

THE DESERT'S HARVEST.

EXPERIENCES MET WITH IN CROSSING BURNING SANDS.

Thrilling Story of one Who Crossed the Desert—Caravans Hovered Around Their Path—Acres of Dead and Abandoned Cattle and Caravans.

One hundred and thirty weary years of tramping and nights of watching since we started. The great plains, the Rockies, the canyons and gorges of Utah, the slimy marshes and alkali plains of the sluggish Humboldt, are all left behind. The desert is before us. Finding but little grass and no water fit to drink, we determined to cross the desert at once, before our horses became too weak to make the journey. There were but two of us—my brother Fred and I—with two saddle horses and one packed with our provisions and little kit of camp fixtures.

Just at sunset we climbed a slight elevation and before us lay the dreaded forty-mile desert, which must be crossed without stopping and without grass or water. All night we plodded along over a solid cement-like floor, thickly strewn with shapeless masses of black and broken rock, whose spectral shadows fell in gruesome, fantastic shapes across our trail. The heat even in the night was sweltering, and was reflected in our faces like the breath of an oven. We had made twenty-eight miles without stopping and had reached the worst and most perilous part of the desert just as the stars were paling and the morning sun was sending up its gleaming streamers in the east, heralding another day of heat and suffering. Ugly-looking wolves had been fitting across our trail during the night, but now we could see the cowardly brutes where the sky and the desert seemed to come together, sitting on their haunches in bold relief, watching us as we tramped slowly and wearily along. Twelve miles of loose, hot sand must yet be crossed before we reached the river and the grass. Our poor horses were reeling along almost famished, pleading in dumb silence for water and something to eat. Our road was no longer solid; we were on a veritable sea of hot, glistening sand, so light and ashy that we sank to our ankles every step, while our horses struggled along, vainly trying to find a solid footing. Not a breath of air was stirring; not a tree, a shrub, a blade of grass, or a drop of water could be seen. The great red sun began to blaze as it climbed slowly into the brassy sky, betokening a terrible day for such as had started with slower teams than ours. We had passed many such during the night, but had left them all behind.

On this sea of sand, on which we were now entering, is where the most of the suffering and the greatest loss occur, and God pity the poor fellows who reach it after the middle of the day. Sand, light, ashy sand, as far as the eyes can see, still hot and crawling from yesterday's pitiless sun. We had seen much wreckage and dead stock before arriving here, but now we began to see the desert at its worst. The outlines of our trail were no longer marked with shadowy rocks, but with wreckage of dismantled wagons, abandoned tents, all manner of camp equipage, and the carcasses of dead animals. We had no further trouble in keeping the trail; our route was all too plainly marked. It was as though a caravan had been smitten by a deadly simoom, and all had perished where they fell. Here is the desert's harvest of death.

As we urged forward our panting horses the sight which met our aching eyes was one never to be forgotten. Above us carion birds were circling high in the tainted air; around us blistering sand. The only landmarks were abandoned wagons and dead animals as far as we could see westward, and for rods on either side the hot sand was thickly strewn with carcasses like a veritable stream of destruction, widening and narrowing, but always continuing. Here was a whole herd of cattle, scattered over acres of sand, all dead and abandoned. Here a single span of horses, or a single yoke of oxen, still hitched to a little unpretentious wagon, were stretched on the hot sand, with yoke or harness on. Here a team of six or eight horses or mules had fallen together. Here were oxen with their yokes still on, five, six, or eight yoke with the end of a stout wagon tongue still in the yoke ring of the wheelers, while the forward teams were still in line, with chains between. Here a young calf with its famishing mother had lain down and died together. Some were barely dead, perhaps had dropped but eesterday. Others, shrunken and shrivelled, told plainly the suffering of earlier years; all had fallen and died of consuming thirst. Some peculiar element in the desert air had preserved them. Some were mutilated by wolves and vultures, but with no indication of decay. Here was a three years' harvest of the desert since the great begira for gold

began. We could step from carcass to carcass for many rods continuously. As the August sun climbed higher the stagnant air became almost stifling, admonishing us that to linger here meant the addition of three more faithful horses to this graveyard of the desert from which many thousands had escaped, while other thousands had pitifully perished almost in sight of the little river, whose skirting of trees could now be seen, while miles of dreary sand must yet be crossed before the shade, the water, the grass, and welcome rest could be reached.

Pathetic illustrations of dumb and pitiable helplessness were now visible all around us. Here was a poor horse prone on his side, just able to raise his head and look wistfully at us. Here is a herd of cattle, horses, and mules, just abandoned, standing with drooping heads and quivering limbs, while their anxious eyes are pleading with dumb eloquence for water.

I shall never forget one brave old ox, poor but still substantial. His yoke had been taken off and his mate was dead, but this grand old fellow, seeming to get a scent of the precious water, now but two miles away, had struggled along alone, until, in complete helplessness, he had stopped and stood trembling as with an ague. She hair on his neck was worn to the skin by the yolk, which he had patiently borne for 1,500 miles. One pail of water would have saved him, and quenched the awful fire of his consuming thirst, and he might have reached the river. Poor brave old fellow abandoned to die. Nobody was now in sight but Fred and I. Desolation and death were all around us, the air like the breath of a furnace, and here in pitiful weakness, the personification of faithful service and unmerited helplessness, with quivering flanks and feet resolutely braced, stood that grand old ox, dying of thirst. Slowly, very slowly, turning his head, he looked beseechingly at us as we were passing. My deepest sympathies were touched. I pitied him, and with my heart almost in my mouth, I went to him, spoke to him kindly, and gently rubbed his yoke-worn neck. His pleading eyes were almost human in their look of suffering. He seemed to know what I said, and tried to lick my hands with his dry and swollen tongue, uttering with quivering, tremulous voice such a gentle greeting that I quite broke down and cried like a child, for I two was almost exhausted. I two was hungry and suffering with thirst. We were fellow sufferers, and I would have given all I possessed if I could have saved that faithful ox. What else could I do but pity him and cry? For a few minutes I stood patting him gently. Then, brushing away my tears, I tramped along, with his appealing eyes following me. Fred, with the horses, had gone on, and I must not get far behind. Fainter and fainter I could here that pathetic m-o-o-o-h-h-h as I limped along to overtake my brother.

Catching up at last and looking back, my poor dumb friend was no longer standing. In trying to follow me he had fallen, and now, out-stretched and quivering, he lay on the hot sand, giving up the hopeless battle.—Chicago Inter-Ocean.

FAMINES IN INDIA.

Records of Some of the Most Destructive in Former Use.

With an overcrowded population of 200,000,000 of peasants whose annual supply of food depends upon a rainfall subject to decided irregularities, it is inevitable that India should suffer from frequent and destructive famines. Meteorological observations have disclosed no rule of periodicity in these failures of rainfall by which seasons of drouth can be forecast with certainty. They have, on the other hand, established the fact that the fall is never either deficient or excessive in any single year throughout the whole of India. There is thus always a reserve of food supply in some part of its area, which may be drawn upon for use in the needy districts. It has been discovered, too, that winters marked by an excessive snowfall in the Himalayas are always followed by diminished summer rainfall, generally in northern India, but sometimes in other portions of the great peninsula. Apart from these few facts, gathered within the past quarter of the century, there is little data from which seasons of drouth may be forecast, though it is known that a drouth, once begun, generally extends over two years or more. The approach of scarcity can be determined only in the year in which it actually occurs, and by a system of observations beginning with the June rainfall and continuing until the autumn has made certain and insufficient supply for the winter crops.

Of the extent of the suffering from drouth and crop failure in the Asiatic world Western people have but a faint conception. In the great drouths in Northern China in 1877-1878 no less than 9,500,000 persons perished; and although during the present century at least no single famine in India has attained that magnitude, it is estimated that in the score or

more disasters of the kind which have occurred, between 15,000,000 and 20,000,000 lives have been lost. That which began in 1875 and culminated in 1877 was the most prolonged and destructive, resulting in the death of 5,500,000 persons. In 1865-66 a third of the population of 3,000,000 starved to death in Orisso, and in 1868-1870 about 1,500,000 died from want in Rajputana. The famine of 1861 in the the northwest provinces was a huge calamity, and the Berar drouth of 1873-74 was only prevented from becoming so by lavish expenditure on the part of the Indian government. Prior to the white conquest families of immense dimensions devastated the peninsula, resulting occasionally in an appalling decimation of the feebler classes of the population. These classes, numbering approximately 40,000,000 are always so near starvation that a season of drouth reduces them at once to extremities of hunger.

In the old days the devices for famine relief in India were of the usual Asiatic sort. First, the shops of the grain dealers were sacked and their owners murdered. When that failed, the offices of the native governments were besieged, and when the royal granaries were emptied the gods were propitiated with sacrifices, ending with the slaughter of human victims and the distribution of their flesh over the barren fields. But during the past thirty years these devices have given way to remedial measures of a more practical and effective kind. Taught by long experience, the government of India has elaborated a system of relief, machine like in its operation, capable of being put into effect at any time, and of adjustment to the needs of any particular scarcity. The old notion that a government can not be made responsible for death from starvation any more than for deaths by fever has disappeared. Every rural official is made to feel his responsibility, and is minutely instructed before-hand as to his particular duty in each stage of scarcity. First, a system of crop forecasts gives notice of the possible approach of famine. When the possibility becomes from further reports probability, the government begins active preparations to meet it. Its forecasts may not prove correct, but it acts once and energetically, knowing that if it waits to verify its estimates action will be too late to be effectual.

Many a boy or girl would be glad to have such employment at good wages as I can find for them—and do find it, too, when they are qualified. Three to four months will give a good start. Write me about it. Snel's Business College, Truro N. S.

CONDENSED ADVERTISEMENTS.

Announcements under this heading not exceeding five lines (about 35 words) cost 25 cents each insertion. Five cents extra for every additional line.

QUEEN VICTORIA: HER LIFE and REIGN; great historic work, sells on sight to thousands. Lord Dufferin introduces it to Canadians in glowing words. Easy to make \$20.00 a week, some make twice that. Many make more in spare time than during day at regular employment. This year's Great Sixtieth Anniversary Celebrations are booming it. Books on time. Prospectus free to canvassers. Territory going fast. THE BRADLEY GARRETT & CO. Ltd. Toronto, Ont.

A CHANCE! We offer for sale our COMPLETE MODERN STUDIO OUTFIT, for making photos any size up to 8 x 10, almost new and everything first class. A chance for a photographer or anyone wanting to start in a good paying business, to the latter we can give complete practical instruction in Modern Photography, by our methods; easy and simple for any one. Address the ROBERTSON PHOTO SUPPLY COMPANY 94 German St., St. John, N. B.

WANTED Old established wholesale House wants one or two honest and industrious representatives for this section. Can pay a hustler about \$12.00 a week to start with. DRAWER 29, Brantford, Ont.

WANTED Young men and women to help in the Armenian cause. Good pay. Will send copy of my little book, "Your Place in Life," free, to any who write. Rev. T. S. Linscott, Brantford, Ont.

WANTED MEN everywhere to paint signs with our patterns. No experience required. Thirty dollars weekly. Send stamps for patterns and particulars. BARNARD BROS. TORONTO, ONT.

WANTED RELIABLE MERCHANTS in each town to handle our water-proof Cold Water Paint. Five million pounds sold in United States last year. VICTOR KOFOD, 49 Francis Xavier, Montreal.

RESIDENCE at Rothery for sale or to rent for the Summer months. That pleasantly situated house known as the Titus property about one and a half miles from Rothery Station and within two minutes walk of the Kennebecasis. Rent reasonable. Apply to H. G. Fenety, Barrister-at-Law, Pugsley Building. 24 6th

CITY OF MONCTON, N. B.,
Jan. 15th, 1897.

S. KERR, Esq.

DEAR SIR,— * * * * I am pleased to add my testimony, with that of many others, concerning the efficiency and thoroughness.

Mr. M. Lodge, accountant W. and L. Dept., City of Moncton, and Mr. L. G. B. Lawson, my assistant (old students of yours), are both in this office. They have spoken to me on different occasions in the highest terms of the training received at your college, and their work certainly adds weight to their testimony.

(Signed) J. C. PATTERSON, City Clerk,
City of Moncton.

Business and Shorthand Catalogues mailed to any address.

S. KERR & SON,

St. John Business College.

The "WHY"



One teaspoonful of Tetley's is found to equal one dessertspoonful of most other teas.

50c. PER LB.
50c. " "
50c. " "
75c. " "

WHY?—Because our sealed packets contain only TEA-LEAVES,—no dried stalks or other adulterations.

"Tetley's" TEAS
"FROM ANCIENT INDIA
—AND SWEET CEYLON."

A New Pattern Oil Can....

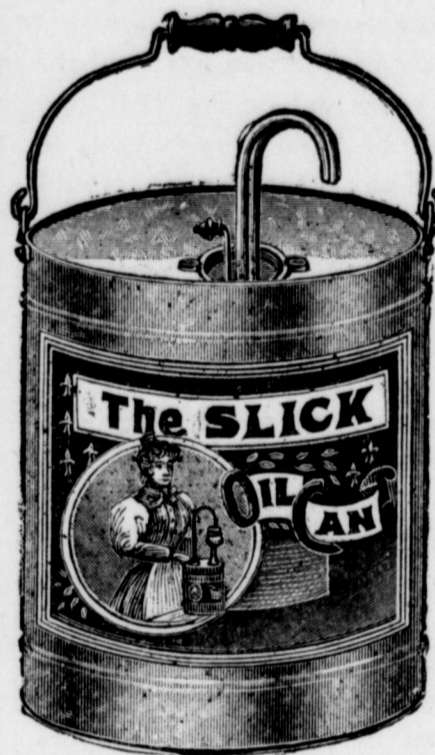
By using the.....

• SLICK OIL CAN •

you avoid waste and promote cleanliness.

In filling a lantern or lamp with the ordinary can it is difficult to tell when it is full. With the SLICK OIL CAN it is impossible to overflow. To demonstrate it more fully you are invited to call and see it working.

They are made of heavy galvanized iron, and holds five gallons.

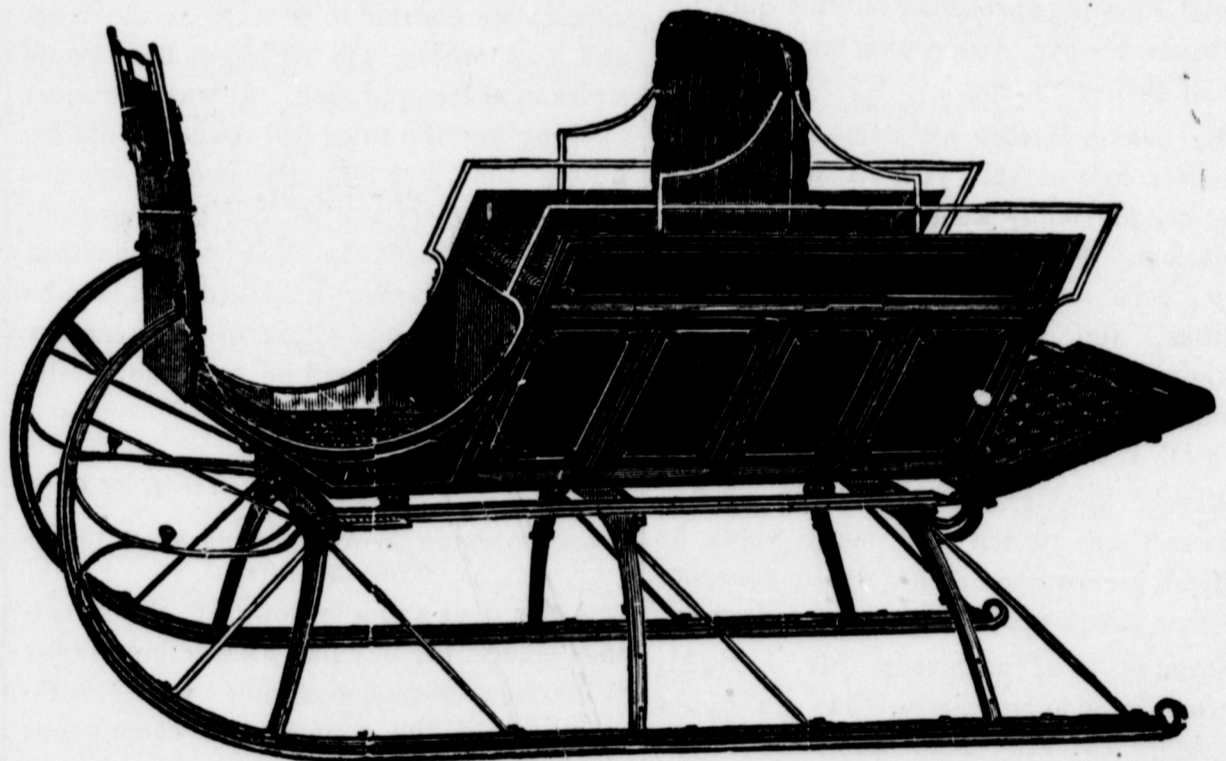


PRICE \$1.40.

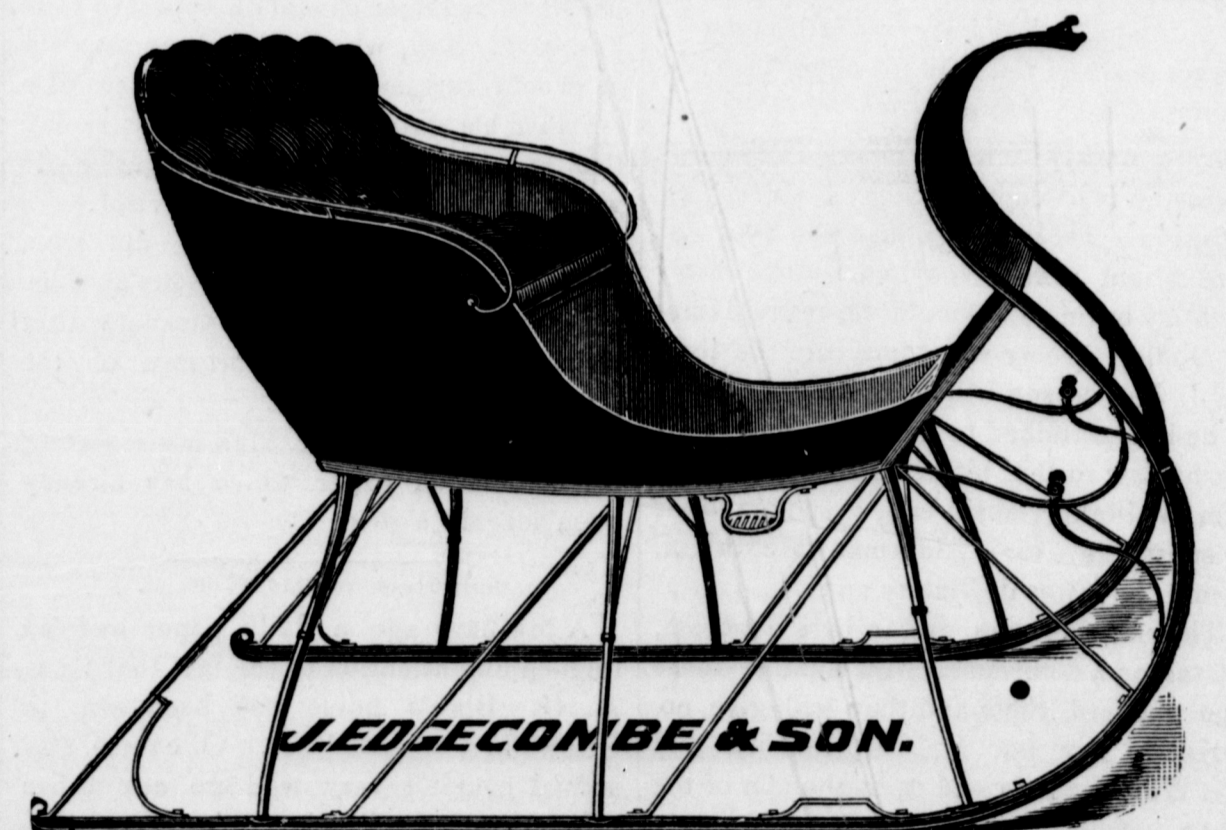
EMERSON & FISHER.

Merry Sleigh Bells

HAVE YOU GOT A NICE SLEIGH?



If not, just look at this FAMILY GLADSTONE, Neatest and Handsomest Turnout made.



And then on this SINGLE SLEIGH—just the thing for comfort and for fast driving. Strong and Durable. For prices and all information apply to

JOHN EDGEcombe & Sons,
Fredericton, N. B.

Ask your grocer for
Windsor Salt
For Table and Dairy, Purest and Best