

## MURDERED BY NATIVES

### British Captain Shot in the New Hebrides

#### Was in Command of Recruiting Steamer—Act Was Result of Superstition.

Victoria, B.C., Dec. 26.—Advice received from the New Hebrides by the steamer Moana contained full details of the murder of Capt. Henry Asmus-Atkinson, master of the recruiting schooner Lily. It appears that the Lily was employed in returning a large number of natives, whose term of service under French planters had expired, to their respective native homes. Among the company on board the Lily were a number of men for the island of Mallicolo and the schooner arrived at the north cape of that island on October 26. During the passage one of the natives died from natural causes, and as the voyage was almost completed, Capt. Asmus-Atkinson decided to inter the body at Mallicolo instead of consigning it to the deep. Arrangements were made for the funeral to take place at night time, and on the evening of October 26 a small company landed and the remains were buried.

It was decided to land the time-expired natives on the following morning, and as usual on such occasions, a large body of the natives of Mallicolo assembled on the beach to accord a welcome home to their comrades. The Lily, owing to the water being shallow, was anchored some distance from the shore and communication with the island was carried on by means of a whaler belonging to the vessel. Capt. Henry Asmus-Atkinson accompanied the first boat load, and although he had no reason to suspect the assembled crowd, he armed himself with a rifle. No sooner had Capt. Asmus-Atkinson stepped ashore than he was rushed by several of the natives, who at once seized his rifle. Immediately they obtained possession of the weapon it was handed to one of their number, who directed it at Captain Asmus-Atkinson at close quarters and fired. The bullet entered the chest of the unfortunate man, who exclaimed "Oh, my God!" and staggered. A second shot was quickly fired, striking the master mariner in the breast, and he fell back dead.

During the encounter the members of the native crew of the Lily endeavored to save their employer from the infuriated savages, but the Mallicolo "boys," as they are called, at once turned upon the crew, and one of them was shot, and it is believed mortally wounded. The remainder of the crew, recognizing the uselessness of attempting to resist a large crowd of blacks armed with a rifle, decided to make for the whaler in order to get safely back to their vessel. They, however, discovered to their dismay that the Mallicolo natives had already seized the whaler and dared any of the crew to attempt to regain possession of the boat. The dead captain's rifle was still in evidence, and aim was taken at the fleeing native sailors. One of their number was shot in the knee and he fell on the beach in a helpless condition. The remaining members of the ship's company had almost abandoned all hope of saving their lives but as they were all powerful swimmers they decided to endeavor to reach the Lily. They plunged into the water, and all succeeded in reaching the vessel.

Possession was subsequently taken of the body of Capt. Henry Asmus-Atkinson, and it was conveyed to the island of Tongoa, where a Presbyterian mission is in existence. Tongoa, it might be mentioned, is one of the settlements founded under Messrs. Burns, Philp & Co.'s scheme for the colonization of the New Hebrides, and an area of land has recently been set apart there for the purpose of a general cemetery. The remains were interred in that section of the burial ground set apart for adherents of the Presbyterian church, and the service at the grave was impressively conducted by the resident missionary. The funeral of Capt. Atkinson was the first to take place in the new cemetery.

The two wounded members of the crew of the Lily were taken to the island of Wala, where they remained until the arrival of the steamer Moreshby, which vessel conveyed them to the island of Ambrym, where they were admitted for treatment in the hospital. According to the latest advice from the New Hebrides, one of the men was in a critical condition and his life was despaired of. The other man was making satisfactory progress towards recovery.

The cause of the outrage is a mystery, and the deceased never for one moment dreamed that his life was in danger until he was suddenly attacked by the natives. It was his usual custom to arm himself when landing at any one of the islands, for at any place the savages are very treacherous. At Mallicolo, however, the natives are used to the white men and friendly disposed toward them. Those acquainted with the superstitions and habits of the natives ascribe the murder to the fact that the Lily arrived with one of their number dead. They no doubt found a newly-made grave or were informed of the death of one of their returning brothers, and without ascertaining the cause of his demise, concluded that he had met his death by violence. Others state that the natives regard a ship which brings a dead body to their shores with the utmost suspicion, and believe that in order to prevent death from visiting their island home it is necessary to take the life of the white man in charge of the ship.

Capt. Henry Asmus-Atkinson was a British-born subject, but he had resided in Noumea for the past twenty-five years. Only a few days before his death he had made an application to Dr. Faraud, the high commissioner for France in the New Hebrides, to become a naturalized subject of France. His object for swearing allegiance to that power was that he might become the holder of lands in the French territory. Capt. Asmus-Atkinson was extremely popular in Noumea, and was well known in connection with the island trade. He had been engaged for some years in recruiting labor in the different islands for the French planters and traders, and in returning time-expired men to their homes.

The schooner Lily, of which the deceased was master, is well known in connection with labor-recruiting, and is the property of Mons. Blanc, of the island of Api, in the New Hebrides. Mallicolo island, the scene of the murder, is about fifty-four miles in length, and varies from seven to twenty miles in width. It was at this island that Dr. Selwyn narrowly escaped with his life in the year 1851. The bishop and his boat's crew were attacked by the natives while watering, and but for the courage of the bishop, who bade all walk straight on through the crowd which had assembled on the beach to prevent their return to the boat, the whole party would have been massacred. The next day the natives were most friendly, stating as their excuse that they had been previously ill-treated by the crew of another vessel, and that they had determined to retaliate, not recognizing the good bishop.

News was also received yesterday of a second murderous encounter at Espigle Bay, another part of the island of Mallicolo. It appears that some time near that of the murder of Capt. Atkinson, at the north cape of the island, the Pearl, a small vessel, was engaged in recruiting labor, when the natives on shore suddenly opened fire on the ship's company. Several of the native members of the crew were wounded, but full details of the attack have not so far come to hand. Espigle bay is situated on the northwest coast of Mallicolo and was named by H.M.S. Espigle, which visited there many years ago. It possesses a splendid sandy beach, and from there to the north extreme of the island the land is low, flat and densely wooded.

At the annual meeting of the National Sanitarium Association, it was announced that after the erection at Toronto of the projected sanitarium for consumptives, which will be the third, the other two being already in operation at Muskoka, a fourth will be built on the Pacific coast.

Sir William Mulock has returned from the Hot Springs, Virginia. He says the premier is enjoying excellent health, and has gone to St. Augustine, Fla.

## MINING IN OLD EGYPT

### Reviving the Industry of Centuries Ago

#### Working Ancient Placers Lying Between the Nile and the Red Sea.

Ancient and interesting as is the mining industry in many parts of the world, it may be doubted whether any country surpasses Egypt in these respects, where after the lapse of many centuries the patient researches of scholars have disclosed the existence of a once great industry, which it is now sought to revive. The various expeditions sent out during the last year or two to explore the ancient workings so revealed have laid bare the remains of a series of workings of almost prehistoric antiquity, and have strikingly confirmed the conclusion of Egyptologists as to the extent to which Egypt contributed to the gold supply of the primitive civilizations of the world. Whether the regions referred to in Egyptian records as Punt, and in later days as Ophir, are referable wholly or in part to Egyptian territory will doubtless remain controversial ground—at any rate those who maintain this view have less need for ingenuity and imagination than the champions of South Africa, India and Malaya.

In a paper of last year Mr. Alford, the engineer to the Egyptian Mines Exploration Company, gave some account of the ancient workings over a large concession in the country between the Nile and the Red sea, between the parallels of latitude 25 and 27 degrees. Since then the working energies of the company have been concentrated on a place called Um Roos, which, owing to the proximity of a good harbor, avoids the main difficulty from which the country suffers at present—the lack of communications. According to the report of the company, which has been recently issued, an inclined shaft has been sunk to a vertical depth of 250 feet, but without reaching the bottom of the ancient workings. Mr. Alford's report is reticent in tone, and unless further information is vouchsafed to the shareholders at the meeting it would seem as if the results so far are not particularly promising. The persistence with which the ancient workers have followed the ore shoots in depth, while satisfactory evidence of their value is attested by the degree of engineering and mechanical skill, which, considering the economic conditions of the time and the fact that the cost of labor was limited to feeding it, may leave but little margin between the grade of ore which the ancients thought worth working and that which it pays to raise today.

Another Egyptian company, the Nile Valley Company, has apparently met with better success than the Egyptian Mines Exploration Co. The workings of this concern are at Um Garaia, to the south of Assouan, and here apparently a depth of 106 feet was sufficient to get below the original workings. The reports, though not detailed, indicate that a rich body of ore has been met with, and it is, of course, possible that similar success will attend the first mentioned company ere operations are carried much further. The results obtained will be important as going to show whether the old workings were abandoned or exhausted. If the former, then the numerous old mines which have been located will all probably prove rich at depths beyond the reach of the ancient Egyptians; if the latter, it will appear that the engineering skill which constructed the Nile dams and the Pyramids has not been unequal to solving the special problems of mining at depth. Hitherto we believe that attention has been confined to gold, but the old records speak of silver and lead, while nitre or natron and marble were largely worked by the ancient Egyptians. Gem stones also, especially emeralds, are believed to exist in considerable quantities in these districts.

Messrs. Streeter & Co. have for some time been prospecting a concession south of that in the hands of the Egyptian Mines Exploration Company, though we believe that the results are not such as to encourage them to continue. The very fine turquoise which have been produced from the Sinaitic peninsula may not unreasonably be expected to appear on the western side of the gulf of Suez. For many reasons, and not least on account of the enterprise shown in attacking a country long generally regarded as destitute of mineral wealth, it would be gratifying to see the measure of success which the Nile Valley Company has achieved extended both in their own case and in the case of fellow prospecting enterprises.

The annual meeting of the Dawson Free Library Association will be held in the rooms over the Canadian Bank of Commerce on Thursday, the 15th inst., at 8:30 p.m.

Members of the association and those interested in the work of the association are requested to attend.

## PROBLEMS OF ASTRONOMY

BY CAMILLE FLAMMARION.

Astronomy is the science which, in modern times, may be said to have made the greatest progress among all the sciences, and to a great extent to have been at the basis of every great modern discovery. Yet, in spite of what it has already achieved, the problems that still remain to be solved are almost infinite.

It may be said that we have discovered the fundamental laws of the universe in certain respects and a number of details that clear away a great many ancient errors, but the more we discover in the celestial mechanism, the more we become convinced of the vast extent of the field where human science still wanders about like a child, groping hopelessly in the dark.

We have not yet completely solved such apparently simple problems as the genesis, development and composition of heavenly bodies. With the exception of a few facts gathered here and there in this vast field of inquiry most of our conclusions are still mere plausible theories.

What mysteries still surround the origin, nature and duration of solar heat, the causes and bearing of solar spots, the sun in its entirety, that marvelous center of flame, light and heat, which, like the Jehovah of old, reveals himself only through a mist to the naked eye!

Astronomy is at the same time the most exact of sciences, and the one which has the greatest number of mysteries to solve. We have discovered the laws concerning the movement of our solar system, enormous instruments of prodigious power have been, as it were, created to penetrate into the maze of constellations at incalculable distances, to discover steps of various magnitudes, according as they are millions and millions of leagues removed from one another, and the distance ever increasing to the twelfth and fifteenth magnitude, to arrive at last at discerning in the immense distance nebulae which are other constellations, or clouds of constellations and which may be new worlds, new universes, in process of evolution.

We are spectators of a universe of worlds coming into being millions of years ago, long perhaps before even our own world was formed, in comparison to which the appearance of our historic Adam and Eve is as of yesterday. Here is where we have an abundance of mysteries and problems on which astronomy may yet throw light, and which, at any rate, palpably show us the boundless field of this incomparable science.

In many cases we no longer see the universe as it is, but as it was in the dim distance of primeval existence. Could we only discover instruments to peer into the secrets which

are still written in these flashes of light, and come to us like brilliant pages of the vast book of creation, what wonderful facts might not communicate to us and give us an idea of the stupendous evolutions, laws and movements of nature?

At one moment we may be studying the gases of worlds coming into existence millions of ages past, and at another investigating worlds that have ceased to exist ages ago, their last ray of light taking millions of years to reach the terrestrial globe. What science is there that has so many, such great and such absorbing mysteries, problems and questions for the human mind to solve?

Every book that is published to bring astronomic truths within the reach and grasp of the people is a book which confers an immense benefit on the human race. We want books of every kind intended for every class of readers to teach the truths of astronomy to the least developed and simplest minds, and the knowledge of the laws which govern the universe, the immensity of the space in which we live and revolve, will give men a more just idea of the grandeur of the universe and the comparative insignificance of the world.

The practical results and applications of astronomic discoveries have been immense and varied, and yet how many men in the common walks of life know about them? The art of navigation depends almost entirely on the data furnished by astronomy. Without his almanac the mariner would nowadays be almost as much at a loss on the high seas as he was in ancient times.

Thanks to the exact data concerning the movements and positions of the heavenly bodies, the modern navigator knows more exactly the true meridian and point of the globe than he finds himself on the ocean when does the traveler on land. Without this certainty modern transatlantic and transpacific commerce could not exist.

Astronomy, that is, the study of the laws of the stellar movements, has given us the greatest lesson we ever received in geography. It is the sky seen through the telescope, that helps to give us more correct notions of distances and places on the earth. And who can say that it is not astronomy that may some day explain the nature and laws of magnetism and electricity?

The only drawbacks which we still experience are in the nature of the instruments which we are at present able to make. The immense results obtained by astronomy so far have been obtained by inadequate means. The greatest telescope in existence

falls still far short of what we could expect from a perfect instrument. There are still worlds of secrets hidden from us for want of means to penetrate into them. We have, through the spectroscopic, analyzed the matter that forms the outward surface of numerous planets, we have even discovered gases in the sky of which we knew nothing, and whose existence was afterward revealed to us on earth.

Strange to say, new metals have also been discovered in the planets before we knew of their existence on our own globe. Yet the spectroscopic is far from having accomplished all that we may yet hope to learn through its means. But the science is always advancing.

Each year announces new progress in discoveries and the achievement of measurements and other practical results. Instruments are being perfected, and new proofs of old truths are brought to the notice of the popular mind, and are having their effect upon the instruction, enlightenment and intellectual elevation of the human race.

## THE HAUNTED 'PHONE

By Mrs. M. L. R. Rye

A young woman in Oak park believes that her telephone is haunted; and some of her neighbors agree with her, and now the theory is being discussed with a suggestion that the instrument is a proper medium for ghosts, and credulous householders are afraid to answer the telephone lest some uncanny disclosure greet them.

No doubt when science has perfected the telephone we will find ourselves in long distance communication with Mars or other planets which have offered us neighborly overtures to which we could not respond. If the explorers of air will lend all their facilities to the development of vibrations, condensing them to a focus for human intelligence, a world of wonder may open to our listening ears, and the sixth sense aid us to a knowledge of the gods. Then Tesla might gather in the telephone cup the power now lying dormant in the air shaft waiting for a liberator. The theory anticipates the use of telephones many years ago a Chicago young woman wrote a remarkable book called "The Automaton Ear." It told the story of a man who was possessed with the idea that all the harmonies of earth, since the morning stars sang together for joy, were still centered in the air and could be reproduced if an ear could be invented to gather and retain them. So he invented an automaton ear which was a success, but the inventor had overlooked one condition. With the sounds of joy and the songs of harmony came groans of discord and the wails of

sorrow, and these so predominated that he went mad and died of disappointment. When the busiest and most necessary official on the circuit, in Oak Park was asked to come up to a certain number and find out what was wrong with the telephone, he sent a "sub," who reported that it acted "crazy," and would not "ring true."

So David Campbell went there himself and found a distressed matron, who said mysteriously: "I sent for you because I'm having trouble with my telephone."

"So I understand," he answered. "Wires caught somewhere by the high winds most likely. I will soon find out the trouble, Mrs. Blanke. I am used to those difficulties."

"I don't think you are," responded Mrs. Blanke, "and I am afraid that all your skill and experience will not help in this case. The truth is my telephone is haunted."

"Haunted?" The electrician gave a start; his Scotch ancestors had believed in second sight, but a spook in a telephone—his business sense refused to harbor the idea. "Impossible!" My dear madam, who ever heard of a ghost in a telephone?"

"I hear voices and am rung up to take strange communications," persisted Mrs. B. "Take down that receiver and listen a moment."

He did so, and heard the usual "Number, please," much to his satisfaction, and then rung off and turned cheerfully to Mrs. B.

"You see, it is all right. What led you to think otherwise?"

"Several unusual experiences, but you will only laugh at them. The other night when the high wind blew I was out spending the evening with friends, when I was called to the telephone. I distinctly heard the voice of my little son Theodore, whom I had left at home in bed. He said to me, 'Please come home, mamma, I'm awfully afraid of the storm.' I told him to go in and sleep with his brother, and I would soon be home. He said, 'All right, mamma, good-by,' and rung off. When I went home he was sleeping where I had left him, had not been awake and did not even know it was storming. Yet, it was my boy's voice I heard and no other."

Mr. Campbell looked politely incredulous and suggested that the boy might have telephoned in his sleep, but he could not convince the mother Mrs. Blanke had another experience in reserve.

"I was thinking of a friend at a distance and wanting to hear from her, went to the telephone to call her up. As soon as I put the receiver to my ear I heard some one speaking, and asked who it was, and my friend answered, without being called. Now is that telepathy or what is it?"

"I think," said the electrician gently, "that the telephone has got on your nerves. Let some other member of the family answer for a while. You take these incidents too seriously, and even if you cannot account

for them, they do not mean anything. It is a common event for telephone bells to ring mysteriously, but a crossing of the wires or a mistake in the number could easily be the cause. Might I venture to suggest that some rough member of your family might be 'playing tricks'?"

But Mrs. B. would not admit this for a moment, so the baffled electrician was obliged to leave the mystery where he found it, and the troubled matron went on losing weight every day and feeling sure whenever her telephone bell rang that some ghost was on the wires. Then a friend moved into her suburb and put with the outside world. At an early hour in the morning Mrs. Blanke called up Central and asked for her friend's number.

"Fourteen hundred and ninety-two," came the answer. It stirred strange memories in Mrs. Blanke's mind. She called it with an indefinite feeling that she had heard it in some former life. A weird voice responded.

"Who is this?" she asked, cautiously.

"Columbus," "Columbus who?" "Why, Christopher Columbus. I discovered America in 1492. Say, what do you want? P'raps you'd like to talk to Ferd or Isabella Hurry-up. I can't stand here a whole century. I'm tired."

Mrs. Blanke recognized that voice. It was that of her own hopeful Theodore, who was visiting the small son of her friend. Both boys were in the early period of American history and had struck the coincidence of the telephone number as an aid to memory.

Mrs. B. gave her hopeful a snubbing for his precocity and was permitted to talk with her friend. So one of her telephone ghosts has been laid, but she still persists that she is likely at any time to be placed in direct communication with the unseen powers of the air as a medium of expression.

#### Shows Lack of Nobility

Vienna, Dec. 27.—The elopement of the Crown Princess of Saxony and the renunciation of his titles by the Archduke Leopold have eclipsed the ignominious fate of the Count Heinrich Edmund Potocka, who has just been sentenced to three months on a charge of embezzlement and obtaining money under false pretences.

Potocka moved in the most aristocratic circles of Vienna and was persona grata at court. A few years ago he inherited a huge fortune, which he squandered in dissolute living. Two years ago he was pronounced a bankrupt, with debts of two million kronen.

A trust and confidence man recently had the count arrested on a charge of petty swindling.

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