

Shall I do this, sir, and shall I do that, sir?
 Shall I go in, sir, and shall I go out?
 Shall I be honest, or shall I be liar, sir?
 State your opinion; I'm sadly in doubt.
 Shall I go riding, or shall I go walking?
 Shall I accept it, or shall I refuse?
 Shall I be silent, or shall I keep talking?
 Give me your advice, I cannot well choose.
 Thus do we ponder to others' opinions,
 Wearing the garb of Society's slaves;
 Fashion's tyrant, and we are her minions,
 Robbing our lives of the freedom it craves.
 Ought I to visit her, ought I to cut her?
 Shall I be friendly, or shall I be cold?
 Shall I look boldly, or peep through the shutter?
 Shall I give silver, or shall I give gold?
 What will be said if I stay from the dinner?
 What will be said if I stay from the ball?
 Will they proclaim me a saint or sinner?
 If not the former, I go not at all.
 Thus do we ponder to others' opinions,
 Wearing the garb of Society's slaves;
 Fashion's tyrant, and we are her minions,
 Robbing our lives of the freedom it craves.
 Why not go forward, undaunted, unfeared,
 Doing the thing that is lawful and right?
 Caring not who may be seeing or hearing,
 Shunning the darkness, and courting the light.
 Surely, if conscience forbear to upraid us,
 We may weigh in at the verdict of fools;
 God is our guide—for his service he made us—
 Not to be ruled by the makers of rules.
 Pander no longer to others' opinions,
 Wear not the garb of Society's slaves;
 Be not of Fashion the pitiful minions;
 Rob not your life of the freedom it craves.

IN PARTNERSHIP.

Jack Martin and Pedro Valencia stood beneath a fragrant buckeye by the roadside awaiting the arrival of the stage, then due at the village of Campo Seco. It was the twilight of a warm summer's day, and the cool breeze which had sprung up seemed to have freshened the perfumes of withering wild flowers and drooping grasses. The two men stood silent and watchful under the shadow of the overhanging foliage, occasionally glancing impatiently down the road, which, from their position, sloped precipitously for a considerable distance, making an abrupt turn at the foot of the hill and then descending a deep canon, into the bottom of which the sun never penetrated.
 "There she comes!" It was Martin who spoke. Pedro bent forward and listened intently. Up through the murmuring canon floated the creaking of wheels and the jingling of harness. Then the sharp crack of a whip was heard, followed by the hoarse voice of the driver as he urged his horses to renewed exertion. Pedro turned and found himself face to face with a hooded form armed with a double-barreled shot-gun. He expressed no surprise, but advancing to where the roots of the buckeye sank into the red earth of the bank by the roadside, and lifting a gunny sack similar to that which covered the upper portion of his companion's body, drew it over his head. Drawing a shot-gun from the underbrush, he crossed the road and disappeared in the chapparal. Martin stood close in the shadow of the buckeye.
 The stage crawled lazily out of the canon. Only the driver and a single passenger occupied the box, and the passenger was a woman. When the vehicle had approached within ten yards of the buckeye, a shrill whistle sounded and two men with leveled shot-guns stood in the roadway. The leaders of the stage-team sprang away to the right, and would have dashed down the bank in their fright if the driver had not skillfully reined them in.
 "Halt!"
 "Halt it is," the driver replied; "but you might as well put down them Gattings—they're dangerous, an' might go off; besides they skeer this young lady."
 "Shut yer jaw an' throw down that box," commanded Martin, advancing with his gun leveled, while Valencia grasped the reins of the high leader.
 "Which box do you mean?" inquired the driver.
 "Wells Fargo's; an' if you give us the wrong one, you'll never drive over this road again."
 The threat produced the effect intended, and a heavy blue box, bound with iron, and padlocked, was flung into the road. Martin examined it closely, and was apparently satisfied, for he motioned Pedro away from the horses, and ordered the driver to "Go ahead, an' be quick about it, too." When the stage had disappeared, the partners struck into a narrow trail leading across the canon.
 "Purdy heavy box," remarked Pedro.
 "Yes, I reckon we've called the turn this time. If it's over ten thousand I'm goin' to quit the business," Martin answered.
 The two men struggled in silence through the chapparal, crossing precipitous gulches and climbing steep ridges, until they reached the head of a gloomy canon, thickly overhung with young pines and chemical. Here they deposited their burden, and tearing away a huge boulder from the hillside, revealed a cavity that had evidently been prepared for the reception of the booty. They hastily thrust the box into the cave and rolled the stone back into its place, carefully effacing every trace of their work.
 On their return to Camp Seco, they found the town in a fever of excitement over the bold robbery that had occurred almost at their very doors. The sheriff and a posse of determined citizens were scouring the country in search of the robbers, and the people were anxiously awaiting the result of the search. Not the least suspicious attached to the partners, who were regarded by the citizens of Camp Seco simply as gamblers of the ordinary character. They retired that night weary with their labor, but exulting in the knowledge that their enterprise had yielded them the handsome profit of twenty thousand dollars.
 "A pretty good night's work," muttered Pedro Valencia, as he curled up in his bunk, after parting with Martin—"a pretty good night's work. Twenty thousand dollars! My share is ten thousand! That will take me back to Durango, and plantations are cheap enough there. Santa Maria! I'll live easy after this. I'll pass for a gold hunter, and marry some rich ranchero's daughter, and I'll ride the finest horses in Mexico. Twenty thousand dollars and half of it mine. Ten thousand dol-

lars! That's a good deal, but it isn't as much as twenty thousand. Why shouldn't I have it all? He's only a Gringo anyhow, and if he gets half a chance he'll cheat me out of my share. Suppose I walk off with the box! Twenty thousand dollars in Mexico is a big pile. Let me see. I can fool this Yankee thief, and I believe I'll do it. I'll take the box out of the cache and hide it somewhere else. When the row about this robbery cools down, and the Gringo talks about dividing, we'll go to the place where we hid the box, and we won't find it. Then I'll say some thief has waded us and stolen our money. The Yankee won't know any different. Then, when the time comes I'll disappear. I might as well have twenty thousand as ten thousand, and I'll have it this very night."
 And the robber arose, and dressing himself, placed a revolver in his belt, and stole forth into the night.
 "It's the best job I ever did," thought Jack Martin, as he flung himself, half undressed, on the bed in his cabin. "Twenty thousand dollars! My share is ten thousand. Ten thousand dollars. I'll quit cards; I'll be an honest man; I'll get out of the State; I'll go back to Missouri, buy a farm, and settle down. I'll live easy the rest of my life."
 A smile of satisfaction overspread his countenance as these thoughts flashed through his mind.
 "They'll never suspect me. They'll think I made my money in the mines. Well, I did make it in the mines, didn't I? It don't make any difference how I made it, and I don't care how honest my neighbors think I've been. Ten thousand dollars! It won't be long before I make it twenty thousand. I wish I hadn't taken that Greaser in the spec. I could have handled the job just as well without him. Beside, what does he want with so much money? It'll never do him any good. He'll only buck it off at monte. I wish—" Jack Martin arose and went to the door. He looked out. "Starlight," he muttered. Returning to his seat, he puffed at his pipe with renewed vigor. "Now, that Greaser," he thought, "wouldn't think nothing of cutting my throat for that money. I'll bet he won't rest until he gets me in the door, so's he can get away with the swag. I won't take him. If he does the square thing I'll divide—if he don't I'll keep the twenty thousand and he can whistle for his share. I'll hide the box in my own cache, and I'll hide it to-night."
 In a few moments Jack Martin was creeping through the pines of Lame Hog Gulch. He was armed to the teeth, and he knew a short cut to the canon where the stolen treasure was buried. Jack Martin crawled noiselessly through the brush on his hands and knees. The pines, through which the night winds sighed in ghostly cadences, shut out the dim light of the stars, and the vicinity of the cave was as dark as the interior of a cemetery vault. The robber had almost reached the place where the box was buried, when his quick ear detected the presence of another person. He paused and lay flat upon the earth.
 "Somebody is after that box," he muttered.
 A curse and a peculiar grunt of a man who is endeavoring to lift a heavy burden broke the stillness.
 "It's that Greaser," thought Martin. "Well, if he thinks he is going to swindle me he is mistaken. His life ain't worth the powder I'll burn to send him to perdition."
 At this moment the man in the bush gave a cry of satisfaction. The boulder had been displaced. He dragged the box out of the cave. There was the sound of crackling twigs and the noise of jingling coin as the box was dragged through the brush. Then a dark form crawled out of the thicket and struggled down the canon, dragging the box behind him. Still Martin did not fire, although the marks was a fair one. He crept up to his pistol and followed his doubly dishonest partner. It was a long tramp—the fixed stars were sinking low on the horizon when the Mexican reached the spot where he intended to hide the ill-gotten treasure. He had scarcely disappeared over the summit of the ridge after placing the box in the new cache, when Martin sprang from his place of concealment and disinterred it. In another hour the treasure had been reburied and Martin was sneaking homeward in the gray dawn, exhausted and satiated with his night's work.
 A month rolled by. The excitement engendered by the robbery of the Campo Seco stage had subsided to a dull hum by Wells, Fargo & Co.'s detectives. The partners, with hypocritical earnestness were talking of a division of the spoil. A night had been named for unearthing the treasure. Both men waited impatiently for the denouement, and, when on the night selected for the division, they stood before the cave at the head of the canon, each was prepared to play his part. The boulder was rolled away, and the Mexican, thrusting his hand into the cave, gave vent to a well simulated cry of dismay.
 "The box is gone!" he cried.
 "Gone!" echoed Martin. "You lie, you Greaser, you lie. It must be there."
 "Feel for yourself," the Mexican answered.
 Martin, apparently trembling with agitation threw himself on his knees and reached into the cave. Then he arose, and grasping the Mexican by the arm, exclaimed:
 "Where is the box? You know where it is. Don't go back on me, Pedro—we're partners—we've risked our necks together to get this money, and it ain't right to beat me this way. It's a joke on me, ain't it?"
 "I've played no joke on you, Jack. Somebody followed us when we carried off the box, that's all, and they've stolen the money—that's all there is about it. We'll have to stand up another stage. Jack. Maybe we'll have better luck next time."
 This explanation seemed to satisfy Martin, and the partners returned to Campo Seco. For a week they pretended to plan together, preparatory to robbing another stage. Then, one dark night Pedro Valencia left town, as he thought, forever. He had made every preparation for fleeing the country with the twenty thousand dollars. It was nearly midnight when he returned. When he entered the gambling hell where Mar-

tin was playing, his sardonic face filled with rage.
 "Jack Martin, I was to see you outside," he hissed between his set teeth. Martin exchanged his faro chips for money and arose. The robbers had arrived. The departure of the two men was scarcely noticed by the other players. Suddenly they were started by a pistol-shot, followed almost instantly by another, that rang out in the night air with deadly distinctness. As the crowd rushed to the door, a man staggered into the room and fell sprawling to the floor. The blood was oozing in torrents from his side, and the pallor of death was creeping over his dark face. It was Pedro Valencia.
 "Who shot you, Pedro?" inquired one of the gamblers.
 "I did." All eyes were turned to the door, in which stood Jack Martin, a smoking pistol in his hand. "That knife," he continued, "is proof that I shot him in self-defense."
 As he spoke, he pointed to a murderous bowie-knife which Pedro clutched in his right hand. The dying robber raised himself by a mighty effort on his elbow, and regarding his partner with a look in which importunage was mingled with hate and male, gasped his denunciation:
 "Jack Martin—and I—robbed the—robbed the stage. He stole the—money from—from me. Twenty thousand—"
 With a gurgling groan the Mexican sank back upon the floor, the blood gushing from his nose and mouth, and in another instant he was dead. The partnership was dissolved.
 On the trial for the murder Jack Martin told the whole story, and he told it truthfully, notwithstanding the advice of his lawyers, who expected a heavy fee in the event of his acquittal. He confessed the robbery in detail, the double play of himself and Pedro, and testified that when the latter on that fatal night accused him of removing the treasure from the pipe where he (Pedro) had hidden it, he admitted the fact. When he refused to divide the Mexican had attacked him with the knife, and in self-defense he had killed his partner. This version of the affair could not be disputed, and a verdict of not guilty was rendered.
 But Martin had not revealed the hiding place of the twenty thousand dollars. On his trial for robbery he pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to ten years in the State prison. He carried his secret with him, and although his term has long since expired, the spot where the money was buried has never been discovered, notwithstanding the fact that hundreds of men have searched for it in every direction for miles around Campo Seco. Afters release, Martin disappeared, and it is supposed that he quietly and secretly unearthed the treasure and fled whither to some distant retreat, where he may be living at the present time a highly respected citizen. But his name is not John Martin.

Irish Fun.

Any one in want of light and amusing literature, illustrating national manners and customs cannot do better than study the reports of Irish police cases. Never mind what the offence may be, some comic element is sure to be introduced by either the bench, the bar, or the accused; while very frequently all join in the promotion of harmless mirth. At Blarney the other day, three laborers were arraigned for nearly murdering a sheriff's officer on the high road. Indeed, had it not been for the intervention of his wife, who happened to be with him, they would have made a complete job of it. But it was all a mistake, as he lay on the ground nearly senseless, he heard one of his assailants say: "Bedad, now, he's as dead as a herring, and it's the wrong boy we've killed." For all that they did not cease from maltreating him until, a light being struck, his identity was fully established. Then they all apologized like gentlemen for their little blunder, and the "untoward incident" was at an end so far as they were concerned. When giving his evidence the plaintiff stated that he had presented a latch key at the rascals when the affray began in the hope they would mistake it for a revolver. But in court he produced not only a revolver but a swordstick, and when one of the magistrates asked: "Why, you're a regular armory?" he blithely answered, "Yes, your honor, I intend to be just that for the rest of my life." Another witness, being asked why he did not interfere to save the plaintiff from being killed, replied: "I'd have been killed myself entirely if I hadn't run for the police." In short, all concerned appeared to regard the brutal outrage as quite a pleasant little joke, although perhaps carried a trifle too far.

Knocking out History.

There is a wide spread belief among Americans that the Declaration of Independence was signed on the "Fourth of July." The writings of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, as well as the printed journal of the Continental Congress, bear out this idea, but a recent investigation by the chief librarian of the Boston public library shows that we have along been laboring under a mistake. The declaration was read and agreed to on the 4th of July, but it was not signed. It was ordered to be authenticated and printed during the afternoon, and on the following day copies were sent all over the country. On the 19th it was resolved that the declaration be engrossed on parchment and signed by every member. On the 2nd of August nearly all of the members signed it. Thornton, of New Hampshire, did not sign until November 4 of that year, and McKean did not sign until 1781. Of course no one proposes to change the day of our celebration. It is a fact that our independence was announced to the world on the 4th of July, and that is enough. The signing of the document was of less importance.
 SINGULAR epiphany: "General Tom Thumb is dead. Peace to his lab."
 Moderation is commonly firm, and firmness is commonly successful.
 We have faults enough of our own, and need not be too severe about those of others.

Island of Key West.

A traveler writes that on a recent sunny day I sat in the bow of a southern bound gulf steamer. I espied a small black speck on the horizon, then another, and another, and many more, and concluded they were the keys, or coral reefs of Florida. Presently I saw one larger than the rest, on which are numerous white houses, which looked very warm in the glaring sunshine. It is the city of Key West. The steamer runs up alongside the dock, where there is a mass of warm looking humanity, waiting to extend to the passengers a warm reception. A walk through the streets convinced me that everybody looks warm, feels warm, and is warm. A glass of water taken from a pitcher on ordering some cool, refreshing drink, I am annoyed to find it warm. After a warm search over the city for more than an hour I find a suitable room wherein to locate, which has one door and four and one-fourth windows (three-fourths of the fifth window belongs to another room) and all wide open. Why they are open I do not know, unless it is to let the warm air in, as it seems as warm inside as out. I endeavor to keep cool, but find that every effort I make to that end only increases the heat, and I am getting thoroughly warmed up to the situation.
 The city of Key West is built on the key of that name, which is one of the largest of the group of islets, or keys, which extend from the southern point of the mainland way southwest into the gulf. There are only a few small keys west of it, and it is the farthest south, being the most southern point of Uncle Sam's possessions. Its latitude is 24 degrees 32 north. The key is seven miles long and four wide at its broadest point. The surface is rocky and flat, and the highest elevation only sixteen feet above the sea level. Although the whole key is covered with grass and scrub, but little of it is cultivated, as it requires a pick-axe to turn the soil. The coconut tree is the most interesting, with its long fan-like branches swaying in the wind, and the fruit nestled close to the trunk of the tree in large bunches. Besides the coconut there are a few bananas and limes, several varieties of the cacti family, some flowers and the Australian pine. The lowest temperature ever recorded was 41 degrees. Jack Frost never covered the island with his white mantle.
 The town itself is quite odd. The building material is wood, and as to shape and style, there are none. The buildings may have the appearance of a house, barn, stable, haysheaf, woodshed, or anything; but they are all occupied as dwellings. The houses may be erected on any part of the lot, and many on one lot in some places. They are not afraid of getting close together. The large majority of the inhabitants are Cubans, who were dissatisfied with their own island and settled here; next come the jovial negro; then the Couks or Bahamas, and last is the Americans, who number about one thousand in fourteen thousand population. One hotel and two or three boarding houses are the only accommodations for tourists. The wholesale business is nearly all done in the auction rooms, especially in the line of fruit. The chief industry is the manufacturing of cigars made of Havana tobacco, and the Cubans have that branch of business to themselves. There are more cigars made here than in any other city in the United States of its size. The Couks are employed in sponge fishing along the Keys to the eastward.

Noty Italians.

A traveler in Europe writes; there were hard-working men and women in the train with me from the moment of leaving Paris. I marvelled how easily they assimilated themselves to their hard circumstances. There was ample space, as the passengers were standing out at full length or half length, or in the most crooked and twisted and cramping positions, and sleep and snore as though on the softest of bed. Possibly their room were too small to admit their full length either sitting or standing. When hungry they would run into the little restaurants at the stations and get a bottle of wine and a loaf of bread for a few sous, and on these would feast with entire satisfaction. But I have no doubt they would enjoy a meal of many courses, artistically cooked, as well as the lords of the land through which we pass, and whose villas are one where the miserable huts and cottages of workmen are thousands.
 After leaving Macon, which is the junction of the Marseilles and Italian routes, many Italians entered the train. Some munchered dry bread and drank wine; and the insinuating odor of garlic floated out on the morning air. Two brawny men of Piedmont are now my fellowpassengers. They talk volubly to each other and sing duets from Italian operas with voices not the worst I have ever heard. They are in corduroy suits and have tremendous hob-nailed boots on their feet and to their knees. They smoke pipes constantly, and finally they exhaust their stock of matches. I offer a "vestal" to the older one of the two and he responds with a "Tank you." I look at him in surprise, and he says:
 "I know you Inglesi by your bag."
 And he points to my tourist's knapsack. I ask him where he learned to speak English, and he replies:
 "In America. You Americano?"
 "Yes. Where were you in America?"
 "At Hollidaysburg and Hazelton, in Pennsylvania."
 And he shows me a mining store book of a firm in each place, and whose names were well known to me, with entries of all kinds and his name "John Rodgers" inscribed thereon.
 "But you are not John Rodgers in Italy?" I say to him.
 On, no; here is the name in Italian, and he turns on the last page of one of the books.
 "Ah, yes. Giovanni Roggero."
 How mellow our hard English becomes when it is transposed into "soft, bastard Latin," as Byron calls it!
 And then Giovanni Roggero shows me a great silver watch which he

bought at Altoona and tells me how he worked on the reservoir which new furnishes that city with water; how he took contracts at so much a yard for running tunnels into the coal mines, and how, when his employers found he was making \$3 to \$4 a day because he was strong, industrious and tireless, they made him work by the day for \$1.50 for ten hours; how he was driven from place by the decrease of wages, and finally left the country and came back to Italy, where his family had remained, expecting to join him in the Western Canada which flowed with milk and honey for every one; how he had been working in the mines near Dijon in France, and how business was depressed there and mines ceased operation and how he was again going back to his family.

Polar Bears.

It is no uncommon event for a polar bear to grow along the ice-floes of the sea-coast, which is its favorite walk, until it finally stumbles on an Eskimo village; and, if the dogs see it, or smell it, it is very apt to be brought to bay near by, and then killed by some of the native hunters, who have been alarmed by the noise and outcry. A fair fight on the open ice with a polar bear is somewhat dangerous for if severely wounded, it may tear the hunter to pieces. The Eskimo seldom would any dangerous animals, for being a very brave people—that is, personally brave—they generally go so close that, unless some accident with the frearri happens, the animal, whether bear or musk-ox, is usually killed at the first shot. I once found an old Eskimo hunter, however, in my camp in North Hudson's bay whose hair and scalp had been taken completely off by the bite of a wounded bear he had endeavored to kill; and Toooloah once fired at a big bear with too hasty an aim, hoping to save one of his dogs that the bear had under its paw. He only wounded the huge animal, which instantly charged him, and was only killed by a lucky shot just as it was close upon the hunter.
 Toooloah told me that he has seen polar bears climb up places so steep and perpendicular that the natives could not follow them without cutting in the wall of ice niches wherein to put their hands and feet, and even, in some instances, an ice-wall so high, that the hunters dared not attempt to climb it on account of the danger of slipping off and killing themselves. A British explorer in the Arctic regions says that he once climbed to the top of an iceberg and there found a big white bear sleeping away in quiet possession. The explorer, on discovering the party, jumped over the perpendicular side of the ice mountain, fifty one feet, into the sea, and swam to the nearest land, which was more than twenty miles away. The polar bears live on seal and walrus, crawling stealthily up to the former on the ice-floes and catching them while the walrus, for only the young are thus caught, for an old walrus is twice as big as bruin.

An Inate Bride.

"I have urgent and important business," said a young lady, when told by an officer at Essex Market that Justice Duffy did not receive callers for summonses and warrants on Sundays. She carried in her arms a large bundle, which she placed on the bench, and proceeded to open it, when the Justice stopped her.
 "It's my wedding dress," she said.
 "I want to show it to you. I am to be married in it this afternoon. The dress-maker didn't make the dress right at all. It's a great deal too large for me. I look like a slob in it," and she was on the verge of tears.
 "What can I do about it?" asked Justice Duffy in bewilderment.
 "I want to have her arrested for false pretenses. She guaranteed that the dress would fit me, and I paid her before I tried it on."
 "What does your mother say about it?"
 "Boo-boo-boo, she-she sa-says it fits me."
 "I think I understand the case," remarked Justice Duffy. "Go home and stop crying, or you will look like a fright at the wedding."
 Songs have Two Lives.

"Songs," said a favorite ballad singer the other day to the New York Journal, "are a good deal like ladies' bonnets. You've got to keep changing the style all the time. A good song which becomes popular has two lives. When it first comes out and begins to catch on you hear everybody humming it, and when the bootblacks and newsboys take it up and start to whistle the tune its popularity is assured. After a while people begin to get tired and you hear a groan when some fakir strikes up the air. When a few years have rolled around though and when you spring the song on the public again everybody begins to applaud. I tell you there is no story takes a man's mind back like an old song revived. I remember a good many years ago a man who had been worried a good deal by a hand organ threatened to shoot me for singing 'Ben Bolt.' I saw that man in the audience when I sprung the song on him for an encore I saw the water come into his eyes. He may have cried because he hadn't shot me when he threatened to, but I guess that wasn't the reason."

Bold Women Defenders.

The valor with which the women of Saragossa aided in the defense of their city against the French, still lives in the hearts of Spaniards. Two thousand wives and maidens of Madrid have shown what great things can yet be accomplished by the women of Castile, in holding a tobacco factory against the armed forces of the town—military and civil—to say nothing of the minor feats of insulting the Governor and smashing the furniture and machinery of the factory. The cause of this outbreak was the introduction of machinery into the factory. The women employed there knowing the excellence of their own handiwork, resented this attempt to lower the quality of the cigar.
 Major Stevenson, of the United States geological survey, has done good work here for the past two years in developing the history of the Pueblo Indians. He has just shipped five car-loads of pottery, blankets, weapons, agricultural implements, etc., etc., illustrative of the manners, customs, and general civilization of these people, but this work does not tell us of the people who swarmed over this country before the time of the Pueblos, who do not number over 17,000, while the former people must have numbered hundreds of thousands, and were probably identical with the mound builders of the western prairies and the cave dwellers of Arizona.

A Prehistoric Race.

Forty miles from Sabinal, on the eastern side of the Rio Grande, lie the ruins of a large town now called Gran Querera. The foundations, made of stone, are all that remain of the houses. The rooms were generally small, about 10x14 feet, although a few were much larger, and were evidently used for religious purposes. The stones are not hewn, but are laid up in good shape. The land in the vicinity shows evidence of cultivation. At many places along the Rio Grande the ruins of these stone houses can be seen, often accompanied by evidences of cultivation of the soil. The houses were always built on a knoll or point commanding a view of the surrounding country, and where there were many of them, they joined one another so that the whole would form a fort affording protection against neighboring savages. Almost every village-course and hundreds of gulches and valleys where there is no water contain the ruins of these houses and villages. The rock used is always malpais, or a kind of hard sandstone. A large hole was dug in the center of every village, perhaps to hold water, but there is no cement in it, and it is more likely that they were used in religious rites. Large quantities of broken pottery are found about these villages, and in the few places where excavations have been made many curious articles have been found, and entire skeletons, with protruberances two inches in diameter at the base of the skull. The Navajos now, and generally all the Indians of this section, when disposing of their dead, hide the skulls where they are never found by Americans.
 Excavations in the Tulerosa valley have revealed stone walls to the depth of six feet. The same may be said of the Pecos. Thirty miles northeast of Fort Wingate are the ruins of one house built almost round, of rough sandstone. The diameter was 50 feet. One corner of it is now standing nearly 50 feet high. Logs of wood are placed at intervals of about seven feet, showing that there were seven stories. The building was five miles from a mountain where there is a spring of water. Quite a large valley runs north from the mountain, but there is no water in it. A great deal of broken pottery is scattered over the hills near this building, which appears to have been the only one in that section. Ten miles south, on the divide, a wagon-load of petrified oyster shells could be picked up. That part of New Mexico abounds in petrifications of various kinds. It is no uncommon sight to see trees three feet in diameter and fifty feet long petrified and often crystallized. The crystallized, yellow, black or white—are often very beautiful and would make handsome ornaments for eastern parlors. The petrified forest on Rhododendron creek in Arizona has been written about so much that many have the mistaken idea that all the petrifications are contained in this forest. Petrified trees are found for 250 miles east of Sunset, Arizona.
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History of the Alphabet.

The most ancient of books, a papyrus found at Thebes, now preserved in the French National Library, supplies the earliest forms of the letters used in the Semitic alphabet. The stone tablets of the law could have been possible to the Jews only because of their possession of an alphabet, and thus the Bible and modern philological science unite in ascribing a common origin to the alphabet which is in daily use throughout the world. The nineteenth century before Christ is held by Taylor to be the approximate date of the alphabetic writing, and from that time it grew by degrees, while from Egypt, the home of the Jews during their long captivity, the knowledge of the alphabet was carried in all directions where alphabets are now found.
 The Aryans are thought to have been the first to bring the primitive alphabet to perfection, and each letter and each sound may be traced by Taylor's careful analysis through all the changes that have marked the growth, progress and in some instances, the decay, of different letters of various alphabets. It is an interesting fact that the oldest known "A B C" in existence is a child's alphabet scratched on an ink bottle of black ware, found in one of the oldest Greek settlements in Italy, attributed to the fifth century before Christ. The earliest letters, and later ones, are known only by inscriptions; and it is the rapid increase, by recent discovery, of these precious fragments that has inspired more diligent research and quickened the zeal of learned students in mastering the elements of knowledge of their origin and history throughout the world. As late as 1876 there were found at Cyprus some bronze plates inscribed with Phoenician characters, dating back to the tenth and even the eleventh century before Christ.
 Each epoch has its fragments, and the industry of English explorers, the perseverance of German students, and the genius of French scholars, have all contributed to group them in their chronological order. Coins, engraved gems, inscribed statues, and last of all the Sileam inscription, found in 1880 at Jerusalem on the wall of an old tunnel have supplied new materials for the history. From the common mother of many alphabets—the Phoenician—are descended the Greek and other European systems, on the one side, including that which we use, and have the greatest interest in; and, on the other, the alphabets of Asia, from which have sprung the alphabets of the East, Syriac, Arabic and Hebrew.