

Scientific.

SCIENTIFIC LECTURES BEFORE THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

PROFESSOR ALBERT F. LEEDS, ON GALVANISM. This difficult subject was admirably treated by the young Professor, before an attentive and delighted audience. Few lecturers possess a happier faculty of talking to their class in an easy and pleasant manner than does Mr. Leeds.

A simple galvanic cell, he said, was composed of a copper and a zinc plate, placed in vessel of acid water, and the two plates, joined by a connecting wire, formed the complete circuit. The compound battery is a multiplication of simple cells with certain modifications. The connection between the galvanic current and the magnetic needle forms a curious and interesting feature in the science. The needle is always deflected at a right angle from the quarter of the parallel current. [An experiment with the Galvanometer proved this promptly.] A step further in this investigation proved that a current of electricity is a magnet—an experiment with a ring of iron, around which the wire coil was wrapped, proved this point; another iron ring, cut in two half circles, being so powerfully magnetized that it was impossible to separate them while the current was on, though they dropped apart when the current was severed; a bar of soft iron was so magnetized by the current, as to hold several pounds of nails suspended from each other in a confused network.

The medical battery was next explained, and the curious fact shown that a comparatively weak current, is made a powerful one by passing it through a coil of coarse wire, surrounding parallel bars or needles of soft iron—and the whole surrounded by another coil of fine wire of great length. This brought him to an explanation of the magnificent Ruhmkorff Coil, the most powerful electrical battery known. It is a copy of our American Medical Battery, improved upon by an inventor of Paris, who has given his name to the machine.

The American manufacturers have again improved upon the French; until from the Boston machine torrents of sparks, 20 inches long have been drawn, while that made in Paris, none longer than 4 to 6 inches have been obtained. The coil exhibited by the lecturer contained 60,000 feet, (10 miles) of extremely fine wire—so fine, that although wrapped the entire length with insulating silk thread, the whole wrapped wire was as fine as the finest sewing silk. It is sufficiently powerful to kill a man by its discharge, it is supposed; and during the manipulations necessary to the experiments, it was kept out off from the galvanic cups, except, just at the last moment, for fear of accident to the lecturer or his attendants.

When all was ready, the gas lights in the room were put out, and a series of most brilliant experiments was shown. The discharges were like those of a pistol when a Leyden jar was connected with the battery. A mirror was placed in connection with the wires—a tree of light spread from the pole in front, finding its way to that behind the glass. Ether and gunpowder were both ignited by the spark. A beautiful aurora was drawn through a tube 4 feet long, from which the air had been extracted. The light was of an intense violet hue and surpassingly beautiful. Abbé Nolle's globe, showing a bright green light in a sphere containing Sulphate of Quinia, was surrounded by the violet aurora, all being in an exhausted air vessel. The Leyden tubes, showed various tints, pink, green and violet light, from the presence of various gases—nitrogen, oxygen, &c. The rapid discharges of the coil—the brilliant flashes, at times blinding—the beautiful tints, all make up a set of the most brilliant experiments that a lecturer can possibly show to a class.

PROFESSOR HAYDEN ON GEOLOGY.

Professor F. V. Hayden, delivered a second lecture on Geology before the above Association on a recent Friday evening. He said, I am happy to lecture on such a subject before an association of this stamp, for Geology has no teachings which are contrary to the teachings of the Bible. We find all animals and plants grouped into families. God grouped them, not scientific men, and He has left, in all science, the door ajar; so that scientific minds may consecrate their lives to interpret God in nature.

The study of Geology stands next to that of Astronomy in sublimity. The astronomer investigates the field of the universe, which he has found to be not less than six thousand millions of miles in diameter. He is compelled to be an earnest worshipper of the Creator of such a universe. The Geologist studies the earth alone—one little speck—an atom in space, but his studies include the millions of years of time required in the changes of the earth's crust. He peoples it with the animal or vegetable life of the ages that passed away millions of years before man came upon it—as I shall show presently.

A sort of inspiration is given to the profound students of nature. Cuvier conceived the great idea of dividing all animals into 4 great branches—the vertebrates, the articulates, the molluscs, and the radiates. This was the greatest step in advance ever made in scientific study. It has not been changed since Cuvier's day; but it was not Cuvier, it was God who thus divided the animal creation and inspired Cuvier to find it out.

In the study of Geology, as in all scientific pursuits, man originates nothing; he merely recombinates that which God has made; or in Geology, that which God has written upon the rocks. We find in America, the crust of the earth, which we have had the chance to examine, to be from 15 to 20 miles in vertical thickness. Beginning with the oldest formations, we have the Azoic rocks, then the Silurian, the Devonian (or old red sandstone), the Carboniferous, the Reptilian (Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous) and the Tertiary.

These six formations, Hugh Miller has

beautifully shown to correspond with the six days of creation, man being introduced at the close of the sixth, and the seventh being the day of rest, the present period. These different groups of strata are known and distinguished by the different fossil remains of animals or plants found in each. The Silurian was the age of molluscs; the Devonian of fishes, the Carboniferous of plants (forming our coal beds), the Reptilian of reptiles, (the whole face of the earth in that period was covered with marshes and filled with reptiles, among which were immense Saurins 80 feet in length.) The Tertiary age, was the age of mammalia, (the mastodon, sloths of gigantic size, and mammalia of various kinds, in immense numbers.) The age of man comes last, with the present surface of the earth. Now the fossils of each age are found to differ from each other. In the lower stratum of the old red sandstone, for example, there are remains of fishes differing essentially from those found in the stratum next above it, and showing a different phase of existence entirely. There are five different changes in the old red sandstone. So also in the coal formation, there are three phases, and we find that scarcely any of the fossils of one phase pass into either of the others. So in the pleiocene period, the last of the Tertiary prior to the present age, we find the mastodon and a class of elephants which are totally extinct now. By the fossil remains then, of the various strata we read them and determine the correct place of any rock in the series and obtain a comparative idea of its age.

Time, geologically speaking, involves millions of years. Formerly the earth was believed to be but six thousand years old. We did not interpret the Bible correctly when we held to this view. We speak of the Azoic rocks as the oldest we know of. The Gneiss rock at Fairmount, belongs to this class. It is altogether probable that the eye of man has never seen the rock which formed the original crust of the earth. In Canada we have formations of this Azoic rock in the form of stratified Gneiss 50,000 feet thick. Geologists suppose that this rock was deposited not faster than one inch in a century. See what countless ages the first group would take! Above the Azoic rocks, (in some places, 16 miles in thickness above them) we find chalk and limestone rocks. This class of rock was built entirely, it is thought, by coral insects, and they are known to build but a few inches in a century. It is impossible for the mind of man to conceive the countless ages that have passed in the slow formations of the earth's crust. The Weald formation in England shows a cliff worn away by the sea, that would require one hundred millions of years to wear away as much as shows the marks of such agency. It is no wonder that Geologists contemplate fossils, which reveal these sublime movements of the Creator, with awe and wonder.

The infinite force required to upheave the Rocky Mountains, and to contort and twist about the vast strata of the Appalachian or Allegheny chain, next came under review. Then the Temple of Serapis in Italy, showing how that ruin proved the lowering and subsequent rising of the coast of Italy, was described. Niagara Falls next came under review. Queenstown Heights were once the shore of Lake Ontario, and the Falls tumbled right over the bluff at Queenstown, into the lake. By degrees they have worn their way to their present position. Mr. Lyell visited them in 1841, and computed that they had been 31,000 years wearing their way backward to where they now fall, say one foot each year. From the slight inclination of the strata, the softer rocks formerly worn away, are much deeper at the falls, than at Queenstown; and the present hard rock over which the water now tumbles, will last for 600,000 years before it is worn back to Lake Erie—so that the present generation about Queenstown, need not fear an inundation. From the whirlpool there is an old channel down to the lake, which was gradually filled with a deposit containing lake shells, but among them has been found a mastodon's tooth, showing the formation to be that of the Tertiary period. Formerly the river flowed in this channel; but the whirlpool, in a former age, turned the river to the right, and made the route now taken by the stream, which has since been cut down to the present depth.

The Professor then dwelt upon the progressive development of animals, from the first dawn of life down to the present period—the successive steps not running into each other, as Darwin would have us believe, but each an advance upon the former one, and replacing it. The same law holds good in plants. In the Devonian age we have rushes in the Carboniferous Ferns. In the Jurassic and Cretaceous, the first plants like our fruit and forest trees. Through millions of years, no tree existed on the earth in advance of gigantic Rushes, Ferns, &c. In the Cretaceous period the leaves were very plain, but in the Tertiary period more beautiful and like our own. In the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods the earth was covered with vast marshes filled with myriads of reptiles. Man could not have lived then. He could not have existed at all, before the present configuration of things; showing a profound thought, a wise plan arranging the earth for the home of man.

The prophetic types of animal life were then dwelt upon, when the Professor closed with the promise of greater developments still in store for the Geologists. We must not forget that the science is as yet, but 60 years old; that it is not long since that Prof. Silliman carried all the specimens belonging to Yale College to England in a little box, to have them named by the students of Mineralogy and Geology of Great Britain. Such lectures as this must accomplish the ardent wish of Professor Hayden, to have our young men rise to a love of scientific pursuits.

Knowledge is necessary to the perception of ignorance.

Rural Economy.

IS SNOW A FERTILIZER?

"Farmer," of Sullivan county, New York, writes: "I have frequently heard it said that snow is very beneficial to land, and hence it is sometimes called the 'poor man's manure.' Although this is a commonly received opinion, I have hitherto failed to meet with any one who could explain it upon philosophical principles, and have been led to doubt the truth of the assertion. Why is it said to be so?"—Answer—Snow absorbs from the atmosphere very considerable quantities of ammonia, which is especially abundant in the air near cities, as it is set free from coal and other fuel. It is a warm covering, protecting the plants covered by it, especially such as the grasses and winter grains, from the unfavorable action of frost, for it matters little how deeply the ground is frozen—a good bed of snow lying upon it for several weeks will thaw it all, and even permit a growth of grain and grass to take place under it. When it melts, the soil has the benefit of the ammonia, and any fertilizing dust that the snow may have caught, and the snow-water besides contains much oxygen—hence the effects which are like those of manure, and the reason for the popular judgment, which is quite right.—American Agriculturist.

MILK A CURATIVE AGENT.

Surely there is something new under the sun, as the following, from Dr. Philip Karell, St. Petersburg, will show. The extract below is taken from a well written article, which appeared recently in a leading medical journal in Europe:

With regard to my own practice I have, after fruitlessly trying all sorts of remedies in many chronic and obstinate diseases, at last succeeded in thoroughly bringing the alimentary canal, that seat of so many diseases, under my control. I did this by administering milk according to a new method. The results which I have thus obtained tempt me to publish my observations with reference to the efficiency of this mode of cure, provided, of course, that it be administered with method, and by a person of experience. And in the first place, then, must we attribute the beneficial influence of milk in certain serious illnesses merely to its nutritive qualities, or to some occult medicinal virtue? I cannot pronounce in favor of the one or of the other hypothesis. It must be remembered, however, that milk and chyle resemble each other very closely. After a great deal of experience, I have arrived at the conclusion that in all dropsies, in asthma, when the result of emphysema and pulmonary catarrh; in obstinate neuralgia; in diseases of the liver, (simple hypertrophy and fatty degeneration,) and generally in diseases where there is faulty nutrition, often a consequence of obscure sub-acute inflammation of the stomach or intestines, followed by affection of the nervous centres—in all these cases, I consider milk as the best and surest of remedies. Even in those cases where dropsy is the result of organic heart disease, or of old standing liver complaint, or of far advanced Bright's disease, I have seen very marked improvement take place, which also lasted a considerable time. But if, unfortunately, we are unable to cure organic disease, shall we not have conferred a great benefit on poor anasarctous patients if we reduce, with a promptitude little hoped for from other remedies, the distressing symptoms of oedema?

I generally commence the cure by employing milk alone, and forbidding all other kind of nourishment. I proceed with great caution in prescribing for the patient, three or four times daily, and at regularly observed intervals, half a tumbler or a tumbler—that is, from two to six ounces—of skimmed milk. Its temperature must be made to suit the patient's taste. In winter they generally like tepid milk, heated by placing the tumbler or cup in a vessel filled with hot water. In summer they generally prefer it of the same temperature as the surrounding atmosphere. They should not gulp it all at once, but take it slowly and in small quantities, so that the saliva may get well mixed with it. Of course, the milk must be of good quality. That of town-fed cows has generally an acid reaction; that of country-fed cows is better, because its reaction is generally neutral. If the patient digest the milk well, which is proved by the faeces becoming solid, I gradually increase the dose. The first week is the most difficult to get over, unless the patient has a strong will and firm faith in the cure. During the second week two ordinary quarts are generally administered each day. If the cure take its regular course, then the milk must be drunk four times daily—at 8 in the morning, at noon, at 4, P. M., and at 8, P. M. If the patient desire it, I change the hours; but I always insist on regular intervals being observed, for the patient will think lightly of the cure, if he be not ordered to observe some regularity while subjected to it. No confidence can be inspired, and no cure expected, if the physician says to his patient, "Drink milk in whatever quantities, and whenever you wish."

PRAIRIE PASTURES.

Every succeeding year's experience is contradicting the generally conceived idea that prairie land is not well adapted to the production of the tame grasses. Especially is this true of the older grazing portions of Central Illinois. In a recent conversation with an extensive stock grower of Logan county, a former resident of the renowned blue grass region of Kentucky, he affirmed that he could keep more stock on an acre of blue grass pasture upon his present farm than upon any equal amount of land he had ever seen before. It is also a fact, we believe, that the older the pasture becomes, if properly treated, the better the yield of

grasses. Blue grass and white clover seem to come into our pastures spontaneously, together with a proportion of other varieties that keeps up a succession of feed. There are some soils, of course, here as elsewhere that do not "set" well to grass.—Prairie Farmer.

CLIMAX.

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We briefly refer to Rev. David Elder, Franklin, N. C., who was cured of Dyspepsia. C. R. Cross, of Theocite, Ill., cured of Liver Complaint. H. Hooley, of Springfield, Pa., had Scrofula, and had to use crutches; was cured in three weeks. James D. DeLena, of Adrian, Mich., cured of Bilious Fever, Rev. Henry Graham, Presbyterian Church, Gannagsville, Cal., of Fever and Ague. Rev. Ed. H. May, Twenty-first New York, of Rheumatism and Piles of 25 years standing. Rev. Samuel Bowles, Editor of the Springfield (Mass.) Republican, was cured of Terrible Costiveness. Hon. Ed. Webber, of Rumney, N. H., of Liver Complaint, &c., &c., &c. A box of Moffat's Life Pills, with full circulars, &c., will be sent gratis to any Physician or Clergyman, on the receipt of two or three cent postage stamps.

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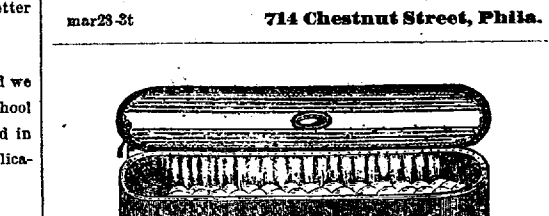
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