

Wolves.

Among beasts of prey, none are more generally known than wolves. They inhabit all the wilder portions of all continents. They are alike known and dreaded in Asia, Africa, Europe and America. They are spoken of in the oldest book of the Bible, where it is said, in prophesy, Gen. xxxix. 27: "Benjamin shall raven as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil."

On Egyptian monuments, 4000 years old, delineations of wolves have been found. The tradition of a wolf having nursed Romulus and Remus is associated with the earliest notices of Rome, and the brazen statue of that she-wolf and her boy pets may still be seen in one of the Roman galleries. That statue is probably 2000 years old, and has once been perforated by a stroke of lightning.

When the Romans invaded Britain, they found the wolves of the forests almost as destructive enemies as the native human inhabitants. At a later period, the Saxon and Norman kings of England had to adopt the most vigorous means to protect their people from the ravages of wolves. Athelstane, in A. D. 925, built a refuge in Yorkshire, to which travelers could flee when pursued by wolves. One of his successors—the boy-king Edgar—made war upon the wolves by offering pardon to criminals who would bring in a given number of wolves' tongues, and by freeing the people of Wales from taxes, on condition of an annual tribute of three hundred wolves' heads. This war of attempted extermination was a long one. It went on for hundreds of years before anything like a complete conquest over the wolves was secured either in England, Scotland or Ireland.

A similar war had to be waged in our own country, as is proved by the fact that many of the States of the American Union have enacted laws offering bounties for the heads or scalps of wolves.

The wolf, in zoology is known by the name *canis lupus*, showing that he belongs to the same animal tribe with the dog. There are many species of wolves. The chief differences among them, however, are rather of color than of character or habit. There are yellow wolves, gray wolves, black wolves, brown wolves and white wolves. They also differ in size, from those large enough to attack a reindeer singly and successfully, to the wolves of our western prairies, which burrow in the ground like foxes.

All kinds of wolves bark like dogs, but in the night their bark is usually prolonged till it becomes a howl. Fortunately for persons pursued by them, they cannot climb trees like panthers and wild-cats. Many stories have been told of boys and men, in newer portions of our country, who, when chased by wolves, have climbed into trees to escape from them, and have remained there all night, while the ravenous beasts were raging and howling beneath, ready to devour them, if in sleep or weariness, they should fall to the ground.

Fierce as wolves are to attack men at night, they generally slink away when morning dawns, so that those whom they have pursued at night can escape, if not frozen, or too much frightened from their exposure in tree-tops or other places of refuge.

It is, however, only when wolves exist in very great numbers, or when they are prompted by extreme hunger, that they attack human beings. With all their fierceness, they are cowardly. They seem to prefer preying upon animals that make little or no resistance. Hence sheep and lambs are the special objects of their search and attack.

Out of these destructive habits grew the necessity common both to ancient and modern times of preparing folds for sheep wherever wolves prevail.

On entering into Palestine the Jews were commanded (Num. xxxii. 24), "Build you cities (houses) for your little ones, and folds for your sheep;" and this is just what necessity taught the settlers in the newer portions of America to do as long as wolves and other destructive wild beasts were about.

But now these beasts are so rare that Americans in older States seldom see them except in museums and menageries. As, therefore, civilization drives out and destroys ravenous beasts, so true religion expels hypocrisy, and all false and ruinous elements of character. Well would it be for our country, and for the generations to come, if false-hearted people of every kind were as rare as wolves have become in the Atlantic States.

WOLVES ATTACKING A HORSE.

Whenever wolves associate together for mischief, there is a numerous train of smaller ones to follow in the rear and act as auxiliaries in the work of destruction. Two large wolves are sufficient to destroy the most powerful horse, and seldom more than two ever begin the assault, although there may be a score in the gang.

It is not less curious than amusing to witness their ingenious mode of attack. If there is no snow, or little on the ground, two wolves approach in the most playful and caressing manner, lying, rolling and frisking about, until the too credulous and unsuspecting victim is completely put off his guard by curiosity and familiarity. During this time the gang squatting are looking on at a distance.

After some time spent this way, the two assailants separate, when one approaches the horse's head, the other his tail, with a shyness and cunning peculiar to themselves. At this stage of the attack their frolicsome approaches becomes very interesting, the former is a mere decoy, the latter is the real assailant, and keeps his eyes steadily fixed on the ham-strings or flanks of the horse.

The critical moment is then watched, and the attack is simultaneous; both wolves spring at their victim at the same instant—one at the throat, the other to the flank—and if successful, which they generally are, the hind one never lets go his hold till the horse is completely disabled. Instead of springing forward, or kicking to disengage himself, the horse runs around and round, without attempting a defense.

The wolf before then springs behind to assist the other. The sinews are then cut, and in half the time I have been describing it the horse is on its sides; his struggles are fruitless—the victory is won. At this signal the lookers-on close in a gallop; but the small fry of followers keep at a respectful distance, until their superiors are gorged, and then they take their turn unmolested.—*Ex.*

Sunday Paragraphs.

The peace which Christ gives to his disciples is not a peace which comes of disciples' surroundings, it is a result of nearness to Him who is the center of the universe, and who is unmoved by surroundings. The Christian's peace is as great in times of storm as in times of calm. When the tempest of sorrow or of opposition rages on every side, then he who is one with Jesus realized "the peace of God which passeth all understanding."

There is a point of rest
At the great center of the cyclone's force,
A silence at its secret source;
A little child might slumber undisturbed,
Without the rattle of one fairy curl,
In that strange central calm amid the mighty whirl.

True greatness shows itself in ignoring, or quickly forgetting, personal injuries, when manner natures would be kept in unrest by them. The less of a man one is, the more he makes of an injury or an insult. The more of a man he is, the less he is disturbed by what others say or do against him without a cause.

The sea remembers not the vessel's rending keel;
But rushes joyously the ravage to conceal.

It is the tiny streamlet which is kept in a splutter, by a stick thrust into its waters by a wilful boy.

An Irish Farm.

Imagine a level country, with a few trees and no forests, cut up into very small irregular fields by stone walls. It is of such land that Irish farms are composed. In most countries there is a great deal of boggy, swampy land, from which the farmers cut peat, which serves them as fuel.

An Irish farm is generally about as large as an ordinary village green of New York or New England, say, from five to fifteen acres. In some districts, a farm of ten acres is considered rather large, and it is often the sole support of an immense family,—father, mother, ten children, and perhaps, an old grandmother.

Boston common contains forty-eight acres of land. It would make six good-sized Irish farms, which would maintain fifty or sixty human beings, half-a-dozen cows, a horse or two, some donkeys and many pigs, besides paying about three hundred dollars a year to the landlord, and something to the priest.

In good seasons, all this teeming and swarming life can just be maintained. But suppose a crop fails! Suppose the peat cannot be dried! Then what? Why, hunger and starvation, of course. And, remember, there are no factories or other business to fall back upon. If the crops fail, all fails.

If the crops of New England should be as poor this year as they were in Ireland last year, it would be a great calamity, but a very persons would go hungry on that account. The fisheries, the shops, the factories, commerce, and the savings-banks would go on about as usual, and the people would buy their food from other States.

Irish farms do not all lie along a high road, as with us. Farms are behind farms; and a great number of them can only be reached by a donkey path three or four feet wide. All the work is done by hand. The fields are dug, not ploughed, and many farmers have no implements but a spade, a hoe and a turf-cutting, and no vehicle except a small donkey-cart.

The farm house is generally one story high, and very often consists of a single large room, with perhaps a recess for a bed. It is commonly built of stone, with a roof of thatch, but many of the houses are made of earth, with a hard floor of home-made cement. In this one room, the dairy-work is done, and all the family live, the pig coming in and going out as he pleases.

Are the people then miserable and degraded? By no means. When the harvest is good and the rent reasonable, they are among the most cheerful people in Europe, and, in all the world, there is no land where the women are more modest and pure.

The children are ruddy and robust. The houses are generally clean and neat. The people enjoy life so much upon those little black, boggy farms, that when they emigrate to America or Australia, they sometimes almost die of homesickness.

In many instances, a poor Irish girl among us never goes to bed for six months after leaving home, without crying a little for the old house of mud and thatch, and the old folks within it.—*Youth's Companion.*

Signs of Spring.

The sun climbs higher in the sky,
The mud your boot carouses;
The folks about "first robin" lie,
The willows don their tresses.

The farmer walks his field and says,
"The frost is out the ground;
We'll get to work in a few days!"
And crows and crows abound.

Within our gardens hens and dogs
Our bulbs are scratching out;
Within the franchised pond the frogs
We soon shall hear no doubt.

The winter's hat is shabby grown,
The boys at marbles play;
For "yaris" the dames come up to town,
To "change the blood," they say.

Clean up your cellars and your walks,
At barrow tug and push
Cut from your vines the straggling stalks,
And prune the currant bush.

Pore o'er the seedman's pictured list,
Your money spend in seeds,
(Your precious crop will still consist
Of very costly weeds).

Buy fertilizers, rake and hoe,
And shovel, trowel, fork,
Into your garden daily go
And late and early work.

Spring tripping comes from the South land,
By gentle zephyrs led;
A handkerchief is in her hand,
A cold is in her head.

—In order to grow in grace, we must be much alone. It is not in society—even Christian society—that the soul grows most vigorously. In one single quiet hour of prayer it will often make more progress than in days of company with others. It is in the desert that the dew falls freshest and the air purest.—*H. Bonar.*

A dose of Yankee Cough Syrup taken at bed-time will insure you a good night's rest from coughing.

MISCELLANEOUS.

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