

PAPIER-MACHE ARMOR.

How It Is Displacing Steel at the Present Time—Ancestral Mail at Small Cost.

This is an age of imitation and utopia. The chrome and the chromo-photograph are elbowing the oil painting aside, and now papier-mache is beginning to displace steel, iron and bronze for making the armor which is supposed to have been worn by the dead but accepted sovereigns of literature.

The new goods are warranted not to break easily or to cut any unfortunate guest upon whom they happen to fall. Arranged in the hall or upon the wall of the salon, they are guaranteed to deceive the best critics, and to give all the satisfaction of the genuine suit of mail worn at Poitiers or Crecy.

THE BLATTA ORIENTALIS.

A Monster Cockroach from the Tropics Which Has Found Its Way to England.

The blatta orientalis is about three times as large as an English "black-beetle," and is well known to sailors in the tropics as one of the many pests of ships. This tropical or eastern cockroach has been transported to the "zoo," the eggs being carried there in packing cases containing reptiles and beasts from warm countries, and has found a congenial climate in the reptile-house.

THEY WEAR KNEE-BREECHES.

Ex-Secretary Foster Gives Amusing Incidents of Some of Our Representatives Abroad.

Hon. John W. Foster, former secretary of state, and one of the most widely experienced of American diplomats, tells in the Saturday Evening Post interesting and amusing instances of "American Diplomats and Court Costumes." The ladies will be interested in knowing that in diplomacy extreme consideration is given to the kind of clothes which the representatives wear.

Lawless New Mexico. A good deal of lawlessness is prevalent in New Mexico. In many of the towns the faro, roulette and other gambling houses are wide open, and the authorities seem to regard them as matters of necessity.

Valuable Property in Hawaii. Some of the finest sugar mills in the world, costing \$1,000,000 each, are found in Hawaii, and there are plantations in the islands who produce \$400 worth of sugar and \$500 worth of rice to the acre.

A NIGHT IN A MINING CAMP.

Story of a Tragedy in Which Two Men Were Killed and One Injured.

One night, says the author of a curiously interesting article in Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly, things came to a climax. Marshal McInness was at Sitka; his substitute, Rowan, was sitting in an all-night lunch room, when a man with blood running down his face staggered in the place. He shouted for some one to give him a "gun," and Rowan, who was a square man, explaining that he was acting marshal, asked him what his trouble was.

A RUSH FOR AUTOS.

Manufacture and Sales Have Increased Over a Hundred Per Cent. During Past Year.

The year in automobiles has been a good one, but even with its increase of about 100 per cent. in the manufacture, the business was not entirely gratifying to manufacturers. At the outset the makers looked for tremendous sales, but with the unsettled condition in business, generally due to declining values, many purchasers held back.

RILEY AND THE VIOLIN.

Why the Well-Known Hoosier Poet Has a Weakness for the Instrument.

It has been noticed that at all the entertainments given by James Whitcomb Riley there is always a violin solo on the programme. There is never an exception to the rule. His manager says the custom is followed out of deference to Riley, although it is not known that he ever requested such a favor.

New Competitor for Wheat Trade.

The far northwest has entered into competition with the Mississippi valley for the wheat trade of the world. A British steamer has loaded wheat at Tacoma for Liverpool via the Suez canal. The Cape Horn route is shorter, but is less desirable because of the cost of and difficulty in procuring coal.

A LONE MONARCH.

Solitary Buffalo Bull Joins Herds of Cattle.

Western Ranchmen Surprised by the Appearance of the Sole Remnant of a Once Numerous Species.

An immense buffalo bull lately put in an appearance among the cattle owned by the Sioux Indians and ranged near the Standing Rock reservation, 60 miles south of this city, says a Bismarck (N. D.) special to the St. Louis Republic. The animal came unheralded, whence nobody knows. For years it has been supposed that every bison was extinct in this state, and the last time any were seen in the state was in the middle eighties, when Gov. Roosevelt, hunting along the Little Missouri river, killed one at a crossing of the river.

The presence of this lone monarch of the prairies recalls the time when the bison ranged the vast prairies in the western part of the state by thousands, if not millions, when every watering hole was a gathering place for them and the hills and valleys were worn deep with trails along which the animals went from feeding ground to watering places.

In the early days of steamboating along the Missouri river, passengers were frequently treated to an unusual sight in the fording of the river, by bands of thousands of these animals. On one occasion a boat plying up the stream was forced to stop for 48 hours while the immense moving mass of bison plunged into the stream, swam through its muddy waters and emerged on the other side.

Then came the buffalo hunters. In the early days of Bismarck, hundreds of hunters armed themselves and sought the feeding grounds of these animals. Thousands upon thousands of them were killed for the hides, the carcasses being left to rot on the prairies. No precautions were taken at that time against their extinction, and the result was that in a few years there was not a bison remaining.

Buffalo coats and robes that were worth a few dollars 20 years ago in the west now command fancy prices. Good robes are impossible to obtain at any price, and coats are eagerly sought after. The government still has a few rough coats in store that are issued to the soldiers in the far west. Buffalo heads that were sold for little or nothing 15 and 20 years ago, now bring as high as \$500 when mounted, and are difficult to obtain at that price.

THE LONDON 'BUS.

Structure and Cost of the Popular Vehicle and How It is Operated.

A 'bus weighs 3,200 pounds, and costs £145. It is made of ash and oak, except the paneling, which is mahogany, and the windows are of plate glass. Before a 'bus is allowed to earn its £2 10s a day it has to be licensed, or, as they say, "you have to get a number plate for it." This number plate is the white plate with black figures surrounded by a crown, seen at the tail of the 'bus.

Attached to each 'bus is a stud of 12 horses, of which only ten, or five pairs, are worked in any one day, thus insuring a complete day's rest for each pair every sixth day. As a 'bus runs 64 miles a day, and five pairs of horses are used, it follows that a 'bus horse's day's work is 13 miles, which he does in less—considerably less—than three hours—the rate at which he travels being between five and six miles an hour.

THE PRESIDENT'S DOUBLE.

Dr. Bugbee, of New York, Calls on the Occupant of the White House.

Dr. Luther Hazard Bugbee, of New York, the other day called upon President McKinley at the white house. The object of his visit was to show the president the striking resemblance between the two. For many years Dr. Bugbee has been mistaken for the president. This resemblance was noticed even while President McKinley was in congress. It at last became a matter of so much comment that Dr. Bugbee decided to visit President McKinley and acquaint him with the fact that he had a double.

"I wouldn't wear a silk hat in Washington for anything. I guess I look more like the president's photographs than like the president himself. I have been mistaken for the president many years, even while he was in congress. In 1896 I had to go to Chicago on business. It was just after the president had been nominated. Many people approached me and offered to vote for me. I took it all good naturedly for some time. Finally, a big policeman came up to me one day just as I was about ready to catch a street car. 'Mr. McKinley,' he said, in the most respectful manner, 'pardon me, but we are all going to vote for you.'"

WOMAN FASCINATED BY LION.

Canadian Girl Creates Sensation in Paris by Her Actions During Public Performance.

A Canadian woman calling herself Edith Sherson, who was formerly a London actress, has been a constant spectator for the last ten days at the Folies Bergeres, Paris, where a German animal trainer is exhibiting a troupe of lions.

When the lions appear in their iron cage the woman appears fascinated and she habitually stands near the cage of a particularly ferocious lion named Menelik, who seems to have captivated the woman. The other night the climax occurred. No usher was near and the trainer was occupied by the lions in another cage. Suddenly the woman sprang on to the stage, dashed to the cage where Menelik was growling and showing his teeth, and pressing her head against the railings, touched Menelik's head. The beast turned quickly and sprang open-mouthed against the bars. The audience was horrified, but the woman, unscathed and undismayed, knelt so as to stare the lion in the eye, and then stroked his head.

To everybody's amazement, the great beast slunk back to the farthest corner of his cage. The audience applauded wildly, but the tamer called an usher and had the woman escorted outside with the notification that she would not be admitted hereafter.

FINE MINERAL COLLECTION.

Splendid Gift Presented to the American Museum of Natural History.

What is probably the finest private collection of minerals in the world has just been presented to the American Museum of Natural History, at Seventy-ninth street and Columbus avenue by a citizen of New York. The collection is that of Clarence S. Bement, of Philadelphia. In addition to the minerals, the collection contains Mr. Bement's entire gathering of meteorites, valued alone at about \$50,000.

The specimens number about 14,000. The collection is noted not only for the number of specimens, but also for the individual perfection and elegance of the minerals. The collection represents the labor of 35 years.

The National Museum, it is stated, and other institutions have made endeavors to secure this collection, but the price placed upon it has been an obstacle to its purchase.

AUTOMATIC PARACHUTE.

Young Experimenter Sends Up Paper Balloon with Parachute Attached Which Cuts Itself Loose.

Harold M. Phelps Stokes, youngest son of Anson Phelps Stokes, of New York, is taking a great interest in balloons, and the other day he experimented with a balloon which was sent up from the back yard of the Stokes home. Several friends of young Mr. Stokes were on hand to see the experiment. The balloon used was 18 feet high and 8 feet in diameter and was made of paper. A parachute six feet in diameter was attached to the balloon, and this was arranged so that at the height of 3,000 feet it automatically cut itself loose and came down, carrying a light weight attached to it. The experiments were reported to be most successful.

Suggestion to a Prince.

The cable brings word that Prince Chowfa Maha Vajiravudh, of Siam, is traveling in Russia. If the prince is in a hurry, he might save a good deal of time, suggests the Chicago Times-Herald, by using a rubber stamp when he gets up against the hotel registers.

Taxes Church Property. California is the only state in the union that taxes church property.

Costly Engines. The engines of a first-class British man of war cost about £175,000.

SPEED ON THE OCEAN.

Designer of Torpedo Boats Predicts Revolution in Ocean Travel.

Convinced That Boats Can Be Built That Will Cross Atlantic in Six Days—His Torpedo Boat Destroyers.

Sixty miles an hour is the unprecedented speed expected of a new torpedo boat destroyer, plans for which have been submitted to the authorities at Washington. The designer is Oscar P. Ostergren, a noted Swedish inventor, who also designed the torpedo boat destroyer Bailey and the Eli, the fastest vessel ever constructed. The latter has speed of 42 knots an hour.

Mr. Ostergren said he was confident that he could build a boat that would make 60 knots, and probably more.

"I have just completed the plans for the construction of such a vessel," he said. "It may seem almost impossible, and I am convinced by practical tests which I have applied that I can readily attain such speed for my boat."

"This new boat will be cigar-shaped, long and narrow, so as to encounter the least possible resistance while passing through the water. Matters of displacement, bulk, etc., will also receive special attention. Nickel steel will be the principal material, both for the vessel proper and for the machinery.

"The machinery will consist of four quadruple expansion engines, fitted with specially designed appliances of my own invention. One remarkable feature will consist of finlike appliances fitted to the sides of the vessel. The object of these fins is to keep the boat on an even keel while attaining high speed.

"I am firmly convinced that boats built upon my plans will ultimately give the public the long-hoped-for trans-Atlantic steamships which will cross the ocean inside of three days."

GIFT OF DEAD INDIAN.

Groswome Relic Comes from Interior of Alaska to the Bureau of American Ethnology.

Maj. John W. Powell, director of the bureau of American ethnology, has just received the most unusual Christmas present of any person in the United States, if not in the world. It is nothing more or less than a dead Indian, and not a fresh dead Indian either. It is reported that he died some 70 years before being brought to civilization, which only happened about a week ago.

The gift is neatly put up in a birch-wood basket, not much bigger than a country pumpkin, and this basket in turn is secured in a seal-skin sack of the type used by the Alaska Indians. This unique present was obtained by an agent of the government who collects Indian relics for the department of ethnology, and was secured after great difficulty, as to come into the possession of a dead Indian is a great crime among the Indians.

The story accompanying the relic is as interesting as is the specimen. An Indian of one of the tribes of the interior of Alaska was taken into the confidence of the collector and was bribed to rob the ancient funeral bier for the sum of \$70. After getting both the money and the body the wily red man undertook not only to retain the relic but tell on the would-be owner unless more money was forthcoming. A woman's smile finally beguiled him into giving up the idea of turning himself into a walking morgue, and the prize was secured. As a safe transportation was not provided the agent, a woman, slept in her lonely miner's hut with the dead Indian under her bed for a period of three years.

This is said to be the only Indian relic of this kind in the great collection and is almost beyond money value.

REVIVED AFTER CENTURIES.

Lobster Discovered in a Stratum Antedating the Glacial Period.

A most remarkable story of suspended animation comes from Easton, where John H. K. Shannahan is boring wells for the Eastern Water company. From a depth of 112 feet a ball of clay was brought to the surface, which, when exposed to the sun, showed signs of life, and proved to be a live and somewhat ferocious lobster, its legs and claws gradually uncoiling. This curious live specimen is now in the Pennsylvania university museum, where it was sent by Col. Charles A. Chiple. Several sharks' teeth were dug up at the same time, and Mr. Shannahan has unearthed many strange things from the peninsula which is of alluvial formation.

While such men as Prof. W. K. Brooks, of Johns Hopkins, have hesitated as yet to express an opinion as to this discovery, the stratum in which it was found having been the sea floor before the glacial period, it is surmised that this lobster was caught napping with thousands of others when the glaciers swept down and deposited the bed of rock, which must now be drilled through to get artesian water. This having taken place 100,000 years ago, according to geologists, it would mean that the lobster has been practically dead all these years. It is possible that Mr. Shannahan may find other specimens.

Youth at a High Figure. Persons who remark on the way Sara Bernhardt holds her youth cease to wonder, says the Chicago Record, when they are asked to pay five dollars for a seat.

COMPELLED BY CONSCIENCE.

Employee of the Chicago Post Office Confesses to Having Been Guilty of Untruth.

"Only God and myself know it, and it has been preying on my mind and I feel that I should resign." A letter to the postmaster general in Washington from an employee in the Chicago post office brought both a resignation and a confession. The man's name is withheld, but the story is that recently he obtained a place under Postmaster Gordon. He passed the examination and obtained a high marking.

Among the questions he answered was one relating to previous service in the government. He said he had never been employed by the government before. Now he writes that this was an untruth and that he is conscience-stricken. Though, as he writes, only Providence, and himself know of the untruth, he could not obtain his place under false pretences. So he decided to resign.

It appears that this man was once in the revenue cutter service, but left his ship at Portland, Me., and did not return. Naturally he would keep the story of this desertion a secret, and when the question faced him in the recent postal examination he wrote down a false answer.

The entire incident is one of the most peculiar that has come under the attention of the postmaster general since he has been in office. The offense in itself is trivial, but inasmuch as the writer of the note appeared to be penitent and wished to confess, nothing remains to be done but to accept his resignation.

ONE CENT POSTAGE.

Postmaster Merritt at Washington Thinks Reduction of Letter Postage Still Remote.

"One-cent letter postage will come, but not for a few years," said Postmaster Merritt, of Washington. "For the last few years," he added, "the deficiency in postal receipts has gradually been growing less until the fiscal year just closed, when the deficiency was a little over \$5,000,000. The year before the deficiency was something over \$7,000,000. At this ratio of decrease the postal service ought to be self-sustaining in about three years, and when it becomes self-sustaining then, in my opinion, congress will give the people the one-cent letter postage."

"The postal service was self-sustaining when the reduction from three to two cents was made in letter postage. I look for a reduction in foreign postage from five cents to two cents before domestic postage is reduced to one cent. While I was third assistant postmaster general I recommended to the postmaster general that this reduction be made.

"A reduction in the foreign postage instead of impairing the revenues would, I believe, act as a stimulus, and the result would be an immense increase in our foreign mail. The cheaper postage would be taken advantage of by our business men, who would at once start in to build up a foreign mail order business. The reduction in the foreign postage rate, I think, will be a reality within the next year or two."

PUTS BLAME ON MOSQUITOES.

The United States Government Says They Transmit Yellow Fever.

The United States government has formally recognized the responsibility of the mosquito for the transmission of yellow fever and malarial diseases. This fact is indicated by the issuance of a general order by Maj. Gen. Wood at Havana, directed to his post commanders, reciting that the chief surgeon of the department of Cuba has reported that it is now well established that malaria, yellow fever and filarial infection are transmitted by the bites of mosquitoes. Therefore the troops are enjoined to observe carefully two precautions. First, they are to use mosquito bars in all barracks, hospitals and field service whenever practicable. Second, they are to destroy the "wigglers" or young mosquitoes by the use of petroleum on the waters where they breed. Permanent pools or puddles are to be filled up. To the others are to be applied one ounce of kerosene to each 15 square feet of water twice a month, which will destroy not only the young but the old mosquitoes.

PAYS OLD DEBTS.

Former New Yorker Rebuilds His Fortune in South America and Then Settles Up Old Scores.

Ex-Congressman David R. Paige, who has been in exile in South America for nearly ten years, recently returned to New York and wiped out a debt of \$720,000 which had kept him out of the country since 1890.

Paige was a member of the contracting firm of Paige, Carey & Co., which built several sections of the new Croton aqueduct. He left because of charges that the firm had put out notes for immense sums bearing the forged indorsement of John Huntington, a millionaire of Cleveland, O., and Paige's brother-in-law.

Paige went to South America and made winning ventures in Brazil, Uruguay and other countries. Three years ago Paige wrote home that he was building up a new fortune and that when he got enough he would wipe out all of his old debts and return to New York.

Abundant Apple Crop. The apple crop in Baden, Germany, was so abundant that the assistance of soldiers had to be asked for its harvesting.