

WAY TO BEAT A RAILROAD

Petersburg, Mich., Land Owner Incorporates Eival Company to Defeat Condemnation Suit.

Monroe, Mich.—How to get the Best of a Railroad Company, or, More Than One Way to Skin a Cat, is the title of an interesting sermonee that has been under development in the circuit court the past three days.

Officially, it is the case of the Michigan, Ohio & Indiana Railroad Company versus The Toledo, Ann Arbor & Detroit Railroad Company, et al.

The latter company is building a line from Toledo to Ann Arbor and when it got as far as Petersburg it struck a snag in the shape of the refusal of one lot owner to allow the crossing of his land. The owner refused to set a price upon the property and the railroad company was preparing to condemn it according to law when the owner's son, who is an attorney, conceived the idea of organizing a railroad company for the least capitalization allowed by law and deeding the desired property to the new company. This would make it impossible to condemn the land, since there is a statute forbidding one railroad company to condemn the right of way of another railroad company unless such right of way has been unused for three years.

This plan was carried out. The new railroad company now contends that the purpose of its organization cannot be questioned and that it had a right to incorporate for this purpose. If this contention is correct it will practically nullify the law of eminent domain in so far as railroad land owner concerned, since any objecting land owner can organize a little railroad company of his own and effectually prevent condemnation.

PUTS \$5,000 VALUE ON LIFE

Oregon Judge Rules That Man Who Supports His Family Is Worth That Sum.

Portland, Ore.—A man who supports a family is worth \$5,000.

This is the valuation placed upon a workingman by Circuit Judge Sears in an opinion rendered in which he refused to set aside the verdict for \$5,000 given Mrs. Mollie Wolf last summer by a jury. Mrs. Wolf is the administratrix of the estate of Simon Wolf, who was killed at the corner of First and Mill streets several years ago by a passing street car. She brought a suit for \$5,000 against the City and Suburban company.

At the first trial the widow was allowed a small sum as damages. The case was appealed to the supreme court and a new trial ordered. This was held last summer and \$5,000 damages, the limit, was awarded the administratrix.

The company asked that the verdict be set aside on the grounds that Wolf was not worth \$5,000, that he saw the car coming and did not busy himself to get out of the way, and that the judge had not instructed the jury as he was asked to do.

WILD DEER IN CITY STREET

Man Knocked from Bicycle by a Buck with Antlers Down—Escapes in River.

South Norwalk, Conn.—Henry J. Buckingham, a painter, of this city, going to work at seven o'clock in the morning on his bicycle, was struck by a large buck which dashed across the street with head and footlong antlers down, and was hurled several feet from his wheel.

Buckingham landed in the gutter of the street, which was in one of the most prominent resident sections of the city. The buck attacked him again and Buckingham grabbed him around the neck, held on in desperation and gained his feet. He tried jiu-jitsu, strange holds and half Nelsons to down the buck. The struggle lasted several minutes. When about to give up Buckingham got the deer down on his haunches and was then able to dash behind a tree. The buck was content to withdraw from the scene.

The deer has been around the city several days. He swam the river when a number of people tried to lasso him.

SEED DISTRIBUTION SOON.

Thirty-Eight Million Packages Will Be Given Away by Government Beginning in Short Time.

Washington.—The annual distribution of vegetable and flower seeds by the department of agriculture will begin soon, and before planting time it is expected the entire amount, aggregating 38,000,000 packages, will be in the hands of the people in all sections of the country.

Congress for several years has appropriated \$200,000 for this purpose, but a part of the amount is used for foreign experiment work. Most of the 38,000,000 packages are subject to the order of senators and representatives for distribution among their constituents, the secretary of agriculture reserving one-fifth of the entire amount to supply the statistical crop correspondents and the weather bureau, and for other purposes. The country has been divided into six sections, with special regard to climate and soils, and the seeds will be sent only to those localities in which their propagation is believed to be possible.

The "Attic" Days Are Over.

The announcement that a Kentucky novelist is about to start a bank, and that a Philadelphia millionaire has written a novel effectually relegating to innocuous obscurity the old story about cultivating literature on a little oatmeal. It is now cultivated on the whole menu.

BIG YIELD OF CORN.

CROP FOR 1905 FAR ABOVE THE TEN-YEAR AVERAGE.

Department of Agriculture Gives Out Statistics Gathered from Reports of Its Correspondents—Nearly Three Billion Bushels.

Washington.—The crop reporting board of the bureau of statistics of the department of agriculture finds, from the reports of the correspondents and agents of the bureau, as follows:

The preliminary returns on the production of corn in 1905 indicate a total yield of about 2,707,993,540 bushels, or an average of 28.8 bushels per acre, as compared with an average yield of 26.8 bushels (15.0 cents) as finally estimated in 1904, 25.5 bushels in 1903, and a ten-year average of 24.9 bushels.

The general average as to quality is 90.6 per cent., as compared with 86.2 last year, 83.1 in 1903 and 80.7 in 1902. It is estimated that about 3.3 per cent. of the corn crop of 1904 was still in the hands of the farmers on November 1, 1905, as compared with 3.6 per cent. of the crop of 1903 in farmers' hands on November 1, 1904, 5.2 per cent. of the crop of 1902 in farmers' hands on November 1, 1903, and 1.9 per cent. of the crop of 1901 in farmers' hands on November 1, 1902.

The estimated condition of cotton harvested and not harvested, as reported on November 1, 1905, is 68.8, as compared with 71.2 on September 25, 1905. As this is the first time a condition report has been made in the month of November, no comparisons can be made with condition figures of previous years or with a ten-year average.

The preliminary estimate of the average yield per acre of buckwheat is 19.2 bushels, against an average yield of 18.9 bushels in 1904, 17.7 bushels in 1903, and a ten-year average of 18.2 bushels. The average for quality is 93.0 per cent., against 91.5 last year, 91.4 in 1903, and 88.1 in 1902.

The preliminary estimate of the average yield per acre of flax seed is 11.2 bushels, as compared with a final estimate of 10.3 bushels in 1904, 8.4 bushels in 1903, and 7.8 bushels in 1902. The average as to quality is 94.6 per cent., as compared with 92.0 one year ago and 84.9 in 1903.

The preliminary estimate of the average yield per acre of potatoes is 87.0 bushels, against an average yield of 110.4 bushels in 1904, 84.7 bushels in 1903, and a ten-year average of 85.8 bushels. The average as to quality is 85.4 per cent., as compared with 93.4 per cent. one year ago, 86.4 in 1903 and 90.4 in 1902.

The preliminary estimate of the average yield per acre of hay is 1.52 tons, against an average yield of 1.52 tons in 1904, 1.54 tons in 1903, and a ten-year average of 1.39 tons. The average as to quality is 89.8 per cent., against 92.7 one year ago, 91.3 in 1903 and 85.7 in 1902.

The preliminary estimate of the average yield per acre of tobacco is 813.5 pounds, as compared with the final estimate of 819 pounds in 1904, 786.3 pounds in 1903, and a six-year average of 745.1. The average as to quality is 87.3 per cent., as compared with 89.5 per cent. one year ago, and 85.9 per cent. in 1903.

The preliminary estimate of the average yield per acre of rough rice is 29.6 bushels, against an average yield of 31.9 bushels in 1904, and 32.7 bushels in 1903.

ANIMAL EATS \$800 WATCH.

Woman's Visit to Circus Also Results in Loss of Hat to Elephant's Appetite.

Poplar Bluff, Mo.—Mrs. Ella Goltz, of Portsmouth, O., who has been visiting relatives here, was robbed of a gold watch set with diamonds and valued at \$800 by Tip, an elephant with a circus. Mrs. Goltz ventured too near the elephant, and Tip seized her watch and swallowed it. He also made a meal of her beautiful hat. Mrs. Goltz became hysterical, and is in a critical condition.

A warrant was sworn out for the manager and the big elephant, which raises the legal question, can the elephant be held? The manager has consulted a local physician, and an operation may be performed to recover the timepiece. The manager has offered to pay for the watch, buy a new bonnet, and liquidate the doctor's bill, but Mrs. Goltz refuses these terms.

BOY HUMAN STONE QUARRY

Four Thousand Pieces of Rock Taken from Body of Young Minnesota Youth Injured in Explosion.

St. Cloud, Minn.—John Janski, of this city, aged 21, is a human stone quarry. Fourteen months ago he was the victim of an explosion in a stone quarry and ever since the doctors have been prospecting, every time with good results.

Four thousand pieces of stone have been removed from various parts of Janski's anatomy. A piece of granite weighing an ounce came out of his arm in an operation the other day and another of half an ounce weight was removed from the socket of his eye, which was lost in the explosion.

Four times a week Janski, without taking an anesthetic, submits to the knife.

Measured by the Printer.

The Bradley-Martins and their hyphen are getting much more notice in the press these days than Gen. Urbe-Urbe and his hyphen. But the Bradley-Martins eat a three-*e* menu in "society."

THE HARDEST SUBSTANCE.

An Uncommon Metal Called Tantalum, Which Has Important Uses.

For centuries the diamond has been recognized as the hardest of all known substances. The polish powers of diamond dust, the boring power of the diamond drill are familiar facts; so is the fact that nothing can polish or cut a diamond except another diamond.

But a new substance has made its appearance which, if it can be obtained in sufficient quantity, will probably replace the diamond alike in the operations of drill boring and in the lapidary's workshop, for it is harder than diamond, so hard, in fact, that the only effect produced by a diamond drill, worked day and night for three days on a sheet of the substance one twenty-fifth of an inch thick, with a speed of 5,000 revolutions a minute, was a slight dent in the sheet and the wearing out of the diamond. This substance is pure metallic tantalum.

Tantalum is not a common mineral, yet it is also not one of the rarest. Its existence was discovered more than a century ago, but no attempt to separate it from its compounds had succeeded prior to 1903, when Meissner obtained a sample in the electric furnace. The metal which he isolated was very hard and brittle, and we now know it was so much contaminated with carbon that most of the characteristic properties of the pure metal had disappeared.

Pure tantalum was first prepared by Dr. Bolton, a member of the famous electrical engineering firm of Siemens & Halske. One of his methods is to fuse the double fluoride of potassium and tantalum with metallic potassium in an electric furnace in vacuo; but he seems to prefer a much simpler electrical method. Making up the oxide into a filament, exactly like that of a Nernst incandescent lamp, he places it in a globe connected to an air pump, and turns on the current. The oxide is decomposed and the oxygen being gradually removed by the pump, the filament is reduced to the metallic state.

Tantalum differs from all other known substances in combining extreme hardness with extreme ductility. Of its hardness an example has already been given, so it needs only to add that when red hot it is easily rolled into bars and sheets or drawn into wire. It is scarcely affected by the oxygen of the air, even at a red heat, and not at all at ordinary temperatures, and the strongest acids fail to dissolve it; nor does it amalgamate with mercury. It melts only at the highest attainable temperatures and is therefore well fitted to serve for filaments in incandescent lamps, being much stronger than carbon. A pound of it will make 2,000 lamps, and these require exactly half as much power to light them as do carbon filaments giving the same brilliancy.

If only it can be procured in sufficient quantity, tantalum should prove a most useful metal. It will furnish better boring tools than the diamond drill, and cheaper electric lights than carbon, while the possible uses of a plate or a wire harder than diamond, and yet tough and strong, are almost infinite; for every other hard substance is brittle, and this fact has hampered the engineer for centuries.

Future of the Telephone.

The bigness of the telephone interests, present and prospective, of this country is certainly best understood by the engineers. These men of figures and forecasts, whose everyday speech abounds in references to loads, insulations, and relays, have, as is well known, magnificent ideas as to the future of the industry they are building up. Already they are basing their estimates of necessary construction upon a probable 20 per cent. development within the next two or three decades—a prediction which means, in everyday speech, that by 1930 or 1935 there should be, if the present rate of expansion continues, one telephone for every five people in the United States, or, as it has been otherwise expressed, a telephone to every other family and as many more in places of business.—F. W. Coburn, in Atlantic.

Poor "Properties."

When Sir Henry Irving made his first appearance as Hamlet in Manchester the "properties" were very different from those with which he surrounded himself later at the Lyceum in London and the night after he made his speech, "Alas, poor Yorick!" to a blackened turnip and behead King Claudius in the last act majestically trinketing to his success from a marble jar in the sticky disguise of varnished gold paint.

Plain Case.

Examiner—When did you first notice any symptoms of approaching insanity in the part of this unfortunate young man?

Former Employer—There were no symptoms of approaching insanity, sir. He seemed to become insane all at once. When I asked him if he wouldn't like to have his salary increased he said he couldn't conscientiously take it—he thought he was getting all he earned.—Chicago Tribune.

TELEPHONE BEETLE.

VARIETY OF BUG THAT EATS THROUGH SHEET LEAD.

Singular Insect Comes to Light in Wisconsin Through Destructive Work on Cable Terminals.

The discovery of a new beetle is not necessarily a startling event, for there are already in the books of the entomologists considerably more than 100,000 species of coleoptera, or creatures that come under the general designation of beetles. But there are beetles and beetles, and when one is found which has never been seen anywhere, dead or alive, except tucked away inside the lining of a telephone cable, or in a fuse box, he is sufficiently unusual to attract attention.

Why this beetle, whose existence was unknown a short time ago, should have developed such a propensity has not been satisfactorily explained, but the Brooklyn Citizen, in discussing the matter, thinks it is probable that she is in search of a dark place in which to lay her eggs. This much is certain, that no one need warn her against the dangers of lead-poisoning, for, however much of the metal she may gnaw away with her tough little mandibles, she eats none of it. Beetles have outgrown the dining habit; like so many other perfected insects, they have done all their feeding in the pre-existent state—that is, while they were still larvae.

No serious consequences are expected from the appearance of the telephone beetle. It is not a national menace, like the boll weevil, or the brown tail moth. It has thus far appeared in only a few scattered localities, and has done comparatively little damage. At the same time, as it is the policy of the Bell company to be thoroughly informed as to everything that may possibly affect their work, a quiet investigation into the habits of the insect is being carried on. Forewarned is forearmed; if it should ever be desired to take steps for the creature's extermination, sufficient knowledge may have been collected to aid materially in the discovery of the requisite means.

To this new beetle, which without difficulty claws his way through a thick sheath of lead, the scientific name of dermestes lardarius has been given. His family, that of the dermestidae, is a widely distributed one, some members of it living in plants, others—and these are ones that have given the name—finding their feed in skins, leather and woolen materials. They are all characterized by very powerful mandibles. The larvae—to speak scientifically—have small rounded heads with short feelers and six ocelli on each side, and these features reappear in the imago. There is some reason to believe that the larvae of caterpillars of this dermestes also have a propensity for lead.

The immediate occasion for making a study of the ways of this beetle was his sudden and unheralded appearance at La Crosse, Wis., recently. A peculiar circumstance was reported in this connection. An engineer of the Wisconsin Telephone company discovered that some 19 of the little lead fuses which are used in cable terminals had been attacked and gnawed off by insects. According to his observation this destructive work was done by the larvae, and not by the insect in its final stage. No part of the circuit outside of the terminal was attacked. The larvae were removed, as well as all the fuses, new leads substituted, and no trace of either larvae or beetles has since been found.

Although the case was a peculiar one, the Bell engineering department had no doubt when it was first reported that the insect was either identical with or very similar to one which has given more or less trouble in Texas for the last two or three years. When aerial cables in the Texas cities first began to present little holes of mysterious origin the engineers cast about for adequate explanation. It was thought for a time that the cables might have been maliciously pierced by disaffected workmen—a theory that fell flat if for no other reason because there were no disaffected workmen in the system.

Careful inspection of the borings led to a different suspicion. The holes, when examined under the microscope, showed in every case a curious raggedness, as if little particles of lead had been picked away one by one. Then the broken mandible of an unknown insect was discovered, and presently one of the beetles was detected with the goods on. It is believed that the insects which have appeared in Wisconsin, and a specimen of which is being examined in Boston, are of the same species as those already noted in Texas.

Ducks in China.

There are more ducks in China, and more are eaten, than in all the rest of the world. At some of the duck farms of that country 50,000 are annually hatched.

Easy.

Grace—Why is Ethel so fond of masked balls?
Maud—Can you ask? Look at her complexion!—Cleveland Leader.

RUNS FOR THREE DECADES

Court Timepiece at Freeport, Ill., Stops After Long Service of Thirty-Two Years.

Freeport, Ill.—For the first time since it was put up, more than 32 years ago, the big clock in the county courthouse tower in Freeport has been taken down for repairs. The old clock has done remarkably good service during the long period that it has been in use, and with the little attention paid to it each week by the jeweler engaged by the county board to wind and regulate it, has kept good time and never has stopped for a moment. Shopkeepers, clerks and office men in the principal business part of the city have missed the friendly clang of the huge bell that takes the place of a gong on the big clock since the removal of the works and it will be like the voice of a returned friend when the old clock renews the striking of the hours.

The clock was purchased by the county in February, 1873. It cost \$2,200, and is the largest clock in this part of the state. Every part of the works is of massive dimensions.

The escapement works on a heavy iron shaft more than two feet long, and all the rest of the parts are of corresponding size. The weight by which the clock proper is operated weighs 500 pounds, and the weight on the striker weighs 1,500 pounds. The bell alone weighs 1,800 pounds. The works, after their long usage, have become somewhat rusted and clogged with dirt and oil, but after they are thoroughly cleaned they will be practically as good as ever.

WAD OF GUM SAVES LIVES

Timber Cruisers Crossing Lake in a Frail Canoe Defeat Death Through Woman's Wit.

Duluth, Minn.—To a woman's ready wit and a large piece of chewing gum, H. H. Bartlett and John Cameron, timber cruisers, and Mrs. Helen Bartlett, wife of the first-named man, owe their lives.

The three have just returned here after an exciting adventure in Saginaw lake, on the Canadian border.

They were crossing Saginaw lake in a birch bark canoe when their frail craft, which was being propelled swiftly through the water, struck a submerged rock.

The shock tore a hole in the bottom of the canoe and water began coming in at a rate much in excess of the bailing facilities at hand. It was fully a mile to shore, and the water was freezing cold, ice having formed around the edges of the lake when the cruisers had left the shore. To attempt to swim would be suicidal, and in that isolated region there was little hope of assistance.

Then it was that the wit of Mrs. Bartlett manifested itself. She drew from her dress pocket a big wad of chewing gum, ordered the men out onto the rock, followed them, turned the canoe upside down, tore a piece off her skirt, softened the gum with burning matches and then repaired the leak.

Half an hour later the party reached the shore, chilled through, but safe.

DYING MAN IN MAD RIDE.

Fatally Hurt, Conductor Loses Race to Wife—Dies on Flying Train.

Williamsport, Pa.—Frederick Henderson, a conductor on the New York Central railroad, who was crushed beneath his engine at Tiadaghton, died at Lawrenceville during a mad run, with clear right of way, for Corning, N. Y., where Mrs. Henderson was at the depot waiting.

The last words Henderson was able to say was a plea that the engine might be made to go faster, so that he could reach home to see his wife before he died.

When the accident happened at Tiadaghton, 40 miles south of Corning, the division superintendent at the latter place sent an order along the line sidetracking every train for right of way for an engine and caboose, in which Henderson was started for home.

At Stokesdale Junction a surgeon was taken on board, but he found Henderson dying. Before another ten miles had been covered the conductor was dead.

TEACHER CAN BURN NOVEL

So Decides Judge in Case of Girl Pupil of Logan County, Nebraska.

Lincoln, Neb.—Yes, it is proper and legal for a school-teacher to burn yellow novels when found in the desk of on the person of a girl pupil. So declares Judge Gilchrist in deciding the case of Miss Helen Brown against Lewis Gordon, teacher of a Logan county district school. Miss Brown, who is a pretty girl of 16, brought suit against her teacher for \$1, the value of four novels confiscated. The trial created great excitement, and all the pupils of the school district crowded into the courtroom to hear the details. The court held that the novel was worthless and refused to give judgment against the school-teacher, who it was held, did right in destroying the cheap novel. The costs were assessed against the girl, who sued through Levi Forbis, her guardian.

Not "Specky's" Fault.

The enemies of Von Sternberg, who are trying to make trouble for him because Mr. Roosevelt calls him "Specky," don't know the president. If he ever happened to meet the kaiser and took a fancy to him, he wouldn't hesitate a minute to call him Bill.

MANY AUTOS ARE IMPORTED

Machines Worth \$2,000,000 Recently Brought Over from Across Ocean.

New York.—Importation of merchandise, and especially of automobiles, increased to a surprising extent in the port of New York during the last year. According to a statement issued by George W. Whitehead, appraiser of merchandise for this port, there were 111 automobiles imported during August, as compared with 47 imported during the same month last year.

From January to August of this year 654 automobiles were imported, and their appraised value was \$2,000,000, while during the same period last year 363 machines came in.

Automobile experts say the increase in the number of automobiles imported does not indicate that the foreign-made machine is more popular than the domestic, but they are of the opinion that the increase is only normal compared with the remarkable advance made in the general use of automobiles in this country.

The sale of domestic machines shows the same surprising figures, they say, and at all points the industry indicates great development. The registry of automobiles in Albany shows a proportion of three to one for the present year, as compared with last year.

In his statement Mr. Whitehead gives the value of all importations in New York for August as \$52,703,768.10, an increase of \$9,000,800 over August, 1904. The appraised value of precious stones imported in August was \$2,375,815.59, a 12 per cent. increase over August, 1904.

CLIMBER FINDS OLD HERMIT

Dweller in Alps Has Long Shaggy White Hair and Beard and Seldom Visits Village.

Geneva.—A hermit has been discovered in the Alps by a Bavarian climber while climbing the Mesapiana mountain, on the Swiss-Austrian frontier.

During the descent the Bavarian was overtaken by a storm, and took shelter from the rain beneath an overhanging rock. Hearing a slight noise near him, he looked around and saw a man's head overtopped with long white hair and shaggy white beard emerging from a hole in the mountain side.

The man was exceptionally tall, and so emaciated that every bone could be seen. The upper part of his body was covered with hair and round the waist he wore a kind of skirt made of sacks, which hung to his knees. His feet were incased in moccasins made of chamois hide, and in his hand he carried a long stick.

When he was induced to talk, the man said he did not remember how long he had lived in the mountain cave—it was many many years. "I have no name, no relations, no friends," he said. "You are the only person who knows my secret, and if you divulge it, beware. Now go."

At a village at the foot of the mountain the Bavarian learned that the hermit went down on rare occasions in the winter to buy food.

HISTORIC ROOM REPAIRED.

Place Where Washington Resigned Military Commission Again Reproduced.

Annapolis, Md.—The work of remodeling the senate chamber in the old state house at Annapolis, the room of national historic interest as the scene of the resignation of Gen. Washington's military commission, has been completed and it is said to be one of the most accurate and interesting pieces of historical restoration ever achieved in this country.

The work has been under the direction of Architect Josiah Pennington, of Baltimore, aided by the state building commission, and a specially appointed commission of architects and historians. After careful research every important detail of the old chamber has been fixed upon with well-nigh certainty, and reproduced minutely.

The senate chamber was reconstructed in 1876 in order to obtain additional room. The event with which the room is always associated took place on December 23, 1783, though this was not the only event of national significance connected with it, for there the treaty of peace which ended the war with Great Britain was ratified on January 14, 1784, and there (September 11-14, 1786) sat the delegates for the six states in the meeting which led to the calling of the federal constitutional convention of 1787.

Job Vacant in Norway.

Any able-bodied king out of a job can get a pleasant situation with good wages and one night of a week by applying to the Norwegian work-bank. The last king of Norway has been fired because he was trying to hold down a similar job for Sweden at the same time, and slighted Norway's work. The job is open to any journeyman king who may apply and who has a union card. That seems to be the trouble. All the kings who are not working have been fired from the union for "ratting" or for grafting, and most of the others are content with their present employment. It looks as if an apprentice or princeling will have to be advanced in rank and given the place, for the Norwegians refuse to go out of the union, even to secure a more competent man.

A Large Contract.

Russia will be all right now if she succeeds in making peace with herself.