AT LAST.

Some day or other the cross will be lifted,
Beneath which the pilgrim has journeyed so long;
Some day or other the lute that is rifted
Shall melody make in the chorus of song.

Some day or other the hopes early perished
Shall rise into beauty undreamed of before;
Some day or other the hearts fondly cherished,
The lost and the longed-for, the grave shall restore.

Some day or other the doubts which have haunted
Shall all be dispelled in the light of His face;
Some day or other the foes who have daunted
All vanquished shall be through the might of His grace.

Some day or other the toil shall be ended,
The nameless unrest, the vague yearning be past;
"Thanks unto Him who thus safely hath tended,"
The ransomed shall cry. "It is Heaven at last!"

—E. A. Kelsey, in Great Thoughts.

PILLAR MOUNTAIN.

A Remarkable Freak of Basaltic Formation in Nevada.

That celebrated mineral ledge, the Comstock lode, is located in a mountain region which is not only strikingly picturesque, but which contains many mineralogical and geological curiosities, among them what is locally known as Pillar mountain. It is not a mountain at all, but a curious basaltic mound, rising from a comparatively flat elevated tableland on the west slope of Mount Davidson, the towering peak which frowns down upon Virginia. The mound, which is oblong in shape, and perhaps three hundred yards in length by fifty in width, is composed of massive basalt pillars, which, generally speaking, stand perpendicularly on their bases in a compact, symmetrical body. At first glance it looks all the world like a gigantic bunch of asparagus.

The Giant's Causeway in Ireland, the Palisades on the Hudson and Fingal's Cave on the Island of Staffa, off the coast of Scotland, are famous for their basaltic columns. Pillar mountain possesses the same geological marvels. Its ponderous columns are just as wonderful to behold and as striking in the inexplicable peculiarity of their formation.

Pillar mountain is only a few miles from Virginia, but few Comstockers know of its existence, and fewer still are acquainted with its strange characteristics. This is probably due to the fact that it is out of the way somewhat, and off the lines of travel to and from Virginia. A good road leads almost to the spot where its columns rear their heads, and a drive of an hour will bring the curious to it. The road by which it is reached leaves Virginia at the divide—that quarter of the city which joins Gold Hill—and winds southward along the eastern slopes of the hills abutting against Mount Davidson.

The irregular cluster of mountains within which the mining camps of Virginia and Gold Hill are situated is composed of foothills of the Sierra Nevada range, projected at an angle to the south and then spreading to the east. On the west and south the cluster is encircled by a curving valley which divides it from the mother range. The upper half of this is known as Washoo valley and the lower as Eagle valley. On the east the group is separated from the foothills of the Toyabee range by the Carson river, which flows eastward through Eagle valley and winds to the north along its eastern base, finally swinging sharply to the east again when it gets abreast of Virginia. After the river turns to the east at the latter point it crosses the southern neck of a white, flat, gleaming stretch of sand known as the Twenty-Six-Mile desert, whose shimmering bosom extends to the north till it disappears beyond the northeast extremity of the cluster. It will be seen by the foregoing description that these mountains are isolated from their neighbors on all sides but the north. High in the heart of them are Virginia and Gold Hill, the former clinging to the east side of Mount Davidson in a cup-shaped depression and the latter strung along the upper end of Gold canyon, which strikes off from the mountain in a southeasterly direction and twists and turns until it reaches the Carson river.

The road to Pillar mountain passes under the brow of a peak, surmounted by a tower-like mass of stone. The mural monument on the peak is known locally as Suicide rock, and history attaches to it a very tragic episode which occurred in the early days. It was in the '60s or the '70s, perhaps, history is not exact, that three miners were living together in a cabin in Gold canyon. They had a claim among them, so the story goes, which yielded very generously of dust, and in time they accumulated considerable of the yellow stuff. One day they played cards for money, and in a short time one of them had nearly all of their combined wealth. Toward the end of the game the other two discovered that he had been cheating and resented it with an angry protest, whereupon he drew his revolver from his pocket, ruthlessly shot them both, and fled from the cabin. One of them lived long enough to tell the tale, and the population turned out en masse to search for the murderer. They guarded all the trails from the locality and searching parties scoured the hills. He had taken to the mountain side and he found his way to Suicide rock. From his eyrie on the rock he could see the country round, and he concluded that escape was impossible, for, on the third day after the murder, the searchers heard a pistol shot and saw a ring of blue smoke curl upward from the rock, and upon investigating his hiding place they found his dead body, with a bullet hole in his head. He had killed himself rather than be taken alive, and the tragedy gave the rock its name.

The gradual ascent of the road as it trends to the south finally brings it to a saddleback on the breastbone of the mountains, over which it passes to the west. On the west side of the mountains the road bends back on itself and skirts their flanks till the rear of Mount Davidson is reached; then it lifts to the plateau upon which Pillar mountain is located. The plateau projects from the mountain midway between the base and summit of the latter. Its surface is irregular, and the big bunch of basalt shoots its ashen columns fifty feet into the air from an earthen mound on its highest spot. The basaltic deposit is in the shape of an ellipse, and is very regular in its construction. It has the appearance of having been thrust up through the earth by an internal convulsion, and its gray pillars contrast oddly with the surrounding hills, which are sandy, overgrown with sagebrush and dotted with an occasional scrubby pine. The blackened, gray stones are radically different in aspect and formation from the ledges of quartz and granite which come to the surface in broken seams here and there.

In the main the basaltic columns stand side by side so closely that at a distance the mound, from some points, looks like a mass of solid stone marked from base to apex with regular parallel lines. All the upright pillars, even where occupying regular perpendicular postures, are separated into segments by cracks which traverse them horizontally. The segments are from six to fifteen feet in length, and the whole segmented column approximates sixty feet. As the compact points of the mound are approached the exterior columns are observed to incline inward at the top, which gives them the semblance of strips of stone overlying each other.

The mound has something of the appearance of a great oblong amphitheater, with crumbling walls where the columns have broken away and fallen outward to its base. At the places where the columns are broken they lie in confused masses or rear their colossal heads singly at various angles. It is at these places that the ponderous nature and the symmetrical proportions of the columns are displayed to the greatest advantage. They are principally hexagonal in shape, although many three-sided, four-sided and five-sided examples are in evidence. Some of the broken and displaced columns standing upright, alone or in groups, have the appearance of huge monuments, and a man standing beside them is dwarfed into insignificance. Most of them weigh many tons. The observer is chiefly impressed by their massiveness and clean-cut symmetry. They look as if they had been carved by giants out of the solid rock, and it is difficult to conceive how nature could have molded them with such regularity and precision.

It is now a generally accepted theory of geologists that basalt is of volcanic origin. It is composed of three distinct elements; iron oxide, pyroxine and feldspar or some kindred composition. When feldspar is a component it is called feldspathic basalt; when that element is replaced by an affinity it takes the name of the affinity. Minerals occur in basalt, as shown by analysis, but their presence is due to the percolation of water through the basalt after its formation. The doubt connected with the origin of basalt springs from the water which analyses have proven it to contain.

Some geologists have claimed that if it were of volcanic origin the water would have been expelled while it was in a molten state in the course of the eruption which brought it to the surface. This view has been overruled, however, by other students of geologic conditions, who point out that steam and hot water are often cast up by volcanoes, and that basalt is sufficiently compact to have resisted the expansive force of the steam imprisoned within it.

On the top of Pillar mountain there is a cavity or depression with an earthy bottom, which several local wiseacres of a geologic and scientific turn of mind have pronounced the crater of a volcano. The shape of the depression and the character attributed to the rocks lend color to the theory.

Basalt either occurs in the form of a dike or in a horizontal sheet. The positions of the columns vary according to the character of the deposit. When it is in the form of a bed the columns are erect. In the dike formation they are horizontal.

The regularity of form displayed by the columns is accounted for by a theory resting upon impeded contraction. When mud dries out a network of cracks appears on its surface. Investigation reveals that the shapes in the mud are generally hexagonal, and show the operation of a governing force which determines their form. In theory this principle controls the formation of basaltic columns. The theory may be correct and simple enough, but the uniform shapes of the columns never fail to strangely impress the lay mind, notwithstanding.—San Francisco Chronicle.

The Critic Confounded.

A practice to which a large number of men conform is not lightly to be found fault with, for it is generally based upon a good reason, of which the critic is ignorant. Coleridge, the poet and philosopher, was once floored by a Jew, a peddler of old clothes, whom he ventured to criticise for abbreviating a word. The Jew had annoyed Coleridge by passing him several times, crying for old clothes in the most nasal tone. At last, the philosopher was so provoked that he said to the peddler: "Pray, why can't you say 'old clothes,' as plain as I do now?" The Jew stopped, looked gravely at his critic, and in a clear, grave accent, answered: "Sir, I can say 'Old clothes' as well as you can, but if you had to say so ten times a minute for hours together, you would 'Och clo' as I do now." He walked away, but Coleridge was so moved by the justice of the man's retort that he followed him and gave him a shilling, the only one he had.—Youth's Companion.

—A Wise Precaution. — She — "Oh, Charlie, I bought you a box of lovely cigars to-day, of my own selection." He—"Thank you, love. Did you get a life insurance policy to go with it?"—Detroit Free Press.

STRANGE FRIENDSHIPS.

A Pet Cat and a Canary Bird Become Inseparable Chums.

Cats learn all sorts of antics and sometimes form contradictory attachments, young, birds mice and puppies being the peculiar objects of affection. A story is told from authentic sources about a lady who had a pet canary and an equally well-beloved cat. When alone she allowed the former to fly about the room. Chance discovered that pussy was as fond of the canary as herself; for, to her surprise, one morning she entered the room to find that the bird had escaped and was perched on the body of the cat, who was apparently delighted. The bird seemed to have no fear, and after that the two pets were devoted companions. Their mistress had, however, another fright. One day the cat gave a terrible growl, and, seizing the bird in her mouth, leaped on the bed for protection. Her tail was swelled to twice its natural size, her hair stood on end and her eyes were as big as four ordinary cats' eyes. The bird was given up for lost. The secret was this: A strange cat had entered the room, and it was for the preservation of the bird that the cat had seized him, and as soon as the intruder was driven away she set the prisoner at liberty.

Another author tells the story of a cat and dog friendship. These two antipathetic creatures by nature grew so unnaturally fond of each other that they were never willingly asunder. Whenever the one had a choice morsel of food he was sure to divide it with the other. They ate out of the same plate, slept in the same bed, and took walks together. Wishing to put the friendship to the proof, the master took the cat by herself in one room, and gave her a sumptuous meal during which she enjoyed the bones of the quail and seemed to forget the dog. The other half of the quail, uneaten, was put in a cupboard, the door of which was unlocked. The cat left the room, went to the dog, and mewed loudly in different tones, being answered with short barks. Presently the dog followed his friend, and, going to the cupboard, the cat pushed off the plate covering the quail and laid it before the dog, who devoured it quickly.

A curious circumstance took place in New Orleans in the year 1832, when a bear was lowered into the

LEADING THE BLIND.

cage of an old African lion, supposing it would be torn to pieces. As many people were assembled to see the barbarous exhibition the bear placed himself in a fighting posture and flew at the lion, but to the amazement of every one the lion placed his paw upon the bear's head as if to express his pity, and tried to make friends with him. Taking the bear under his protection he suffered no one to approach the cage, and did not sleep until he was exhausted, so closely did he watch over his new friend. He allowed the bear to eat, but refused food for himself, and guarded the bear with the jealous affection of a human being.

A clergyman tells the story of once walking through a meadow late one evening and seeing a great number of rats migrating from one place to another. He stood perfectly still, and the entire procession passed by him. Great was his astonishment to see an old blind rat holding a piece of stick at one end of his mouth, while another rat had hold of the other end, and thus conducted his helpless and afflicted companion.—Esther Singleton, in Chicago Inter Ocean.

Attacked by a Bull Moose.

Two Maine men were out hunting for deer, when a big bull moose came into view, and in a minute the tables were turned. The old fellow spied the hunters, and without hesitation charged them. His gait was a tremendous lope, and the first bullets sent into him only increased his speed. The hunters had time to fire another shot, and then they had to run for their lives. Fortunately they got to a place where the trees grew so close that the progress of their pursuer was retarded. This gave them time to reload and the next shot dropped the big animal. It took eleven bullets in all to finish him. Both hunters before had been skeptical as to the courage and fury of this monarch of the woods, but they are now willing to give him a wide berth.

Another Question Altogether.

Children are too often little spendthrifts. They use up an entertainment for which their fathers and mothers would be grateful, and then look about them for something new. It is said that while Rudyard Kipling was in England, during the past summer, he became very fond of Dorothy Drew, Mr. Gladstone's granddaughter. He met her at a country house, and being very fond of children, took her about the grounds and told her stories. After a time Mrs. Drew, fearing that Mr. Kipling must have had enough of the child's society, called her and said:

"Now, Dorothy, I hope you have been a good child and have not been wearying Mr. Kipling."

"Oh, not a bit, mother," replied the little girl, "but you've no idea how Mr. Kipling has been wearying me."

YOUTHFUL MARKSMAN.

Little Willie Douglass Is a Sure Shot at Forty-Five Feet.

There is a secret desire in every American boy's heart to become the sole proprietor of a gun which will shoot real powder and bullets. As he reads of the heroes of the French and Indian wars he wishes that these stirring times were of the present day. Then he thinks of how, with a trusty rifle, he would have gone forth against the savage red men. It is no idle day dream. He is only showing the true American spirt and pluck which is strong in every boy born in this great country of ours.

The famous rifle shots have all begun when they were boys. Daniel Boor

WILLIE DOUGLASS.

could accomplish wonderful feats with his flint-lock rifle before he had outgrown his teens.

Col. William Cody, familiarly known as Buffalo Bill, had achieved fame as a sure shot before he had reached his twenty-first birthday.

There are few boys who have an opportunity to develop skill with firearms nowadays. Those who do usually live in the west or in the rural districts. Every now and then one of these lads comes to the front to prove that America leads the world in the handling of this favorite weapon of the frontier.

We recently learned of a youth whose record is so good that every boy will wish to learn more of him. This young rifleman is Master Willie Douglass, of Lafayette, Ind. He has been shooting but a short time, but has shown a wonderful proficiency already. The illustration presented herewith shows Master Douglass; also his targets, with shots made at a range of 45 feet. It shows a score which counts 97 out of a possible 100. The target shown is full size.

Willie Douglass, this youthful disciple of Leather Stocking, says the New York Recorder, is about 10 years of age. He weighs 51 pounds—just a trifle over five times as much as his rifle. This handsome model of the gunmaker's skill he handles as correctly as does a veteran marksman. He is very cool and reserved in manner. He has a pair of keen, steel-gray eyes, and is a youth of striking appearance. His rifle is a 22-caliber. Willie Douglass is very fond of his rifle and the sport it affords him. He has a medal which shows his prowess.

KILLING JACK HARES.

Ten Thousand Horsemen Take Part in a Great Drive.

The jack hare group contains five species, which in turn inhabit all portions of the southwest quarter of the United States, as far north as Oregon, as far east as Nebraska and Kansas, and southward to Tehuantepec. Their numbers vary in different localities according to circumstances. Wherever in any portion of this vast range the coyotes and foxes are almost exterminated, the jack hares soon increase to an alarming extent. Men are beginning to learn that it will not do to cut out too many cogs from the great balance-wheel of nature; for her affairs are so nicely adjusted that even so apparently slight a matter as the poisoning of

AMERICAN JACK HARE.

coyotes may cause a great disturbance. In many portions of the southwest the jack hares are already a perfect pest.

In central and southern California the destruction of the carnivorous animals that usually keep rabbits in check has led to such an alarming increase in "jack rabbits" that now they constitute a genuine plague. In Fresno and Kern counties they are so destructive to young fruit trees that the fruit-growers have been compelled to adopt heroic measures for their wholesale destruction. In the winter of 1892 Mr. C. H. Townsend reported to Forest and Stream that in the great drive which took place near Fresno about the middle of February, a tract of country containing about 20 square miles was surrounded and swept over by nearly 2,000 horsemen, who closed in from all sides, driving the game before them. About 15,000 jack hares were thus forced into a central corral of wire, where they were killed with clubs. During the previous winter more than 50,000 jacks were killed in a series of drives which were made near Bakersfield, Kern county; and the worst of it was the animals were at that time not fit to eat.—W. T. Hornaday, in St. Nicholas.

WELL-TRAINED BEES.

An Englishman Once Educated a Swarm of the Busy Insects.

In the education of animals it is more remarkable to see the smaller ones trained to exercises that seem absurdly out of place by the patient care of the human brain that devotes itself to this educational process. Mice, canary birds and fleas! They have all been upon the boards. The idea of teaching the vivacious flea to perform certain specific antics! How was it instilled into its small imperceptible faculties that in obedience to certain signals from the master, man, it should do things which would never enter into the mind of the simple, natural flea!

Among the smaller animals there is none that seems so intelligent, so practical and sober-minded as "the little busy bee." He will mount in the air, and fly in a straight line for his hive. It has passed into a proverb, and when a man wishes to say that he has gone by the shortest line from one point to another (and that, as mathematics teaches, is the straight line), he says he "made a bee-line" for the place. So in the structure of their cells they apply by instinct the form and proportions which reason proves to be most effective and economical of space. They are fine subjects and obey implicitly their queen, and they take good care of the drones as long as they are useful to the well being of the community, and kill them as soon as they cease to be so.

It would appear, therefore, a very simple thing to teach bees tricks and introduce them to a professional life as performers on the amusement stage. Yet probably very few have ever seen them trained. In 1831, however, a man named Wildeman, of Plymouth, did train a troup and exhibit them for the recreation of the curious public. He got swarms of bees so well trained that he could make them enact maneuvers with as much precision and unity as troups of soldiers go through field tactics. This man used to exhibit the bees in a large hall, outside of which was a garden. When the bees got through working as trick performers they could have a good time playing among the flowers. Wildeman would appear before the audience with the bees swarming all over him. They were on his face, on his hands, crawling over his clothes, and his pockets were full of them. It looked as if he were

THE GERMAN PROFESSOR AND HIS TRAINED BEES.

a great flower full of material from which honey could be made, from the assiduous attention which these busy little bees paid to him. Whether they had been despoiled of their stings or not is not said. But he must have felt uncomfortable if he knew that many scores of bees, were they so minded, could have stung him at will. Such a quantity of bee stings as that could easily settle a man and leave him stung to death. Anybody who has ever been unlucky enough to receive the sting of even one healthy, vigorous bee will not find it difficult to believe this.

The hives of the bees were in a certain part of the large hall quite removed from the stage where Wildeman stood with them thickly clustered on him. All at once he would give a whistle and presto! The bees started off and flew straight to their hives. When they had got well settled there he would whistle again, and back they flew and settled on his face and hands and clothes once more. This was done with the greatest promptness and regularity. It must have been with some solicitude that the spectators assisted in this performance. But it is due to the bees, and perhaps to Wildeman, to say that no one was ever stung by them.

Virgil, the great Latin poet, who wrote four poems on different agricultural themes, devotes one of these Georgics, as they are called, entirely to bees. But he nowhere says they can be taught to do the things which this man of Plymouth trained them to perform. Virgil's bees know a great deal, but they have learned it all from nature.—St. Louis Republic.

The Dog Was Interrupted.

The signs were all about in the fair grounds that, at a certain tent, Tom, a Skye terrier, would correctly play upon the piano a certain air. The people crowded the tent and waited for the wonderful performance. The piano was opened, and Tom came out, and gravely got up on the stool and placed his fore paws on the keyboard. The music was as promised, but a man back in the audience, who doubled Tom's musical ability, called out: "Cats!" "Cats!" Tom jumped from the stool and ran round the stage madly, barking with all his might. It did not interrupt the music! The piano was played by machinery arranged inside the case by the owner.

Frozen for Over a Century.

"While at Birch Creek, in Alaska," said an American who recently returned from the mines, "I saw a wonderful cave, lately discovered. After entering through a small aperture, the sides of which are composed of granite, the explorer enters a solid ice-chamber, from which hang numerous stalactites. In this chamber Schumann, the discoverer, found a black bear frozen stiff in a block of ice. He took his ax and chopped a piece off the animal and found that it crumbled at the touch. It probably had been frozen for a century or more."

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