Animal Curiosities.

Parrots Who Kill Sheep—Amusing Stories About Monkeys — When Birds Are Frightened — A Cute Fish That Gets Ahead of Its Neighbors — Endurance of the Reindeer — Roping a Wild Elephant.

FAITHFUL TO THE LAST.

As an evidence of the faithfulness of dogs, a New York paper gives the following: Emma Eisterman, 55 years old, was found lying dead this forenoon at the base of a pile of rocks at the foot of East Seventy-seventh street. A lot of children were playing about the neighborhood, and in the course of their sport came across the body of Mrs. Eisterman, beside which sat a little terrier, which would not permit anybody to approach. The self-stricken animal moaned piteously, and would cease his cries only long enough to lick the cold face of his mistress in a vain endeavor to revive her. He bit viciously at anyone who approached, and refused to quit his guard until the husband of the woman was found. In him the dog recognized the proper one to take his place as guardian of and chief mourner for the dead. But he did not quit his moaning, and there is every reason for believing that the animal is practically heart-broken and will die. Mrs. Eisterman had fallen from the rocks, receiving an injury to her head that caused death.

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PARROTS WHO KILL SHEEP.

Mr. Taylor White contributes to the Zoologist an account of the kea, a dull green bird of the parrot type, known as Nestor notabilis, whose sheep-killing propensities have lately attracted much attention. Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace says that the kea deserted its natural forests and berries first for the pickings of the farmers' slaughter yards, then for the live sheep, and finally by a refinement of evolutionary adaptation for the delicate fat which overlies the sheep's kidney.

Mr. White, who was farming sheep on the New Zealand mountains before the kea had learned its bad habits, and who has had the best opportunity for studying the bird, dispute this statement. The kea, he says, could not have deserted its berries, for it is only found above the forest line, where berries do not grow. Its food consists naturally chiefly of lichens on stones, and it hit on the practice of killing sheep in all probability by accident. Suddenly it was found that some sheep, which had missed a shearing and had long wool, would die in the night, and on skinning a small round hole far down the back would be discovered. For a long time the cause of this was unknown, but one day the kea was caught in the act, and thenceforth its proceedings were closely watched.

The kea's habit of sheep killing and seeking out the kidney fat has been held up as one of the most striking instances of rapid adaptation; but Mr. White thinks that the adaptation was occasioned by the resemblance of the long and possibly frozen wool to the lichens on which the birds feed. The parrot, it seems, never touches the kidney fat at all, but simply wants the blood, and the reason for its choosing a spot far back was not the proximity of any special delicacy, but the fact that it could not be reached there, and that the position and long hair gave it a purchase during the frantic efforts which the victim made to escape.

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MONKEY BURGLARS.

There are three monkeys in Calcutta just now who are stated to be the greatest thieves and robbers that disgrace the City of Palaces. Considerable amusement was caused the other morning when seven people who had been treated very badly by these monkeys, walked into the Jorabaganthana, and, in all seriousness, wished to lay a charge of "theft and causing mischief" against the offenders!

The inspector regretted that he could not accept the charge, and advised the complainants to destroy the troublesome animals. This suggestion they would not adopt on account of religious scruples. The inspector thereupon advised the men to go to the police court and charge the monkeys with being burglars of a very bad type, and apply for a warrant for their arrest. The deputation left to consider the position of affairs.—Westminster Budget.

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A DOG'S RUSE.

The other day I witnessed an amusing instance of canine sagacity worthy of commemoration in print. I was staying with friends who have a varied collection of dogs—a Blenheim spaniel and her five puppies, a fox terrier and two fine deer hounds. This happy family are allowed to spend part of the day in the drawing room, provided they conform to certain rules as to boundary lines and an amicable agreement among themselves.

The hearth rug is the favorite "coign of vantage" with them all. Zuna, the deer hound, sauntered in one morning and found every approach to the fire blocked by the slumbering forms of her companions. She tried gently to scratch a passage for herself, but was repelled with growls. So, apparently suffering from extreme lowness of spirits, she retired to a distant corner of the room, but not to sleep. For ten minutes she crouched there, pondering silently, then, suddenly bounding up, flew to the window and barked as if an invading army were in sight. Of course, everyone, human and canine, followed in mad haste. The hearth rug was left unoccupied, and Zuna quietly trotted round, stretched her huge form before the fire, and in an instant was snoring heavily, leaving us all staring out into vacancy—emphatically "sold!"

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A FIGHTING FISH.

The paradise fish, in addition to being ornamental, has some very interesting ways. The male builds the nest, which is quite right and proper, but he builds it of bubbles! Rather frail building material, you may think, and not apt to endure very long. It does very well, however, for the bubbles forming in the slime which surrounds the egg are quite lasting, and by constantly adding fresh ones, the fish keeps the nest in a fair state of repair. The younger are nearly transparent, and floating beneath the bubbles they ar quite invisible to their enemies above the water.

From the time the eggs are laid until the young fish are large enough to take care of themselves, their father guards them against their hundreds of enemies beneath the surface, among which is their own mother. This unnatural parent would devour her offspring as greedily as she would a wriggler, were it not for the vigilance of her mate, who takes very good care that she does not get an opportunity. Between guarding his children, which are numbered somewhere in the hundreds and keeping his somewhat flimsy nest in repair, he is a very much occupied fish. With a very business-like air he flirts about, now rising to get a mouthful of air to release in bubbles below his nest to mend a break, now dashing after and seizing another of his runaway children, or rushing with a degree of ferocity all out of proportion to his size, upon some finny raider.

But he is utterly depraved himself, and if he gets the chance he will kidnap half a dozen of his neighbor's family to increase his own, so when the nests are close together there is a perpetual warfare going on between the proprietors. He is very pugnacious and there is no discretion coupled with this quality, for he displays as much readiness to attack and devour me, sketching outfit and all, if I approach too closely, as he would a May fly. But his disposition is not half as bad as that of one of his cousins, for there is no species of the same genus, called Betta pugnax, which is cultivated in Siam for its game and fighting qualities.

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TOLD BY AN OLD SHOWMAN.

"Speaking of monkeys," said the old showman, "we had about 30 of them once in a big cage with a shelf along each side, up high, for them to lie on, and a little dead tree with the ends of the branches sawed off standing in the middle for them to climb up to the shelves by, and to hang on by their tails if they wanted to. One day we set in on the bottom of the cage a champagne bottle filled with very highly fermented root beer, and with the cork tied with a bow-knot. The monkeys got up on the shelves and up in the stump tree and looked down on this bottle very suspiciously; finally their curiosity got the better of them, and they came down and moved around the bottle to inspect it. At last they got near enough to touch it and handle it, and finally they upset it over on its side. Then one of the monkeys began pulling on the string, with the rest all clustered around. At last he pulled the knot loose, and bang! went the cork, and away went the beer. The first rush of it knocked over three or four of the monkeys nearest the muzzle of the bottle, and it drenched half a dozen of them and wet all of them more or less, for it went through the bunch of monkeys like a puff of smoke, spattering and flying in all directions. An instant later the monkeys were up the tree and lying along on the shelves. There was nothing left on the floor of the cage but the empty bottle.

"A number of times after that we set the bottle of beer out in the sun to ferment, and then set them in the cage, but the monkeys never would touch them. We could set the bottles in, but we couldn't make the monkeys pull the string.

"There was a lady standing in front of the cage one day who had on a hat with a big bunch of red cherries and a lot of flowers on the top of it. A monkey reached through the bars and grabbed the cherries. The lady pulled back, but the monkey held on and pulled the hat off, and tried to drag it through the bars into the cage. Three or four other visitors standing near rushed up and grabebd the hat, and they pulled one way while the monkey pulled the other. They finally got the hat away from the monkey and returned it to the lady. The cherries were all gone, and what there was left of the rest of the hat really wasn't of much account. The lady said she would have to be paid for the hat, and she made for the boxoffice.

"'Why, certainly,' said the man in the box office. 'How much do you value the hat?'

"'Five dollars,' the lady said, and the box office man handed out the money.

"The lady smiled; she was evidently pleased. 'I didn't really expect you would pay for it, she said, and she turned to go away.

"'Madam,' said the man in the box office, and the lady turned around.

"'We'll take the hat now, if you please.'

"'What!' said the lady.

"'The hat, if you please,' said the box office man. 'We've paid for it, and we would like to have it.'

"Of course, the lady couldn't go away without a hat, and the upshot of it was that she returned the $5 and went away with the hat.

"Standing in front of the cage one day was a man who had on a pair of gold spectacles. A monkey reached through and took the spectacles off the man's nose. The man was greatly surprised at this, but he was a great deal more surprised when he saw the monkey, still standing close by him, push the glasses out of the frame and put them in his mouth and stow them away, one in each cheek, and then proceed to twist the frames up, like so much wire, into a small bunch. One of our men went into the cage and choked the monkey until he got the glasses out of his mouth, and then we got the frame away from him and we returned them to the owner. Of course they were not of much use to him in that shape, but it was the best we could do."

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A FELINE MOURNER.

"L. S." writes to the London Spectator: "I had a dear little dog, a Skye terrier, and some time after he came to my house a wandered cat was added to the establishment. He was very kind to 'Bessie,' as we called our new inmate, and watched over her with great care, never allowing her to go out by the front door, but pushing her gently in when she attempted it; but they had many a romp together in the back garden. My dog died at the good old age of thirteen, and the cat mourned him like a human being, losing all her liveliness, and moping about the house. About a year after the dog's death I desired the gardner to put turf over the dog's grave, as the house was let and I feared strangers might dig there. To do this he began to level the earth over the grave, and whenever the cat saw him digging there she got into a most excited state, frisking about in the wildest spirits, evidently expecting that her kind companion was to be restored to her. Her disappointment, when he never appeared, was trying to witness; and she has been a "sadder and a wiser" cat ever since, doing her duty faithfully by the mice, but apparently expecting little pleasure in life.

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ENDURANCE OF THE REINDEER.

Mr. F. G. Jackson has marvelous tales to tell of the reindeer, their speed and endurance as animals of draft—so marvelous, indeed, that he must forgive us for suggesting that he has made a mistake in his figures. "I have myself," he writes, "driven three reindeers a distance of 120 versts within twelve hours without feeding them, and I heard of a case where a Zirian drove three deer from Ishma, on the Pechora river, to Obdorsk, on the Obi, a distance of 300 versts, within 24 hours. * * * A reindeer, or Samoyed verst, by the way, is equal to four Russian versts. In other words, Mr. Jackson says he has driven three deer for twelve hours at the rate of forty Russian versts, or 27 English miles, an hour. And the Zirian, with a similar team, covered 710 miles in 24 hours. The latter, by the way, must have crossed the Ural Mountains and one or two rivers in the bargain. Surely there must be some mistake. There exists, it is true, a well-known tradition of a reindeer which once—about 1700, we believe—carried important dispatches for the King of Sweden 800 miles in 48 hours, and, dying in the service of its king, is still preserved, in skeleton form, in a northern musseum. But that, after all, is only a tradition. Better authenticated records do not give a higher rate of speed than 150 miles to nineteen hours, which is considerably higher than what is attained by any other animal.—London Spectator.

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ROPING A WILD ELEPHANT.

With the two ropes ready, Ali approached the elephant from behind, for it was his hind legs he was attempting to secure. When about twenty feet off he made the end of one of the ropes fast to a tree, and then inch by inch covered the intervening distance. At last, after much painful effort, he lay at full length, almost touching the animal, the two nooses lying open, one behind each pillar-like leg. Giving a last glance to see that the rope he had fastened was clear, he took the noose and pushed it forward until it touched one foot. To get it on the leg the elephant must by some means be induced to raise his foot. With a long thorn Ali gently pricked the other leg, just as a fly might sting it, for the pachydermata, in spite of their thick hides, are very sensitive to the bites of insects. Slowly the foot he was endeavoring to secure rose and rubbed the spot he had pricked. As it left the ground the noose was slipped open beneath it, so as to encircle it when replaced. Then after a moment's pause, with steady, unfaltering hand, the noose was raised and slightly drawn. When the elephant felt the contact of the rope he at once, with the other foot attempted to showe it off down to the ground. This action allowed Ali to slip the second noose into place. After another pause both nooses were raised, and still with gentle touch drawn tight, one on each leg. The elephant at once moved forward, but before it could feel the check of the tree to which it was attached, Ali had glided away and had taken a turn around another trunk with the second rope and made it fast. Nor was he a moment too soon, for suspecting the danger, the elephant dashed forward with a mighty rush. When it reached the end of its tether its hind legs were pulled from under and it was thrown to the ground.—Outing for November.

Missing Links

Gossip From Every Land Summarized for Busy Readers.

THE Bass Rock pays an annual tribute of 12 solan geese to the parish minister of Berwick, Scotland.

THE Duke of Marlborough's father used to say, in regard to the enormous expense of keeping up Blenheim Palace that it cost £800 ($4,000) a year to keep the place in putty alone.

HIS EXCELLENCY is the title by which Earnest Curtius, the historian of Greece, is now addressed, Emperor William having appointed him an active Privy Councilor, wirklicher Geheimrath.

THE internal heat of the earth increases 1 degree (Fahr.) for every 50 to 70 feet of vertical depth in various regions, so that from 2,000 to 3,000 feet in depth is about the limit that a man can work.

Sar Peladan, the head of the "Rose Croix," and writer of an endless series of mystical novels, having found a rich widow who will marry him, has shorn his long locks and given up his eccentricities.

SIR JAMES LOW, Lord Provost, of Dundee, Scotland, was, on the 16th of October, presented by his colleagues with a silver cradle, a daughter being added to his family during his term of office in the civic chair.

THE best paid governess in the world seems to be the English governess of the little King of Spain, This lady receives $4,500 a year for her services, and attends only to the little King's English primer work.

A 20-year-old printer of Brixen, named Delago, recently scaled the westernmost and highest of the Rosengarten Dolomites in Tyrol and came down safely. The peak is 9,250 feet above sea level, rising almost perpendicularly.

WOMAN has forced her way into the orchestra seats of the Comedie Francaise, Paris, which heretofore only man could occupy. She must appear in full dress, however, and bonnets, and all other forms of covering for the head must be left outside.

ENGLAND has sent 672 missionaries to China within the past five years. Thirty-six left in a body recently to work in China and India. The proportion of women who take this rigorous and self-denying work on themselves is far greater than that of men.

A LITTLE fellow in knickerbockers killed an eagle measuring seven feet from tip to tip of its wings, near Greenwood, Ky., a few days ago. The eagle had killed a turkey hen in the barnyard when the boy saw it. He got a gun and killed the bird at the first shot.

ONLY 36 per cent of the Parisians were born in the city, according to the last census. The foreigners are 184,000, but 8,000 of them having independent incomes, the rest being workmen or tradesmen. Nearly 27,000 are German subjects while in Berlin there are only 397 Frenchmen.

TWO prize rams in Pike county, Pa., fought a duel to the death one day last week. Their method of combat was to back off from each other a distance of 30 to 50 feet, and then run full tilt together, head to head. Finally one ram dropped dead with a completely smashed head.

HAILSTONES as large as hens' eggs have given place as a remarkable natural product in Washington State to apples as big as footballs. Red apples 15 inches in circumference have been produced in several districts, and pippins and greenings measuring from a foot to fourteen inches around are almost plentiful.

POLICE Judge Campbell, of San Francisco, joined the Salvation Army in that city last week. Mrs. Ballington Booth is preaching there, and at one of her meetings the judge stood up and asked to be prayed for, and afterward joined the army. He does not expect to don uniform and become a regular warrior.

A HINDU who stammers has found out that he stammers more on moonlight than on dark nights, and that when he sleeps in the moonlight he stammers most on the days succeeding the full moon and not at all on the day before and the day after the new moon. Nature says this agrees with other observations.

MRS. PRISCILLA BRIGHT McLAREN, of Newington House, Edinburgh, widow of Duncan McLaren, and only surviving sister of John Bright, has just been the recipient of numerous congratulations and presents on the occasion of her 80th birthday. Mrs. McLaren, notwithstanding her advanced age, is in the enjoyment of excellent health, and still takes much interest in politics.

MR. DAVID PLUNKETT, Member of Parliament for Dublin University, who has just been raised to the peerage, though not a wealthy man, has probably more money standing in his name than any single private citizen in the world. He is trustee for many rich people, including the Guinesses, and generally holds in that capacity from $150,000,000 to $200,000,000 worth of securities.

IN ANSWER to numerous articles describing the gradual Germanization of Alsace-Lorraine, a writer in the Revue Hebdomadaire, Paris, says it does not make a particle of difference whether the people of these provinces wish to remain German or not. France must have revenge, although certain ill-advised French writers fancy she will accept the present delineation of her frontier as final.

THE Duke of Argyll has long refused to build new houses at Inverary, or to allow other people to do so. Most of the present houses are nearly a century old, and many of them are in a scarcely habitable condition. The state of matters has long been a scandal, and now the town council, acting on the report of their medical officer, have been forced to take action in regard to a number of the duke's houses.

IN GERMANY they are discussing the advisability of framing a law excluding foreigners from occupying German thrones. Several reigning families are dying out. Saxe-Coburg is already held by an Englishman, Brunswick will go to another Briton, Oldenburg is likely to fall to a Russian as next of kin. It is thought that these foreign princes as heads of German states could interfere with the prosperity of the country.

POLLIWOGS have been tested by electricity recently. One placed in a cell containing water and supplied with electrodes, waggled his tail when the current was sent in the direction from head to tail, but kept still when it was reversed. A number of them in a large trough were greatly excited when the current was first turned on, but soon came to rest lying in the direction of the current.

THE Gaulois, of Paris, prints the following: "The Norwegian town of Bergen is to erect a statue to the great violinist and patriot, Ole Bull, the paganini of the north, and one of the founders of the first Norwegian theatre, at Bergen, in 1850." Ole Bull, Griegs Ibsen, Bjornstjerne, Bjornson and Holberg, called the "Moliere of the north"—it is a splendid group of names and men for the little town of Bergen to have produced!

THE traveling barber exists in Spain; the warmth of the climate and an evident distate for his hirstute adornments makes el barbero a necessity in any Spanish house. He can be seen on the footpaths of country Spain, trudging along under a little load of brass pots, bowls, and basins, not forgetting a tiny oil stove, which enables him to supply customers with a warm shave. He also carries lancets for bleeding, and he never fails to assure every man he meets that his personal appearance would be wonderfully improved by the barber's art.

SCOTLAND YARD, in London, is so called from a palace built for the reception of the Kings of Scotland when they visited England. Fennant tells us that it was originally given to King Edgar by Kenneth, Prince of that country, for the purpose of his coming to pay him annual homage, as Lord Paramount of Scotland. Margarte, widow of James V., and sister of Henry VIII., resided there a considerable time after the death of her husband, and was magnificently entertained by her brother on his becoming reconciled to her second marriage with the Ealr of Angus.

SIR CHARLES HALLE, the distinguished musician, whose death was cabled the other day, was born in Germany in 1819. He was famous in Paris as a pianist when yet a youth. The revolution of 1848 caused his emigration to England, where he appeared for the first time at a concert in Covent Garden Theater, playing Beethoven's E flat concerto. Soon after he became director of the Musical Institution at Manchester. He instituted in London, in 1857, an annual series of twenty orchestral and choral concerts, which have taken place uninterruptedly since then, and are among the most important in Europe. Sir Charles Halle was regarded as the leader among the classical pianists of England and was highly esteemed as a conductor. He published a few compositions of merit and edited works of the classics. He was knighted in 1888. His wife was Norman-Neruda, a celebrated violinist.

Love's Young Dream.

Father—Now, see here. If you marry that young pauper, how on earth are you going to live?

Sweet Girl—Oh, we have figured all that out. You remember that old hen my aunt gave me?

"Yes."

"Well, I have been reading a poultry circular, and I find that a good hen will raise 20 chickens in a season. Well, the next season there will be 21 hens, and as each will raise 20 more chicks that will be 420. The next year the number will be 8,400, the following year 168,000, and the next 3,336,000. Just think! At only 50 cents apiece we will then have $1,680,000. Then, you dear old papa, we'll lend you some of the money to pay of the mortgage on this house."—New York Weekly.

Royal wisdom is not much better than the ordinary kind, but it costs more.

A MUCH-SPOKEN-OF PLACE.

Facts About Venezuela, Which Has a Quarrel With Great Britain.

The Republic has enjoyed a Federal constitution since 1864.

There are 407 miles of railway and 2,595 miles of telegraph lines.

Gold has been the most important product next after coffee.

Boots and hats are chief manufactures. The Venezuelans make hats from a material called jipijapa (pronounced hee-pee-ha-pa), which are often sold in the United States for Panama straw.

Venezuela is one of the important markets for American petroleum, though it has important oil fields of its own.

The monetary system is the same as that of the Latin Convention—France, Belgium, Italy and Switzerland—the unit being the bolivar, which takes the place of the franc. The metric system of weights and measures is legal.

The Roman Catholic is the State religion, but freedom of worship is guaranteed by law, and popular education is well provided for.

The public revenue is derived chiefly from customs.

The constitution is modeled to some extent after that of the United States.

Venezuelans celebrate July 14 as their day of independence. On that day, in 1810, they rose against the Spanish rule, under Bolivar, the George Washington of South America.

Caracas, the principal city, took its name from the Spanish Captain-General in 1550.

Spain recognized the independence of the Republic in 1845, after a 30 years' war.

Of the last 85 years nearly one-half have been spent in war.

An important article of diet among the common people is arepas, a kind of cake made of coarsely ground Indian corn.

It was the first American mainland sighted by Columbus on his third voyage, in 1498.

It was under Spanish rule until early in the present century.

Among the snakes are rattlers, boa constrictors and anacondas.

Yellow fever is almost of annual recurrence in the coast towns.

There are dry and rainy seasons, as in California, the rainy season occurring during the months of our summer.

Swarms of locusts sometimes commit great ravages among the fields and plantations.

The "boundary question" has been perennial since the founding of the Republic. Colombia, Ecuador and Great Britain have been the chief contestants.

The Republic comprises eight states and nine territories, besides two colonies—Guzman Blanco and Bolivar.

Though situated on or near the equator, the country has a moderate climate. In Caracas the mean temperature is 71 degrees, the extremes being 48 and 83 degrees. This is due to the trade winds.

The hottest weather is in April and mid-August.

The vegetation is tropical in its character.

The town of Meridia is 5,400 feet above the sea—200 feet higher than Denver.

It claims territory exceeding the territory under its actual government by 193,000 square miles.

BANNER'S BADGES REGALIA FOR ALL SOCIETIES THE DOMINION REGALIA Co 7 YORK ST. TORONTO.

Died as Near Heaven as Possible.

As the snows on the Rhotang Pass melted the fragments of the dead body of a man were found against the north wall of the refuge on the Lahoul side of the pass. As he had been there all the winter, little was left save bones, rags and a drinking cup. He had evidently—thinks a Bombay contemporary—come there to die, as he had built two low stone walls some three feet apart, and then lain down to die with his head against the north wall of the refuge. This showed him to have been a "Khampu" or Spiti man, as the prevalent belief in Spiti is that the higher the elevation they die at, the greater their chance of going to a better world. They do not seem to hold the Buddhist doctrines of transmigration, absorption or annihilation, but rather to look forward to a somewhat materialistic heaven, which seems to be situate in the air immediately above the Kailas Mountain, with a vestibule or entry on top of the Kailas itself.

Romantic Scotland

How the Regalia of the Northland Was Saved From the Invader—In and Around Dunnotter Castle — The Clever Scheme of a Minister's Wife.

(Chambers's Journal.)

On the east coast of Scotland, immediately south of Aberdeenshire, and occupying the country between the mouth of the Dee and the North Esk, lies the county of Kincardine—a district anciently known as the Mearns. The cliffs along the shore line are here composed of a red conglomerate or pudding stone, and the platform on which Dunnottar Castle stands looks as if a huge mass had slipped down from the adjoining cliff and become anchored by its own weight in the sea. Its summit is lower in elevation than the shore behind, with which it is connected by a low narrow neck of land only a few feet above sea level. A steep path leads down to this conecting isthmus, and from it runs upward again towards the gateway of the castle, which is situated in an angle of the buildings that form the outworks of the fortress. The ruins are of great extent and interest. Dunnottar Castle must have afforded accommodation for a large number of people, and been more like the abode of a community than the residence of a family. The old keep or tower stands at its full height, but is neglected and shattered, and threatens soon to fall into the waves below. The later buildings contain a great gallery for assemblies, and form a spacious quadrangle, with a deep well in the court, filled with water, the mystery of which water supply has long puzzled and still puzzles many wise heads. Here, too, are bakery and brewery, and all the appurtenances of a place in which were many mouths to be daily filled. Here, also, is a dismal vault into which a hundred and twenty Whigs—men, women and children—were in the summer of 1685 thrust, and there kept for three dreadful months, to the torture of all and the death of many; those who survived being shipped abroad to the plantations.

Perhaps the most romantic incident in connection with this ancient stronghold was the preservation of it, and the rescue therefrom of the crown, scepter, sword of state, and other articles and jewelry forming the regalia of Scotland. On Jan. 1, 1651, these articles had been in use at the coronation of Charles II. at Scone, and were thereafter restored to the keeping of Keith as Earl Marischal of Scotland. But the progress of the civil war rendered it imperative that the insignia should be put in a place of security, and with this view the distant and strong castle of Dunnottar — which, moreover, was the property of the Earl Marischal—was fixed upon as the place for the temporary security of the regalia. The Earl himself being at this time a prisoner in the Tower of London, the defense of the stronghold of Dunnottar was entrusted to George Ogilvy, of Barras, who had been trained in the German campaigns, and was therefore a soldier of experience. When the English forces of the Commonwealth began to move northward to give their attention, among other places, to the Castle of Dunnottar, the Scottish Committee of Estates became alarmed, and in August, 1651, sent an order to withdraw the regalia from Dunnottar and convey it to a more private and secure place. But this the Governor Ogilvy refused to obey. The English commanders summoned Ogilvy, with a promise of fair terms, to surrender the castle; but this he stoutly refused to do, expressing his resolution to defend it to the last.

The English cannonading began from Black Hill, and then the danger of the castle was seen to be imminent. In this emergency, thoughts seem to have been entertained of sending the regalia away by sea; but this plan was not adopted, as English vessels were cruising all along the coasts. Finally, as the story runs, "female ingenuity and courage found a resource." Although the Earl Marischal was lying prisoner in London, his mother, the Countess Dowager, was in Dunnottar. She is described as a woman of masculine courage and prudence, and not disposed to forget that the charge of the regalia was one of the honorable duties imposed upon her son as his birthright inheritance. An ingenious plan was therefore concocted for the removal of the regalia from the castle, and for the secreting of it in a secure place till better times should come for Scotland. The plan was one which required the co-operation of some trustworthy person outside the fortress. The Governor's wife as well as the Dowager was in the secret; and outside they found the ally they required in Christian Fletcher, wife of the Rev. James Granger, minister of Kinneff. In prosecution of the scheme, therefore, Mrs. Granger solicited and obtained from the English general permission to visit the Governor's lady within the castle. The regalia was then secretly delivered to Mrs. Granger. The crown she concealed in her lap, while the scepter and sword were wrapped up in a bundle of flax, which was placed on the back of a female domestic. All this was done without the knowledge of the Governor, so that, should he ultimately be compelled, as was not improbable, to surrender the castle, he might be in a position to declare truthfully that he knew nothing about the disappearance or subsequent hiding place of the royal insignia. Before proceeding to the castle, Mrs. Granger had left her horse in the English camp, as Dunnottar could not be approached nearer on horseback. Upon her return to the camp, therefore, she accounted for the presence of the domestic with the flax by stating that she was having it conveyed home to be spun and manufactured into cloth for Mr. Ogilvy. The English general did not suspect any treachery, and is said even to have courteously assisted the lady to mount her horse; she with the crown in her lap, being thus placed perilously on the verge of discovery. But she retained her presence of mind, thanked the officer for his courtesy, and so departed triumphant. The minister of Kinneff and his wife buried the various articles comprising the regalia, in different parts of the church; and thither they went from time to time at night to make sure by inspection that all was safe. Under the restoration in 1660 the regalia were once more returned into the custody of the Government.

Facetious Invitations.

There is a story—a very old story—of an invitation. It runs thus: "We have just taken a house near the Regent's Canal, and hope you will drop in some evening."

Sydney Smith's answer to an invitation was perhaps nearly as humorous. "Dear Longman,—I can't accept your invitation. My house is full of country cousins. I wish they were once removed."

Hogarth, it is said, could be merry over the most trivial things. On a card, inviting a friend to dinner, he drew a pie, with a knife and fork as supporters, and the following sport on three letters of the Greek alphabet: "To Eta Beta Pi."

Charles Lamb wrote many a pleasant and humorous invitation, and also many good answers. Being tickled by the oddity of Haydon's address, he once sent him the following reply:

"My Dear Haydon,—I will come, with pleasure, to 22, Lisson Grove, North, at Possi's, half way up, right-hand side, if I can find it. Yours, C. LAMB. 20, Russell-court, Covent Garden, East. Half-way up. Next the corner. Left-hand side."

To his friend Manning was sent the following playful and pressing invitation: "This night we shall be at home, and so shall we certainly both (sic) Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Take your choice. Mind, I don't say of one, but choose which evening you will not, and come the other four. Doors open at 5 o'clock. Shells forced at 9. Every gentleman smokes or not, as he pleases."

Of course one occasionally finds the senders of invitations "dropping into poetry." Tom Moore, as one might suppose, was a good hand at that pleasant exercise. Matthew Prior once sent an "extempore invitation to the Earl of Oxford, High Treasurer, 1812":

My Lord,—
Our weekly friends tomorrow meet,
At Matthew's Palace in Duke street,
To try for once if they can dine
On bacon, ham, and mutton chine:
and in the same strain invites the noble lord to the plain, but, no doubt, cheerful little dinner.