the pirate went mad with terror and, seizing the wheel, raced away before the wind and, according to the legend, was condemned to range the seas forever thus in command of his horrible prize.

Woe to the ship that encountered it scudding along by moonlight or in the lightning's glare, manned by skeletons and steered by a shouting, skeletonizing madman, and when on several occasions it was sighted in the fog off Medford it was considered as the herald of storm and disaster and the loss of many ships.—New York Press.

Jenny's Quick Method.

Jenny's uncle, who was a school teacher, met her on the street one beautiful May day and asked her if she was going to the Maypole dance.

"No, I ain't going." "Oh, my little dear," said her uncle, "you must not say 'I ain't going.' You must say 'I am not going.' And he proceeded to give her a little lesson in grammar. "You are not going. You are not going. They are not going. Now, can you say all that, Jenny?" "Sure, I can," she replied, making a courtesy. "There ain't nobody going."—Ladies' Home Journal.

Jury at the Theater.

An unusual spectacle was witnessed at the Theater Royal, Nelson, Auckland, when the jury, who had been locked up three nights because they could not agree to a verdict in a murder case, were allowed to witness a living picture display. They had expressed a desire to attend the theater as a relief, and the judge consented.—Auckland News.

A Work Maker.

"Binks is weak financially, isn't he?" "He hasn't much money, but he gives employment to a great many men." "Who are they?" "Other people's bill collectors."—London Tit-Bits.

THE PRISON BIRD.

Tyrannical and Jealous Feathered Beauty of Africa.

The peculiarity of the prison bird, a feathered beauty of Africa, is that he is the most tyrannical and jealous of husbands, imprisoning his mate throughout her nesting time. Livingstone watched the bird's habits while in Monpour, and in his subsequent observations referred to the nest as a prison and the female bird as a slave.

The nest is built in the hollow of a tree through an opening in the bark. As soon as it is completed the mother bird enters carefully and fearfully and settles down in it. Then papa walls up the opening, leaving only just space enough for air and food to pass through. He keeps faithful guard and brings food at regular intervals without fail. The female thrives under her enforced retirement. But if the prison bird is killed or in any other way prevented from fulfilling his duties the mother and her little ones must die of starvation, for she cannot free herself from bondage.

Normally the imprisonment lasts until the chicks are old enough to fly. Then the male bird destroys the barrier with his beak and liberates his family. "It is charming," writes Livingstone, "to see the joy with which the little prisoners greet the light and the unknown world."

THE NORMAN "OYEZ."

A Legacy of William the Conqueror to the Courts.

Everybody who has ever been in a United States courtroom knows that when the judge walks out of his chambers and ascends the bench the court crier drones out:

"Oyez, oyez, oyez, the honorable court of the (whatever district it may be) is now in session."

Not many persons, however, realize that the crier says "oyez, oyez, oyez," instead of "harken, harken, harken," because of a chance visit that William the Conqueror made to an English court almost 900 years ago.

William had overrun England, seized the government and placed himself at its head. Happening to enter a courtroom, he heard the crier call the assemblage to order in English. William rebuked him and on the spot decreed that the business of all English courts should be transacted in Norman French, his native tongue. Afterward the courts went back to English, but to this day "oyez, oyez, oyez," clings to court customs wherever the English language is spoken as a reminder of the great Norman who whipped King Harold in the battle of Hastings.—Scrap Book.

One of Life's Tragedies.

He had expected a tender embrace from his sweetheart, but her greeting of him was cold. He could not understand it.

"Darling," he exclaimed in agony, "what is the matter?"

But she remained silent, her lips tightly closed, and motioned him from her.

He fell upon his knees. "My love," he cried, "tell me what I have done to offend you? I swear I have done nothing wrong! I confess I kissed the Simpson girl last night at the party, but on my oath I—I thought she was you."

Her lips closed even tighter, but she uttered not a syllable, and in despair at her unbending demeanor, he fled from the place, he knew not whither.

Would you know, oh, reader, the reason of the conduct by which a woman blighted two young lives? 'Twas simply this: She had left her false teeth in the bathroom.

The Reason of It.

"What do you think of that proposal for all those extra watchers?"

"I suppose the idea was that all wards have to have guardians."

"Nations are a good deal like men."

"As to how?"

"Always willing to rush to each other if there's a fair chance of being held apart."

The Century.

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A GREAT LINCOLN YEAR.

The year 1909, the 100th anniversary of Lincoln's birth will be appropriately marked in the Century, which magazine has been the vehicle since its foundation for the publication of the most important Lincoln material. Unpublished documents from Lincoln's own pen and from that of one of his private secretaries are coming, and Lincoln portraits.

GROVER CLEVELAND.

The real Grover Cleveland, will be described in the Century by the man who knew him best.

THE GERMAN EMPEROR

is the subject of an article recording a recent conversation with him, in which he talked freely.

SAINT-GAUDENS

greatest of modern sculptors, who died recently, left an autobiography—a rare human document. The Century will print it.

HELEN KELLER

is writing for the Century. Don't miss her article, "My Dreams."

ALICE HEGAN RICE

who wrote "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," will contribute a brilliant serial novel. Pathos and humor are exquisitely blended in "Mr. Opp."

ANDREW CARNEGIE

is writing for the Century. Read his remarkable article on Tariff.

PADEREWSKI

has given an interesting interview to the Century, his views on great composers and their music.

THOMPSON SETON

whose "Biography of a Grizzly" was written for the Century, will contribute a fox story.

DR. S. WEIR MITCHELL

will contribute short stories, and so will Thomas Nelson Page, Kate Douglas Wiggin, Edith Wharton, Jack London, Frances Little, and many others.

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