

# THE MIRACLE OF LAVA CANYON.

BY W. S. PORTER.

Copyright, 1900, by W. S. Porter.

THE sheriff of Siskiyou county had a secret. He never told it to his best friend, but it was never out of his own mind. He was a physical coward. A shot fired set his heart beating wildly, and he turned sick at strife and carnage. His pulse beats averaged 95 per minute and his heart turned cold every time a summons for arrest was placed in his hands. He experienced a sensation of nervous dread each time he swung himself upon the back of his high spirited horse. Every sudden sound conveying presage of danger thrilled him with fright. His disposition was high strung, sensitive and unalterably timid. And yet "Rad" Conrad was known as the coolest and most courageous sheriff in this territory. He had attained this reputation by a daily and hourly struggle with his whole moral force against his natural weakness. His fear of danger, great as it was, had been subdued to a greater fear lest his falling be known. How to hide his cowardice from the world was his one aim. With a cold fear in his heart he sought danger with the eagerness of one who loved its every phase. Quiet, persistent, plodding in his way, without any of the western dash and audacity belonging to most men in his occupation, he continually sought the closest risks and hazards, driven by an abnormal desire to appear fearless. Men who had no conception of the meaning of the word "fear" sometimes stood apart, agape at the man's daring, and admired him. Apparently without the slightest excitement, almost sullen of aspect, he trailed desperate criminals to their rendezvous, engaged in combat against mighty odds and waged such relentless war upon desperadoes and outlaws that his fame as an upholder of law and order was spread far and wide.

Radcliff Conrad kept his secret well. Not a man in Siskiyou county had ever seen him flinch from his duty, and tales were told in saloons and camps of his intrepidity and recklessness. The sheriff's personal appearance aided him. He was strongly and finely formed. He possessed a blond head of classic mold and a steel blue eye under good control. His inward struggles kept him at a tension that gave him a reserved and somewhat preoccupied manner, and his every action seemed the result of deliberation instead of impulse. The giving away to impulse was the thing he was most afraid of. He felt that some day his moral courage would fail him and he would stand stripped to the gaze of his friends the coward that he knew himself to be. No monkish ascetic ever scourged his fleshly sins as Radcliff Conrad did his own egregious failings. How well he succeeded in triumphing over it his fame in Lava Canyon and indeed in the mouths of men as far as the sagebrush grew to east and west attested.

There came one cruel day when the sheriff was forced to apply the whip to his tortured spirit with double force. The town of Lava Canyon was built on a stretch of plain sloping down to a river from the exit of a mountain gulch. Within this gulch was a tangled wilderness. Two miles back from the town it converged to a fissure half a mile deep like a sword cut cleaving the hills. The sides for its whole extent were inaccessible except to the rattlesnakes that made their dens among the boulders. Within the edge of the gulch where the densely wooded sides began to straighten to steeper angles stood the white painted cottage of Emmet Reed, the postmaster and leading dealer in hardware, cutlery, arms and ammunition. Here beside the mountain stream and among the moss grown rocks played the juvenile Reeds, little more than rushes in size, watched over more or less carefully by Boadicea, aged 20, eldest daughter of the house.

To these confines late one afternoon came Arizona Dan, worst man in the county, after breaking half a thousand dollars' worth of mirrors and glassware in the principal places of entertainment and introducing sundry stags of lead into various citizens, to their great bodily anguish. Dan was not too drunk to entertain a wholesome fear of Rad Conrad, and it was his intention to conceal himself until darkness should lend him cover to escape.

On being apprised of these events the sheriff of the county, recognizing his duty, prepared to effect Dan's capture. A brave man in his place who properly estimated the value of a good citizen's life in comparison with the vital spark of a degenerate like Arizona Dan as a furtherance of the survival of the fittest idea would have summoned a posse and by moral force of numbers would have secured the surrender of the offender without risk of bloodshed. Radcliff Conrad was not the man to do this. He shunned all appearance of lack of courage, as he desired in his heart to shun the danger.

"What arms did he have?" asked the sheriff of some men who had seen Arizona Dan's retreat to the gulch.

"Nary a one," said a saloon keeper who had suffered from the fugitive's leonardism. "He left both his guns in my place."

The sheriff unbuckled his revolver and shoved it across the counter.

"Keep that for me," he said. "I'll go and get Dan."

He passed slowly down the street, walking in the direction of the gulch, and the men gazed after him admiringly.

"Never knew what he'n afraid was, Rad uez'er," said the mail carrier.

"He 'uz born that a-way," said the county clerk. "A man as ain't got no keer in him don't deserve no credit for havin' sand. He wouldn't take his gun along 'cause Dan had left his'n. With a creature like Dan he'd leave his'n that's a leetle reckless. Dan overweighs had a matter of 25 pound the very least."

In the gulch things were as usual to appearances. The little mountain brook that dashed down the steep rocks purled in the deep shade and went out diamond flashes where stray gleams of sunlight dived into it, and the birds in the redwood trees whistled away as though there was no such inharmonious and degraded thing as Arizona Dan somewhere below trying to conceal his desecrating presence. The little Reeds were at school, and such noises as might have been heard by that legendary and overworked creature the casual observer were sylvan and well attuned. A critic in slight harmony would also have found little to cavil at, unless his too fine drawn perceptions had deemed the aspect of Miss Boadicea Reed, who sat neglected in a grassy swing, too unphilippic for perfect accord.

Miss Boadicea—called "Dicey" by her immediate family and friends, a diminutive evolved from their original and arbitrary pronunciation of her name—sounded a note which may have been a dissonance, but it had its true power of accentuating the soft melody of the wood. As she half reclined upon the giant vine her freshly starched white muslin crackled about a form whose measurements flattered not an inch from the modern standard of perfection. Her glossy black hair was arranged in the latest fashion shown in the most recently arrived ladies' magazine in Lava Canyon. Her features were clear cut and regular. She had the eyes of Melpomene and the heart of the ancient British queen whose name she bore.

Miss Boadicea Reed also had a secret. Being a woman, her dearest friends had often heard it divulged, but as it was a secret there needs must be those to whom it was not imparted. That portion of humanity was the one denominated by Miss Reed as "the gentlemen." This awful secret was that she had never—no, never—felt the slightest sensation of fear or abashment on any person or thing since she could remember.

Miss Boadicea despised and contemned all the little feminine weaknesses and terrors of her sex with all the prejudice of one who did not understand. She sometimes stood apart, agape at the man's daring, and admired him. Apparently without the slightest excitement, almost sullen of aspect, he trailed desperate criminals to their rendezvous, engaged in combat against mighty odds and waged such relentless war upon desperadoes and outlaws that his fame as an upholder of law and order was spread far and wide.

Radcliff Conrad kept his secret well. Not a man in Siskiyou county had ever seen him flinch from his duty, and tales were told in saloons and camps of his intrepidity and recklessness. The sheriff's personal appearance aided him. He was strongly and finely formed. He possessed a blond head of classic mold and a steel blue eye under good control. His inward struggles kept him at a tension that gave him a reserved and somewhat preoccupied manner, and his every action seemed the result of deliberation instead of impulse. The giving away to impulse was the thing he was most afraid of. He felt that some day his moral courage would fail him and he would stand stripped to the gaze of his friends the coward that he knew himself to be. No monkish ascetic ever scourged his fleshly sins as Radcliff Conrad did his own egregious failings. How well he succeeded in triumphing over it his fame in Lava Canyon and indeed in the mouths of men as far as the sagebrush grew to east and west attested.

There came one cruel day when the sheriff was forced to apply the whip to his tortured spirit with double force. The town of Lava Canyon was built on a stretch of plain sloping down to a river from the exit of a mountain gulch. Within this gulch was a tangled wilderness. Two miles back from the town it converged to a fissure half a mile deep like a sword cut cleaving the hills. The sides for its whole extent were inaccessible except to the rattlesnakes that made their dens among the boulders. Within the edge of the gulch where the densely wooded sides began to straighten to steeper angles stood the white painted cottage of Emmet Reed, the postmaster and leading dealer in hardware, cutlery, arms and ammunition. Here beside the mountain stream and among the moss grown rocks played the juvenile Reeds, little more than rushes in size, watched over more or less carefully by Boadicea, aged 20, eldest daughter of the house.

To these confines late one afternoon came Arizona Dan, worst man in the county, after breaking half a thousand dollars' worth of mirrors and glassware in the principal places of entertainment and introducing sundry stags of lead into various citizens, to their great bodily anguish. Dan was not too drunk to entertain a wholesome fear of Rad Conrad, and it was his intention to conceal himself until darkness should lend him cover to escape.

On being apprised of these events the sheriff of the county, recognizing his duty, prepared to effect Dan's capture. A brave man in his place who properly estimated the value of a good citizen's life in comparison with the vital spark of a degenerate like Arizona Dan as a furtherance of the survival of the fittest idea would have summoned a posse and by moral force of numbers would have secured the surrender of the offender without risk of bloodshed. Radcliff Conrad was not the man to do this. He shunned all appearance of lack of courage, as he desired in his heart to shun the danger.

"What arms did he have?" asked the sheriff of some men who had seen Arizona Dan's retreat to the gulch.

"Nary a one," said a saloon keeper who had suffered from the fugitive's leonardism. "He left both his guns in my place."

The sheriff unbuckled his revolver and shoved it across the counter.

"Keep that for me," he said. "I'll go and get Dan."

He passed slowly down the street, walking in the direction of the gulch, and the men gazed after him admiringly.

"Never knew what he'n afraid was, Rad uez'er," said the mail carrier.

"He 'uz born that a-way," said the county clerk. "A man as ain't got no keer in him don't deserve no credit for havin' sand. He wouldn't take his gun along 'cause Dan had left his'n. With a creature like Dan he'd leave his'n that's a leetle reckless. Dan overweighs had a matter of 25 pound the very least."

In the gulch things were as usual to appearances. The little mountain brook that dashed down the steep rocks purled in the deep shade and went out diamond flashes where stray gleams of sunlight dived into it, and the birds in the redwood trees whistled away as though there was no such inharmonious and degraded thing as Arizona Dan somewhere below trying to conceal his desecrating presence. The little Reeds were at school, and such noises as might have been heard by that legendary and overworked creature the casual observer were sylvan and well attuned. A critic in slight harmony would also have found little to cavil at, unless his too fine drawn perceptions had deemed the aspect of Miss Boadicea Reed, who sat neglected in a grassy swing, too unphilippic for perfect accord.

Miss Boadicea—called "Dicey" by her immediate family and friends, a diminutive evolved from their original and arbitrary pronunciation of her name—sounded a note which may have been a dissonance, but it had its true power of accentuating the soft melody of the wood. As she half reclined upon the giant vine her freshly starched white muslin crackled about a form whose measurements flattered not an inch from the modern standard of perfection. Her glossy black hair was arranged in the latest fashion shown in the most recently arrived ladies' magazine in Lava Canyon. Her features were clear cut and regular. She had the eyes of Melpomene and the heart of the ancient British queen whose name she bore.

Miss Boadicea Reed also had a secret. Being a woman, her dearest friends had often heard it divulged, but as it was a secret there needs must be those to whom it was not imparted. That portion of humanity was the one denominated by Miss Reed as "the gentlemen." This awful secret was that she had never—no, never—felt the slightest sensation of fear or abashment on any person or thing since she could remember.

Miss Boadicea despised and contemned all the little feminine weaknesses and terrors of her sex with all the prejudice of one who did not understand. She sometimes stood apart, agape at the man's daring, and admired him. Apparently without the slightest excitement, almost sullen of aspect, he trailed desperate criminals to their rendezvous, engaged in combat against mighty odds and waged such relentless war upon desperadoes and outlaws that his fame as an upholder of law and order was spread far and wide.

Radcliff Conrad kept his secret well. Not a man in Siskiyou county had ever seen him flinch from his duty, and tales were told in saloons and camps of his intrepidity and recklessness. The sheriff's personal appearance aided him. He was strongly and finely formed. He possessed a blond head of classic mold and a steel blue eye under good control. His inward struggles kept him at a tension that gave him a reserved and somewhat preoccupied manner, and his every action seemed the result of deliberation instead of impulse. The giving away to impulse was the thing he was most afraid of. He felt that some day his moral courage would fail him and he would stand stripped to the gaze of his friends the coward that he knew himself to be. No monkish ascetic ever scourged his fleshly sins as Radcliff Conrad did his own egregious failings. How well he succeeded in triumphing over it his fame in Lava Canyon and indeed in the mouths of men as far as the sagebrush grew to east and west attested.

There came one cruel day when the sheriff was forced to apply the whip to his tortured spirit with double force. The town of Lava Canyon was built on a stretch of plain sloping down to a river from the exit of a mountain gulch. Within this gulch was a tangled wilderness. Two miles back from the town it converged to a fissure half a mile deep like a sword cut cleaving the hills. The sides for its whole extent were inaccessible except to the rattlesnakes that made their dens among the boulders. Within the edge of the gulch where the densely wooded sides began to straighten to steeper angles stood the white painted cottage of Emmet Reed, the postmaster and leading dealer in hardware, cutlery, arms and ammunition. Here beside the mountain stream and among the moss grown rocks played the juvenile Reeds, little more than rushes in size, watched over more or less carefully by Boadicea, aged 20, eldest daughter of the house.

blade held by the huge desperado he had come unarmed to capture. His pride and the wonderful moral courage that ground out his gaudy deeds from heart sinking apprehension urged him forward another step. Arizona Dan laughed a low, half sober but chilling laugh. So quiet it was that the voice of the brook sounded in the sheriff's ears like the derisive mockery of men at his poltroonery.

"Will you come?" said the sheriff in a tone a bridegroom might have used to his bride.

"I'll cut your heart out, Rad Conrad," said Arizona Dan, "if you come two steps nearer."

Boadicea, on the ledge above, rustled a little and the sheriff, without looking up, smiled again. Arizona Dan held his knife as one holds a foil, point outward, with his thumb against the guard. The sheriff crouched some three inches like a cat and seemed to gather himself together with his weight balanced evenly on each foot. Arizona Dan stood still with his knife ready. Was Rad Conrad fool enough to attack him with his bare hands?

The sheriff could have shouted for joy. Like a flash valor and audacious courage had come upon him. He felt that he had never known fear again.



"Come and get me," he said.

that he would never know fear again. Something had passed into his blood that had made him a man instead of the spurious being he had been. He felt the two dark eyes above fixed upon him, but he kept his own upon Arizona Dan's.

Heretofore the sheriff's exploits had been attended by a fortuitous chance that brought him safely out of them—a chance just as blind and incomprehensible as that which guards the ways of children and drunks. Now he felt the caution, the indomitable intent to do coupled with the prudence of the successful general that gives bravery its value. Half a miracle had been accomplished. The other half was to follow.

It must have been that Arizona Dan's nerves were unstrung by his debauch, else when a small stone dislodged by Boadicea's foot rattled down to the path at his side he would not have bestowed the advantage of turning his head quickly to look. But he did so, and in the instant the sheriff had his knife arm by the wrist and his Arizona Dan was filled with surprise to feel the arm that held his knife slowly twisting in spite of all his resistance—twisting outward, until the tendons and muscles were cracking. The sheriff's hand was like a steel clamp, and when the pain grew unbearable Arizona Dan dropped the knife. When the sheriff heard it ring on the rocks, he released the wrist suddenly and laid his left forearm across Dan's throat. They were too close for blows, and there was little struggling or shifting of ground.

The arm across Arizona Dan's throat pushed his head back, and the other from behind about his waist held him close. It was a silent, fierce, straining contention on one side for the displacement and on the other to regain the center of gravity. The side for displacement won, and the gladiators went down with a crash. A small boulder in the way of Arizona Dan's head left him lying in a disgraceful heap oblivious to defeat. The sheriff knelt upon the vanquished distributor of leaden largess, drew cords from his pocket and ignominiously bound him hand and foot. Then he sprang to his feet and turned his flushed face and yellow curls to the source of his new being as a sandflower turns to the sun.

Boadicea slid down through the bushes like a young panther.

"You're a Jim dandy," she said, "if there ever was one. I saw it. I—"

She stopped suddenly. The sheriff was looking straight into her eyes. She felt for the first time a strange heat in her cheeks and thought she must have fever. Her eyes slowly dropped for the first time before another's. Her tongue for the first time tripped and faltered.

"It'll be dark soon," began the sheriff, and his voice sounded to her far away like the wind in the pines. "You'd better let me walk back to the house with you. I'll bring a horse back for this chap by the time he recovers. You are Miss Reed, I think. I know your father."

The evening breeze rustled airily through the redwoods. A squirrel frisked up a hickory, and the first owl hoot came from the shadows about the brook. The brook's babble no longer mocked; it sang a psalm of praise. As they walked down the path together a scream of fright came from the name-sake of the battle queen of the Britons.

"A horrid lizard!" she cried.

The sheriff's strong arm reassured her. The miracle was complete. The soul of each had passed into the other.

## REVOLVER WOUNDS.

More Dangerous, For Many Reasons, Than Those of the Rifle.

Wounds in civil life differ from those in military life in the greater after danger of septic involvement. Revolver cartridges are more liable than are rifle cartridges to have been handled frequently, to have been carried in dirty pockets and to have come in contact with various forms of infectious materials that may prove of serious consequence when buried in the tissues. Moreover, revolver cartridges are covered with a coating of grease, and this encourages an accumulation of manifold microbial material, some of which may prove to be of virulently infectious nature.

Rifle bullets are practically always sterilized by the intense heat developed by the powder at the moment of their discharge. Their rapid progress through the air while in a heated condition still further serves to cleanse them of any extraneous material that may chance to have accumulated on their surfaces. This cleansing process is very effectually begun by the rifling of the rifle barrel through which the bullet forces its way.

All these favorable factors are lacking in the case of the revolver bullet, and so it is possible that in any given case such a bullet may carry infectious material with it into the tissues. If this were in small amount, nature might eventually wall it off and no serious consequences result. On the other hand, such infectious material might be slowly gathering strength by multiplication, and when its toxins were elaborated in sufficient amount they might paralyze protective chemotaxis and produce a septic condition.—New York Medical News.

## APHORISMS.

The man who procrastinates struggles with ruin.

An apt quotation is as good as an original remark.—Johnson.

Progress is the activity of today and the assurance of tomorrow.—Emerson.

To be vain of one's rank or place is to show that one is below it.—Stanislaus.

The desire of appearing clever often prevents one becoming so.—Rochefoucauld.

God is on the side of virtue, for whoever dreads punishment suffers it, and whoever deserves it dreads it.—Colton.

The mind that is much elevated and insolent with prosperity and cast down by adversity is generally abject and base.

Human nature is so constituted that all see and judge better in the affairs of other men than in their own.—Terence.

In spite of all refinement, the light and habitual taking of God's name in vain betrays a coarse and brutal will.—Chapin.

## A Large Covey.

Two old hunters were swapping yarns and had got to quail.

"Why," said one, "I remember a year when quail were so thick that you could get eight or ten at a shot with a rifle."

The other one sighed.

"What's the matter," said the first. "I was thinking of my quail hunts. I had a fine black horse that I rode everywhere, and one day out hunting quail I saw a big covey on a low branch of a tree. I threw the bridle rein over the end of the limb and took a shot.

"Several birds fell and the rest flew away.

"Well, sir, there were so many quail on that limb that when they flew off I sprang back into place and langed my horse!"—Los Angeles Times.

## Turned the Tables.

A lecturer was once decanting on the superiority of nature over art when an irreverent listener in the audience fired that old question at him:

"How would you look, sir, without your wig?"

"Young man," instantly replied the lecturer, pointing his finger at him, "you have furnished me an apt illustration for my argument. My baldness can be traced to the artificial habits of our modern civilization, which is doing me in."—here he raised his voice to the windows shook—"is made of natural hair."

The audience testified its appreciation of the point by loud applause, and the speaker was not interrupted again.

## Rice and Rice.

To most people rice is rice, but, notwithstanding this, there is a considerable difference between the Chinese or Japanese and the American article. The former is darker in color and in no way compares with the latter in flavor or quality. Of the American, however, there are a number of grades, of which that grown in the Carolinas is considered the best. When purchasing, see that the grains are large, plump and unbroken. In washing be careful not to break them between the hands.

## How High Birds Fly.

A Straburg aeronaut says he has seen an eagle at the height of 3,000 yards, and again a pair of storks and a buzzard 900 yards above the sea level. On March 10, 1890, some aeronauts observed a lark flying at a height of 1,000 yards. On July 18, 1899, another balloon met a couple of crows at an altitude of 1,400 yards. These, however, are exceptions. Birds are hardly ever seen above a height of 1,000 yards; even above 400 yards they are not frequent.

## Woman's Intuition.

Tess—She says she can't understand why people call him a fatterer.

Jess—She does, eh?

Tess—Yes; I guess it's because he never said anything flattering to her.

Jess—More likely he did say something flattering and she's trying to make herself believe he was in earnest.—Philadelphia Press.

## Brain Weight.

It is stated by an authority that the weight of a man's brain has nothing to do with his mental power. It is a question of clarity, not of intellect. The colder the climate, the greater the size of the brain. The largest heads of all are those of the Chigatsches, who live very far north, and next come the heads of the Lapps.

## SPRINGS IN THE SEA

FRESH WATER STREAMS THAT BURST FROM THE OCEAN'S BED.

The Origin of the Underground Rivers That Have an Outlet Under the Persian Gulf Has Never Been Satisfactorily Explained.

Along the shallow bottom of the ocean, not very far from the land, a number of openings have been discovered in various parts of the world through which water as pure and fresh as that of any bubbling spring mingles with the salt water of the sea. Another remarkable class of fresh water springs is those that sink out of sight or perhaps never come to the surface, but follow hidden channels under the land and under the sea until they finally come to the open air on an island. Both of these types of underground rivers are perhaps most remarkably illustrated near and on Bahrein Island, in the Persian gulf, a place that is also noted as one of the chief sources of pearls.

Bahrein Island, the largest of the group of islands bearing that name, is about twenty miles off the coast of Arabia in the Persian gulf. As the island has almost no rainfall it is a dead level of sandy desert relieved only by palm groves and patches of vegetation where water springs to the surface from the mysterious underground channels. In many places the water does not reach the surface, but is found by sinking wells, the water being raised to the surface by donkeys and bullocks and poured into the channels from which the date palms and other crops are irrigated. These springs cannot possibly be derived from the island, and it is no more likely that they come from the sandy wastes of neighboring Arabia. The Arabian shore as far as can be seen is low and devoid of water except at El-Katif where similar springs are found.

Arabs say that these streams come straight from the Euphrates river through an underground channel by which the great river, in part, flows beneath the Persian gulf. Geologists, however, have dismissed this theory. "Though the origin of the springs has not yet been satisfactorily explained, the most favored theory is that they come from the well watered slopes of the Persian mountains far to the north. If this theory is correct, it means that the rainfall sinks into the earth's crust until it reaches impermeable rock strata along which it is carried for a great distance to the south out under the sea until the rock, sloping upward, again brings the water near the surface on Bahrein Island. Some of the wells in that area are enormous, and one of them, the Adari, serves for the irrigation of many miles of date palms through a canal of ancient construction. The Adari well is one of the great sights of Bahrein, being a deep basin of water 22 by 40 yards in size. The fact that it comes from a far higher source is shown by the force with which it enters the well. Divers, driven back by the strong current, are unable to reach the bottom.

There being no wells within miles of some of the coast towns of Bahrein, they obtain water from springs that issue from the bottom of the gulf not far from the shore. These springs of course have the same origin as the wells. Divers, with goatskins under their arms, dive through the salt water and fill the skins with the cold, fresh liquid at the bottom. The water obtained in this way usually contains a slight admixture of salt water, so that the mixture is just a little brackish. At some of these openings at the sea bottom the head of water entering the sea is so strong that when hollow bamboos are pushed down into it the water rises through the tubes, delivering the fresh water directly into vessels that are held by men and women who are sitting in the boats that brought them from the land. The force of some of the streams as they come from the earth is so considerable that it pushes back the salt water, and the spring is not mixed with the sea water for quite a space around the place of entrance.

It has been practically determined within the past few years that the waters of a small river in West Africa which disappeared in a fresh water swamp that has no visible outlet find their way by an underground channel into the Atlantic and mingle with the sea through an opening in the bottom that has been discovered a few miles from Cape Verde. A channel has been found on the sea floor which, apparently, was cut by some fresh water stream. During some soundings that were made in 1895 for the purpose of finding and raising a broken cable the vessel engaged in the work was surrounded by swamp vegetation that was continually rising to the surface. It was evidently brought through the underground channel from the swamp.

The breaking of a cable off the mouth of the Rovuma river in East Africa has been attributed to the destructive action of a stream of sweet water entering the sea level several miles from the land. Another remarkable example of a submarine river is found to the north of the city of Arica on the Pacific coast of South America. A river from the Andes that is gradually swallowed up in the sand has been found to make its way invisibly into the sea, with which it unites some miles from the land.—New York Sun.

## Fire Among Savage Nations.

According to Piny fire was a long time unknown to some of the ancient Egyptian tribes, and when a celebrated astronomer made them acquainted with that element and how to produce it they were wild with delight. The Persians, Phoenicians, Greeks and several other nations acknowledge that their ancestors were once without the comforts which fire bestows; the Chinese confess the same of their progenitors. Pomponius, Mele, Plutarch and other ancient writers speak of nations which, at the time when they wrote, knew not the use of fire or had just recently learned it.

The inhabitants of the Marian Islands, which were discovered in 1551, had no idea of fire or its uses. Their astonishment knew no bounds when they saw it applied to wood, most of them taking it to be some kind of animal which the sailors had brought with them and which must be fed on wood.

All charged but the cork. A good story is told of a digger who had ridden into a Western Australian town to consult a doctor. Having done so, he went to have the prescription made up.

"How much is this lot?" he asked the chemist.

"Well, let me see," was the reply. "There's seven and sixpence for the medicine and a shilling for the bottle." He hesitated, uncertain whether he had charged for everything.

"Oh, hurry up, boss," said the impatient miner; "put a price on the cork and let us know the worst."—London Tit-Bits.

An Apt Definition. "What is a Bohemian?" said the young man who wants to study human nature.

"A Bohemian," answered the cold blooded friend, "is a person who always needs two or three extra indorsements on his note when he wants to borrow money."—Washington Star.

## BOOKKEEPING

Stenography, Penmanship, Telegraphy, Commercial Law, a teacher's course, preparation for Civil Service examination, or entrance to any university; thorough work in seven courses including over fifty studies, given at the old reliable STOCKTON BUSINESS COLLEGE. Besides these the rates are the most reasonable, the courses the most thorough, the accommodations the best, the home most complete and the advantages many. Write for particulars to

W. G. Ramsey, - - Principal  
Stockton, Cal.

Learning the Game. When that great plainman J. B. Hicks, better known as "Wild Bill," came east on what he called a "red hot trail to learn something," he stopped one Saturday night at a hotel in Portland, Me.

When he went to his room to seek rest, he found that the adjoining room was occupied by a company of fashionable and rich young sports of Portland who, it did not take him long to discover, were playing an interesting game of poker for high stakes. In vain did he try to sleep. He could not do so, and after an hour arose, dressed himself and knocked on the door.

Instantly all was silent; but he inquired politely that as they would not let him sleep would they let him come in and watch the game?

"They did so and were impressed with the appearance of the man and asked if he would join them.

"I will if you will post me; but you know, I'm a tenderfoot east," he replied.

They were willing to "post" him, and, playing awkwardly, making blunders and asking questions, but seemingly greatly interested, he continued to play until daylight, when he put his winnings, some \$1,500, in his pocket.

"I thank you, gentlemen," he said, "and I'm rather glad you would not let me sleep. I'll be here until tomorrow, so keep me awake some more."

But the players did not appear again.—Detroit Free Press.

## Borrowing Habits of Poets.

On Tennyson's habit of failing to recognize clearly his own borrowings from the classical poets, Mr. Lang observes that the poets have always had a kind of regal indifference to their own lighter productions. Mr. Lang says: "Scott did not care; no, not when he found that he had unwittingly taken a line from a poem by the valet of a friend. In the preface to a little collection of verses from the novels he frankly declares that he cannot pretend to be certain which are of his own composition and which are not.

"To take an example from the level at the foot of Parnassus, I once read, in an American paper, some lines attributed to Mr. Austin Dobson. 'Not bad for Dobson,' I said freely to a friend. But it was proved on me that the rhymes were my own! A hard who forgets his own verses may be pardoned for remembering those of other people and mistaking a half line of somebody else's for his own. I dare say that Tennyson did this occasionally, but he could hardly say that the sun sets 'without being accused of unconscious borrowing.'"

## Greek and Roman Stories.

Warm as Greece and Rome and Egypt are, stories were made there in the dim and misty vistas of the past. It was not just the pattern used at present, but was a metal basin in which charcoal was burned. It sat in the middle of the room, and as the resulting smoke was of the slightest no opening in the roof or elsewhere was necessary. The same implement, still called by its old Greek name of brazier, is now employed in many portions of continental Europe, where it is utilized for heating as well as cooking.

But the progressive Romans improved on that and made a hypocust. It was the germ of the present furnace. It was made under the house in a little cellar prepared for it, and the heat was conducted to the rooms and lower portions of the wall. Later flues were provided, conducting heat for any portion of the house. In some of the old Roman villas in England the remains of these old time furnaces are still found.

## Origin of the Clearing House.

In 1775 the bankers of London rented a house in Lombard street and fitted it with tables and desks for the use of their clerks as a place where bills, notes, drafts and other commercial paper might be exchanged without the trouble of personal visits of employees to all the metropolitan banks. Transfer tickets were used, and by means of this simple plan transactions involving many millions were settled without a penny changing hands. The Bank of England and every other important bank in London are members of the Clearing House association. The first clearing house in the United States was established by the associated banks of New York in 1853.

## Arab Music.

Arab music has been described as the singing of a prima donna who has ruptured her voice in trying to sing a duet with herself. Each note starts from somewhere between a sharp and a flat, but does not stop even there and splits up into four or more portions, of which no person can be expected to catch more than one at a time.

## To Save Time.

Visitor—No, I won't come in. Could I see Mr. Jones for two minutes?

Servant—What name shall I say, sir?

Visitor—Professor Vondersplinkentoo-tleheimer.

Servant—Och, sure ye'd better step in and bring it wid ye, sorr!—Punch.

## Not Necessary.

"When you are at a loss