

Lieutenant Peary's "Meteorite"

ON his recent return from the Arctic in the steam whaler *Hope* Lieutenant Peary, the American explorer, brought back the huge lump of metal which he discovered on a former journey to the northern regions, and which is said by some to be of meteoric and by others of volcanic origin. A correspondent sends a photograph of the landing of this solid mass of almost pure iron, weighing, it is said, from seventy to ninety tons—by a navy yard derrick at Brooklyn. The "meteorite" is probably the biggest piece of natural iron in the world. The next largest known weighs only eighteen tons.



TWO OF THE ESQUIMAUX WHO ARE TO ACCOMPANY
LIEUT. PEARY ON HIS NEXT POLAR EXPEDITION

and is in the British Museum. Peary's specimen is to find a resting place in the Museum of Natural History at New York. Sir John Ross first reported it in 1818, but it was not located until Peary and Lee discovered it three and a half years ago.

Lieutenant Peary also brought back with him a group of Esquimaux, whose co-operation he has secured for his new scheme of reaching the North Pole. The idea is to take a little colony of these people—men and women and their children—with him, the men being less likely to desert him if they are accompanied by their families; and as the expedition will probably be in the Arctic regions for some years, it is all important that the members of it should be content, and under no temptation to desert.

New Novels

"LOCHINVAR"

MR. S. R. CROCKETT has transferred young Lochinvar, "so faithful in love and so valiant in war," from some once upon a time before Flodden to the more definite period of Killiecrankie. He has extended Scott's ballad to full novel length, with the result that his "Lochinvar" (1 vol.: Methuen and Co.) is a stirring romance of recklessly tremendous adventure—partly in the manner of Stevenson, partly in that of Mr. Stanley Weyman—that ought to go to the whole heart of every right-minded schoolboy. What better could be said of any story of pure and simple adventure, through which a brave young hero wins triumphantly against all odds of men and women, rocks and whirlpools, with nothing but his own strong hand and loyal heart to help him? We only wish that Mr. Crockett's history were as sound as his fiction. All about William of Orange and "bonny Dundee" is worse than irrelevant. The Great Deliverer was really something more than a mere jerky thing of wood. And as to Claverhouse, we all know how, after the fatal shot, he, being told that the day went well for the King, answered, "Then I am well," and immediately expired. It seems incredible, but Mr. Crockett positively makes him add, "May be I was in the wrong—in the wrong." This is far more improbable even than the exciting rescue of the heroine from captivity on an apparently inaccessible Hebridean island, or than the yet more daring achievement of carrying her off—as in the ballad—on her wedding morning in the face of the bridegroom and all his friends. In these respects Mr. Crockett is as daring, and as successful, with his pen as was Wat Gordon of Lochinvar with his sword.

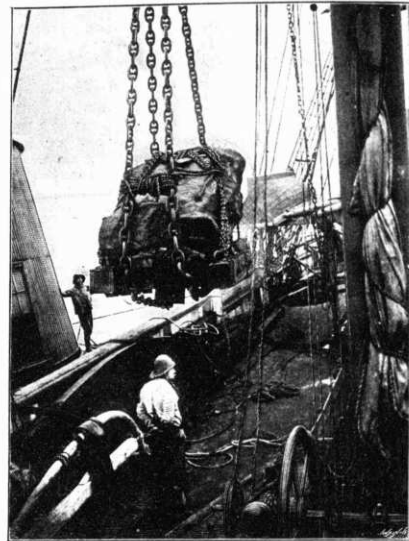
"WHAT MAISIE KNEW"

"What Maisie Knew," according to Mr. Henry James (1 vol.: William Heinemann), was a sort of family puzzle of the nature of "If Dick's father were Tom's son." Beale Farange, Maisie's father, and Ida, late Farange, her mother, have been divorced, with an arrangement that the little girl shall spend the half of every year with each alternately. Beale, her father, marries Miss Overmore, the governess engaged by her mother. Ida, her mother, marries Sir Claude (surname not given). The father presently elopes from his second wife with a rich coloured lady; the mother elopes from her second husband with one of a series of lovers. Meanwhile a liaison has been established between Sir Claude and the second Mrs. Farange, *née* Overmore. All this Maisie knows, but what it all means she does not know, because she is removed from it all in time by another governess who thinks that such a complication of parents and step-parents is becoming rather more than decently immoral. Mr. James, in his minutest manner, photographs the situation, and, according to his earlier method, leaves his readers to make out its meaning. Is it intended to reduce the results of divorce to a grotesque absurdity? Or to create a latter-day Una in the person of Maisie? Suppose that exactly such people were to find themselves exactly in such a situation, it is quite as likely as not that they would talk and comport themselves generally as Mr. James makes them. He would have been untrue to the nature of those whose life-breath is the atmosphere of the divorce court had he portrayed them as otherwise than dull.

"BIJOU"

"Gyp's" "Bijou" (translated by Alys Hallard: 1 vol.: Hutchinson and Co.) is better adapted for an English dress than is

often the case with foreign fiction. It depends exceptionally little upon the charm of style and the conversational subtleties which no translation, however skilfully performed, can ever succeed in conveying. The portrait of Bijou, the girl whose pet-name gives the story its title, is independent of language. The hand of Balzac himself might have been at work upon the stupendous selfishness and hypocrisy—an hypocrisy amounting to genius—of this unique *ingénue* who twists not only men, but women too, round her finger with such consummate and cynical ease. There is no feeble compromise with poetical justice—Bijou is left smiling, triumphant and happy, in the midst of the tragedies she had dealt around, and which nobody, save one keen-sighted victim, dreams of ascribing to



Landing it at Brooklyn from the *Hope*
THE LARGEST "METEORITE" IN THE WORLD

her apparently infantine innocence. It is really strong work; and is all the stronger for its not containing a single word that could be spared.

"KIRKHAM'S FIND"

A very agreeable variation upon the Australian novel is provided by Mary Gaunt (Mrs. H. Lindsay Miller) in "Kirkham's Find" (1 vol.: Methuen and Co.). It contains neither bushrangers nor bush fires, neither sheep-shearings, nor "sun-downers," nor the Melbourne Cup, nor, in short, any of the ingredients traditionally regarded as indispensable. It deals with human nature almost as exclusively as if its scene were laid on this side of the equator; and the gold-find, with its consequences, among the sterile rocks of

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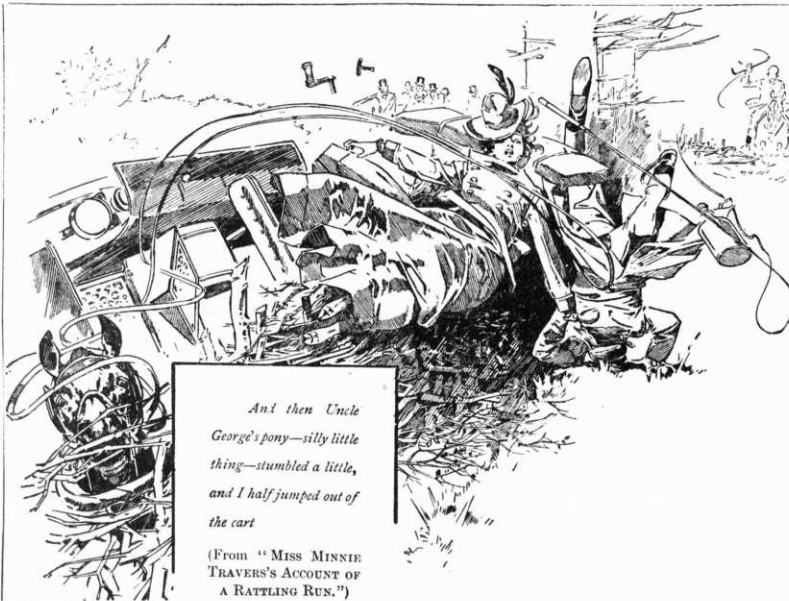
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And then Uncle
George's pony—silly little
thing—stumbled a little,
and I half jumped out of
the cart

(From "MISS MINNIE
TRAVERS' ACCOUNT OF
A RATTLING RUN.")

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