The Pedlar and His Pack

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You saw great, dirty, romantic cities of the East—Constantinople, Damascus, Bagdad. You saw the blue Mediterranean and the Isles of Greece and Arabia and the Red Sea and Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives and the "little town of Bethlehem," and could even call up a picture of shepherds watching their flocks by night under the stars! You saw lemon groves and street bazaars, sycamore and fig trees, date palms, cedars of Lebanon and long camel caravans winding their slow way over the desert to that ancient market of the eastern world, Damascus. The pedlar could conjure all these wonders up in broken, halting English in such an irresistible way you could have listened forever.

But this year he does not speak much of his people or of Syria. His heart is too full and in his dark eyes that unsleeping sorrow is more noticeable. So you do not question him. He is restrained but intense fire smoulders within him and dries up any tears that might flow. One of his sisters was hung by the hair of the head to a roadside gallows near Van, because she resisted the Turks. His old mother was dragged from a sick-bed and sent on a long march with hundreds of other prisoners and when she died her body was kicked over a precipice. His cousin was crucified by order of the Germans in Turkey, and many friends perished in the wholesale massacres. He had a sweetheart. If she is yet alive—forlorn hope!—he will find her and they will be married and live in Damascus.

A word about Damascus, called "The Pearl of the East." This is the oldest city in the world. There is absolutely no other to dispute the claim. It lies on a fertile plain and its strategical importance is great for it is the key to Central Syria and the terminal of the great caravan routes. It is watered by seven streams, and dominated by Mount Hermon whose snowy crest rises to a height of 9,000 feet. The first impression of Damascus made on the traveller is one of entrancing beauty. From afar it "shines like a diamond, set in the deep green of fruitful gardens, amid cypress, myrtle, palm, apricot, olive, walnut, orange, fig, and pomegranate trees, and the air is saturated with the fragrance of their blossoming in spring." The city received its name from the damascene work for which it has always been noted from days of antiquity up to the present. This damascene work consists of inlaying fine steel with gold and silver in wavy lines which produce a sheen when held to the light. Hence, too, comes damask linen and the city gave its name also to the damask rose, the damask plum, to rosewater, damask powder and to a certain quality of chased silverware.

The houses of Damascus are outwardly mean but it is said that the interiors of the larger ones are magnificent. Until it felt the oppression and the tyranny of the Turk the city of Damascus was wealthy beyond computation. The streets are no index of the city itself. They are narrow and dirty and crooked. Running east and west through the town to this day is "the Street called Straight" however. This would seem to indicate that a straight thoroughfare was a remarkable thing back in those biblical times—as it yet is in some more modern cities. Traces of colonnades may yet be seen and according to tradition persisting down the centuries the sites of the houses of Naaman, Ananias, Judas, and of the one where "standing room only" forced Paul to descend in a basket from a hole in the roof, can be pointed out. In the "Street which is called Straight" a great mosque stands and the Moslems believe that at the end of the world all who can crowd into this temple will be saved.

Damascus has undergone more changes of ownership than any other city in the world. It belonged in turn to the Egyptians, to King David, to Solomon, to the Assyrians, to Alexander the Great, to Rome, to the Moslems, to the Crusaders, to Saladin, to Turkey again, to Egypt again, back to Turkey in the nineteenth century and now—shall it become the capital of a free and happy and enlightened republic? Who can say! But one fact is absolutely sure and reliable: with Great Britain to guide the destiny of Asia Minor oppression and injustice will never again hold sway and the Syrian may look confidently forward to the beginning of his Golden Age.

The Riders of The Plains

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estimated that the distance to the farthest patrol, about 1300 miles, could be covered in fifteen hours and it took the gold seekers who went to the Klondyke in 1897, just eighteen months to make the trip.

Many distinguished visitors, including the Prince of Wales, have become ardent admirers of this famous force and His Royal Highness has consented to become Honorary Commandant of the body.

The members of the force are usually men of superior education. They have always been of great physique. Parthian riders, unequalled scouts, accustomed to hardships and rough fare and schooled in all the arts of diplomacy. It has been very truly said that "there is one thing on this planet longer than the equator and that is the arm of British Justice and the Mounted Police are the men who enforce it."

Fashions and Patterns

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illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 15 cents in silver or stamps.

A Popular Coat Style—Pattern 3338 was used for this model. It is cut in 5 sizes: 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 years. A 10 year size will require 3¾ yards of 44-inch material. Cheviot, tweed, heather mixtures, polo cloth, velours, serge, satin and velvet are good for this design. A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 15 cents in silver or stamps.

A New Corset Cover—Pattern 3117, cut in 6 sizes: 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust measure is here portrayed. It will require 1⅜ yard of 36-inch material for a 38-inch size. The design is good for "all over" embroidery, for lawn, nainsook, satin, silk, crepe, batiste and cambric. It is simple, easy to develop and to adjust. A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 15 cents in silver or stamps.

A Splendid Work Dress—Pattern 3127 is here portrayed. It is cut in 7 sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46 inches bust measure. Size 38 will require 7 yards of 27-inch material. This model is excellent for a nurse's or maid's uniform. It may be developed in gingham, chambray, lawn, linen, sateen or serge. The width of the skirt at lower edge is 2 yards. A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 15 cents in silver or stamps.

A Popular School Dress—Pattern 3331 is shown in this design. It is cut in 4 sizes: 6, 8, 10 and 12 years. A 10 year size will require 4⅝ yards of 36-inch material. Plaid or checked gingham, percale, seersucker, poplin, repp, serge, mixtures, velveteen and taffeta, also linen and pique are good for this style. A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 15 cents in silver or stamps.

Brook Fishing for the Gaspereau

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Earl the big hawks sailed along outside, but would not come near enough for me to picture them.

The gulls make a frantic fall into the water—the salt water of the harbor—and dip their necks and shoulders down and nip up an unwary kyiack, or alewife, or gaspereau—call it what you will.

I do not blame you dwellers along the great lakes and prairies for saying that the alewife is thin and bony, as you get a fresh-water dwarfed fish, but take one of these fish, double the size of those in mid-continent, full-fleshed—yes, and fullboned, too. I admit there seems to be more bones in it than the critter really needs for a well-adjusted skeleton, but one of these big fish, as large as the largest herring you have ever taken from the fresh-water lakes, is really only fairly good eating. The female is a bit bigger and stouter than the male as it is full of spawn. One odd thing about them: I could not find a single tooth on either jaw, or on the tongue or vomer.

We are wondering, as we sit here at home resting, just how that boy Earl will get those two partly-filled barrels of fish to his home a mile away. Then, if he is going to smoke them, he will have to salt them. He luckily does not have to clean them as all these fish are smoked "just as they is."

CRAFTY SNAKES

The South African snake called the eggeater has inherited from long generations of ancestors a sense of smell so acute that it appears never to be at fault. Professor Fitzsimons, director of the Port Elizabeth Museum, gives in his book on "The Snakes of South Africa" an interesting incident of the wisdom of these serpents.

Being short of fresh pigeons' eggs once, I went to my cabinet and took the clean-blown shells of a few doves' eggs. Beating up the contents of a fowl's fresh egg, I syringed them into the empty shells, and carefully pasted tiny bits of tissue paper over the holes. I put these in the eggeater's cage, and watched, for I expected the snakes to swallow them as they did the other eggs. First one eggeater advanced. He touched each egg gently in turn with the tip of his nose or the point of his forked tongue, and crawled away in disgust. Another and yet another eagerly advanced, repeated the performance, and straight-way retired. I began to get interested. Leaving the eggs, I returned in a few hours' time to find them still there.

For two whole weeks those eggs remained in the cage untouched, although I refrained from giving the snakes any others. Then I procured some fresh pigeons' eggs and put them into the cage. The snakes approached, touched them with their noses or tongues, and instantly began to swallow them. I tried this experiment a second time with the same result. Frequently I have noticed that the snakes would eat some of the eggs that I gave them, and reject others. On breaking the latter open, I always found that they were either addled or else had a partially developed young bird inside. I could never induce an eggeater to swallow an egg that was not perfectly fresh.

The eggeater is an expert climber, and his sense of smell is so sharp that he can discover birds nests with the greatest facility. If you place an empty bird's nest in the cage of an eggeater, he will take no notice of it, except to use it occasionally for a cosy bed. But if you put fresh eggs in it, he at once detects their presence, although they are hidden from his sight.

THE BLACK TRACKER

During the South African War an officer of the Australian contingent boasted of the cunning of his black tracker,—who was no great master of his craft after all,—until he quite exhausted the credulity of the British officers with whom he was messing. He told one remarkable tale after another, until the other men challenged him to make good his reputation for veracity, and the conditions were these:

The five skeptical British officers, two afoot and three mounted, should start, at various intervals, in whatsoever directions they might elect, and proceed for a period agreed upon; and the black tracker, knowing only the color of the horse that each mounted man rode, and having seen only the print of the shoes that each footman wore, should trace them all within a certain time and subsequently report the movements of each with reasonable accuracy.

"Is it agreed," said one of the officers, "that we may obscure our tracks?"

"Oh, yes"

"Must we keep to soft ground?"

"Oh, my word, no!" the Australian laughed. "Go where you like."

"May we take off our shoes?"

"Of course. Don't spare the tracker. He'll be all right enough."

The tracker had an entertaining day of it. He returned contemptuous of the bushcraft of the five British officers. But he had not been spared, for the officers had taken to stony ground and sought in every way to bewilder him. He had followed the tracks of the mounted men, however, on the run, indentifying the movements of each by the colors of the dark-brown, light-brown and gray hairs of the horses, samples of which he produced; he also told how the first horseman had dismounted and lighted his pipe, how the second had been thrown when riding at a canter, and how the third had dismounted, rested in the shade and climbed a tree for a veiw of the country.

He also described accurately the movements of the footmen. One had tramped his course without pause or accident, but the other, having taken off his shoes, according to the evidence of a wisp or two of wool from his socks, had cut his foot and gone lame the rest of the way, as a stone with a speck of blood disclosed.

When the tracker concluded his revelations, it was agreed by the five British officers that his report was ample, that he had not made a single mistake, and that he had fulfilled all the conditions of the trial.

SUPERHUMANLY SENSITIVE

In a recent issue, the National Geographic Magazine contains an interesting article about the measuring and testing machines in the Bureau of Standards Building at Washington. It says: Here can be seen instruments of such delicacy and precision that the mind fails at first to grasp the full significance of what they can accomplish. In one room is a balance so sensitive that the mere presence of the operator's body generates an amount of heat that is sufficient to disturb the machine's accuracy. In another room there is one so delicately adjusted that it shows the loss of weight due to the reduction of the earth's atmosphere when two pieces of metal are weighed one upon another instead of side by side.

Remarkable beyond the imagination are the heat-measuring instruments that register infinitesimal fluctuations of temperature. A ray of light may have started ten years ago from some distant star, and may have spent all of those years hurtling earthward-bound through space at a gait so astonishing that it could girdle the globe in far less time than it takes to wink the eye, and yet when it falls upon the sensitive bolometers at the Bureau of Standards, they will tell the observer how much heat that ray brought with it from the star to the earth.

Such are a few of the most delicate instruments. There are others that are as powerful as those are sensitive. In the engineering laboratory there is a huge testing machine that can tear apart the strongest steel girders used in building great "skyscrapers," while on the floor above are little electric furnaces that can generate a heat intense enough to melt the most refractory materials. The Bureau can accurately measure cold great enough to liquefy the very air we breathe, and heat that will melt solid rocks.

An American spending his vacation in Scotland had an opportunity to play golf every day on a world-famous links. Moreover, he had assigned to him an exceptionally fine caddie, who had frequently carried the bags of the best golfers in Scotland.

"Donald, my man, I expect to get some good tips from you while I am here," said the American, while making the first round of the course.

"And I expect," returned the thrifty Donald, "the like frae you."