THE TRAGEDY OF COYOTE HOLE.

AT daybreak Indian Tom emerged from his wickiup and stood at the doorway, open, as is the custom, toward the east, whence the desert tribes expect a Messiah. He surveyed the forbidding landscape with an air of proprietorship. Tall, gaunt, with an eyee like a coyote's and a skin clinging close to his bony frame, tanned to yellow parchment by hundreds of electric storms, Indian Tom was a veritable wizard of the wilds. Half a dozen snarling curs scattered at sight of him, yelping, and the three squaws who formed his household hastened about their morning tasks. Evidently there was excellent discipline at his rancheria.

Not far to the westward rose the long, undulating outlines of the Funeral Mountains bordering Death Valley. On every other hand stretched the monotonous wastes of the Mojave Desert, now a long way of barren plain, now a range of hills rising above it. A few yards from Tom's habitation was a pool of black water which oozed slowly from the ground on a little slope. When it reached a certain level, it overflowed and trickled in a narrow rivulet along the sands into a piece of ground inclosed by wires. Here it kept alive a scanty growth of native grasses. In the background of Indian Tom's immediate landscape were dozens of burros, which constituted his worldly wealth and made him a lord among his fellows. When a burro became famished to the point of starvation on the sparse sage-brush, it was admitted to the little inclosure and permitted to feed until it could stand strong upon its legs. Then it was clubbed forth upon the desert again. Indian Tom often sold burros to prospectors, but the number did not diminish, and the source of constant supply was a mystery which no man had fathomed.

Above the low mountains in the distant east the sun rose like a ball of fire. There were no soft tints of blue and purple along the summits to herald the approach of dawn and indicate a little moisture in the air. But instead came a sudden flare of light that burned at once in the sky and along the mountain sides and on the wide reaches of the plains. The air was shot through and through with penetrating, stinging rays. Here and there appeared puffs of wind, whirling sand aloft, with an ominous, swinging, funnel-like motion. And in the far north these gradually increased, until a cloud of dust hung like a curtain against the sky, higher above the earth than the tops of the highest mountains. Indian Tom surveyed the scene, sniffed the hot blasts which saluted his withered nostrils, and muttered, in the composite lingo which he had picked up from prospectors of different nationalities: "Ugh! Mucho calor! Heap dam hot wind!" Then, as one of his squaws placed before him a chunk of dingy-looking bread, a black bottle, and a savory combination of jack-rabbit and bacon, he squatted beside them, upon the ground, and attacked, with great gusto, a breakfast which, for a desert Indian, was an epicure's dream.

Three hours later the shifting gusts of wind had united in a constant furnace blast. And at a point fifteen miles from Indian Tom's, across the range, and upon the edge of the basin-like depression known as Death Valley, two men were suffering constant torments from the almost insupportable heat. These were Anderson and Grimes, prospectors. At the first indications of an electric storm they had prepared an insufficient shelter by making a low tent of some canvas, under which they had crawled for protection. They had also tried to shield their two burros by muffling their heads in gunny-sacks, to screen them from the driving sands which rode on the sweeping blasts of the norther. This sand penetrated everywhere, and cut the skin, if exposed, like needles. Its drift was not sufficient to bury any living, moving thing alive, but man or beast might become exhausted by the heat, and so incapable of motion, and then suffocated. Grimes and Anderson had placed the various articles of their mining outfit as a low rampart on the side next the wind, and the sand had drifted over them. When Grimes lifted an ax, to place it among their other possessions, a spark of electricity passed to his arm, with a report like the crack of a pistol, and the arm was still benumbed from the shock. The high electrical tension in the atmosphere was, in itself, a tremendous strain upon the nerves. Moreover, it burned all vitality out of the air and added to its heat. To expose a hand from the partial shelter of the canvas meant a blister on the skin; and the two men lay upon the ground, struggling for breath, moistening their lips, every few moments, from the contents of their canteens, and swearing a constant succession of miners' oaths at the "luck" which had brought them to the confines of Death Valley on this direful day.

"I wonder if the critters is alive?" said Anderson, in a lull of the tempest which permitted the raising of his voice above the whistling of the wind. "If they be," he added, "'twould be a mercy to wet their noses with a little water."

Grimes struggled to his feet, throwing off the weight of the canvas, which had been pressed down upon them by the drifting sand. Five minutes later the burros had been resurrected, the gunny-sacks had been removed from their heads, and their mouths had been thoroughly sponged. When these things had been done, and everything had been adjusted for a probable recurrence of the tempest, the men found that they had just one canteen of water left, one which had been filled at Coyote Hole as they had come past a few hours before. It had been kept until the last as being the freshest. They each took a "pull" at this.

"It's pretty bitter and brackish, isn't it?" Grimes remarked. "Some way I never liked that water. It tastes to me like arsenic and asphalt. But—by ——, it's good! Give me some more. It's good, it's good, it's good. Ha! this is life. No man knows what joy he can get out of a little thing until he's been almost dead with hunger or with thirst. Don't you think so, pard?"

"Don't be an idiotic fool," Anderson replied. "The wind's a-comin' up again. Better run down here behind the outfit, and see that you make that water go just as far as it will. If we can stand it till night, and the moon comes up, and the wind goes down, and the burros is alive, and we can git to Indian Tom's, where there's water, we're all right. But if we can't—why, then we're just dead and buried, and that's all there is of it," was Anderson's grimly philosophical reply.

So, as the long afternoon were drearily on, the two men lay under their improvised shelter and suffered in silence, their lips too parched and swollen to talk, their eyes bloodshot, their cheeks puffed and blackened as the blood thickened and grew sluggish in their veins. They turned their faces apart, as though each dreaded to witness the sufferings of the other, and pressed their swollen lips against their teeth to keep back tell-tale groans.

When the sun went down, blood-red in the west, the wind sank to rest, like the spent wrath of an angry giant. The heat, which had been pressing down upon the earth, seemed lifted all at once and flung abroad into space. For a brief interval the darkness of night swept over the mountains, pierced in the illimitable vault overhead by thousands of brilliant points of fire. Then the moon came up, swimming in a sea of silvery radiance. Anderson and Grimes, by a supreme effort, aroused themselves from the lethargy which had overtaken them in the closing hours of the day, and prepared to leave the spot where so much suffering had been compressed into so brief a time.

They had adjusted the pack upon Nobles, the smaller of the two burros, and were preparing to "cinch" the load on Jerusalem, a big and brawny specimen of her patient race, and their principal dependence as a pack animal. Anderson stood with his foot against her side, pulling on the rope that held the pack in place, when properly adjusted. But there was no answering pull from the other side, where Grimes was standing. Anderson was angered.

"Why the devil don't you pull?" he thundered. Then, in gentler tones, "Why, boy, what in the name of Simon Peter's ghost is ailin' you? Have you got the St. Vitus dance?"

Grimes was reeling in aimless circles, frothing at the mouth and making inarticulate cries of pain. Then he fell to the ground, and his legs and arms threshed the ground with spasmodic contortions. Then came nausea, worse than any seasickness. And a moment later Grimes sat up and "pulled himself together."

"God!" he said. "That's terrible. Little the worst I ever had. Who would have thought a man could live through such pain as that?"

"I tell you what," Anderson replied. "You've eaten something that don't agree with you—it's almost like poison. You're locoed. We've got to camp here again and make some coffee to settle your stomach."

Fortunately, a little alcohol stove and the necessary fuel were in the outfit. It took only a few minutes to prepare the coffee, in the making of which they used the last water that they had. Both drank freely: Grimes declared that he was better; the process of loading the packs was completed, and they broke camp, heading for a curved notch in the mountains, the head of a canyon, beyond which were Indian Tom's and safety.

After a mile or two of travel, almost in silence, Grimes called a halt. "I'll have to rest," he said. "I'm sick again. I hate to say so, but I can't go on."

"I'm pretty bad myself," Anderson replied, when they had stopped. 'Queer, isn't it?' Then suddenly the same symptoms which had so tortured his friend, although in a lesser degree—spasmodic, uncontrollable contractions of the muscles, a wretched nausea, and a burning, intolerable thirst, which seemed to dry up every atom of vitality and to cleave to the very centers of existence. But Anderson was strong, and he fought like a lion against his unseen foe. When he recovered a little from the paroxysms of pain, he found Grimes prostrate, moaning pitifully, and apparently unable to move.

"It was in the water," said Anderson. "We've been poisoned. Those devilish coyote-bounty hunters have put strychnine in the springs. Five dollars for a coyote's scalp and a man or two thrown in. Hell, what a country this is!"

"It's that fiend, Indian Tom," whispered Grimes. "He's poisoned the water at Coyote Hole, and he'll be looking fer our burros to-morrow. If I can live long enough to stick a knife into him, I'll be satisfied," and the remnants of the tortured man's voice wandered off into incoherent curses.

Anderson rallied all his powers to meet the situation. "I can walk," he said, "and you can ride. Old Jerusalem is strong. I'll tie you on top of the pack, and we'll get out of here yet. Brace up!"

"For God's sake, Anderson, shoot me," Grimes replied. "I can't stand this torture any longer. We've been, good friends, you and me. Take your revolver and blow my brains out. If you have any love for me, do what I say, won't you? Shoot me, man, shoot me."

"Now, see here," said Anderson, "none of that. You stop that kind of talk, or I'll lat you over the jaw. Stop kickin' now, and keep quiet. Here you go.' Then, exerting all of his waning strength, Anderson lifted his companion to the top of Jerusalem's load, and propped him between two rolls of blanket. He tied him securely in place, and started the burros ahead, walking beside Jerusalem and listening to the heart-rending demand of agonized human nature, "Shoot me, shoot me, shoot me," until he was himself frantic with the mingled passions of anger, pity, and fear.

Thus they traversed the sloping rim of Death Valley and the comparatively level ground above it, and came to the long, winding canyon which opens upon the confines of the valley and, at its upper extremity, forms a pass in the Funeral range, beyond which lie those continuations of the desert where, at this time, Indian Tom's wickiup and the adjacent springs were the most important signs of life. At intervals when Jerusalem, staggering beneath her double load, stopped to rest, Anderson was compelled to listen to the delirious ravings of his friend, who constantly begged for surcease from pain by death as for some priceless favor.

The situation was intolerably oppressive to Anderson. The physical pain which he endured, although terrible, was nothing in comparison with his mental torments as he listened to his friend. There were moments when he despaired of the issue, and argued with himself that neither could survive the toilsome journey; that both must die; and that it were better to end all at once.

Centering his mind upon this question, and weighing it pro and con, Anderson directed Nobles and Jerusalem along the narrow, precipitous sides of the canyon, now on the right, now on the left, here shuffling in sand, there stumbling over rocky ground where some brief winter torrent had washed the thin soil from the mountain-side. The breeze which was drawn downward through the canyon was cool and exhilarating to a degree that was surprising, when one remembered how the desert expanses over which it had been borne had so recently been broiled beneath a fiery sun and swept by a flaming tornado. The moonlight, too, was very beautiful, and the stars, dimmed by the light of the moon, yet distinct, shone with that perpetual calm suggestive of eternity. Gradually a sense of euthanasia, a longing for death, came over Anderson's spirit. It would be so easy to breathe away from that broken tenement and to become a sentient yet indestructible portion of the mighty universe which upheld those brilliant points of light through an infinity of space.

In this frame of mind Anderson no longer replied to the pleadings and groanings of Grimes until they had almost completed the ascent of the canyon, and the burros paused, from sheer inability of move further, upon the highest point where the sides of the gorge dropped abruptly away into unknown depths, shrouded in darkness, where there was no fantastic play of the moonlight. Here Grimes called softly for water, asking in the tone of a spoiled child who believes that its mother denies its request from caprice. There was something in the tone, and in the repeated, insistent demand that cut Anderson to the heart. It was really such a little thing, yet so impossible. "Water, water, won't you give me water? Only a drop, one little drop, and I'll be satisfied."

"Come," said Anderson, gently, "can't you be yourself for jest a minute? Don't you know that I can't give you water? Try to reason, just a little."

"Water!" was the imperious reply—"water, or kill me, in mercy."

Anderson drew his revolver from its holster for the first time. The moonlight glanced from the polished steel as he held the handle toward Grimes. He intended to test him.

"Here is the revolver," he said. "Take it and use it."

"I can't," was the reply. "My arms are paralyzed. I can't lift my elbows. Don't you see that I'm only a wreck of a man—nothing left of me except a voice and a brain that's all on fire? Anderson, I'm myself now. I know what I'm saying, and I call on you, as you are my friend, to do your duty."

Anderson hesitated for a moment. He wavered to and fro and toyed with the revolver, undecided. Then, with a with a quick movement, he turned the weapon upon his own heart and pulled the trigger. There was a report, followed by a cry. Anderson threw his arms into the air, fell, clutched vainly at the edge of the precipice, and disappeared into the depths.

Again, at the first break of day, Indian Tom stood at the door of his wickiup, holding erect his meager form, unbent by the weight of a hundred years, and gazing into the far reaches of the landscape. The atmosphere, swept by the norther of the day before free from every particle of moisture, was perfectly transparent, and every outline of the mountains, every naked rock and shrunken desert brush, was distinct with a startling individuality.

Here and there a jack-rabbit bounded over the barren plain, or a coyote sneaked away from the approach of day. Shuffling unsteadily across the sands came two gray forms which Tom watched intently from their first appearance in the distance. Nobles was in advance, with the lighter load, crazed for water, and frantic to bury her nose in the black, sluggish ooze beneath the shadow of Tom's habitation. Then came Jerusalem, trembling with fever and weariness and staggering under her twofold burden. For, lying back upon the blankets, tied so that it could not fall, was a human form, rigid, uncovered, the beard and cheeks flecked with bloody foam, the glassy eyes staring unmoved into the face of the morning sun.

Then Indian Tom, lifting his hands to the east, chanted, in guttural monotone, a verse of thanksgiving to the spirit on high who puts into the white man's heart the lust of gold, and sends him forth into the wilds, driving his deft-footed little beasts laden with the miner's pick and pan, with tobacco, with bacon, and, best of all, with whisky, which warms the marrow and gladdens the heart of the Great Father's dusky servant.—William M. Tisdale, in San Francisco Argonaut.

She Called, but Alas!

"I never was so disgusted and angry in my life," said Mrs. de Garmo.

"What's the trouble?" her husband inquired.

"This afternoon that rich Mrs. Hilton, whom I have been dying to have call on me, came just as I was getting ready to take a bath."

"Too bad. Wouldn't she stay until you could get ready to see her?"

"That's just it. I rushed around and almost broke my neck getting into my best clothes, only to find out when I got downstairs that she had called to see if I wouldn't like to buy a 50-cent ticket to an entertainment that the Good Samaritan Society was getting up for poor sewing girls. I shall cut her dead the next time we meet!"

No man's life is as beautiful as the prayers he makes in prayer meeting.

Never go from a warm atmosphere into a cooler one without keeping the mouth closed, so that the air may be warmed in its passage through the nose before it reaches the lungs.

Never strain the voice in the attempt to speak while hoarse. Wait until the hoarseness is recovered from, or the voice may be permanently injured or difficulties of the throat produced.

Never stand still in cold weather for any length of time in the outdoor air, especially after having taken active exercise; and never stand long on the ice or snow, or where the person is exposed to cold wind.

Many believe in withholding salt, pepper, etc., from the sick. This is wrong. Whatever is done toward making the diet desired and appreciated promotes its digestion.

Water and air are food-stuffs. Water acts as a carrying agent to transport foods to the different tissues. The oxygen of the air is need for the tissues and fluids of all forms of animal life.

The food of a person doing ordinary work should be proportioned as follows: Four ounces of proteids or albuminoids, four or five ounces of fats (increase this as the necessity for work or heat increases), eighteen to twenty ounces of starches, and one ounce of salts.

A mustard-plaster ought never to blister the skin. If it burns too much an extra piece of muslin can be placed between it and the body, and can be removed when the patient becomes accustomed to the heat. Mix the mustard with equal quantities of flour and ground ginger.

It has been found by experiment that tea retards digestion. An infusion of 1 per cent. of tea causes a perceptible delay; a 3 per cent. infusion will delay the digestion, sometimes, as much as twelve times the normal period; a 10 per cent. decoction arrests the digestion of all starchy foods.

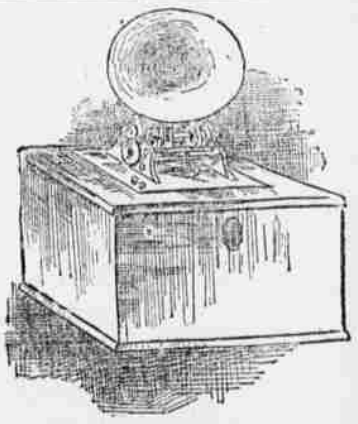
The eyball rests in a cushion of fat, by which it is surrounded on every side. When the system becomes greatly emaciated through diseases, this fat is absorbed, and the eye sinks further into the head, thus giving the sunken appearance so common in disease.

Butter is highly recommended as a food for pulmonary and other invalids. Therefore, if butter is agreeable to the individual, and occasion no gastric or intestinal disorders, it would seem an important adjunct to the present dietetic treatment. Then, too, if it is an advantage in this condition, why not in other were facts are indicated?

THE SCENTOGRAPH.

The Smelling Machine Is One of the Wonders of the Moment.

A machine which he claims will take its place by the side of the phonograph has been invented by Louis Kramer, a Missourian, who moved to Binghamton, N. Y., about a year ago. It is used to receive and magnify odors of all kinds and is called a scentograph. A patent is to be applied for, but it has been already practically tested. It will take a liquid heretofore regarded as odorless and distill the most delicate perfume. A drop of perfumery or essence placed on the receiver will produce an odor that would in a very short time cause symptoms of suffocation. The grocer might utilize it in detecting adulteration in goods, while it has been suggested that bank paper can be tinctured with a special scent, imperceptible to the ordinary sense of smell, but which could be easily detected when placed in the scentograph, lessening liability of counterfeiting. It is also claimed that the machine will be popular in homes, hospitals, sick rooms, where the air can be kept permeated by most delightful fragrance. The machine is about twelve inches square and eight high. Mr. Kramer says it can be manufactured for $50. It is thought he will have no trouble in obtaining financial aid for organizing a company to place is on the market as soon as the patent is granted.



SMELLING MACHINE.

There are others, but people never find it out until they are married, and it is too late.