

FIGHT WITH EAGLES.

A SIGN PAINTER'S THRILLING BATTLE IN MID-AIR.

Was Suspended Over the Side of a Nine-Hundred-Foot Precipice, Descending the Landscape With a Patent Medicine Advertisement, When Attacked.

Many struggling young artists can tell hard luck stories and tales of trials and tribulations innumerable, but as far as is known there is only one in Chicago who once had to wield his paint brush with one hand while he fought eagles with the other. Moreover, this was while the artist was suspended in a basket 125 feet down the perpendicular face of a precipice, which was 840 feet from top to bottom. Frank J. Van Ness, who is now a portrait painter in Chicago, was the artist who had this unusual experience. Mr. Van Ness says he is not likely to forget the first and only sign he ever painted. It was while putting a patent medicine advertisement on the face of a precipice in the Adirondack mountains that he made his too intimate acquaintance with a colony of American eagles.



A BATTLE WITH EAGLES IN MID-AIR.

"My adventure in the Adirondacks occurred several years ago," said Mr. Van Ness, "but I remember it just as well now as if it were only yesterday. I had gone to Keene Center, a little town in the mountains of Western New York, with a friend to do some sketching from nature. One day there came to the little hotel where we were stopping, the agent of a well-known patent medicine company. He was accompanied by two sign painters, and we were informed that these two men were going to paint a sign on the face of a precipice about 800 feet high, which was located about half way between Keene Center and Westport. The agent took them out to the precipice. They took one glance down the 840 feet of perpendicular rock and absolutely refused to go down the face of the mountains to paint the advertisement. The medicine man came back to the hotel, bearing the men and wishing he could find somebody who would tackle the job. I told him I would do it if he

could make sufficient inducement.

"The agent offered me \$300 and we each posted a forfeit of \$50. The two painters who declined to make the descent agreed to handle the ropes in letting me down, and as soon as I was ready we made our way to the precipice. I looked over the ledge, and I'll acknowledge the prospect was pretty scary. About 200 or 300 feet down there were projecting ledges, and here and there on the ledges bald eagles had their nests. And they were good big eagles, too—none of your owl size. "The men tied strong ropes to the spruce trees growing at the top of the precipice and the other ends of the ropes were tied to a big basket into which I climbed with my buckets of paint. Then they dropped the basket over the cliff and let me slowly down until I was about 125 feet from the top. My basket hadn't any more than stopped in its descent when the birds set up a terrific racket far down below me. They screamed and screamed as if they were holding a terrible indignation meeting. I watched them for a minute or two, but as they didn't appear to be figuring on committing assault and battery I dipped the big whitewash brush I was using into the paint and started to work. A minute or two later I thought I heard a swish in the air, and looking up I saw a big eagle, that looked about the size of an ostrich swooping down on me. He was so close that I didn't have time to grab either my club or revolver. I made a pass at him with my big brush as he came down. I hit him a kind of a glancing lick and I think I got a little paint in his eye or his mouth, for he sat down on a ledge for a minute and made queer motions with his head as if he were trying to get the paint out of his eye or mouth.

"Then another eagle came to his assistance and the two began gyrating around in my neighborhood in a manner that I didn't like. I dropped my paint brush and went to hunting, so to speak. I shot at them a time or two, but didn't seem to do much damage. Again one of them flew above me, and, folding his wings to his sides, came down with a swoop. If he intended to hit me squarely, his aim wasn't any better than mine. I shot at him and missed, and he opened a wing that knocked my hat off as he shot past me. Then the other one came at me with a scream of rage. But, as good luck would have it, I blazed away with my revolver and hit him, and he few back wounded to the family below. None of the eagles came very close after that, but I kept up an intermittent firing to let them know that I proposed to hold the fort."

In the Good Old Days.

A local history of Cumberland avers that at Kirton-le-Moor, in 1797, a man and his wife, and thirty children, might have been seen proceeding to church to the christening of the thirty-first child.

Hawaii's Population.

The population of Hawaii consists of 109,000 persons, of whom 31,000 are natives, 24,000 Japanese, 22,000 Chinese, 15,000 Portuguese, 8,000 half-breeds and a few hundred Americans, English and Germans.

A MYSTERY OF WAR.

THE UNANSWERED CHALLENGE AND ITS INEVITABLE TRAGEDY.

A Mere Incident in the Terrible Drama, Yet a Striking Example of the Indifference to Human Life That Warfare Begets—Walked Blindly to His Death.

It was a soft and beautiful night. The moonlight had about it that hazy appearance betokening rain in a few days and seemingly spreading a soft film over the surrounding objects. A delicious languor was in the air, while the katydids chirping their shrill notes answered one to another in the sojourn trees. The colonel was evidently in a reflective mood. His face and attitude of thought there in the moonlight were studious, and at length rousing himself from his lethargy, he said:

"My mind has been busy with the scenes of other days. I am reminded to-night of an incident of the war in which I took part. It occurred while I was with the army in Tennessee. There was a crisp coldness in the atmosphere, however, while the snow upon the ground made it seem almost as bright as day. The pickets had been doubled, and my companion and I, who were on picket duty together, had our coats buttoned tightly about the neck. Strict silence had been enjoined, as the two armies were facing each other in close proximity, and we were ordered to keep a sharp lookout at our post, which was an important one. We did not walk any beat, but simply stood in the shadow of the trees, having strict orders to shoot anyone approaching who did not answer the first hail."

"After standing thus for a long time we perceived the dim outline of a figure approaching from the direction in which the enemy were engaged. Drawing back still further into the shadow of the trees, we awaited the coming of the soldier, for such we now perceived him to be. He was walking in a leisurely manner, seemingly unconscious of any impending danger of his venturing too far beyond his own lines. He stepped as carelessly as if taking a stroll, and had now approached quite close to where we were posted.

"Halt!" exclaimed my companion in a clear ringing voice, "who goes there?" while there was an ominous click of his gun, and I also made ready, but there was no answer to the challenge and the man continued to advance directly towards us. My companion's gun went to his shoulder, and I saw his face work convulsively in the moonlight, and in a low but distinct voice he again exclaimed "Halt!" but there was still no response and the man continued his even stride. A bright trail of fire sprang from my companion's gun and our strange visitor fell dead, his blood reddening the snow. There in the moonlight we looked upon his calm features and upon his limbs stiffening in death, and the picket said as he leaned upon his rifle:

"I am sorry I had to do it but it couldn't be helped, and then resumed his position.

"Some home had doubtless been de-

stated by that shot, and we know not how many hearts were saddened, but it was one of the exigencies of war. A man became accustomed to many things, but it was a great deal easier to shoot a man while in the heat of battle than when one had time to reflect that he was taking life. We could never determine whether the man who was killed was deaf, walking in his sleep, very absent-minded or crazy. It was one of the sad mysteries of war-times, and we did not have time to pay much attention to such matters then."

A Scorpion's Bouquet.

A scorpion carrying a flower is the curious sight seen not long ago by an Aden correspondent of Nature. The flower was a large blossom of what is locally known as the white-gold moutree tree, and the creature held it over its back by one claw, curling up its tail to assist. The nearest tree from which the flower could have been obtained was thirty feet away, with two or three steps and a low stone parapet intervening. This fact seems to prove that the scorpion carried the flower through intention, though whether for concealment, to shield itself from the bright lamplight, or for some other purpose, is unknown. Scorpions are not known to feed on vegetable substances nor to construct nests.

His Daughter is a Mystery.

J. F. Bell, of Goose Creek township, N. C. says he has a daughter seventeen years old who has never spoken to him. She talks with the other members of the family, but refuses to talk to him, yet her parental affection toward him seems to be as great or greater than that of his other children. She frequently goes with him away from home on a visit and listens to him talk, but never returns a word or answers a question for him. Her mental faculties are as good as the average and she is to an extent educated, can read and write. Mr. Bell does not claim to understand the case himself.

The Puffer Pipes.

One of the most remarkable kleptomaniacs on record is an old Frenchman named Bide whose passion for smoking has impelled her to pilfer pipes from Parisian shops with such industry that no fewer than 2,600 were found in her lodgings. All were meerschaums, and thirty-nine were well colored.

Night Blindness.

Night blindness is a peculiar affection of the eye in which the patient sees well during the day, but becomes blind as night approaches. It is mostly met with in warm climates, and usually gives way to mild treatment.

The Purest Water.

The purest water in the world is said to be that of the small Swedish river Loka, which in 100,000 parts, contains only 434 parts of mineral substances.

Value of a Farthing.

It takes four farthings to make a penny, but the intrinsic value of the penny is less than that of the farthing.

THE ASTOR KITCHEN.

IT CONTAINS EVERY POSSIBLE AID TO CULINARY PERFECTION.

The Wife of New York's Richest Man is a Model Housekeeper and She Has Displayed Positive Genius in the Arrangement of Her Kitchen.

Not the least attractive apartment in the modern house is the kitchen, and if the house happens to be the home of a millionaire, this room, although it may not be hung with rare tapestry, as was the kitchen of Mme. de Montpensier, is more than attractive; it is fascinating.

At least this is the case in the Astor, Vanderbilt and Gould mansions, where the coffers, skillets and ironware alone are almost objects of art. Take the new house of Mrs. Jack Astor, on upper 5th avenue, New York city, for instance. The kitchen, with its suite of rooms, occupies nearly the whole of a large basement. There is the kitchen proper, the scullery, the vegetable room, the bread and pastry room and a small sanatorium for the cook—where menus can be studied and arranged, and conferences held with the maids.

To begin with the floor—the scullery maids are down on their knees every morning, often as early as 4 o'clock, giving it a scrubbing which makes it shine like a waxed floor. Above the wainscoting of tiles the walls are painted a dull gray to harmonize with the color of the tiles. Perhaps the most conspicuous furnishings of the room are the brightly burnished copper of every conceivable shape and size. The roasting-pans and frying-pans are enameled, and many of the utensils are nickel if not silver-plated. These, together with porcelain lined saucepans, folding griddles, flesh forks, oyster broilers and larding needles, have hooks and shelves on either side of the range, which is a mammoth affair, divided into compartments—here a place for broiling and there one for roasting. There is a hood above the range to catch odors and an electric fan to carry them off.

In addition to the range is an open fireplace where birds and fowls are roasted, here one sees the old-fashioned, paraphernalia: cranes pot-hooks, spit, skewers, a trivet and a jack.

The oven dressers have glass doors of diamond-shaped panes of glass but the bright particular innovation of this fine-dielectric kitchen is a huge table which stands over against the range. It is a metal table, and constructed in such a way that it can be heated by means of pipes which are laid about the under part of the table, the object of the hot metal table is to serve as a receptacle for the different dishes as they are taken from the fire, that they may not grow cold while undergoing the process—always more or less elaborate—of decoration before being borne forth on costly dishes, by liveried footmen, to the dining-room.

Only the more substantial parts of the dinner are cooked in the kitchen proper, a little room, separated by glazed sliding doors at one side, is the "pastry-room;" this is where the dai-

ties are manufactured; a marble-top pastry table and a hollow glass rolling pin, which can be filled with ice, are features of the pastry-room. Perhaps the most alluring objects are the rows of ramekins and molds for jelly, aspic and puddings; they are of every shape—melons, birds, birds' nests, swans, doves, cornucopias—every form that can be imagined. Gas stoves only are used here.

In the room where the vegetables are prepared are enough knives and vegetable cutters to stock a cutlery establishment. The mill is that part of the kitchen where mills for coffee, pepper, ginger and such things abound. In the Astor establishment coffee is roasted and ground only as it is needed.

The ruling genius of the kitchen and its suite is the chef, under whom is an assistant cook, whose duty it is to keep account of supplies received and to make note of needed articles.

Mrs. Astor generally makes out the menu for the day, although this duty is often delegated to the chef, or even to the assistant. Three kitchen maids and a scullery maid, who presides over the destinies of the scullery, a room scoured in its white paint and tiles, complete this branch of the menage. There are no patent dish-washers, but a white tiled sink, with dish drainers and grooves galore.

Recipe for Toilet Water.

Young ladies are always so anxious to have recipes for making toilet waters that the following should prove acceptable. Take a quarter ounce of attar of roses and mix with one quart of strong spirits of wine. Put these into a close vessel, cork and shake it, then immerse the bottle in a deep basin full of hot water. When the vessel is warmed through, take it out of the water and shake vigorously until cold. Add a teaspoonful of calcined magnesia, shake again and filter, lastly through close muslin. A few drops of this in a basin of water makes a pleasant washing fluid.

Tattoo Marks the Real Thing.

It is considered the real thing abroad for perfect ladies to bear tattoo marks. Queen Olga of Greece has an anchor on her shoulder and Princess Waldemar of Denmark goes her one better, adding a crown to the anchor. An English lady of nobility has a tattooed snake holding its tail in its mouth.

Uncle Sam's Beauty Show.

There are six thousand women employed as clerks in the Government departments in Washington. If you don't think Uncle Sam has any discrimination regarding beauty plus industry, just take a tour through the various public buildings in the capital.

Training the Child.

The peculiarities and wishes of each child should be considered and followed out as nearly as possible so that they may develop according to their natures.

There is no more proper ornament for hall or smoking room or for services of china and silver than the family arms, with the proper quarterings.

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