

PROGRESS.

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INVENTIONS OF THE PAST.

The experience of the Patent Office, United States with its "hall of models" throws an interesting light upon the progress of American invention. For many years the government required an applicant for a patent to submit a model of his invention. If the invention were a machine, none of the three dimensions of the model was to exceed twelve inches. The models were displayed in show-cases on the upper floor. This extensive collection of little engines, pumps and mowing-machines, came to look somewhat like a top-shop, and to it hundreds of visitors were attracted.

But so long ago as 1880 it became evident that the practice of receiving models must be discontinued. The space they occupied was needed by the office for its regular business. So the models then on hand were sorted over, and the most interesting ones were retained, appropriately grouped, as a patent office museum. They have since been frequently sent, as a part of the government's exhibit, to great fairs like that at Chicago in 1893.

The rest of the models are now kept on two floors of a large storehouse near the patent office which have been rented for the purpose. The few visitors who chance to stroll through that wilderness of show-cases are reminded of the diverse channels in which American inventiveness has sought an outlet.

It is a singular fact that, to understand a machine, the patent office examiners prefer a mechanical drawing to an actual model, so trained have they become in translating the conventional marks of a diagram into the physical reality for which it stands.

THE MORTALITY OF CITIES.

The latest bulletin of the American department of labor contains three statistical tables of unusual interest, showing the number and cause of deaths, during the last fiscal year, in one hundred and twenty nine cities having a population of thirty thousand or more.

Like all statistics, these figures sometimes require to be explained. For instance, the highest death-rate of any city in the country—almost thirty five to the thousand—is that of Charleston, S. C., while New Orleans, Savannah and San Antonio all had a death-rate of more than twenty-five to the thousand. But this does not prove that they are unwholesome places. Each has a very large colored population, and exceptional mortality here swells the general average. The really "deadly" cities are foreign ports, like Bombay, where the death-rate is sometimes over sixty-four to the thousand.

With the exception of Rockford, Illinois, the most healthful cities seem to lie west of the Mississippi. Sattle heads them, with a death-rate of only about seven to the thousand. St. Joseph, Missouri; Portland, Oregon; Lincoln, Nebraska; Tacoma, Washington; Sioux City, Iowa, and Rockford, Illinois, all have a death-rate of less than ten to the thousand. The death-rates of New York, London and Paris are over nineteen to the thousand.

Coming to specific diseases, Chelsea, Massachusetts, shows the smallest percentage of deaths from consumption, and Houston, Texas, seems to be most free from pneumonia. The fewest deaths from typhoid took place in Fall River. In Charleston there was but one death from diphtheria, and in more than one-third of the cities no death was caused by malarial fever.

It is interesting to note that Salt Lake

City records the largest number—about eleven to the thousand—of deaths from "old age;" that Auburn, New York, had the smallest proportionate number of deaths by violence; that the fewest deaths from heart disease took place in San Antonio, and the fewest from apoplexy in Spokane.

This has been a great year for elections. Members of the Storting were chosen in Norway in September, Great Britain renewed its Parliament in October, when were the first general elections since 1895. In the United States the quadrennial election of President took place November 6th; Canada chose a new parliament November 7th, to succeed that elected in 1896, and on the following day Newfoundland held its parliamentary election. A general election has been ordered in Austria, but has not yet taken place. The situation in that country is described in an article on this page.

JOSEPH JEFFERSON'S LUCK

Gigantic Fortune Brought an Island Owned by Him in Louisiana.

Joseph Jefferson, the actor, owns a little island near Bob Acres Station, La., that is a veritable salt mine. He bought the property a few years ago for a winter residence, and it was entirely by accident that he discovered recently the fact that the peace of real estate in question is situated directly over an immense mass of solid salt—the largest block of salt known to exist anywhere in the world. It is of the utmost purity, too, being wholly composed of the finest quality of table salt, without the slightest admixture of any other mineral, and its quality is such that one may take a block of it and read a newspaper through it, just as if it were so much glass.

Apparently the whole island, which is about 300 acres in extent, is underlaid by one great body of salt which is struck at a depth of 100 feet or so. Mr. Jefferson came across it while boring hopefully for mineral waters, and since then it has been penetrated through a vertical distance of 2,100 feet, or more than a third of a mile directly downward, without reaching the bottom of it. This was accomplished by means of drills, which yielding cores made it possible to study the material through its successive strata with the utmost accuracy. But there was no variation with the depth in the quality of the stuff, which throughout was pure crystalline table salt.

To Visit Strange Peoples.

Messrs. Jochelson and Bogoras of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition have recently started for Northeastern Asia to continue the work of clearing up the mystery concerning the relations between the aborigines of America and those of Asia. They will visit several native tribes dwelling north of the Amur River, concerning whom very little is at present known. The influx of gold-seekers along the Behring Sea is said to threaten the early extinction of the aboriginal tribes there. From the Sea of Okhotsk, Mr. Jochelson will cross a lofty mountain range, on a trail never pursued by white men, in order to visit the isolated tribe of the Yudagir, and will then try to make his way westward to Russia.

Wheat From Egyptian Tombs.

The statement has frequently been made that it is possible to cause grains of wheat found in ancient Egyptian sepulchres to germinate and grow. This statement has been disputed, and the question was discussed at a recent meeting of the French Academy of Sciences. It was shown that while the albumen of wheat found in a tomb 6000 years old had undergone no alteration, the embryo was changed and could not be caused to germinate. But a fresh embryo placed in the ancient albumen would grow, and this fact, it was said, probably accounted for the statement that the old Egyptian wheat rescued from its long entombment would sprout and grow.

This comes from making love to the daughter of a genius.

'What is the trouble, Tom?'
Why, her father has just invented a parlor clock that sounds an alarm at 10 o'clock, turns out the gas, and opens the front door by a wire spring!

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Chicago is not only the greatest cattle, sheep and hog market in the world, but it now leads all creation as a horse market. During the nine full months of the present calendar year 147,000 horses were received and sold there, breaking all former records by nearly 30,000.

VERSES OF YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Malthace Graham.

That was her name, Malthace Graham,
The flower of Maple Ford;
All Canada knew no sweeter name,
Nor a maiden more adored.
She gave her heart and she gave her hand,
To a soldier leaving the town;
To fight on Africa's scorching sand,
Loyal to England's Crown.

The night was black and the flying gale,
Called from the homestead trees;
There came a crash like a storm of hail
And the maiden was on her knees.
Thunder rolled like the cannon's roar,
And the gusts like a rain of lead;
From the rift a fire beat o'er and o'er,
Where the brave were lying dead.

A flame like a crimson flash of light
Shot into the maiden's room;
And a body stood in her prayerful sight,
Beside her from the tomb.

None but her spirit caught the sound,
Nor dreamed of the soldier's fall;
Till deep in her soul she felt a wound,
And she heard his dying call.

What sudden cry the loud mother heard,
In that hour so dark and late;
That out of her slumber to action stirred
Like the presence a spectral fate;
Tearful she opened the chamber door,
Holding her very breath;
And there alone on the naked floor,
Lay the love of her life in death.

To a sentry pacing his lonely round,
In the dead of the silent night;
Passing that Modder River mound,
Came a vision of wondrous light.

The form of a lovely maiden stood,
And wept where her lover lay;
Till the ghostly moon shone over the flood,
And the vision vanished away.

And the wire beneath the swelling waves,
From the land so far away;
From the lengthened trenches of gallant graves
Had these marvellous words to say.
"The bright young soldier of Maple Ford,
In that awful night surprise;
Till where he led with his valiant sword,
In a warrior's grave he lies."

CYRUS GOLDBE

The Sweetest and Best.

There is nothing so sweet as the winds that blow,
Over the roses in balmy June
There is nothing more fair than streams that flow
In the mingled mirth of a merry tune.

There is nothing so sweet as a faithful heart,
When the sorrows of time around us roll;
The world's temptations lose all their art,
In a sunny light of a sinless soul.

There is nothing so peaceful and free from care,
As a soul that blesses affliction's rod;
That leaves unbidden the false world's glare,
And finds its peace in the love of God.

CYRUS GOLDBE

The Snow.

I am the little white wonder, Snow!
Far have I fallen, yet softly I light:
Out of the North comes a sower to sow—
Out of the North comes a husbandman white.

What will you call me, the seed that the flings?
Bloom of a garden whose blossoms have wings?
Down of strange thickets past boreal bars?
Crystalline dust from the floor of the stars?

There—let me lie on your palm for a space,
Brief, for I fall in the wind of your breath;
Mark you my symmetry—exquisite grace—
Quick! For the leap of your pulse is my death!

Moccasined football of Indian maid,
Softer than this is my step in the slide;
Tumble of plumes in the crown of the larch,
Lighter than this is the sound of march!

Chambers of cloud with the pale moonrise filled,
Whiter than these are the tents that I build;
O'er the bare woodlands my tapestries throw—
Yet am I only the Snow—the Snow!

I am the mighty white marvel, Snow!
Shepherd of mountains, my fleece covered flocks,
Close to the sun doth their pasture go,
Hard by the stars is their fold in the rocks!

What will you call me, my front to the morn?
Hear is my breath where the glaciers are born.
Splice-like my marble-cold silence I keep,
What will you call me—the Angel of Sleep?

Do I keep silence? The night is I'arest;
Softer than this is my step in the slide;
Hark! To the swirl of my wings on the blast,
Hark! To the sea, when I trouble the tide!

See the proud thornes where in splendor I sit,
The world at my feet and the glory of it!
Sunrise and sunset flame over my crest,
See, their red roses I wear on my breast!

Mighty the strength of my wind-trowled walls;
Mighty my vice when the avalanche falls!
Lord of the lands of the berg, and the flce!
Yet am I only the Snow—the Snow!

A Veteran's Gratitude.

Two years ago Robert Majors, a civil war veteran, was assistant custodian of the Federal Building at Omaha. His duties required him to pass through the postoffice after the day force left. One evening, during the interval while the clerks were leaving and Majors were entering a certain room, a small package of money, which had been lying on a table was missed. Majors was suspected, arrested and prosecuted. Through the influence of two comrades, Major T. S. Clark and Harry M. Turner, of Omaha, he was saved from a felon's cell, although he lost his job. He then went to Huntsville, Ala., to live with relatives. About a month ago a brother died and left the veteran a fortune. With the first cash paid in by the administrator, Majors started for Omaha to present substantial gifts to the two comrades who helped him when he was in trouble. To each one he gave \$10,000 in cash and the three veterans had a jolly reunion.

Fergus county, Mont., possesses one of the most remarkable mines in the world—the Yogo sapphire properties—in that the precious stones are found in regular formed veins like gold, silver and other valuable metals, whereas in other communities diamonds, sapphires, opals and other buried treasures are found in pockets or clusters.

Chairs Re-seated, Cane, Splint, Porcelain, Dural, 17 Waterloo

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TORTURES BY ITALIAN POLICE.

Again Brought to Notice By Their Failure to Capture the Brigand Mussolino.

In connection with the extraordinary man hunt now proceeding in the Province of Reggio in southern Italy, where the brigand Mussolino continues to defy all efforts to capture him, extraordinary allegations have been made against the police and the judicial authorities. It is alleged that, maddened by their failure in the operations against this desperado, officers of the law and the judiciary have resorted freely to torture in order to extort information from the peasants who are suspected, doubtless not without good reason, of supplying Mussolino with news as to the movements of his pursuers. Complaints have been sent to Rome, and it is possible, but not probable, that they will be investigated—perhaps twenty years hence.

Whatever may have happened in Reggio there is not the slightest doubt that torture has become an almost regular instrument in the hands of the so called administrators of justice in the island of Sicily. There, as is well known, the peasants are almost to a man and a woman in league with the brigands, who have also their friends and agents by the hundred in all the towns, not excluding Palermo, the capital itself. Nearly ten years have elapsed since the late King Humbert called before him various members of the Ministry of the Interior, told them that the continued and defiant existence of brigandage in Sicily was a disgrace to Italy and a standing reproach to civilization, and insisted that the evil should be tackled at once and effectively. Since then relentless warfare has been carried on in the beautiful island, but brigandage still flourishes despite or perhaps because of the activity and ferocity of the special police force charged with the work. Torture, more or less openly used, undoubtedly forms part of the regular judicial machinery in Sicily. The fact has been proclaimed and as often denied. Probably the only officers of the law who have not resorted to torture in order to obtain evidence are the Judges of the High Court in Palermo, but even in that city it is carried out under the very noses of the supreme tribunal. Here is a case in point which came to light this week.

A year or so ago five peasants believed to be accomplices of brigands were charged with the murder in atrocious circumstances of one Giuseppe Grippi, who was suspected of having betrayed a notorious band into the hands of the police. The prisoners at first denied and then confessed the crime and all were promptly sentenced to imprisonment for life. Last week, however, a certain Giuseppe Mannino being at the point of death confessed to his priest that he was the murderer of Grippi, and that not one of the condemned men had the slightest knowledge of or complicity in the crime before or after the event. Acting upon advice of the priest, Mannino repeated his confession on oath in the presence of the Magistrate and also furnished material proofs of his guilt.

The five condemned men, when called upon to explain the reasons which induced them to confess to a crime of which they were innocent, declared that it was because of the horrible tortures to which they had been subjected in prison at Palermo. They were led to believe that if they confessed they would escape with nominal punishment, but that if they remained contumacious they would still be found guilty and would be subject to further tortures. A report of the case was sent to Rome and a special inquiry was instituted, the result of which was to prove the innocence of the five men beyond doubt and also the truth of their assertions as to the application of torture. They are still in prison pending the formalities necessary to be observed before they can be released.

England's Coal Mines.

A French author, Monsieur E. Loze, has recently discussed again the question of the probable duration of the British coal-fields. Assuming that the prosperity and power of Great Britain depend upon her supply of coal, he thinks that "the end of Britain" is due within the coming century. He fixes the date 1950 for the complete exhaustion of the attainable supply of coal in the British Isles. To this statement the English scientific journal, Nature, replies that Monsieur Loze has failed to take account of recent investigations proving that

mining can be economically carried on at much greater depths than 2000 feet,—the limit assumed by the French author—and consequently that the British coal supply will last indefinitely longer than his calculation shows.

Madam Butterfly.

Among the famous beauties at the courts of the Stuarts was Mary Villiers, Duchess of Richmond and Lennox. She was born in 1623, and was married at so early an age that her husband, dying within a twelvemonth, left her an eleven-year-old widow. Then she returned to the court of Charles I., her adoptive father, and, a radiant child clad in widow's weeds, created no small sensation.

One little adventure shows her at her prettiest, and won for her the nickname of "Butterfly."

She had climbed into a tree in the king's garden to gather some fruit, and her long black dress and veil spread themselves over the branches in the manner of wings, so that the king, at some distance, imagined he saw a strange bird perching in the tree. Mr. Porter, a gallant young courtier, was in attendance, and his majesty, knowing him to be an exact marksman, said:

"Do you see that strange bird up in that tree? I wish you would fire at it."

But the range was too great, and Mr. Porter crept up under the tree. There among the branches was the countess, looking down upon him with the most innocent air, and pelting him with fruit.

"What have you there, Porter?" asked she, glancing at his fuscus. "Why can't you speak? Are you bewitched?"

"O madam," he replied, "it you knew what brought me thither, you would own that I have reason for being surprised. The king, spying you in a tree, took you for a bird. So you may guess upon what errand I came."

"What," she cried, "to kill me?"

"Yes, madam, to kill you! I promised to bring the king some of your feathers!"

"Ha, ha!" cried she, laughing. "You must be as good as your word! I will put myself into a large hamper, and so be carried into his apartment."

So the hamper was conveyed into the king's presence, and Mr. Porter, accompanying it, explained that the butterfly had proved so beautiful that nobody could possibly wish to kill it, and so he had taken it alive.

The king was of course very eager to see so lovely a creature, and opened the hamper with his own hand. There crouched the countess, bubbling over with merriment.

History does not tell us whether she quoted:

"Isn't this a pretty dish to set before the king? But it does declare that the king was delighted anew with the little lady and her fantastic humor."

Inevitable.

Bobby came home one day covered with dirt and bruises, and trundling a broken bicycle.

"What on earth have you been doing, my child?" exclaimed his terrified mother.

"I ran over a big dog and took a fall," explained Bobby.

"Couldn't you see him and give him the road?"

"Yes, I saw him and was turning out, but when I got within about ten feet of him I shut my eyes, and before I got 'em open again I'd run into him."

"For the land's sake, what did you shut your eyes for?"

"Couldn't help it. Had to sneeze. If you think you can hold your eyes open when the sneezes comes, you just try it some day."

If the reader thinks Bobby's excuse was not a valid one let him try it some day, when the sneezes comes.

Compressed Air for Canal-Locks.

On the Erie Canal at Lockport, New York, a pneumatic balance lock is being substituted for a flight of old-fashioned stone locks. The new lock consists of two steel chambers, one for ascending and the other for descending boats. Each chamber is divided into two parts, an upper one containing water to receive the boats, and a lower one containing compressed air on which the upper chamber floats. When a boat has been run into the upper chamber it is either lowered or raised, as may be desired, by filling or exhausting the air-chamber beneath it.