

IN PERIL IN THE AIR.

Feelings That Occupied an Aeronaut's Mind During a Sudden Fall.

"There is some kind of a fatality pursuing me," remarked Professor Bartholomew to a reporter. "First, Cole was hurt, by his own folly, however, in monkeying on his parachute when he was coming down; then Hogan was killed; Miss Carmo drops within ten feet of an unfathomable abyss of mud in a sulphur marsh, and today I have met a man who witnessed the most narrow escape from death I ever had. "The incident referred to occurred two years ago at Terre Haute, Ind. I shall never forget my experience on that day. A number of outsiders held the ropes of the balloon while it was being inflated, and one of the men amused himself by tying a big knot in his gny. I did not realize the danger from that knot until it came near being the cause of my death. My ascent was unusually high on that day, and it was the means of saving my life. "I straddled the bar of my parachute and launched myself off. I felt the cord which held the parachute to the balloon snap, and a second later there was another 'ting' from above. I looked up and there was that knot on the gny swung around six of the parachute cords, forming a nest a half hith as you ever saw in your life and holding me to the balloon. You have noticed that there is a weight attached to the top of the balloon which turns the bag upside down as it is released of the weight of the aeronaut. "The gny rope, which was half hitched around the strings of my parachute, was also fastened to the top of the balloon, and the latter turned up and began discharging the hot air instantly as I jumped. The air escaped gradually, and of course my parachute descended very gradually at first and not inflating. "Down I kept coming, the gny rope preventing the parachute from inflating, and I gave myself up as lost; I wound my legs around the ropes of the parachute trapeze and shut my teeth. The speed commenced to be fearfully accelerated, and I was sure that I had to die, but I was cool and retained my senses. "Soon the balloon had emptied itself and commenced flapping its huge tail in the air with awful swishes. The balloon weighed over 200 pounds, and was also pulled down by the 60 pound sand bag. It came down past me, and as the knotted gny rope slipped down the lines the parachute opened with such a fierce snap that it seemed as if the ropes which supported me would give way. The spreading of the parachute saved my life, for the 200 pound balloon kept on down and broke the six cords held captive by the gny rope as if they had been pack threads. It takes a long time to tell the story, but it all happened in half a minute. I was within 400 feet of the ground when the balloon tore away, but my fall was checked and I landed all right. "Everybody thought I was a goner that day, and a more excited crowd than had gathered around where I was to have fallen you never saw. There is no mistake about my being scared that day, but I foiled my parachute and balloon as coolly as if nothing had happened and went to bed for the remainder of the week."—Detroit Free Press.

Papyrus Books.

Early writers made use of linen or cotton fabrics, of skins and even of scales of fishes for writing. For a long period papyrus was used, the books being made in rolls, being about 1 1/2 feet wide and sometimes fifty feet long. Papyrus was a flag, or bulrush, growing eight or ten feet high, found in the marshes of Egypt; from its inner pith the form of paper called papyrus was made. Papyrus sheets were neatly joined, attached to a stick and rolled upon it (whence we have our word "volume," from the Latin *volvere*, to roll). The titles were written on tags attached to the sticks or inscribed on the outside of the rolls. The rolls were kept in round wooden boxes resembling the old fashioned bandboxes, and could easily be carried about.—C. A. Lynde in St. Nicholas.

An Accidental Cure.

A gentleman was suffering from an ulcerated sore throat, which finally became so swollen that his life was despaired of. When his household came to his bedside to bid him farewell, each person grasped his hand for a moment and then, turning, went out weeping. A pet ape, which had modestly waited till the last, then advanced, and grasping his master's hand for a minute, also turned and walked away with his hands to his eyes. "This assumption of deep grief, which it is hardly possible the animal could have really felt, was so ludicrous in its perfection that the sick man was seized with an uncontrollable fit of laughter, which broke the ulcer in his throat, whereby his life was saved.—American Notes and Queries.

The Easiest Language to Acquire.

Probably the easiest European language is Italian, not so much on account of its analogies with Latin as because of its hometic character and the simplicity of its rules. And after Italian, in the order of ease, the present writer would be induced to place Spanish.—Boston Herald.

EASILY TERRIFIED.

A Peculiar Weapon Used to Subdue a Very Wicked Maine Citizen.

Colonel Joe Peaks, of Dover, tells a good story about an incident that enveloped his early law practice. John Fuller was once sheriff in Penobscot county. Afterward he was colonel of the Sixth Maine, and he was first in the ranks of the great unfrightened all the way through.

One day in the epoch when Fuller was sheriff a writ of replevin was placed in his hands. It was to be served upon the Tufts—that's as good a name as any. Now the Tufts lived away out in a lonely district, and they were wicked citizens from the word go.

This writ of replevin was called out by a horse trade in which the Tufts had robbed a man of a good beast under pretense of trading. Fuller was expected to go over to the Tufts' stronghold and bring away that horse.

Colonel Peaks was a young lawyer in those days and he was not surprised when Fuller drove around and asked for his company upon a short business trip. After they had gone a short distance Peaks asked:

"Where are you going, Fuller?" "Over to old Tufts. Going to replevin a horse." "Don't you expect to have trouble?" "Lots of it."

It was not encouraging, but there was no backing out. When they drove into the Tufts' dooryard a supernatural hush brooded over everything. House and barn were closed and no one was in sight. Said Fuller:

"Now, Joe, turn the horse around and be ready to start on short notice when I come out of the stable. I expect to have to hurry this thing just a little."

The sheriff jumped over the wheel and made for the barn. He managed to get the door open and disappeared. In a moment there came the tramping of a horse and Fuller appeared at the tieup door leading the animal. At the same moment, too, a brawny Tuft came bursting through the kitchen door and ran savagely toward the sheriff.

"What in splittery blankeration yer dunn with that horse?" "I've got a writ of replevin and I'm going to take him."

"Are ha-a-h?" "Stand back, Tuft, and let me pass or I won't answer for the consequences," gritted Fuller, and as he spoke he drew an ominous looking weapon from his breast pocket and pointed the muzzle at Tuft. The latter dodged back and then danced in helpless rage, swearing with most tremendous and diverting energy. In an instant Fuller was in the carriage and off, towing the disputed horse behind. Old Tuft was left yelling and throwing rocks. At the first hill they struck Fuller commenced to laugh and kick the dashboard.

"What on earth are you laughing at?" said Peaks, "I'm blessed if I saw anything comical about that scrape. Without a word Fuller passed over the weapon that had so terrified old Tuft. It was a morocco pipe case!—Lewiston Journal.

The Sea Cucumber.

Among the curious animals which inhabit the sea we may take the holothuria or sea cucumber, so called from its resemblance to the cucumber. When this animal is attacked by an enemy it does not stand up and fight, but by a sudden movement it ejects its teeth, stomach, digestive apparatus, and nearly all its intestines, and then shrivels its body up to almost nothing. When, however, the danger is past, the animal commences to replace the organs which it has voluntarily parted with, and in a short time the animal is as perfect as ever it was. Dr. Johnstone kept one in water for a long time and one day he forgot to change the water. The creature in consequence ejected its intestines and shriveled up, but when the water was changed, all its organs were reproduced. Although the animal is not eaten in Europe, it is a favorite with the Chinese, and the fishing forms an important part of the industry of the east. Thousands of junks are annually used in fishing for trepan, as the animals are called.—London Tit-Bits.

Itinerant Photographers.

The photographer of the poor and humble used to be a man who ran a gallery on wheels. In New York he is now a man who works the back streets very much after the fashion of an organ grinder. He pays no rent. He plants his camera in front of a small butcher shop or shoe shop or notion store. Then his assistant goes in and strikes a bargain. To protest that no picture is wanted does no good. The man takes it anyhow, saying, as a last resort, that it won't cost anything. In a couple of days the finished pictures come around, and "if you want them you can have them for a quarter."—St. Nicholas.

Perhaps in four cases out of five the quarter is forthcoming. A smart butcher wagon or a vain grocer's driver, a nice truck team or a brace of mules or a pet dog, they all come within this stealing photographer's business. And on good days he picks up a neat sum of money.—New York Herald.

A Botantizing Outfit.

In starting out on a collecting trip one should provide himself with a good hand lens of rather high power, a pocket knife, some wrapping paper and string, and either a portfolio or a tin collecting box, according to whether it is desired to press the plants in the field or after return to quarters. One should also carry some envelopes and a few pill boxes.—Washington Star.

English Monarchy on Its Good Behavior.

The monarchy is accepted by the vast majority of Englishmen without any strong enthusiasm for it, but without any desire to put an end to it. The onward march of democracy will sweep away the house of lords and the established church; it will concentrate power even more than is now the case in the house of commons; while, by the payment of the members of that house, it will convert it from an assembly of plutocrats into one more directly in harmony with the people.

But the monarchy is likely to survive these changes. Its abolition is not within the area of practical politics, nor will it be so long as those who have at heart its continuance are wise in their generation. The monarchy has devoted adherents among the upper classes on account of its social aspect, the middle classes like it because they have a notion that it is respectable; the artisans and the agricultural laborers have grievances that touch them more closely, and a change from a monarchy to a republic would not so directly benefit them as the removal of these grievances.

At radical gatherings, while I have never observed any ardent desire to sing "God Save the Queen," I have never heard any desire expressed to substitute a republic for our present system. Were a parliamentary candidate to address an electoral meeting on the advantages of a republic, he would be deemed a tilter at a windmill, and he would be requested to favor his hearers with his views upon more practical and more immediate issues.—Henry Labouchere in Forum.

The Herb of Prophecy.

Another remarkable plant has recently been added to the long list of botanical curiosities, M. Carrera, deputy of Oaxaca, having taken to the City of Mexico a plant which is known to grow only in Mixteco, called the "herb of prophecy" by the natives. Devotees of this weed take it much in the same manner that cocoa leaves are taken by those addicted to the habit. In a few moments after a dose of it has been taken a sleep is produced similar in all respects to, and it might be said identical with, the hypnotic state. When under its influence the sleeper is completely insensible, but will answer with closed eyes all questions put to him.

It is further said of this wonderful plant that the pathologic state induced on whomsoever partakes of the herb brings with it a kind of prophetic gift and second sight. One who has taken this herb loses his will even more completely than does the person who is in the hypnotic state, and is so thoroughly under the control of any voice that he would shoot or stab himself at any moment if commanded to do so. When one regains his senses after being under the influence of the "prophetic herb" he remembers nothing of what he has done when in the trance.—St. Louis Republic.

The Policy of the Astor Family.

The wealth of the Astors is remarkable for the way in which it has been kept intact, and for the steady and considerably rapid augmentation which is continually taking place. The elder Astor made a mint of money out of the fur trade, and would have continued in that business, but he found that investment in real estate was vastly more profitable. The family has steadily adhered to this line of investment through three generations.—Henry Clews in Ladies' Home Journal.

Poetic Comments.

"Architecture," says the poet, is frozen music."

"Humph!" said Chappie. "This hotel must be a lullaby. Everybody's so sleepy here."—Harper's Bazar.

A Gold Bound Book.

In the Jewel House of the Tower of London is a book bound in gold and enamel, clasped with a ruby. On one side is a cross of diamonds with other diamonds around it. On the other a flower-de-luce in diamonds and the arms of England. The book is enriched with small rubies and emeralds.—St. Nicholas.

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