

BEAVERS ATTACK A BIG DAM.

A View of the Animals at Work Obtained by Mill Men in Maine.

Horace Frost, one of the Berlin Mills Company's superintendents, had the gates in the dam above Kennebec Falls, Maine hoisted the other day to let the water out. When he did so he noticed a beaver on the other side of the dam busily at work cutting a 12x12 timber used as a brace.

The crew of twenty-five or thirty men were called to witness the unusual sight, for it is asserted that beavers will never work in sight of human beings. The crowd watched the industrious little fellow as he first gave his uppercuts and then his undercuts, and then, if the chip did not fall, he would take hold of it with both sets of teeth.

Mr. Frost went down to where the animal was working but the beaver stood his ground, and when Frost backed away the beaver gave chase. The beaver next went under a pile of brush.

When one of the men went down to discover where the animal had disappeared and got on his hands and knees to look under the brush the beaver charged from the rear. The man took to his heels and never stopped till he was well on top of the dam.

After this the beaver went away and in a short time came back with a number of others, who joined in the task of cutting away the timbers. They were driven away, but left rather reluctantly.

The high water, which was running some ten feet over the dam before the gates were raised, had evidently driven the colony of beavers from their homes, and they had reasoned out the problem and were going to clear away the obstructions. This is the second time the beavers have attempted to demolish this dam.

Land and Water.

One of the most interesting of census tabulations is that recently made of the water surface of all the states and territories in the Union. Their gross areas appear in one column, their water surface in the next, and the amount remaining, which is the land surface, in the third. This last series of figures is the one used in computing the average number of people to the square mile.

To this some statisticians object, maintaining that water surface as well as land area should be regarded as a basis of human support. In Canton, China, people live on the water, but as they have never done so here the census office prefers to limit its calculations to the land.

It is a notable fact that fifteen states have a greater surface than the land area of Rhode Island, which is one thousand and fifty-three square miles.

Minnesota's lakes and rivers cover more than four thousand square miles, and this does not include any of Lake Superior, on its boundary line, except harbors and landlocked bays. Largely on account of such harbors and bays Florida slightly outranks Minnesota in water surface, taking the lead for the country. Delaware has about the same water surface as Arizona, although only one-fiftieth as large.

In Texas there are sixty-six counties which have a greater land area than the State of Rhode Island; one of them, El Paso, is considerably larger than Massachusetts.

People in the East can hardly realize the great distances of the far West, while to the residents of those states the Eastern coast seems cramped and small. Facts such as these brought out by the census bulletin do much to acquaint one part of the country with the territorial conditions prevailing in the other.

Man's Uncultured Sense of Smell.

A writer in Nature, discussing the rise of the new chemical industry of producing artificial perfumes, makes a significant remark concerning the sense of smell in human beings. He declares that it is, as yet, wholly uncultured. 'In walking through the country,' he says, 'we can rarely identify a particular odor caught until the sight of the plant from which it emanates makes us wonder at our hesitation.' He suggests that the growth of the perfume industry, which results in the continual production of new odors, may lead to a cultivation of the neglected sense of smell, which may be capable of an artistic development as that which color perception has attained.

Meteorites and the Nineteenth Century.

Among the great scientific advances of the century just passed there is one which is seldom mentioned, although it is of remarkable interest. It is the demonstration of the fact that stones and metallic masses fall from the sky. Dr. O. C. Farrington reminds us that up to the beginning of the nineteenth century the attitude of scientific men toward the accounts of stones reported to have fallen from the sky was in general "one of scorn and incredulity." He quotes

a remark of President Jefferson when told that Professors Silliman and Kingsley had described a shower of stones at Weston, Connecticut, in 1807: 'It is easier to believe that two Yankee professors will lie than to believe that stones will fall from heaven.' It was only after a great shower of meteoric stones at Laigle, in France, in 1803 had been carefully investigated by the French Academy that men of science finally became convinced that such things really occurred.

Disconcerted Missionaries.

Christian men and women who go out to convert believers in other religions to their own faith sometimes find skillfully set traps in their path. The London Globe quotes the story told by an American missionary, who, on trying to teach a Chinaman the tenets of the Christian faith, was answered thus:

'You think you know everything, yet none of you English can tell me why you all wear two useless buttons on the back of your coats.' The American did not happen to be familiar with this interesting bit of antiquarian lore and so was silenced for the time.

Doctor Johns, a missionary to the Pueblos, met a similar rebuff. He had lived among them for some time, striving to make clear to them his own belief in an invisible God and Saviour, and a world beyond the grave. One day the chief gravely summoned him to an audience.

'There is a grasshopper chirping on the other bank of the river. Do you hear it?' The doctor, smiling, shook his head.

'Two deer are hiding in the grass yonder hill. Do you see them?'

'My son, down in the camp, has lighted his pipe. Can you smell the smoke of it?'

'No. My senses are not trained as yours are.'

'Yes, you have them. You are not half the man you ought to be. If you will not take the trouble to train the eyes and nose and ears, which have been given you to understand this world, why should I think that you understand that other, or take your word about it?'

Missionaries sometimes begin their work with a belief that all heathen are naturally ignorant and vicious, and are upholders of religions which they know to be false. It is only when they stand upon a fair basis with them, giving them credit for good purposes and sincerity in a faith which is the best they know, that they can help them.

This is true, whether the heathen live on the banks of the Congo or in the back alleys of our own cities.

Budapest's Telephone Journal.

The Hungarian city of Budapest, noted for its enterprise, has at present 7,000 subscribers to the 'telephone journal,' which was established there in 1893, and experiments have been lately made looking to the extension of the system to the neighboring cities of Szegedin and Arad. Between 8 A. M. and 11 P. M. the subscribers receive all important news, an electric bell summoning them at certain hours to the receiving instruments, which are so arranged that two persons can listen at the same time. Stock exchange and parliament news is transmitted every half hour.

Music From the Electric Arc.

A London electrician, Mr. W. Duddell, recently gave an exhibition of a novel musical instrument, composed of a series of electric arc lights, which played a popular air. When the current is passing through solid carbons they give off a musical sound, and by placing a shunt across the carbons, connected with a keyboard, Mr. Duddell was able to vary the sounds through the scale of two octaves. The keyboard served to vary the self-induction and capacity in the shunt circuit, and by employing four acts in series, the intensity of the sounds was made sufficiently great.

Artificial Stone for Building.

Mr. Baehr, the United States Consul at Magdeburg, reports that the manufacture of artificial stone for building purposes is growing to enormous proportions in Germany. Sand and lime are the principal ingredients, in the proportion of four to six parts of lime to 94 or 96 parts of sand. The lime is pulverized and the mixture is pressed into blocks, which are then placed in an hermetically closed boiler and submitted, for about 10 hours, to high-pressure steam, which, by its action on the silicic acid in the sand, hardens the stone.

The Solar Motor in California.

A practical demonstration of the possibility of running a steam-engine with heat derived directly from the sun's rays has been made at Los Angeles, California. The rays of the sun are focused upon a boiler by means of a reflector 33 feet in diameter, composed of 1788 small mirrors which are so adjusted that they concentrate the sunshine upon a single central point. The

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An Incident of War.

One of the chapters of General Chaffee's diary deals with the fight of the 'Big Dry Wash,' in the summer of 1882, a fight the memory of which is cherished by cavalrymen as one of the most gallant displays of their arm of the service. About one hundred and fifty White Mountain Apaches, who had taken to the warpath, were on one side of a canon in the Mogollon plateau. The Kansas City Star tells the story of an act of heroism performed that day by Chaffee, then a major.

Major Chaffee, with a pursuing troop of the Sixth Cavalry, held the summit of a rocky hill commanding the entrance to the canon. The battle went on for hours. One of the scouts fell some two score yards from the spot where Chaffee was standing. A second scout at Chaffee's elbow remarked that the fallen man was done for, but the major saw that he was only wounded.

'Come along,' said he, 'and we'll fetch him in.'

Then he threw himself flat on the ground and crawled toward the wounded soldier. The scout followed. Slowly and painfully Chaffee and his companion, in the face of a concentrated fire from all the Indians, worked their way to the wounded man, and half-carrying, half dragging him, brought him back within the lines.

The handful of troopers on the rock, thrilled with the deed that had been performed, forgot the risk in hand, stopped fighting and began to cheer. This made Chaffee furious, and he shouted at the top of his voice:

'Stop that noise and go to shooting!'

Thus recalled to the work of fighting Indians, Chaffee's men again turned their attention to their carbines, and having been relieved in the nick of time by two troops of the Third Cavalry, they slowly fought the foe to a standstill. The apaches, almost to a man, were killed or captured. Chaffee was brevetted a lieutenant colonel for this day's work, and in 1897 the brevet became a commission.

Lighting Up Niagara.

An experiment made a little while ago at Niagara Falls proves, says the Philadelphia Times, that it is possible to illuminate the great cataract so perfectly that the scenic effect is even more awe-inspiring than in daylight.

A complete marine search-light apparatus was set up in a large box car. A little

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marine engine attached to a search light, was operated by steam from the locomotive.

The night was very dark and cloudy when the operator adjusted his thirty inch lens to the brink of the Horseshoe Fall and turned on his hundred thousand candle-power light. Suddenly the great cataract was dazzling. The monster ice formations, the stalactites and the stalagmites surrounding the Horseshoe, were radiant in the strong white light. The mist rising from the gorge looked like myriads of diamonds.

After testing the light at Falls View station the car was run down opposite the American Falls, where an equally successful test was made, the features of the scenery being brought out even more strikingly than in sunlight, since the surroundings were hidden in darkness. Of course the light had to be operated from a fixed plane in this case the road-bed of the railroad. When it can be placed at varying elevation and describe more of an arc, the results are expected to be still more satisfactory.

This opens a new field for railway enterprise. Probably before many years leading lines will illuminate picturesque places along their routes. The Grand Canon of the Rockies and various view points in the Adirondacks will be strung with electric lights. Observation cars on night trains will be crowded, and it will become part of the duty of porters to wake up passengers who wish to see the Horseshoe curve at one a. m., or Lake Michigan at midnight.

When the Atlantic was Bridged.

According to the distinguished French anthropologists, Gabriel and Adrien de Mortillet, there was a junction between Europe and America by way of the British Isles, the Faroes, Iceland and Greenland in what is known as the Chellean epoch, which is supposed to have ended a hundred and fifty or sixty thousand years ago.

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And strove to call my mother,

But ere the larder cry would come

My lips he tried to smooth—

Then did a wild, unstarved kiss

Occur beneath our noses!

My soul swam in a sea of bliss

Permeated with altar of roses!

My head with rapture seemed to spin,

My soul was rank with blisses,

As sat he there and raved in

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