THE QUEENSTOWN NEWS.

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Give some men bread to-day and they will expect pie to-morrow, complains the Chicago Daily News.

"Americans think too much of themselves," says Professor Lowe of Pennsylvania, in the sage North American Review.

Talk about necessity being the mother of invention! No such thing, asserts the Reader, I assure you. Accident is the mother of invention in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred.

The Duke of Manchester says positively that he will not settle in America. Count Boni de Castellane has not said anything definite about it for publication, but it is generally believed, avers the Louisville Courier-Journal, that he will not settle anywhere.

Little imagination is needed to picture the revolution in modern methods that the armed airship would produce, remarks the China Morning Post, Hongkong, and the nation which first commands the air may very possibly command the earth and sea. War will grow so terrible in its latest stages that mankind will revolt at the devilish nature of its own ingenuity.

Observes the Syracuse Herald: Where self-destruction is due to mental derangement, chronic or sudden, it is in most cases, probably, due to the extinction of those hopes and fears which pertain to the untried future. The suicide evil will continue to increase just in proportion to the weakening of men's sense of moral and spiritual obligation and the narrowing of their vision.

The Providence Bulletin says: The lightness with which people kill themselves may be attributed to a relaxation of that fear of the future that was once a universal possession, but even that is not sufficient explanation. Unless there is a change in present tendencies the future will know our time as the age of suicide. There is a mystery here for the psychologist and the sociologist to solve, if they can.

Some sensation has been caused by one of the prettiest Irish hostesses in London declaring that she will have only American, Scotch or Irish people to her house. She says the English people in good society are too dull for words. The topic is beginning to be discussed. There is no doubt that American, Scotch and Irish people in society mutually fraternize more cordially than they do with the English, while the lady in question declares that English hostesses have to invite some Scotch or Irish to every dinner party in order [illegible] heaviness and make [illegible] body else, or [illegible] that ac- [illegible] being so [illegible] thin ice [illegible] their British [illegible]

[illegible] al. Often [illegible] which bring [illegible] mystery is [illegible] An "e" in a misspelled [illegible] ought home his crime to the [illegible] gott. It was a couple of [illegible] squirrel which convicted [illegible] murder in a case which [illegible] zled the police. Litera- [illegible] to depend upon [illegible] for establish- [illegible] to be

Touch and Go.

By G. R. O'REILLY.

The adventure here related took place in 1890, in Eastern Venezuela, where the mountains between the great River Orinoco and the southern shores of the Caribbean Sea look out upon the Gulf of Paria.

I had gone over from Trinidad to obtain for my collection one of two living specimens of the South American rattle-snake (Crotalus durissus), which, although common in Venezuela, is not found in Trinidad, in spite of the fact that at two points the island is almost within stone-throw of the mainland.

Shortly after reaching Venezuela I fell in with two semi-civilized South American Indians, who were engaged in searching the forests for valuable orchids for a wealthy plantcr. In their work they often met with snakes, and in seeking for snakes I used to see the orchids, so that it suited both parties to hunt together; and a very adventurous time it proved to be. They were brothers—copper-colored, straight-haired, sad-faced, squat of figure, tough as peccaries, and agile as monkeys, but silent and watchful as wild cats. The name of one, appropriately enough, was Saturnino, while his brother was called Cipriano.

For some time we camped together in a palm-thatched hut on the hillside, and, while staying there, it happened one day that Saturnino and I went out alone into the forest, leaving Cipriano at the hut. Rather late in the evening we were lucky enough to capture alive a full-grown specimen of the Venezuelan "coaima de Agua," or fer-de-lance (Bothrops atrox), one of the most deadly of all venomous snakes. During the adventure we got a ducking in the river, and went home with our prize tied up in a bag, feeling anything but comfortable in our water-soaked clothing.

Night had already fallen in the tronical forest when Saturnino and I reached the palm-thatched hut, but Cipriano had a big fire blazing outside, and the lamp was shining within, so that everything looked quite cosy and snug. As we were both wet to the skin, from our soaking in the river, we dried our clothing and enjoyed the warmth.

That night, after supper, we reclined in our hammocks, smoking and talking, till the lamp burned out. Later on, the rain came down in torrents, and extinguished the very last sparks of the smouldering fire, so that finally we lay there in absolute darkness.

Now, darkness is favorable to rats, of which we had some at the hut, attracted there probably by the frequent odor of baked armadillo. As they never obtained very much armadillo, they made themselves free with our other provisions; and like most wild creatures, once they had tasted the difference, they preferred cooked food to raw.

We had lain for a long time silent in the darkness, as I thought the two Indians were sleeping. All was still in the hut, except for a rat gnawing in one corner. Before supper, I had thrown the bag containing the fer de lance down on the floor in this very corner. I had heard that rat a-nibbling for quite a considerable time. Now, for a space, the nibbling ceased, till the stillness was suddenly broken by a squeak and a scuffle. Then there was silence again, till Saturnino called out to me, "A snake has bitten a rat. Get up and look at your snake; I believe he is out of the bag!"

A moment's reflection made me think that the Indian had probably hit on the truth. I struck a match—the very last match we possessed, by the way. I didn't dare to put my feet out of the hammock lest I should step on the snake; but the light from the match was sufficient to show me a fer-de-lance coiled on top of the bag in the corner, and a rat lying dead on the floor within a foot of [illegible] Then the burnt-out match fell [illegible] floor.

[illegible] two Indians saw the coiled [illegible] and the dead rat as well as I [illegible]

[illegible] tay in the hammock!" they [illegible] "Strike another match, and [illegible] the lamp!" [illegible] !" said I, "there are no more [illegible] es."

[illegible] ver mind," returned the re- [illegible] ful Cipriano; "stay where you [illegible] the hammock. I'll get the [illegible] ticks."

[illegible] en I heard him rustling in the [illegible] h of the wall at the head of his [illegible] mock, and presently, through the [illegible] ness, the sound of the twirling [illegible] ht stick between his palms came [illegible] ears, so I knew he would soon [illegible] a kindling. It ought not to [illegible] taken more than a minute and [illegible] alf or two minutes to get the [illegible] from the fire-sticks; but on [illegible] occasion it took fully five, be- [illegible] the sticks were very damp on [illegible] nt of the air being laden with [illegible] from the combined effects of [illegible] eat and the rain. At last, how- [illegible] the friction overcame the damp- [illegible] and the noise of the revolving [illegible] tick ceased—Cipriano had a [illegible] on the point of it. Raising it [illegible] ly to the point of his mouth he [illegible] upon it, and in an instant the [illegible] top of the stick became a fiery [illegible] of glowing charcoal. Placing [illegible] a tinder of rubbed-up leaves, [illegible] lowing upon that, he soon had [illegible] blaze, by the light of which [illegible] plenished our lamp and re- [illegible] it.

[illegible] dead rat was gone and so was [illegible] ake—he had probably swal- [illegible] he rat. Without putting foot [illegible] hammock I moved the lamp [illegible] as to look all over the floor, [illegible] trace of the snake could we [illegible] all three of us got up to [illegible] him, for none of us could [illegible] sleeping in the hut with such [illegible] venomous creature at large. [illegible] could only have been certain [illegible] had gone off to the woods [illegible] uld have felt contented [illegible] But, for my part, I didn't [illegible] that he had; for where a snake gets one rat he always wants to look for another.

First of all I went to the bag, to see if it were really my unsacked captive that had escaped. Yes; there was a hole in a corner of the bag. I picked it up and shook it, whereupon some of the roast-parrot-flavored boiled beans which Saturnino had carried in it dropped out upon the floor. That made plain the cause of the snake's escape—the unfortunate rat had scented the pleasing odor of the cooked beans that had stuck in the corner of the bag, and had gnawed a hole through to get in at them. He evidently hauled them out with his paws, and was sitting up on his haunches to eat them when the fer-de-lance, coming forth through the newly-made hole, struck the nibbling rodent dead on the spot.

All over the hut we searched most diligently, but no trace of the escaped snake could we discover. With great care we lifted every object he could possibly hide under; but he was certainly not in the hut, so we got into our hammocks again, although we did not feel like sleeping. I told the Indians that if we laid quite still the snake would most probably after a while come back to the very same spot where he had swallowed the rat. Accordingly we left the lamp burning and lay motionless in our hammocks.

Now, anyone who has ever strained his eyes in watching—especially at night-time, by the light of a make-shift lamp really no better than a candle—can easily understand that one of us would presently imagine that he saw something. Ere long, therefore, Saturnino thought he saw the snake. This, however, was not enough for me. I would not stir from the hammock till I got a sure and undoubted sight of him, and even then I meant to lie still until the reptile came into such a position as would favor me in recapturing him.

I told the Indians this, and warned them to lie absolutely motionless. Now, to lie absolutely motionless for a time on the broad of one's back is strongly conducive to sleepiness. So it proved with us, and all three of us must have dozed off together; but it was only an involuntary nap, and we were speedily awakened by a rustling in the thatch of the wall.

"There it is again," said I; "the thatch unmistakably rustles."

"Yes! Yes! I saw it stirring," said Cipriano. "The wall-thatch undoubtedly moved down there by the floor, in that very corner where the snake bag was lying."

Presently, out from between the bottom thatch and the floor came the triangular head of the snake.

"Don't move a muscle," said I to the Indians. "If you make the least movement he'll go back, and we may never see him again."

If three dead men had lain in that hut they could not have remained in more absolute repose than did we anxious watchers for the succeeding fifteen or twenty minutes.

The cat-eyed reptile, seeing everything quiet, soon began to come farther and farther out. His velvet-textured scales, of an obscure drab-bish earth-color, irregularly marked with dark cross-bands, rendered him so inconspicuous upon that floor of dun-colored clay that, if our eyes had not been guided to the spot by the noise of his movements in the palm-leaf thatch, I do not believe we should ever have noticed him. On all his upper surface there was not a single scale reflecting the light, so perfectly has Nature clothed this deadly viper in a coat that will render him almost invisible to his intended prey.

Of course, I knew that it was not after us that the snake was coming out from his hiding place in the palm-thatch wall. He was only following the traces of the rat. I told the Indians so, but they would hardly credit it. I impressed upon them that, though they must lie still so as not to alarm him, yet they might speak as freely as they wished, as the snake could not hear our voices—for the simple reason that all snakes are absolutely deaf.

They would not believe this for an instant; they were convinced, they said, that he was coming to kill us. Nevertheless, I prevailed on them to wait a little longer and observe his actions.

Inch by inch he emerged, till his whole length was visible. With head bent to the ground, he went back and forth over the place where the unfortunate rat had been slain and devoured. I knew that he was busily examining the trail of the rat with the sensitive and—to him—informing points of his tongue, forked into two tips of threads-like fineness and delicacy. For several minutes we watched him gloating, as it were, over the old traces of his victim.

When the Indians, seeing all this, admitted that I knew the ways of snakes better than they did, I very gently took my long snake-stick in my hands, and telling Saturnino to be ready to stand behind me with our lamp, I jumped suddenly from the hammock, and, before the startled snake had time to glide away, I pressed the bent end of the stick across his neck, holding him firmly against the floor. The frightened reptile, on finding himself thus tightly held, lashed his tail and body about wildly in efforts to escape. I shouted excitedly to Saturnino to hurry up behind me with the lamp, so that I could see the grip the creature safely behind the head. But at this very moment a most unexpected accident intervened.

Right over and about a foot above my head was a thick pole, put across from eave to eave to give stability within the hut. Upon this pole, and tethered to it by a long strip of raw tapir-hide, a pet monkey of Saturnino's was sleeping. My loud call for the lamp had two effects. It made Saturnino run up close behind me with it, and it also suddenly woke up the monkey, who, seeing the snake, jumped down with a cry of terror on to his master's neck. This sudden advent of the monkey on one side of him, at such a time, made the already nervous Saturnino fall towards the other side, striking against the end of my snake-stick, protruding behind me, and causing me to lose my hold on the snake's neck. Nor was this the worst of it, for the lamp, which Saturnino let fall, was extinguished—and there we were in total darkness, afraid to stir either hand or foot lest we should meet with death by running foul of the escaped viper. Instinctively we both stood still. During all this time Cipriano, very luckily, had never moved from the hammock, and now he quickly found his fire-sticks, got them going again, and soon had a little blaze in the tinder, giving light sufficient for me to see—much to my relief—that the snake was nowhere near me.

I relighted the lamp and searched all around the hut, but the reptile had gone completely out of sight. Saturnino, as soon as he had got the monkey pacified and put back upon its perch, helped me in the search. We even poked sticks into the palm-leaf walls, but no sign of the hidden fer-de-lance could we find anywhere. All three of us concluded, therefore, that having been held down forcibly by the neck with the stick he had become so effectually scared that he had gone off to the woods for good and all.

Very badly indeed did we deceive ourselves in forming such a hasty opinion!

When the first signs of day began to appear in the forest we all agreed that we longed for our coffee, for the wakeful night, so full of exciting events, had induced a most ravenous hunger. Cipriano said he would kindle the fire if his brother would go for the water. Saturnino found, to his dismay, that the large water-gourd was broken; he had fallen on it when the monkey had jumped on him for refuge.

Now, near the door there lay on its side a large earthenware water-jar of the kind called a "tinaja." I myself had brought it with me from the coast. The stopper had fallen out of it and was lying on the floor close by.

"Why, here you are, Saturnino,' said I, picking up the stopper and putting it into the jar. "This big earthenware thing will hold more than your gourd. I'll go with you to help fetch it back."

So Saturnino swung the great jar upon his shoulder, and we both went forth through the dripping forest towards the river.

Present we arrived at the water's edge, where the stream made a nice little bay. It was very deep there, and there was a swift current besides. A great tree had fallen prostrate close along by the brink, and out upon this tree Saturnino walked to fill the jar. I went behind him, standing just at his side. He took out the stopper, laid it beside him, and then lowered the jar into the river to let in a little water with which to rinse it out. Presently the water began pouring into it, and at the very same instant that the water went in, out popped the head and neck of the lost fer-de-lance! With a loud "Carrajo!" the terrified Saturnino let go his hold. As the jar sank beneath the surface the snake came to the top and, with only his head protruding, swam off to the southern side.

We watched him in silence till he climbed up the bank and disappeared in a thicket of dwarf palm. It would have been impossible to follow him, for these palms grow with their porcupine stalks so closely together that nothing so large as a man or a hound could ever with saftey pass through them. By that time, however, I was really glad to see the last of the snake; we had had too many touch-and-go experiences with him to make his company desirable.—The Wide World Magazine.

SCIENTIFIC & INDUSTRIAL

A young plant is seventy-five per cent. water and the remainder carbon, which it has taken from the air.

Extensive and easily workable deposits of anthracite and of brown hematite have been found in the country of the Orenburg Cossacks—about 133 miles from the Siberian Railroad. It's a very important "find" for the Ural iron and steel industries, hitherto compelled to use wood and charcoal for fuel.

The most frequent cause of collapse among small water tanks, says the Building News, is the corrosion of the hoops. These are flat wrought iron bands one-eighth inch. to one-quarter inch thick, which are seldom painted, so that they become subject to corrosion both from the outside and from the inside. Hoops should be made without welds and thoroughly painted before and after erection.

An invention which promises great things to sugar growers is reported by the China Telegraph from East Java. An engineer on one of the sugar estates has invented an implement which, so says expert opinion, will shortly be used wherever time and money are of value to planters. It is a machine which simplifies the cutting of sugar cane in the fields. By it two men can cut 272 piculs "eighteen tons" of cane a day. Further experimenting will be proceeded with.

Monazite, the mineral from which are derived the materials employed in making incandescent gas mantles—cerium, lanthanum, didymium and thorium—is practically all obtained in North and South Carolina. The entire output of the crude sand for 1906—approximately 2,000,000 lbs.—came from the Carolinas. Local mills cleaned the sand, which varied greatly as to grade, up to a grade of eighty per cent. or more of monazite; on a basis of eighty per cent. the total monazite output for 1906 was 546,175 lbs., valued at $153,812.

For the Younger Children....

THE CONTENTED PUMPKIN.

The Garden Truck went on a strike
And made an awful racket;
The foolish Cabbage burst her head,
The Onion split his jacket.

The Peppers burned and Beets grew red,
While Kale growled like a sinner;
The Popcorn cried, "I'll never pop
For any creature's dinner."

The jolly Pumpkin laughed aloud,
With voice so rich and mellow,
"Why, that's just what you're planted for,
You foolish, selfish fellow.

"I've gathered all the sun and dew,
To plumpen me and sweeten,
So I can make the nicest pie
That one has ever eaten.

"And when they pass me twice around,
I'll feel I've done my duty,
If father says, 'Ma, save them seeds,
That pumpkin was a beauty.'"

—McCall's Magazine.

HOW BEARS CATCH FISH.

Did you ever see a row of men engaged in fishing? There they sit or stand on the bank of a lake or river, as still as statues waiting for the fish to bite. Fishing is often weary work, and needs a great deal of patience. Fishermen use a rod and line, some have make-believe flies as bait; some fish with worms or snails. But what fisherman could hope to use his hands with any expectation of success?

Now the North American bear uses his paws in fishing, and oh, how very patient and persevering he is!

The bear, as I daresay you know, sleeps all through the long winter. He was very fat indeed when he went to sleep, and has kept himself alive by occasionally sucking his paws, into which the fat from his body has passed.

But now spring has come, bringing the warm sunshine; the bear wakes, rubs his eyes, and feels uncommonly hungry after his long fast. In order to satisfy his hunger he goes a-fishing.

You wonder, perhaps, how he can hope to succeed without a rod, line and bait? Let us see! There he sits on the margin of a lake or river; he keeps so still that you might easily mistake him for an old burnt tree stump! He is, however, very much alive and watches the water intently.

By and by along comes a fish, and just as it is about to swim past the bear, quick as lightning, dips his right paw into the water and scoops out the fish, no doubt to its great surprise.

The bear fishes in the morning and evening, for he knows well enough that those are the best times.

When he has landed as many fish as he has a mind to, he eats what he wants, and thoughtfully buries the rest. So you see that he is not only a very clever fisher but that he wisely provides for the future.—Cassell's Little Folks.

THE FORESEEING MUSKRAT.

In the month of March, before the rivers have opened, on the snow around the heads of the creeks and about the air-holes in the thick ice may be seen the curious trail of the muskrat. It can be readily recognized by the firmly planted foot-marks, heavily and slowly impressed, and the sharp afterdrag of the long, scaly, blade-like tail.

All through the cold winter months these heavily furred animals have lived warm and comfortable in their well-constructed houses, rearing their third and last litter. One house erected about September seemed planned with almost human foresight. Here with their long sharp teeth and strong, inch-long claws they had cut and cleared wide paths through all the marshes—paths so deep that three feet of ice did not close them, so wide that we have often paddled among them, marveling at the great floating masses of torn-up aquatic vegetation.

These paths were a hundred yards long and four feet wide and were cut through a mass of tangled cover high enough in most places to thoroughly conceal a duck hunter and his canoe.

In the winter months the muskrats can easily dive from their houses into these under-ice channels, and the whole marsh is before them. The long yellow roots of the wild onion (the muskrat apple is the more poetic Ojibway) hang exposed before them or are readily torn out.—From "Hunting the Muskrat with a Camera," by Bonnycastle Dale in the Outing Magazine.

THE KING'S X.

Every boy or girl who ever played a game of tag knows what it means when some one during the game calls out, "Fen tagging me; I have my fingers crossed." It means, of course, that it's not fair to tag the player who says this, and that he's perfectly safe to do as he pleases.

Although we all know what this means, I wonder how many have heard the origin of the quaint custom?

Years and years ago, in the times when men wore heavy iron clothes and iron pots for hats, and people like Robin Hood really lived outside of story books, men were wild and lawless. Education was sadly neglected, and about the only thing that men really knew well was how to fight and to defend their rights.

The poor stood little chance of justice, for the law courts were few and far between, and seldom fair; and so by some of the higher class people who had learned to know some law and order places of refuge were provided for the persecuted poor. These sanctuaries were sometimes in the churches, or perhaps in the king's own house. They were called the "King's Cross," or the "King's X," and it is from these that the boys and girls of to-day get the idea of making a cross with their fingers as a sign of safety.—Washington Star.

THE MAN IN THE MOON.

There is a quaint tradition about how the belief in the man in the moon originated that is worth retelling.

Like so many of these beliefs, it began way back in Bible times and in quite another dress. By many nations the old man is supposed to be the one who first made his appearance in the book of Numbers (chapter xv., verse 32). Then he was found by the children of Israel gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. He was taken before Moses and condemned to death. He was taken later outside the camp and stoned until he died. One would think that was punishment enough even for so awful a crime, but superstition took him to the moon, where, with a bunch of sticks on his tired old back, he was destined to climb forevar up the shining hill and never reached the top. The story goes that his faithful dogs were permitted to share his fate, and if you look carefully when the night is clear and dark you will see the pair toiling away upon their endless climb.

The face of the old man also grew out of the old-time tradition, but the figures are quite plain if one puts on the glasses of imagination.—Washington Star.

FLOWERS CHANGE COLORS.

"This bed of flowers was blue this morning, and now it is pink. That one was white, and it is now rose. The one by the hedge was yellow yesterday, and to-day it is purple."

The gardener chuckled delightfully.

"I call 'em my fairy flower beds, ma'am," he said. "You see, they change color. It's a grand idea, isn't it? It gives a garden such variety."

"But I didn't know that any flowers change their color."

"Oh, yes. That bed you first mentioned is the mutable phlox. At sunrise it is blue, and in the afternoon it is pink.

"The one to the right is hibiscus—hibiscus mutabilis. It goes through three changes in the day, from white in the morning to rose at noon and red at sunset.

"The bed by the hedge is the lantana. The lantana is yellow one day, orange the next, and red the third. Its changes are slow.

"There's other flowers, too, that change. There's the cheiranthus chamele, that shifts from white to yellow and from yellow to red. There's the gladiolus versicolor, that's brown in the morning and blue in the evening. There's the colea scandens, that moves slowly from greenish white to a deep violet."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

A CUTE COLLIE DOG.

Here's a dog story from London: A butcher in the great meat market has a customer who owns a fine collie dog. The dog arrived one day at the market with a slip of paper in his mouth. The dog dropped the piece of paper, which proved to be an order from the collie's master for a small piece of meat. He gave the dog the meat. Day after day the dog came with like orders, until at last the butcher took them for granted, and each time sent the animal home with a piece of meat. After two months the butcher sent his customer a bill for the meat which he had supplied the dog. But the collie's master informed the butcher that he had given the dog only a dozen orders, whereas the animal had received at least fifty pieces of meat. The dog was carefully watched, and it was discovered that the cunning beast, when he was hungry, would lay hold of any piece of white paper he could find and run off with it to the meat market, obtaining for each bogus "order" a hearty meal.

MERELY A FABLE.

A Frog and a Cow stood together by the side of a millpond.

"Do you think?" asked the Frog, "that by expanding the air in my system I could attain your dimension?"

The Cow chewed her cud, reflectively. "It's an hypothetical question," she replied.

"Well, you'll admit that Hot Air expands indefinitely! You also know that the epidermis will stretch a mile before it tears an inch! Now, if I take a large mouthful of air, and hold my breath won't the heat of my body expand the air and stretch my cuticle until I am as large as you?"

"I can't say," replied the Cow. "Frame it differently."

The Frog drew in a long breath and closed his mouth. Slowly his body bulged out. A passing Flea buzzed an objection. With a loud report the Frog exploded.

Moral—Even the Smallest Brain is subject to Storm.—Puck.

Potato Grows Feverish.

When plants are wounded their respiration increases and their temperature perceptibly rises.

In recent experiments a thermo-electric apparatus, capable of registering a change of one four-hundredth of a degree, was employed. When a potato was wounded the fever manifested itself by an elevation of temperature which was greatest at the end of twenty-four hours, when it began slowly to decline.

An onion similarly treated acquired an increase of temperature many times greater than that shown by the potato, and the fever, instead of being confined to the neighborhood of the wound, affected the entire onion. In fact, the onion proved to be more readily affected in this way than any other vegetable experimented with. The rise in temperature is caused by increased absorption of oxygen.—Portland Journal.

London's newest music-hall, the vast Coliseum, in St. Martin's Lane, completed at Christmas, 1904, a structure erected at enormous expense, is to be sold by auction.

SPORT AND ADVENTURE

HOW AMUNDSEN PREPARED.

Captain Roald Amundsen, in Harper's, tells for the first time the story of the successful voyage of his little vessel through the Northwest Passage and his discovery of the north magnetic pole:

"The sloop Gjoa—a vessel seventy-three feet long, twenty feet beam, drawing eleven feet of water when laden, and of forty-seven tons net burden—was built in Norway, in the Hardanger district, in 1872. Originally not intended for the Arctic, she subsequently drifted into the sealing trade, and for several years sailed from Tromso in that capacity.

"On my purchase of her I had her entire fittings removed, and strengthened her with a number of stout wooden and iron beams and crossties; and as well as other necessary improvements she also received an outside skin of two-inch oak planking, reaching from the keelson to the water-line. Finally I put in a petroleum-engine of thirty-nine indicated horse-power, with a two-bladed propeller, such as is customary in vessels intended for Arctic waters. A special apparatus was placed near the man at the tiller, enabling him to control the engine, to start or reverse it as occasion required, and this proved invaluable and of almost constant necessity after we had entered the ice. The engine was also fitted to hoist sails and anchor, run the pump, and haul in the deep-sea lead-line. The last, however, proved to be useless through the shallow waters of the Northwest Passage. The propeller, I should explain, was only to be considered in the light of an auxiliary, the sails being intended as the principal motive power of the vessel, as indeed they were throughout the voyage.

"My provisions consisted mainly of tinned foods, which were packed in tin-lined cases of uniform size, copper nails being used in their construction, so that the empty wooden cases might be utilized in the building of the magnetic observation stations without affecting the magnetic needle. In this way I solved a problem which had long puzzled me, my vessel being too small to carry an extra load of building materials. The plan proved to be a perfect one. With the empty wooden boxes filled with sand we constructed not only excellent observation stations, but also comfortable dwellings, which did excellent service and surpassed all expectations.

"The wearing apparel for the members of my expedition consisted of pure woolen underclothing, with outside garments of reindeer and sealskin. With regard to the former I may mention that I followed their manufacture from the carding of the wool to the completion of the product, thereby guarding against adulteration, and securing a superior make of warm garments for my people.

"Our tents were made after a pattern invented by my friend Dr. Frederick A. Cook, of Brooklyn, and myself, and may be said to have contained the results of our experiences with the Belgian Antarctic expedition, of which we both were members during the years 1897-99. These tents, which somewhat resemble those of the Eskimo, were intended for the use of two persons, were built of light duck, and could be pitched by one man even when a gale was blowing.

"It may sound almost incredible when I state that our small vessel contained provisions and ammunition for five years. Nevertheless such was the case, and the Gjoa brought back with her considerable quantities of nearly every kind of provisions and stores, despite the fact that I gave some ice-bound whalers at Herschel Island some 2500 pounds of flour.

"For fuel, lighting and cooking purposes I took with me about 7000 gallons of refined petroleum of the highest grade. Of this we still had about thirty per cent. left on our arrival at San Francisco. Guncotton, ice-saws, extra fine and strong hawsers, several hundred volumes of books and many games to help while away the time durign the long Arctic nights, as well as everything else necessary to a well-equipped Arctic expedition, completed our outfit on board the Gjoa. The games for some reason or other were never taken into use by the members of the expedition, but were eagerly accepted by our many Eskimo friends, who became quite adepts at some of them."

THE LAST COUNCIL-FIRE.

One autumn day, thirty-five years ago, there was enacted, in a log cabin in the Genesee valley, a scene remarkable for its picturesqueness and pathos. To understand the import of the group of red men and white men gathered in that rude building one must glance back over the centuries which have elapsed since the coming of the first settlers of America. When the pioneers of European emigration landed in the new country, they found in what is now called the Empire State an extraordinary federation of Five Indian Nations, holding absolute sway over that part of the country.

This league was remarkable for its ties of organization and the wisdom of its unwritten laws. It was called Ho-de-no-san-nee, the "People of the Long House," likening the far-reaching confederacy to the form of their long bark dwellings, made to accommodate fifteen or twenty families.

Of the tribes included in the league, the Senecas were the most powerful. The Mohawks left the brotherhood about the time of the Revolution, and for more than seventy-five years were absent from the councils.

Long before the Revolution the league held its councils in a log hut at Caneaden. In 1826 the land on which the building stood was sold, the tribes were lessened and scattered, and the structure was abandoned to ruin. In 1870 a prominent citizen had the cabin carefully removed, re-erected and restored, and in October, 1872, called a meeting of the remnants of the Five Nations and their white friends.

It was a strange and impressive occasion. Generation after generation of the red men had gathered on that same spot. Some of the descendants of the old chiefs were educated men, some were of the army, all were clad in full Indian costumes, buckskin garments, bright sashes, great necklaces, and all gravely smoked their tomahawk pipes as one after another of the orators addressed the meeting. In the middle of the room, on the ground floor, burned the council-fire.

"Brothers," said one speaker, "when the confederacy was formed the smoke rose so high that all nations saw and trembled. We are holding council perhaps for the last time. My heart says this is not a play or a pageant. It is a solemn reality to me, not a mockery of things which are passed and cannot return. Neh-hoh, this is all."

It fell to old Samuel O'Bail, Howay-no-ah, a fine old Seneca in magnificent costume, to welcome back to the brotherhood the Mohawk representation, who had been absent from the council for nearly a century. The Indian character is not emotional, yet as the aged man spoke, tears rolled down his furrowed cheeks.

"Brothers, we are poor and weak. There are none to fear us, to court our influence. The council-fire is little more than a heap of ashes, but the vacant seats of our brothers, the Mohawks, are filled again. Let us stir the dying embers that by their light we can see their faces once more. In token of buried enmity I extend my hand to my Mohawk brothers."

"It has been an occasion of solemn interest," said the last Indian speaker; then turning to the white guests, he added, "You have grown in strength and greatness while we have faded to weak remnant. You who are sitting here to-day have seen the last of the Ho-de-no-sannee. We have raked the ashes over the fire and closed the last council of our people in the valley of our fathers."—Youth's Companion.

THE "ANTS" OF HERODOTUS.

One of the earliest, if not the first, of Tibetan romances dates from the days of Herodotus, nearly five hundred years before the Christian era. The "Father of History" gives a cautious admission of probability, but by no means a cordial assent to this "travelers' tale," which the author of "Tibet, the Mysterious," repeats and explains.

It was said that in the extreme northwest of India there existed a race of enormous ants, fierce and powerful, whose peculiar mission in life was the digging out of gold. Traders, mounted on swift camels, occasionally seized the gold which was accumulated in heaps by these excavating ants. When they succeeded in doing this, they rode rapidly away, pursued by other ferocious guardians of the soil, in the form of fierce wild beasts, which slew them if they caught them.

Amongst all the ludicrous exaggerations of ancient classical tradition relating to India, this story evinces a remarkable tenacity of existence. It is repeated in every tale of the East that was told by compilers and adventurers before the days of Herodotus, and is only doubtfully classed by him as fiction. It was not until, in recent years, the trans-Himalayan explorers of the Indian Survey recorded their experiences that any light could be thrown on the origin of it.

These explorers, making their way painfully over the terrific altitudes which intervene between Indian and western Tibet, reached at length the gold-mining districts which lie beyond the mountains on the great western plains. Here they discovered the Tibetan workman delving for gold after a fashion of his own.

The intense cold and the fierce winds of the highlands compelled him to grovel on the ground enfolded in a thick, black blanket, while he dug, or scratched, painfully and slowly, with the end of the first tool available to his hand, which was usually the horn of the Tibetan deer. To all appearance he was a rough imitation of a huge-horned ant, grubbing up the auriferous soil, and piling it in heaps for subsequent washing.

Guarded by immensely powerful dogs, whose ferocity is well-known among travelers in Tibet, he has pursued his calling from those very early days until now, hardly improving his processes, making but slight impression and shallow indentations in the soil, and probably leaving behind two-thirds of the gold which it contains.

Here, then, is the solution of the early romance.

Can Keep a Secret.

"The woman who can keep a secret" is the name which has been bestowed upon Miss Kate Harrison, private secretary to H. H. Rogers. There may be many women who could keep secrets as well as Miss Harrison can, but she has proved her ability to do so and her right to the title. That she has known many things worth the telling in these days of investigations in general, and of the Standard Oil Company in particular, goes without saying. But Miss Harrison has not told those things. It is only fifteen years since Miss Harrison was studying to be a stenographer, but now she owns her home in Brooklyn and is supposed to have invested a small fortune. As she doesn't tell her own secrets, even, the latter detail must be a matter of conjecture.—Chicago Evening Post.

On the wall in a barber shop in a Carbon County (Colorado) town is a sign which reads: "Those wanting baths take notice. Ten cents extra will be charged if water is splashed over the partition. Don't get too enthusiastic."