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AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A VEGETARIAN.

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Reported by C. O. Groom Napier, of Merchiston, F. G. S.

[CONTINUED.]

"Wishing to see the wildest part of the Irish coast, we sailed for the Arran Isles, and, landing there, spent some days in examining the curious stones for which those islands are famous. Some fishermen there spoke of an isolated rock in the sea, about a quarter of a mile long, very high, with a cavern in it, as the haunt of myriads of seafowl, some of species found nowhere else in the same abundance. With one of these fishermen as our pilot we reached the spot. There was a heavy swell round this island-rock, and we had great difficulty in landing. We determined to anchor the yacht about half a mile off and proceed to the island in the boat with two of our men. Thinking we might like to spend the day there, we took with us two bags of rice, a basket of oranges, some loaves of bread, some peas and beans for soup, and utensils and wood for cooking. In order to afford a seat for the children, a tin chest from the cabin, full of a variety of provisions, was put in the boat's stern, and we embarked, my wife expressing a regret that the the previsions had not been emptied out lest they should make the boat too heavy. With great difficulty we managed to run the boat into a chasm about twenty feet wide and one hundred feet long in the cliff, which was high and very precipitous. This chasm formed a miniature harbor, where the boat could lie, without any danger of being swamped, in deep water close to the cliff, against which it was moored to a projecting rock, as to an artificial quay. It was a considerable scramble to get out of the boat and up the cliff; we just managed it, and landing our provisions, one of our men made a fire and acted as cook, while we wandered over the island, and explored the cave. It was, in fact, a sort of twin cavern, two branches having one entrance; that on the right hand side was about a hundred and fifty feet deep, and was not tenanted, as it had no exit; that on the left hand was a tunnel of even greater length, and about forty feet high; it was the resting-place of many sea birds; cormorants, puffins, guillemots, razorbills, several species of sea-gulls, the arctic tern and gannet very abundant, and a few pairs of the shearwater; of some sort we took a good many eggs. We packed baskets with at least one hundred dozen. I did not shoot, as I did not like disturbing the birds, they were so tame, being but little accustomed to the visits of man. There were some goats on the island, which we conjectured had swam ashore from a shipwrecked vessel.

"This plateau, which was the highest part of the island, was reached by a path ascending about two hundred feet. It was a beautiful emerald meadow, bounded by almost precipitous cliffs, which my eldest boy and I climbed up, but my wife declined the ascent. At about five we sat down to our dinner of pea soup, boiled cabbage, bread, haricot beans, batter pudding and fruit.

"We were seated in the entrance of the cave when suddenly a storm sprang up. The wind was so violent, that though we sadly wished it we did not deem it prudent to get into our boat to rejoin the yacht. One of the sailors went on a high part of the island to observe, and soon informed us that the yacht had apparently dragged its anchor, and was fast disappearing.

"We were all in a sad dilemma. Leaving my dinner unfinished, I with my eldest son went up the cliff; the yacht was nowhere to be seen, and the wind was so violent that we were hardly able to keep our feet on the cliff. I came down and said we should be obliged to pass the night on the island. Accordingly the sailors brought out of the boat all we had left in it, including some shawls, a large fur rug and two sails and a quantity of tarpaulin, which we had intended to sit on had the ground been damp. Lighting a small lamp, I made a careful survey of the right-hand cavern; it was not straight, but turned at a sharp angle; the floor was dry, as were also the walls. I collected a heap of loose, dry sand eight or ten feet long by as many feet wide, and on this I spread the tarpaulin, and over this some shawls. As it got dark, myself, wife and three children lay down on this extemporized bed, covering ourselves with the large fur rug. The wind made a great noise. The sailors lay down a short distance from us, wrapped in the sails. The next morning between five and six we were all up, and I made an inventory of our provisions. We had about eight pounds of oatmeal, about the same quantity of haricot beans, about fourteen pounds of lentils, about twelve pounds of maize flour, three pounds of arrowroot, two pounds of potatoes, a cabbage, four loaves of bread, and about a dozen oranges. With economy, we had vegetarian provisions to last a fortnight, if we could get fresh water—as yet we had found none. In the cavern where the sea-birds were, there was a patch of green moss on the wall, nearly obscuring a deep crack, extending for some yards into the rock. On putting my ear to the crack I distinctly heard water dropping. I tied a towel to a walking stick and poked it into the crack, and pulled out the towel dripping. By dint of probing the rock, I increased the supply, and at last was enabled to get an oar into the crack, which being placed obliquely, acted as a lead to the water, which now trickled down sufficiently fast to fill a tin can of a gallon capacity in about a quarter of an hour. I considered this providential. We were on this island ten days, and slept in the same manner. During the day we kept a sail on an oar attached to the boat's mast, on the highest part of the island, as a signal of distress. We saw several vessels, but they did not come near the island. At last a smack lay to, and sent a boat to the island, and in about an hour we were on board the smack. On the island we adhered strictly to our vegetarian diet, substituting sea fowls' eggs for hen's eggs."

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[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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Partial Table of Contents—

Orderville—The Community—The System Briefly Received.
The Jews and Palestine
Hard Times.
Opinions on the Florida Decision will apply also to the Louisiana and Oregon Decisions.
Ingenious Advertising.
A Good Place to Go To.
Concerning Bustles.
An Odd Legal Question.
Political Economy.
Mad Itch in Cattle.
Ponca Indians.
Omaha Hoodlums.
Tripartite Electoral Commission.
Eastern Question in Parliment.
The Jews and Epidemic Diseases and Pork-eating.
The Mormons at Williamsburg.
Individual Water Supply.
Grapes for Wine.
Another Electoral Decision.
Montana and the Narrow Gauge.
Washington's Birthday. 1
Disgusted People and Hasty Utterances.
Grace Greenwood on the Electoral Commission.
Will it Pay?
The Last Week.
Small-pox Pitting Avoidable.
President Grant on the Situation.
The Kirtland Temple.
Suggestions in Regard to Liquor Selling.
Tobacco Culture.
Macaulay on American Government.
The Druids
Congressional Proceedings.
Estray Notices.
Letter List.
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