

# Freeland Tribune

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The time seems to be not far distant when English will be the language of the people inhabiting the entire valley of the Nile.

Commissioner General Peck is likewise indulging a propensity for expansion. He has secured 22,000 square feet more for American exhibitors at the Paris Exposition.

The government of the state of Nuevo Leon, Mexico, has directed that the pupils in all the official schools shall be taught to write and perform all manual tasks as well with one hand as with the other.

It was a Chicago man who, having purchased a kaleidoscope, brought it back the next day and indignantly explained he had tried to play on the blamed thing for an hour, and had not been able to get a tune out of it.

The young couple who have just finished a journey around the world on bicycles, found that nineteenth century instruments of civilization and sixteenth century adventures in barbarism may go together. It must have been exasperating to wheel at top speed over abominable roads to escape missile-throwing Chinese. It is easy to dart away from crowds who throw stones, but bad roads are trying to the temper. It is impressive that the best road they found in all the world was the 690-mile road to Calcutta, built in the forgotten ages by the Delhi mogul. This is a valuable contribution to knowledge. The mogul and his dusky Macadam little dreamed what strange vehicles would spin over the great road centuries after.

The act requiring the navy department to build four more monitors was passed before the lessons of the war had shown the defects of this class, says the New York Commercial Advertiser. Since the craft must be built it is well that they be the best of their kind. Thus it is gratifying that the plans are to be changed, and the new monitors made much larger and better than the old. They are valuable only for harbor defense, but they can go to sea at a pinch, and can make a long voyage if they do not have to encounter rough weather ships on the way. However, the country is not likely to build any more, as we are not likely to have any more serious attacks on the coast. The Spanish war has shown that the place to defend our coasts is out at sea, wherever an enemy's fleet can be found.

The development of mines of ore and sulphur in Sicily has always been the cause of many strikes, on account of the low prices paid to the laborers. The government of Rome obtained recently from the Chambers a law guaranteeing financial support to sick or wounded and lame miners. The proprietors of the mines announced that they would decrease the wages of the workmen in a sufficient proportion to meet the extra expenses imposed upon them by the operation of the new law taxing property for the support of invalid laborers. The miners in the Province of Girgenti to the number of about a thousand have struck work, and, at last reports, the strike was still in progress; fortunately this time it was not accompanied by the violence and bloodshed which too often marked the labor troubles of Sicily.

That is a novel and an interesting experiment in rural postal delivery which the Postoffice Department has decided to try in Maryland. A traveling postoffice, in the form of a wagon drawn by horses, is to be driven over a route running through several small towns, making connection with a railroad at the end of its circuit. The driver acts as postmaster, collecting and delivering mail at boxes along the road and selling stamps and money orders. In the more thickly settled country districts of the East this extension of the free delivery system ought to prove a success.

## KISSING THE ROD.

Wh distant days of childish joy—  
Oh, days of childish pain,  
This sweet when Fancy I employ  
To win you back again.  
The school bell, with its charming call,  
The leafy laurel wreath,  
And, best and worst of all,  
The little willow switch.  
No wizard's wand was ever raised  
More potent or more grim  
Above some sprite, spellbound and dazed,  
Than that fitful, lingering limb.  
How my wild pranks and mood melt  
As I begin to twitch  
With saintly yearnings, as I felt  
The little willow switch!

What dreams of conquest and of glory  
Were swiftly made to flee  
As I was meditating o'er  
That kind, relentless knee.  
And felt, though I could not desert,  
The bannered beater which  
Was, line by line, imprinted by  
The little willow switch.

When the flashing sword extol  
And half the mightier power,  
And cheer the gun whose echoes roll  
Fierce o'er the paths of men,  
Let's not forget another source  
Of good results, so rich;  
That mighty civilizing force,  
The little willow switch!

## IN THE BALLOON CORPS.

INABLE to stand the new conditions, over twenty years ago, soon after France was forced to surrender Alsace and Lorraine to Germany, a good many people of those provinces came to England rather than swear allegiance to the Emperor William. Among them was an old soldier, who told me the following story in broken English that I will not attempt to transcribe.

"You are mistaken," said he, with some vexation. "I am not a German. Because I speak German, that does not make German my heart. It is all French. I'm an Alsatian. We Alsatians are more French than the French themselves, because from France we long had brotherhood and equality and freedom."

"In the great war I was in the French army. Did I fight in many battles? No, I did not fight at all. But for all that I was in six battles under fire, and sometimes in worse danger than the men who fought. In the balloon corps I was twice wounded."

"You think that was strange? You think there was no danger in the reconnaissance with balloons, eh? But if you saw how fast the Germans shelled our balloons as soon as they stopped in the air!"

"Stopped—how stopped? Why, stopped at the end of the rope. You don't suppose war balloons go loose, do you?"

"Well, if you saw how the Germans fired at them, and how they brought their long-range guns to bear on the ground where the end of the balloon rope was, then you would know whether there was danger for the men of the balloon corps."

"I do not speak of the officers that went up in our balloons to view the enemy's lines. Any one may understand the risks they ran, when rifle balls and shells were screaming to pierce the balloon and bring its car tumbling down. No, I speak more of the risks we privates had from the German fire on our standing ground.

"Could they see us? No; but they could see the balloons. They're not fools, the Germans. When they could see the balloon, they could quickly calculate about where its ropes touched the ground. Oh, that terrible German artillery! Skrei-i-i-i! I think I hear the shells shrieking again. Often we had to stay in one place for an hour, two, three hours, losing more by death and wounds than the same number of soldiers on outpost duty. But the most terrible of all was what happened to me at the end.

"It was toward the latter part of August, ten days after the traitor, Bazaine, had cooped us up in the fortification of Metz. The order came from my squad to go out far, far toward the German lines, send up our balloon, and get a look at what the enemy were doing.

"For ten minutes after we had sent up the balloon, there was no firing at it. There it floated a thousand feet high. It was pressed toward the German lines by the breeze, which seemed stronger above.

"I stood near the cylinder, or drum, from which we had let out nearly all the rope that held the balloon from rising and blowing away. This rope slanted toward the Germans as it went up.

"I had hold of this rope; my two hands were above my head grasping the rope. I was resting like this, when all of a sudden the German artillery opened fire.

"They had not calculated the balloon's position very perfectly, but they got ours well. First, five shells flew over the woods at the balloon. These were all timed to burst, as they did, almost together. But none of their fragments hit the balloon; they had burst too far behind and below it.

"While I was watching these explosions, a far bigger shell came curving over the wood, as if flung from a mortar. It fairly struck the windlass drum on which the rope was wound, burst the same moment, and seemed to kill or wound every member of the squad except me.

"Though I was not hit, I was half stunned by the concussion, and of course I should have been thrown to the ground if I had not held on by the rope. I did not know I was holding on, you understand. I was too much dazed to know what had happened or what I was doing. I knew I was alive, and that was about all. And I clung to rope as if it was to save me from drowning.

"When my full senses came back, I felt that my feet were off the ground. I looked down. The earth was a hundred feet below me. Next moment it seemed nearer, and I saw why. The balloon, carried swiftly by the wind, had already lifted me over the wood. It was drifting toward the German camp.

"All this occurred so quickly that I was more surprised than scared. Somehow, perhaps because I was lifted so easily, I had a sort of confidence that

I should be as easily set down. But where? How long could I keep my hold? The balloon might rise above the clouds, with me dangling a thousand feet below it till I must drop from exhaustion.

"I must have something on which my feet or legs could press. The sensation that they were weighing me down was hideous. I lifted one leg as if to clutch it round something firm. You know how a man will do that when he is holding on by his hand and beginning to lose his grip. It is an unconscious movement. Well, my leg touched the trailing rope—the rope which passed down in front of my body, and which followed slanting behind me, just as the rope above slanted up from me to the balloon.

"At touch of the rope I instinctively threw forward my legs, but failed to hold the rope between them. With that, a great shout came up from a brigade of our infantry over which I was passing. The soldiers, I suppose, had not quite understood the horror of my situation till they saw the movement of my legs.

the end of the war, and I came away to England as soon as I knew Alsace was no longer part of dear France."

## TUMBLING INTO WEALTH.

Charles A. Chapin Made Rich by a Present From His Creditors.

Charles A. Chapin was a merchant in a small way in a little village in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (where alone in Michigan is iron ore found). In course of time Mr. Chapin failed in business, and turned over all of his property to his creditors and was left penniless in his old age. At a meeting of his creditors in Detroit it was by one of them remarked that "Any way, Charley Chapin is an honest man, and I do not feel like turning him out on the world naked." Among the property turned over to these creditors was a quarter-section of timber land that, if cleared, rocky though it was, might be made to produce a living for the old man and his equally aged wife. This tender-hearted creditor proposed that they should deed back this land to Mr. Chapin. This was done, and in clearing up the land iron ore was discovered on it, and in course of time the discovery became the celebrated Chapin mine, of Crystal Falls, Iron County, Mich. Mr. Chapin leased the right to mine ore to a Milwaukee (Wis.) company, with a provision that not less than eighty thousand tons of ore should be taken out each year, and on that a royalty of fifty cents a ton was to be paid out to him. This royalty of not less than \$40,000 a year was duly paid to Mr. Chapin for many years, making him a very rich man, and he finally removed to Niles, Mich., where he doubtless still lives. During one of the periodical depressions that overtake the iron business Mr. Chapin reduced his royalty, and I believe it is now fixed at twenty-five cents a ton. The output of the mine has been enormous; some years it has been over eight hundred thousand tons, and last year and this year it has been over four hundred thousand tons, giving a royalty of over \$100,000 a year.

## GOOD ROADS NOTES.

### Practical Road Building.

The following practical suggestions, from the Municipal World, concisely explain the principles of road construction, dealing especially with the formation and care of gravel roads.

1. Every good road has two essential features: (a) A thoroughly dry foundation. (b) A smooth, hard, waterproof surface covering.

2. The foundation is the natural subsoil "the dirt road," which must be kept dry by good drainage.

3. The surface covering is generally a coating of gravel or broken stone, which should be put on the road in such a way that it will not, in wet weather, be churned up and mixed with the earth beneath. That is, it should form a distinct coating.

4. To accomplish this, (a) The gravel or stone should contain very little sand or clay—it should be clean. (b) The road must be crowned or rounded in the center so as to shed the water to the open drains. (c) Ruts must not be allowed to form, as they prevent water passing to the open drains. (d) The open drains must have a sufficient fall and free outlet, so that the water will not stand in them but will be carried away immediately. (e) Tile underdrains should be laid wherever the open drains are not sufficient and the ground has a moist or wet appearance, with a tendency to absorb the gravel and rut readily. By this means the foundation is made dry.

5. Do not leave the gravel or stone just as it drops from the wagon, but spread it so that travel will at once pass over and consolidate it before the fall rains.

6. Keep the road metal raked or scraped into the wheel or horse tracks until consolidated.

7. Grade and crown the road before putting on gravel or stone.

8. If a grading machine is available, grade the roads which you intend to gravel before the time of statute labor, and use the statute labor as far as possible in drawing gravel.

9. A fair crown for gravel roads on level ground is one inch of rise to each foot of width from the side to the center.

10. The roads on hills should have a greater crown than on level ground, otherwise the water will follow the wheel tracks and create deep ruts instead of passing to the side drains. One and one-half inches to the foot from the side to center will be sufficient.

11. Repair old gravel roads which have a hard center but too little crown and high, square shoulders, by cutting off the shoulders, turning the material outward and placing new gravel or stone in the center. Do not cover the old gravel foundation with the mixture of earth, sod and fine gravel of which the shoulders are composed. The shoulders can be most easily cut off by means of a grading machine.

12. A width of twenty-four feet between ditches will meet most conditions, with the central eight feet gravelled.

13. Wherever water stands on the roadway or by the roadside or wherever the ground remains moist or is swampy in spring and fall, better drainage is needed.

14. Look over the road under your charge after heavy rains and during spring freshets. The work of a few minutes in freeing drains from obstruction or diverting a current of water into a proper channel may become the work of days if neglected.

15. Surface water should be disposed of in small quantities; great accumulations are hard to handle and are destructive. Obtain outlets into natural watercourses as often as possible.

16. Instead of having deep, open ditches to underdrain the road and dry the foundation, use tile.

17. Give culverts a good fall and free outlet so that water will not freeze in them.

18. In taking gravel from the pit, see that precautions are taken to draw only clean material. Do not let the face of the pit be scraped down, mixing clay, sand and turf with good gravel. There is a tendency to draw dirty gravel, as it is easier to handle.

19. Gravel which retains a perpendicular face in the pit in the spring, and shows no trace of slipping, is generally fit for use on the road without treatment. Dirty gravel should be screened.

20. Plan and lay out the work before calling out the men.

21. When preparing plans keep the work of succeeding years in view.

22. Call out for each day only such a number of men and teams as can be properly directed.

23. In laying out the work, estimate on a full day's work from each man and see that it is performed. Specify the number of loads of gravel to constitute a day's work. Every wagon box should hold a quarter of a cord.

24. Make all returns clearly, showing who have done their work and who have not.

25. Make early arrangements for having on the ground when required, and in good repair, all implements and tools to be used in the performance of statute labor.

26. Do all work with a view to permanence and durability.

**Roads and Road Machinery.**  
The first thing to be observed in building country roads is to afford protection against water. A dirt or gravel road properly built and maintained can be made to shed water like a roof, and if the use of narrow tires and the wearing of ruts could be prevented, our country roads might be excellent. Water always runs down hill, and this should be taken advantage of in road building. If the road be properly crowned, that is, if its middle be properly raised above the sides, the rain and melting snow will naturally run off into the ditches. On the other hand, if the middle be worn down by travel, the water collecting there will soon form a puddle, and rain the road. In the same way, ruts formed by narrow tires afford a trough for the collection of water, and contribute to its destruction.

## STRAITS OF ENGLISH FARMERS.

Pitiful Struggles to Hold Estates Owned by Families For Generations.

Mr. Rider Haggard, in the course of his farming reminiscences in Longman's Magazine, says that few people except those who are more or less behind the scenes know the straits to which the English owners of land, and especially of entailed land, have been put of late years, at any rate in East Anglia.

"Even if they are totally unencumbered, most of such properties barely produce enough to pay outgoings and keep up 'the place' upon a very modest scale. And if they are encumbered, as is the case in eight out of ten of them, either with mortgages or with jointures and charges in favor of younger children executed on a scale of liberality dictated by prosperous times, then the position is bad indeed. In nearly every instance the history is the same—a long and pitiful struggle on the part of the sinking family, then at last foreclosure, ruin, and sale at any sacrifice. Who does not know cases of parishes where the properties has been held for centuries by a single family? But long as the day may be, at length it comes to an end, and the lands which they owned from father to son for so many generations, the home that their forefathers built and the woods that they planted, are put up to auction and sold for whatever they will fetch. Well, as it has been with them, so in the fullness of appointed time it shall be with those who supplant them, for against this ultimate fate the hoarding of money and the laying of field to field are no defence."

One of the later marvels of little things is the taking of pictures through the lens of an insect's eye. We are filled with astonishment, says Mr. F. W. Saxon, when we reflect that from a dragon fly's head we could obtain 25,000 perfect lenses, so minute that a million of them would not cover a square inch, and yet each be capable of yielding a recognizable photograph.

According to Messrs. Bone & Wilson, in a paper to the Chemical Society of London, acetylene gas, when exposed in sealed glass tubes to the sunlight, is gradually decomposed, and a faint brown deposit is observable at the end of two or three days. This deposit is being investigated, but it appears to be a dense hydro-carbon. Something useful may yet be made of this discovery.

The flashes of bluish-white light seen in the dark when pieces of sugar are rubbed together have been studied by Mr. John Burke, an English physicist. By rotating a loaf of sugar on a lathe against a hammer, he has obtained almost continuous luminosity, enabling him to observe and photograph the spectrum. The light appears to be a result of some change in the crystals, and not to be due to heating or a chemical action between sugar and air.

Water is contaminated by lead pipes, says Herr Lieberich, a German chemist, through the joint action of the oxygen of the air and carbonic acid, but this action is greatly retarded if the water contains bicarbonate of lime. This, however, does not entirely prevent the dissolving of lead. The quantity of lead taken up while the water is in active circulation is extremely small, but it is liable to become very noticeable in water that has stood in pipes all night, and to ensure complete freedom from lead it is recommended that carbonate of soda be used in quantity sufficient to fix the carbonic acid without rendering the water alkaline.

While progress in civilization has brought greater care of human life, there is yet a prodigious waste. Dr. A. Hill, Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, states that one-fourth of all the diseases that destroy life are absolutely preventable, and that if the practice of hygiene were only on a level with its theory the average longevity would be raised at once from fifty to sixty-five years. The greater number of diseases over which the individual has control are due to mistakes in eating and drinking. One purpose yet to attain is a more exact knowledge by every citizen of the causes and properties of preventable diseases, but it is hardly surprising that the knowledge is still so slight when even medical men hardly realized the contagious character of consumption twenty years ago, although one-third of the cows in England are tuberculous and half the milk sold distributes the bacillus of tuberculosis.

Young musk-rats are very gentle and playful, and may be handled without fear; they do not grow fierce with age if reared in captivity and accustomed to gentle treatment.—Harper's Round Table.

With Russia, the commercial Russia of the Baltic getting access to American markets through that sea and getting American exports in the same way, the volume of business, though not large, is steadily increasing. The imports amounting in 1892 to \$3,000,000. In 1894 they were \$1,600,000. In 1896 they were \$2,100,000. But while they have been declining, the exports of American goods to Russia, and especially since the adoption of the present tariff law, have been increasing and are now \$2,000,000 greater than they were six years ago. The chief importations into the United States from Russia, through the Baltic ports, are raw wool, goat skins and flax, of which Russia produces an abundance. From Russia, too, bristles to the extent of 200,000 pounds a year and some hemp and jute are imported.—New York Sun.

A novelty in the way of a horse hitching contest took place at Areola, Ill., recently, which had the effect of calling out almost the entire community to witness it. The unique contest was the outcome of a prize offered by Charles H. Hickman, a local harness dealer, to a woman who should hitch a harnessed horse to a buggy in the least time. There were six entries, and each woman went at the task with as much unconcern as the average hostler, and the time made in each case was remarkably fast, considering the space in which the women were compelled to work, the immenseness of taking up every inch of spare room. Miss Watson, a young woman from the country, won first in 2:30 flat, while Mrs. Alfred Donely was a close second, with a mark of 2:33.—Chicago Times-Herald.

The Kaiser's Chest Protectors.  
A Berlin newspaper says the orders of decoration borne by the Emperor of Germany are worth a little over \$200,000. His principal and most valued decorations are the insignia of the Black Eagle, the Order of St. John, of the Garter and of the Toison d'Or. In all he has over 200 crosses, stars, badges and other insignia. It is said that he takes them with him on all his journeys and voyages, his hunting expeditions excepted. The offer containing the decorations is in the constant care of an officer of the court, who accompanies the Kaiser everywhere. On returning to Berlin the offer is locked up with the crown jewels in the treasury.

A Chinese Bride's Custom.  
Chinese brides, when putting on their bridal garments on the eventful morning, stand in round, shallow baskets during their lengthy toilet. This is supposed to insure them placid and well-rounded lives in their new homes.

The Spanish Escorial.  
The Spanish Escorial is built in the shape of a gridiron, 640x580 feet. There are three large churches in the inclosure, one containing the tombs of most of the Spanish Kings and Queens.

### Costly Courtships.

There comes a time in the history of every knight of the barrow when his heart is softened and subdued by the power of the tender passion. He loses interest in sport, and no longer finds satisfaction in pummeling his "moke."

If his passion is of moderate dimensions it finds an outlet in "treating." He takes his adored one down the Whitechapel road and buys her sponge cake, ginger beer, apples, bananas, chocolate, milk scones, ice cream, and anything else she may have a fancy for.

When her appetite has gone and she can eat no more they turn to shooting galleries, Edison's phonograph and cocoanut shies, which exist permanently in this neighborhood, and conclude the evening by dropping in at a music hall.

But if his love is very deep these things are forgotten. Ginger beer and three shot a penny can no longer satisfy his cravings of his heart. Real love is by far a cheaper affair.

Under the influence of the grand passion "Arry and Arriet wander down dark turnings together, he with his arm twined lovingly around her neck, until they reach an open space whereupon some philanthropic society has planted garden seats. Here they sit very close together in one corner of the seat—there is another couple in the other corner—gazing silently at the stars until it is time to go home.

And provided no other and bigger coster comes along and demands the girl, accompanying his request with the threat of a "bash on the jaw," the marriage will be celebrated in a very short time. They don't believe in long engagements in the east end. He will propose and she accept, even though he is only eighteen years of age and rejoices in a salary of \$1 a week.—London Mail.

**Dangerous Probing.**  
She had concluded to take out a life insurance policy and appeared before the examining physician.

"What's your name?" he asked in his crisp business way, and she looked indignantly at she answered.

"Age?"

"I didn't come here to answer impertinent questions, sir. I came to be insured."

"But we must know your age in order to fix the rate."

"What rate?"

"The amount you must pay annually for being insured."

"Thirty-three, then," she snapped.

"You must be accurate or it will invalidate the policy."

"Forty; but I must say that I never heard such impudence."

"Weight?"

"I don't know, neither does any one else. Just as though that would make any difference."

"Married or single?"

"Single, thank heaven. Not but what I've had plenty of chum."

"Of course. Any insanity in your family?"

"Sir!" and she tried her best to congeal him with a look.

"I guess that you don't want to be insured."

"And you guessed it right the first time. I don't propose to be a family encyclopedia for you or any other gossip monger," and she flounced out with a vigor that made the doctor think that she was a pretty good subject after all.—Detroit Free Press.

**Objected to the Epitaphs.**  
A dispatch says that the city of Gratz, Bosnia, has confiscated all of the monuments erected in the public cemetery over the graves of the German soldiers killed in their encounter with the Bosnian military during the late racial strife. The only objection raised by the municipality is that the inscriptions on the monuments were in the German language.

