

UNCLE SAM'S MOUNTS.

How Cavalry Horses are Purchased --Various Methods of Trading-- Dealers Try to Get the Best of the Government.

Nearly all of the horses for the army are bought in St. Louis, and are gathered by contractors from Missouri and the neighboring States, says the Washington Post. While this is pretty far West, they are what is known as Eastern horses, and although they are, most of them, quite serviceable after they have been toughened by Western campaigning, the best horses, according to the officers who have had experience in rough campaigning work, are those of Wyoming, Montana and Southern California, which are born and bred to the climatic conditions they have to face in Indian campaigning. Horses from this section are a good deal cheaper than the Eastern horses, and as they come utterly wild and devilish from the ranches, it is also a liberal education to the troopers to have to break them.

The horse buying for the army is done by the Quartermaster-General Office, Lieut.-Colonel Moore, having for many years, been the expert in charge of this work, although he has lately been superseded by Colonel Gillis. A board for horse purchase consists of an officer from the quartermaster's department, a cavalry officer and a citizen's expert and veterinarian. This board is supposed to pass upon the merits of the animals presented and select such as are suitable for army use. Bids are advertised for to furnish the number of horses required, and the contractors bring them in by the score or the hundred, as the case may be. The only regulations within which the horse must come are, that he shall be between fifteen and sixteen hands high, fifteen and one-half preferred; that he must be sound in wind and limb, and of some hardy color—that is to say, not a "calico" horse or cross-marked, i. e., with a mane and tail that do not match his general complexion.

There are a number of standing jokes in the army about the character of horses furnished by contractors and the dark and devious ways followed by these individuals to make the most out of their transactions. The soldiers say that nine-tenths of the horses bought in St. Louis will stop like they were shot if they hear a bell ring. This is a covert way of suggesting that they have served on the car lines. It is also said that if a contractor in that sooty and sinful city gets an order for a lot of horses he will go all around the country and gather in three or four hundred. These he will sort over and get out all the well matched teams he can find and set them apart for private sale. Then he will take out all the "streeters"—that is to say, good, hardy specimens that can be used for street cars and city hauling. Subsequently he looks over the remainder to see if by accident there are any saddle horses left and sort them out for private sale, and the remainder he will use in filling his contract with the government. It is possible that this is a malicious libel on the contractor, but that is what they say about him.

As a matter of fact, however, the army gets a pretty good lot of horses, and probably the best that can be expected, considering the field there is to draw from and the manner of contract purchase. At any rate many of them, with the good care they receive after they enter the service, live to a ripe old age. There is one regiment, now stationed in the West, that is pretty well mounted, though the average age of its horses is thirteen years.

It is said that the most splendidly mounted cavalry in the world is that of Germany. The government in that country for many years has been building up a great national breed of horses. Government stud farms are scattered at intervals all over the empire, and to these the farmers are allowed to bring their mares free of charge. By a long course of selection there has been built up a national breed of horse, powerful in bone and muscle, swift and enduring, and in any emergency the cavalry force of the German army could be doubled or trebled without lowering its standard by simply buying up the surplus of the farms.

A Victim of Superstition.

Superstition reigns tyrannically in many rural districts in Italy. Lately a fortune-teller prophesied to a young farmer and his sister, living near Noto, Sicily, that on the evening before a certain feast day both would die a violent death. This so affected the minds of the poor dupes that they became insane and rushed shrieking through the streets. A brother of these unfortunate then came somehow to the conclusion that the calamity was due to the witchcraft of their stepmother, and in a fit of blind rage killed the poor woman with a hoe.

Dear "Skinners."

Gangs of "skinners," men who slaughter deer wholesale solely for the hides, are again at work in the mountains of Curry county, Or. A hunting party just returned from the region relate that it was not unusual to come across a dozen or more carcasses of deer in the course of a day, left to rot by the law violators. It is estimated that more than 700 deer have been killed in that section this summer solely for their hides. The "skinners" find a ready sale for the hides, and make much money at the wretched business.

FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS.

RECIPE FOR A GOOD LETTER.
To write a good letter, take a handful of grit.
A plenty of time and a little of wit.
Take patience to "set" it, and stir it all up
With the ladle of energy. Then fill a cup
With kind thoughts and helpful thoughts,
Merry thoughts, too,
With bright words, and wise words, and
Words strong and true.

Mix all these together, and then add for
spice
Some good news, some funny news, all
news that's nice.
Then seal with a love kiss, and stamp it
with care,
Direct to your friend's heart, and, presto!
'tis there.

—[Amos R. Wells.

ETHEL'S PROTEST.

Little Ethel is just two years and two weeks of age, and the dignity of such maturity she had deemed it expedient to maintain by the strictest attention to her attire; therefore, when her tiny shoes, through an unavoidable combination of circumstances, had been sent to the cobbler to have the ratages done to the toes rectified, and she was supplied with a dilapidated pair kept for such an emergency, she viewed the whole proceeding with ill suppressed anxiety and deep disgust, but forebore much outward demonstration.

Next morning when she found she was about to suffer the same indignity, she entered an indignant protest and exclaimed with warmth and aggravation, "Patens me, mamma, don't put dem waggid soos on me no more for pity take!"

THE SLEEPING APPLE.

High up in a tree among the green leaves, hung a rosy-cheeked apple that was so still it seemed to be sleeping. A little child came near, and standing under the tree, she looked up and called to the apple: "O apple! come to me! do come down to me! You do not need to sleep so long."

But the apple did not waken.
Then came the bright sun, high in the heavens he shone.

"O Sun! lovely Sun!" said the child;

"Please waken the apple for me."

The sun said: "O yes, I will with pleasure." So he sent his bright beams straight in the face of the apple, and kissed it kindly, but the apple did not move a bit.

Then there came a bird and perched upon a bough of the tree and sang a beautiful song, but even that did not waken the sleeping apple.

And what comes now? The wind, to be sure. "I wonder what he will do," said the child. "I know he will not kiss the apple, and he cannot sing to it, so he will have to try another way."

And the wind did try another way. He puffed out his cheeks and blew and blew, and shook the tree, and the rosy-cheeked apple awoke and was so frightened that it gave a sudden jump and fell right in the uplifted apron of the little girl.

And "I thank you very much, Mr. Wind," she said, as she ran away with it.

A DECEPTIVE SEA FLOWER.

Little fishes have other dangers to guard against besides the hook. Here is an account of a fisherman fastened to a rock, who gets many a fish into his basket.

One of the exquisite wonders of the sea is called the opelet, and is about as large as the German aster, looking, indeed, very much like one.

Imagine a very large double aster, with ever so many long petals, of a light green, glossy as satin, and each one tipped with rose color. These lovely petals do not lie quietly in their places, like those of the aster in your garden, but wave about in the water, while the opelet generally clings to a rock.

How innocent and lovely it looks on its rocky bed! Who would suspect that it would eat anything grosser than dew or sunlight? But those beautiful waving arms, as you call them, have other uses besides looking pretty. They have to provide food for a large, open mouth, which is hidden deep down amongst them—so well hidden that one can scarcely find it.

Well do they perform their duty, for the instant a foolish little fish touches one of the rosy tips, he is struck with poison as fatal to him as lightning.

He immediately becomes numb, and, in a moment, stops struggling; and then the other beautiful arms wrap themselves around him, and he is drawn into the huge, greedy mouth, and is seen no more. Then the lovely arms unclose, and wave again in the water, looking as though they had never touched a fish.

WHEN IT RAINS.

There is no doubt that all animals, wild or tame, four-footed or with wings, have a deep-seated aversion to rain or wet weather. Even water fowl will seek a dry hiding-place when it rains.

Did you ever watch the actions of cattle before a big storm? If so, you must have seen them grow more and more uneasy as the clouds threatened. You also saw them run up and down the field, as if seeking to escape some impending danger. Finally, when the storm does come, they draw closely together, and, with lowered heads, present a picture of despair.

When it rains the domestic animals always keep in-doors, or, failing that, they seek shelter by the barn, or under trees in the woods, or beneath the hedges and thickets—in short, in any convenient place where they are not entirely exposed to the down-pour.

It is the same with fowls. They dislike the rain, which soaks their feathers. They seek sheltered places and creep under wagons, and squeeze in behind boxes and boards. Chickens do not mind wetting their feet, as they will scratch the muddy ground, soon after a shower, in search of worms and bugs.

Wild birds do their best to keep out of the rain. They find shelter in many ways. Some of them build a roof over their nests, in which they keep more or less dry. Others choose a house under the eaves, or under a projecting cliff, where they are safe from the discomforts that the rain brings. But most of them are without any adequate shelter that is

the result of their own forethought. They take refuge in any place that they happen to find at hand. If you watch them before the coming of the storm, you will see them looking around for shelter. If the storm comes suddenly, the small and helpless ones seem bewildered, flying from tree to tree, and from limb to limb, quite unable to make up their minds to a temporary hiding-place.

A SHIP'S LAUNCH.

First Preparations When the Keel Blocks Are Laid.

It has often been said that man begins to die the moment that he begins to live. It might also be said that a ship begins to be launched the moment she begins to be built. The first thing in the actual construction is to arrange the keel-blocks on which the ship is to rest while she is building. They must be placed at certain distances apart, and each must be a little higher than its neighbor nearer the water. These blocks are usually of the stoutest oak, and are placed from two to three feet apart. They must have a regular inclination, or the ship cannot be launched. In vessels like the St. Louis the incline is about one half an inch in height to a foot in length. In smaller vessels it is often more than one inch to the foot. Larger vessels have so much weight that a sharp incline is not as necessary as with smaller ones. The keel of the ship is laid on these blocks, and as fast as the sides of the vessel are built up great props are placed against them to make sure that by no accident will the vessel topple over.

At length the hull of the vessel is completed. Then it is that the launching apparatus is prepared. This consists of two parts, one that remains fixed on the ground, and one that glides into the water with the ship. The part that goes into the water is the cradle. It is that part in which the hull of the vessel rests snugly, and probably that is why it is called a cradle. When the time comes for the launch, a long row of blocks is built under each side of the ship at an equal distance from the keel-blocks and of the same inclination. On these blocks rest first the stationary "ways." These consist of broad planks of oak, from three to four feet wide, capable of sustaining a weight of from two to two and one half tons to the square foot. On top of these ways are the "sliding ways," of nearly the same breadth, and between the two the tallow is placed. A narrow cleat runs along the edge of the stationary ways, so that the sliding ways shall not slip off as they carry the ship along. Above the sliding ways is what is called the "packing." This consists of pieces of timber packed close against the curving sides of the vessel to hold it firm to the sliding ways beneath. The curves in the hull vary so much that it would be impossible to fit the sliding ways to them, and so, by means of packing the ship is fitted to the ways instead. The packing and the sliding ways constitute the ship by stout ropes. Along its length, at intervals of about eight or ten inches are big wedges, the points of which are inserted between the sliding ways and the packing. A rope about the thickness of a clothes-line runs from wedge to wedge so that none may be lost when they float into the water.

We are now ready for the launch. Tallow to the thickness of about an inch has been spread between the ways as they were put in position, nearly sixty barrels being necessary for a ship like the St. Louis. The cradle sets snugly against the ship's bottom. The vessel, however, is still resting on the keel-blocks. The task now is to transfer the ship from these keel-blocks to the launching supports, and to take away the keel-blocks. Then when the weight of the ship rests on the launching ways alone all that is necessary is to saw away the "sole-plate" at the bow, where the stationary and sliding ways are fastened together, and the ship by her own weight will probably slide into the water. If she needs a start, several "jacks" using hydraulic power are ready beneath the keel to lift her a trifle and give her a push.

Doctored Cut Flowers.

"There are a great many dodges that the public never dream of in connection with the enormous sale of button-holes and bouquets. For instance, we often give a perfume by artificial means to the flowers we sell," said a florist to a writer in Answers.

"The greater number of doctored flowers are either those which are fading, and 'off-color,' or those which usually have no scent at all. In the case of the former the flowers are daily dipped in a weak solution of sal ammoniac, which, for a time, revives them in the most marvellous way.

"But the chief doctored is with the flowers which, as a rule, have little or no scent. First of all these are put into a metal box with ice, and then by a very simple process they are subjected to a continuous current of carbonic acid charged with perfumes of the required vivacity. There is an immense amount of profit made by scenting those violets which in the order of nature have no perfume.

"In certain districts prodigious quantities of violets having no scent are to be found, while the naturally odorous ones are quite rare by comparison. But in first-class florists' places no unscented ones are sold, for an alcoholic solution fixed by means of glycerin is used in the case of the scentless ones we receive. It is the same with other flowers, except that some other appropriate scent is used instead of the violet, of course.

White satin ribbon shaded with pale rose and a golden-yellow is one of the novelties.

Black moire ribbon with a feathered edge is very pretty for collarets.

Game in the Big Park.

Superintendent Huntley, of the Yellowstone Park Company, says:

"All large game in the park, except buffalo, is increasing fast. There is still a small herd of buffalo in the park, but it is a constant temptation to the unprincipled hunter. A buffalo head is said to be worth from \$300 to \$500. The troops give them all the protection they can, but once in a while some daring pot hunter gets off with a hide and head. In no place in the country is fishing better than in the park. Seven years ago the Government commenced stocking the streams of Wonderland, and now all afford excellent sport with the rod. Three varieties of trout have been furnished from the Government hatcheries—the rainbow, the Von Baer, and Loch Leven. The latter is the gamiest trout in the world. The Fire Hole River was stocked largely with that variety, and four-pounders have been taken from it this summer. Some of the small lakes were stocked with black bass, but bass fishing will not be allowed for a year or two longer.

"Next year is expected to be a big one. We look for many from the section reached by the Burlington. The road opens a new section of country to Montana and its benefits were felt in the park this year. The hotels were better kept this season than ever before, although the rates were reduced 25 per cent. It will not be many years before the Grand Canon, the geysers, springs, and wonders of the Yellowstone Park will be visited and appreciated by tens of thousands of people yearly."

Cultivating Bacteria.

To the uninitiated mind, it may smack of absurdity to say that in no distant day the bacteria of butter and cheese will be cultivated as we now cultivate other commercial products. A writer on this subject says: "The fermentation of cream and of cheese is already as much of an art as the fermentation of malt in the manufacture of beer. In the curing of tobacco the same activity is discovered, and the day is not far distant when commerce in high-bred tobacco bacteria will be an accomplished fact. In short, we may look forward to the day when the bacteria active in agriculture will be carefully cultivated, and the bacterial herd book will be found along with those of the Jersey cow and the Norman horse." On a par with this is the sterilization of products, which process is necessary before the thoroughbred bacteria is introduced.

Uncle Allen Advises.

"I notice, my dear," said Uncle Allen Sparks to one of his nieces, "that when you have a toothache it's the worst you ever had. The young man who was here last night was the ugliest fellow you ever saw. According to your statement a little while ago, it took you forever and a day to learn how to make a sponge cake. The house, you say, is full of flies. You have just declared that the room is as hot as an oven, you have the dreadful headache you ever had in your life, and the boy across the road is making the fearfulest racket a boy ever made. Don't you see, my child, this sort of thing won't do? Some time in your life you will really have an experience requiring the superlative degree to describe it, and you won't be able to convey any idea of it. You will have used up all your adjectives. That is all. You can go to thumping the piano again."

Postal Telegraphy.

A well known inventor and electrician announces his firm conviction that it is time to get out of the telegraph its full working value, and that it ought now to be used for the carriage of the mails, not in the physical sense, but literally, all the same. He believes that 40,000 or 50,000 letters of about fifty words each between Chicago and New York could every day be profitably sent over a couple of copper wires at a rate of twelve to fifteen cents a-piece. Thousands of such letters now pay twelve cents in the mail to insure the saving of half an hour after a journey of twenty-four hours. The plan is based necessarily on "machine telegraphy," which has been on trial before and not gone very far.

An Odd Ordinance.

Councilman Towle, of Oakland, Cal., recently introduced and engineered to second reading an ordinance compelling all bathers within the city limits of that town to tie up their heads in a sack while bathing. The ordinance provides that all bathers must wear "a shirt or Jersey covering the entire upper part of the body except the arms. The ordinance passed to the printers, and it was the often-abused intelligent compositor who discovered that if it passed the Council every bather in Oakland would be compelled by law to bag his head. The ordinance was reported back, and is to come up for final disposition this week.

Absorbable Tissue For Wounds.

J. Lustok has patented a process in Germany under which the muscular coating of the intestines of animals is divested of both the interior and exterior layers of mucous membrane, and then digested in a pepsin solution until the muscular fibres are half digested. This is then treated with tannin and gallic acid. The result is a tissue which can take the place of the natural skin, and which, when laid on the wound, is entirely absorbed during the healing process.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The principle is now well established that a city has no legal right to pollute the water of a river which flows thence past other towns.

Forty years ago Theodore Parker predicted that before the end of the century Kansas would have 1,000,000 inhabitants and be worth \$1,000,000,000. The prediction has been more than fulfilled already. Kansas has 1,500,000 people and is worth \$2,000,000,000.

It is estimated that 50,000 letters, westward bound, were lost in the Pennsylvania Railroad wreck near Newport, Penn., a few days ago. What a record of high aims and low devices, self-sacrifice and self-seeking, poverty and wealth, happiness and misery, was thus wiped out! But it will all reappear in other sealed envelopes in the course of time.

A SINGLE American copper mine has already produced 74,000,000 pounds of copper this year, and it is expected that its total output for the year will reach 95,000,000 pounds. Its net profits last year are put at \$2,986,000. These exaggerated returns on a comparatively small investment are due primarily to the great demand for copper caused by the increasing use of electricity.

On account of the unprecedented corn crop and the consequent low price expected, the question of the feasibility of using corn extensively as fuel is being widely discussed in the West. A Chicago man guarantees to supply corn for the elevated railroads to burn at less than their coal costs them. On the other hand, corn makes such a hot fire that it rapidly burns out ordinary stoves, and hitherto it has not found unmixed favor as fuel.

JOHN FISKE, the well known American writer on historical topics, says that "few people have the leisure to undertake a systematic and thorough study of history, but every one ought to find time to learn the principal features of the governments under which we live, and to get some inkling of the way in which these governments have come into existence, and of the causes which have made them what they are."

The late Queen of Korea was quite a pretty little woman of an extravagant disposition, but of much greater ability than her husband. She was fond of intrigue and excitement, and during the last few years her life has been full of both. Of all the foreigners at the court she liked the Russians best. The King is apparently not overwhelmed with grief, for "he is to be provided at once, without sign of mourning, with a new and less ambitious wife."

The young King of Spain saw his first bull fight the other day. His mother, who has a horror of the brutal sport, postponed the event as long as possible; but even she was unable to override the ancient court precedent that prescribes attendance on bull fights as part of the education of a Christian monarch. The little chap viewed the sport without betraying any enthusiasm, and departed without rewarding the successful matador, in accordance with custom. And some Spaniards, therefore, fear that he may bring discredit on his order and race by taking a stand against the national sport when he grows to man's estate.

The population of Japan was in 1894 42,000,000. Adding Formosa—which became a part of the country by the late treaty with China—the population is now 45,000,000. In the year 610 the population of the country was 4,988,842. The area of the country is 27,326 square miles. Compared in extent with European countries Japan stands next to Spain, being about equal to Sweden. She is larger than Great Britain and Ireland by 6,933 square miles, and is the eleventh largest country in the world. Compared with Great Britain and Ireland she has 7,100,000 more people, and in population ranks as the fifth power in the world.

The question of the influence of the size of seeds upon germination and upon the size of the plant that springs therefrom has been recently studied anew by Mr. B. R. Galloway, a summary of whose conclusions is given by the Gardeners' Chronicle. The weight and size of the seed are of great importance. A large seed germinates better and more quickly, and with it one can count upon having at the same moment from 85 to 90 per cent. of the total crop, while with small seeds the crop reaches maturity only in successive periods of time, so that at no moment in gathering the crop in toto could we have the same proportion of the whole. Besides, where with small seeds four successive crops are obtained, we have six with large seeds, their evolution occurring with greater rapidity.

THERE is no longer any doubt that the tide of emigration has turned. For two years, notably in 1894, immigration to the United States was held in check; in the year 1895 it has resumed its former volume. The increase is very apparent. During September the arrivals of immigrants in this country numbered 36,593, as against 24,904 in September, 1894. The nine months of the current year show an immigration of 249,392, as against 191,485 for the same period last year. The inference from these facts, exclaim the Boston Commonwealth, is gratifying; it is a proof of the reality of the prosperity which has returned to this country. These hundreds of thousands of emigrants were driven out of Europe by unusual distress in their native lands; they were attracted by better times in America. But their com-

ing in such largely increased numbers imposes upon the United States the necessity of selection more forcibly than ever before. Our present laws assume to keep out the diseased, the criminal, the pauper, and, to a great extent, they are effective. But they need to be supplemented by laws which shall erect a barrier against ignorance, and shall enable the great American Republic to get the best, and only the best, from the peoples of Europe.

In the great outlay which George Vanderbilt is making at Biltmore, in North Carolina, the young millionaire has entertained a more serious purpose than is generally known, says the New York Sun. A great deal has been written about the enormous house, with its library, chapel, scores of bedrooms and the army of servants which will be required to keep it up, but not every one knows that Mr. Vanderbilt intends to make his estate a Mecca for all those who are seriously interested in the study of forestry, scientific farming and horticulture. He has land enough to carry out any scheme of this sort, as he can go 40 miles in a direct line from his own door without passing the confines of his domain. He proposes, therefore, to create a neighborhood of his own on this vast property, which includes, among other cultivated and uncultivated tracts, one forest alone of more than 100,000 acres. He will build a village containing houses, stores and a picturesque inn, and apartments will be rented to all properly-accredited students who desire to avail themselves of the facilities offered there for the study of the sciences which are his hobby. The farm will be conducted after the most approved scientific fashion, and forestry will be carried on experimentally and practically to an extent never before attempted in this country.

WHERE HE DREW THE LINE.

Why the Old Farmer Wouldn't Buy a Windmill.

The man who sold windmills adjusted his chair at a new angle, crossed his feet on the railing of the balcony, locked his hands over the top of his head, and began:

"Curious fellows, those Wayback farmers are; droll chaps to deal with, too; cute and sharp at a bargain. Most of them know a good thing when they see it, so I took a good many orders; but once in a while I come across a conservative old haysced whose eyes are closed to anything modern. One off that sort helped me to a good laugh the other day, and I might as well pass it on.

"He was a genial, white-headed old fellow, who owned several fine farms, with prime orchards and meadows, barns and fences in apple order, and dwellings serene in comfort.

"He listened closely while I expatiated on the excellence of our make of machines; then taking a fresh supply of Cavendish, he squared himself in his chair, with his hands in his pockets, and held forth in this fashion:

"'Waal, stranger,' he said, 'your machine may be all right; but now see here. I settled here in the airy fifties, broke the trail for the last few miles, blazin' the trees as we came along. I had a fair good start, good health, a yoke o' cattle, a cow, an ax, with one bit an' three coppers in my pocket. I built a log house with a shake ruff an' a puncheon floor, an' a cow-shed of popple poles ruffed with sod. I worked hard, up airy and down late, clearin' up land by degrees, an' diggin' a livin' out o' the sile by main strength, an' no favors except the blessin' o' the Almighty. The Lord's been good to me. He's gi'n me housen an' barns; He's gi'n me horses an' cattle; He's gi'n me sheep an' swine, an' feathered fowl o' many kinds. An' now, stranger, after all that, I'll be everlastingly busted if I'll be so mean as to ask Him to pump water for 'em.'"

"And then," continued the storyteller, "he brought his hand down on his knee with a smack that fairly echoed through the house. Of course I couldn't urge him to purchase after that expression of his sentiments, and I left him. Independent, wasn't he?"

Then the windmill man chuckled, as if he enjoyed the memory of the scene he had just described; and his hearers enjoyed his story so much that when he left he was richer by three or four orders.

Petrifying the Human Form.

It is stated that there are in existence a number of figures of petrified human beings prepared by an Italian specialist. His marvellous achievements in preserving the features of the dead have been the theme of discussion among scientists for many years. In the Florentine Museum there are some samples of his work. One of the most perfect examples of his skill has been in existence for sixty years. It was the head of an extremely beautiful young woman who had died from pulmonary tuberculosis. Its whereabouts has been for some time unknown, but the descendants of this great pastmaster in petrification have been searching diligently for it. It has been found in Bavaria and restored to its owners as one of the treasures of Italian anatomical science. Sixty years' use seems to have caused it no appreciable injury, as it is described by a writer as having luxuriant blonde hair quite wavy and soft like that of a living person.

CONFIDENCE.

"I'm going to be President some day," said Willie, proudly. "Papa said I might."