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Democratic Watchman

Bellefonte, Pa., Nov. 24, 1899.

The City of Diamonds.

Kimberley, Scene of the First Desperate Struggle Between Boer and Briton.

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 a part of the Orange Free State.

When gems were found there, the British rushed in at once. The Free State Boers protested. Then Great Britain hunted up a Kaffir chief who presented an ancient claim to the territory. This claim was pushed through. In the meantime the land had been occupied by English. The Free State was compelled to cede this rich strip of desert land to the great empire, receiving an indemnity of \$4,500,000. Since then the English owners of diamonds have taken out gems worth more than 100 times as much as the original purchase price of the territory.

The Griquas are of mixed origin, partly Dutch and partly Kaffir, or Hottentot. It was on the Colesberg kop, or hill, that the first diamond in South Africa was found. In 1870 the famous diamond mines were fairly discovered, and from that time on the growth of Kimberley began and continued with a rapidity hardly surpassed by any of the western "boom" towns of this country. Its name, given to it in honor of the Earl of Kimberley, who was then the British secretary of state for the colonies, is shared with it by one small village in England and by three towns or stations and one goldfield in Australia. The earl took his title from the old English village, and his admirers passed it on to the Australian and South African settlements, through which the world mostly knows it.

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 1,000 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 Vaal river which gives its name to the Transvaal republic. The town is lighted entirely by electricity and at the present time is vigorously and successfully policed, though in the early days of its existence it, like other mining towns, was the scene of constant crime and disorder.

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.

If only a fraction of them were offered for sale at once, the price of diamonds would promptly tumble, but the great corporation owning, as it does, deposits which produce 98 per cent of the world's entire yield of these precious stones, is able to control the market absolutely and holds back a large part of its output, disposing of only a limited number of carats per annum.

The yields of the mines is about 5,500 carats every 24 hours, and the diamonds obtained from the diggings are sent daily, under an armed escort, to the company's headquarters and there delivered to the appraisers in charge. First they are cleaned by boiling them in a mixture of nitric and sulphuric acids, and then they are carefully sorted in respect to size, color and purity.

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 35 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 Kaffirs. 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 experiments made upon animals the nutritive value of corn has been distinctly brought out. A bushel of wheat in one set of experiments produced on an average 13.7 pounds of pork, while a bushel of corn produced 12.3 pounds. But when the difference in weight between the two is considered the actual gain is about the same in each case, and, calculated upon the market price of wheat and corn, it costs \$4.01 to produce 100 pounds, increase in pork by feeding wheat, and \$2.55 to produce the same increase with Indian corn.

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. From the germ of the grain, which is extracted in the manufacture of starch and glucose, a valuable oil is pressed out, while the residue also forms a food material. Nearly all the starch made in the United States is from the grains of Indian corn.

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. Small wonder that she did, for upon her has been wrought a truly modern miracle. Blind since birth, the achievements of modern science have given the sight that for twenty-nine years have been denied her.

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. The neighbors scoffed. It was ridiculous. But how found lodgment in Miss McKinnie's breast, and her own thought was that she would go to the Eye and Ear Infirmary of Rockland interested himself in her, and she was sent here for treatment.

It is a delicate and peculiar operation that Dr. Holt performed upon Miss McKinnie when he removed the two congenital cataracts. The operation that is usually unsatisfactory. A white substance, which was about the color of milk and the consistency of butter, was spread over each pupil. It could not be removed by cutting away like hard substances. Instead it had to be stirred up, so to speak, and then the doctor trusted in a great measure to absorption to remove it.

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 if 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 the roof of a hat on his head. She said she thought that must be a pair because she had felt them while she was blind. Just then a dog went by in the street. She stared in astonishment, and then cried aloud: "Oh, is that a dog? I never in my life saw a dog like that. It was a mystery to her. Their spreading limbs and autumn-tinted foliage held her spellbound. She had never seen colors before. Electric cars were a wonderful thing, as was the electric light. She could not understand the power that was back of them.

When asked what her feelings were when she first found out that she could see, she replied: "Well, I don't know as I can tell you. My eyes seemed to be swimming in water, and I was looking at a man and a lake. This mist slowly cleared away, and then I saw the face of Dr. Holt. Oh, it was the first face I had ever seen, and he is the best man in the world! I shall bless him until my dying day."

When asked if she had been out, she said: "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 print 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."

While 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 contentment represents the normal or perfect vision. Miss McKinnie can see distinctly. 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, etc. 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 trolly ride near the French market. "It was a home," 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."

"Hu-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."

MADE YOUNG AGAIN.

"One of Dr. King's New Life Pills each night for two weeks has put me in my 'teens' again!" writes D. H. Turner of Dempseytown, Pa. "They're the best in the world for Liver, Stomach & Bowels, and give me a never-never grip. Only 25c at F. Potts Green's Drug Store."

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 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 caoutchouc, 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 of the two substances placed 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. But alcohol, almost all scores of other things for which man has the right formula have baffled all attempts at artificial production.

With an abundance of crude turpentine at \$2.50 a barrel, and a scarcity of rubber, it was suggested that a profitable industry to use the one in making the other, if the art could be learned, and the process were not more costly than the one that took place spontaneously in Professor Tilden's laboratory in the case of several years. The suggestion is not an extreme one. The *Kew Bulletin* says, though, that when any effort is made to hasten the transformation of isoprene into rubber the desired result is not secured, but another substance, colophony, is obtained. Colophony is a viscid, aromatic oil, utterly worthless for the purpose for which rubber is used. Even yet, though, it may be practicable to work the desired transformation swiftly. Chemistry is a live science, and is making practical discoveries every year.

The Samoan Islands.

If the Samoan question has been settled in a satisfactory way, as the Associated Press asserts, it will be good news. The difficulties that have grown out of the tripartite arrangement, under which the islands have been controlled for twenty years, make some different agreement very desirable. The suggestion is not an extreme one. The *Kew Bulletin* says, though, that when any effort is made to hasten the transformation of isoprene into rubber the desired result is not secured, but another substance, colophony, is obtained. Colophony is a viscid, aromatic oil, utterly worthless for the purpose for which rubber is used. Even yet, though, it may be practicable to work the desired transformation swiftly. Chemistry is a live science, and is making practical discoveries every year.

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. 15c. and 25c. per package. Try it. Ask for GRAIN-O. 44-1-7

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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.

The majority vote against Corbett was made up of 17 Republicans and 23 Democrats, Populists and silver men. The vote to seat Corbett was wholly Republican. The Republicans at that time lacked a majority in the Senate. The Republicans will have in the next Senate a clear majority of 14 to begin with. Six Democrats who voted to exclude Corbett have been succeeded by Republicans. The 19 Senators who voted to seat Corbett, excepting Senator Morrill, of Vermont, are still in the Senate, and Vermont has a Republican in Morrill's place.

It will be evident, after these figures and facts have been considered, that a very interesting contest approaches. In February 1898, nearly half the Republican members of the Senate voted against encouraging an aspirant for the Senate to hope to get in, after a deadlock, by appointment. If all the opposition Senators and half the Republican Senators decide to stand by the record Quay will be rejected by a larger majority than that against Corbett. If the 17 Senators who voted against Corbett maintain their former position their votes and those of the opposition will, in a full Senate, exclude Quay by a decisive majority.

Quay is said to be very confident. He will be voted for by Mr. Hoar, Mr. Frye, Mr. Hanna, Mr. Foraker, Mr. Lodge and other eminent Republicans. But these Senators all voted for Corbett at a time when, if all the Republicans present had voted for Corbett and all the other Senators present had voted against him, he would have been admitted.

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. The state school fund commissioners had arranged to purchase that amount of Reno county bonds. The bonds were sent to be approved, but on the appointed day they were not returned. The Kansas City Times tells the rest of the story. 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.

He had had the car door open on account of the heat, and a Kansas zephyr had come along and whisked the package out of the open door. The messenger did not think it worth stopping the train for, but he will never make such a mistake again.

Hotels.

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A. A. KOHLBROCK, Proprietor. This new and commodious Hotel, located opposite the depot, Milesburg, Centre county, has been entirely refitted, refurnished and replenished throughout, and is second to none in the county in the character of accommodations offered to the public. Its table is supplied with the best of the market affords its bar contains the purest and choicest liquors, its stable has attentive hostlers, and every convenience and comfort is extended to its guests.

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