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Does Giant Squid Explain Serpent Yarns?

Authority Tells of Peculiar Characteristics of Monster Sea Dweller and Deals With Serpent Stories.

(By A. B. KLUGH, in Canadian Fisherman.)

The belief in the existence of sea-serpents is of great antiquity. Aristotle, writing about B.C. 320, mentioned serpents on the coast of Libya, which upset vessels. Pliny tells of some encountered in the Persian Gulf which were thirty feet in length, and among the Norwegians, Swedes, Danes and Finns the existence of a

sea-monster of prodigious size, known as the Kraken, was believed in for many centuries.

Coming to comparatively recent times we have numerous records of the appearance of sea-serpents. Egged, known as the "Apostle of Greenland" says, "On 6th July, 1734, there appeared a very large and frightful sea monster, which raised itself so high out of the water that

its head reached our main-top. It had a long, sharp snout, and spouted water like a whale; and very broad flippers. The lower part was formed like a snake. After some time the creature plunged backwards into the sea, and then turned its tail up above the surface, a whole ship's length from the head." In 1809, Mr. McLean, the minister of Edg, in the Western Isles of Scotland, said that he had seen, off the Isle of Canna, a great animal which chased his boat as he hurried ashore to escape it, and that it was also seen by the crews of thirteen fishing boats, who were so terrified that they fled to the nearest creek for safety. In 1817 a huge marine animal, having the appearance of a serpent and variously estimated to be from fifty to one hundred feet in length, was reported from Gloucester Harbour, Mass. In May, 1833, a party of British officers crossing Margaret's Bay, off the coast of Nova Scotia, saw at a distance of two hundred yards, "the head and neck of some denizen of the deep, precisely like that of a common snake in the

act of swimming" and estimated its length at eighty feet. Three residents of Christiansand, Norway, in 1847, reported a marine animal "about six fathoms long, the body as round as a serpent's, and two feet across." In 1848 the captain, and some of the officers of H.M.S. Daedalus, saw in the Atlantic "an enormous serpent, with head and shoulders kept about four feet above the surface of the sea, sixty feet of the body being visible, the body being about sixteen inches in diameter, dark brown in colour and yellowish-white about the throat." In 1857 the captain of the Castilian reported a sea-serpent with a head eight feet in diameter seen off St. Helena. In 1875 the officers and crew of the bark Pauline saw a sperm whale which was "gripped around the body with the turns of what appeared to be a huge serpent. The serpent twisted its victim round and round for about fifteen minutes, and then suddenly dragged the whale to the bottom, head first," and in the same year Lieutenant Haynes of the Royal Yacht Osborne reported a marine monster off Gibraltar, seeing "the head, two flappers and about thirty feet of the animal's shoulder." In 1905 two gentlemen on the yacht Valhalla reported that off the coast of Brazil they saw "a great fin, about six feet long, standing up out of the water, and then suddenly in front of the fin a turtle-like head shot up on a long eel-like neck."

Imagination or Reality.

The above are some of the reported appearances of sea-serpents, of which there are many more, but those mentioned are typical. Now is there, or is there not, such an animal? Opinion is much divided on the matter. First, there are those who scoff at the idea, and who deride all such reports as due to an over-active imagination or as fabrications. But before we adopt such an attitude we must bear in mind that the persons who have made these reports were men accustomed to the usual sights of the sea, and that they were men of integrity and sincerity. Next, there are those who believe that such an animal exists, and that it is one of the huge reptiles, such as Plesiosaurs, which has survived in the depths of the ocean since the secondary geological period. Such a theory cannot be banished as an impossibility, but the probabilities are strongly against it in view of the fact that no remains of any of these animals occur in the rocks of more recent geological periods, and neither have any remains been cast up on the shores of any of the oceans. Thirdly, there is the view of Dr. Oudemans that it is a huge mammal closely allied to Zeuglodon of the tertiary period, which had a small head, long neck and more or less whale-like body. This idea, it must be remarked, is founded on the sum of the recorded appearances of sea-serpents, and not on any specimens or remains. Finally, there are those who believe that all the records of sea-serpents can be accounted for by the appearance and habits of some known animal. Some of the records are, in all probability, founded on the well-known habit of porpoises of swimming in line, and leaping from the water, thus furnishing the vertical undulations which suggested serpentine motion, though it must be noticed that the movement of the body of a snake is from side to side and not up and down.

Giant Squid Explanation.

The animal, however, which undoubtedly forms the basis of most of these records is the Giant Squid. In early days the existence of these creatures was unknown, and Perrett, describing a voyage made in 1763-4, is apparently the first to mention these gigantic cuttle-fish. The Danish naturalist Steenstrup in 1847 described a Squid with a body twenty-one feet long and tentacles eighteen feet in length. In 1881 the French steamer Albatros encountered a Squid with a body from sixteen to eighteen feet long near Tenerife, and the crew succeeded in roping it, but the rope cut through the body near the hinder end and only the tail was secured. Since that time many spec-

imens of these Squids have been obtained, and the vast size they attain may be judged from the fact that a specimen fifty-two feet in total length, and another fifty-five feet long, were stranded on the coast of Newfoundland and that about a thousand pounds of meat was cut for bait from one found dead near the Grand Banks. Other specimens have been found off the coasts of Sweden, Iceland, Ireland, Chili, New Zealand, Alaska, and in the Indian Ocean, showing that their distribution is practically world-wide.

How exactly the appearance of one of the Giant Squids swimming at the surface of the water would fit into most of the descriptions of sea-serpents was not realized until careful studies were made of the habits of some of the smaller species of Squids. When swimming, the Squids propel themselves backwards by the out-rush of a stream of water from the siphon, a tube which points in the contrary direction to that in which the animal is going. The tail, therefore, goes in advance and the body tapers towards the siphon. They swim at the surface in calm weather, and it is powerfully that practically all accounts of the appearance of sea-serpents refer to the fact that this was the condition of the weather. The arrow-like tail is raised out of the water, and as it precedes the rest of the body, moving at the rate of several miles an hour, it, of course, looks to a person who has never heard of an animal going tail-first at such a speed, like the creature's head. The appearance of this "head" varies in accordance with the lateral fins being seen in profile or in showing more or less of their flat expanse. The elongated tubular body gives the idea of a long neck, and the upper tentacles floating in undulations behind, resemble a serpentine body, while the excurrent stream, pouring aft from the siphon, is readily mistaken for an indefinite prolongation of the body.

In view of these facts it seems altogether probable, if not practically certain, that the Giant Squid is the animal which has for ages figured as the "sea-serpent."

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A woman had bought a new hatstand, and was showing it to a visitor when her little son came in. So engrossed was he in pointing out the good points of the hatstand that for a few moments he did not notice the arrival of the little boy; but when she did she saw to her disgust, that he was still wearing his hat. "Tommy," she said crossly, "what did I get that hatstand for?" "For four-and-sixpence!" retorted Tommy. "But you said I wasn't to tell anyone."

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MILLEY'S

SIDE TALKS.

By Ruth Cameron.

THE TIRESOME THANKER.

It is a very difficult thing to give thanks gracefully. It is even more difficult, I think, to receive them gracefully. We have all heard of people who hated to be thanked for anything. Doubtless they thought that feeling was due to modesty. But was it? Wasn't it rather a confession of their own social inability. To be able to receive thanks gracefully, without appearing smug or embarrassed should be as much a part of one's social equipment as the ability to eat one's soup without making a noise, or to enter a room without stumbling over the furniture.

However I think we all have preferences about the way thanks should be given.

For myself I hate anyone who keeps thanking me. If I entertain a friend for a week-end in the country or take her on a drive, I hate her keep thanking me all the time she is with me.

The Guest Who Notices. That does not mean that I don't like to have a guest express pleasure and appreciation. Who doesn't love that? To have one's home, the

ine enjoyment and appreciation of a guest, and a few brief sentences with feeling but without fussiness just at the end of a drive or a week-end. And then the guest is a house guest, a letter written promptly and with feeling but without fussiness.

After a guest goes one always that mood when one says, "I wonder what she is thinking about home" and so on, and one sends a letter that graciously and answers those questions.

Thanks That Pleases. My idea of really gracious thanks is first the implied thanks of guest.

First Doctors—Then a Skin Specialist—Then a Bottle of D.D.D.

I will consider it a favor if you allow me to add my testimonial to many hundreds you no doubt have read of the great results of the D.D.D. Prescription. I suffer for two years with eczema on the legs and ankles. I tried or four different doctors and none of them did me any good. I got trying their remedies. I then to a skin specialist but he was better than the others. I was reading Sunday paper and happened to your ad. I am very glad that I secured a trial bottle of D.D.D. and it did me so much good. I sent for a dollar bottle, also a box of soap. That is all I used perfectly well. I have advised several others to use it and they have been the same. You are worthy to use my name for D.D.D. the best remedy in use.

W. W. COOPER, 13 Melbourne Ave., Toronto, Can.

Anyone suffering from skin trouble—mild or severe—should know at once the merits of D.D.D. to-day. Your money back when first bottle relieves you. Ask your druggist.

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The Lotion for Skin Diseases

Pastry shells filled with sauce are a nice garnish for sliced meat.

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MUTT FAILS TO FAIL FOR THE "CULTURE" STUFF.

—By Bud Fisher.

BOSTON IS INDEED THE CITY OF CULTURE. I CERTAINLY POLISHED UP ON MY ENGLISH WHILE I WAS THERE.

WELL, HOW'S BOSTON? AND WHAT ARE YOU GONNA EAT?

BOSTON IS FINE! I HOPE ULTIMATELY TO HAVE A PLACE OF ABODE THERE. I THINK I SHALL PARTAKE OF A PORTION OF SATANIZED CRUSTACEANS!

SATANIZED CRUSTACEANS? THERE AIN'T NO SUCH FOOD ON THE BILL OF FARE!

MY DEAR SIR, I REGRET I MUST DIFFER WITH YOU! SATANIZED CRUSTACEANS ARE ON THE MENU CARD!

PERHAPS YOU GRASP SLANG MORE READILY! IN CRUDE SLANG SATANIZED CRUSTACEANS MEANS 'DEVILED CRABS'!

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