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Democratic Watchman

Bellefonte, Pa., Nov. 24, 1899.

The City of Diamonds.

Kimberley, which has been the scene of one of the fiercest struggles between Boer and Briton in the present South African clash, has a worldwide reputation as the city of diamonds. It is the metropolis of the diamond fields. It is probable that the presence in the city of Cecil Rhodes prompted the fierce Boer onslaught rather than the hope of seizing the fabulously rich mines.

Kimberley is a city of some 30,000 inhabitants, built in the heart of the great karoo desert. Nothing but the presence of its vast underground riches could have caused white men to have built a city in such a place. It is 647 miles by rail from Cape Town. It is in Griqualand West, which before the discovery of diamonds was by a part of the Orange Free State.

The Griquas are of mixed origin, partly Dutch and partly Kafir, or Hottentot. Since then the English owners of diamonds have taken out gem worth more than 100 times as much as the original purchase price of the territory.

Although not unhealthy, Kimberley has never been called a pleasant place of residence by any one who has visited it. Situated in the barren, brown karoo desert, at an elevation of more than 4,000 feet above sea level, its attractions all lie beneath the surface. What trees are to be seen there have been planted by the settlers. Its water supply is derived from the Transvaal river which gives its name to the Transvaal republic.

The very nature of Kimberley's one industry has supplied it with fortifications in the great ramparts of mining "tailings" which surround it. One of these, which used to be locally known as Mount Ararat, is over 90 feet high.

Nobody knows just how much value in the shape of diamonds is kept in store at Kimberley, but it is certainly gigantic. Quite possibly it is \$100,000,000 worth. The company has offices in London, but its headquarters are in the South African city, and there, in its buildings resembling a bank, the bulk of the gems is kept, stored away in vaults.

Two of the mines, the Du Toits Pan and the De Beers, are the largest holes ever sunk in the earth, the mouth of the former being 19 acres in extent, while the latter has a yawning of 25 acres. They are lighted by electricity, and the machinery used is of the most ingenious and powerful description.

The Kimberley mines now yield 2,500,000 carats annually, representing a value of \$25,000,000, of which two-fifths is clear profit. During the last quarter century they have added to the world's wealth tens of millions of diamonds, worth \$300,000,000 uncut and \$600,000,000 after cutting.

These mines employ 1,500 Europeans and about 6,000 Kafirs. Necessarily the utmost precautions have to be taken against theft, and yet, notwithstanding all preventive measure, the company reckons on a loss of 10 to 15 per cent of its product in this way.—By Charles Warner.

Digestibility of Corn.

Contains Quite as Much Nourishment as Wheat. In a recent bulletin on corn, Professor Wiley, chemist of the Department of Agriculture, combats the opinion that corn is less digestible and less nutritious than wheat.

In point of digestibility for human beings, which is something rather harder to reach by practical tests, the conclusion is offered based on what is known as digestion coefficients of wheat and other grains, that Indian corn is not inferior in this respect to wheat. Bread made from Indian corn is the great food of the southern part of the United States. With fat pork it is the food upon which the laborer usually performs in a climate excessively trying to the laborer on account of its heat.

Sight Given to One Born Blind.

The Surprise of a Woman Who Was First Able to See at the Age of 29.

A few days ago Miss Alberta McKinnie looked out of the windows of the "suggestion room" of the Eye and Ear Infirmary and burst into tears. Other patients have looked from the windows of the infirmary and shed tears caused by suffering. But Miss McKinnie wept for pure joy, and she praised God and Dr. Holt alternately.

Miss McKinnie belongs in Rockland, and she was born blind. Over each eye a congenital cataract obscured the vision. She lived with relatives who clothed and fed her. One day a stranger saw Miss McKinnie and looked at her eyes. He told her that he believed if she would go to the Eye and Ear Infirmary an operation might be performed that would enable her to see.

For fourteen weeks the patient has been at the infirmary. The operation has been performed by two stages for the purpose of watching and studying each change. Little by little the milky cataracts disappeared until now but a small white speck remains on each eye, and it is thought that these will disappear in time. In all probability another slight operation will be performed to correct a slight crossed effect that appears in the restored organs.

When the final operation was performed the eyes were bandaged and carefully kept from the light for several days. When they were strong enough to be fitted with glasses it was a difficult task to find just the kind that she needed, but it was finally accomplished. Dr. Little placed them on Miss McKinnie and led her to the window for the first time.

It was almost as though being born into a new world for Miss McKinnie. Of course a good many things she had a general idea of through hearing people talk about them. Directly opposite the infirmary a man was walking about with a cane. She asked him what the first object he eyes rested upon. "What is it?" asked Dr. Little. "It must be a man," she answered.

"Oh, yes, several times. I can't describe to you my sensations. I have seen so much that is beautiful and I have so much more to see. I am learning to read now and have got so I can quite a good deal out of a newspaper. I have read some of the means of the raised letters provided for blind folks, so it hasn't been so hard to learn the letters in print. If I could stay here forever I would be perfectly happy."

White similar operations have been performed, it is seldom that they result so successfully as this one. To give an idea just what her sight now is, it may be said that tententus represents the normal or perfect vision. Miss McKinnie can see things at a distance with the glasses that have been fitted to her eyes she will be able to see better than many persons who have always seen, but who have such affections as near-sightedness, &c. She will be able to read, and every one says she can see more than a needle. Her eyes are new to her, so to speak, and as soon as she gets used to them she will use them much better. One peculiar thing that can be noticed about Miss McKinnie is the change of the expression of her face. It is well known that blind people have expressionless faces as a rule, particularly those blind from birth. It was so in Miss McKinnie's case. Why should it be otherwise? What could she know of the beauties or humors that produce the various expressions of the face of those of us who can see? She did not know what it was to laugh, but she does now, and so, little by little, each new emotion that causes the hitherto impassive countenance to light up with all the emotions of other mortals.

Bamboo Curtains.

"I noticed such a sweet decorative idea on the street yesterday," said a lady visitor to a New Orleans friend, while talking a trolley ride near the French market. "It was a house," she continued, "hung at all the second and third story windows with pale yellow bamboo curtains. They were perfectly plain and all of the same shade, but you have no idea how they set off the old place. Why they simply glorified it."

"Hm-m-m," mused her friend, "I don't recall the house. Just point it out as we go by, will you?" Presently the visitor uttered an exclamation. "There it is!" she cried. "The house of the bamboo curtains! I'm sure a colony of artists must live there!" "A colony of Italians," said her friend, grimly. "That's not bamboo. It's a spaghetti factory. They hang the stuff out there to dry."

Artificial Indian Rubber.

Substance Formed Spontaneously in a Liquid Derived From Turpentine.

An incident of interest, both from scientific and industrial points of view, was described in the Kew Bulletin two or three weeks ago. Some bottles of isoprene which had been standing for a considerable time were freshly examined by Professor Tilden who tells the story, and were found to contain small masses of genuine Indian rubber. The rubber had been formed spontaneously in the liquid. Isoprene is a volatile fluid, composed of carbon and hydrogen in the proportions of five atoms of the former and eight of the latter. It contains the same ingredients, in the same proportions, as caoutchou, a distillate from rubber. Isoprene is derived from turpentine.

Two sets of phenomena that have attracted the attention of chemists have served to inspire no end of experiments with the object of producing useful substances on a commercial scale. Analysis for starch for instance, shows that it contains six atoms of carbon to ten of hydrogen and five of oxygen. Sugar contains twelve atoms of carbon to twenty-two of hydrogen and eleven of oxygen. It would seem, then, as if the addition of two atoms of hydrogen to one of oxygen to the constituents of two molecules of starch would make a molecule of sugar. And so it would; but the difficulty is to correct a number of successes in chemically when they are placed in juxtaposition. The third has been tried thoroughly, but without success.

In that attempt, however, one can see that the slight difference in the proportions of the elements is of more importance than the chemist at a disadvantage. Hence, in the experiment next to be described, one might expect a readier triumph. The elements in benzene are carbon six atoms and hydrogen six. Acetylene consists of two atoms each of carbon and hydrogen. Yet a transformation from benzene to acetylene, or vice versa, has never yet been effected.

It thus appears that it is vastly easier for the chemist to find out what a substance is made of than to manufacture it out of the proper materials. Nature knows some tricks that man has not yet discovered in making compounds out of what are commonly called elements. Synthetic chemistry has achieved a number of successes in reproducing artificially the exact composition of various substances. Indigo and other dyes, vanilla and similar flavors, and the perfumes of numerous flowers are among the products of synthetic chemistry.

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The inhabitants of the islands are of one race, but their government has been of a very loose character. They have a king, but he has little power. The kingship is of comparatively recent origin, and it has been the source of great trouble in the islands. The permanent abolition of it seems certain in any case. It is probable that a fair division of the islands would be better for all concerned than the continuance of such a government as has existed heretofore on the islands.

A Quaint English Ceremony.

On the last day of each October the city solicitor of London, with an assistant, attends upon the royal remembrance, when, by proclamation, the tenants occupiers of a piece of waste ground called the moors in the county of Salop, are commanded "come forth and do your service upon pain and peril that shall fall thereon." The solicitor chops in halves two fagots, one with a hatch and the other with a billhook. Afterward comes the summons to the tenants, etc., of "a certain tenement, with a forge" in the Strand and the payment of six horse-shoes, with 61 shoe nails, by the solicitor. This forge has long ceased to be used, and the same shoes and nails are used year after year, the shoes being at least two centuries old.

Quay and the Senate.

Matthew Stanley Quay was appointed by the Governor of Pennsylvania to be a Senator of the United States, after the Legislature of his State had failed to elect him and had adjourned, and expects to be seated by the votes of the majority of the Senate.

Matthew Stanley Quay was appointed by the Governor of Pennsylvania to be a Senator of the United States, after the Legislature of his State had failed to elect him and had adjourned, and expects to be seated by the votes of the majority of the Senate. He was not entitled to take his seat as a member of the body. One of the Senators who voted with the majority to exclude Corbett was Penrose, Republican, of Pennsylvania.

There is no rule of the Senate requiring that the body shall be consistent in its voting. There are traditions that sometimes restrain the body to respect its recorded decisions in such matters as this. The debate on Corbett's case did not develop any opinion strongly supporting the theory that the other way to become a Senator, next to the proper way of being elected, is to contrive a deadlock and trust to a friendly Governor to appoint a candidate not acceptable to the people to be represented.—New York Times.

A Fortune in a Field.

Bonds That Blew From an Express Train and Laid Undisturbed for Days. Seventy-six thousand dollars lying in an open field for two days, and nobody stopping to pick it up. This is what happened a short time ago in Kansas.

Superintendent Nelson received a telegram from the Reno county commissioners, asking why the bonds had not been sent. Nelson replied that they had been. The Reno county people wired back that they had never been received, and that they had no trace of them. Nelson called on the express office for an explanation. The express people searched their books, and said that a package answering that description had left the Topeka office for Hutchinson on Saturday.

The matter began to look serious, and the express company investigated its records to ascertain what messenger was on the train. A telegram was sent to him, asking if he knew anything of a certain package bound for Hutchinson from Topeka.

He replied that he did not know for sure, but that a little package blew out of the express car door as he was bound West on Saturday, and might have been the one wanted. He further told the company to ascertain the value of the package, and he would pay for it out of his salary. The company wired back: "Seventy-six thousand dollars," and the express messenger's hair stood on end.

The first thing he did was to get a "lay-off" and take the first train for the station nearest the place where he remembered the package disappearing. He went out to the exact spot, and after hunting for some time found the missing package in a certain place by the side of the track, exactly where it had blown.

No Credit for Good Intentions.

"Some people" said the boy with the dirty face, "never thank ye, no matter what ye do for 'em. A feller put a bent pin on the teacher's chair the other day, an when the teacher was about to set down I pulled the chair out from under him to save him from the pin, an, by George, he licked me fur it!"

Memory.

If it should be asked what possession I most valued, I would say some beautiful memory. Memory is possession. It is the only thing on earth that is absolutely ours, which no one can take from us. We can produce and enjoy it in a crowd of uncongenial people as easily as if we were alone. No noise can drown its voice; no distance can dim its clearness. Strength, hope, beauty, everything else, may pass. Memory will stay.

There is a Class of People.

Who are injured by the use of coffee. Recently there has been placed in all the grocery stores a new preparation called GRAIN-O, made of pure grains, that takes the place of coffee. The most delicate stomach receives it without distress, and but few can tell it from coffee. It does not cost over 1/2 as much. Children may drink it with great benefit. 15cts. and 25cets. per package. Try it. Ask for GRAIN-O. 44-1-37

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