

DEEP SEA DIVERS.

Death Always Hovers Round Them While They Toil.

PERILS THEY HAVE TO FACE.

The Awful Pressure of Water and Air That May Bury or Burst Them—The Helmet Telephone a Wonderful Aid in Work and in Times of Danger.

It is surprising to learn how many uses there are for divers. The navy, of course, employs many to set submarine mines and torpedoes and to attend to investigations of the condition of ships' bottoms. Bridge construction companies use them, as do those who build dams, waterworks and reservoirs. Waterworks in large cities keep a diver on their staff constantly. Wrecking companies need their services, and the profession of underriver tunneling makes many demands on the time and skill of the man in armor.

Since Simonon in 1779 designed a pump to supply air to the diving bell little real improvement in the art has been made, save in detail of helmet and clothes, until the invention of the telephone. The greatest advance ever made in the art, divers will tell you, is the combination of the telephone with the diving suit. Before its advent divers had to depend entirely upon pulleys on the life line for communication with the surface and upon signs to each other when under water if two wished to communicate. Today the modern diving helmet is equipped with a telephone, and the diver can not only hear what is said to him from the surface, advise those in charge of his pump as to whether the air is "coming right" or not, but he can communicate to a brother diver and hear the instructions sent to him from the surface, all of which facilities are of great assistance in the work.

At first thought it may not seem so difficult a thing, this going down under water and breathing air sent in from a pump by a tube. But the physical drawbacks to the work are enormous. For every ten feet a diver descends he sustains an additional pressure of four and a half pounds over every square inch of his body. What this means may be better understood when considering the greatest depth ever made by a diver—204 feet. His body at that depth sustained a pressure of eighty-eight and a half pounds to the square inch over and above the fifteen pounds always sustained when in the air.

Divers must descend very slowly, swallowing as they go; otherwise they may bleed at the nose and ears and even lose consciousness. And they must ascend even more slowly than they descend, particularly when coming from great depths; otherwise they may literally burst from internal air pressure. At the least, too sudden a rise may cause an attack of that terrible disease known to tunnel workers called caisson disease, or the bends, in which air gets into the tissues under pressure and causes the most extreme torture.

The diver, getting ready to descend, clothes himself in very heavy underwear of guernsey or flannel, the drawers well secured to prevent slipping, and adds a pair of heavy woolen socks. If the water be cold two such suits may be worn. If the depth be so negotiated is great cotton soaked with oil is put in the ears or a heavy woolen cap pulled down over them. Shoulder pads, if worn to take the weight of the helmet, are next tied on, after which the diver wriggles into his heavy suit of rubber and canvas. Next come the inner collar and the breast-plate, which are secured with clamps to the rubber dress, the utmost care being taken in this operation not to tear or pinch the rubber. Finally the shoes are fitted on and the rubber gloves clamped to rings in the sleeves.

The helmet is the last to go on, and never before the valves and telephone have been tested. The attendants start to pump as the helmet is clamped home. The helmet is attached to the pump with a rubber tube, which is canvas and wire protected. No diver descends, after the helmet is put on, until he has tested the outfit and found that his air supply is sufficient and the pump working properly.

He is supplied with a life line, with which he can signal should his telephone get out of order and by which he may be drawn to the surface should he become helpless for any reason. He must take great care when walking about on the bottom not to foul his life line or his air tube and for this reason must always retrace his steps exactly to his starting point if he has gone into a wreck or about any obstructions. For the same reason two divers working together must be careful not to cross each other's path.

Sometimes the life line may become so entangled in wreckage that it must be cut, and then there is danger of the diver not finding his way back to his boat or float, especially if the bottom is muddy and fouts the "seeing." But the greatest danger of all, of course, is that the tube be cut or the diver faint. In either case he is in desperate straits. If the man handling the life line "feels" anything wrong he will haul the diver up willy nilly and regardless of the severe bleeding at nose and ears which will result from too rapid a rise to the surface. But if the diver be inside a wreck or if his life line gets tangled in wreckage such hauling would do no good. It is in situations like these that the slender connecting link of telephone wire means so much to the men who risk their lives far beneath the surface of the water.—Scientific American.

CORDED A CROCODILE.

Turning a Greedy Water Devil into a Trussed Up Mummy.

It is known that a crocodile will sometimes leave a river stocked with food, explore for miles an unsuitable tributary, then wander inland until it finds a pool.

In this way three crocodiles once found their way to Taiping lake, in the Malay peninsula. So long as they confined their attention to the fish and an occasional duck no one objected to their presence, but when one of them began to take sheep off the bank as they came down to drink it was felt that the saurians ought to be exterminated, and an Englishman and his servant made the attempt.

Obtaining a dugout, they paddled into deep water. The servant was already barefoot, and the Englishman himself took off shoes and stockings, so that his bare feet might have as good a hold as possible on the smooth bottom of the canoe. A bait was attached to a heavy rattan, and soon a tug and a plunge indicated that the crocodile was fast to one end. Immediately the canoe began to move through the water. After a protracted struggle the Englishman managed to get the crocodile within a few yards of the canoe. At one moment the open jaws would surge out of the broken water and snap together in unpleasant proximity to the men's legs; the next moment the heavy tail would swing free of the water and with the weight of a falling pole would hit the side of the canoe a blow that made it shiver.

As the crocodile surged close to the canoe and the open mouth appeared above the water the servant slipped a noose of stout cord over the upper jaw and pulled it tight some six inches behind the point of its nostrils. Then, with a quick turn of his wrist, he slipped the slack of the cord round under the lower jaw. He drew the cord tight, and the teeth of each jaw pressed home into the sockets of the other. The servant now grasped the point of the long, narrow head with one hand and with the other rapidly wound the cord round the clinched mouth.

Another noose was slipped over a fore leg. It pulled the leg up to the animal's side. The servant slipped the line over the creature's back and caught up the other fore leg. Then he noosed and tied together the hind legs. The effect he had achieved was wonderful. In a few minutes he had transformed a ravenous water devil into a trussed up mummy, and his only weapon had been three pieces of box cord.

The beast was afterward dispatched, and the servant received the government reward.—Harper's Weekly.

EYE OF THE CAMERA.

Washed Out Blood Stains Cannot Escape the Ultra Violet Rays.

Even before it had been adapted exclusively, by means of special lens construction and combination, to the reception of the invisible ultra violet rays, the camera eye, owing to its peculiar sensitiveness to this light, has played a strikingly dramatic role on various occasions. One of these occurred a few years ago in Lausanne, Switzerland.

It appears that a handkerchief formed an exhibit at a murder trial and was regarded as a crucial bit of evidence. The closest inspection failed to reveal a stain on the immanently white cloth even with the aid of a powerful microscope. But it occurred to a professor of Lausanne university to photograph the handkerchief, when the image obtained clearly disclosed the presence of great splashes, or, rather, of what had been such, showing ghostlike in the carefully washed fabric. The photograph proved the turning point of the trial, and the result was conviction.

Blood, as was scientifically explained at the time, happens to be one of the substances that absorb ultra violet rays, and when any of these substances have found their way to a receptive surface no amount of erasing or cleansing can hide its presence from the camera eye. When the latter is equipped to utilize only this invisible light the result is much more marked. Should the neatest erasure be made in writing done with substances specially absorbent of the rays the ultra violet photograph would show the traces of the erasure as plainly as the writing itself.—New York Tribune.

Follows Instructions.

The father of a small family tells us this one:

"My wife instructed our little boy when he was invited out to lunch the other day that when he was asked to have a second helping of cake he should refuse. 'You must say, 'No, I thank you, I've had enough,' said she. 'And don't you forget it.'"

"He didn't. When asked if he'd have some more cake he said, 'No, I thank you, I've had enough, and don't you forget it!'"—Toledo Blade.

Men Are So Uncertain.

"Why did you jilt that man who wanted to marry you?" "Because," replied the prima donna, "I couldn't decide whether he was in love with me or merely wanted to hear me sing for nothing."—Exchange.

He Got It.

Teacher—Willie, give me a sentence in which the term book and eye is used. Willie—Me an' pa went fishin'. Pa told me t' bait me book an' I did.—Baltimore American.

A Fine Voice.

Smith—Your wife has a fine voice. Jones—Yes, one of the best in the world; otherwise it would have been worn out several years ago.

WOMAN AND WOE.

Old Age in India Invariably Blends the Two Into One.

"I have seen women under a burning midday sun reaping in the fields," says a writer on India; "I have seen them at roadmaking in the streets of cities; I have seen them loading engines with coal at railway stations; I have seen them in long procession on the white roads of the plains carrying great burdens on their heads like a string of camels. And I have seen also in the eyes of every old woman whom I have encountered, every one of them, such misery, adversity and angry bitterness as seemed to curse the very air of heaven. I have not seen one happy old woman in the whole country."

"Women follow through the village like a dog at the husband's heel. Maternity is no excuse for the task in the field and the duties of the house. They are servants without wages and without liberty to select another master. Before them is perpetual servitude, and if they are so abandoned by the gods as to reach old age their certain destiny is misery, dejection, friendliness and black despair. I never knew all the meaning of the word woe until I looked into the face of an old woman under an Asian sky."

"The women folk of the upper classes in India, speaking generally, are more the prisoners of their husbands than the women of the helot castes. They do not labor except in cooking and serving the meals of their husbands, but they are cut off from the world as completely as a nun; they do not even know, in many cases, the male relations of their husbands. They are little more than caged animals taught to do a few household tricks."—Chicago News.

COOKING A HEDGEHOG.

Bake It In Clay Into a Solid Mass and Carve It With an Ax.

When a Maine Indian has the choice of a hedgehog, a skunk, a woodchuck and a muskrat for dinner he will select the first named invariably and take the skunk as second choice, leaving the woodchuck, which is the only one of the lot a Maine white man will taste, to the last. Unlike the skunk and the woodchuck, which are lean and unsavory except for a few months in the fall, or the muskrat, which is never fat and which has a strong flavor in spite of parboiling, the hedgehog is always in edible condition and has meat that is as tender and white as that of a spring chicken.

The method of cooking a hedgehog is so simple that a novice can learn in one short lesson. When the epicure is permitted to make a choice he should shun the large old males, which at times weigh thirty or forty pounds. The preparation consists in removing the viscera, washing out the interior and filling the cavity with slices of fat pork, peeled raw potatoes, sprigs of spearmint and wild celery from the brook.

Then, without removing the quills or skinning, the body is plastered thickly with wet clay from the nearest bank. The muddy, bulky mass is thrust into live coals and covered with blazing fagots to be roasted for two hours. On removal from the coals, the clay is found to have baked into a hard and solid mass, which must be broken open with an ax or a heavy stone, whereupon the skin and quills of the animal cling to the clay wrapping and fall away, leaving the clean white meat ready to be eaten.—New York Herald.

A Bridge of Ants.

A species of ants which spin silk is common in hot countries. The ants nest in trees, binding the leaves together to make their nests. The silk used for this purpose is not secreted by the adult ants, but by the larvae. In order to attach the silken threads and draw the leaves together the ants must carry the larvae about from leaf to leaf. When two distant leaves are to be drawn together a remarkable method is employed. Five or six ants form a chain bridging the gap between the leaves, each gripping the waist of another in its mandibles. A number of such chains will co-operate in bringing two leaves together.

A Legend of Lace.

According to Melchior de Vogue, the legend of lace is as follows: A Venetian sailor gave his ladylove a frond of seaweed to keep him in memory while at sea. But the girl found that the seaweed was rapidly drying up and disappearing. So she caught the fine branches and leaves of the plant with thread against a piece of linen and, working on, with her thoughts following her lover, invented lace.

Force of Habit.

He was an old merchant who had built up a big business by advertising. "John," said his wife, "what do you want on your tombstone?" "Oh," he answered, "it isn't very important what the text is so long as it gets good space and is well displayed."—London Telegraph.

Keeps It Well.

Nell—Don't you think Miss Antique keeps her age remarkably well? Belle—Sure. She never gives it away.—Philadelphia Record.

Tragic.

What is more tragic than to forget on "the morning after" that convincing excuse you gave the night before?—Lippincott's.

So much is a man worth as he esteems himself.—Rabelais.



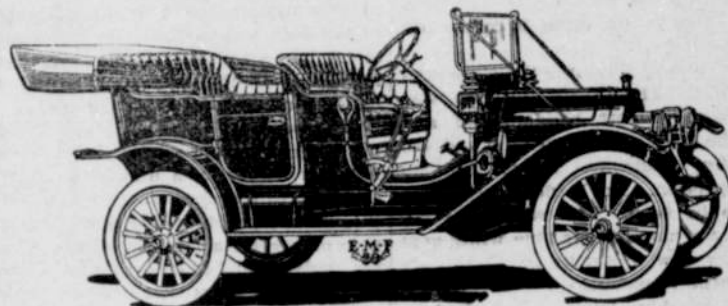
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