

PLYMOUTH ROCK'S CRACK.

Its Origin Involves a Unique and Mysterious Bit of History.

Plymouth has been called the cradle of New England. It is on the coast thirty-eight miles south of Boston and is a thriving and prosperous New England town, with good schools and churches and town hall and shops of all kinds and comfortable homes.

On the flat strip of land that runs for miles up and down the shore of the bay the diminutive white houses of the fishermen are crowded close together. In the center of the same flat land strip, flanked on both sides by the fishermen's homes, is a large, open square forty yards from the water front. Here stands Plymouth rock, the first sight of which gives one a mental shock, for, no doubt, fancy has pictured an immense boulder rising grandly out of the sea, but instead the visitor sees only an oblong, irregularly shaped gray sandstone rock twelve feet in length and five feet in width at the widest point and two at the narrowest. Across one part runs a large crack which has been filled with cement and which gives to Plymouth rock a highly artificial appearance. The origin of this crack is a bit of unique history and bears evidence to the early differences that at times divided the inhabitants into two factions.

For a long time there waged spirited and bitter wrangling between the opposing parties, and it even settled down upon the much cherished Plymouth rock, which one party declared ought to be removed to a more worthy position in the town square and the other wranglers protested it should not be moved an inch from its position, even though they had to guard it with their pikes and guns.

Finally the stronger faction drew up their forces around Plymouth rock and in attempting to move it up the hill split it asunder, which seemed a bad omen for those who had attempted such a thing until an ardent Whig leader flourished his sword and by an eloquent appeal to the other zealous Whigs convinced them that they should not sever from their plan of carrying the rock to a place in the town square.

"The portion that first fell to the ground belongs to us," he cried, "and that we will transport with all care and diligence to its proper home."
Twenty yoke of oxen drew the Whig section of Plymouth rock up the hill amid the shouts of the throng that pushed forward around the liberty pole which was to mark the new site. The new position was very impressive, and the people stood with bared heads and in reverent tones chanted their high pitched psalms in token of thanksgiving.

In the town square this part of Plymouth rock remained for more than half a century, when a committee of the council resolved to move it back to its original position and join it as best they could to the other half. Accordingly, in 1834, on the morning of the Fourth of July, the Plymouth rock had been reunited in all seriousness to its long estranged portion and the union made complete by a mixture of cement and mortar.

Today four granite columns support a canopy of granite that offers Plymouth rock an indifferent protection against the rain and the sun and serves to keep back in some measure the thousands of sightseers that go to Plymouth with only one object in view—namely, to press up around the iron bars and to gaze through them at the revered rock, on which they see the single inscription, cut in the middle of its face in large, plain figures, "1620."

The rock is surrounded by a high iron railing composed of alternate boat hooks and harpoons and inscribed with the illustrious names of the forty men who drew up the pilgrims' compact on board the Mayflower that November day as they sighted the coast that henceforth was to be their home.—Cornelia Hickman in St. Nicholas.

The Judge's Teent.
The judge's boyhood home was in a small New England village, where he had the reputation of being a very kind hearted and generous man. He was always glad to see his old friends, no matter how rustic they might be.

On one occasion the judge had some legal business in the capital of his native state, and there met an old farmer from his birthplace who was taking an unwonted holiday and looked rather bewildered. The judge invited the old man to dine with him at the hotel.

When the farmer took his seat at the table one of the waiter's laid a bill of fare before him. The old man looked at it, and, then, turning round to look the waiter squarely in the face, he said in a tone that rang through the dining room:

"No need to gimme that, young feller. Judge Brown call'tes to settle my bill. He came from our town, an' I know his ways."

"Death Rings."

Horrible are the stories of the poisonous rings by means of which so many a murder has been done, so many an undesirable friend or relative got out of the way. The famous ring of Caesar Borgia was massive, but hollow, and in this cavity he carried a deadly poison, which, by means of a cunningly devised siphon, was dropped into the wine cup of any guest of whom he might desire to be rid. Other "death rings" communicated poison by means of small, sharp steel claws, cleft in such manner that when the hand of the wearer pressed that of the destined victim a slight wound was inflicted and the poison forced out. Still others concealed in the inside a poisoned needle, which, on pressure, darted out like the sting of a bee, and, though the puncture was of the slightest, the victim was cold in death within a few hours.

Made It Emphatic.
"What's Maude crying about now?"
"Oh, she asked her husband if he would marry again in case she died, and he declared that he wouldn't."
"Well, nothing wrong about that."
"No; but you should have heard him say it."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

And Her Money.
"Yes, I was sorry to see Jack Goodley married to Miss Roxley."
"Sorry! For his sake or hers?"
"For mine. I wanted her."—New Yorker.

VICTORIA FALLS.

One of the Most Beautiful Spectacles in the World.

There is a fine description of Victoria falls in the Zambesi river in E. F. Knight's "South Africa After the War." The author says: "The nature of the extraordinary volcanic fissure that created the falls cannot easily be realized without reference to a map, but at the point under consideration the mighty Zambesi flows, roughly, from north to south. At about half a mile above the falls the river is a mile and a half in breadth. Then it contracts, and the breadth at the falls themselves is a little over a mile, or, to be exact, 1,536 yards. And here, to one looking over the edge, the great river seems suddenly to come to an end, no continuation of its channel being visible. The Zambesi for its whole mile of breadth thunders down precipitously into a comparatively narrow, profound trench or canyon, which extends at right angles to the river's course from shore to shore. Beyond the falls one is faced by the perpendicular wall of the canyon. Below the madly whirling spray obscures the view of the bottom of the canyon, and it seems as if the whole mighty food were falling into the center of the earth through this awful chasm. But the river has its exit, a precipitous cleft, only ten yards in breadth, near the eastern end of the canyon, through which the whole of the contracted Zambesi rushes with incredible speed, fury and confusion, forming at this point what is called the Boiling Pot, surely one of this earth's most terrific scenes."

"I believe," the author adds, "that on that day I was gazing at the most perfectly beautiful spectacle of all this beautiful world. It was the lovely tenderness of the rich coloring, bathed in that translucent atmosphere of thin, pearly haze, rather than the awful majesty of the scene that impressed me. At our feet, far below, a raging flood thundered away down the canyon to the exit in the misty distance. On our left the line of the cataract, plunging into the swirling spray beneath, was clearly visible for some way out with its white avalanches and cascading spray, and then gradually became less distinct in the thin haze until at last far off beyond Livingstone island it disappeared from our vision in the luminous pearl-like mist that formed the background to all the landscape."

"On our right, facing the cataract, loomed the 500 foot high wall of the canyon, topped by the lush green Rain forest with its ever dripping branches. And as we looked new wonders became gradually revealed to our wondering gaze. I began to perceive in nooks of the black precipices halfway down strange plants growing, as in happy confidence their fragile rainbow hued blossoms ever shaking in the wind and driving spray, but safe and unharmed amid this eternal storm. And down the black cliff wall on my right I saw hundreds of tiny white streamlets pouring, formed by the returning spray from the Rain forest. And as I watched them I discovered a strange thing.

"These falling streams never reached the bottom of the chasm. They dropped into little cascades to about a third of the way down, and then, as if defying the laws of gravity, they literally turned round and came back again, mounting vertically. It was curious to see these cascades, after breaking into spray, appear to hesitate and falter and then begin to rise, first slowly, but soon rapidly, shooting upward in whirling foam columns and feathery fountains, being carried up by the fitful blasts of cold air that the dropping cataract forced out of the narrow chasm into which it thundered."

The Time of Day.
Strictly speaking, the word "morning," which first meant the time of day dawn and then the early part of the day, is now confined to the time between midnight and midday, or noon. But it has long been usual in society to apply the term to the whole of the day before dinner. So long ago as April 16, 1796, the Hull Advertiser gave the information that "the Duke of Devonshire took a morning's ride before dinner yesterday at 7 o'clock in the afternoon." "Noon," too, once had a floating meaning, but is now definitely 12 midday. But at first it meant the ninth hour—that is, 9 o'clock in the day, the time of reciting the "nones" in the Roman Catholic church. As the hour for this office fluctuated, so did the meaning of "noon," which might be any time between midday and 3. And finally the word assumed its present limited significance. It was dinner time, the most important moment of the day to an Englishman.—London Chronicle.

Not Always Orange Blossoms.
Only in England, France and America is the orange blossom the bridal flower. When the German bride becomes a frau her head is garlanded with myrtle, except in certain sections, where gaudy wreaths of artificial flowers replace the natural blooms and are treasured from generation to generation.

In Italy and the French cantons of Switzerland white roses are dedicated to the brides as well as the dead, but in Spain red roses and pinks lend an additional touch of color to the bridal dress of black and yellow.

Greek brides are garlanded, appropriately enough, with vine leaves, and in Bohemia rosemary is supposed to bring luck to the bride who wears it.

In most of the countries of Europe, however, the bridal wreath is considered as essential as the veil, and pretty sentiment clusters about the faded wreath that is laid away, whether the wreath be of orange blossoms or hazel.

The Month of August.
Few persons know why August has thirty-one days. July, which takes its name from Julius Caesar, has thirty-one days, and Augustus, who completed the calendar, declined to submit to the indignity of seeing his own month branded with the inferiority of one day less. The astronomers had accordingly reshuffle the lunar cards, and, after some perplexity, hit upon the expedient of shearing twenty-four hours from February's glory in order that August might face the world on a footing of perfect equality with July.

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is my baby girl, now two weeks old," writes Mrs. J. Priest, of Webster City, Iowa. "She is a fine healthy babe and we are both doing nicely. I am still taking Cardui, and would not be without it in the house."

BABES IN THE WOOD.

A Seventeenth Century Incident in the State of Maine.

In 1679 James Adams of York became acquainted with one of his neighbors, Henry Simpson, and determined to avenge himself upon two of Simpson's children, whose ages were six and nine years. In a solitary place four or five miles from the dwelling houses of the inhabitants he built of logs beside a ledge of perpendicular rocks a pen or pound several feet high, with walls inclined inward from bottom to top. After he had built this he decoyed the children into the woods under a pretense of searching for birds' nests and caused them to enter within

the pound, where he left them conned to perish. The place has since been called the Devil's invention.

The children were soon missed, and the alarmed inhabitants searched for them more than forty-eight hours. The boys, when aware of their wretched situation, made various attempts to get out, and at length, by digging away with their hands the surface of the earth underneath one of the bottom logs, effected their escape. They wandered in the woods three days, being at last attracted to the seashore by the noise of the surf, where they were found.

The depraved criminal was condemned to have thirty stripes well laid on, to pay the father of the children £5, the treasurer £10, besides fees and charges of the prison, and remain a close prisoner during the court's pleasure or till further order. The same month he recognized before two of the judges, "conditioned to send him, within twenty-one days, out of the jurisdiction."

GENTLEMEN OF ENGLAND.

How Their Claims Were Established in the Middle Ages.

A curious meeting was held in Lyons on Jan. 4, 1696. The royal commissioners solemnly sat in council to decide the question if lawyers and doctors could be regarded as gentlemen. It proved too hard a problem for the wise heads, and the doctors and lawyers themselves were summoned to prove their right to gentility. The matter was settled to the satisfaction of the professional parties.

In the middle ages of England heralds went through the counties to examine into the claims of landholders to be called gentlemen. There is an interesting list of the disqualified, and one reads today the shame of a certain Thomas Robbins who failed to establish the title and was writ among the ignominious. Charles Anselmi, a representative of one of the oldest families, is registered as "unfit to be styled a gentleman, although worth not more than £2000."

Brooke, an old writer, has given the world his opinion of what constitutes a gentleman, and his definition has never been excelled:
"The character, or, rather, quality, of a gentleman does not in any degree depend on fashion or mode or state or opinion; neither does it change with customs, climates or ages. But, as the spirit of God alone can inspire it, so it is that quality of heart which is the same yesterday, today and forever."

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