

BAFFLES COUNTERFEITERS.

The Unlucky Opal Defies the Imitative Skill of the Moderns.

One kind of opal, the hydropane of Mexico, loses its beauty and becomes dull and colorless when exposed to water. The same stone, says the Westminster Review, it is said, can be restored to its color and beauty by subjecting it to a certain degree of heat. A writer on the subject says that the opal is always much more brilliant on a warm day, and that a sharp dealer will always hold one in his hand a short time before showing it to a purchaser. In ancient times the opal was most successfully imitated by a glass paste, which could only be distinguished from the real gem by the most careful experts. The art has been entirely lost, for the best counterfeiters fail to produce a stone that in the least baffles the connoisseur. The finest opal of modern times, says King, was one which belonged to Empress Josephine, and which was called the "Burning of Troy," because of the innumerable red flames blazing upon its surface, while the reverse was perfectly opaque. In the troublous times that followed the Napoleonic period the gem was lost sight of, and there is left no trace of it. There are two wonderful opals among the French crown jewels, one of which is set in the clasp of the imperial cloak. Empress Eugenie is said to have a most superstitious dread of them and would not wear an opal for any persuasion. Queen Victoria does not share this feeling with her. She, on the contrary, admires the gem very much, and has given to each of her daughters, or their marriage day, various pieces of jewelry set with the iridescent gem. There are many varieties of opals coming from almost as many quarters of the globe. The opal found in Hungary was thought to be harder and more durable than those found in Mexico and South America, but since the better development of the mines in those places stones have been found quite the equal of Hungarian gems.

SALT WATER IN CEMENT.

The Sulphates of the Sea Are Very Destructive.

In the opinion of Dr. Michaelis, of Berlin, the greatest enemies to the permanency of the Portland cement used in marine structures are the sulphates contained in sea water. If there is any great quantity of alumina and ferric oxide in the cement the structure breaks up sooner than otherwise. This is accounted for by the fact that the sulphate forms, with the aluminate and ferrate of lime, a number of crystalline compounds, such as basic sulphate of lime, aluminosulphate and ferrosulphate of lime. These compounds take up a large quantity of water of crystallization, so that the total volume is much increased. Hence the weakness and disintegration of the cement structure. Dr. Michaelis considers that the separation of hydrate of magnesia is quite innocuous, for it is only displaced from its solution in the form of a flocculent, slimy hydrate, which, if anything, is useful in stopping up the pores. His general recommendation to users of concrete for marine work is to choose a cement rich in silica and as poor as possible in alumina and ferric oxide, and to envelop the structure with an impenetrable mixture composed of one part of cement with two to two and one-half parts of sand of mixed grain, of which at least one-third should be very fine sand, and to this the requisite amount of ballast should be added.

CASTE FOLLOWS THE NOSE.

Anthropologists Say the Nose Tells the Culture of Man.

Anthropology, said Sir William Flower, is becoming of the highest importance in politics. If we take a series of castes in Bengal, Behar or the northwestern provinces and arrange them in the order of the average nasal index, so that the caste with the finest nose shall be at the top, and that with the coarsest at the bottom of the list, it will be found that this order substantially corresponds with the accepted order of social precedence.

The casteless tribes who have not yet entered the Brahminical system occupy the lowest place in both series.

The fisher castes are a trifle higher in the scale; the pastoral, the cultivating, and a group of cognate castes—from whose hands a Brahmin may take water—follow in due order; and from them we pass to the trading and the landholding classes and the upper crust of Hindu society.

Thus it is scarcely a paradox to lay down as a law of the caste organization in Eastern India that a man's social status varies in inverse ratio to the width of his nose.

The Most Ancient Song.

A topical song three thousand years old was sung in a comic opera lately produced in Australia by a traveling Chinese company. The history of this venerable ballad is authenticated by the affirmation of the chief comedian of the troupe, who avers that the song has been sung on the Chinese stage, with the original words and music, since 1000 B. C. A Melbourne critic says the accompanying melody "consisted partly of a Chinese chopping wood, partly of another Celestial blowing a bull's horn with horrible intensity of effort, and partly of a curious stringed instrument, which makes a noise like an infant crying in the night."

Late Flowers.

With the turning of the leaves it is supposed the flowers disappear, but in northern New England, and over the line in Canada, the asters are never more gorgeous, the daisies bigger or the chamomile more abundant than just on the eve of frost time. In towns two or three hundred miles north of New York the short but warm summer seems to have its fruitage after the equinox, and the parks and gardens in these towns are brilliant with marigolds, zinnias, asters, cosmos, and even sweet peas, long gone by in these latitudes. Melons are in their prime in Maine when they are not on sale in New York.

THE RETIRED BURGLAR.

His Fondness for Little Children Gets Him Into Trouble.

"I always was fond of little children," said the retired burglar, "and once I served a term on that account. I had gone into a house in the western part of the state and rummaged about downstairs, and finally got up and got into a room where there was a man and his wife and a little baby, all asleep. The baby was in a cradle that stood at the foot of the bed; not far from the cradle, standing against the wall, was the bureau. I transferred whatever there was of value in the bureau and then I turned to the baby; I couldn't help it. I turned my light on the kid to look at him, and it woke him up. He stared at me a little and then he began to smile and double up his fists at me.

"Well, he looked so funny that I chuckled him under the chin, and that seemed to tickle him immense; he threw up his legs and his arms, and laughed more'n ever, and tried to say something; all he could say was: 'Goo-o-o-o,' but that was enough. You've heard of women so tired you couldn't wake 'em up firing a cannon in the next room that would wake up in a minute if the baby turned in its cradle? Well, when this baby said: 'Goo-o-o-o' its mother not only woke up instantly but she began to get up before she was fairly awake; and all the time she was looking toward the cradle, and she saw the light long before I could douse it. Then she screamed and I made a great break for the door.

"But the man got there before I did; and, besides being very quick, he was very able-bodied and not the least bit afraid; in fact, he was a better man than I was, and the upshot of this business was that I got four years and six months just for stopping to chuck a little shaver under the chin."

FORMATION OF HAIL.

The Agency of Electricity in Making the Ice Pellets.

The formation of hail through electrical action, according to the new theory of Sig. Marangoni, is a very interesting, and even wonderful, process. The wind draws out a cloud into a long, narrow strip. In that form, owing to the great amount of surface exposed to the air, the cloud evaporates very rapidly, and rapid evaporation produces intense cold.

Dry particles of snow are then formed, and these, by friction with the water drops, quickly become charged with negative electricity. But the water-drops themselves carry positive electricity, and since negative attracts positive, a film of water is formed upon each snow particle and is instantly frozen into a layer of ice.

At this thickness its outer surface remains moist, the water not freezing so rapidly there, whereupon the electrical charge changes from negative to positive, and the particle is repelled by the water-drops and driven to the outer parts of the cloud. Here the increased cold covers it with snow again, and friction charges it anew with negative electricity.

Repulsion is now once more changed for attraction, and the particle rushes back into the cloud, receiving upon its surface another film of water, which is turned into a second ice layer.

Thus, the growing hailstone darts zigzag through the cloud, piling up its alternate layers of snow and ice, until gravitation gains control and sends it, with a jingling crowd of its fellows, spinning to the ground.

REPRODUCTION IN MICROBES.

Two Million Individuals From a Single Specimen.

The old line of pseudo scientists, the superstitious, self-styled "scholars" of the early part of this and the latter part of the eighteenth century, believed that filth would breed microbes, but, as the absurd idea of "spontaneous generation" has long since been exploded, it will not be discussed in this "note," which is solely intended to explain the manner in which microbes multiply. There are several species of these minute creatures and they have various ways of reproducing their species, but the most common is what the investigators term "reproduction by fissure." If, with a strong microscope, we carefully watch a microbe for a short time we see a "constriction" appearing on each side in the center of the body. This soon shows itself in the shape of a line across, and then, all of a sudden, the microbe separates in the middle and behold, we have two in place of one! Each of these rapidly increases in size until they are as large as the original, when the miracle of the side spots and transverse line appears and in place of two microbes we have four. By this wonderful plan of reproduction one increases to two, two to four, four to eight and eight to sixteen until within the space of five hours we have two million wiggling individuals from a single specimen.

The Death of Hannibal.

Hannibal was made an exile, not as commonly supposed, through Roman influence so much as from the personal animosity of his countrymen. After the defeat at Zimma he turned his attention to the political affairs of Carthage, and inaugurated a system of reform which he carried out so rigorously that he soon found himself intensely hated by a large faction of the Carthaginians. Behind him was the honesty of the country, however, and, finding he could not be swerved from his purpose, the rogues in office attempted to assassinate him. Finding that his death had been determined on Hannibal left Carthage, went to Tyre, and thence to the dominions of Antiochus, whom he soon enlisted in war with Rome. The war proved a failure, and Antiochus was ordered to surrender Hannibal, who got news of the demand and made his escape. Roman hatred followed him to Bithynia, and, finding himself on the point of being given up, he died from poison. The story that he once had a meeting at Ephesus with his old enemy, Scipio Africanus, is told on fairly good authority.

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A little Italian who came to Rockland last summer had never seen snow, and a recent storm was a great surprise. Looking out of his window and noticing some of the snow on the walk, he cried out: "I guess one of the lime kilns is busted." And then seeing some everywhere, he continued: "All the lime kilns must have busted."—Kennebec Journal.

A Secret.

If all the ladies knew the simple secret that a bad complexion is due to a disordered liver, there would be fewer sallow faces and blotchy skins. This important organ must be kept active and healthy to insure a clear and rosy color. Dr. J. A. McLean's Liver & Kidney Balm as a purifier, beats all the creams and lotions in existence and will produce a more permanent effect. Removes bad taste in the mouth, offensive breath, yellow tinge in the skin, wind on the stomach and that dull, bilious feeling which so surely indicates the torpid liver. Price \$1.00 per bottle. Snipes & Kinnersly, Drug Co.

"But, sire," urged Marshal Murat. "if you take this step and it turns out disastrously for France, what can you say in vindication of yourself?" "My vindication," said Napoleon, sternly, "can safely be left with the American newspapers of 1894-5."—Chicago Tribune.

Many stubborn and aggravating cases of rheumatism that were believed to be incurable and accepted as life legacies, have yielded to Chamberlain's Pain Balm, much to the surprise and gratification of the sufferers. One application will relieve the pain and stiffening and its continued use insures an effectual cure. For sale by Blakely & Houghton Druggists.

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With a scornful glance in the direction of the girl with the chemie hair, he thrust his head resolutely under the blanket.—The Idiot.

Mrs. Hartford—I voted for Mr. Tewksbury. Mrs. Trotter—I am surprised at that. You are a Democrat and he is a Republican. Mrs. Hartford—I know, but he has such lovely black eyes and such a cute mustache.—The Scoffer.

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