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LOUISVILLE, KY.—HENRY WATERSON, EDITOR

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LAND OF MIRAGES

Death Valley and Its Treacherous Lures of Beauty.

WORK OF A GOOD SAMARITAN.

Beck, the prospector, who has made the desert bloom with guideposts pointing the way to water and saved many men from death.

In the American Magazine is an article about Lew Westcott Beck, who is known as the "good Samaritan of Death valley." He and his dog, Rufus, have saved many prospectors from a horrible death by making the desert blossom with guideposts showing the way to water. The following is an extract from the article:

"Time was when Beck was a plain prospector in the Cripple Creek country. He was in on the diggings at Leadville, and he panned around in Montana awhile. Likewise he rushed into the Big Horn at the time of the mineral strike there, but he never struck a lead that made him rich.

"Eventually he drifted down through Nevada and into Death valley, chasing rainbows. Wild rumors about 'Death Valley' Scotty's big find in that section electrified the country, and scores of prospectors rushed into the desert, expecting to make their fortune in a few days. Beck was among those present."

"There were several in Beck's party. They hiked many miles through the mirage land, finding nothing worth while and worrying constantly lest they exhaust their supply of water. For two days they sought water holes, and when out of water they went for hours with tongues swollen and lips parched from want of moisture. Then when death seemed inevitable they suddenly discovered a tiny stream trickling out of a canyon at the base of the Panamint mountains.

"When Beck returned to civilization he was a changed man. He had seen sands that were strewn with skulls, and that sight had put a big idea into his head.

"Come spring, and Beck made another trip through Death valley. At his side was a Newfoundland dog. The prospector carried a bundle of tin strips. They were signboards to guide the wanderers' steps aright.

"Each summer since then the prospector and his dog have made a journey to the land of the purple mist, piling up rocks and attaching signs to them, searching for lost travelers and incidentally keeping a lookout for a piece of precious metal. Once or twice Beck has led his mentor to prospectors who, after long suffering from thirst,

and fallen upon the burning sands to die.

"In signboarding the desert Beck has saved a number of thirst mad rainbow chasers and has also in remote districts stumbled upon the bleaching bones of dead men who may have found fortunes in the silver sulphur district, but who did not live to tell the world about it. At one time he assisted at the burial of four men who died of thirst within two miles of a spring.

"The country that Beck traverses is the most arid section of the American continent—a dreary stretch of hundreds of miles of desert, dotted here and there with foothills, buttes, dry creek beds, chaparral, prickly pear and sagebrush. Springs are miles upon miles apart. Most of them are bitterly alkali, and some are poison.

"On an ordinary summer afternoon the thermometer runs up to about 134 degrees in the shade out in Death valley, and the most unpleasant thing about it is that there is a dearth of shade. When man ventures out upon this trackless expanse the shimmering heat dazes him, and the mirage—treacherous, lying thing of beauty that it is—looms ever before him, flashing upon the canvas of his mind's eye a verdant valley, gorgeously green with growing things, fresh with flowers, wet with water and waiting to welcome him.

"He can see grassy hill slopes just ahead, and the mirrored lake appears to be just beyond some beckoning meadow. He follows on and on and afterward drains the last drop from his canteen. Then his throat becomes parched, his tongue cleaves to the roof of his mouth, and strange things pass before his eyes. The buzzards begin to soar over him, and the coyotes sit upon their hunkers and watch him chase rainbows until he pitches forward upon his face and closes his eyes upon a world that is too mysterious and merciless for him to linger in longer."

Song of a Little River.
There's no music like a little river's. It plays the same tune (and that's the favorite) over and over again, and yet it does not weary of it like men and children. It takes the mind out of doors, and, though we should be grateful for good houses, there is, after all, no house like God's out of doors. And, lastly, sir, it quiets a man down like saying his prayers.—Robert Louis Stevenson.

Rejected.
He—Be mine and you will make me the happiest man in the world. She—I'm very sorry, but unfortunately I want to be happy myself.—Boston Transcript.

Swift counsel is swift in its march.
Plutarch.

WHIRLING BODIES

They Invariably Tend to Point to the Pole Star.

SCIENCE AND SPINNING A TOP.

That the Earth Revolves on its Axis May Be Proved by a Simple Experiment With the Gyrostat—Phenomena of Rapidly Revolving Objects.

Spinning a top is not always child's play, although it has generally been regarded as a juvenile sport. Once in England top whipping was practically ordered by law. There was a huge top formerly provided in every village to be whipped in frosty weather that the peasants might be kept warm by the exercise and out of mischief while they could not work. Shakespeare in "Twelfth Night" says, "His brains turn like a parish top." Ben Jonson in "New Inn" writes, "He spins like a parish top," and Beaumont and Fletcher have "dances like a town top and reels and bobbles." Evelyn, the diarist, speaking of the uses of willow wood, says that it was ordered that "the great town tops should be made thereof."

Of late years, however, science has taken a hand in spinning tops with fruitful results. From spinning tops we can learn many interesting and valuable things. For example, we can prove that the earth revolves on its axis and calculate at what speed.

The phenomena of spinning bodies are extremely interesting. If you throw your bat into the air, but without spinning it, it will fall perhaps on one side, perhaps on the other, but if you give it a spinning motion before sending it into the air it will always come down the same side down as it went up. The same thing is true of coins and in fact of all objects spun in this manner. A knife, if merely thrown into the air, may come down at any angle, but if held point down and sent spinning into the air it will on falling stick its point into the floor invariably.

Other bodies acquire rigidity when spun rapidly. Thus a piece of chain if placed on a wheel and made to revolve rapidly will form a perfect circle and if thrown off the wheel suddenly will roll across the table or the floor just like a solid hoop until its speed is diminished, when it will fall into a huddled mass.

It is a strange fact that spinning bodies always tend to point to the north star—the pole star. Gently, but firmly, they seem to tug at their moorings in an effort to assume the angle that will point them in that direction. Once they have attained it they do not vary.

If, now, you want to prove the rotation of the earth by means of a spinning top you can do so as follows: Provide yourself with a gyrostat capable of being driven by electricity so that it can run for twenty-four hours or more without stopping. Set this going and point it to the north or pole star. It will soon assume that direction. Now, as the axis of the top is pointed in a certain direction (say the north wall of the room) and stays there, without ever moving, this will be a guide to you to check off your observations. And as you watch you will notice that in six hours' time the top will point to the west and six hours later to the south, six hours later to the east, and at the conclusion of the twenty-four hours it will have completed the circle and will again be pointing due north. It will have completed the circuit of the four walls of the room.

What does this mean? It means that the room has revolved round the top, but as the room is fixed to the solid earth it implies that the whole earth has revolved round the top, which alone remained stationary. Consequently we have proved by this means that the earth has turned once round on its axis, and that it does so turn, and that the heavens remain still and stationary.

Many interesting astronomical discoveries have been made by the aid of spinning tops, and the facts obtained by their study have been applied to the rotation of heavenly bodies, the earth included, and the "wobble" of its axis has been calculated by this means. In many ways, therefore, the spinning top is a valuable scientific instrument.—Hereward Carrington in New York World.

Effect of a Dream.
"The happiest dream I can recall," said a successful business man, "was one I had ten years ago. In it I was with my good mother again, seated in the old home church. She placed her hand on my head and whispered, 'Son, I am proud of you.' That little statement has kept me out of wrongdoing more than all the sermons I have ever heard and, I think, has made me a better man."—Philadelphia Record.

As Values Are Judged.
"Great Scott, woman! Are you trying to ruin me?"
"Why, Henry! You don't even know what I paid for the gown."
"I know that any gown that looks as bad as that one costs more than I can afford to pay."—Life.

Quite Correct.
A philosopher says, "A man worships what he cannot understand." If he is referring to women he is correct.—New Orleans Picayune.

Chance generally favors the prudent.
—Joubert.

BEAUTY IN AN AX.

Glowing Tribute to the Symmetry of the American Product.

In Professor T. De Tarnow's "Aesthetic Education" Von Hartmann's formal orders of beauty are the text for several chapters, one of which in treating the proportion maintains the following thesis:

"There is an actual, possibly a necessary, correlation between mechanical efficiency and aesthetic proportion. In other words, as a tool or a machine increases in all round efficiency there is a corresponding increase in the aesthetic quality of its proportions."

As an example the American ax, "the most beautiful in existence," is described and analyzed:
"Theory, accident and experience have stood beside the smith as he has forged the blade, the head and the eye of the ax. The same forces have influenced the makers of the handle as they have selected the hickory, have shaped it in the rough with ax and drawing knife and finished it by the open fireside with knife and sandpaper and broken glass. From a straight, round stick it has become what we see, a gracefully curving handle, flat enough to enable the woodsman to hold the blade true, large enough to fit the hand comfortably, enlarged sufficiently at the end to make sure the grasp yet be no bar to the comfort of the user and curved enough to secure the maximum of ease and vigor of stroke.

"The whole constitutes a balanced perfection which is as beautiful in its proportion as it is efficient in its action. The edge of the blade rounds gently at its extremities for ease of entrance to the wood and recovery from it; above these rounded ends of the cutting edge the blade is made somewhat thinner front and back than through the body of the wedge, and for a similar reason, namely, that there may be greater recovery for the next stroke. The head is just massive enough to balance the blade and is either made square for striking a nonpenetrating blow or is gently rounded."

Salesmen and Smiles.
"The smile is one of the greatest assets of the successful salesman or saleswoman," says the manager of a department store linen department. "It makes friends for the store as readily as do moderate prices and good goods."

"The ability to smile for eight hours a day is a trait hard to acquire and possessed by few store help. Yet it can be gained by constant practice—the watching of oneself and not permitting at any time the slightest indication of a frown.

"I recall my first purchase in a New York department store. I was directed to the counter where I could find the special article of my choice. I was met by a gruff 'What is it?' from the salesman. I recall I said, 'Nothing,' and I haven't been in that store since."—New York Press.

The Answer.
"I just found out last night," he said, smiling nervously at his watch, "that a man's a fool to allow himself to be benched."

There was a general roar of laughter, says the Cleveland Plain Dealer. Then one of the men asked:

"And how did you come to make that startling discovery?"

"Well, it was this way. My wife was jumping on me something fierce, and I couldn't figure out how I deserved it. So I spunked up and said: 'Look here, why do you always pick on me when you're sore? Why don't you raise thunder with Albert once in awhile?' (Albert's our youngest boy). 'Why,' she says, 'Albert wouldn't stand for it, that's why!'"

Famed as a Murderer.
A story once went the rounds in Paris that an enterprising visitor to M. Constans proposed to pick a quarrel with M. Rochefort and kill him.

"Many thanks," said Constans, "but I do my own murders."
The retort found its way to Constantinople, and when M. Constans arrived there as French ambassador he was struck by the exaggerated deference of the Turkish officials from Armenia. A man who did his murders himself was a remarkable figure to administrators who employed the Kurds for that necessary business.

A Like Retort.
A dapper young shoe clerk fitted a number nine over a farmer's yarn sock. "When you get these on," he smilingly remarked, "you can sing 'How Firm a Foundation.'" The farmer answered not a word until the number nines were on his feet and his old shoes in a neatly wrapped package under his arm. As he reached the door he smilingly said, "And you can sing 'A charge to keep I have.'"—Philadelphia Ledger.

Not Very Clean.
"And now I mean to handle your witnesses without gloves," said a counsel whose witnesses had met with rather severe treatment from the other side.

"Indeed! That's more than I should like to do with yours," smilingly retorted his learned friend.—London Answers.

Oh, Where Was She?
"That new cook I secured is certainly quiet," said Mr. Dubbs happily.

"One would never know she is about the place."
"She isn't," chimed in Mrs. Dubbs. "She left early this morning."—Philadelphia Ledger.

A man used to vicissitudes is not easily dejected.—Samuel Johnson.

DO FALSE CREEDS MAKE CRIMINALS?

Prison Statistics Support Inference, Says Pastor Russell.

Reverence For God Constitutional With All—With Proper Conceptions of God All Would Delight to Worship Him—How Satan Has Fostered the Misconceptions—How These In Turn Have Driven Men From the Almighty In Fear—God Has Been Pictured as Beelzebub—The Bible, Considered the Revelation of Satanic Purposes, is Shunned—The People Perish For Lack of Knowledge—Christians Should Awake—The True God Should Be Preached—True Knowledge Will Draw All Men Toward Him.



Columbus, Ohio, September 28.—Pastor Russell preached twice here today. We report one of his discourses, from the text, "If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."—2 Corinthians 4:3, 4.

I do not charge our forefathers with evil intent in making the creeds. I cheerfully admit that every creed contains an element of Bible Truth. My contention is that Satan has substituted the creeds for the Bible; and into the creeds, through human weakness, he has injected a sufficiency of nonsense and "doctrines of demons" to render them unhealthful for saints, and absolutely poisonous to others, said the Pastor.

Taking up his text, he declared that its truthfulness is manifest on every hand. The word Gospel means "good tidings of great joy." This Gospel of Divine Love and Mercy toward our race is completely hidden from the world. Even mature Christians discern but little because the creeds of human tradition have so misrepresented God and His purposes as to make of them bad tidings.

"Hath Blinded Their Minds."
The Pastor pointed out that St. Paul, as well as the other Apostles, foretold the falling away of the Church from "the faith once delivered to the saints." St. Paul particularly declared that this would result from giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons—the fallen angels. (1 Timothy 4:1.) In a thousand ways, through mediums, planchettes, visions and dreams, these seducing spirits have intruded their demon doctrines upon God's Church. Their purport is to deceive mankind regarding God's real character and purposes.

The Pastor then showed how successful Satan and his fallen host have been. While persuading men that they were afar off stoking fires, they have really been assisting ecclesiastics in misinterpretation of the Bible, especially its parables and symbolical statements. As a result, the glory of God manifested in Jesus for human salvation is unintelligible to the world.

The statement of our text, "Hid to them that are lost," said the Pastor, does not mean that they are lost because they cannot see it. The Bible distinctly tells us that all are lost through Adam's disobedience. The Apostle means that the masses of the lost world cannot see the Gospel light. Soon Christ will take His power and reign. His first work will be to bind Satan, that he may no longer deceive mankind.

What Prison Statistics Mean.
In all modern prisons, statistics are kept showing what religious training was received by the prisoners in early life. In almost every case the prisoners guilty of the most serious crimes were from infancy trained to believe in eternal torment. In such homes, fear prevailed instead of love. The natural effect upon the children would be a terror of God, a torturing fear respecting the future.

Even in Christian homes, the parents feared to tell the children their advanced views. They said, if children are scarcely restrained from evildoing with the thought of eternal torture, how terrible might be their course if they were to doubt that doctrine! Little did we realize the foolishness of such reasoning. Fear cannot draw the sinner to God. "The love of Christ constraineth us."

The Pastor then showed that the influence of the creeds of the Dark Ages has been the very reverse of what has been expected. Man naturally has reverence for God. The true knowledge of God would incline men to worship Him. The highest qualities of their being would find expression in worship. With the enlightenment of the Bible men would learn that all are sinners; that death is the penalty for sin; but that God has provided through Jesus' death a reconciliation.

By hiding the Truth from men, Satan has driven them from their best Friend—Almighty God. In dread of God and in fear of the unmerciful arrangements for the future taught them from infancy, many have plunged headlong into sin, striving to forget God. But a true knowledge of God's character has revolutionized the lives of many.

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