

END OF AN ADVENTUROUS TURTLE.

Incidentally Killed by the Big Loggerhead in the Aquarium.

Until a few weeks ago the turtle pool on the floor of the Aquarium was occupied wholly by two loggerheads—the big one, that has long been a feature there, and a small loggerhead as a sort of companion for the big one. Then the pool was divided by a wire fence extending across it at about one-third of its length. The larger section was reserved for the big loggerhead; in the smaller section there was placed a number of smaller sea turtles of different varieties brought down from the turtle tanks on the gallery tier.

Among these new dwellers in the turtle pool was one from Venezuelan waters, a sea turtle about ten inches in length and weighing perhaps five pounds. It could just squeeze under the lower rail of the dividing fence of the pool, and so pass from one section of the pool to the other. All the turtles in the pool are fed once a day, but the smaller turtles are fed in the morning, the loggerheads in the afternoon. The Venezuelan turtle, however, managed to get two meals a day; it breakfasted with its own people in the morning, and when the loggerheads were fed at night it squeezed through under the rail and dined with them, returning then to its own quarters. It continued to do this until last week, when upon one of its visits to the loggerheads' enclosure the big loggerhead killed it.

The food for the loggerheads, which is commonly fresh codfish cut in strips, is supplied in much larger pieces than the food given to the smaller turtles on the other side of the fence. Some of these strips of codfish are four or five inches long and an inch square, weighing a quarter of a pound or more. Such a piece, however, makes but a small mouthful for the big turtle, which is about five feet in length and weighs something like 300 pounds. The Venezuelan turtle on this fateful day had picked up one of these pieces of codfish, which was a great deal more than it could take at a swallow. While it held one end of this strip of fish in its mouth the free end lapped over one of its forward flippers. The big loggerhead swinging round from another part of the pool saw the little Venezuelan with this strip of codfish in its mouth and made for it; not, it is believed, with any idea of hurting the little turtle, but solely with a view of taking the strip of codfish.

But in taking the piece of food the loggerhead took in also the Venezuelan flipper, alongside which the piece of codfish was lying, and with the next indrawing bite it took in the whole turtle. The big loggerhead's mouth opens back six or eight inches; it could easily break a man's leg between its powerful jaws. When the big loggerhead closed these jaws on the ten-inch Venezuelan turtle it simply destroyed it, broke it all up in one bite and killed it instantly.

Then, no doubt, the big turtle would have eaten the little one, but they don't permit cannibalism on that scale at the Aquarium, and by the prompt and firm pressure of the steel ring of a scoop net upon the back of the big loggerhead's burly neck it was made to let go the crushed smaller turtle, which was then removed from the pool.

And so for the sake of a small piece of codfish this adventurous turtle lost its life.

Where Was the Goat?

The country known as the Mosquito Coast lies on the western shores of the Caribbean Sea. Charles Napier Bell, in his book, "Tangweera," gives an interesting account of his life there, at a settlement named Bluefields. Tigers were frequent visitors. His house was built on posts, and the goats and pigs slept underneath. Frequently the animals would rush out from their shelter, and in the morning tiger tracks would be seen.

One dark night my sister woke me, saying that a tiger was killing one of our goats. I rose and heard a piteous bleating in the wood shed. We lighted the lantern and fired off my gun, but still the cries continued. Then my sisters and I sallied out to the rescue. She held the lantern while I walked in front with my double-barreled gun.

We walked cautiously over the forty yards of grass and stopped at the shed, afraid to enter its dark shadow. The piteous cries of the goat still continued, and we were surprised to see the pigs lying in the dust quite unconcerned, and all the goats, with their green eyes glittering in the light of the lantern, composedly chewing their cud. We were certain from this evidence that there was no tiger about, and we searched carefully to discover where the cries came from. At last my sister saw the horns sticking out of an upright barrel of tar!

The goat, like all goats, loving high places, had jumped upon the top of the barrel, and the head giving way it was

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plunged up to the neck in tar.

I mounted the barrel with my feet on the ribs, and laying hold of the horns, I hoisted the goat out of the tar and tumbled it on the ground, and then we laughed and went to bed.

The next morning the poor goat was covered with cocoanut-oil, washed with hot water and soap and made as clean as possible; but all its hair dropped off, and it was a long time before it grew again.

KEEPING CHRISTMAS.

How Four Travellers Helped a Widow and Her Family.

Four travellers who were snow-bound in a western passenger-train on Christmas eve speedily became acquainted with each other, and sat about the stove at the end of the car to "talk it over." One of the men was a drummer, another a cowboy, the third a big cattleman, and the last the minister who tells the story. They finally fell into conversation with a poor woman and her two children, the only remaining passengers, and found that the mother, who had tried to maintain herself by sewing since her husband's death, was giving up the unequal struggle and going home to live with "grandma."

The little threadbare children had been promised a joyous Christmas there, and when they found that the blockade would prevent their getting farther, for the present, they cried bitterly until sleep quieted them. Just before they dropped off the drummer remarked:

"Say, parson, we've got to give these children some Christmas."

"That's what I said the cowboy."

"I'm agreed," added the cattleman.

The children were told to hang up their stockings.

"We ain't got none," quavered the little girl, "ceptin' those we've got on, and ma says it's too cold to take 'em off."

"I've got two pairs of new wooden socks," said the cattleman eagerly. "I ain't never wore 'em, and you're welcome to 'em."

The children clapped their hands, but their faces fell when the elder remarked:

"But Santa Claus will know they're not our stockings. He'll put in all the things for you."

"Lord love you!" roared the burly cattleman. "He won't bring me nothin'. One of us'll sit up, anyhow, and tell 'em it's for you."

Then the children knelt down on the floor of the car beside their improvised beds. Instinctively the hands of the men went to their heads, and at the first words of "Now I lay me," hats were off.

The cowboy stood twirling his hat, and looking at the little kneeling figures. The cattleman's vision seemed dimmed, while in the eyes of the travelling man shone a distant look—a look across snow-filled prairies to a warmly lighted home. The children were soon asleep. Then arose the question of presents.

"It don't seem to me I've got anything to give 'em," said the cowboy, mournfully, "unless the little kid might like my spurs. I'd give my gun to the little girl, though on general principles I don't like to give up a gun."

"Never mind, boys," said the drummer, "you come along with me to the baggage-car."

So off they trooped. He opened his trunks, and spread before them such an array of trash and trinkets as took away their breath.

"There," said he, "just pick out the best things, and I'll donate the lot!"

"No, you don't!" said the cowboy. "I'm goin' to buy what I want and pay for it, too, or else there ain't goin' to be no Christmas here."

"That's my judgement, too," said the cattleman, and the minister agreed.

So they sat down to their task of selection. They spent hours over it in breathless interest, and when their gifts were ready there arose the question of a Christmas tree. It had stopped snowing, and tramping out into the moonlit night, they cut down a great piece of sage-brush. The mother adorned it with tinsel paper, and



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the gifts were prettily disposed. Christmas dawned for two of the happiest children under the sun, and a happy mother, too, for inside the big plush album selected for her, the cattleman had slipped a hundred dollar bill.

Her Antelope.

Stalking antelope among the Rockies may have its humorous as well as its thrilling side. Says Mrs. Seton-Thompson in "A Woman Tenderfoot":

We tied our horses on a dizzy height, and stole, Nimrod with a carbine, I with a rifle, along the treacherous, shaly bank which ended twenty feet below in the steep, rocky bluff that formed the face of the cliff.

A misstep would have sent us flying, but I did not think of that. My only care was to avoid starting the shy, fleet-footed creatures we pursued. I hardly dared to breathe. Every muscle and nerve was strained with long suspense.

Suddenly I clutched Nimrod's arm, and pointed at an oblong, tan-colored bulk fifty yards above us on the mountain.

"Antelope! Lying down!" I whispered.

Nimrod nodded, and motioned me to go ahead. I crawled nearer, inch by inch, my gaze riveted. It did not move. I grew more elated. It was not so hard to approach an antelope, after all. I felt astonishingly pleased at my performance. Then rattle! crash! and a stone went bounding down. I raised my rifle to get a shot before the swift animal should go flying away.

It was strangely still. I stole a little nearer, and then turned and went gently back to Nimrod. He was convulsed with silent laughter. My elaborate stalk had been made on a nice buff stone.

In Danger of Freezing.

The Rev. C. T. Brady, a missionary in the West, says that his mission field covered a large extent of territory, and that he was compelled to drive long distances, often in the worst possible weather. One day he started with two wiry broncos, although the thermometer had dropped to eighteen degrees below zero, and a light snow was beginning to fall. He conducted service at the prescribed place, and then, although the storm had risen and was at a terrific height, set out for the next station. His friends remonstrated, but with perhaps a foolish pride he had resolved not to miss a single service on that day. He says:

My companion in the sleigh utterly gave way to the cold, and sank down under the buffalo robes, where I continuously kicked him to keep him from going to sleep. I had a scarf, called a nubia, covering my face, all except the leeward eye, out of which I was constantly obliged to brush the frozen snow. My breath froze on the wool, and I thrust my handkerchief between the scarf and my face and kept it there until the handkerchief froze as well.

Then I opened my little prayer book in the middle and laid it across my nose, under the scarf, making a penthouse through which to breathe.

The reins lay loose in my benumbed hands. I was conscious of nothing but the rush of the wind and the blinding drive of snow over the prairie. All I could think of was to keep up my rhythmical kicking of the man at my feet.

After what seemed ages of such agony as I never wish to endure again, the horses stopped at their stable door. It was night

and everybody was surprised to see us. My companion and I were taken to our houses and then, before I fully realized the extent to which we had suffered, I insisted on taking the little handful of men present over to the church, where we lighted the lamps and went through a service together.

It was foolish, of course; but somehow it is the only act of folly in my life on which I look back with pleasure.

Antarctic Spring.

After spending weeks so near the South Pole as to share in the long night of that lone region, the crew of the Belgica prepared for dawn. Every man had suffered from the unnatural conditions of that imprisonment, void of light and solar heat. Physically and mentally they were all next door to entire collapse. Yet the sun, for which they had barely lived, was about to rise once more. Says the author of the book, "Through the First Antarctic Night":

Every man on board has long since chosen a favorite elevation from which to watch the coming dawn. Some are in crow's nest, others on the ropes and spars of the rigging; but these are the men who do little travelling. The adventurous fellows are scattered over the pack upon icebergs and high hammocks.

These positions were taken about eleven o'clock. The northern sky at this time was nearly clear, and clothed with the usual haze. A bright lemon glow was just changing into an even glimmer of rose. At half past eleven a few clouds spread over the rose, and under these began a play of heavenly color. There were spaces of gold, orange, blue, green and a hundred harmonious blends, with an occasional band of polished silver.

Precisely at twelve o'clock a fiery cloud separated, disclosing a bit of the upper rim to the sun.

We could not speak. There were no words to express the buoyancy of our belief, nor the feeling of new life which ran coursing through our arteries, following the beat of our enfeebled hearts. On every countenance were signs of the accumulated suffering of seventy dayless nights. We were haggard, our faces lined and flabby, of an unnatural coloring. Perhaps we had not known until that moment how terrible our experience had been.

We watched and watched, hoping the crest of fire would rise; but instead it slid teasingly down to the verge of the sea. A few minutes after twelve the light was extinguished, a smoky veil of violet was drawn over the dim outline of the ice, and he stars again twinkled in the Gobelins blue of the sky, as they had done without tinted outshone for nearly seventeen hundred hours.

Logical Listener.

Parson Franks of Slowbury was preaching with much fervor one Sunday morning upon the duty of doing with all one's heart and might whatever one finds to do, when he became conscious of a commotion in the pew of the Widow Goldsmith.

That lady seemed to be engaged in animated conversation with her son Tom, a boy of nine, on whose coat she had a firm grasp.

As Parson Franks bent his gaze on them the boy broke away from his mother's detaining hand, and started up the aisle. When he reached the foot of the pulpit he halted, scarlet-faced and gasping.

"What is it, my boy?" asked the minister, looking kindly down at him.

"Please, sir," stammered the youthful Goldsmith, "I—I forgot to feed the hens this morning, hurrying to get ready for church. Shall I go home now, or wait till the preaching's over?"

Some of the congregation smiled, but Parson Franks continued to look down at his little parishioner with kind gravity.

"I think you'd better stay, as the sermon is nearly done, Tom," he said, "but I thank you for showing me that at least one member of my congregation understands what I am saying."

Then Tom returned to his seat, and the Widow Goldsmith was filled with reluctant pride.

New Diamond Fields.

Diamonds have been found in considerable numbers and of very fine quality in the interior of British Guiana on the Mazaruni River, 250 miles above its junction with the Essequibo. Mr. Moulton, consul at Demerara, says that the London dealers to whom the stones have been forwarded consider them superior to South African diamonds and equal in quality to those of Brazil. The present diggings are situated in a tropical jungle five miles from the river, and the region is not easily reached. The matrix from which the gems have become scattered is now the object of search.

"There is no joy," says the office philosopher, "equal to that of the brow beaten clerk who finds out his employer is henpecked."



Songs of Praise

Ottawa, Jan. 20, 1899. I have used SURPRISE SOAP since I started house and find that it lasts longer and is better than other soap I have tried. J. Johnston.

Fredericton, N.B., Dec. 15th, 1899. Having used SURPRISE SOAP for the past ten years, I find it the best soap that I have ever had in my house and would not use any other when I can get SURPRISE. Mrs. T. Henry Troup.

St. Thomas, Ont. I have to wash for three brothers that work on the railroad, and SURPRISE SOAP is the only soap to use. We tried every other kind of soap, and I ellevybody why our overalls have such a good color. Maudie Logan.

Montreal. Can't get wife to use any other soap. Says SURPRISE is the best. Chas. C. Higgins.

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