

AUGUR FOR DRILLING SALT

Compressed Air Furnishes the Power for Working the Device Which Makes Mineral

In Muskegon, Mich., salt is used in large quantities, and, consequently, the warehouses of the firms dealing in it are capacious enough to store away a considerable supply, says Frankland World. As is well known, salt, on account of its affinity for water, is a substance that has a tendency to harden and make when piled away any length of time, and some of the pillars which it is stored contain beds of it 30 feet high, and so hard that but little impression can be made upon them even with the pick or ax. For this reason a somewhat curious device has been brought into use to loosen the material so that it can readily be secured. This is a large boring tool, or augur, which is operated by compressed air. The augur is mounted on a wheeled truck, which is guided by handies projecting from the rear of the framework. The rear end of the augur revolves in a socket fitted into the framework, while the air is admitted to the socket from the hose which supplies it. When operated the boring tool is pushed against the mass of salt and the augur is set in motion and in a minute or two, so rapidly does the tool work, a hole about five inches in diameter is made in the formation the entire length of the augur. Then another hole is drilled parallel with the first, and another, until the pile has been undermined, so to speak, when its contents can easily be broken out. The advantage of this method is seen when it is said that two men can get out as much salt by the power method as two dozen men by using picks and shovels.

RIVAL RIGHTS IN VOLCANO.

Four Communes Near Mount Vesuvius Assert Proprietary Powers Over the Domain.

Vesuvius, with its eruptions, has done more than provide magnificent fireworks to attract the foreigner; it has set four communes—Boscolo, Torre del Greco, Roccaraso and Ottaviano—by the ears. Each claims that the volcano stands within its confines, if not all, the greater part of it, and that it (the commune) can thus claim the taxes of the ground, Cook's railway and the one hundred and one other things which yield money. The quarrel is a pretty one, and bids fair to be unending, as no sooner have the communes been established and a comparative, if discomfited, peace patched up, than the volcano belches forth new lava, forms new hills and valleys and belittles the commune. Since the late eruption feeling has risen to such heights that the people of one commune throw stones at those of the others, and refuse to speak as they pass by. Each declares that it has ancient documents to prove its rights beyond dispute, but when the moment comes for exhibiting them they somehow have misplaced them. They would have been the most useful of the council of state, to whom they have appealed, but they cannot be found. Meanwhile, until the quarrel is settled, Rome has decidedly the best of it, as, while the others were terror-stricken, she boldly and her confines by herself taking in the whole mountain.

COURTSHIP BEGINS WHEN?

English Judge Finds Himself Facing a Puzzling Problem in Court.

When does courtship begin? At the moment when a man first meets his affinity? At the time when he realizes that "the only girl in the world" is his affinity? Or at the time when he determines to let her guess his views on the subject? asks the Chicago Tribune. This delicate question was raised in the English probate and divorce court. The president, Sir Francis Jeune, was compelled to admit that the solution was beyond him. The point was raised in this way: A young man named George Whitehead was asking the court to declare that the Scotch marriage between his parents was valid. His mother, Mrs. Whitehead, was called on a witness in support of his case, and gave evidence about her courtship, which began, she said, in the garden that San Francisco street in Edinburgh. "How long had your husband been courting you when he proposed to you?" asked counsel. Mrs. Whitehead hesitated, finding the query hard to answer, and the president came to her rescue. "Can anyone say that?" he remarked. "I doubt if a man knows himself when he first begins to court a girl."

Japan's Imperial Mint.

One of the earliest western institutions established in Japan was the imperial mint at Osaka, and it has been one of the most successful and useful. In the convention which was signed at Yaddo, in 1866, between representatives of the Japanese government and those of the foreign powers, the establishment of a mint was stipulated. The Japanese government purchased from the British government a mint, which had been established at Hong-Kong, but which the latter had resolved to discontinue. The mint is now managed entirely by Japanese.

Gloomy View of Lo.

James Mooney, attached to the Smithsonian bureau of ethnology, sees a hopeless future for the Indians, among whom he has spent the greater portion of his life. He believes that it is practically impossible to civilize the Indians; that, having no ambition for improvement or progress, they will continue in their present state, dying out in numbers till they become simply roving bands.

LIFE INSURANCE IS VAST.

Assets of Companies in New York State Declared to Exceed Two Billion.

If the assets of all the life insurance companies engaged in business in the United States were distributed equally to all the population of the world, each man, woman and child of every continent and every country, from Africa to Labrador, would receive two dollars each, says a writer in the Era Magazine. There would be two dollars for every human being on the globe. The assets of the life insurance companies of this country—that is, the actual property, real estate, bonds, stocks, etc., which they own—amount in the aggregate to more than \$2,000,000,000. The companies doing business in New York state, and these include practically all of the companies with headquarters in other states—had at the close of 1903, assets, in exact figures, equal in value to \$2,236,483,203. Such is the magnitude of the institution of life insurance! If all the adult men in America, of every race and occupation, should contribute simultaneously \$100 each toward a fund, that enormous sum would not equal the value of the property owned by the American life insurance companies. More than \$500,000,000 of the money paid to the companies every year by policy holders goes to defray the expense of maintaining a spy system. After all the preliminary precautions have been taken, the medical examination made, the references looked up—after the policy has been granted, detectives are employed to watch policy holders. Your money is paid to employ men to follow you through your daily walks, track you into restaurants, to interview your servants, to see all the other low and contemptible means which these creeping shadowers employ. The spy system of the "combine" is interesting.

UNITED STATES AS A FARM

Whole States Devoted to One Crop and a Vast Domain Still Remains Untilled.

The area of the United States, exclusive of Alaska and insular possessions is 3,000,000 square miles. Census returns give 600,000 square miles of this as "improved farm" land. An interesting illustration lies in assuming a segregation of the principal farm products within specific areas of familiar boundary. In the following arrangement the areas, are sufficiently accurate in all cases, are sufficiently close to give a good idea of what the national farm would look like if it were parceled out in such a manner. Thus planted, Maine and New Hampshire would be the oat field. Rhode Island, with 800 square miles from eastern Connecticut, would be the tobacco plantation. The rest of Connecticut, with Long Island, would be the potato patch. Vermont, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Delaware would form a vast wheat field. Virginia and West Virginia would be a hay field. Maryland would be planted in rye, barley and buckwheat. North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia would be covered with corn. There is a choice between Texas or a combination of Ohio, Kentucky, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin as the pasture and grazing land and for the cultivation of minor crops and garden truck. With this vast area thus occupied, is left nearly three-quarters of the national domain in the form of unimproved land and forest. It is the biggest farm in the world and an empire is left for settlement and cultivation.

STORY OF SIAMESE TWINS.

Barnum, the Circus Man, Asked Peculiar Questions by a Visitor from the Country.

The late P. T. Barnum was a keen student of human nature, as well as a natural humorist, and nothing which set forth human traits that were odd or amusing escaped his attention. He was fond of telling stories of incidents that brought out features in human character, and one of them that delighted him immensely was connected with the Siamese twins. When he was exhibiting these oriental freaks the press of the country made them widely known and they became soon one of his best drawing cards. One day there came to see them a bank-country rustic, who was perfectly absorbed in them, and inquisitive enough in regard to them to require almost a bureau of information to answer his innumerable questions. Mr. Barnum happened to be the one questioned, and he was asked their age, occupation, original name, whether they were single or married, their weight and stature and their religious belief. Nothing at any rate, was too trivial or irrelevant for the rustic to think of, all of which interested the showman intensely. Finally the bucolic visitor started slowly, but reluctantly, to leave; but after walking away a few steps he returned and said with the most solemn simplicity: "They are brothers, I presume!"

Very Valuable Balm.

The women of savage tribes have not infrequently a wardrobe consisting of furs which would be worth from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Grundeman, the explorer, relates how one fair Greenlander wore a dress of sealskin with a hood of that costly fur, the silver fox. The garment was lined with fur of the young seal otter, and there was a fringe of wolverine tails. About \$600 is probably the average worth of the dress of Indian women on the Columbia and Fraser rivers.

Spells of War.

Among the spoils of war taken at Lianyung was a pet pigeon belonging to Gen. Kuropatkin. It is now in Tokio.

COIN DOLLARS IN PRIVATE.

Italian Tells of Money Which is Hidden in Palermo—Shows Samples.

One evening I was sitting with an Italian friend in a restaurant, relates an Everybody's Magazine writer, and we were discussing American laws and restrictions, at which he was very much inclined to scoff. "Did you ever see a dollar that is not a dollar?" said he. I shook my head, and he rolled across the table to me a silver coin. It seemed to me to be a dollar. I examined it with every care, and getting another from the cash register, compared the two. They were exactly alike in weight, sound, color, milling and all. At last I got them confused, and only my friend was able to point out which was which. "That is what we call a Palermo dollar," he said. "Do you remember some years ago that western silver miners were caught taking about \$7,000,000 worth of silver into the Nevada City mint and having it turned into money without being recorded? Well, that is just what is going on in Palermo to-day, with variations. Silver is brought in San Luis Potosi, Mexico, or thereabout, shipped to Paris, taken to Palermo, and minted with reasonable privacy. The dollars are jumbled with stones to nick them and laid in greasy clay, then come over here in third-class baggage for distribution. They cost about 45 cents and defy detection, except that the nick is too similar, and it is said that the 'M' on the neck is not quite deep enough, and that the '7' is pluribus is a thousandth of an inch crooked. You know every counterfeit makes some little mistake."

TEACHING OYAMA TO SHOOT

America Tells of Delightful Experiences with Now Famous Japanese Field Marshal.

"Twenty-five years ago I was an experienced rifle shot," writes Horace Fletcher, in World's Work, "and could hit a moving object every time. The 22-caliber rifle and machine-made cartridge, which came into general use in the '70s, made extensive rifle practice possible. I wrote and published at the time a pamphlet on how to shoot with a rifle. It happened that copies of the pamphlet reached Japan, where I passed some time soon after. Japan had just begun to make a military organization on the most modern lines and Marquis Oyama was minister of war. He invited me to visit him in his home at Tokio and showed great interest in learning to shoot at a moving object with a rifle. He had already seen the pamphlet. I had a number of American rifles and ample ammunition with me in Japan and Marquis Oyama and the then Col. Murata (inventor of the Japanese military rifle) joined me several afternoons at target practice. They entered enthusiastically into the spirit, Oyama in particular showing the enthusiasm of a boy. I shall never forget his keen joy the first time he hit a moving object with a bullet. It was a teapot thrown in the air, I believe, and when it came down in dust and places he capered about and screamed in his delight like an excited schoolboy."

AMERICA'S FOREIGN SCENES

No Better Way to Go Abroad Than to Start Journey in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Those of our fellow citizens who imagine that the only way to go abroad is via a trans-Atlantic liner, need to get acquainted with certain spots in southeastern Pennsylvania. There is no better starting point and time for his voyage after novel sights and interesting experiences than the city of Lancaster, the seat of the richest county in the state, on any local market day, says W. H. Richardson, in Four-Track News. Most of these people are representatives of one of the most curious survivals in all America, the Amish Mennonites, a schism of the Mennonite society which seceded from the main body about the year 1683. So far as language, manners, dress and traditions are concerned the Amish, as they are locally known, are foreigners in America. Their tongue is almost the same as that of their ancestors from the far-off Rhine two centuries ago; the dress of the women suggests Holland or Brittany of to-day; their religion, with its amusements and its curious practices and observances, smacks of the days of the reformation.

A Colt That Assisted.

One rainy day a farmer opened the barn door and tried to call in the cows, so that he would not have to walk in the deep mud to drive them. One cow refused to come, although he called her name repeatedly. A colt, standing at the other side of the yard, watched him, as he vainly tried to drive the cow without stepping into the mire. Then the colt quietly stepped up to her and bit her. Of course she moved. He followed, giving her a nip whenever she moved in the wrong direction, until she went through the door into the barn. Then he trotted back to the other side of the yard.

Pyramid Building Not So Hard.

When the pyramids were built the laborers did not work under such disadvantages as have long been attributed to them. Researches show that they had solid and tubular drills and lathe tools. The drills were set with jewels and cut into the rocks with keenness and accuracy.

Over Hamlet's Grave.

A railway is about to be constructed near Elsinore which will run across the spot traditionally believed to be the grave of Hamlet. Numerous signed protests against the projected railway have been addressed to the government.

RISK IN TWO ADDRESSES.

One on Each Side of an Express Package May Result in Double Charge.

The clerk in the express office was just about to toss the package back off the counter, says the Philadelphia Record, when he noticed that it was addressed on both sides. "It's good I saw that. Charges might have been collected twice," he said. "That's funny," remarked the shipper. "I just paid the charges, you know." "Yes," responded the clerk, "and I marked it paid, but the second address might have caused them to collect at the other end. You see, I checked it off 'Paid' on one side, but when it reaches the other office it might be that the prepaid mark would be on the bottom. That would bring the other address up, and, seeing no check mark there, the receiving office would mark it 'Collect.' The chances are the package would be handled that side up, without the other address, and the prepaid mark being discovered, and the party to whom it is addressed would pay the second express charges." "And I thought I was doing something to expedite matters in putting the address on both sides," commented the shipper. "You weren't," said the clerk. "It's all right to address letters on both sides, for the convenience of mail clerks, but don't put two addresses on express packages, unless you want to run the risk of paying double."

GROOM TAKES TRIP ALONE

Bride Is Left at Home When Her Husband Starts on Honey-moon.

Booker T. Washington says that a domestic long in the service of a well-known Alabama family recently gave "notice" of two weeks, explaining that she desired to get married. The mistress, says the Saturday Evening Post, managed to secure an acceptable successor, but was dismayed to discover that the new maid could not report for duty until a week subsequent to the time fixed for the wedding of her predecessor. So the present incumbent was asked whether she would not agree to postpone the happy event for a week. This the domestic declined to do, from superstitious scruples, no doubt bearing in mind the old saying: "Change the date, change the fate." However, she said that she didn't in the least mind getting married and continuing the household duties till her successor could put in an appearance. The husband-elect offering no objections, this arrangement was agreed upon; and an hour or so after the marriage ceremony the domestic was performing her duties just as before. "I presume your husband has returned to his work, as you have done," the mistress chanced to remark. "No'm," responded the girl in a matter-of-fact tone. "Joe, he done gone on his honeymoon."

TRAIN SPIDERS TO CHEAT.

Insects Weave Webs About Wine Bottles Thus Producing Aged Appearance.

In this age of shams even spiders' webs may be fraudulently attached to wine bottles, for there is an elderly Frenchman who makes a comfortable competence by supplying unscrupulous wine dealers with specially-bred spiders at a fixed rate of \$250 per 100, which may be rolled upon. If turned loose among wine bottles, to at once proceed to spin abundant webs among them. The reason of this is that he keeps a large establishment, which he devotes to breeding spiders. They are kept in dark, cool rooms, and the spiders are allowed to roam at their will about shelves on which are placed numerous empty port wine bottles. If a spider spins on the wall or in a corner of a shelf, its web is promptly destroyed by the owner; but if one of these creatures spins on a bottle it is promptly rewarded with a fly. When their education is completed they are placed in separate compartments in light wooden boxes and dispatched to the fraudulent wine merchants, who make use of them to give their bottles the appearance of 20 years' storage in cellars cool.

The Patient Brain.

The brain is one of the most patient and industrious organs of the body. It can be induced, by good treatment, to perform prodigies of labor. Few realize its capabilities and endurance. But it is sensitive. It will not long brook abuse. It bristly responds to the whip at first, but if the lash is laid on too hard and often it balks. It insists upon having plenty of good, red blood when it works hard; and good, red blood is made from wheat and roast beef, not from pie a la mode, lobster salad and cocaine or whiskey. The most special thing for the man who works with his brain is plenty of sleep. Only in sleep does the brain find the rest and refreshment that are necessary to maintain its vigor and integrity.

Bridge Lights Mean Much.

There are three lights on the Brooklyn bridge which are never seen by those who have occasion to use the bridge at night, but those three lights mean much to the masters of sailing vessels whose masts approach or exceed the 135 feet between the center of the span and the water. One of the three is directly in the center of the span and marks the highest point, the other two are at each side of the center light, about 100 feet from the towers, and mark the danger limit.

Navy Rejects Smokers.

It is stated that nearly 20 per cent. of the recent applicants for admission to the naval academy at Annapolis were rejected because they were suffering from "tobacco heart," caused by smoking cigarettes.

GOWNS TELL LOVE OR HATE

Dresses Symbolical of Emotions Is an Idea Bred of the Ancient Times.

"Psychological gowns," said a milliner to a Newark News man, "were worn by an actress in a piece that recently fell flat. The gowns were called psychological because they symbolized things, and the idea of such symbolical gowns was thought to be quite new. It is, however, an old as dress itself. The actress in her play, to symbolize viciousness, attacked herself in scarlet. She wore a delicious sky blue in a love scene to symbolize virtuous happiness between sweethearts. But her garb was yellow when she mixed the poison to extinguish her unfaithful lover. All this was considered new and clever. What, though, could have been older? Consider the bride as she approaches the altar. Doesn't her white gown symbolize innocence and her white veil maiden modesty? Consider the widow in black. Aren't her lank and lugubrious robes symbols of her desolation? Consider the maid in white who is about to take the veil. Does not her snowy robe symbolize the purity of her heart? Dress, in fact, has always been symbolical. The South Sea Island women wear their shells and feathers with much psychological significance. The women of the Congo arrange their scanty draperies and ornaments in ways that mean: 'I desire a husband'; 'I am rich'; and 'twenty other things. All these forms of dress may truthfully be called psychological forms. Hence I don't understand why this actress with her varied gowns gave an idea of novelty.'"

EVOLUTION IN HOUSE-HEAT

From Boudoir in the Main Living Rooms to the Dangerous Section Draft.

In the primitive fireplace the smoke was supposed to pass through an opening in the roof, but failing in this, says Country Life in America, it escaped, with the occupants, through the handiwork side opening. The middle ages set the hearth against the wall and built a projecting hood of brick or stone above it to carry off the smoke. Gradually the fireplace was built with two flanking jambs which supported it, and thus the present form of fireplace was evolved. As the armorial bearing was a prominent feature of decoration in these times, its embodiment in the treatment of the fireplace became common and the already important fireplace became the central feature of the room. At a later period the fireplace opening was of small dimension, but, on the theory that the larger opening meant an increase of heat, it was enlarged to great size. Then, when the tendency to draw children and furniture up the chimney or let in all the outside cold through the enormous opening found little hindrance in the iron doors employed to remedy the defect, they went back to the smaller opening as a relief.

MANY FISHING ON SUNDAY.

People of City Island Know the Day Under Peculiar Name—Bearly Comes Happy.

There is a certain Sunday in May that the people of City Island know as "Fisherman's Sunday," but it is not marked with red letters on the calendar, and to a plain everyday citizen of New York who happens up that way any Sunday in May or June, or July even, it would seem that he had come on Fisherman's Sunday, says Bertha Smith, in Four-Track News. To be most sure of it he must start not later than six o'clock in the morning for it is not only the early bird that gets the worm, but it's the early worm that gets the fish, and the early man that gets the boat to cast out the worm that gets the fish. Six o'clock is none too early in May, and it is almost too late from June to September to find a sun that is not ready to pelt you with hot rays; and so, for the few minutes between that hour and the time when the first train for Bartow pulls out of the uptown station, every street car, and every elevated train contributes its mite—a man, or two, or a half-dozen—to the line at the ticket window. Later in the autumn a later start can be made.

ALL DEPENDS ON HER PAST

Cable Car on Steep Hill Arouses Suspicion of Woman Passenger to High Point.

A few years ago when they were operating cable cars up and down a steep hill in one of the New England cities, a middle-aged lady, who had never seen them before, entered a car one day that contained only two other people, seating herself as near the conductor as possible, relates the Philadelphia Ledger, and when he had collected her fare she spoke to him and said: "Is this car perfectly safe?" "I hope so, madam," replied the conductor. "Have you ever had accidents on this awful steep hill?" "Well," replied the conductor, "there have only been a few small accidents; nothing serious." "Where would I go," she then inquired, "if this car should get away and go sliding down this steep hill?" "Well, madam," said the conductor, "it would all depend on how you have lived your past life."

What He Did.

An Irish dairyman was recently accused of adding water to the milk he sold and grew very indignant over it. He said that it was absolutely untrue, that he always added the milk to the water.

CHECK CIGARS IN GOTHAM

Strange Custom of Depositing Lighted Weed Before Entering New York Stores.

Everyone knows that you can check a trunk, even if it be to San Francisco. You also receive a check to your hansom cab when you drive up to a restaurant, or for your \$20.00 motor car at the country club. Even the good housewife, when she goes to the up-to-date department store, says the New York Press, may check her baby while she makes her round of the counters. It is known to very few, however, that in a certain wholesale dry goods house in this city you can and must check your lighted cigar before entering the building. This dry goods house is the largest in this country, if not in the world. It covers an entire city block, a few minutes' walk from Broadway, and everyone, no matter whether he be a big buyer with a carload order, or a diminutive messenger boy with a telegram must leave at the door his cigar, cigarette or pipe. It is the most stringent rule of this great firm that no one, from the \$50,000 a year salaried president down to the three dollar a week office boy, may smoke when inside the building. At the entrance stands a neatly uniformed man, who is big enough to make one think twice about argument. As you enter he politely touches you on the arm and says: "Pardon me, are you smoking?" and should that be the case, he will say: "I must ask you to leave your cigar here." He will then hand you a check and with gloved fingers carefully deposit the perfecto or pipe on a small brass rack provided for the purpose, and which bears the same number as the check you have received. When you leave the building you present your check and receive your cigar or pipe and a match to light it with and go on your way.

TOOK BACK MINOR CHARGES

Methodist Insisted on "Presbyterian," But Retracted "Robber" and "Liar" Statement.

In a certain town of western Massachusetts, relates Harper's Weekly, two of the most prominent citizens—a Methodist brother and a Presbyterian brother. These are neighbors and for the most part, dwell on good terms, except when they try to effect an exchange of horses or to talk religion. On one occasion the two had traded horses and although the outcome ranked in the breast of the Methodist they had met and started a discussion on the subject of predestination. As usual, an altercation ensued, when the Methodist lost control of himself. With mixed emotions concerning horse trades and John Calvin in his mind, he suddenly exclaimed: "You are a robber, a liar and a Presbyterian!" This proved too much for the Presbyterian, and a fight began, in which the Presbyterian got the best of it. As he sat upon his prostrate opponent, bumping his head against the ground, he said: "Take it back, take it back, or I'll bump your foolish head off!" "I'll take it back," gasped the vanquished Methodist, "on the first two counts. You're not a robber nor a liar, but you're a blamed old Presbyterian; if I die for it!"

SHE REBUKED A CONDUCTOR

He Ordered an Aged, Infirm Woman to "Step Lively," But Soon Retracted Words.

It was on a League Island car going south, says the Philadelphia Press, the time was high noon, and as usual there was a variegated assortment of persons inside, while out on the front and rear platforms passengers stood huddled together like sheep. The conductor, a tall youth, who had evidently not been ringing up fares for many months, was in bad humor because people did not step lively enough when leaving or entering the car at the various stops. At one of the street crossings the car stopped and an aged woman, careworn and feeble-looking, got up and slowly, with the aid of the backs of the chairs, started toward the rear to get on. "Come, come, there, lady, step lively, we can't wait here all day," impatiently shouted the conductor. The old lady glanced up at the tall youth in a kindly manner as she passed him and in a low but pathetic voice replied: "I am moving as fast as I can, my boy, and would step lively, but I have been sick all summer, and this is the first time I have been out since last May. Didn't you ever have a mother, lad?" It is needless to say the conductor was humility itself for the rest of the trip.

Meat of Porcupine.

It is not generally known that the common porcupine is an inhabitant of both southern Italy and Spain, and that its flesh is a regular item of consumption. As the animal is a very clear feeder, the meat is of fine quality and has a taste something between that of chicken and of pork. It is believed to have been naturalized in Italy by the Romans, just as they probably brought the rabbit to England. In South Africa porcupines are regularly hunted at night with dogs.

To Keep a Horse Down.

When a witness in an English court the other day remarked that it was necessary to sit on a horse's head when he was down to keep him quiet, the judge replied: "Nothing of the kind. People don't seem to understand that the only thing necessary to keep a horse from kicking when he is down is to get hold of his ear and keep his nose up in the air. I have seen a lady keep a horse quiet in that way without soiling her gloves."