

MAKING MATCHES.

One Machine that Cuts 10,000,000 Sticks a Day.

The operation of making matches from a pine log may be divided into four heads, namely: Preparing the splints, dipping the matches, boxing making and filling. When the timber is brought into the cutting room of the factory it is seized upon by a gang of men, who place it before a circular saw, where it is cut into blocks fifteen inches long, the length of seven matches. It is then freed of its bark and taken to the turning lathe, where, by means of a special form of fixed cutting band running its entire length, a continuous roll, the thickness of the match is cut off.

As the block revolves and decreases in diameter the knife advances and a band of veneer of uniform thickness is obtained. As the veneer rolls off the knife it is met by eight small knives, which cut it into seven separate bands, each the size of a match. By this one operation seven long ribbons of wood, each the length and thickness of a match, are obtained. These are then broken into pieces six feet long, the knotty parts removed, and they are then fed into a machine which looks and acts like a straw-chopper which cuts them into single matches. The machine cuts 150 bands at the same time, and a mechanical device pushes them forward the thickness of a match each stroke of the cutter. This little machine with its one sharp knife can cut over 10,000,000 matches a day.

From the cutting room the splints are taken to the dry room, where they are placed in revolving drums, which absorb all the moisture the splints may contain. They are then prepared for dipping process, which is a very important operation, as each splint must have sufficient space to be fully coated and yet not placed so close to the others as to cause the mixture to clot the heads of the other splints. To do this they are placed upon an ingeniously constructed machine which seems to work with almost human intelligence, and are caught up and placed closely, but at regular intervals, in a dipping frame. These frames contain forty-four movable laths, and between each lath the machine places with clock-work regularity fifty splints, making over 2,000 splints in each frame.

The heads of the splints are all on the same level, and a single attendant at each machine can place over 1,000,000 splints in the frame per day. The dipping vat is a stove of masonry, which contains three square pans. The first pan is for heating the splints so they will absorb the mixture, the second contains moulten paraffine, in which the points are dipped, and in the third they are coated with the igniting composition. Over 8,000,000 matches can be dipped by a skillful workman in one day. After the dipping process the matches are dried while still in the frames and are then taken to the packing room, where they are put into boxes by hand.

The Danger of Too Much Exercise.

Dr. Patton, chief surgeon of the National Soldiers' Home at Dayton, Ohio, said, in an interview in Pittsburgh the other day, that of the 5,000 soldiers in the Dayton home, "fully 80 per cent, are suffering from heart disease in one form or another, due to the forced physical exertion of the campaigns." And he made the prediction that as large a proportion of the army as that which will be found twenty-five years from now to be victims of heart disease, resulting from the muscular strains that they force themselves to undergo. As for the likelihood of exercise to prolong life, it may be said that, according to the statistics of M. de Solville, there are more people living in France to-day who have passed the age of sixty than there are in England, the home of athletic sports. And it is probably no nation in Europe more adverse to muscular cultivation for its own sake than the French. Great athletes die young, and a mortality list of Oxford rowing men published a few years ago showed that a comparatively small percentage had died before the age of thirty, the average of the rest being the age of fifty. Dr. Jastrow has demonstrated in some very elaborate statistics that men of thought live, on an average, three and a half years longer than men in the ordinary vocations of life, and nearly eight years longer than men of action, among whom are included the athletes. And it is noteworthy fact that women, who, until recent years, have taken no physical exercise at all, die of a more advanced age than men. But doubtless their superiority in regard to tenure of life will come to an end if they follow the advice Dr. Richardson, who, in a lecture before the Ladies' Sanitary Association, of London, is reported to have "declared it essential, as a matter of principle, that eight hours a day should be devoted to exercise." [Providence Journal.

Medical Skill Among the Ancients.

Centuries and centuries before Dr. Jenner the learned physicians of India and China understood the merits of vaccination and practiced it. In a treatise, the Esculapian of the east, explains the method they employed in his sacred book, "Sayeya Granthano." Drs. Jackson, Morton and Wells dispute as to which of them is entitled to the credit of having discovered anesthetics. In the "Odyssey" Homer describes accurately the effects of an anesthetic under a name from which we get our word "anesthesia," the original word signifying "without suffering." The French academy possesses a venerable Chinese work which describes a preparation of hemp called "ma yo," used 2,000 years ago to deaden pain.

Nor was the science of optics unknown to the ancient world. Alexander kept a copy of the Iliad inclosed in the skin of a nut; this could not have been written without the aid of a microscope. Mr. Layard found in a ruined temple at Nineveh what was confessed by Sir David Brewster to be "decidedly and designably a magnifying glass." The Emperor Shun, who reigned in Asia 2335 B. C., it is somewhere recorded, observed the heavens through a "sliding tube." One miles at a picture of the Emperor Nero at a theatre with an opera-glass, but what else was the gem through which he was wont to gaze at the gladiators from his seat in the amphitheatre. —[Chicago News.

A Congressman's Mistake.

A story about a certain Congressman who has interested himself much in naval affairs has been going the rounds of the war ships for some time. The naval Congressman was invited to dine at the officers' mess by one of the lieutenants. That evening in his honor they had a superb dinner. The table was covered with handsome service. There were many courses. There were several kinds of wine. The Congressman ate well and drank heartily. Toward the end of the dinner he so far forgot his manners as to say in a loud voice:

"I don't see what you fellows have got

to complain of. I wish Uncle Sam fed me as well as he feeds you."

The officers said nothing. They looked at their plates and smiled. After the dinner the lieutenant who had invited him told him that the Government had nothing to do with supplying food for the officers; that the dinner was of their own purchase, as were all their dinners and breakfasts and suppers. Naval officers get \$9 a month for food. This would not pay a week's board. So each set of officers club together and appoint one of their number to buy the supplies each month. They then divide up the bills, each paying his share out of his salary.—[New York Sun.

TATTOOING.

The Studio of an Artist Who Decorates the Human Cuticle.

In a little by street of a seaport town, writes a correspondent, I recently came across a modest little two-story dwelling, over the window of which was the strange device, "tattooing," on a projecting sign, composing two sides of a triangle. Within, the tattooer was awaiting customers. "Oh, yes, it is a regular business," he said; "it's all I've got to depend on for a living, at any rate."

The artist in tattooing, who is a man of the middle height, stoutly built, hairy as Esau, showed me various samples of his skill on his own limbs. Every available spot upon his arms and chest had been utilized; in fact, he was a walking catalogue of his own pictures. His bench was the window recess, a small space around it on the ground floor room being retained off for the purpose of his profession. In this small space—4 or 6 feet square—he exercises his art with only a dim light, finding his way through the small panes, in which are hung various pictures and designs.

On the window-bench lie the tools of his craft, and a large volume of designs from his pencil. Most of the designs are emblematic of Father Neptune and his crew, but the book abounds with others, among which the various predilections of his customers can scarcely fail to be noted. The designs are wrapped in the stars and stripes, and protected by the enormous eagle; arms and navel standing hand in hand; visions of ballet loveliness seen away from the footlights; the sailor tearfully taking his farewell of his lass; these, and items of a comic nature too, can be punctured into the skin at a charge varying according to the magnitude of the design and the amount of labor involved. The tools look, at first sight, like an artist's paint brushes, only much shorter. Instead of camel's hair the brush is made of fine needles, seven in a row in the largest and two in the finest. He has several in an ink-pallet and some pieces of India ink and bottles of vermilion. These constitute, with the designs, his stock in trade.

His business has not been brisk lately, he informed me. What kind of customers did he get? Oh, from all classes; but he relied chiefly on blue-jackets, and men of a similar station in life. Had done work for people in more exalted stations, but he never had tattooed ladies, but in their cases he had been restricted to tracing of initials on their fair wrists, or sometimes he worked on a bracelet. No, he did not know whether these were their own initials, but he rather guessed they were not. "Would you like to see how it's done?" expressed my preference to seeing it done by having it practiced on myself. I held his arm tight, so as to stretch the skin, while he, with his brush of needles, previously dipped in the Indian ink, rapidly traced a circle by pricking the skin.

"Oh no, there's not much of a sensation," he remarked; "the needles don't go far in." They went sufficiently far, however, to enable the brush to hang in the skin as he illustrated the mode of procedure. One of the larger emblematic pictures, occupying a space nearly half the size of a Harper's Weekly page, would have to be done on the victim's chest, and in addition to paying \$2.50 for the work the client would have to sit still for six hours while the artist was at work. He said he had learned the art at sea, where his services used to be in great requisition among his shipmates.—[Commercial Advertiser.

The Fourth Finger.

It is a generally known fact that the fourth or ring finger of the human hand is not on a par with the other fingers, it being the weakest, the least flexible, and the most rigid in action. Scientific men explain this feebleness by the theory that the lateral tendons joining the ring finger to the others composing the hand in a measure paralyze its movements. To the majority of people it matters little that one finger should be inferior to the rest in strength; as a scientific oddity, however, it is worthy of note; to the pianist the matter is of great importance, it is a source of considerable inconvenience. As art can in the present day remedy most defects which incommode us, a medical man has thought that something could be done to free the ring finger. He informs those interested in the matter that if they wish to have a strong, flexible fourth finger they have but to submit to a surgical operation, which consists in dividing the tendons of the hand. The operation, which is very simple, scarcely deserving of the name, has recently been performed on several New York, Boston and Brooklyn pianists.—[St. Louis Republic.

Food Supplies in Alaska.

In counting upon, and rather boasting of the abundant food supplies in Alaska, the Alaskan says: In winter the natural food supplies of the natives are herring oil, venison tallow, venison, halibut, dried salmon and dried sea-weed. A plug of sea-weed resembles a large plug of tobacco. It is a wholesome food, and is eaten either raw or stewed. Only one or two kinds of food are used at a meal. Natives are not accustomed to baking bread, and little bread is used. Pilot bread, purchased at the stores, takes its place. Springtime is the season of fish-eggs, an abundance of which are dried for winter use. June is the time for edible greens from the woods. Bushels of raspberries and salmon berries are gathered in the summer and the fall. A variety of wild berries grow in great profusion. Indications are that there will be a bountiful supply of salmon this season.

Why the Fourth of March.

Why was the 4th of March chosen as the day on which to inaugurate the President? The first Wednesday in January had been appointed by Congress for the choice of electors for President, the first Wednesday in February for the choice of a President by the electors, and the first Wednesday in March for the meeting of the new Congress and the inauguration of the President. The first Wednesday in March, 1789, happened to be the 4th of the month.—[Boston Cultivator.

FROZEN MUTTON.

Details of the Preparation of It at La Plata, Brazil.

A correspondent of the Journal de Geneve sends from La Plata a description of a visit which he paid to a manufactory at St. Nicholas, upon the Parana, for the preparation of frozen meat. After pointing out that the essential thing for a manufactory of this kind is to be able to place the congealed meat directly on board the steamer without coming even for a few minutes into contact with the sun, he says that the manufactory in question has a wharf upon the river bank, at which vessels of 2,500 tons burden can lie at anchor, so that the carcasses of the sheep are conveyed direct from the freezing chambers of the factory to those of the steamer. Several hundred sheep selected by competent buyers are brought each day to the manufactory in the slaughter house and are allowed to rest for a few hours so that they may be killed in good condition. They are slaughtered and dressed so rapidly that twenty men can easily dispose of 1,000 animals in the course of the day. The carcasses are hung up to dry in a large chamber for several hours and they are then taken to the first freezing chamber, whose carcasses which show the slightest sign of any wound or defect being put upon one side and sold at the market of the town.

The first freezing chamber is only about 10 degrees Fahrenheit, as it is not desirable to let the meat be frozen too suddenly upon the surface, but rather that the cold air should penetrate gradually inward. After being for a few hours in the first freezing chamber the carcasses are taken into the second, where the temperature is as low as 30 degrees below zero, remaining there for three days, at the end of which time they are completely congealed and are as hard as wood. They are then placed in coarse muslin bags to protect them from dirt and wait in the store house (the temperature of which is the same as that of the second freezing chamber and which will hold 30,000 carcasses) the steamer which is to convey them to England.

About three hundred thousand sheep were disposed of at St. Nicholas manufactory last year, and it is estimated that each carcass weighs upon an average forty-eight pounds, and as the sheep do not cost more than \$1 each, and the meat sells at eight cents a pound, there is a good margin for profit even after payment of freight (not quite two cents a pound) and other expenses, the more so as the Argentine pays a small premium. Moreover, nothing is wasted at St. Nicholas, for, while the fat is specially prepared for the market, the blood is used for manure, while the offal is sent to Buenos Ayres. Moreover, the engines burn comparatively little coal, not more than two and one-half tons a day, and this is a small economy in a country where coal costs \$80 a ton.

Manufacture of Postal Cards.

Improvements have been recently made in rotary cutting machines, which have materially increased the rapidity with which postal cards can be manufactured. The cards are printed on a sheet of paper in the process of cutting the latter is first passed through a rotary slitting machine, which produces strips containing ten cards each. As these strips leave the machine they drop upon a division platform, which collects them in ten separate packs. The capacity of this machine is such that the number of strips cut in ten hours will make three million of single cards. The sheets are laid on the broad table of the machine, one at a time, and pushed forward to the knives, which draw the strip in and deposit it on the opposite side of the machine upon the receiving platform. The machine is usually operated by man. The strips are laid against the guide plate before passing the cross cut rotaries two at a time. This feature of the operation requires special training on the part of the operator, who must be very expert from long experience. By the feeding of two strips at a time into the machine the output is almost doubled. It was at first denied that two pieces could be cut at every time, but a skilled operator was procured who not only demonstrated the procedure to be a success, but later instructed all the other operators how to perform the same feat. The sense of feeling in the hand becomes so trained that mistakes rarely, if ever, occur. In the factory which supplies the government, in a working day of nineteen hours, before passing the cross cut rotaries two at a time, this feature of the operation requires special training on the part of the operator, who must be very expert from long experience. By the feeding of two strips at a time into the machine the output is almost doubled. 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