

GIANTS ON THE EARTH.

A GOOD DEAL OF FICTION WRITTEN ABOUT THEM.

The Belief That the Ancestors of Mankind Were Giants Exploded Long Ago—Noted Big Men Whose Statues Have Been Recorded by Actual Observers.

The idea conveyed by the word giant in classical mythology is that of beings more or less man-like, but enormous in size and strength. Figures like the Titans and the Giants, whose birth from heaven and earth is sung by Hesiod in the Theogony, such as heap up mountains to scale the sky, and war beside or against the gods, must be treated with other like monstrous figures of the wonder tales of the world as belonging altogether to the realms of mythology.

Besides the conception of giants as special races distinct from mankind, it was a common opinion of the ancients that the human race had itself degenerated, the men of primeval ages having been of so far greater stature and strength as to be in fact gigantic. Yet so far as can be judged by actual remains it does not appear that giants, in the sense of tribes of altogether superhuman stature, ever existed, or that the men of ancient time were, on the whole, taller than those now living. It is now usual to apply the word "giant" to beings not superhuman in their height, but merely the tallest men and women of our nation.

Until the beginning of the present century, it was universally believed that giants, of a size far exceeding those which are exhibited in our times, formerly existed, either as nations or as individual specimens. This belief was based, first, on the asserted discovery of colossal human bones; second, on supposed scriptural evidence; third, on the evidence of various ancient and mediæval authors.

A reference to the first volume of Cuvier's "Ossements Fossiles" will show that the bones of elephants, rhinoceroses, mastodons, etc., have been exhibited and accepted as evidence of prehistoric giants. Even so good a naturalist as Buffon fell into this popular delusion and figured the bones of an elephant as the remains of human giants. Saint Hilaire, in his "Histoire des Anomalies de l'Organisation," notices several of the most famous of these cases. A gigantic skeleton which was found at Trapani, in Sicily, in the fourteenth century, was at once pronounced to be that of the classical giant, Polyphemus, and his height was calculated at 300 feet. It was pointed out that the bones differed in form as well as in size from those of a man, but this objection was easily met by the question, Why, if his height was sixty times as great as that of an ordinary man, should not his form also be different? Many less celebrated giants were subsequently examined in Sicily, and the existence of the "Osseous Canerus" described by De Quatrefages in his "Rambles of a Naturalist" fully accounts for such discoveries at an epoch when few could recognize the differences in form between the bones of an elephant and those of man.

Nor have our own countrymen been less credulous than their neighbors. In 1712 Dr. Increase Mather, in the "Philosophical Transactions," announced the discovery of enormous bones and teeth, which had been found in the State of New York, and which he regarded as affording evidence of the existence of giants of enormous size in ancient times. The bones were in reality those of a mastodon.

The Scripture evidence, when carefully examined, does not amount to much. The Hebrew words nephirim and giborim, which occur several times in the book of Genesis, and which are translated "giants," might as well be translated "bearded," "cruel" or "violent men." The height of Og, King of Bashan, is not given—we are only told the length of his bed. And including his helmet, which was probably taken into account in the recorded measurement, Goliath at most did not exceed eight feet and a half in stature and consequently was not taller than some giants of modern days.

The classical evidence is abundant, but obviously untrustworthy. Thus, Plutarch relates that Serbois had the grave of Antalus, in the city of Tungsia, opened and, "finding there his body full 60 cubits long was infinitely astonished, ordered the tomb to be closed, gave his confirmation to the story and added new honors to the memory of the giant." Pliny gives to one, Gabbaras, an Arabian, the stature of nine feet nine inches, capping this with the mention of Posio and Secundilly, who were half a foot higher.

Pliny reports also that an earthquake in Crete disclosed the bones of a giant forty-six cubits in length, who was held by Dorne to be Orion and by others Otus. What exaggeration can do in this way may be judged from the fact that the Patagonians, whose average height is five feet eleven inches, are described in Pigafetta's "Voyage Round the World" as so monstrous that the Spaniards' heads hardly reached their waists. Descending to more certain evidence, there can be no doubt that a height of eight and nine feet, and probably of more than nine feet, has been attained. There is a skeleton in the museum of Trinity College, Dublin, eight feet six inches in height; that of O'Brien (or Byrne) in the museum of the College of Surgeons of England is eight feet two inches, and that of a giant in the museum at Bonn is eight feet, and the actual body, with the soft parts attached, was probably two or three inches longer than the skeleton. For example, we find it recorded that O'Brien measured eight feet four inches after his death.

The Spider's Web.
The body of every spider contains four little masses pierced with a multitude of holes imperceptible to the naked eye, each hole permitting the passage of a single thread; all the threads to the number of 1,000 to each mass, join together when they come out and make the single thread with which the spider spins its web so that what we call a spider's thread consists of more than 4,000 threads united.

WHO WAS FARRAGUT'S FATHER?

Naval Tradition Assigns That Honor to Admiral Porter, of Tripoli Fame.
About two hundred yards to the north of the equestrian statue of General Jackson, that highest type of American manhood and noblest exemplar of American citizenship, on Connecticut avenue, Washington, D. C., where Sixteenth and Seventeenth intersect that most beautiful and finest of all the splendid residence streets of the capital, in the middle of an exquisite little park, is the massive bronze statue of David Glascoe Farragut, the first American admiral and a naval hero who stands second to none whose feats are recorded in history. Not Howard, nor Drake, nor Frobenius; not De Ruyter, nor Van Tromp; not Nelson, nor Collingwood; not Paul Jones, nor Chauncey, nor Preble, nor Decatur, can be named before him. In sketches of him it is said that he was born in Tennessee about the time that Jefferson was inaugurated President; he entered the navy at the age of eleven, and participated in the war of 1812, which terminated when he was less than fourteen years of age. He saw active service in the Mexican War, and during the war between the States he did as much to crush the South as Grant, or Sherman, or Thomas. He died in 1870, as he had lived, the head of the navy.

There is a tradition in the navy, however, that Farragut was not a Tennessean. The story is one that people love to believe whether it be history or romance. It is told in the gunroom, and believed in the fore-castle, that Farragut was the natural son of old Dave Porter, who fought Tripoli at the beginning of the century, and that his mother was a native of one of the Mediterranean islands—a Greek, perhaps; may be a Corsican, or a Sicilian; possibly a Turk, or an Arab. Tom Marshall used to begin that eloquent and original lecture of his on Napoleon Bonaparte by saying that he had no doubt that could the truth be ascertained it would be established that the Corsican demi-god was a direct lineal descendant of a son of Julius Cæsar, begotten when the future world's master was a prisoner in the hands of pirates in the Mediterranean seas. And if Farragut owed his existence to the mother navy gossip assigns him, we can easily believe that some ancestors of his were by the side of Regulus when he swept from the seas Carthaginian navies; that another ancestor of his was in the fleets of Don John, of Austria, and fought at Lepanto; that others yet of his blood fought with the Barbarossas and the Dorias, making the azure waters of those classic seas crimson with the blood of heroic battle. If the tradition of the navy as to Farragut's parentage be true, it only bears out what Shakespeare said upon the subject in classic language in several of his plays, notably in "Lear." We find the children of the house of Stuart by the "right hand" imbeciles, while those of the "left hand" nobility the Duke of Berwick, were heroes. The same may be said of the descendants of Henry of Navarre. A chapter on the natural son among the world's great men would be interesting and surprising history.

His Sweetheart's Hair.

A decidedly unique method of carrying on a correspondence with a French thief was adopted by his friends while he awaited trial. One day the jailer was visited by the prisoner's betrothed, who asked him to give her lover an envelope. This, upon being opened, was found to contain simply a small lock of hair, around which was folded a leaf of a book. The jailer did not consider it worth his while to deliver this souvenir to the culprit and therefore threw it aside. A day or two later a similar inclosure was handed in at the prison gate and shared the fate of the predecessor. In the course of a week another was left by the same person. This aroused the suspicion of the governor of the prison, to whom had been detailed the circumstances. He determined to investigate the matter, and accordingly first examined the printed leaf. This he found was torn from a novel and contained twenty-six lines on each side. He next turned his attention to the hair and discovered that there were twenty-six pieces of unequal length. This puzzled him for a while, and then concluding that there must be some connection between the numbers of the printed lines and the number of hairs, he laid each of the latter along the line of the page they respectively reached, beginning with the shortest hair at the top of the leaf. After changing them about several times he discovered that each hair pointed to a different letter, and the combination thus produced formed a slang sentence, by means of which the prisoner was given to understand that his friends had ascertained the day on which he was to be taken to court and were determined to make a bold attempt to rescue him as soon as he made his appearance. Taking the cue, the governor adopted every precaution to frustrate the well-laid plans of the outsiders; the attempt was made and, as a natural consequence, the conspirators soon found themselves in the same condition as the one for whom they had planned the rescue.

Baron Hirsch's Wealth.

Baron Hirsch is said to be worth \$100,000,000. He made his wealth chiefly out of contracts for building the Turkish and Transylvania railroads. The Rothschilds were his financial backers when he assumed the contracts, but they got the idea that the railroads would not succeed, and, therefore, withdrew their support. He then secured assistance from big banking firms of Frankfurt, which he was able to influence through his marriage, and thus obtained funds enough to carry on the great undertaking. European financiers had been surprised by the enormous success of these railroads. They paid from the day they were opened, and they made one of the greatest fortunes in Europe for the bold contractor, who pinned his faith to them when others thought him foolhardy. Everything he has since touched has turned to gold. He is a large holder of landed estates and French rentes. It is said that his benefactions for several years past have amounted to \$1,000,000 annually.

Brother Gardner and the Dynamiter.

Something had happened to upset Thompson street its whole length, but just what it was no one could find out. It was finally reported that Brother Gardner had been ransomed for \$3 and a Waterbury watch, and he put in an appearance just then, as if to confirm the story. He went ahead in his usual calm and dignified manner and opened the meeting, and after everything was in running order he stepped to the front and said:

"My fren's! I h'ar dat all sorts o' wild stories hev bin flyin' about dis artemoon an' evenin' concernin' myself an' odder officers. I will now explain the hull matter. At exactly fo'ty-one minits an' six seconds past 1 o'clock to-day somebody knocked on de doah of my cabin. I was bar fut at de time, shavin' off my co's, but 'sposin' de pusion to be Sir Isaac Walpole, cum down to pay me back de \$3 he owed me fur three or fo' months, I called to him to cum in. Mrs. Gardner had dun gone out to meet with a church society, an' I was all alone.

"Gen'len, who do yo' 'spose dat pusion was? He was a white man. He had long black ha'r. His eyes rolled. He was chankin' his teeth. In his right hand he held a package, an' he waved it round an' declar'd dat if I didn't hand ober \$10,000 in cash he'd blow de hull outfit 19 miles high! Yo' kin emagine de situashun I was in. An' yet I can't say I was tookin' by surprise. On de contrary, I have bin 'specting sumthin' of de sort to happen. I looked dat chap squar' in de eyes, an' I saw dat he was dun crassy as a loon. Wit'out 'pearin' to be tall excited I said dat I had just got de cash counted out fur him, an' axed him tostep into de kitchen an' look in de wood box. He stepped. So did I. As he looked into de wood box I was clus behind him, an' I drewed off an' let him hev it behind de ears. He fell to de floor, an' befo' he could kick twice, I had him tied hand an' fut wid de clothes line."

Here the entire meeting rose up as one man and cheered and shouted until the plaster began to fall in every direction. "When I called in de police," said the President, after order was restored, "we examined de bomb, an' we found dat it contained 'nuff 'sposhoun to kill 48 of de leadin' capitalists of No'th America. De man was a crank. He'd been tryin' to invent a clothes line which would wind itself up in de back yard when it was gwine to rain, an' he wanted mo' cash to carry on his experiments. He cum dar calculatin' to git \$10,000 of me or hit me in de stomach wid dat bomb. I was prepared for him. If I hadn't been no one kin guess how wide spread dat calamity would hev bin."

Sir Isaac Walpole then arose and said the day had arrived when no great man in this country was safe from the crank and his bomb. There must be a remedy. We must search for and apply it. While he sincerely congratulated Brother Gardner on his escape, what security had the club that some other crank would not try the same thing to-morrow?

"My fren's," said Brother Gardner, after several other brethren had given their opinions, "it is trooly a sad state of affairs, an' is deservin' of most serious thought. Yo' or I go at it, an' by savin' up carpet rage an' soap grease, an' by livin' mighty clus an' pinchin' along, we get rich. We doan' git rich fur the richness of it, but to take comfort in our ole age. Bimeby along comes a pusion who wants to fly, but he hain't got de money to build his wings. He sots down an' broods an' sulks, and he finally makes up his mind dat some rich man has got to help him or die. He darfere goes an' gits a bomb and fills it up wid turpentine, arsenic, castor ole an' odder 'sposives, an' he walks in on dat rich man an' tries to scatter him all to squibs.

"I doan' reckon de crank kin be reached by law until it am too late. It would be too hard to identify him. Yo' doan' know dat he is a crank until he has got dat deadly bomb sailin' fur yo' chin. Seems to me dat it am a better ideah to depend on Providence an' yo'-self. Yo' kin depend on Providence dat he will strike some odder rich man in place of yo'; dat he will fall down an' break his leg while comin' to yo' office; dat if he gets in, yo' will be out eatin' raw oysters about dot time. Depend upon yo'-self by havin' it all planned out what yo' will do, same as I did. Fur the las' six months I have knowed jest what sort of a programy I should foller. When de time cum I was as cool as a piece of oilcloth in Juniry. I jist hauled off an' lit dat fellow 'zactly behind de ear, jest as I had planned, an' he fell in a heap on de floah, jest as I 'spected he would. While de law will probably do all it kin, an' while Providence, 'specially heal in New York, seems to be doin' a good deal of watchin' ober humanity, de rich must arter all keep deir eyes peeled an' be ready fur de crank when he calls. We will now go home an' be glad dat we am livin'."—New York World.

It's Lighted by Electricity Now.

The train on the Fitchburg Railway had just entered the long tunnel and the young New England bridegroom whispered in the blushing ear of his fair bride:

"Eurydice, if I choose, peradventure, to kiss thee I'd like to know Hoosac going to prevent me?"

"Orpheus," she replied, gently, "thou shouldst not trifle thus with the 'tunnel verities.'"

And the roar of the train came like a mighty poulitce to heal the blows of all subsequent sounds.—Chicago Tribune.

She Attended to That.

Brown—Say, Jones, when you come in late at night, don't you always wake your wife?

Jones (promptly)—Never.

Brown (surprised)—Jeehosaphat! How do you manage it?

Jones (with a sigh)—I don't have to.

What to Say.

He—Can I say nothing to prove my love to you?

She—Yes, you can.

He (with hope)—Tell me, oh, tell me what.

She—Say "goodby" and say it quick.



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