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SVERDRUP'S EXPEDITION

Changes Suggested by Experience in the Preparations.

A Norwegian proverb says, "The ship that has once seen the sun set on a field of ice, will always return to it." With the Fram this certainly will prove to be the case, for in these days she again sets sail for Polar seas.

Already in the autumn of 1896, shortly after the world had been electrified by the news of the return of Nansen and the Fram, her captain, Otto Sverdrup, began planning a second arctic expedition. Before, however, publicly announcing his intentions, he laid his scheme before English and Scandinavian scientists, and went carefully over his plans with Nansen; the former agreed with him, that were he successful in accomplishing what he intended, the trip would be of great scientific value; the latter naturally fired Sverdrup with his usual enthusiasm and encouragement. Captain Sverdrup had but to suggest his plan to wealthy Norwegians of scientific interests in order instantly to receive promise of such support as to remove all financial obstacles, even should the government not appropriate.

The Fram's first expedition had, of course, shown its captain in which ways she fell short of, as well as surpassed, expectations, and how she bore the very varying stress and strain of polar seas. Although the ship had most admirably withstood the packing and grinding of the ice, as well as internally fulfilled the wants of such an expedition, still Captain Sverdrup had observed several ways in which she could more fully meet requirements.

Remodelling the ship, he thought, might cost about \$5,000, but later he found that it would amount to about \$6,500 in the spring of 1897 a petition, accompanied by a hearty recommendation from Nansen, was laid before the Skorthring, requesting an appropriation of money sufficient to cover the expenses. It was instantly and enthusiastically voted by both Radicals and Conservatives.

The entire cost of the necessary provisions was defrayed by the brothers Ringnaes and Consul Heiberg, and the Fram was ready and transformed early this spring.

With Nansen meeting success, after having sailed out in the face of so much criticism and scepticism, Sverdrup found it unnecessary to explain his intentions or support his views in order to gain confidence or belief. The course of his trip is in the main as follows: First, to creep along the western coast of Greenland, through Sverdrup's Sound and the Kennedy and Robinson Straits, to the northwestern coast, and from there out into Lincoln's Sea, well known from Markham's voyage in 1876. Sverdrup hopes to reach Robinson Strait by August, the time of year when it is freest from ice. In Lincoln's Sea, somewhere near Greenland's coast, he hopes to seek winter quarters. Then, the following spring or summer, the journey will continue around the northern shore of Greenland, according to the latest investigations, supposed to be an island, and drift with the polar current down the eastern shore. The course of the trip is, therefore, mainly a circumnavigation of Greenland. Sverdrup's greatest difficulty, should he succeed in getting round the north of Greenland, will undoubtedly be when endeavoring to force the Fram out of the "pack-ice," by which she would gradually be carried southward with the polar current. His succeeding in doing this with the Fram in the summer of 1896 was what earned for him Nansen's remark, at a dinner of the Norwegian Geographical Society, "I consider," Nansen said, "Sverdrup's freeing our ship from the horrible crush of the pack-ice which surrounded her the greatest achievement ever performed in arctic regions."

The aim of Sverdrup's journey is merely one of scientific research, and not, as Nansen's party was, to reach the axis of the pole. Besides a study of the meteorological, magnetic, and other physical conditions of these partly unknown regions, much of the work will be an accurate examination of the palaeocryotic ice, as well as the oceanic, and the stretches of land that are passed. The geology of the country also will be investigated, the depth, percentage of salt, and temperature of the sea, the flora and fauna of the regions, etc.

With the Fram as their station, many sledging expeditions will be made in order to locate definitely the geographical position of islands and coast, and as Sverdrup recently put it in a speech at the recent fete of Norwegian geologists, "to color the white ignorance of our maps."

In one respect a radical departure has been made in the Fram's equipment, namely, in the use of petroleum for lighting as well as heating, instead of electricity. The large quantity of coal needed for heating as well as for motor force has now been replaced by twenty tons of petroleum.

The Danish government has, as usual, done much towards the success of the trip. When the Fram reaches Godhavn, Greenland, she will there find sixty tons of coal awaiting her, as well as the so necessary dogs. In Scoresby Sound a station has been placed at the disposition of Sverdrup. The Greenland authorities in Godhavn, Egedes Minde, and Upernivik have also received instruction from the home government to aid in every possible manner Sverdrup and his ship.

Samuel Stout of Newcomb, Ill., who has just been granted a patent for a farm gate, is said to be the oldest person to whom a patent right has ever been attended. Mr. Stout is over 80 years of age.

It was the first time Johnny had ever heard a guinea hen. "Oh, mamma!" he shouted, "come and hear the chicken waddlin' itself up."



WHY BESS WAITED.

The earth was robed in white when
Bess
Sprang from her little cot,
And, running to the window, stood
As rooted to the spot.

At breakfast time the child was found
Still gazing at the snow,
For all the world like some white bud
That had forgot to blow.

When told 'twas time to dress, and bid
Her sleeping-gown to doff,
She said, "I'm waitin' for ze earf
To take its nighty off!"

THE "JUSTICE BELL"

The Story of How an Old Horse Once
Used It.

The Glen Island Museum of Natural
History, on Long Island Sound, now
boasts the only original "Justice Bell,"
whereof this familiar tale is told:

"In one of the old cities of Italy,
many centuries ago, the King caused
the bell to be hung in a tower in one
of the public squares, and called it 'The
Bell of Justice.' He commanded that
any one who had been wronged should
go and ring the bell, and as call the
magistrate and ask and receive justice.
And when, in the course of time, the
lower end of the bell rope rotted away,
a wild vine was tied to it, to lengthen
it. One wild, stormy night the inhabi-
tants were awakened by the loud clang-
ing of the bell. An old and starving
horse that had been abandoned by its
owner and turned out to die wandered
into the tower and, in trying to eat
the vine, rang the bell. The magistrate
of the city coming to see who
demanded justice, found the horse, and decreed
that during the horse's life his owner
should provide for him proper food and
drink and stable."

Hon. John H. Starin, while travelling
in Italy, saw the bell and heard its history
and immediately bought it for his
museum.

YOUR LIGHT'S OUT."

The question of carrying lights after
dark, which has lately been a bone of
contention to the drivers and bilo-
rists of some of our own cities, is not
a new one.

Two centuries ago the town council of
Oudenarde, in Flanders—famed as
the scene of one of Marlborough's great
victories—issued an order that no citizen
should appear on the streets, after
eight o'clock in the evening, without a
lantern, under a penalty of ten florins.
The rule caused as much grumbling as
did a recent edict of New York, com-
pelling all vehicles to show a light.
The burghers consulted together, and
went forth at nightfall, lanterns in
hand, but with never a candle in the
lanterns.

Next day the council met and passed
a further ordinance that every nocturnal
pedestrian should carry a lantern
and that each lantern should contain
a candle—penalty, for infraction,
twenty florins.

That night the law-abiding citizens
of Oudenarde sallied forth with lan-
terns and candles, but the candles were
not lighted.

The council again convened, and added
a third rule—that the candles must
be lighted, under a forfeit of forty florins.

In this emergency the good Oudenarde
lit their candles, but wrapped their
lanterns under their cloaks.

The struggle was finally ended by an
official order which stated, in terms too
precise and emphatic to be evaded by
any trick or device, that the citizens
must carry lanterns with lighted can-
dles, that the lights must be plainly
visible at a distance, and that any viola-
tion of this严明的 ruling should pay
forty florins to the town's treasury.

THIS ROBIN WAS CLEVER.

A little story is being told in Huntington, L. I., of a clever robin in that place who wove into its nest a piece of rags old lace. The lace belonged to Mrs. Sammis, and was one of those delicate pieces that are treasured with such care by those fortunate enough to possess such heirlooms.

Mrs. Sammis washed it and put it
out to dry in a place that she thought
particularly safe, but when she went for
it an hour later, it had disappeared, and no
trace of it could be found. The rob
knew nothing of the value of this
beautiful treasure, and thinking it just
the thing for its nest, had snatched it
up and flown away. Mrs. Sammis had
noticed a robin flying by with some
white lace, and suspecting what it
would be used for, had her husband
place a ladder against a tree and make
a search. He found a dainty little rob-
in's nest, with the lace nicely woven
into it.

It was necessary to get the lace, and
although the little robin fought bravely,
her beautiful nest was torn to pieces
and the lace restored to its rightful
owner.

HE STUDIED FRACTIONS.

"Bobbie, how many sisters has your
new school fellow?"

"He has one, mamma. He tried to
stuff me up by saying that he had two
half sisters: but he doesn't know that
I study fractions."

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THE CURIOUS CRAWFISH.

A Crustacean Highly Esteemed as a Food by Germans and by Basques.

"The crawfish hasn't come to be much appreciated in this country as food," said a fish dealer, "although among a small circle here it is alleged to be highly prized. In some European countries, and especially in northern Germany, the crawfish as an edible crustacean is in such demand that it is largely grown by artificial means."

"The crawfish is in many respects a curious creature. It is so tardy in reaching maturity that it requires from twelve to fifteen years to attain its growth, which is between three and five inches. The male crawfish live in colonies in holes in the river or creek banks, and the female, especially white waiting for her eggs to hatch, prefers to live by herself. The crawfish hunts its prey at night and begins the quest as soon as dusk sets in. Crawfish are never found in any numbers and never of mature size in water inhabited by eels or pickerel. The eel is its greatest enemy and destroyer. The crawfish sheds its shell every year, the male in June, and the female in July. They are then the most tender and delicate of creatures and especially prized as bait for bass. The most prolific water for crawfish I ever knew is the Miami River in Ohio. There are no eels or pickerel in that stream, but it is noted for a choice variety of bass. These bass will seldom take any other bait than the soft crawfish. For other fish the tail of the hard craw, as the natives call it, with the shell peeled from the hard, white, sweet flesh, is a killing bait. If the angler can get it within reach of the fish he is hoping to catch before it is seized by some living crawfish."

"If a fisherman is after crawfish for bait he has only to let down a piece of pork or beef or any other kind of flesh, or even a piece of potato or turnip, tied to a string. In a moment, every craw that can get hold of it with its claws will quickly do so. If the string is pulled up slowly and steadily not a craw will let loose of the bait until it is landed on the bank or in the boat. The fisherman wrenches the tail from the body and casts the latter away. So tenacious of life are the crawfish that it is a common sight to see scores of these mutilated bodies crawling about the river banks and returning to the water, where they will live for hours. The craws that are captured in this way are all hard shells. The soft shells are so delicate it would not be possible for them to cling with their claws to anything. They are caught by turning over stones on the bottom of the river, where they hide during the season in which they are shedders. Anglers who want them for bait are not the only ones that invade the hiding places of the soft-shell crawfish. Bass constantly hunt them, turning over the stones to uncover them with as much skill as the angler can. That such enormous quantities of crawfish survive the shedding season in the Miami River is one of the wonders of piscatorial life."

"Although the crawfish will survive for hours, and sometimes a day or more, the mutilation to which fishermen subject it, it will soon die if laid on its back and kept there. It placed in that position it works violently with its rows of feet and its claws, which seems to soon exhaust it and cause its death. The crawfish will live for a week or more out of water if kept in a cool, moist place. Those Europeans who consider this crustacean a delicacy have a superstition that they are not good in the months containing the letter 'R,' unlike the belief in this country that oysters are only good in such months. It is declared to be a fact by growers and shippers of crawfish that if a thunderstorm arises while they are in transit they will die instantly."

FIRST ELEPHANT IN AMERICA.

It is not generally known that a citizen of Owensboro, Kentucky, brought