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SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

The Japanese in Formosa are discouraging the use of sun-dried bricks. During the typhoon of 1898 there were 1398 maa-brick houses totally destroyed within a radius of two miles, from the American consulate at Tamsui, while not more than one building made of kiln-burnt bricks suffered any damage.

Among recent novelties in electric lighting is an incandescent lamp having two independent filaments, one giving 16 and the other only one candle-power. The low power light is intended for burning in a sick room, or wherever a faint illumination is desired. The current is changed from one filament to the other by turning the lamp in a screw socket.

Recent reports from both French and English botanists say that the "tu chung" tree of China contains a valuable rubber or gutta-percha. The substance is believed to be a true caoutchouc, and it is thought that the tree will become of great commercial importance. This is mentioned as one of the good effects that will follow the "opening up" of the country.

Recent improvements in the processes of making wool out of turf fibres have resulted in the production of a soft material that can be spun as readily as lamb's wool. Besides, it has excellent absorbent qualities, and is capable of being bleached and colored for use in various textile industries. Much of it is now used at Dusseldorf, Germany, for manufacturing cloth, rugs, hats and other articles.

It is well known that many insects bear a close resemblance to leaves, twigs and other things, and there is no doubt that this is for their protection against, or their concealment from, their enemies. One of the most remarkable cases of this kind was recently made known to the Entomological Society of London. It is that of a spider that lives in the rocks near Cannes. A certain kind of moths inhabit the rocks also, and their cases are to be found all about. It was noticed that the spider, when at rest, looked exactly like one of the moth-cases.

A scientific problem of much interest will confront the engineers of the Transvaal gold mines when the war between the English and the Boers is over, and that is the depth to which shafts will be sunk in search of gold-bearing veins. Some of the shafts already opened will descend 4000 to 5000 feet, but it is thought by some of the engineers that a depth of 12,000 feet will be reached in other cases. The temperature at that depth will be about 100 degrees, the warmest, perhaps, at which men can work, but the suggestion has been made that a still greater depth may be found practicable if means be devised for cooling the air.

Consul Frederick W. Hossfeld thinks there is a splendid opportunity to increase the volume of sulphate of copper exported from the United States to Greece, where there is a big demand for it. It is estimated that from 7000 to 8000 tons are used annually by the currant growers. The wholesale currant trade of Greece is practically in the hands of banks and commercial syndicates, and they have arranged to import sulphate of copper in large quantities and to sell it to the farmers at cost, in order to encourage the growers to spray their vines. Nearly all the importations have so far been from Great Britain, but it is the opinion of the consul that the United States could easily secure a goodly portion of the trade. There is no tariff on the commodity.

There are five rivers in the world which drain over 1,000,000 square miles. They are the Amazon, La Plata, Obi, the Congo and the Mississippi.

Rev. Percy H. Gordon, of Burgzets-town, has accepted a call to the First Presbyterian church of Freedom.

The Eighty-fifth Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers, will have a reunion at Washington, Pa., November 12.

Copperhead snakes drove a party of Altona railroad men from their camp at Alexandria.

Seven foreigners at South Sharon were poisoned by eating toadstools for mushrooms.

THE OPTIMISM OF NATURE.
JAMES M'ARTHUR.
"Ah, what do lone waves say,
In their low surge on the beach?
We kiss the shore as we may,
And gladden as far as we reach;
And, bending low down, hangs many a spray,
The blessings we give to beseech."
"And, sweet flowers, we ask of you,
What returns for the storm's rude blast?
We drink of the sun and the dew,
When the crown and the terror are past;
We lift up our faces, cheerful and true,
And smile on the world to the last."
"Ye stars of the distant sky,
We ask why ye twinkle so bright,
Methinks I hear your reply,
Our home is a region of light;
We beam with a radiance pure, from on high,
To lessen the gloom of the night."
They hail us from every side,
And our vision of life expand;
Sweet voices!—they're near to abide,
Their missions could we understand.
As angels of good they're near us to guide,
With touch of a magical wand!
We may not dispel the cloud,
Nor the lightning's scathe avert;
With troubles we may be bowed,
Though ever upon the alert;
But why should our folly the soul enshroud,
Or fear from the right divert?
Fond nature, so kind and so true!
She treats us with never a slight;
She spangles the night with dew,
And wakes our affections with light;
Her blessings, her gifts, her rewards are not few,
In all and through all to requite.—Success.

THE WARDEN'S RECRUIT.
A TRUE STORY.
By John Dickinson Sherman.
IN Pekin, upholding the dignity of the Stars and Stripes, there is a young United States marine with an unusual history. The warden of a State penitentiary is willing to guarantee that the young marine will serve his country faithfully and well. William Simmons is not the marine's name, but so we may call him; and this is his story—the true story of the value of a kind word.

Simmons's boyhood was passed in the slum districts of the West Side of Chicago. His companions were ruffians and thieves, and in time he became the leader of a gang, and a bold and reckless criminal. His history during his young manhood is written in the blotchers of the West Side stations and in the records of the criminal court.

Two years ago a series of daring highway robberies raised an unusual outcry. Simmons was under suspicion, and thought it best to leave Chicago. He hung about a town in Indiana for several weeks. Then the safe of a storekeeper was blown open one night and several hundred dollars taken. A week or two later Simmons was caught at Fort Wayne in the very act of opening a safe. He was sentenced to the penitentiary for one year.

Simmons did not make a model convict. At first his sole thought was to break jail. After two weeks of planning he assaulted a guard with a file and made a desperate effort to escape, but was overpowered and punished by confinement in the dungeon. When, after a reasonable time, he was brought back to his cell, he was far from being subdued; he was as ugly as a caged wild beast, and refused to work. Back he went to the dungeon. In the meantime the warden had kept an observant eye on the young convict, had seen that he was intelligent, and resolved to appeal to his reason. After Simmons had been long enough in the dungeon to quiet down, the warden went to him and said:

"Now see here, young man, you are gaining nothing by acting like this. You are no fool, and you can reason the situation out for yourself. You've no chance at all along your present line. If you are ugly, you've got a bad year ahead of you. I've been watching you, and I believe you have some better traits than you have shown. Why not try the other tack? I want you to live up to the rules of the prison and behave yourself. It's a much easier proposition than the one you've mapped out. You turn over a new leaf and the guards will treat you well. What do you say?"

Simmons finally agreed to give the warden's plan a trial. Before long he became one of the model prisoners of the institution. He kept his temper, worked well, and was respectful and obedient. He attended to his own business strictly, and made no attempt to curry favor with the officials.

plead grief and hope to the warden's heart. The letter was from Chicago, and stated boldly:
"I fell in with the gang last night. This won't do. I am going to get out of here. Can't reform in Chicago.—William Simmons."
For the next two weeks the warden watched the Chicago newspapers anxiously. That two young fellows had been tempted he was sure; he dreaded lest he had fallen. His only hope was that Simmons had fled from temptation and had left Chicago. At the end of the fortnight a letter came in the familiar handwriting. The warden drew a long breath of relief to see that it was postmarked in Annapolis, Maryland, but he was not prepared for the news that it contained.

"I have enlisted in the United States marines. I may never be an officer, but I am going to try and be a good soldier. Yours, William Simmons."
The warden filed away the letter beside the other with a feeling of thankfulness. He knew that Uncle Sam keeps a close watch and a strong hand on his fighting men; moreover, the young fellow was out of the reach of his former Chicago associates. That was the last he expected to hear from William Simmons for some time; but in less than two weeks came a third letter, which the warden opened with the liveliest interest, for it was from San Francisco. It said:

"Got here to-day. Leave for China to-morrow. Coming through Nebraska a young woman at a station pinned a flower on my coat. You can't imagine how it affected me. Will write from the other side of the world.—William Simmons."
"God bless that young woman!" said the warden to himself. "She may be as homely as a hedgehog and as ignorant as a Sioux squaw, but she touched the right chord in his breast. The man who has the courage to fight for his country and can appreciate a flower from a woman's hand is on the right road. I believe in my soul the boy is safe for all time." And when the warden put the letter with the others there was a moisture in his eye that is unusual with officials of State penitentiaries.

True to his promise, Simmons wrote from the other side of the world—from Tien Tsin. The letter was a long time in coming, but it arrived at last. Like all the other, it was short and to the point. It read:
"I was on the firing-line yesterday and didn't run. We leave for Pekin in a day or two. Enclosed find \$25. Thanks, I'll never steal in Indiana or elsewhere. I'm cured. God bless you.—William Simmons."

The warden now reads with great interest all the army news from China and the East. If some day he should find among the list of dead the name of William Simmons, he would grieve sincerely. He is sure, at any rate, that he will never see that name disgraced, and he hopes that some day he may again grasp the hand of the man whom his own kind word saved from a criminal's end.—Youth's Companion.

The Passport in Russia.
The train slows down as it crosses the frontier, and creeps gently up to the platform of the first station on Russian soil. Furtively peeping out of the window, you behold a number of stalwart men uniformed in the Russian style, and wearing the peculiarly Russian top boots. The polite conductor comes to the compartment and bids you get the passport ready. After a few minutes of waiting, during which anxiety is not diminished, an officer in smart gray-blue uniform comes along, attended by a soldier with a wallet. He demands the precise document, and, noting its foreign origin, casts upon its possessor a keen, searching glance. Then he looks for the all-important visa or indorsement of the Russian official in the country of issue; and on finding it he passes coldly on without a word. All this is very formal and impressive; you feel as a prisoner feels when the chain of evidence is tightening round him; your thoughts wander back to the past, and you wonder whether any indiscretion of your insignificant youth may not now be brought up in testimony against you.

The utmost care is taken in the study and registration of these documents; every Russian must have his passport; every foreigner entering, or leaving the country must have it, too. Whether native or alien, you cannot move about the country without the document; when you arrive in a town it must be submitted to the local police; when you leave that town the police must indorse the passport with their sanction to the journey. The system gives the authorities the firmest hold over the people; and wise is the stranger who complies carefully with every part of the formality.—Chambers's Journal.

The Chinese Court at Si-an.
The Orientalist Lloyd gives some very curious particulars taken from native journals as to the life of the Chinese court at Si-an. Over the main entrance of the palace is a signboard with the words "Temporary Palace," and all the chambers of the palace are lighted by "European safety lamps and candles." The Emperor is dyspeptic and suffers from insomnia—the old curse of the tyrant—but the Emperor is stronger and enjoys better health than in Pekin. (An Irishman might add, "that is, if he's really alive and not only a substitute.") At first the court lived on ducks, poultry and fish, but now things are better there is an occasional swallow's nest or shark's fin. The Emperor likes Shan-tung cabbage, and eats little meat. "The Dowager Empress prefers pastry." This is an appalling picture, that of a sleepless and dyspeptic Messalina devouring pastry by the light of a patent petroleum lamp.—London Spectator.

NO MIRACLE IN MANNA.

An Edible Lichen that is Still Found in Parts of Asia and Africa.
"It is manna!" exclaimed the people of Israel as they gathered the food which seemed so miraculously to appear at their very feet in answer to their cry for sustenance, but though they ate and were satisfied, yet, we are told, they "wist not what it was."
And during the ages that have passed since its first appearance on that memorable dewy morning in the wilderness of sin, men have declared again and again that they "wist not what it was" that thus fed the Israelites in their need, though numberless conjectures have been made and discussions held on the matter.

The chief opinion which has sway for a long time was that manna was the sap of the tamarisk, but now authorities, seeing in the light of widening scientific knowledge, declare that manna was without doubt a certain lichen (Lecanora esculenta). This is borne out by the fact that well-authenticated rains of manna, absolutely believed by the inhabitants to be showers from heaven, have been reported at least six times during the past century by reliable travelers in the East, and the descriptions of the deposit given in precise present-day language leave no doubt upon the point.
If a piece of manna be examined under the microscope its peculiar compound structure can be clearly seen; there is a delicate network of interlacing fungal threads glistening in the light, while inclosed in their meshes are a number of round, bright green cells, each a tiny algal plant. Thus fungus and alga live together in most intimate connection.
It may be asked how fresh manna-lichens arise, seeing that it is difficult to imagine a frequent coincident meeting of a particular fungus and a particular green plant. But, granted the meeting has once taken place, the rapid reproduction is easy to understand.

At certain times in the year a yellowish dust appears in little green cups growing on the surface of the plants, and each of the grains of dust is a minute bundle containing a few of the green cells wrapped up together, so that wherever this dust may fall each grain can become a new manna-lichen.

There is, moreover, a second method of reproduction in which the fungus alone takes part and sends out tiny spores to take their chance in the wide world of finding a suitable host as their parent has done, but the details are complicated and at present involved in some obscurity.
Thus, then, Lecanora esculenta—manna—is in its very nature one of the most remarkable phenomena in the vegetable world. It is found over great tracts of southeast Asia, near Constantinople, in the Crimea, the deserts of Arabia, in the Sahara and the deserts of Algeria.

It is easy to pass it by unnoticed, for it is grayish yellow in color and grows on gray limestone rocks and fragments of rock in the form of a wrinkled crust, which seems to be a casual observer part of the very rock itself, and needs care to distinguish it.
Cut through, it is white like corn within, dry and powdery; it is, moreover, extremely light in weight. It is obvious that there is not much nourishment to be obtained from the bare face of the limestone rock—hence the sustenance of the two plants must be obtained from the atmosphere and the rain by the little green plant, which must thus work doubly hard to be able to pass on sufficient food for its partner's living, in addition to providing its own.
By degrees, as it grows older, it becomes loosened, or even detached from the rocks, and then, when the sudden whirlwinds and violent storms which affect many of these regions blow, the featherweight pieces of lichen crust are torn up and blown into the air at the mercy of the wind, and carried, it may be for immense distances.

The rains, too, that descend with such sudden vehemence, sweep it away into water channels, where it is borne along on the stream and deposited in hollows, and left there in heaps when the waters subside.
At times, too, a waterspout will gather it up, carry it along and ultimately deposit it in a place where—therto it had been practically unknown.—Sunday Magazine.

This Insect Carries a Gun.
There is a curious insect known to French scientists as the Bombardeur. It carries on its back two symmetrical organs which are in effect minute cannons. On being attacked one may just hear what sounds like a small explosion, and two tiny streams of liquid are squirted out very much after the manner of a boy's squirt gun. At the same time the insect is lost to view in a cloud of smoke, or, more properly speaking, a humid fog, which, being corrosive, is successful in holding at bay all the creature's enemies. Such is the composition of this liquid that it boils at eight degrees above zero, which accounts for the artificial cloud. This method of defense is also employed by certain mollusks, which, in order to cover a retreat, excrete a black liquid that completely hides them from view.

A Useful Invention.
The latest invention in the way of improving methods for printing newspapers is a machine that will set type by telegraph, although the operator may be a thousand miles away. Western newspapers, who say the inventor is a young Iowan, named Frank Pearce, assert that several telegraph companies are striving to secure the patent rights to the invention.

The revenue of European nations has multiplied fifty-three times since 1680.



Red snow is frequently seen in the Arctic and Alpine regions. Chemical experiments have led to the conclusion that the red color is due to the presence of a vegetable substance.

A resident of Vermont has a fish pond in his own house. He has about two feet of water in his cellar, so it is reported, and has placed some fish in it that he caught in the river, so that he does not have to go out of his house for fishing.

An historic mansion in Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, is about to be pulled down. It was built in Charles II.'s reign for the Earl of Lindsay from designs by Inigo Jones. Charles Dickens took one of the rooms as the scene of the assassination of Sir Leicester Dedlock in "Bleak House."

While digging for pier foundation for a bridge over the Wansbeck, at Sheepwash, Northumberland, England, the arch of a very old bridge was discovered twelve below the bed of the river. The old structure was strongly built and intact. Nobody knows when this bridge was built.

In Korea visiting cards measuring foot square are in vogue. The savages of Dahomey announce their visits to each other by sending in advance a wooden board, or the branch of a tree artistically carved. When the visit is paid, the "card" returns to the possession of its owner, who probably uses it for many years. The natives of Sumatra use for a visiting card a piece of wood about a foot long, decorated with a bunch of straw and a knife.

Birds are made to take their own pictures by the ingenious apparatus of Mr. O. G. Pike, an English photographer. A bit of fat is placed on an electrical wire which is so connected with a camera that, when the bait is removed, the camera shutter is released, giving an instantaneous exposure of the sensitive plate. An excellent portrait of the song thrush is among the interesting results that have been shown. The arrangement may be used with other timid creatures, and for getting pictures of nocturnal animals the electrical wire can be made to ignite a little magnesium as it releases the shutter, giving a strong light at the instant of exposure.

One of the Customs Inspectors.
At the "Cheshire Cheese," the famous restaurant in Fleet street, where Dr. Johnson and the other literary characters of his time used to do their loafing and take their meals, are several famous dishes, which are served daily to American tourists and other patrons. One of the delicacies for which the "Cheshire Cheese" is peculiar is a lark pie, which can be obtained nowhere else in London. A young Philadelphia gentleman who was over here not long ago took a decided fancy to the lark pie and arranged with the proprietor of the inn to send him one after he got home to be served at a birthday dinner. The pie was sent in good time and condition, but when it reached Philadelphia it did not look very appetizing. The customs inspectors of New York suspected that it was a new trick of the diamond smugglers and dug it all out. After examining the crust and the contents minutely they dumped it back into the pan and forwarded it to the consignee.—Chicago Record-Herald.

When Not to Volunteer.
"Always obey orders, but never volunteer," said General Fitzhugh Lee, recently, "is the rule with army officers, and it is a good one, as I know to my cost. In my early career I nearly lost my life by volunteering to round up a band of Indians in the Southwest when there was no occasion for my action at all. To make a long story short we met the Indians in a strongly entrenched position, and had all we could do to rout them out. In the midst of the fight, which was extremely lively while it lasted, an arrow passed clean through my body, and it was almost a miracle that it did not kill me. As it was I nearly died in the rough ride back to camp, and I had to stay in the hospital a long time. Since then I have found that a soldier can get all the fighting he wants by simply obeying orders.—Washington Star.

Surely a Gentleman.
In far-off years Sir Walter Scott visited the first Lord Plunkett, who was then Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and was taken to see the ruins of the Seven Churches of Glendalough, one of the sights of Ireland.
One of the most romantic spots is St. Kevin's Bed, a cave which requires a scramble over rocks to enter. Sir Walter, in spite of his lameness, penetrated the "shrine," an old peasant woman leading him a willing hand.
On the return, the Lord Chancellor asked her if she knew how great a man she had assisted, adding, "He is Sir Walter Scott, the illustrious poet."
"Begorra, your honor," the old woman replied, "he's no poet! He's a gentleman born an' bred—for hasn't he loft in me hand a piece of silver?"
Truly, there is more than one way of knowing a man by his works.

Killing Rats by Gas.
Some interesting experiments have taken place at the London docks to show the effect of a new system for the extermination of rats on board ships. The vessel is charged with sulphur-dioxide gas, which apparently has the effect of attracting the rats from their hiding-places, and as soon as they breathe the fumes they become suffocated. In the experiments on the steamer Gourkia several hundred rats were destroyed in a few minutes by means of the gas, which has no injurious effect upon the decorations of the saloon.—Tit-Bits.

How New York Has Grown.
The ancient game of bowls upon the green has been revived in England with some fashionable approval. Our Dutch forefathers in the time of Peter Stuyvesant flocked to the Bowling Green to divert themselves with that fine old Holland pastime. But if our honored Dutchmen of to-day sought a green for bowling they would be compelled to cross Spuyten Duyvil Creek or to pass by Hell Gate in order to find a suitable field for that ancient pastime.—New York Tribune.

SIGN AND POSTER EVIL.

Adequate Restrictive Legislation Should Be Introduced.

The abuse of advertising by signs and posters has raised up in England a Society for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising, the work of which is interestingly described in to-day's Tribune. In a word, the society found that the system, which works so admirably in France, of imposing a stamp tax on all posted advertisements, was impracticable in England. Instead of this, it worked to secure a general law, which gave the local authorities full powers to regulate, restrict, or prohibit advertising that challenges attention in a public way. Many towns immediately adopted restrictive legislation. Dover has taken the lead, requiring a license for all advertisements which are not contained within a window, and for all vehicles chiefly used for advertising purposes, while absolutely forbidding all sky signs. London, Glasgow, Manchester, and many of the smaller towns have passed regulations covering various abuses, such as transparencies, electric flash signs, and sky signs, and regulating the size of the letters permissible in a poster. Everywhere a praiseworthy public spirit has been shown in this matter, and it may reasonably be hoped that England will eventually be as free from this distasteful as, say, France or Belgium. What has been accomplished in England is certainly possible here, where, in fact, reform should be easier; for we have a more strongly pronounced collective sense, and a less exaggerated idea of individual rights. The English precedent should encourage those who are working to arouse public opinion in this matter. If adequate restrictive legislation can be introduced in one of our cities, the work will be half done. The busiest among us will appreciate the comfort of walking in the streets freed from the distracting signs which now, as the French say, jump at your eyes.—New York Post.

Explosions When Box Cars Collide.
"Did you ever hear a freight wreck?" said a railroad man the other evening.
"You mean did I ever see one, do you not?"
"No; I said 'hear' one, and your not understanding the question shows that you never have been within earshot of a collision between two trains of boxcars. I was at a little station on the Iron Mountain a few years ago, when a long file of empty cars rumbled past, rounded into a deep cut, and must have been half a mile away when we heard a frantic whistle from the engine, answered by another in a different key, and then there followed a series of explosions as if fifteen or twenty dynamite cartridges had been set off in succession. We knew that something horrible had happened, manned a handcar and started for the scene. We found the freights telescoped, several dead tramm and as fierce looking a wreck as ever happened. What caused the explosions, you ask? A man on one of the cabooses told me that as the engine on the down train struck the first empty boxcar it blew up like an empty candy bag popped by a boy, and then each succeeding car went off with the pop! pop! pop! we had heard away back at the station."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

A National Experiment Farm.
There are now fifty-four agricultural experiment stations scattered through the country and maintained by the States. Hitherto the general Government has had nothing of the kind on an extended scale. But a 500-acre model farm is now to be established by the Agricultural Department. It will occupy a part of the old Arlington estate, lying along the Potomac opposite Washington. The work of getting this big tract in shape for scientific cultivation is now going on. The object will be to demonstrate here the culture of every sort of useful plant that can be made to thrive in this climate. There will be a six-acre model home plot to illustrate what can be done to make rural home surroundings pleasant. While all the familiar fruits, vegetables, cereals, grasses, berries, etc., will be grown and studied, another object will be to introduce new species. A cranberry bog will be maintained, and an attempt made to cultivate the huckleberry, which has so far not been domesticated. With the facilities and resources at the command of the Agricultural Department this big experiment farm will be made an institution of the highest value to the American farmer.—The Pathfinder.