

## TRAGIC END OF A DARING MOUNTAIN CLIMBER.

Mr. J. C. Staats gives the following account in the San Francisco Chronicle of the terrible climb up El Capitan, which cost his companion, C. A. Bailey, his life.

There is something in all great mountain peaks that seems like a direct challenge from nature to the traveller. The sheer height of an unscathed summit rises insidiously, as if it laughed at the insignificance of man. I am sure that this idea has occurred to every climber who has set his strength and cunning against the stern face of the granite, and I know it quickened in the breast of one at least the determination to let no crag go unconquered. That one was my friend, Charles A. Bailey, of Oakland, whose intrepidity led to his fatal fall from the almost perpendicular face of El Capitan on June 5 of this year. That mighty wall has been scaled at last—but at what cost!

It was my first visit to the Yosemite, and I had started out with the general determination to let no view escape on account of the difficulty of climbing to the best point of vantage. But the first glimpse of the valley from the gorge of the Merced temporarily put all thoughts of climbing out of my mind. As the stage rumbled along at the base of El Capitan the idea of attempting to scale it seemed simply ridiculous, and I understood at once why nobody had ever, up to that time, seriously entertained it.

We arrived at the hotel on the evening of June 2, and as I listened to the stories of what others had done, my courage revived. Then somebody introduced me to Charles A. Bailey, and the spell of the mountaineer was upon me. Bailey told us of the peaks he had surmounted in Asia and in Europe, and as he spoke with the vivid language of a good raconteur, climbing seemed easy. The next day we spent enjoying the glories of the valley, which are within the reach of the most timid soul, and it was not until the following Monday that he mentioned El Capitan. It was several hours before the sun had glided the neighboring peaks and spires when we started down the east bank of the river. No more lovely morning ever tingled with the spirit of springtime. Nowhere was there a foreshadowing hint of the tragedy which was to end the day.

We walked as far as Bridal Veil Falls and sat down to plan our campaign, commenting at the same time upon the surpassing loveliness of the scene. We had not yet fully determined to make El Capitan the objective, and arriving at Cathedral Spires, debated whether it would not be well to attempt the gorge between them. Then we turned toward the river and crossed the bridge which leads to New Inspiration Point—how unfortunate nomenclature often is—and there to the right rose El Capitan itself, steep and unconquered. Bailey at once laid bare the plan he had cherished in his heart, and without much persuasion I agreed to help him make the most attempt, which, I was yet to learn, was to go where no human foot had gone before.

By ten o'clock our progress had become very much slower. The path was now frequently overhung with projecting rock, and the foothold consisted of fragmentary ledges to reach which Bailey would climb upon my shoulders, and then, taking hold of some projecting knob, slowly draw himself up to a place of safety. I would then pass him his staff, with which he would reach down and help me to gain a place beside him.

After allowing my companion to use me as a ladder a few times in the way described, I proposed that we give up the enterprise, and descend, if possible, by the way we had come. But my loss of nerve was momentary. To go back would in itself have been an undertaking full of peril, and when Bailey cried, "Never give up till you're up!" I was seized again with the enthusiasm which loves to conquer difficulties. I suppose it is some such spirit which bids men cut down a giant tree and hold cotillon parties on its stump—the delights of mastering something huge, be it a giant redwood or El Capitan.

"That's right! Brace up, and the summit is ours," said Bailey, when he found me ready to proceed. But no sooner had we commenced to climb than he himself realized the desperate nature of the situation. "If one of us should fall," he observed, "it would mean death to both."

"Why both?" I asked.

"Because neither of us would be able to climb up or down from this

place without the assistance of the other."

"Then God grant that I may not be the one left alone!" I cried. Nothing could have been more horrible than the thought of being solitary, helpless, clinging between heaven and earth to the face of that sheer precipice, feeling one's strength gradually go and waiting for the inevitable fall. From that moment I knew that it was to be a fight with death, and the very extremity of the danger nerved me to go on. In the end it was, indeed, I who was left alone, but by better luck than is likely to come to a man twice, I was not called upon to share the fate which overtook the brave man who had acted as my guide.

But we now faced a well-nigh perpendicular rock, with nothing to break the smooth surface save here and there a small shelf or crevice. We could not see more than a few feet above us, as it was exceedingly dangerous to lean back to try to obtain a clear view of the way. All that promised a foothold was a tiny ledge nearly ten feet directly over our heads.

Bracing myself as before, I let Bailey climb upon my shoulders. Then he reached up with one hand and grasped the edge of the shelf, and a moment later had succeeded in seating himself upon it. It was a magnificent feat of strength, agility and coolness—the last he was destined ever to perform. He seemed quite elated at having bridged a seemingly impossible part of the journey, and called down to me, quite exultingly: "When you reach this place the hard climb will be over."

A moment later he said: "Pass me my staff and I will help you up."

These were his last words. Whether he was seized with fright, vertigo or weakness I do not know, but an instant later I saw him fall back against the rock. The shelving ledge on which he sat let him slip, and he shot like an arrow into the abyss, passing about three feet to the right of where I was standing.

I saw him strike first one ledge and then another, till falling in a bruised heap upon a point of rock many feet below, he bounded and took the final plunge out of sight.

I was not frightened, I was not nervous. I did not cry out. I felt as if I were turning into stone. I could not move. My feet and hands seemed heavy, or rather as if glued to the little shelf on which I stood.

Gradually I realized where I was and what had happened. The meaning of my friend's words, "If one falls it will mean death for both," came back to my mind. There I clung for I know not how long, nothing but the steep granite above, below and about.

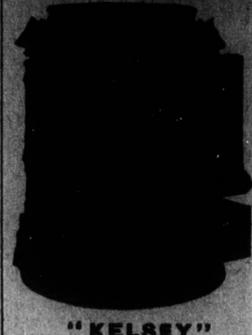
When I could move the first thing I did was to stick Bailey's staff into a crevice to mark the spot. Then I crawled down to the shelf below and removed my shoes. Barefoot, I succeeded in reaching the place where he had first struck. There lay his hat, a mute token of the tragedy, so silent, so sudden, so awful, which had taken place. By the time I had reached the third red-stained ledge, which he had struck in falling, I discovered that it would be impossible for me to get where I could even see his body, and I began to think about my own safety. Discarding everything that could encumber me, I tried to regain the lost ground. For a long time it was impossible to advance an inch, and I was about to give up the struggle when I noticed a narrow shelf about two feet above me which seemed to extend clear around the main rock. Below me was the gorge. Above me was the sky. My only hope was the shelf. Did it grow narrower or wider?

My fate depended upon that answer. With my arms stretched flat against the rock, and my face close to the wall, I began sliding along to the right. But the shelf became narrower; my heels projected over the dizzy gorge. Still I continued to advance slowly and painfully till suddenly the sound of falling water burst upon my ears, and I was enabled to move a degree faster, but an overwhelming desire to look behind me was threatening me with imminent danger. Calling all the remnants of my will power into play, I succeeded in momentarily controlling this awful desire, to gratify which would have meant instant death. The sound of gurgling water became plainer. I was nearing a waterfall, and in a moment more the fall itself was in sight.

There was but one thing possible

to do. That waterfall must be surmounted. In the icy water I crawled, and up, right under the falling stream. The rocks were of shale, and I reached up, grasping a projecting point of one, by means of which I drew myself up to a higher shelf. But this ledge was in the direct path of the falling water and my limbs were fast becoming chilled. I knew continuous motion was necessary, so by holding to the rocks along the stream I managed to drag myself up some thirty feet higher, where further advance was apparently stopped by a perpendicular wall nine feet high which barred the way. Even in the face of this difficulty my nerve did not fail me. I worked loose some small stones which I piled to a height of about two feet just under the falls, and found that by standing on this pile I could just reach with the ends of my fingers a small projecting rock. Securing as firm a hold as I could, I swung my feet clear of the stone pile to a point almost eighteen inches higher, and by continuing to push myself up feet first, and making use of the small bumps on the rocks, I finally was able to stand upright on a small shelf of rock only a little distance from the one from which my late companion had been hurled to his death. I was, by this time, thoroughly soaked, and shivering with cold. My fingers were blue and pinched, my whole body numb, but I felt with a sensation of infinite thankfulness that, as Bailey had said, "If I could attain that ledge, the worst was over."

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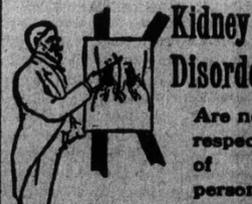
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I looked at my watch. It was just four o'clock. It seemed as if since I had started on my appalling climb over the perpendicular face of the monster cliff after Bailey had vanished, yet only an hour had been consumed. The distance to the top of El Capitan was yet two hundred feet, but the mountain from the point where I was covered with small bushes, vines and rocks, and in an incredibly short time as compared with my previous efforts, I stood upon the summit. 3300 feet above the level floor of the valley, but beyond the grim clutch of death. The top of El Capitan is nearly level, and after searching for some time for a sign or mark that would aid me in discovering a trail to the valley, I found a blazed tree, and following the direction indicated soon came to an Indian trail which led to Eagle



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Peak, where I struck the main trail to Yosemite Falls. The distance from the blazed tree to the camp is fourteen miles, but the trail was good, and I made rapid progress. I reached the valley at seven o'clock, just three hours from the time I had stood on a narrow ledge, clinging like a fly to a sheer wall of granite, and having expected for hours to be dashed, a whirling atom, on the giant rocks below.

When I was able I reported the awful accident, and was ready to lead a party to the scene of the tragedy that same night, but this idea had to be abandoned. At 5.30 o'clock in the morning of June 6th, I started back over the ground, in company with nine others, and at eleven o'clock reached the top of the gorge at the point where I had come out the day before. We had brought seven hundred feet of rope with us, but finding it twenty feet short, we obtained a piece from a pack saddle, and so were enabled to reach the remains of my friend. The heroism of J. A. Snell, of Callisto, and of H. Spaulding and F. Curry, of Palo Alto, who permitted themselves to be lowered over the great cliff, deserves to be commemorated.

When we again reached camp, my nerves suffered a complete collapse, from which they have not yet recovered. They will not be put to the test again. Others may attempt to take El Capitan. I have climbed my last.

## DOGS OF WAR.

(Major E. Hautonville Richardson, in the Nineteenth Century.)

Two hundred dogs, chiefly sheep hogs, are at present attached to the German forces operating in Herero Land under General von Trotha. One of them, Flock, has been sent home to Kell invalided. He was wounded by a bullet in the engagement of Opajbo while scouting in front of the skirmishing line. He displayed great fearlessness under fire, and worked faultlessly until disabled.

The Japanese are using a number of dogs for reconnoitering purposes; they are attached to long ropes and well trained. The Russians are employing dogs for sentry and messenger work.

Capt. Peradsky, of the late Count Keller's staff, writing from Odessa, says: "In finding the wounded men with which the millet fields are strewn, nothing has succeeded like our seven dogs; their intelligence, especially the English breed ones, is extraordinary." I have been asked several times to supply dogs to the Russian army, and only quite recently was commissioned to purchase sheep dogs in the Highlands for the German ambulance dog training establishment. Perhaps, instead of breeding and exporting dogs for foreign armies, we may some day find our dogs of service to their own country.

## IS A NEPHEW OF FATHER MATHESW.

The senior judge on the English bench is Lord Justice Mathew, who celebrated his 75th birthday recently. The Lord Justice, who has the reputation of being one of the ablest on the bench, is a nephew of the famous Father Mathew, the temperance advocate. One of his daughters is the wife of Mr. John Dillon, M.P. Justice Mathew is an Irishman and a Catholic.

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## SYNOPSIS OF CANADIAN NORTH-WEST BOUNDARY REGULATIONS.

ANY even numbered section of Dominion Lands in Manitoba or the Northwest Provinces, excepting 8 and 26, not reserved, may be homesteaded by any person who is the sole head of a family, or any male over 18 years of age, to the extent of one-quarter section of 100 acres, more or less.

Entry may be made personally at the local land office for the district in which the land is situated, or if the homesteader desires, he may, on application to the Minister of the Interior, Ottawa, the Commissioner of Immigration, Winnipeg, or the local agent receive authority for some one to make entry for him.

The homesteader is required to perform the conditions connected therewith under one of the following plans:

- (1) At least six months' residence upon and cultivation of the land in each year for three years.
- (2) If the father (or mother, if the father is deceased) of the homesteader resides upon a farm in the vicinity of the land entered for the requirements as to residence may be satisfied by such person residing with the father or mother.
- (3) If the settler has his permanent residence upon farming land owned by him in the vicinity of his homestead, the requirements as to residence may be satisfied by residence upon the said land.

Six months' notice in writing should be given to the Commissioner of Dominion Lands at Ottawa of intention to apply for patent.

N.B.—Unauthorized publication of this advertisement will not be paid for.

W. W. CORY,  
Deputy of the Minister of the Interior.

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**C.M.B.A. OF CANADA**, Branch 26—Organized 13th November, 1880, Branch 26 meets at St. Patrick's Hall, 92 St. Alexander street, on every Monday of each month. The regular meetings for the transaction of business are held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at 8 o'clock p.m. Officers: Spiritual Adviser, Rev. J. P. Killoran; Chancellor, W. F. Wall; President, J. M. Kennedy; 1st Vice-President, J. H. Malden; 2nd Vice-President, J. P. Dooley; Recording Secretary, R. M. J. Dolan, 16 Overdale Ave.; Assistant Sec. Sec., W. J. Macdonald; Financial Secretary, J. J. Costigan, 825 St. Urban street; Treasurer, J. H. Kelly; Marshal, J. Walsh; Guard, M. J. O'Regan; Trustees, T. J. Finn, W. A. Hodgson, P. J. D'Arcy, R. Gahan, T. J. Stevens; Medical Advisers, Dr. H. J. Harrison; Dr. E. J. O'Connor, Dr. G. H. Merrill.

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## RECONC

The local train, which speeding out of town at twelve miles an hour, came to a standstill with a view at a level crossing a cow and Reynolds, shaken out, vere, opened the window, and revealed only an impassive green, he sat back to a more important question. She was a friend and not the Potters. There was a faint smile on her face, and she said: "But you have a bag that looks as if it might have instrument in it."

"Why, yes," the young fellow, in astonishment, "a banjo. That's lucky, isn't it?"

"Great Scott! Why, yes, so. But what in the name of heaven—"

"Then you are the man!"

"This way, sir, please, and as you can, if you don't mind, can't you move the train as she hears 'Rule, Britannia'?"

"It's the only thing that I can do. We tried everything. Pushing, pulling, everything sticks on the rails like a rock. I wouldn't bother you five minutes late, but I'll be doing everybody a good lively 'Rule, Britannia'!"

Reynolds caught up his hat and hurried after the official, as he went, which had gone insane, and when the attack would prove to be a temporary aberration.

A number of passengers in the train. They were gathered around the portion of crossing which intersected.

"Now, then, here comes and his lady!" cried a voice from the crowd.

For a minute the young fellow stood with his own mental little by little a light broke in his brain.

A few yards only of line between the engine and the track. At the crossing the obstruction in full view. It was small, antiquated pony drawn by or rather attached to white mare.

The animal was neither staid nor approved as a her kind, nor prostrate, as times happen by accident. The young man's face was not calm, almost blue, expressive brown-green eyes.

The carriage was occupied by women. One of them, a stately, maiden-aunt-looking person engaged in making volubility to a delighted child, other, a girl in white, with black among the cushions and, in evident enjoyment of the situation.

At sight of the girl Reynolds, with a little cry of "back under his breath." The young man's face was not calm, almost blue, expressive brown-green eyes.

"How do you do, Mr. Reynolds?" she said. "I'd no idea you were this part of the country. Can I be of any assistance? The pleasure which excluded young man's face was not in that of the girl's.