

LITTLE GOLD CHEESE.

Meal Product of Valuable Relics Turned Into Cakes.

Old Silverware and Odd Bits of Precious Metal Melted in Government Pits—Some Interesting Particulars.

For 32 years the same two men have been making the same kind of cheese in the same little old building on Wall Street.

Henry Doherty has handled gold and silver in the room of the United States assay office since 1849. He prepares it for Cyrus G. Brunner, who for 50 years has stood every day in his corner by the hydraulic press, squeezing gold and silver meal into the cheese, says the Washington Star.

Anybody can take gold and silver to the assay office in lots of not less than \$100 and have it melted or refined by paying a small charge. It is in the character of the wares thus brought for melting that the human interest of the office is found. Of \$100,000,000 of precious metal melted last year about \$7,000,000 was old silver. Owing to the fact that plated ware is accepted, the silver business made the greatest bulk. It consisted of old watch cases and abandoned plate. An odd feature is that often a so-called old family, forced to part with its venerable plate through un-ward circumstances, will have costly and artistic forms turned into mere ballion before it is offered on the market.

Where there is no special artistic value in the old plate, it is wise, from a business standpoint, to melt it before selling it. Dealers in old plate buy it for its bullion value only. They, being expert, can tell what its value is, and if they are not exactly honest, might get much the best of the bargain. But when it is melted in the assay office each bar is stamped with the exact weight and fineness, so that a child might take it to market and get its value.

Not old plate alone goes into the melting pots of Uncle Sam. Every year hundreds of sets of silverware that have never left the manufacturer's hands are melted up. These are wares that have been made in excess of the demand and have gone out of fashion, so that the best way to realize on them is to remelt them and reform them. Some manufacturers do this, melting themselves, but the government does it well and cheaply, so gets much of it to do.

In the smaller bits of gold and silver that come to the mint are rings, and surprising how many love tokens that their way there to be purified in flame. Toys, engagement rings, presentation badges and odd coins are mingled into a common mass in the furnace. Often articles of extreme value come to the furnaces in these odd lots, but even if the assay office employees recognize a treasure they may not save it without the consent of the owner.

The melting furnaces are run from eight o'clock to four daily. The fuel gas is aided by a blast. To melt silver it takes 1,300 degrees Fahrenheit; to melt gold, 2,500 degrees. This heat will turn the metal into liquid in 75 minutes. One furnace will run off 25,000 ounces of gold in a day, or 5,000 of silver. Molten silver looks like weak tea heavy with sugar sirup; gold like rare old Tokay. The ordinary mold is of the size of a building brick. It is of steel, the inner surface highly polished and smeared with sweet lard. As the rich flood falls into it the lard springs into flame and keeps on burning after the metal has come to rest, making a little wall of fire about it. Each mold when full will hold 200 ounces of silver or 300 of gold. The metal is left to stand in the molds but a moment, for the instant it is hard enough to stand alone it is turned out on a metal table. At first it is a deep red, then gradually cools and assumes its proper color. The weight and fineness are stamped before the bricks leave this table.

Now the gold and silver meal has been left behind in the bottoms of the respective pots and vats. Each metal is treated alike. It is collected from pot and vat with copper hose and put into tubs, where hot water is poured upon it while it is stirred with a wooden ladle. The washing process is kept up until the water that runs off is clean. Then it is put into large tubs and hot water is run over it with a hose. The water run off in this washing is carefully collected and strained ten times, so that no particle of precious metal escapes.

After the meal has been washed clean it goes to the 200-ton hydraulic press, where it is pressed into cheese a foot in diameter and three inches thick. This pressure is to dry it. As the mighty plunger descends on it water is forced out on all sides through minute slits. This water is strained through muslin ten times. The finished cheese is worth, in gold, \$22,000; in silver, \$300. It looks hard and dry, but it still contains so much water that if put into one of the super-heated furnaces the atoms of water would be converted into steam and explode. So the cheeses are lined up in a drying vat heated with steam and with hot steam pipes as shelves. There they are baked ten hours, after which they are ready for any use.

Gambling for a Pastor. A novel way of choosing a pastor was recently adopted by the Methodists at Groffdale, Pa. There were ten candidates and ten Bibles were placed on a table before them. In one was a slip of paper, and the candidate who chose this Bible became the pastor.

PRONE TO HAVE APOPLEXY.

Recent Evidence That Clergymen Are Peculiarly Subject to This Fatal Disease.

The number of sudden deaths occurring lately among ministers is worthy of passing note. Why this should be so is not easy to explain. Certainly none of the penalties pertaining to dissipation and high living that directly invite physical decay applies in their case, says the Chicago Chronicle.

It is true, most of them have hard work and comparatively poor pay, with the attendant overstrain and tire of the life struggle, but there seems to be no good reason why their orderly lives should not in a great measure counterbalance mental and bodily stress. Notwithstanding all this the clergymen wear out comparatively early.

For some reason not equally explainable with other brain workers, there appears with them a marked proclivity toward apoplexy. Perhaps this is in part due to continuous and exacting mental drudgery along necessarily limited lines. But this was hardly the case with the Brooklyn pastor who added to his other qualifications that of a well-merited reputation for outside scientific research. Death in his case, as is common in some forms of apoplexy, came to him with startling suddenness. While preparing to make a call and standing in his doorway, he merely "straightened up and then slowly sank to the floor." Evidently a blood vessel of large size in the substance of the brain gave way and killed him as instantly as the bullet from a rifle. The preliminary spasm thus explained itself. There was no warning. In fact, as is often noted in similar instances, the man had previously said that he felt unusually well.

BABOO ENGLISH.

Title Given to Ornate Language of Family Educated Natives of India.

Baboo English is the descriptive title given to the extremely ornate language in which many two-thirds educated natives of India express themselves. The magazines and newspapers of India are full of it. One periodical says of a certain lawyer's plea: "His childlike simplicity fascinated all, and was proof against the demoralizing influences of his honorable profession." The late G. W. Stevens gives an example of baboo English in his book, "In India." It is a feeble effort to express admiration for the speech of President Madan Mohan Malavaya at a native congress.

His speech is as mellifluous as his name. He has a sweet voice and is one of the most enthusiastically welcomed of men on the congress platform. Neither tall nor short, not stout but thin, not dark, dressed in pure white, with a white robe which goes round his shoulders and ends down below the knees, Mr. Madan Mohan stands like Eiffel's tower when he addresses his fellow congressmen. He stands slanting forward, admirably preserving his center of gravity. His speeches are full of pellucid and sparkling statements and his rolling and interminable sentences travel out of his mouth in quick succession, producing a thrilling impression on the audience. There is music in his voice; there is magic in his eye; and he is one of the sweet charmers of the congress company.

AN AMERICAN PEER.

Lord Fairfax Died in His Title and Lived and Died in America.

A couple of months ago brief mention was made of the death of Dr. Fairfax, a prominent citizen of Maryland. Few knew through information gleaned from the doctor that he belonged to one of the most distinguished families of England. No man ever bore his title with less ostentation, for neither he nor his elder brother, from whom he inherited the peerage, would ever take measures to have it confirmed. The settlement of the Fairfax family in the United States dates from the time of the sixth baron, although several members had previously come to reside here.

The late peer lived the life of a gentleman farmer in the south. The only title by which he was known was that of doctor, which he obtained as a graduate of the medical school of the University of Pennsylvania. When he was a lad he left Virginia and moved to the heights of Georgetown, where he received his first education. He graduated from Princeton, and later became a doctor of medicine and rejoined his mother at Washington. When the war of the rebellion began his family, as southern sympathizers, found matters so disagreeable for them that they moved to a point near Hellville, in Maryland. Thenceforth Dr. Fairfax, who had married the daughter of Col. Kirby, of the United States army, resided on the lands and modest fortune which descended to him.

Female Electorship Dodge. The Primrose Dames of England resorted to an artful dodge on behalf of the conservatives at the recent election. They flooded many constituencies with circulars that under the four years of Salisbury's administration there had been 33,336 more marriages than during the previous four years under the Liberal party. It is believed that the circulars had no inconsiderable effect on the campaign.

From London to Paris. There are five routes from London to Paris.

NEW VIEW OF MATRIMONY.

Official Opinions That It Is Woman's Proper and Particular Profession.

School boards and the post office department agree in holding that matrimony is woman's profession and vocation, and that when a woman marries she secures means of livelihood and has no right to engage in other pursuits to the exclusion of her own or of women who are not married.

In Norfolk, Va., a woman employed as a teacher, being aware of the rule excluding women having husbands to support them, married secretly, and when the fact was discovered she was forced to resign. But she decided that she would rather teach than be a wife, and she offered to obtain a divorce in order to retain her place. This remarkable offer was rejected by the school board, which may or may not have won thereby the gratitude of the gentleman who has the happiness to be the lady's husband, and she promptly employed counsel to sue the city for breach of contract.

In the case of a clerk in the Indianapolis post office, the Washington authorities have ruled that when a female employe gets married she must resign and leave the government service.

It remains to be seen whether the general adoption of such a rule will tend to discourage matrimony or diminish the fervor of woman's desire to do man's work in the world, observes the Philadelphia North American. Surely not all women could be induced by the prospect of a small salary to divorce their husbands or to remain spinsters all their lives.

NATURE KIND IN CALIFORNIA.

A Country Where the Farmer Is Not Subjected to the Rigors of Severe Weather.

The New England farmer must fortify himself in his stronghold against the seasons. He must be ready to adapt himself to a year that permits him to prosper only upon decidedly hard terms. But the Californian in the country has, during the drought, more leisure, unless, indeed, his ambition for wealth too much engrosses him, says the International Monthly. His horses are plenty and cheap. His fruit crops thrive easily. He is able to supply his table with fewer purchases with less commercial independence. His position is, therefore, less that of the free dweller in the summer cottage, who is, indeed, not at leisure, but can easily determine how he shall be busy. It is of little importance to him who his next neighbor is. At pleasure he can ride or drive to find his friends; can choose, like the southern planter of former days, his own range of hospitality; can devote himself, if a man of cultivation, to reading during a good many hours at his own choice, or, if a man of sport, can find during a great part of the year easy opportunities for hunting or for camping both by himself and for the young people of his family.

In the dry season he knows beforehand what engagements can be made without regard to the state of the weather, since the state of the weather is predetermined.

OSTRICH PLUMES SCARCE.

There Is a Great Decrease in the Supply Caused by the South African War.

The London papers note that the supply of ostrich plumes in that city, the center of the trade, has been greatly curtailed by the South African war. It is said that there will be a deficiency of nearly \$270,000 worth of feathers at the next sale in Mincing lane. To these sales, which take place six times a year, buyers come from every part of the continent, and even from America. Over \$4,000,000 worth of feathers are sold every year, making an average of \$675,000 at each sale. Since the capture of the Khartoum there has been a steady supply of ostrich feathers from Barbary and, though the South African feathers still command the higher price, their supremacy is threatened by the Barbary feathers. At Mincing lane the cost of the feathers ranges from \$7.50 to \$75 or \$80 per pound weight. The best wing feathers give about 110 to 120 to the pound, and at the highest price this works out at less than 75 cents each. As many of the white feathers scarcely need cleaning, and as dyeing and curling are very expensive, either the middleman or the milliner must reap handsome profits from the fashionable weakness for these beautiful feathers. The smaller feathers from the tail and body of the bird are used for boas.

We Spring from Mud. A good deal of pleasure appears to have been elicited by the proofs which a German professor has made public to show that they are not descended from apes, says London Truth. It would seem that the apes branched off from the direct line of descent about the time that we did, and that they are, consequently, our cousins a good many times removed and not our remote grandfathers. Personally it is a matter of perfect indifference to me whether I descend from an ape or whether the ape is only my cousin. During the period that covers the life of a planet, or, I suppose, brief period when the heat and the humidity produce vegetation, and the outcome of vegetation is animal life, if, indeed, there is any clear line of demarcation between animal and vegetable life. We and the apes alike descend from protoplasmic mud, one of the most recent discoveries being that all molecules are a self-contained electric battery.

WED ON A SINKING VESSEL.

Two Courageous Emigrants Flighted Their Vows in the Face of Death.

Perhaps the most impressive marriage ceremony ever performed was solemnized while death stalked leering by on the deck of the sinking emigrant steamer St. Levant. The vessel was bound to Australia, with 300 emigrants on board and a heavy cargo. During a violent hurricane in the Indian ocean the cargo shifted, throwing the vessel over on her beam ends and leaving her entirely helpless. A panic ensued and before the ship's officers could quell it 30 of the passengers had leaped over the side in their terror. For days the ship drifted, swept by the seas, and life was lost daily. Finally it was decided to give the steamer one more day and then take to the boats, as the St. Levant was sinking slowly. Then two of the passengers—a young man and a young woman, who had become engaged on the voyage—hunted up the chaplain and demanded to be married.

The chaplain declined at first, saying they had much better spend their time getting ready for the death that seemed certain. The pair had no notion of looking at the gloomy side and said they would rather die as man and wife if it was inevitable. Eventually the clergyman married them before two witnesses, with a sinking ship instead of a church, and the cries of terrified passengers as a chorus. The boats were resorted to two hours later and all were taken off. Of the 330 souls on board only the newly married couple and six other people, in the smallest boat, ever saw land again. They reached the Isle of Socotra after 12 days at sea.

GREAT SHELL COLLECTION.

One in San Francisco That the Owner Spent Sixty Years in Gathering.

There is probably no finer collection of shells in the world than one in this city, owned by Prof. Conradus de Lange. Agents of the Smithsonian institution, who have seen it here and added that it excelled in many features, especially in the rarity of its specimens, the one in the possession of that famous museum. Every sea and land in the world has given from its treasure to the collection, and it has taken De Lange nearly 60 years to get it together. The professor says, and eminent authorities sustain him, that he does not believe there is another lot of conchological aperula—that is, shells with their doors—in existence, says the San Francisco Bulletin.

Shortly before the demise of the late Senator Stanford he entered into negotiations with the professor to purchase the collection, but the former's last illness came and they were abandoned. De Lange is getting old and he feels that the time has come to give the world the benefit of his three-score years of research. It was with this idea that he took up the study of conchology and started a collection in his Norwegian home when not more than a boy. He is now 81 years of age and believes that among other important things of civilization man first got his idea of architecture and color from shells.

VLADIVOSTOK IN WINTER.

Ice-Breakers Employed to Prevent Interruption of Traffic at Russia's Port.

Vladivostok is no longer the ice-closed port in winter it formerly was, for the resources of modern shipbuilding have been called in and powerful ice-breakers keep it open the whole year round, so that now there is no interruption of traffic at any season and passenger steamers come at regular intervals all the winter, therefore reasons for obtaining Port Arthur no longer exist, says a Russian correspondent. Still, the climate is not good in winter, and, naturally, the officers of the men-of-war prefer to winter in Port Arthur or Nagasaki, although in summer time the bright side of life in Vladivostok is quite as attractive as in the southern ports.

The place has been strongly fortified, but strangers are strictly prevented from visiting the fortifications, which are to be seen on all the hilltops. Magazines, masked batteries and other means of offense and defense have been provided, and they are connected by an electric tramway, and by telephone and telegraph, so that in case of attack communication with the various points can be rapidly established. The number of soldiers stationed at Vladivostok has been greatly increased, and probably it would be a more difficult place to capture than Port Arthur.

New York Has a Malay Colony.

We have a small number of Malays and Lascars in the sailors' boarding-house district, which is situated near the East and North rivers, downtown, says the New York Post. The Malays are chiefly Manila men, although many come from Batavia, Samarang and Singapore. The Lascars are from India. They are all so dark as to be taken easily for negroes, but their features are Caucasian and their hair is straight, stiff and wiry. They are peaceable and orderly up to a certain point, and then they lose all self-control and generally resort to the knife. The number varies from 50 to 400 and 500. They are inveterate smokers, and many of them use opium as well as tobacco.

Weather Instincts of Ants.

Ants are credited with an instinct for the weather of a whole season. When they are observed at midsummer enlarging and building up their dwellings it is said to be a sign of an early and cold winter.

WHEN JAMES A. WAS KING.

Salaries That Have Grown and Berths That Have Vanished Since His Death.

The new volume of the historical manuscripts commission, relating to the manuscripts of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, contains some interesting tables of the salaries paid to public officials about 1607-08.

The lord treasurer of England took a salary of £345, with £15 extra for livery; the chancellor of the exchequer, £250, and £12 for livery. Now the first lord of the treasury gets £5,000 and the chancellor £5,000. The lord chancellor of England had a very fat berth, embracing a fee of 23s. a day, £200 for attendance in the star chamber, £300 annuity, £41 for clothes, two tons of wine, and an odd £72 from somewhere or other. The lord chief justice took £248.

At that time there were various interesting low offices that have now, unfortunately, quite disappeared, such as clerk of the hamper, the protonotary, the chaffer of wax, the erler and the joiners of the tales, says the London Daily Mail. The latter office must have been extremely underpaid at £20 a year. The lord admiral received £133 as pay and £200 for food. The "clerk of the storeroom at Dettford strand" received £32 13s. 4d. a year and was allowed one clerk at 1s. a day. The royal "surgeons" got £30 apiece, "phlebotomists" £100 apiece and apothecaries £2 13s. 4d. apiece.

There were also full staffs of officials for pantry, buttery, larder, kitchen, scullery, beds, bakehouse, spicery, confectionery, pastry, pitch-erhouse, chaundry, laundry, cellar, wafery and woodyard.

BRITONS AFRAID OF RIVALS.

Favors and Trade Not Coming Their Way So Rapidly as in the Past.

The British people are desperately anxious to see the America cup back again in the old country, but they would prefer even more to know that the fastest mail steamer on the Atlantic had her home in the docks of the Mersey, says a London newspaper. Competition is becoming remorseless; the days of monopoly are receding swiftly into the past. Not many years ago such an angry outcry as that which was raised at the statement that great engineering contracts in connection with the railways of South Africa had been placed in the United States would have been impossible. British iron and steel makers would have laughed incredulously at the suggestion that their American rivals could produce work more cheaply and more quickly than themselves. There is no such laughter to-day.

The British public have not forgotten that it is an American bridge which crosses the Albara and that it was placed there by American engineers, because no British firm could guarantee its completion within six months of the time specified on the other side of the Atlantic. Whatever the reasons were, the fact remains—a standing reminder that the race is to the swift. When the huge contracts for South Africa come to be placed, will it be found that any of the leeway has been made up?

FURS FOR DOLLS.

They Are Made in Considerable Variety and Most Commonly Sold in Cities.

This is the season when its owner looks out to see that dolly shall be carefully protected against the cold when taken out for an airing. So the dolls' furs are brought into use; or, if the doll has none, some are bought for it. These may be found in considerable variety of style, material and price. Doll's furs include muffs, and collarettes and boas. All these things are made in various sizes and then are commonly sold in sets. As to material, the collar is made of a fur in imitation of ermine and of seal skin, such furs being lined with silk or with satin, in one color and another, and muffs and collarettes finished just as those for grown-up people would be.

Doll's furs, according to the material of which they are made and the style of finish, sell at from 50 cents, or perhaps less, a set, up to three dollars. They are, of course, sold only in the colder parts of the country, where furs would ordinarily be worn. And while there are some articles of dolls' equipment that, like the dolls themselves, are sold in city and country alike, dolls' furs are sold chiefly in cities.

Age of Responsibility.

In England the law looks upon everyone over the age of seven as a responsible being, and every child beyond that age can be prosecuted as a criminal. The same age is accepted in Russia and Portugal. In France and Belgium the age is eight, in Italy and Spain it is nine. Norway, Greece, Austria, Denmark and Holland decline to prosecute a child under ten, and this is the rule also in some of the Swiss cantons. In Germany the limit of responsibility is fixed at 12.

Won by a Chinaman.

The Sons of the American Revolution in Hawaii recently offered a prize for the best oration, written and delivered in English, upon a specified historic theme. The competition was open to every boy in the islands. Was it the son of a son, a native Hawaiian, a clever Japanese, a Portuguese of ancient lineage who, at that cosmopolitan crossroads of the Pacific, won the coveted prize? No, it was a full-blooded son of that China which is now the political problem of the world.

VENETIAN IRON WARE.

Five-Tenths of It Now Manufactured in New York—A Growing Fad.

At first sight there does not seem much relation between the gloom and grime of Pittsburgh and the artistic screens and house lanterns of today, but the connection came when the Pennsylvania forges succeeded in producing ductile iron and soft steel in any shape at very cheap prices. Before that time, says the New York Post, all the specimens of that beautiful school of art known as Venetian iron work were imported from Italy, Paris and Sheffield, but to-day nine-tenths of it is made in the United States, and a very goodly portion right here in the city. You can buy the iron and steel in any quantity, ready for use. If your tastes run towards small objects, you can get ribbons and wires delicate enough for a doll's house, and, on the other hand, you can secure rods and shafts thick and strong enough to make the gates of a safe-deposit company.

A few simple tools are all that are required for the work, and for those who have little or no originality hundreds and even thousands of designs are neatly printed upon sheets of paper for both student and artisan. The work is a fad with many people, who turn out products of commendable beauty and utility. Hall lanterns, chaffing dish frames, picture holders, lamp stands, chandeliers, electroliers, gas brackets and transom screens are the favorite objects. Beyond these are hundreds which find a ready sale in the market or constitute highly appreciated presents at the holiday season.

ONCE A CHORISTER.

England's Lord Chief Justice Formerly Sang in a Parish Church Choir.

When Lord Alverstone, the recently appointed lord chief justice of England, was Sir Richard Webster, attorney general and tory member for the Isle of Wight, he used to sing pretty regularly in the supplied choir of Kensington parish church. One of his constituents, who did not know him by sight, thought he would like to see his member in this uncommon position for a great lawyer. So, when next in London, he attended morning service one Sunday and asked a verger which of the choir was Sir Richard Webster. "Well," replied the official, "that's the vicar, those are the curates and I'm the verger, and so long as the choir gives satisfaction it is not my business to inquire into the antecedents of any of them, man or boy."

On one occasion, at a semipolitical meeting Sir Richard, who is reasonably proud of his good tenor voice, offered to sing to the audience at the conclusion of the evening. His solo—a sacred one—was heard with even more attention than his speech. When he had finished a gaunt spinster arose from the audience and said: "With your face and your voice, Sir Richard, you ought to be teaching gospel truth to the poor heathens instead of telling honest folks how to be polemical." She probably meant to say political. But this weird Mrs. Malaprop, so the story goes, effectually prevented the great lawyer from accepting the encore which the rest of his audience demanded.

HUNTERS TURNING TO BEARS.

The Pursuit of Beasts Has Become More Exciting Than That of the Deer.

It is thought that the Maine legislature will this winter repeal all laws providing for the payment of bounty on wild animals killed in the state. The experience with bears in particular has demonstrated that the bounty laws, while a burden on the taxpayers, do not always cause an increase in the number of predatory animals killed, reports the New York Sun.

Up to two years ago Maine paid a bounty of \$5 each on bears, and when it was proposed to repeal the law it was argued that without the bounty as an incentive to hunters to kill off the bears no sheep could be raised in many parts of the state. The bounty was repealed and experience has shown that more bears have been shot since that time than ever before, while no more sheep have been killed by bears than when the bounty was in force.

Sportsmen from the large cities are becoming tired of shooting deer, which is rather a tame sport anyway, and as only one man in ten can get a moose, many are turning their attention to bears as being not only nobler but also more valuable game than deer. The skin of a good bear is worth taking home, while a deer skin is worth very little, and the meat of the bear is also good, according to many tastes. Formerly few bears were taken through Bangor by sportsmen on their way home, but this season the shipments average ten a week.

Massachusetts Centenarians. Twenty-one persons died in Massachusetts last year aged 100 years or more. Sixteen of the 21 were women, three of the 16 never having been married. Eight of the 21 were born in Ireland, three in Canada and three in other foreign countries—leaving seven native-born, six of whom were of Massachusetts nativity. The oldest was two months over 106 years.

Light from Microbes. Microbe light is the latest Paris invention. A French chemist, Inghel Duhobis, has found a way of nourishing phosphorescent animals in glass vessels, which soon emit a light about as bright as the moon. He expects to increase its intensity and believes that its being entirely free from heat will give it a scientific value.