

Lesson 1 A PERILOUS ADVENTURE

第一课 千钧一发的冒险

THREE or four lads are standing in the channel below the great Natural Bridge of Virginia. They see hundreds of names carved in the limestone buttresses, and resolve to add theirs to the number. This done, one of them is seized with the mad ambition of carving his name higher than the highest there! His companions try to dissuade him from attempting so dangerous a feat, but in vain. He is a wild, reckless youth; and afraid now to yield, lest he should be thought a coward, he carves his way up and up the limestone rock, till he can hear the voices, but not the Words of his terror-stricken playmates.

One of them runs off to the village, and tells the boy's father of his perilous situation. Others go for help in other directions; and ere long there are hundreds of people standing in the rocky channel below, and hundreds on the bridge above, all holding their breath, and awaiting the fearful catastrophe. The poor boy can just distinguish the tones of his father, who is shouting with all the energy of despair, — "William! William! don't look down! Your mother, and Henry, and Harriet are all here praying for you! Don't look down! Keep your eyes towards the top!"

The boy does not look down. His eye is fixed towards heaven, and his young heart on Him who reigns there. He grasps again his knife. He cuts another niche, and another foot is added to the hundreds that remove him from the reach of human help from below.

The sun is half way down in the west. Men are leaning over the outer edge of the bridge with ropes in their hands. But fifty more niches must be cut before the longest rope can reach the boy! Two minutes more, and all will be over. That blade is worn to the last half inch. The boy's head reels. His last hope is dying in his heart, his life must hang upon the next niche he cuts. That niche will be his last.

At the last cut he makes, his knife — his faithful knife — drops from his little nerveless hand, and ringing down the precipice, falls at his mother's feet! An

involuntary groan of despair runs through the crowd below, and all is still as the grave. At the height of nearly three hundred feet, the devoted boy lifts his hopeless heart and closing eyes to commend his soul to God.

Hark! — a shout falls on his ears from above! A man who is lying with half his length over the bridge, has caught a glimpse of the boy's head and shoulders. Quick as thought the noosed rope is within reach of the sinking youth. No one breathes. With a faint, convulsive effort, the swooning boy drops his arm into the noose.

Not a lip moves while he is dangling over that fearful abyss; but when a sturdy arm reaches down and draws up the lad, and holds him up before the tearful, breathless multitude — such shouting and such leaping and weeping for joy never greeted a human being so recovered from the jaws of death.

Words

ambition, *aspiration*.

attempting, *undertaking*.

buttresses, *supports*.

catastrophe, *event*.

commend, *commit*.

convulsive, *agitated*.

dangerous, *perilous*.

despair, *hopelessness*.

dissuade, *discourage*.

dying, *expiring*.

energy, *vehemence*.

glimpse, *glance*.

greeted, *welcomed*.

involuntary, *unintentional*.

leaning, *stretching*.

multitude, *crowd*.

nerveless, *feeble*.

precipice, *cliff*.

reckless, *rash*.

resolve, *determine*.

seized, *inspired*.

swooning, *fainting*.

Questions

What did the boys see on the limestone rocks? What did they resolve to do? What did one of them propose? Who came to witness his dangerous position? In what did his chance of safety lie? How was he at last saved?

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三四个小伙子站在宏伟的弗吉尼亚自然大桥的桥洞下。他们看到桥墩

的石头刻着许多人名，便决定要把自己的名字也加进去。刻完后，其中一个小伙子心里一直有个疯狂的想法，他想把自己的名字刻得比别人的都高！他的朋友劝解他放弃这样危险的行为，但一点用也没有。他是个桀骜不驯又无所顾忌的年轻人；他怕自己要是现在放弃了，人家就会把他看成是懦夫，于是他决定要一直攀爬上桥墩的石头，直到听到人们的欢呼声为止，而不是听从他那群胆小的朋友的劝阻。

他其中一位朋友跑到村里头，把他危险的处境告诉了他父亲。剩下的人则四处寻求帮助，不一会儿工夫，就来了上百个人聚集在桥洞下，还有的挤在桥上，屏住呼吸，来观看那惊心动魄的一幕。这可怜的孩子一下子就辨认出了他父亲的声音，他父亲正声嘶力竭地喊着，——“威廉！威廉！别往下看！你妈妈，亨利，还有哈利亚特都在为你祈祷呢！别往下看！眼睛往上看！”

男孩没有往下看。他的眼睛紧盯着天空的方向，年轻的心一心想着上帝是那里的主宰。他再一次抓起刀子，又刻下一笔，又攀爬了一步，他本来已经离着地面几百英尺，这样地面上的人们就更加难以帮他了。

太阳已经快要下山了。人们把身子探出桥，手里抓着绳子。但在那最长的绳子能够得到这男孩之前，他还得再刻上五十刀！再过两分钟，一切就结束了！那刀子已经被磨损得只剩下半寸的样子了，而男孩子开始头昏目眩起来。他最后的希望就是即使死去也要完成自己的心愿，而他的生命就完全系在他要刻的下一笔了。那一笔将是他的最后一笔。

当最后一笔刻完的时候，他的刀——他那恪尽职守的刀子——从他那已经毫无感觉的手中掉落了下来，一路滚落下峭壁，落在了他母亲的脚边！油然而生的绝望情绪马上在下面的人群中蔓延开来，但所有人都鸦雀无声，一动不动。在三百英尺的高度，那热忱投入的男孩已经绝望的心升华了起来，他闭上眼睛等待着上帝的召唤。

啊！——一声喊叫从头顶传来！有个人把身子横亘在桥上，抓住了男孩的头和肩膀。说时迟那时快，那带套索的绳子一下子就够到了往下坠的男孩。大家都屏住呼吸。昏昏沉沉的男孩使出吃奶的力气，把胳膊套进了绳套里。

他惊心动魄地悬吊在半空的时候，没有人发出声响；但当用稳稳的手臂托住那孩子，拽他上桥，把他送到满含热泪、屏住呼吸的人群面前的时候——人们爆发出前所未有的欢呼雀跃声和喜极而泣的声音，他们为从死神手中夺回一个毫发无损的生命而喜极而泣。

Lesson 2 THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB'S ARMY

第二课 亚述王军队的陨灭

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming with purple and gold.
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue waves roll nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever were still.

And there lay the steed with his nostrils all wide,
But through them there rolled not the breath of his pride
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider, distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpets unblown.

那曾经的喘息只留下嘴边挂着白沫，
它已经冰冷地躺在了砾石丛生的草原。

还有那马背上的人也躺在了地上，身体扭曲，脸色苍白，
眉心沁汗，信件斑驳，
营地死寂一片，只剩下那独自飘曳的条幅，
无人投掷的长矛，还有那不再吹响的号角。

从亚述人的窗边经过，能听到他们的号啕声动天；
太阳神庙里的神像被捣毁；
那利刃也动不得分毫的加利利人的权威，
好像被上帝看了一眼的积雪一样，融化不再！

——拜伦勋爵（1788-1824）

Lesson 3 “ABOVE THE CLOUDS”

第三课 在云端

IN 1856 an attempt was made, under the auspices of the British Government, to commence a series of observations in some region “above the clouds,” where the serene and quiet air would be specially favourable for viewing the heavenly bodies. The island of Teneriffe was selected for this purpose, as combining more of the required advantages than any other mountain within easy reach of Europe.

The expedition was under the direction of Piazzzi Smyth, the distinguished astronomer at Edinburgh; who, in a remarkable and interesting work, has since published a narrative of the expedition. In an article contributed to a popular magazine he thus graphically describes the ascent of Teneriffe to a point high “above the clouds:” —

It was only a few days after — on a morning also cloudy, and with north-east cloud too — that the little party set forth from the town of Orotava, on the northern coast of Teneriffe, to climb the great mountain, and put to the only true test of actual practice their hopes of getting “above the clouds.” Through long, winding, stony pathways, between vineyards and cactus plantations, between orange groves and fig-trees, they proceeded, always ascending; past gardens, and then past orchards, still ever ascending; past corn-fields and oat-fields, ascending yet higher, and then amongst natural vegetation only — ferns and heath and some few wild laurels; and now, at a height of 3000 feet vertical, they are close under the cloud.

Before entering therein, let us pause for a moment and survey the beauties of creation in the region we are leaving behind. If, for that one purpose of severe astronomy, a position below the clouds is unsuitable, yet what an infinite amount of benefit for man to enjoy, and of beauty for him to contemplate, is connected therewith! Beneath the clouds are kindly rains and gentle dews; and these, assisted by a warm climate, encourage all those exquisite forms of vegetation which we

have admired clothing the lower slopes of the mountain. Without these, where were the fruits to support human life; where the buds and blossoms and fading flowers which teach us many a lesson useful to life eternal?

But duty now calls us on our upward way. Before many more seconds are passed, first comes one cold hurrying blast, with mist upon its wings, and then another, and another. Then, in the midst of a constant dense wet fog, all creation is shut out of our view, except the few feet of sloping earth on which we are treading, and that appears of a dull gray; and the occasional spiders' webs seen across our path are loaded with heavy drops of moisture.

For half an hour we must toil on and on through this winding-sheet of gloom; perpetually on the same upward way, but strong in faith and hope of what must in the end be presented to our eyes; on still, and up higher, when suddenly a momentary break appears overhead, and a portion of sky is seen — oh, so blue! — but it is lost again.

In a few minutes, however, another opening, another blue patch is seen; and then another, and another. Before three minutes more are passed, all the hurrying clouds seem blown on one side. Fair sky is everywhere above and around, a brilliant sun is shining, and there, there below us, is the upper surface of the clouds, extending far and wide, like a level plain, shutting out lowland and city and sea all from view, and in their place substituting brilliant reflections of solar light, which make the surface of this new mist-country look winter than snow! Yes, indeed, we are now "above the clouds;" and this view that we have attempted to describe is the first example of the heightened, the advanced, the glorified appearance of even Earth's sombre fog-banks to those who are privileged for a time to look on them from the heavenward side.

"Above the clouds!" — not only no rain, no mist, no dew, but a scorching sun, and an air, both by day and by night, dry to almost an alarming degree. The further we advance, and the higher we ascend, the drier becomes the air; while at the same time the strength of the north-east trade-wind is continually decreasing, and at the height of about six or seven thousand feet has completely died away.

Not that it has ceased elsewhere as well, for the driving clouds below show that it is still in its accustomed violence there. The distant movements of those rollers

of white cloud betray that it must yet be raging down there in all its strength, tearing the mist piecemeal, and bowing down the heads of suffering palm-trees, and lashing the sea into foam-crested waves. Heaven grant that no cry of shipwrecked mariners be borne on the breeze; and, more still, that no evil thoughts be engendering in the cities of men.

It was when our party on the mountain were in the fullest enjoyment of their daily and nightly views of the heavens, that their friends in the towns of Teneriffe near the sea-coast wrote to them most sympathizingly:

“Oh! what dreadful weather you must have been suffering! Down here we have had for three weeks the most frightful continuance of storms — constant clouds, rain, and howling winds; and if that was the case with us, what must it not have been with you at the greater height!”

Yet at the greater height, at that very time, the air was tranquil and serene, the sky clear, and bad weather entirely confined to that lower depth in the atmosphere beneath “the grosser clouds.”

Words

accustomed, *usual*.

actual, *real*.

alarming, *disquieting*.

ascending, *mounting*.

auspices, *patronage*.

brilliant, *gorgeous*.

commence, *begin*.

completely, *entirely*.

confined, *limited*.

contemplate, *consider*.

continuance, *succession*.

decreasing, *diminishing*.

distinguished, *eminent*.

dreadful, *terrible*.

engendering, *growing*.

expedition, *enterprise*.

exquisite, *dedicate*.

graphically, *forcibly*.

heightened, *elevated*.

hurrying, *fleeing*.

mariners, *seamen*.

momentary, *transient*.

narrative, *account*.

observations, *investigations*.

perpetually, *constantly*.

practice, *expedience*.

privileged, *permitted*.

region, *district*.

serene, *tranquil*.

severe, *accurate*.

substituting, *exchanging*.

survey, *examine*.

sympathizing, *compassionately*.

treading, *walking*.

unsuitable, inconvenient.

violence, vehemence.

vegetation, plant life.

Questions

What place was selected for the astronomical expedition of 1856? Who directed it? At what height was the party close under the cloud? What benefits arise to man from being beneath the clouds? How long was the party in piercing the cloud? What was the state of the sky above it? What was the appearance of the clouds from above? What was the state of the air as they ascended higher? What change did the trade-wind undergo? What showed that it had not ceased elsewhere? What was the state of the weather near the sea-coast? What, above the clouds?

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1856年，在英国政府的资助下，一个太空观测系列项目在部分地区展开。这些地区僻静而天气晴朗，对于观测空中的天体而言再好不过了。特纳利夫岛就是这部分地区中的一个，它得天独厚的条件要胜过所有能够容易到达的欧洲山地。

这次探险活动是在皮亚兹·史密斯的带领下进行的。史密斯是爱丁堡负有盛名的天文学家，他在一本备受追捧且生动有趣的书中，描写了此次探险活动。在一篇写给大众杂志的文章中，他如此形象地描述了特纳利夫山高耸“在云端”——

仅仅过了几天的时间——也是一个多云的早晨，云朵向东北方漂移——小分队从位于特纳利夫岛北海岸的斯特拉瓦出发，向着特纳利夫山攀登，实现他们到达“云端”的梦想。他们走过那些又长又蜿蜒而且布满砾石的山路，跨过那些葡萄藤和仙人掌盘踞的荒原，又穿过橘子林和无花果树林，仍然向前行进，不停地登攀；他们又过了几个花园，穿过了几个农场，还是继续前行；接着又过了几片玉米田和麦田，他们攀登得更高，到达了只有原始植被——蕨类，石楠和一些野生月桂树的地方；而现在，在海拔3000英尺的地方，他们离着云端只有几步之遥了。

在到达前，我们先停下来看看那些生长在我们走过的路途中的美丽生物吧。因为，如果只是为了严肃的天文学的话，攀爬到云端下的地方实在是不值得，但如果能把一路上所闻所见的美丽事物都冥想一番，那该是怎

样的一种美妙境界啊！云端下是温和的雨露；它们在温暖的气候下，给所有多姿多彩的植物提供了生长条件，而那些植物，我们多希望它们能点缀海拔低的山坡啊！没有它们的话，哪里有滋养我们的鲜果，哪里有让我们见证花朵从盛开再到花瓣凋零，从而明白了人生的许多道理。

但我们现在肩负重任，必须向前。又过了许多时候，我们先是到了一处荒芜的寒冷之地，迷雾萦绕其间，然后又过了一处，再过一处。之后，在久久不散的潮湿的浓雾中，一切生物都从我们视野中消失不见了，只有脚下的几英尺陡峭的土地，发出毫无生机的灰白色；偶尔能看到几处蛛网横结在路上，上面净是水坑。

我们必须继续跋涉，穿越着蜿蜒的晦暗，一直走上半个钟头；我们永远在同样的路上向上攀登，而内心保持着最后会看见美景的强烈信念和希望；然后继续前行，攀登得更高，直到突然头顶出现了一瞬间的闪亮，露出天空的一角——噢，如此湛蓝的天啊！——但不久又看不到了。

不过，过了几分钟，又看到了天空一角，看到那湛蓝的一角；再过几分钟，又看到一处。不出三分钟的时间，所有那些行迹匆匆的流云都被吹拂到一边了。清澈的天空随处可见，呈现在头顶和周围，明亮的太阳在闪耀着，而就在那里，就在我们站立的地方，已经到了云端，它向外无限延展着，取代了那太阳光的明亮的倒影，让这迷雾萦绕的地方更像冬季的雪天！是的，没错，我们现在已经“在云端”了；而我们希望描述的这个场景，是对晦暗的、烟雾萦绕之地的升华的、提升的、光辉的场景的首次描述，把这样的景象描述给曾经有幸仰视过它们的人们听。

“在云端”！——这里没有雨水，没有雾气，没有朝露，有的只是灼人的太阳和干燥到几乎令人惊异的空气，昼夜环绕在那里。我们越往前走，越往高处攀登，就发现空气变得越干燥；同时北风的强度也在减小，到海拔六七千英尺的高度，几乎就没什么风了。

这并不是说风停了，因为从下面风卷残云的景象看来，它依然强劲。远处云朵的卷动表明，在低处，风一定是在用尽全力呼啸，在迷雾中间撕开口子，让那忍受强风吹拂的棕榈树低下了头，这风还拍打着大海，卷起一波波白沫冠顶的波浪。上天为证，已经葬身海底的、见识到这劲风的船员绝对不会发出哭嚎，而在这里生活的人们心中也没有邪恶的念头。

当我们在山上满心欢喜地庆贺白天和夜晚看到的天空的美景的时候，那生活在海岸边的特纳利夫城的朋友，用最同情的口吻写了一封信：

“哦！你们该遭受了怎样恶劣天气啊！在山下，我们一连经历了三个星

期的暴风雪，可怕极了——乌云不散，雨水连连，还有呼啸的风一直吹个不停；如果我们这里都是这样的话，那你们在高处该是怎样一副光景啊！”

但在高处，就在那一刻，气氛静谧而宁和，天空清澈，坏天气完全是在低处缠绵，在那“更潮湿的云朵”之下。

Lesson 4 THE CONDOR OF THE ANDES

第四课 安第斯山脉的秃鹫

IN those sterile heights Nature withholds her fostering influence alike from vegetable and from animal life. The scantiest vegetation can scarcely draw nutriment from the ungenial soil, and animals shun the dreary and shelterless wilds. The condor, or South American vulture, alone finds itself in its native element amidst these mountain deserts. On the inaccessible summits of the Cordillera, and at an elevation of from 10,000 to 15,000 feet, this bird builds its nest, and hatches its young in the months of April and May.

Few animals have attained so wide a celebrity as the condor. This bird was known in Europe at a period when its native land was numbered among those fabulous regions which are regarded as the scenes of imaginary wonders. The most extravagant accounts of the condor were written and read; and general credence was granted to every story which travellers brought from the fairy-land of gold and silver. It was only at the commencement of the present century that Humboldt overthrew the extravagant notions that had previously prevailed respecting the size, strength, and habits of this extraordinary bird.

The full-grown condor measures, from the point of the beak to the end of the tail, from four feet ten inches to five feet; and from the tip of one wing to that of the other, from twelve to fourteen feet! This bird feeds chiefly upon carrion; it is only when impelled by hunger that it seizes living animals, and even then only the small and defenceless, such as the young of



sheep, vicunas, and llamas.

It cannot raise great weights with its feet; which, however, it uses to aid the power of its beak. The principal strength of the condor lies in its neck and in its feet; yet it cannot, when flying, carry a weight exceeding eight or ten pounds. All accounts of sheep and calves being carried off by condors are mere exaggerations.

The bird passes a great part of the day in sleep, and hovers in quest of prey chiefly in the morning and evening. Whilst soaring at a height beyond the reach of human eyes, the sharp-sighted condor discerns its prey on the level heights beneath it, and darts down upon it with the swiftness of lightning. When a bait is laid, it is curious to observe the number of condors which assemble in a quarter of an hour in a spot near which not one had been previously visible. These birds possess the senses of sight and smell in a singularly powerful degree.

Some old travellers have affirmed that the plumage of the condor cannot be pierced by a musket ball. This absurdity is scarcely worthy of contradiction; but it is nevertheless true that the bird has a singular tenacity of life, and that it is seldom killed by fire-arms, unless when shot in some vital part.

Its plumage, particularly on the wings, is very strong and thick. The natives, therefore, seldom attempt to shoot the condor. They usually catch it by traps or by the lasso, or kill it by stones flung from slings, or by the bolas.

A curious method of capturing the condor alive is practised in one province. A fresh cow-hide, with some fragments of flesh adhering to it, is spread out on one of the level heights, and an Indian provided with ropes creeps beneath it, whilst some others station themselves in ambush near the spot ready to assist him. Presently a condor, attracted by the smell of the flesh, darts down upon the cow-hide; and then the Indian, who is concealed under it, seizes the bird by the legs, and binds them fast in the skin, as if in a bag. The captured condor flaps its wings, and makes ineffectual attempts to fly, but is speedily secured, and carried in triumph to the nearest village. Live condors are frequently sold in the markets of Chili and Peru, where a very fine one may be purchased for a dollar and a half.

—DR. J. VON TSCHUDI: *Travels in Peru*.

Words

absurdity, *nonsense*.

affirmed, *asserted*.

ambush, *concealment*.

assemble, *collect*.

capturing, *seizing*.

celebrity, *distinction*.

commencement, *beginning*.

defenseless, *unprotected*.

discerns, *describes*.

exceeding, *surpassing*.

extraordinary, *wonderful*.

extravagant, *exaggerated*.

fabulous, *legendary*.

fostering, *nourishing*.

frequently, *often*.

impelled, *driven*.

inaccessible, *unapproachable*.

ineffectual, *fruitless*.

particularly, *especially*.

purchased, *bought*.

sharp sighted, *keen eyed*.

singularly, *peculiarly*.

soaring, *flying*.

sterile, *barren*.

summits, *peaks*.

tenacity, *retentiveness*.

triumph, *exultation*.

ungenial, *unfavourable*.

Questions

What other name is given to the condor? Where does it build its nest? What accounts were current before the 'present' (i.e. 19th) century? Who overthrew these? What are the dimensions of a full-grown condor? On what does it chiefly feed? Where does its principal strength lie? When does it go in quest of prey? What shows the keenness of its sight and smell? Why do the natives seldom attempt to shoot the condor? How do they kill it? What curious method of capturing it is practised in one province? For what may a live condor sometimes be bought?

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大自然在贫瘠的高海拔地区对其泽养万物的能力做了公正的保留，对植物如此，对动物也一样。零星分布的植物勉强从贫瘠的土地中汲取养分，动物们则对这样荒凉而毫无遮掩的地方避之不及。秃鹫，或者叫南美洲秃鹰，独自生活在这些山区的沙漠上，这里就是它的原生带。在无法企及的科迪勒拉山脉的高峰上，在海拔1万到1.5万英尺的高处，秃鹫在那里筑巢，在4月和5月孵化幼鸟。

几乎没有什么动物像秃鹫一样有名。它曾在欧洲风靡一时，因为它的故乡是想象中一个颇为神秘的国度。人们写了很多描述秃鹫的华丽夸张的辞藻，这些辞藻又传播开来；而人们普遍相信那些远行者从神奇的土地上带回金银的故事。仅仅到了20世纪之初的时候，洪堡才推翻了那些之前流行于人们中间的关于这非凡鸟儿的身形、力量和习性的夸张描述。

成年秃鹫，从喙尖到尾端的长度从4英尺10英寸到5英尺不等；而从其一翼的一端到另一翼的一端的宽度则有12到14英尺！秃鹫大都食腐肉，只有在饥饿难耐的情况下，它才会捕捉活的动物，不过即使是那样，它捕捉的也只是些身形娇小没有反抗能力的动物，比如小山羊、小羊驼和小美洲驼。

秃鹫的脚爪抓不起大重量的动物，因此，它会用喙的力量来协助。秃鹫的主要力量在它的颈部和脚爪上，但飞翔的时候，它不能携带重量超过八磅或十磅的东西。那些秃鹫掠去羊牛的说法都不过是夸张的传言罢了。

白天大部分时候，秃鹫都在睡觉，而清晨和傍晚则是它盘旋空中捕捉猎物的主要时机。秃鹫在人眼难以看到的高度飞翔，用锐利的眼睛观察地上的猎物，然后以迅雷不及掩耳之势一个俯冲下去抓住猎物。当腐肉出现的时候，从来不会只出现过一只秃鹫，而是不出十几分钟就会有一群的秃鹫聚集而来，这是非常有趣的现象。这些鸟儿的视觉和嗅觉都非常厉害。

某些有经验的远行者说，秃鹫的羽毛火枪也打不烂。这样荒谬的说法不值得辩驳，但无论如何，秃鹫的生命力顽强却是不争的事实，它很少会被火枪射杀，除非是被击中了致命的部位。

它的羽毛，特别是翅膀部分的羽毛，又坚硬又厚实。土著人因此几乎不会狩猎秃鹫。他们通常是设下陷阱或用套索来擒得它们，或者用石头砸死，或是用绳索勒死它们。

在某个地方，有一个生擒秃鹫的有趣方法。新剥下的小牛皮，上头粘连着新鲜牛肉的香味，被平铺在一个较高的架子上，有个手里拿绳子的印第安人埋伏在下面，同时，他的帮手也埋伏在附近。秃鹫为肉的味道所吸引，就俯冲向牛皮；然后藏在牛皮下头的印第安人就抓住秃鹫的腿，牢牢地捆住它，就像给袋子扎口一样。被擒得的秃鹫挥动翅膀，梦想要飞走，但总是徒劳，人们马上就把它捉住了，然后胜利昂扬地把它抬到最近的村子。活的秃鹫经常在智利和秘鲁的市场上被贩卖，在那里，一只上好的秃鹫可能会卖上一点五美金。

Lesson 5 THE PRAIRIE ON FIRE (I)

第五课 大草原失火记 (I)

[THE PRAIRIES. — Between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains there is a vast extent of grassy plains called *Prairies*. The soil is fertile and the vegetation luxuriant; and before their occupation by the white man the tall grass waved in the wind over the wide expanse, resembling the rolling of an emerald ocean. These plains furnished food for countless herds of buffaloes, elks, antelopes, and other animals that feed on herbage. They moved continually to and fro in vast masses, as the seasons changed and the state of the pasture drove them to new fields.

Different regions of the prairies had different characters. The wide undulating plains, frequented by buffaloes and covered with grass, were called *Rolling Prairies*, from their general resemblance to the long, heavy swell of the ocean, when subsiding after a storm; and *Dry Prairies*, because they were generally destitute of water. These were the most common and extensive.

Other regions abounded in springs, and were covered with shrubs and bushes. These were called *Bushy Prairies*.

Lastly, there were the *Alluvial* or *Wet Prairies*, which were covered with rich verdure and gorgeous flowers, and which in the rainy season were frequently overflowed.

Sometimes a prairie was set on fire, either accidentally or by design. Such a prairie on fire was one of the most terrible things in nature. The ocean of flame rolled onward and onward before the wind, with irresistible might, devouring everything that lay in its path. Drove of wild horses, buffaloes, antelopes, rushed madly before the advancing flames, beasts of prey forgetting their enmities in the midst of the common danger. Crowds of vultures and other birds of prey followed the course of the fire, and seized upon the carcasses which the flames had not completely consumed.]

THE sleep of the fugitives lasted for several hours. The trapper was the first to shake off its influence, as he had been the last to court its refreshment. Rising just as the gray light of day began to brighten that portion of the studded vault which rested on the eastern margin of the plain, he summoned his companions from their warm lairs, and pointed out the necessity of their being once more on the alert.

“See, Middleton! exclaimed Inez, in a sudden burst of youthful pleasure, that