

GOT THE EGGS FRESH

They Were Turtle Eggs and Agassiz Wanted Them.

A WILD RACE AGAINST TIME.

The Professor Had to Have the Eggs Before They Were Three Hours Old, and This is the Story of How the Hunter Made Good His Promise.

When Professor Louis Agassiz was writing a book on the turtles of the United States it became necessary for him to have some fresh turtle eggs. He engaged Mr. Jenks of Middleboro, about forty miles from Cambridge, to get them for him. Mr. Jenks promised that the eggs should be in Agassiz's hands before they were three hours old. Mr. Jenks, who told the tale to a writer in the Atlantic Monthly, had to wait by a certain pond for the turtles to come out and lay their eggs in the sand. Finally, after weeks of waiting, one morning about 4 o'clock a turtle crawled up the beach, partly buried herself in the soft sand and laid her eggs. Mr. Jenks went on to say:

As she did so the distant clock struck 4. There was no train till after 9, and the eggs must be in Cambridge in three hours.

I laid the eggs on a bed of sand in the bottom of my pail, filled in between them with more sand, so with another layer of eggs with the other, not daring to get off my knees, although the bang on them as we pounded down the wood road was terrific. We had nearly covered the distance to the pike when ahead of me I heard the sharp whistle of a locomotive.

With a pull that lifted the horse from his feet I swung him into a field and sent him straight as an arrow for the track.

By some stroke of luck I got on the track and backed off before the train hit my carriage. But the maneuver was successful, for the engineer stopped, and I swung aboard the cab—hatless, dew soaked, smeared with yellow mud and holding as if it were a baby or a bomb a little tin pail of sand.

"Throw her wide open," I commanded—"wide open." These are fresh turtle eggs for Professor Agassiz of Cambridge. He must have them before breakfast.

The engineer and the fireman no doubt thought that I was crazy, but they let me alone, and the fast freight rolled in swiftly to Boston.

But misfortune was ahead. We slowed down in the yards and came to a stop. We were put on a siding to wait no one knew how long.

I suddenly jumped from the engine, slid over a high fence and bolted for the street. In the empty square stood a cab.

The cabman saw me coming. I waved a dollar at him and then another, dodged into the cab, slammed the door and called out: "Cambridge! Harvard college! Professor Agassiz's house! I've got eggs for Agassiz!" and I pushed another dollar up at him through the hole.

"Let him go!" I ordered. "Here's another dollar for you if you make Agassiz's house in twenty minutes!"

We flew to Cambridge. There was a sudden lurch, and I dived forward, rammed my head into the front of the cab and came up with a rebound that landed me across the small of my back on the seat and sent half of my pail of eggs helter skelter over the floor. But we were at Agassiz's house. I tumbled out and pounded the door.

"Agassiz!" I gasped when the maid came. "I want Professor Agassiz, quick!"

She protested that he was in bed and threatened the police. But just then a door overhead was flung open, a great, white robed figure appeared on the dim landing above, and a quick, loud voice called excitedly:

"Let him in! Let him in! I know him! He has my turtle eggs."

And the apparition, slipperless and clad in anything but an academic gown, came sailing downstairs. The great man, his arms extended, laid hold of me with both hands and, dragging me and my precious pail into his study, with a swift, clean stroke laid open one of the eggs as the watch in my trembling hands ticked its way to 7 as if nothing unusual were happening in the history of the world.

A Fearful Poison.

From the microbe which gives rise in human beings to the disease known as tetanus, or lockjaw, a poison called tetanine is obtained which is over 100 times more powerful than strychnine. A fragment of tetanine so small as to be invisible to the naked eye would kill almost instantaneously the strongest man. One fifteen-thousandth part of a grain of it has caused the death of a horse 1,000,000,000 times its own weight.—Pearson's.

Fully Informed.

"With all your wealth are you not afraid of the proletariat?" asked the doctor in sociological problems. "No, I ain't," snapped Mrs. Newrich. "We boil all our drinkin' water."—Philadelphia Record.

Make yourself an honest man, and then you may be sure there is one less roval in the world.—Carlyle.

Every housewife "in business" is a buyer of home supplies—and should watch for buying opportunities as closely as though she were buying to sell again.

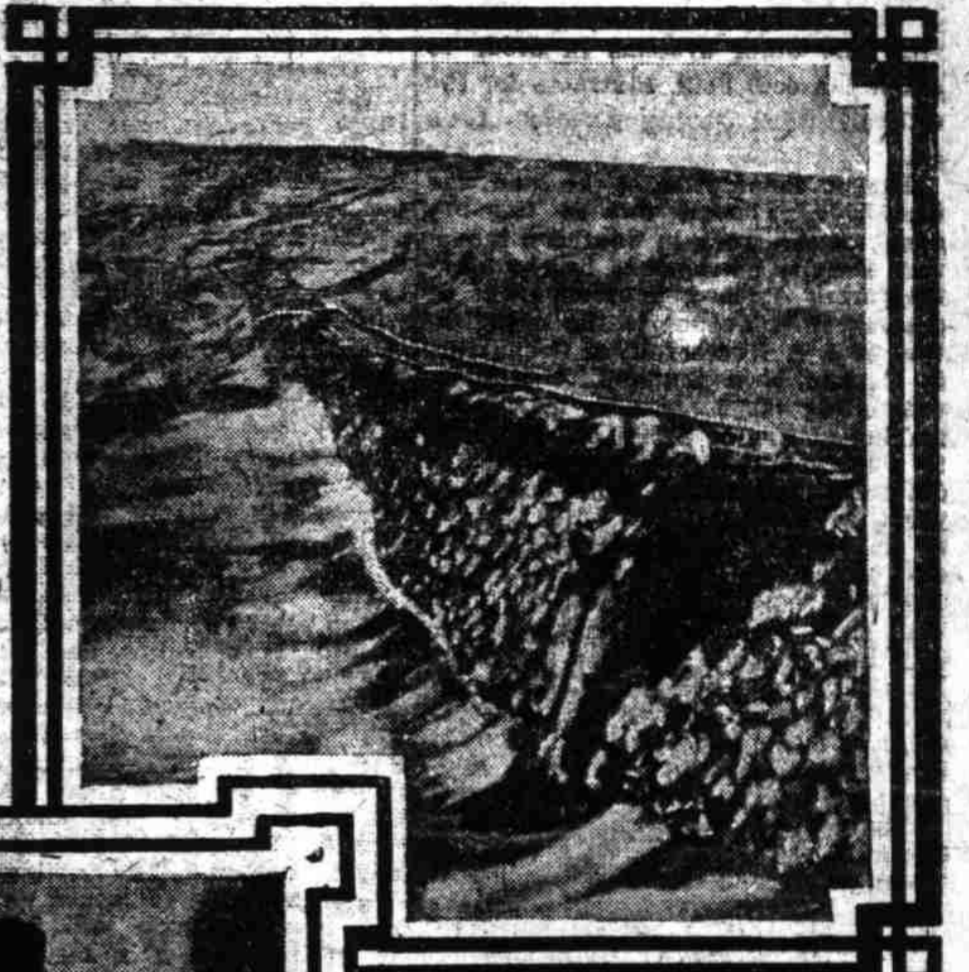
Tempts Fate Living On Top of Volcano

Frank A. Perret, an American, Engaged in Vesuvian Exploration, Has Strangest Home in the World—Built Over a Fissure in Mountain Side, He Can Hear Unceasing Struggle of the Terrestrial Elements Down in the Bowels of the Earth While Lying in Bed—Thrives on Nerve Racking, Sleep Dispelling Experiences.



Vesuvius in an Angry Mood.

Frank Perret, American Scientist, Listening to Disturbance Through Volcanic Fissure on Vesuvius by Means of Dictograph.



Wreck of Trolley Line Leading Up to Vesuvius After an Eruption.

FOLLOWING the trail of the tiger and the rhino through the trackless jungle may have its compensating advantages; aeronautics its birdlike joys, but for the thrill that really exhilarates and is worth while, you must live on the crest of a volcano.

The sensation is immense. It may not enchant you to fancy yourself being shot out of a fiery catapult several thousand feet in the air and deposited piecemeal on some deserted hillside four or five miles away or waking up some bright morning on the other side of the Styx, with the consoling information that while you slumbered the merciful lava had snuffed out your life without disturbing your sleep. But it's the sort of experience that is apt to keep you on edge every minute and turn your thoughts wistfully back to those tranquil days of babyhood, before the spirit of adventure lured you into danger's zone.

To those who have eaten of the tree of knowledge and played every string on life's harp, save this one, it's a bully experience. But unless you have nerves of steel, and an angler's patience, you had better not try it. No occupation in the world is so contingent upon the unexpected happening. When it does happen the world usually stands aghast at the enormity of the catastrophe visited upon some helpless community.

But with all its shortcomings there is something impelling, something stirring in the excitement of making your home on a real, live crater, which is hard to resist. From whatever angle you gaze on the encircling horizon, the vista is one of desolation. It is a spectacle that inspires, yet chills and depresses, and unless you have the real sporting strain in you, it may make you wish you were back on dear old Broadway, with its plethora of caviar and lobster and the ambrosial Wurzburger that cheers.

Of all places in the world, this is the last one to appeal to the fancy of a molluscodile. It is the place for the adamant man, the human stoic, who is not over particular whether Gabriel calls him unto his own from amidst the gables of civilization or the flame-seared ribs of old Stromboli.

Truly might it be called the sport of kings, if it did not have a serious side to it. And there's the hunch. Out of curiosity kings and princes, sickened by the obscurity of their courts, occasionally seek solace and stimulus in its noisy environment, as the nerve-racked nebrilate looks to the sanatorium to brace him up.

The treatment being heroic, little of the tonic suffices and such excursions are invariably of short duration. They are embarked upon generally when there is relatively little or no danger imminent, enabling the royal pilgrim to gather such experience as the momentary inactivity of the slumbering monster affords without unnecessary risk.

Whatever feeling of instability it may conjure in the mind of others, the prospect of a sepulchre of red hot ashes has no terrors for Frank Alvert Perret, an American of Brooklyn, N. Y., who has spent the last five years on Mount Vesuvius, studying its phenomena. American tourists who went out to see the volcano this summer found him busy exploring the opening of the great crater which destroyed Pompeii and which has put the blight of death upon all living things hereabouts.

In this inferno, which has been home, playground, laboratory and everything to him through the alternating periods of quiet and eruption, which apply the acid test to one's courage and shake the stoutest heart, his lot with all its trials and anxieties has been serenely happy. What would be to the great majority of men the equivalent to service in a mad house is to him a fascinating study. In their suggestion of mighty power the seamed and scarred ridges of the volcano presenting one of the most forbidding looking perspectives in all the world, is to the quiet little Brooklyn man the most sublimely beautiful, mentally uplifting and majestic picture nature affords in its protusion and variety of landscape, the earth over.

Like a baby cooed to sleep by its mother's lullaby, this rarely constituted Yankee sinks into repose nightly blissfully indifferent to the rocking and the writhing of the earth, the belching forth of molten lava, and the terrific detonations through which nature expresses its internal agony. No thought of peril perturbs him.

No peasant in the pastoral valleys beyond lives in more placid peace of mind and none enjoys more freedom from any personal fear of danger than he. For a number of years Perret has been engaged in making a scientific examination of the volcano in collaboration with the officials of the royal observatory. With the hope that his researches and observations may be of value to the world, his long residence there has been made possible through the generous patronage of wealthy Americans, among them George Gould.

Attended by a faithful old man servant, Perret makes his home in the mountains, under the shadow of the

Vesuvius on the Eve of an Eruption.

volcano. He calls it his nest—to be polite people call it a villa. It is a simple but attractive little abode, suggesting in its spare furnishings a keen realization of its owner's sense of insecurity. A few chairs, a table and a bed, with some pictures on the walls and a few pieces of bric-a-brac to give cheer to an otherwise weird environment, constitute its only appointments.

At first the awful solitude of the hermitage palled on him, but he has now gotten used to his isolation from the world's noise and bustle and does not mind it.

Indeed, so absorbing has his self-imposed task become to him that only a disturbance on Mount Etna, or the blowing up of old Stromboli can lure him away from it. In this mountain retreat nothing escapes his observation. The house of the scientist commands a magnificent view of the country for miles around in every direction. Standing on Perret's front porch Pompeii, oppressively impressive in its sepulchral silence, looms out of the haze in the distance. That he may not altogether feel himself forsaken, even though he is alone, picturesque old Naples, aglow with the life and color so peculiarly radiant throughout Italy, beams beneficently on his loneliness, from across the bay.

To the scientist this setting of strange contrasts is stimulating. In his study of the volcano it is a constant unending inspiration to Perret.

In his five years of residence there his contributions to Vesuvian lore have greatly enriched that intensely interesting field of investigation. To his zeal and enterprise the officials of the royal observatory are indebted for many important discoveries, which have shed new light upon the phenomena of Vesuvius. Although associated with them in their researches, much of his work is done, independent of these officials. This leaves him to his own initiative and has enabled him to take observations along lines different from those usually followed. His experiments both afield and at home have developed a number of new features in connection with the crater that have proved of great help to the professors of the observatory in their consideration of certain phases of the volcano, which from time-immemorial have been enveloped in more or less doubt. All of his field experiments are made with the aid of a portable seismograph, a seismometer and a dictograph. With the seismograph he is able to register not only any unusual disturbance

Stirring Up Trouble.

of Vesuvius, but any inordinately violent shock originating anywhere on the entire continent of Europe. The seismometer measures the intensity and direction of the disturbance. By means of the dictograph, which magnifies sound waves, he is able to detect the most minute murmur below the surface of the earth. In making his observations, Perret drops a diaphragm of this instrument, connected with two wires, into a fissure at the side of the mountain. Over the fissure he places a cone covering, much like a phonograph horn, through which the hot vapors escape as steam from a peanut roaster. Through this the wires are extended to the top, being connected on the outside with a receiver. By placing this to his ear the explorer is able to hear the faintest rumble in the bowels of the earth, and determine the condition of the troublous area below.

These observations are taken at different hours of the day and at various points in and about the volcano. An accurate record of them is kept, the data thus collected being exceedingly valuable from a scientific standpoint, showing as they do every premonitory symptom of a gathering storm.

Frequently the experiments begin before sunrise and are extended late into the night, whenever in the judgment of the Yankee explorer there is warrant for supposing that they will yield favorable results. They are carried out, however, only in development of these observations, and are not made at all times.

Equally interesting and valuable are the records obtained with the aid of the dictograph. As in the field observations a powerful diaphragm is lowered into the fissure by means of a set of wires. These pass through an opening in the floor of the scientist's sleeping room and extend up to the side of his bed, to which the receiver is attached. With the same facility with which the occupant of a modern office building or dwelling can telephone to a distant point, Perret by adjusting the receiver to his ear is able to open up communication with the center of volcanic activity; many leagues beneath the

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ONE OF THE MOST IMPRESSIVE SIGHTS WHICH CAN BE IMAGINED, SAYS PERRET

Mr. Perret interestingly describes the avalanches in the volcanic cone due to the tremors within the interior of the earth, which intermittently add to the terror of life in and around the crater and often mistakes for snowfalls because of the heavy deposit of ash. "The last eruption," he says, "left great masses of material in unstable equilibrium around the inside of the crater's edge, and from time to time these were precipitated into the abyss, compressing the air by their fall, and were then dotted as flames of fire in the sky. The descent of these large masses raised the floor of the crater to a point some three hundred meters below the rim, and the subsequent avalanches have formed a series of cones around the circumference of the flat central area."



Collecting gases from a fumarole at a temperature of 487° C.



Smoke falls from Vesuvius, being hot and wet.