







Wolf-Children in India.

Whether children, carried off by wolves, could be suckled and kept alive in a den for any length of time is surely a question which students of natural history and even medical sportsmen might settle for us once for all, while the documentary evidence in favor of the existence of such wolf-children might exercise the ingenuity of some of our cleverest lawyers. When they have done their work, and not till then, the work of the comparative anatomist will begin, therefore proceed to put together some of the best-authenticated cases of wolf-children, without, however, presuming myself to pronounce any opinion, either adverse or favorable. The following extract is from a letter received from the Rev. Mr. Erhardt, Superintendent of the Orphanage at Secundra, in reply to his request for information regarding a boy in that institution who was alleged to have been found living with wolves:

"We have had two such boys here, but fancy you refer to the one who was brought to us on March 5, 1872. He was found by Hindus, who had gone hunting wolves in the neighborhood of Myspur. Had been burnt out of the den, and brought here with the scars and wounds still on him. In his habits he was a perfect wild animal in every point of view. He drank like a dog, and liked a bone and raw meat better than anything else. He would never remain with the other boys, but hid away in any dark corner. Clothes he never would wear, but tore them up into shreds. He was only a few months among us, as he got fever and gave up eating. We kept him for a time by artificial means, but eventually he died. The other boy found among wolves about thirteen or fourteen years old, and has been here almost six years. He has learned to make sounds, speak he cannot, but he freely expresses his anger and joy; work he will, at times, a little, but he likes eating better. His civilization has progressed so far that he likes raw meat less, though he still will pick up bones and sharpen his teeth on them. At the Lucknow mad house there was an elderly fellow only four years ago, and may be alive now, who had been dug out of a wolves' den by a European doctor—when, I forget, but it must be a good number of years ago. The facility with which he learned to walk on four feet—hands and feet—is surprising. Before they eat or taste food they smell it, and when they don't like the smell they throw it away."

A remarkable feature in all the stories is that the wolves are invariably alleged to have communicated much of their natural frolic and notably untamable disposition to their human charges, and attempts to account for their somewhat unworldly treatment of them. Stories of the same kind, and supported by much more business-like witnesses, have appeared in Indian papers during the last fifty years. The most important witness is the late Col. Sleeman, a man of an unimpeachable character, one of the truly great men whose names are less known than their works. He was commissioner for putting down Thuggee, and probably knew more of the real life and character of the people of India than any Indian officer. According to Col. Sleeman, the wolf-children were the victims carried off by wolves to be devoured is so great in some parts of India that people make a living by collecting from the dens of wild animals the gold ornaments with which children in India are always decked out by their parents. It is said that these people are unwilling to take part in any wholesale destruction of wolves for fear of losing their livelihood. From a number of cases, more or less fully attested, of wolves taking compassion on a child and bringing it up to nurse with their own milk, I select the following:

"A trooper, sent by the native Governor of Chandour to demand payment of some revenue, was passing along the bank of the river about noon, when he saw a large female wolf leave her den, followed by three whelps and a little boy. The boy ran up to him, and he, having devoted much time, aided by the best microscopical instruments, to the discovery of the original nutritive particles in food and the changes they undergo in the process of preparation for nutrition, he was not surprised to find that the nutritive matter in the breast of the mother wolf rather is contained in minute smooth white globules, differing in size in the different grains or roots. Thus in wheat they are 2-1,000 parts of an inch; in the potato double this size, while in buckwheat they are only 1-10,000 part of an inch in diameter. Pure flour or starch is made up of these minute globules in their natural size. Raspail ascertained that these minute globules consist of an envelope and an inclosed kernel, constituting the nutritive matter. These globules are insoluble or unalterable, and do not require a heat of 122 degrees to expand the kernel and burst the envelope, yet at this degree of heat the substance is not decomposed. It is these coating envelopes that constitute the starch of the laundry. The investigations of these philosophers seem to have established the following facts as stated by Raspail:

1. That the globules contain flour, meal or starch, whether contained in grain or roots, and are incapable of affording any nourishment as animal food until they are broken.

2. That no mechanical method of breaking or grinding is more than partially efficient.

3. That the most efficient modes of breaking the globules are by heat, by fermentation, or by the chemical agency of acids or alkalis.

4. That the dextrine (the nutritive part) is not nutritive, they are indigestible to digestion, either from distending the stomach or bowels, or from some other cause not understood, it having been proved by experiment that concentrated nourishment, such as sugar, essence of beef, or ozonome, cannot long sustain life without some mixture of coarser and less nutritive food.

5. That the economical preparation of all food containing globules of fecula consists in perfectly breaking the shells, and rendering kernel or dextrine content in the shells soluble and digestible, while the fragments of the shells are at the same time rendered more bulky, so as the more readily to fill the stomach.

6. That great advantages are derived from cooking meat for stock we think these facts and hundreds of experiments have been made clearly demonstrate, and the only question that presents itself for consideration is, whether the saving in grain by cooking is equal to the labor and expense of the operation. Two points must determine this question: first, the market value of grain, and secondly, the perfection of the apparatus for cooking and feeding—Herald World.

FARM AND HOUSEHOLD.

Cure for Ringworm.—A simple and harmless application, said unfaillingly to cure this troublesome eruption, is found in a solution made from the root of the common nutmeg, called dock, which belongs to the botanical genus *Rumex*. Use vinegar as the solvent.

As persistent and profitable producers of eggs, hens which are a cross between a game-cock and a black Spanish hen are strongly recommended by an English breeder. He says they are small and black, but they yield averaged eggs never desire to sit, and seldom cease to lay even for a day, except at molting-time.

To Cure Hoarseness.—When the voice is lost, as is sometimes the case, from the effects of cold, a simple, pleasant remedy is furnished by beating up the white of one egg, adding to it the juice of one lemon, and sweetening with white sugar to the taste. Take a teaspoonful from time to time. It has been known effectually to cure the ailment.

One poultry-fancier cured chicken cholera by feeding every other day for two weeks bran mash, in which was a liberal dose of the common garden pepper. One old birdy was determined to die. She was crouched in an out of the way spot. He sought her, gave her a white sugar to the taste. Take a teaspoonful from time to time. It has been known effectually to cure the ailment.

The London *Garden* speaks of the "small and wretched specimens" of watermelons at Covent Garden, and of the steamer which brought 40,000 of them to Boston from the more Southern States—some weighing forty pounds—

and remarks that the watermelons, which the editor never saw in England, have a delicious flavor and are almost as bright inside as a full-blown rose. The truth is, that while the English gardeners possess pre-eminent skill in raising whatever is suited to their climate they cannot obtain good watermelons simply because their summers are too cool. No skill can obviate the difficulty.

If one will weigh 100 pounds of Indian corn after the crop is husked and then weigh the same grain after the expiration of six months he will be surprised to learn that there has been a shrinkage, varying from one-fourth to one-fifth from the first weight. Of course the weight of the shrinkage will depend on the condition of the soil, the nature of the soil, and the amount of water. A series of experiments, instituted to test the average loss in weight by drying, shows that corn loses one-fifth and wheat one-fourteenth by the process. From this statement it is made that farmers will make more by growing the same crop on a large tract of land than they would on a smaller tract of land, if the same corn was grown on the larger tract.

Our corn fields, therefore, are mulched to advantage by the use of the cultivator. Whether it will pay when this course is applied to a special mulch is a question. It will with potatoes. The mulch, if a thick one, will keep moist, will prevent weeds and the crusting of the surface, thus giving access to air, which it will keep the ground cool—what the potato grower does not know.

The best mulch for this, as well as for shrubs and young trees of all kinds, is one of green grass or weeds, applied immediately after the last stirring of the soil, and sprinkled well with leached ashes. The ashes will draw moisture from the soil, and protect the soil from being dried up. This will also aid fertility. We have used it for several years with the most gratifying results. The severest drought has but little effect; there is a fine growth, seemingly in defiance of the weather. We also apply it to grapes, and with benefit.

The winter of 1872 was a test for grass. Grass must have itself or the snow to protect it. A good aftermath or well-drained soil is sure to do this. It will lessen the huring; and there will be considerable fertility furnished by the plant itself, which is lost, but goes to one to form a pulvum for the next plant thus reproducing itself, being an addition to the usual growth where the ground is fed close.

Straw is a good mulch for winter wheat. In some parts it is a rule to apply it. You protect the straw by evergreen boughs, the best protection among the many, that can be applied. It prevents smothering, and it keeps off the cold. The roots of grape-vines, shrubs and small trees should be covered with leaves held down by a little soil. It will lessen the frost both in intensity and depth. The winter of 1872 was a test for berries, the leaves will add manure in the spring, and of the right kind—*Correspondent Utica Herald*.

Bank Up Your Fruit Trees. In sections of the country where field-mice are liable to gnaw off the bark of fruit trees round the surface of the ground a small mound of earth should be raised around the base of every tree. Mice seldom gnaw the bark so long as they have snow on the ground, but soon after snow has fallen to the depth of only three or four inches the pests will commence forming runs beneath the snow on the surface of the ground. Strange to relate, the runs will always extend from tree to tree and in numerous other directions. When there is not a liberal supply of such feed as field-mice are fond of they will attack the bark of any sort of fruit tree. When there is grass and rubbish around trees mice will often gnaw the bark, even when the ground is not covered with snow. In localities where deep banks have formed about trees mice have been known to gnaw all the bark off for a distance of three feet from the ground. We have in mind a farmer having a large orchard, more than 1,000 of whose trees were completely girdled by the mice during a short period in the month of March while the ground was covered with snow. It is unsafe to allow fruit trees to remain during the winter without a mound of earth or some other protection around each one. When the mice work along beneath the snow and encounter a mound of earth they will run around the base and pass by the tree. This explains the philosophy of banking fruit trees. Where the ground is mellow a laborer can throw up a conical mound 15 to 18 inches high in less than half an hour. The best material to pack the surface of the mounds with is a shovel than to allow mellow earth to remain not smoothed off. Mice will often gnaw the bark, even when the ground is covered with snow. It is unsafe to allow fruit trees to remain during the winter without a mound of earth or some other protection around each one. 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