

GREAT TUNNELS.

Modern Improvements and Science Have Lessened the Cost.

In comparing the four great tunnels it is interesting to note that time is an extraordinary element in the cost.

All four were old settled countries, with abundant labor, and the very great difference in cost per foot, plainly marked the progress of science, because it was the invention and improvement in tools that made it possible to reduce the time and thus the cost.

To observe the difference between the work on the three great European tunnels, built by Government aid in old-settled countries, it may be well to observe for a moment the work done on a comparatively small tunnel built far from civilization through the Cascade Mountains, on the line of the Northern Pacific Railroad.

The mountain through which the tunnel is cut is 3,700 feet above the floor of the tunnel. To understand the magnitude and difficulty of this undertaking it must be observed that the site of the tunnel at the time the contract for the construction was signed was an unbroken wilderness.

At the then existing terminus of rail connection everything—men and tents, food, horses, machinery, lumber, hospitals, and in fact, the material for the army—had to be transported over improvised roads 82 miles through forests, through snow and mud, to the east portal of the tunnel, and 87 miles to the west portal.

Six months passed before all the machinery was on the spot. Rivers had to be turned aside, bridges built, camps established and men and horses collected, fed, housed and cared for nearly 100 miles from a locomotive. The tunnel is 15 1/2 feet wide and 22 feet high, and the entire distance (8,950 feet) was bored through the mountain in 22 months, the rate of progress with the power drills being 413 feet a month, and the cost of the completed tunnel was only \$1.18 a foot, and the entire work was completed in 28 months from the signing of the contract in New York city.—Chautauquan.

Widow Smith.

At high noon I rode to a settler's dug-out on the banks of the Republican River to see if I could get a bite to eat, but before I had dismounted from my horse a woman came out and saluted me with: "Hello, stranger—ar' ye arter the Widow Smith?"

"I don't know any Widow Smith," I replied, as I noticed that she was barefooted, hair uncombed and her general appearance very slouchy.

"Well, I'm sorry you lost your husband. Can I get a bite to eat?"

"Then you wasn't makin' for her?" she queried.

"Wasn't headed this way because you heard I was a widder?"

"No."

"Didn't know I had a claim, four children, this dug-out and a span of mawies?"

"No."

"And you are not on the marry?" she persisted.

"I have a wife, madam."

"Shoo. I've had two husbands and buried both. Jest want a bite to eat?"

"If it won't be too much trouble and you'll take pay."

"And you are not lookin' arter widders?"

"No, ma'am. I'm going up to Herbert on business, and I was told to take this trail as the shortest route. Did you say I could have dinner?"

"No, I didn't say it," she replied, as she turned away. "If you was headed for here, to see the Widder Smith she'd set out the best she had in the house, but bein' as you are head'd for Herbert and not lookin' arter widders, Mrs. Smith begs to inform you that she don't run no hotel, and you kin ride on five miles farther or fill up on water from the creek!"—Detroit Free Press.

The Gulf Stream.

According to Captain Maury, the gulf stream runs up hill. He says that after emerging from the Gulf of Mexico this famous current of warm water broadens out toward the north and becomes correspondingly more and more shallow. Thus, its depth off the Island of Bermuda is about 200 fathoms, while off Cape Hatteras it has shallowed to about 100 fathoms. He calculates the ascent at ten inches to the mile.

Sir John Herschel says that the so-called "running up hill" of the gulf stream is a "strange perversion of language." The warm water of the gulf stream is more buoyant than the cold water of the North Atlantic, and floats on its surface. It spreads out as it moves northward, and necessarily forms a layer, becoming thinner and thinner. Some portion of it, it is true, rises to a higher level, but this is not motion against gravity.

How Disease is Carried.

A physician in a country village has lately given to his medical brethren some additional instances of the ways in which contagions are spread that should make us all thoughtful. The only case of scarlet fever ever lost by this doctor was one in which the disease was communicated by a letter written by a mother (in whose family there were two cases of the fever) to a friend a hundred miles away. The envelope of the letter was given to a child as a plaything. Another severe case of the fever was contracted by a little girl from two playmates who had what the doctor called "scarlet rash," and still another was carried to a family by a carpenter, who lived eight miles away, whose little children were alling with scarlatina, a disease that "the attending physician informed the father was not nearly as catching as scarlet fever."—New York Evening Post.

An Economic Museum.

One of the educational schemes which the University of Pennsylvania has undertaken in connection with its new development is the founding of an economic museum. It is to represent everything in connection with the trades, industries and commerce of the nation, it might almost be said of the world. For it is to represent the products and materials of all the arts, industries and trades, the study and comparison of which will better fit the student for his chosen life work, be it manufacturing, any one of the textile arts, or of the trades, or of the productive, technical or constructive industries which have made and are making the United States the greatest industrial nation on the globe.

HELD A LOSING HAND.

It Was Not the One She Wanted, but It Was Welcome.

A charming young woman who lives on the west side, and her young man round the Summit street cars packed to the doors the other evening when they started home from the Auditorium. Nothing daunted, Miss West Side sought a place upon the step of the platform. She had barely room for one foot, and as the car lurched and heeled she clung to Charley's big, strong hand. Occasionally under cover of the darkness, she squeezed it tenderly, because—well, because she and Charley are engaged. And so she held on to the hand for many blocks.

"Charley," said she, "aren't you about worn out holding me on the car with your one poor, tired hand?"

"What!" cried Charley in horrified tones.

Mademoiselle looked up and then dropped the hand frantically. She had been holding to and squeezing the hand of an entire stranger, a young fellow with black mustache and a pleasing eye.

"I beg a thousand pardons," gasped mademoiselle.

"Don't mention it!" replied the stranger. "You were entirely welcome."—Kansas City Star.

A Woman's Postscript.

"Why women write postscripts" is a problem that has been engaging the attention of one of the London woman's weeklies. The answers betray that the sex understands itself, and does not mind exposing its amiable weaknesses. All are from women, who ascribe, among others, these reasons: "Because they seek to rectify what of thought by an afterthought," "because they are fond of having a last word," "because they write before they think and think after they have written."

One correspondent puts down the feminine P. S. to the same cause "which leads women to prolong leave-taking in omnibuses, namely," and rather profoundly it appears to the casual observer, "that they lack organization of thought." Another woman comes to the defense of her sisters with the suggestion "that when women have anything special to communicate they know that their P. S. is equivalent to N. B.," and yet another friendly soul turns a neat compliment in her reason: "Probably because woman herself is the embodiment of the P. S. in the scale of creation—she—the indispensable—was added last."

Not That Kind of It.

Belle—I was caught by the undertow and nearly drowned.

Nell—Gracious! Who had hold of it?



The directors of a bank had engaged the services of a watchman, who came well recommended, but did not seem over-experienced. The chairman, therefore, sent for him to post him up a bit and began:

"James this is your first job of this kind, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Your duty must be to exercise vigilance."

"Yes, sir."

"Be careful how strangers approach you."

"I will, sir."

"No stranger must be allowed to enter the bank at night under any pretext whatever."

"No, sir."

"And our manager—he is a good man, honest, reliable and trustworthy; but it will be your duty to keep your eye on him."

"But it will be hard to watch two men and the bank at the same time."

"Two men—how?"

"Why, sir, it was only yesterday that the manager called me in for a talk, and he said you were one of the best men in London, but it would be just as well to keep both eyes on you, and let the directors know if you hang round after hours."

A Puzzling Question.

"Yonder she comes," said a tall, lank man who was sitting on a trunk near the railroad station.

"Yonder who comes," asked a fat, heavy man who sat near him.

"The train," replied the lank man.

"Why do you say 'Yonder she comes'?" asked the fat man.

"Well, that's the customary way of speaking of a train, isn't it? And custom is what fixes things. Everybody says, 'Yonder she comes' in speaking of a train's approach."

"Well, I insist you should have said, 'Yonder he comes.'"

"Oh, pshaw! nobody ever says 'he' in speaking of a train," returned the lank man.

"Well, I'll agree to leave it to the station agent, and see if it wouldn't have been better for you to have said 'Yonder he comes,'" added the fat man.

Humorous News Item.

A Rochester boy spoke of bloomers. His mother said he-says, "Bloomers? What do you know about bloomers?" "Oh, I know what they are," said the boy. "They're puff sleeves worn on the legs."—Rochester Post-Express.

A QUEER LITTLE ANIMAL.

It Is Part Rat, Guinea Pig and Squirrel—Caught in a Trap.

A strange animal was received by Mr. Frank Boring, a well-known business man of this city, the early part of last week, from one of his traveling men, who obtained the freak from a farmer living near Pleasant Hill, Mo. The farmer found it one morning in a trap he had set for squirrels. The traveling man forwarded it to this city, where it has been placed on exhibition at Wheatfield's cigar store, on Walnut street. Thousands of persons have gazed on the little beast, but all attempt to discover to what species of the animal kingdom it belongs have proved failures. All have agreed that it belongs to the rodent family, but to what separate branch of that family cannot be determined.

The animal is a primitive thing, weighing about six ounces, and measured from tip of nose to its tail about six inches. The tail is four inches in length. It has the attributes of four separate members of the rodent species, with a considerable individuality of its own. The head, forelegs and lower body are exactly like the Taguan fly squirrel Pteromys Petaurista. Its tail is distinctly that of an ordinary rat, while its hind legs are short, with feet that resemble hands, that when it perches on the haunches one is reminded of the kangaroo. The ears, eyes and forehead are those of the guinea pig—savia apprea. Its individual feature separate from all branches of the rodent tribe is that not a hair can be discovered anywhere upon the body, with the exception of a few whiskers about the nose.

Its mouth is another strange feature, although it is more like the mouth of a guinea pig than any other. The skin is a delicate buff in color and hangs all over the body in loose folds, being quite elastic, there being quite enough to cover an animal five times the size of this one. It feeds on candy and bread, and will not eat meat or any substance of that kind.

A number of doctors and zoological students have studied the strange creature closely, but all efforts toward a solution of the primitive puzzle have failed. Dr. Schenk has given the monstrosity a very close study, and arrived at the conclusion that it is a cross through several generations of breeding of the four species of the rodent branch of the animal kingdom.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

The Losses of Japan and China.

Possibly no trustworthy statistics will ever be made public of China's losses and losses in her late war with Japan. The Japanese, however, make their reckonings carefully, and the statement that they had a total effective strength in the campaign of a little less than 61,000 troops, and of these lost 965 by deaths in battle and from wounds is an expressive comment on the character of the fighting. Adding the naval casualties, might carry this loss in battle somewhat above 1,000. The deaths by disease were quite heavy, being put at 3,144, of which over half, it is said, were from cholera.

If we compare these aggregate losses in the field with those of the Union or Confederate forces in a single great battle of our civil war, some notion will be had of the difference in the magnitude of the armies and the character of the fighting. The chief point suggested, of course, is the ease with which the Chinese were put to flight. Strange as it may seem, considering their great population, they were outnumbered at important points, and greatly so at Ping Yang, the principal land battle of the war. Putting that fact with their inferiority in arms, in marksmanship, and in discipline, it may be no less a wonder that they inflicted so little loss on the Japanese. That the latter would have stood up, and would have won, under much severer losses, there is every reason to believe.

On the whole, it is creditable to the Japanese commanders that they accomplished results so striking with forces so moderate and with losses so few. They need not be ashamed of their figures, for these show a finely calculated adjustment of means to ends, and a skillful use of those means worthy of great praise. Still, they would find war sweeter with other foes.

The Gospel in Many Tongues.

The latest edition of "The Gospel in Many Tongues" gives a single verse (John III, 16), printed in the 329 languages which the Bible Society embraces in its issues, and it should be noted that from their number, versions no longer in circulation have been carefully excluded. It is impossible to look without emotion on so striking an illustration of world-wide devotion and self-sacrifice. Few meagre even the greatest linguistic gifts are found to be before this gallery of alphabets, so diversified that the same verse occupies in some cases an entire page, in others two or three lines only, while the words which it comprises vary from the terrific and guttural of the Targu to the monosyllabic simplicity of the Chinese vernacular!

How strangely divergent the development which evolved 2,000 separate forms from one primeval tongue, and now tends to revert to its aboriginal unity once more! How inscrutable the destiny ordained for the sacred books of Christianity that they should be translatable into every known type of human speech, and should even at times stand out as solitary beacons, the sole memorials of dead tongues and peoples!—The Quarterly Review.

Early Postage Rates.

The following were the rates of postage in this country in the year 1800: Every letter composed of a single sheet of paper conveyed not exceeding forty miles, eight cents; over forty miles and not exceeding 150 miles, 12 1/2 cents; over 150 and not exceeding 300 miles, seventeen cents; over 300 miles and not exceeding 500 miles, twenty cents; over 500, twenty-five cents. Every letter composed of two pieces of paper, double these rates; every letter composed of three pieces of paper, triple those rates; every letter composed of four pieces of paper weighing one ounce, quadruple those rates, and at the rate of four single letters for each ounce any letter or packet may weigh; every ship letter originally received at an office for delivery, with six cents.

Heats of Hitting H-d.

"That's a steam comin', John; hitch the ole mule in front of the house."

"What for, dad?"

"Well, if that comes a flash o' 'ebmin' he'll kick it into flinders before it hits the house!"—Atlanta Constitution.

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