

SOMEWHAT STRANGE.

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS OF EVERY DAY LIFE.

Queer Episodes and Thrilling Adventures Which Show That Truth is Stranger Than Fiction.

A MAN, in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, tells how to get earth-worms without digging for them. Take a strong stick, four or five feet long and sharp at one end, and go to some locality, such as the back of a barn, where the worms are sure to be plentiful. Drive the stick four or five inches into the ground with a hammer or stone, and then begin to twist it with a rotary motion. Every few minutes hit the top a rap to drive the point further into the ground, and keep on twisting. In five minutes the worms will begin crawling out of their holes, and all you have to do is to pick them up and put them in your can. They hear the grinding and think it is a mole after them, and know that only on the surface are they safe. So they come out, those nearest to the sound making their appearance first, with every evidence of haste and trepidation. Sometimes they come up for a distance of ten or fifteen feet from the twirling stick; and in places where they are plentiful, as many as a hundred can be literally scared out of the ground in this manner. Some people think a worm has no sense, and they may be right in general, but a worm knows that a mole is its deadliest enemy, and will come squirming to the top of the ground any time it hears a mole coming in its direction.

A WELL-KNOWN family has a pet crow, which is given the liberty of the whole household. It is as precise and particular about its appearance as a prudish young maiden, and frequently it is allowed a place in the dining-room when the family meal is eaten. When night comes, it stations itself at one of the fence corners and keeps a lookout for intruders until the early dawn setting up a loud cawing at the sight of any stranger approaching. A valuable diamond earring belonging to one of the daughters was missed from the dressing-case the other day while the crow was perched on the window-sill. Search was made everywhere for the missing piece of jewelry without success, and the finding of it was given up as one of the impossibilities. A few days since the crow was followed into a corner of the yard filled with empty boxes, and in one of them, hidden away from sight, was found a perfect bric-a-brac shop, a number of bright silver and copper coins, a flagstone comb, several lustrous tortoise hair ornaments, a lot of bits of broken colored glass, and a stock of shining buttons of endless variety, and the diamond earring. The character of the crow has been considerably lowered in the estimation of the family since the discovery.

DURING a recent heavy thunderstorm at Fishkill, N. Y., a large black-walnut tree by the kitchen door of Dr. White's residence was struck. A day or two after it was discovered that the fluid had entered the butler's pantry near the northeastern corner of the house. On a shelf about four feet from the floor stood on edge a row of Royal Dresden plates leaning against the hard-finished wall. The face of these plates is highly decorated in brilliant colors. Around the edges of several of them standing nearest the corner was found a band of dark discoloration, while on the wall, about an inch above them, in circles corresponding in shape with the plates, was a fair copy of the ornamentation on the crockery, done in the same colors, though slightly less brilliant. The discoloration on the plates was easily removed by washing, and the ware and ornamentation appeared entirely uninjured by the shock. No place was found where the lightning entered or left the room, though there is a small smoke-colored mark by an iron bracket near where the first plate stood.

SOME weeks ago John Bonker, a Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railway brakeman, lost his left leg under the cars at Booneville. The limb was buried there and Bonker was removed to the company's hospital in Sedalia. Bonker began to experience the sensation that his amputated limb was in its accustomed place, and great pain was felt in the foot. So intense did this feeling become that the crippled man tossed from side to side of his little cot in the surgical ward of the hospital and moaned with pain till the doctors became alarmed at his condition. He could not sleep nor could any thing be done to relieve him until Bonker's father visited Booneville and had the leg removed from the grave. The lid of the box was raised and the toes of the foot were found to be crossed. No other peculiarity was discovered. The lid was closed and the coffin reburied. The injured man at the hospital at once experienced a sensation of relief, and the trouble has completely vanished. The case is a very peculiar one and has excited much comment in medical circles.

SRAS C. HOFFMAN is a voracious citizen and farmer of Hamilton County, Ohio. He comes to the front with a remarkable snake story. He says that during a severe thunder and lightning storm an immense oak, which stood upon his place in Glendale, was cleft in twain by a thunder bolt. He saw the bolt strike his favorite oak, under which he had played as a boy and often sought shelter under as a man, and he felt as if an old friend had been taken away. Immediately after the storm he lost no time in repairing to the tree, and there in the crotch he saw a snake fully six feet long suspended and dead. Its head was pinioned in the splinters, which bore the mark of the lightning's stroke. Looking down into the hollow of the tree his surprise was heightened by discovering, all cuddled up together, twenty-two young snakes, all dead. He surmised that the large snake was the mother who had been out in quest of food, when the storm arose, and in endeavoring to reach her young had been overtaken by the thunderbolt.

THERE is a lineman in a busy little Michigan town who has excited the envy of the youth of the neighborhood by the audacious way in which he has invaded one of their prize honored provinces, and furthermore, turned it into a source of revenue. The English sparrow is not

liked in Kalamazoo, and the decided feeling against him is indicated by the fact that the people would rather by three cents see a dead sparrow than a live one. The lineman who looks after the lights of the city is now availing himself diligently of the benefits of this ordinary pay by the destruction of "Englishmen" that he is inclined to believe the very best sparrow trap in existence is an arc lamp. The birds make their nests in the lamps, and after the eggs are laid the lineman keeps a close watch on it. Just before the young birds are fully fledged he pinches their heads and realizes on them. One day he brought in 141, and last year his "side line" brought him \$70.

J. B. RUMFORD, of Los Gatos, Cal., has originated a new system of living which he calls the Edinic system. He eats nothing but raw wheat, consuming about three-quarters of a pound a day. Bread, butter, sugar, meat, eggs and milk he regards as poisonous. He eats only when he feels hungry, and appears to thrive on his strange diet. At forty, he says, he was an old man, whereas now, though sixty, he feels young. "I can get along," he adds, "on one or two cents a day, and do a good day's work. Five cents' worth of rolled oats has lasted me twenty-four hours while travelling. I could not possibly eat more than ten cents' worth of wheat a day; so you can see how economical my system is." Mr. Rumford also has a theory about feeding horses, giving them only one good meal a day just before bed time.

SOME stolen money was recovered through a queer agency in Hallowell, Me. When the loss of the bills was discovered the family at once started to look for the robbers. Two men were seen running down a lane across the farm just beyond a Mr. Gilman's house, into which they attempted to break. As they ran, one of the men was seen suddenly to pull out a handkerchief and beat it about his neck, where some of the bees he and his partner had disturbed, had alighted. Judging from his antics, the little creatures got in some effective work. When the pursuers reached the spot at which the man had pulled out his handkerchief, they were delighted to find the missing roll of bills, which the men had dropped.

WHEN the Shah of Persia was touring through Europe three years ago he was accompanied everywhere and at all times by a little boy, who was gorgeously attired and was allowed to do just as he pleased. The boy was not a member of the imperial family, but just a fortunate youngster for whom the Shah had taken an unaccountable liking. A report has come from Teheran that the boy was playing with a revolver in the royal camp near Burjford recently, and, as usual, very close to the Shah, when the weapon accidentally went off, and the Shah had the very narrowest kind of escape from sudden death. The boy has been sent away now.

JOHN ST. GERMAINE, a well-known cattleman, engaged in a fight with Dr. McDougal at Chadron, Neb. He supposed the Doctor had been killed, and he jumped on his horse and started home. J. H. King pursued and attempted his arrest. St. Germaine, instead of halting when ordered, with a drawn revolver charged his pursuer. King shot, killing him instantly. The body maintained its position in the saddle, giving no signs that the man had been hit. The horse was discovered later on the way home with the master's dead body astride.

In one camp on the Grand Ronde river in Washington there are seventeen marriageable Indian girls, and they all want white men for husbands and shun their would-be lovers in the camp. The father of one of the girls makes an open offer of 200 head of good horses to the young white man who will marry his daughter. The old Indian says, however, that he will not accept any kind of a "hoodlum" for a son-in-law; the man must be of good character.

THE greatest curiosity we ever saw in the egg line was brought in yesterday by Hiram Bloomer, Jr., says the Farmer (N. Y.) Review. It is the product of one of his hens and he says all the fowls in the neighborhood cackled at the job. The curiosity consists of two common sized eggs joined together at the small ends by a shell, filled, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches—the whole resembling a pair of nose-glasses.

MISS ELLA EWING of Scotland county, Mo., is a coy damsel of eighteen summers who measures eight feet two inches in height and is still growing. She is said to be retiring in disposition, but exhibits quite an amount of exuberant girliness among her intimate friends.

Bermuda's Lily Fields.
In the picturesque islands of the Bermudas lilies are raised as a regular field crop. In value and in the esteem of the inhabitants they come next to the potato, though both are less esteemed than the onion, which is the staple crop of the islands. The Buffalo, N. Y. Express claims that no more beautiful sight can be imagined than at this season of the year greets the eye of the traveler as he comes suddenly upon one of these fields, hundreds of yards square and a mass of most fragrant white.

Unfortunately, the lily fields are not in the most profitable state. The beautiful bloom represents to its owner waste, for the lilies should be marketed in the form of buds. They are cut from the stems and packed in cases, sixty-four in a box, and sent by express all over the United States. If kept in a cool, dry place the buds will remain without opening several weeks, while being placed in water they can be brought to perfection in a day or two, or, if the water is slightly warm, in a few hours. This fortunate peculiarity of the lily has made it possible for it to be transported, notwithstanding the long journey. The culture was introduced only a few years ago upon the Bermudas by an American gentleman, General Hastings. Some of the largest fields are still owned by this gentleman, and it is said that on one of them at any time in the season over 100,000 lilies may be seen in bloom at the same time.

Alaska has yielded \$33,000,000 in seal-skins. Russia sold it to us for \$15,000,000.

EXPRESSION IN ANIMALS.

Observation of Their Ways Shows Some Interesting Facts.

Dr. A. S. Japp, in Cassell's, gives the following interesting facts regarding expression in animals:

Birds are not generally credited with great powers of expression; but let any one observe how even the common canary, when once the delightful little fellow is on free terms with his master or mistress, can keep up a conversation in his own way, and give language to his varied feelings by unmistakable signs and expressions. If you wish to see inquiry, curiosity, and questioning mingled in degree with surprise and wonder, suddenly show something that is new or strange to a pet canary. You will see the feathers on the top of his head rise, till what had seemed to you elegant from its length and almost flatness, grows round and short, while the eye is turned first on the object you hold with a certain intense kind of scrutiny, that for a moment really alters the expression of the eye, and then, with the most questioning air, on you, and back again. The softer hue that comes over the little dark eye, accompanied by the "twee-twee" on seeing you the first thing in the morning, or after you have been absent longer than usual from the room where he is, the flirting of the tail up and down, and the puffing out of the fore part of the neck, if you may not see again for a long while, if you remain constantly beside him. It is his way of saying, "Good morning, I hope you're well!" or "welcome back, dear friend; I wish you joy."

We knew a gentleman who had a fine macaw, which was much attached to all the members of the household, save a servant girl, and her the bird could not endure. Her master would take the macaw off her perch, and do anything with her, and she would kiss and fondle him in the most demonstrative manner, the soft, round tongue going over his lips, though one felt one would need to be sure of the bird's affection before venturing on such endearments, for that beak could crack the hardest nut with the utmost ease, and go through a hard ship's biscuit like the sharpest steel. But when the servant girl came, the whole expression was different; the macaw would scream and hiss, and set up the head feathers, or else, cunning bird, she would pretend to be reconciled, that she might give all the deadlier peck; but the maid had learned to be wary. No one could in the least account for the dislike the bird had to that girl, but an expression special to the occasion was unvaried whenever the girl came near. But think of the dog. What a variety of expression he has! Look at his eyes, and the lights of joy that shoot in them as he jumps round his master who has been absent longer than usual; see him when he plays with the youngsters—the "pawky" turns of expression, as a Scotchman would say, which he puts on.

And then the capacity for discipline notwithstanding. I have seen a blind beggar's dog seat at the end of a stone step, with a posse of stray dogs gathered around him, sniffing at him, barking and doing all they could to enlist him in their sociability and enjoyment. No; there he sits, utterly passive, faithful to his task, with a happy but demure expression in the higher sense of duty done. His little eyes would follow the dogs, with no movement of a muscle beside. They speak of the discipline of the battle field, which is so wondrously sustained by mere sense of comradeship, but the blind man's dog, all alone, was in this case discipline incarnate.

And when a passer-by essays to put a penny in the tin box tied under the dog's chin, and misses it, the expression of joy with which the dog jumps down, and with his mouth secures the copper, is a treat to see, and also the grand, proud smile that seems to light up his eyes when he receives his blind master's approval, that he will not accept any kind of a "hoodlum" for a son-in-law; the man must be of good character.

Or again, look at pussy when she is busy hunting after mouse or bird; the eyes are wide open and show light strongly; the ears are very erect, if not even bent forward, so as to catch the slightest sound the more quickly; the body is lengthened out and the limbs thrown apart, so that a spring is easy any second. The main features and expressions of this position characterize all the cat tribe, and when we see our "harmless, necessary cat" in this position, we see her in an act which most directly proclaims her long descent, and her kinship with the giant members of her species. Mr. Hamerton, in his fine studies of animals, favors the idea that the cat does not have the almost moral sensitiveness that marks the dog, though in some respects a her sense of touch and her perceptions are finer, at all events, quicker; but we have met with at least one case where the attachments to individuals were so strong that they overcame some of the most powerful instincts in the cat, such as going round the house in the wet for the sake of master's company. That cat's range of expression was really wonderful, as well as the attempt to keep up a conversation by news, varied through a considerable scale, and modifications of expression such as sometimes gave much amusement to visitors.

Much might be said about the influence of man on animals in developing their power of expression. The dog does not bark, properly speaking, till he comes into contact with man, nor does he exhibit the feelings most vividly expressed by barking—joy, sense of guardianship, as well as surprise or sense of danger. In truth, domesticated animals receive a new dowry of feeling and emotion through association with man, which is almost as surprising as man's own accent in emotion and thought, and all the fine complexities of language and expression which they bring.

A New Method of Preserving Ice.

An easy way to lay in a stock of ice for summer use is practised by a Minnesota farmer. In the winter he packs drifted snow in his ice house for a few nights, wetting it with well water. When frozen hard it is covered with sawdust. Last summer his stock of snow ice lasted until September; it is just as good and clear as river ice, and he hadn't the trouble of hauling it.—[St. Louis Star Sayings.]

ANCIENT GEOGRAPHY.

HISTORY OF THE WORLD BEFORE THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA.

The Crude Ideas About the Conformation of the Earth Which Prevailed in Medieval Ages—Early Struggles of Columbus—Our Incomparable Land.

The Greeks indulged their imagination in regard to regions beyond the limits of their observation, and we find in their dissertations upon geography reference to "Floating islands," "Tin islands," and "islands of the Hesperides." Tin was called by the Greeks cassiteros, is repeatedly mentioned in the Homeric poems, and was employed at a very early period as an alloy of copper, from which mixture bronze was produced. This precious metal was produced from certain islands known to the Greeks as Cassiterid's or Tin islands. These islands thus designated were the Scilly islands, together with the adjacent peninsula of Cornwall, which was erroneously supposed to be a larger island of the same group and from which in reality all the tin was procured.

Tin is well known, was found at a very early period in small quantities in the interior of Spain, in Lusitania, in Portugal, and in Cornwall, England. Mr. Bunbury, in referring to this matter, says: "Whether or not their supplies were really derived in the first instance from Cornwall or from some part of Spain, there is no doubt that Gades (Cadiz) always continued to be the center of the tin trade. It was from thence that the Phœnician colonists and in later times the Carthaginians made their adventurous voyages to the British islands; and from this circumstance it came to be supposed that the Cassiterides were connected with Spain, a notion which became so firmly fixed in men's minds that they were described by geographers in much later times as a group of islands in the ocean off the coast of Spain, without any hint of their connection with either Britain or Gaul. Strange as it may appear, it is thus they are represented not only by Strabo but even by Ptolemy, long after Britain itself was familiar to the Romans."

Many references are found in the ancient legends to the "Floating islands," but among the most charming is found in the Third book of the *Æneid* of Virgil, as follows:

"Amid the sea, a land there lies, sweet over everything,
Loved of the Nereids' mother, loved by that Egean king
Great Neptune, this swandering once all coasts and shores around
The Bow-Lord good to Gyarus and high Myconos bound,
And back he fixed to cherish folk nor fear the wind again;
There came we, and that gentlest isle receives us weary men;
In haven safe we land and thence Apollo's town adore,
King Anius, who, a king of men, Apollo's priesthood bore,
His temples with the fillets done and crowned with holy bays,
Meets us, and straight Anchises knows his friend of early days."

It is a curious fact that Homer, in common with all his successors down to the time of Heccatus, believed the earth to be a plane of circular form, surrounded on all sides by the ocean, which they conceived not as a sea but as a vast continuous stream, forever flowing round and round the earth. The vault of heaven, which is referred to as "brazen," was of a solid concave surface, like the "firmament" spoken of in the scriptures, of equal extent with the earth so as to rest on it on all sides, setting "upon tall pillars in charge of Atlas" which keep the heaven and the earth asunder.

The sun rose out of the ocean stream and again sank into the same at its setting. How it was carried back to the point from which it was to start afresh on its course it is probable that no one in the days of Homer ever troubled himself to inquire. The quarters of the heavens were almost always derived from the winds, the names of which must have been from the earliest ages familiar to the Greeks as a seafaring people. Boreas, the north wind, came from the region of Thrace; Notus, the south wind, brought sudden squalls dangerous to navigators.

Zephyrus, the west wind, was a rude and stormy wind, while Eurus, the east wind, was mild and soothing. Homer was familiar with the Hellespont from its proximity to Troy, but knew nothing of the Euxine and the division of the world into three continents, and the names of Europe, Asia and Africa were wholly unknown to him. Africa is sometimes referred to as Libya, but Europe and Asia never.

The geography of Homer is sometimes characterized as the "inner" and "outer" geography. The inner, meaning the belt of countries around the *Ægean* sea, and the outer the regions beyond the zone.

The country around the Troad in Asia Minor appears to be pretty well known, although none of the colonies of Greece from Mysia to Corea is mentioned. Among the *Ægean* islands Crete and Rhodes are named with a southeastern group—also the group of the northeast of the Troad, such as Tenedos, Imbros, Samothrace (called Samos), Lesbos, and Lemnos, but the Cyclades and Chios or Samos are not mentioned. The "outer" geography of the *Ægean* would seem to include in its hazy boundaries stories of somas living far to the north who roam the plains beyond the Thracian hills, living on the milk of the mares.

To the south there are rumors of "swart faces" (Ethiopes), remotest of men, and of Pygmies, who dwell hard by the banks of the river Ocean. Egypt is noticed only in a passing mention of the Egyptian Thebes. The name Phœnician occurs only once, but the cunning works of Sidon are more than once mentioned.

Parts of the *Ægean* bear the impress of southern Greece in the imagery of wild woodlands and hills, and in the presence of Mount Olympus as the dominant feature of the landscape. Other parts of the *Ægean* show local coloring borrowed from the valley of the Cayster, near Ephesus, or from that of Ionia, near the coast of the *Ægean*, which was washed the seaboard of Southwestern Asia Minor.

In the *Odyssey* the coast of Ionia is referred to and for the first time Chios and "windy Mimas," the promontory on the Ionian mainland, and the Sicilians.

It is useless to undertake to follow Odysseus in his wanderings, for from the moment he sets sail from Troy and is driven to the land of the Cyclopes on the coast of Thrace and crosses the *Ægean* to Cape Malea he enters the realm of fancy and we give him over to the evil winds. The whole impression left by the *Odyssey* is that of a poet who himself knew only the *Ægean* zone woven into imaginary wanderings—derived from stories of the western Mediterranean brought by Phœnician traders who had reached the south of Spain as early as about 1100 B. C. Not a word in Homer shows acquaintance with the great monarchies on the Euphrates or the Tigris. The names of Assyria and Babylon are never heard. Civilization outside of the *Ægean* is represented solely by Egypt and Phœnicia.

Herif al Edrisi, surnamed the Nubian, an eminent Arabian writer about the beginning of the fifteenth century, tells what he knows of the geography of the world and of the perils of ocean navigation, as follows: "The ocean encircles the ultimate bounds of the inhabited earth, and all beyond it is unknown. No one has been able to verify anything concerning it, on account of its difficult and perilous navigation, its great obscurity, its profound depth and frequent tempests; through fear of its mighty fishes and haughty winds; yet there are many islands in it, some peopled, others uninhabited. There is no mariner who dares to enter into its deep waters, or if any have done so they have merely kept along its coasts, fearful of departing from them."

"The waves of this ocean, although they roll as high as mountains, yet maintain themselves without breaking, for if they broke it would be impossible for a ship to plough them."

Bancroft, the historian, says that nearly three centuries before the Christian era Aristotle, following the lessons of the Pythagoreans, had taught that the earth is a sphere and that the water which bounds Europe on the west washes the eastern shores of Asia. Instructed by him the Spaniard, Seneca, believed that a ship, with a fair wind, could sail to the Indies in a few days. The opinion of Aristotle, the Arab, commentator of Aristotle, and observation assisted to confirm it; and poets of ancient and of more recent times had foretold that empires beyond the ocean would one day be revealed to the daring navigator. The genial country of Dante and Boccaccio gave birth to Christopher Columbus, by whom these lessons were so received and weighed that he gained the glory of fulfilling the prophecy.

Accounts of navigation from the eastern coast of Africa to Arabia had reached the western kingdoms of Europe, and adventurous Venetians, returning from travels beyond the Ganges, had filled the world with dazzling descriptions of the wealth of China, as well as marvelous reports of the outlying island empire of Japan. It began to be believed that the continent of Asia stretched over far more than a hemisphere, and that the remaining distance around the globe was comparatively short. Yet from the early part of the fifteenth century the navigators of Portugal had directed their explorations to the coast of Africa; and when they had ascertained that the torrid zone is habitable even under the equator, the discovery of the islands of Madeira and the Azores could not divert them from the purpose of turning the southern capes of that continent and steering past them to the land of spices, which promised untold wealth to the merchants of Europe, new dominions to its princes, and heathen nations to the religion of the cross. Before the year 1474 and perhaps as early as 1470 Columbus was attracted to Lisbon, which was the great center of maritime adventure. He came to insist with immovable resolution that the shortest route to the Indies lay across the Atlantic. By the words of Aristotle, received through Averroes and by letters from Toscanelli, the venerable cosmographer of Florence who had drawn a map of the world with eastern Asia rising over against Europe, he was riveted in his faith and lived only in the idea of laying open the western path to the Indies.

After more than ten years of vain solicitations in Portugal he left the banks of the Tagus to seek aid of Ferdinand and Isabella, rich in nautical experience, having watched the stars at sea from the latitude of Iceland to near the equator at Elmina. Though yet longer baffled by the skepticism which knew not how to comprehend the clearness of his conception, or the mystic trance which sustained his inflexibility of purpose, he lost nothing of his devotedness to the sublime office to which he held himself elected from his infancy by the promises of God. When half resolved to withdraw from Spain, traveling on foot, he knocked at the gate of the monastery of La Rabida at Palos to crave the needed charity of food and shelter for himself and his little son whom he led by the hand, the destitute and neglected seaman, in his naked poverty, was still the promiser of kingdoms, holding firmly in his grasp "the key of the ocean sea," claiming as it were from heaven the Indies as his own, and "dividing with him the office to which he held himself elected from his infancy by the promises of God. 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