

"OF THEE I SING."

DR. SMITH TELLS HOW OUR NATIONAL HYMN WAS WRITTEN.

First Scribbled on a Scrap of Waste Paper; Sung on July 4, 1832, in Boston, and Since Then in All Parts of the World.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes once said facetiously that he supposed the three people in the world whose poems were the best known were himself, one Smith and one Brown.

The one Brown he had in mind was the Mrs. Brown who wrote "I Love to Steal Whistle Away." The one Smith was his old college classmate and long time friend, Samuel Francis Smith, D. D., the author of "My Country, 'Tis of Thee."

Dr. Smith is still among the living, one of the last of that famous class of Harvard '29 men which included, beside the late Dr. Holmes, the Rev. James Freeman Clark, Prof. Benjamin Pierce, Judge Curtis, Judge Bigelow and a number of others well known in Massachusetts and beyond them.

In October, 1834, Dr. Smith was 86 years old. He recently told a contributor of the New York Herald the following story of the birth of the national hymn:

I did not know that I had written a national hymn till the conviction was forced upon me. While I was a student in the theological seminary, in Andover, Mr. Lowell Mason, through whose efforts the study of music was introduced into the public schools of Boston and elsewhere in this country, brought me a number of singing books which Mr. William C. Woodbridge, who had visited Germany to inspect the school system there, had brought home with him and put into Mr. Mason's hands.

Mr. Woodbridge had been much impressed with the German method of teaching music in the schools, and I was asked to look through the books and translate such of the songs as seemed to me appropriate to our American schools.



DR. SAMUEL F. SMITH.

Turning over the leaves of one of the music books I found one song of a patriotic nature set to the tune which England claims as hers because she has so long sung it to the words "God Save the Queen," but which the Danes claim as theirs, and which the Germans claim as theirs, and which the Germans claim as original with them, and of the real origin of which I believe no one is certain.

The music impressed me by its simplicity and easy movement, and I was at once moved to write a patriotic hymn of my own, which American children could sing to this same tune, which I did on a scrap of waste paper, probably finishing it within half an hour.

That was in February, 1832. I gave the hymn to Mr. Mason with others—some translations, others my own—and thought no more of it. The following Fourth of July I happened into Park Street church, in Boston, where Sunday school children were enjoying a patriotic festival. It was at this children's Fourth of July celebration that "America" was first sung, the words of which I had written a few months before. Since then I have heard it sung all over the world.

As to the story which has been told of the sending of the original of "America" to the pope, it is not true. An autograph copy was sent, framed, by a friend of mine, as an individual, to be deposited in the Vatican library at Rome; the original is still in my own possession.

It was of Dr. Smith that Dr. Holmes wrote in his poem to "The Boys," composed for one of their Harvard class reunions:

And there's a nice youngster of excellent path
Fate tried to conceal it by naming it
Smith;
But he shouted a song for the brave and the free,
Just read on his medal, "My Country, 'Tis of Thee."

Speaking of the difference between college life to-day and in his own student days, Dr. Smith says the chief difference is the decrease of class spirit owing to the largely increased number of men in the classes to-day. "Our class at Harvard," said Dr. Smith, "numbered sixty when we graduated, and we all knew each other well. We had the chance to measure, mark and weigh each other, and were almost like brothers of one family."

For the last few years of Dr. Holmes' life the remnant of the class of '29 gave up holding their annual reunion at one of the hotels and dined at his residence as his personal guests. These occasions lasted from 4 in the afternoon till late at night, and the reminiscences exchanged were peculiarly entertain-

ing, saddened only by the dwindling numbers.

Dr. Smith has led too busy a life to sentimentalize over his work, until this year not even taking the trouble to hunt up the manuscript of his famous patriotic poem, to which he always referred when questioned as "scribbled upon a bit of waste paper somewhere."

Only a Few Moonshiners Left.

In an interview the other day the commissioner of internal revenue said that practically every dollar of tax on Kentucky whisky was collected, and with less expense than any other revenue due the federal government. The commissioner is, of course, correct, but this has not been the popular opinion. The moonshiner, says the Louisville Courier-Journal, has taken such a prominent part in the literature of the day—in newspapers, magazines and books—that his numbers have been as much magnified as those of that sorry set of scoundrels who attacked the brave Sir John Falstaff on Gad's hill. Ambitious dialect writers and a horde of cheap humorists have added their contribution to the prevailing impression. Ambitious revenue officers, aided and abetted by zealous reporters they take into their confidence, break out at irregular periods with stories of their prowess in raiding illicit distilleries and capturing bloodthirsty revenue outlaws. Many are their hairbreadth escapes and thrilling are the battles in which they have engaged.

These stories of moonshiners and moonshining are the response to a strong public demand, the appetite for the romantic being; especially lively in connection with a State whose people are considered to have such marked personal characteristics as Kentuckians. But they must be taken with a large amount of salt. We certainly have very few moonshiners in Kentucky and they are not numerous or bloodthirsty anywhere. Usually they are poor people who lack industry or pluck enough to succeed in farming or other vocations. Such men will not fight if they can help it and their operations are generally on the smallest sort of a scale. Their numbers are equally insignificant and out of all proportion to the space they take up in the newspapers.

Waterproof Leather.

All medical authorities agree as to the importance of keeping the feet dry. But aside from the use of rubber and such materials, nothing has heretofore been invented that would fully answer this demand. A new process of tanning, however, gives assurance that this much desired article has at last been made a possibility. Raw hides are saturated with a weak solution of bi-chromate of potash, containing sufficient hydrochloric acid to free the chromic acid. The skins remain in this preparation until they are of a bright yellow color all through. The moisture is then pressed or drained from them, when they are immediately put into a hyposulphite of soda bath, containing a little acid, put in to change the compound to green chromic oxide. The oxidation of the sulphurous acids creates sulphuric acid, resulting in a complete reduction of chromic acid. At this stage the leather must be dyed any desired color, as in its present condition it is of a dull green blue tint. After the dyeing and drying it is extremely tough and flexible and absolutely water and damp proof, so much so that it will take on no permanent color, as the surface is thoroughly non absorbent. The process is said to be very readily learned and easily understood. While it sounds complicated and suggests a great deal of knowledge of chemistry, it is as easily managed as the old method of tan bark, and is, beside, a disinfecting process as well as a destroyer of any disease germs that might by accident be lodged in the skins to be handled.

Wood Going Out of Use.

The enormous increase in the capacity of iron and steel works has its justification and warrant in the wide variety of new employments found for those metals as substitutes for wood. The German Iron Trade association has lately taken the pains to point out, for the benefit of all concerned, the many advantages to be gained by the resort to steel; and it would seem that there is barely a single use left for wood in constructive detail, and not much in ornamental finish, except in genuine carving. The modern edifice is nearest perfection in point of durability and safety according to the proportion in which metal has excluded wood. It is now proposed that wood shall be dispensed with entirely in the framework of railway rolling stock, and this means something when we remember that there are about two and a half million railway vehicles, exclusive of locomotives. In mines metal is doing away with wood, and the use of iron pit props in France has shown that they need to be renewed only half as often as those of wood. At the same time metal has its own special risks, and it is suggested, for example, that unless carefully insulated a large building full of steel and iron might be as susceptible to electrolytic action by stray currents eating it up as though it were rail forming part of an electric railway circuit, or gas or water pipes adjacent thereto. If this new danger exists its remedy should be readily discoverable.

An echinoderm that inhabits the West Indian seas has over 10,000 arms.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

NEW YORK'S new constitution has a clause making the forest lands belonging to the State inalienable. They cannot be sold, leased or exchanged without a new amendment to the constitution, and the power over them, therefore, now rests with the people.

At a Chicago newspaper men's banquet the other night one of the toasts offered was: "Woman; second only to the press in the dissemination of news." The ladies present are not yet quite decided whether to take this as a compliment or not.

CHINESE papers say that the emperor has ordered six two edged swords for Prince Kung, Li Hung Chang, Li Hung Tsao, Weng Tung Ho, Kang Yi and Gen. von Hanneken. With these they have the right, without asking imperial permission, to cut off the heads of all persons from the second rank down who propose peace with Japan. This does not look as if the Chinese wish to give up the fight.

THE announcement that Gladstone is to re-enter political life, following directly on the announcement of the restoration of the Bismarck influence in German politics, compels us to revise some of the commonly accepted notions on the subject of longevity. Gladstone was in his youth a physical weakling, and the habits of life of "Mad Bismarck," both as student and as dyke captain, were directly opposed to the rules which are laid down for all young men who wish to live long. Now, if Crispien can maintain his position in Italy, and if the pope shall continue to defy the infirmities of his advanced age, the European situation during the present year will be exceptionally picturesque and interesting, is the opinion of the New York World.

THIS is what Electrician Thomas A. Edison says: "I hear a great deal about the chances for a man's success having been greater in the past than in the present. The very fact that there is such little competition after a man has climbed up should be a great incentive to advancement. I will admit that great natural inclination will help a man much, but that has nothing to do with the dogged perseverance which is the keynote of success. That, and that only, has placed me where I am. The capacity for hard work is what always wins the battle. I do not believe much in temperament. It might play a large part in music, painting or other kindred arts, but in the workshop of science a man of the sanguine, sandy kind comes out ahead. I think the chances will increase as the years go by, the amount of intelligence increasing by necessity as industrial processes and machinery are constantly growing more intricate."

THE Boston Transcript says that of the 145 inhabitants of the little town of Chilmark, on the island of Martha's Vineyard, thirty-six, or almost exactly one-quarter, are congenitally deaf and dumb. The town records show that two of the original settlers of the place, away back in the seventeenth century, were deaf and dumb, and the infirmity has thus been transmitted to our own day. This hereditary infirmity shows no plan of uniformity in its workings, deaf and dumb parents having children in full possession of all their senses, and vice versa. This peculiar community, shut in from the outside world, is, however, alive to all the social and political influences of the time, and does not differ in great degree from the thousand and one secluded villages which dot our New England hills and shore line. It affords, however, ample opportunity for the minute investigation of both the sociologist and the student of evolution and physiological heredity.

THERE is a woman living in the Sinnamahoning valley, Pa., who was born an Orr, and by marriage she has in turn changed her name to Barnes, Calahan, Rix, Enos, Robinson, Elder and now Bailey. Each of her six dead husbands had been a soldier in the late war, and she married the first one in 1863, when she was 17. It is hardly fair to say, either, that these husbands were exactly six, for not one of them had all of himself left when he succeeded to the title of husband to this admirer of the military. Three of the husbands had only one leg apiece; one had only seven fingers, beside being short a leg; another was wood and won the widow with one leg and one arm, and the sixth was minus an eye. This one died three years ago last May. Her present husband is not a veteran of the war, and has all his legs, arms, fingers and eyes. Mrs. Bailey is not yet 49 and is the mother of twelve children, two each by her soldier husbands.

A FRENCHMAN who has been traveling in this country says in Le Temps that what struck him most in the United States was the American habit of filling the teeth with gold. About \$500,000 worth of gold is thus used every year, he says, and of which, of course, is buried. So he figures that at the end of three centuries the cemeteries of America will contain gold to the value of \$150,000,000. "I am afraid," he adds, "that this will prove too tempting to the practical mind of the future American, and we shall see the day when companies will be organized to mine the cemeteries and recover the gold secreted in the jaws of dead ancestors." The writer then goes on and figures on the average amount of gold in the teeth of each dead person. He has evidently been consulting the record of vital statistics, for he says that 875,000 people died in the United States in 1889. This would bring

the value of the gold in each dead person's teeth to an average of about 65¢ cents, and he thinks that in well crowded cemeteries the mining of this gold could be carried on profitably, despite the small average value.

UNITED STATES CONSUL General De Kay, at Berlin, has come forward, in a report to the State department, with a novel proposition that should command immediate attention on the part of social economists as well as of sportsmen. He says the abundance and excellence of venison cannot fail to impress persons who live in German cities. It is a common dish all the year round, and its price is so moderate that only the poorest classes fail to taste it now and then. The reason for this is the high cultivation of forestry and the care with which deer are bred, fed and protected from poachers. Considering the excellence of venison as food, and the small cost of rearing deer under protection, it is in America especially that steps to form practical deer parks might be easy and of profit. In the neighborhood of great cities the supply of water has to be regulated by the preservation of large districts of more or less mountainous and woody country. In New York, for example, the Croton watershed and the Adirondack reservations might be easily used as deer preserves, and the annual killing and sale of animals of the proper sort would furnish an income far beyond the aggregate salaries of overseers, foresters and guards. In Germany great success has attended the crossing of the American Wapiti with the native deer. The consul calls attention to the recklessness with which in our country the wild animals have been destroyed, bringing its own punishment, and he urges that our river reservations be stocked with Wapiti and Virginia deer, and the herds then regularly decimated to supply the markets with cheap and wholesome food. By a very moderate gun license also sportsmen would derive much pleasure, and the parks would be a source of revenue.

Grip and the Weather.

E. B. Dunn, of New York city, has been comparing and charting the returns of the grip epidemic to ascertain what, if any, relation exists between the prevalence of certain types of weather and the prevalence of grip. His conclusion is that the weather is an important factor in the mortality of grip cases and that the humidity of the air "seems to be the important element in producing or aggravating the disease." He says: "The fatality is most marked when the humidity is at its maximum and there is a sudden fall of temperature. * * * The higher the humidity and the more sudden the fall of temperature the greater the number of deaths, and it is also observed that when the temperature and humidity drop at the same time there is a sudden decrease of the death rate."

The microbial origin of influenza is now thoroughly established by the researches of Pfeiffer, of Berlin, and many other bacteriologists, as Kitasato, Canon, Cornil and Letzerich. But, notwithstanding the fact that the disease is always directly caused by the distinctive germ or influenza bacillus, the susceptibility of persons to the attacks of these microbes may doubtless be greatly increased by certain changes of weather.

Symbolical Jewelry.

The Japanese ladies, by the several ways of dressing the hair, denote whether they are maid, wife or mother. Other nations and tribes attach a similar significance to the wearing of certain articles of jewelry, as the Algerian women, who, upon the birth of the first child, assume a round silver brooch, encircled by small coral roses and finely wrought knobs of metal. If the child is a girl this ornament is worn on the breast; if a boy it is placed on the forehead. These women, young and old, are fond of trinkets, and wear a multiplicity of bead and coral necklaces, as well as those made of spices and a sweet smelling paste, said to be composed of pressed rose leaves. Bracelets and necklaces of the latter kind are found on sale in large bazars, and are desirable not only as curiosities, but on account of their pleasant and lasting perfume.

Costly Cigar Ashes.

A certain Hans Weber, of Stettin, sells and advertises largely a powder which, it is claimed, will cure the dropsy. This marvelous specific, offered with medical recommendations and numerous testimonials of cures, is sold at a price which amounts to 140 francs the kilogram (less than one and one-quarter pound avoirdupois). Dr. Hoffman, of Stettin, bought some of this secret remedy and had it analyzed by the director of the laboratory of analysis at Darmstadt. The director found that the powder was composed, chemically, one-half of carbonate of lime, 12 per cent. of carbonate of potash, with variable portions of coal, clay, phosphate of lime, magnesia, and some other things, the whole from a chemical point of view being identical with cigar ashes.

Some Fine Writing.

A postal card has recently been received at the Cincinnati Enquirer office on which 3,303 words were legibly inscribed with an ordinary steel pen. The writing was extremely difficult to decipher with the naked eye, but a powerful magnifying glass brought out each letter clearly. The words would fill over two columns and took the writer six and a half hours to finish.

THE LATEST PANACEA.

Cold Waters a Cureall For Society Dames.

Cold water as a cure has at length been formally inaugurated as a fad by the gentle ladies of New York's smartest society. One of the gayety loving matrons, who went abroad last year a hollow eyed, romantically pale wreck of her lovely self, the victim of suppers over daintily for a delicate digestion, and of too much frivolity for so fragile an American frame, has come back a rosy, living exponent of the virtues of cold water, and an earnest prophetess preaching to her afflicted sisters. So effective has been her work that every second woman one meets is, not absent from home and society and plunged into a rest cure, but, by the magic of cold water, 2p and doing daily, with a heart for any fate. They all take cold baths three times a day. In the morning, on hopping out of bed, they lean over the bath tub, and after sponging off arms, shoulders and neck with cold water have a maid pour a pitcher of the cold liquid over back, shoulders and arms; then, with a Turkish towel, the upper half of the body is polished to a clear, bright, coral color. At noon a sponge and spray bath is given the extremities, with similar applications of a Turkish towel. For a quarter of an hour in the late afternoon these ardent water sprites, scantily clad, march solemnly up and down the length of their bath tubs in about a foot of cold water; this done, they hop out, and clearing away the rugs from a hardwood floor run for half an hour up and down the length of the room, and then get into shoes and stockings. When troubled at night by insomnia they get up and take a cold water bath, or sponge off with cold water, and before the moisture has dried on the skin skip back under the covers, damp, indeed, but soon soothed to sleep. The waiking in water is, they hold, a sovereign cure for nervous prostration; the baths correct nervous dyspepsia; and as they are rigid dieters, and the cold water stirs up lively appetites, they satisfy its cravings and resist temptations at teas, etc., by calmly producing from their pockets little square silver cases, shaped like cigarette boxes; within are squares of toasted bread, hard, brown and crisp, of which a nibbled bit or two every hour satisfies nature's yearnings.

A Tall Snake Story.

Arthur E. Viney writes the following letter to the London Times from Cape Colony: "Your issue of Oct. 26 came to hand by last mail, reporting the extraordinary cannibalistic feat of the boa constrictor in the zoological gardens. This incident, marvelous though it was, is capped by another, which is well authenticated in this neighborhood. Near the ostrich farm of Mr. Mallerby a large blacksnake was recently killed. As it appeared unusually fat in proportion to its length it was cut open. Inside it was found a yellow snake almost as long as itself. Inside the yellow snake was found a good sized blacksnake, in which were thirty eggs, each of which contained a young snake, apparently not much the worse for its temporary entombment. This makes, therefore, a total of thirty-two snakes inside one snake!"

Chloral Inebriety.

The effects of chloral after the intoxication from this sleep producer has passed away are most unpleasant. The digestion is liable to be upset. The capacity to sleep naturally is, to a large extent, lost. The circulation of the blood is badly nourished and insufficiently aerated. The circulation is oppressed. The heart labors. The secretory and other functions are disturbed. The inhibitory power of the various nerve centers is lessened. Muscular unsteadiness, in the equivalent of nervous instability, is a feeling of general muscular weakness, cardiac debility and reduced vascular tension. There is some vasomotor disturbance, witnessed by coldness and blueness of the extremities, the tip of the nose, etc. Often, too, there is a dull, listless lack of energy.

Remarkable Will.

Count Victor Bawarowski, of Lemberg, who committed suicide in his study about three weeks ago, has, the Vienna correspondent of the London News tells us, left a remarkable will. He declares that his brother is not to inherit anything from him. His sole heir is to be Galicia, but his fortune is to be left untouched until it amounts in value to 20,000,000 florins, when it is to be devoted to the foundation of literary academies, schools of painting, etc., in Cracow, Tarnopol and Lemberg. If there is anything to prevent these institutions from being founded, the property is to be divided equally between the British Museum in London and the Institute in Paris. The Count died worth about 6,000,000 florins in money and land.

Bees and Alcohol.

Dr. Bulhoer has published an interesting report upon the experiments which he has recently carried out for the purpose of ascertaining the effects of alcohol on working bees. By placing them on a regimen of alcoholized honey the most astonishing effect was produced. He discovered unmistakable signs that they revolted against their queen, and gave themselves entirely over to idleness and to habits of pillaging and pilfering, until they were cast out by their fellows.

GANDER PULLING.

A Strange Sport of the Early Days of Missouri.

Ex-Governor Fletcher, of Missouri, formed the center of a little group the other day who were discussing old times. "When I was a boy," he said, "I lived among the pioneers in Missouri. They were a fine class of people; all in all, the best people I ever knew. They drove back the Indians and made bear and deer their meat, as the saying goes. It was before the days of the schoolmaster. Occasionally we had a three months subscription school, but the master was employed more for his physical qualifications to discipline the big boys than for his learning. It was before the days of baseball and football, and the sport that stood at the head of the list was 'gander pulling.' The men met," continued the governor, "at some suitable cross roads store, and they pooled in \$1 each, say twenty or twenty-five of them. They got the oldest and toughest gander that roamed that circuit. The feathers were carefully plucked from his neck and the neck was covered with grease and soap. After these preliminaries Mr. Gander was securely tied to a swinging limb of a tree, head hanging downward. This done, the men would mount their horses, a circle was drawn, the master of ceremonies took his place in the center of the ring, whip in hand, and kept every horse on a lively run as the riders tried to catch the gander's neck. The man who succeeded in pulling off the gander's neck raked in the pot. If he held on until he was pulled off his horse, it counted for the gander and the rider was out. It was a little tough on the fowl, but as a feat of strength and horsemanship it was worth seeing, and the knights of old never put lance in rest or rode in tournament to greater applause among the spectators than was showered upon them by the throng at a gander pulling. I was once an eye witness of this strange sport. Of course, it wound up with a dance, and the hero who pulled off the gander's head danced with the prettiest girl."

Gibraltar and Its Defense.

Experiments at Shoeburyness have shown that an Armstrong shell can be thrown 9,176 yards—about five and one-third miles—says a writer in Temple Bar. It is therefore absolutely clear that if all the fleet were temporarily absent from the port of Gibraltar, either on some special mission or dispersed by a storm, hostile ironclads taking up a position within four miles of the eastward of Europa point might with impunity send shot and shell into the outlying parts of the fortress and cause much destruction of life and property. On the other hand, the governor of the fortress would not be idle, and the experiences of the late civil war in America have abundantly proved that the cannon in fortresses, if they strike a ship of war with their projectiles, even at long range, may do considerable mischief; while, on the other hand, many shot and shell may strike a fort and only do trifling damage. It is practically impossible to throw shot or shell over the high part of the rock, near Spain, and the cannon ensconced in the unique rock galleries, with their royal artillery gun detachments, would be absolutely safe. Even if the neutral ground between Gibraltar and Spain were occupied by a hostile foe comparatively little damage would be the result. During the writer's stay at Gibraltar it was considered desirable to try the experiment of firing upward from the plain on the Spanish side into the galleries, dummies being placed to represent the necessary gun detachments. A regiment several hundred strong was accordingly placed in position and supplied with ball cartridges. The range, however, was unknown and the fire being directed upward, it was fully an hour before any of the dummies were hit, after the expenditure of much ammunition. In actual warfare, of course, the British rifle sharpshooters must have picked out their foes by firing downward from the galleries. Bomb proof barracks and hospitals are potent factors against the horrors of bombardment, and there is little doubt that there is ample room at Gibraltar for some amendment on this head.

Seven Years Disappeared.

Seven years ago Miss Jennie Morgan disappeared from her home in Pittsburg, Penna., and nothing was known by her family of her whereabouts. Five months ago her father went into court and asked to be appointed administrator of her estate, as it was known that she had about \$1,500 in a local savings bank. The other day there was a hearing in the matter, but further proceedings were stopped by the appearance in court of the young lady herself. During these seven years she had been employed as a domestic in an East end family and had kept her identity concealed. She gave as a reason for her action that her father had ill treated her.

New Orange Disease.

Orange trees have been attacked by a new disease in Spain. It resembles mildew and affects fruit, branch and leaf, which it turns yellow. The disease has been named pereta. A commission of agriculturists, botanists and chemists is engaged in studying it, and as a preliminary defensive measure orange growers are counseled to give their trees a coat of petroleum.—Chicago Herald.