

THE WEST SHORE,

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EVENINGS AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

The President and family receive informally in the evening, sometimes in the red room and sometimes in the library. These visits, however, are only made by intimate personal friends, or by those warranted through their acquaintance to call in a social manner.

COAL PRODUCTION.

The coal production of the world has enormously increased during the last 30 years. The six principal coal producing countries are Great Britain, Belgium, the United States, France, Prussia and Austria, including Hungary.

A NOTE FOR BEER DRINKERS.

A general impression prevails that "ignorance is bliss." This, says the Medical Examiner, manifestly depends on the nature of the ignorance and the nature of the bliss; for example, it surely cannot be a blissful state to be acquainted with the following preparations that are advertised, and we presume, used by town and country brewers.

AUSTRALIAN OPINIONS OF THE AMERICAN RAILWAY SYSTEM.

The report of the Commissioners for Victoria to the American International Exhibition, says of American railroads: "The Americans are justly entitled to the highest rank in the mechanical arts and appliances. The simplest hint of a mechanical idea is, by their native ingenuity, perseverance and mechanical skill, worked out to proportions which any one who has not resided among them would scarcely conceive."

"The Americans never tried to make a good common road, and the railway system was introduced at the nick of time, and was quickly and universally adopted. It is the West which owes most to railways, for in the Eastern States the rivers are open for seven months of every year, bringing cargo and passengers to the cities upon the coast."

THE MATHEMATICS OF STRIKES.

The following remarks of Sir Edmund Beckett, Q. C., in a communication to the Times, will be read with interest in the present crisis: "It is surprising how little the men have yet realized the fundamental pieces of mathematics of unionism, viz., that even a successful strike of a difference of, say, a tenth for a week is a loss, unless it is followed by 10 times a week of the higher wages, and so for any other fraction."

EXPORTS OF PETROLEUM.

Six years ago our exports of crude and refined oil amounted to an aggregate of 90,000,000 gallons. This was in 1872. Three years later, the total had risen to 140,000,000 gallons. In 1877 the export was, in round numbers, 248,000,000 gallons. The increase in the yields of the Pennsylvania oil fields has kept pace with the demand abroad and at home—the average yield in 1870 having been about 13,000 barrels per day, while in 1877 it had risen to an average of more than 35,000 barrels daily.

THE DUTCH IN HOLLAND.

The Department of State has received a report on the social and political condition of the Dutch, from the Minister of the United States to The Hague. As an illustration of the carelessness and stolidness of the Dutch, the Minister says that there has not been a bank failure in Holland during the last 40 years, and that the paper money of the banks during that time has been equal to gold.

THOROUGHBREED HEREFORD HEIFER.

consequently, of everything they have to buy, until they meet again in February? An arbitration may be a less temporary evil than a strike, though I am by no means sure of that as a general rule, and that is not saying much for them.

THE TELEPHONE IN THE ARMY.

The German Military Department, always on the watch to make use of the latest scientific discoveries, has naturally devoted its attention at once to the telephone. In the last number of Militair Wochenblatt we notice a report on the practicability of its use in warfare for maintaining communication with pickets and outlying posts.

MINERAL OIL IN A LAVA OF MOUNT Etna.

In the localities in which reaches from the foot of Mount Etna, in a south-southeasterly direction, near the village of Paterna, there is a prehistoric doleritic lava, containing olivine, which surrounds the clay deposits of a mud volcano, and which has been examined by Sig. Orazio Silvestri. Under the microscope the lava shows an angitic principal mass with a quantity of olivine and many white transparent crystals of labradorite. The lava contains numerous round or irregular cavities which are coated with arragonite, and which are filled with mineral oil.

MODIFICATIONS IN THE TELEPHONE.

Some modifications of the telephone have been brought to the notice of the Academy of Sciences, Paris, by M. Brugnet. A plate of thin sheet iron having a black lead pencil pressing slightly on the center is connected by wires with the two ends of the bobbin wire of a Bell telephone. Instead of the magnetic bar, one of soft iron is used. In the circuit a battery of two bichloride elements is placed, and the plate vibrated by the voice causes vibrations in the black lead, and so in the resistance of the circuit and the intensity of the permanent current. Thus attractions and non-attractions are produced in the electro-magnet of the receiving end, and the sound of the voice is made audible.

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It is surprising how little the men have yet realized the fundamental pieces of mathematics of unionism, viz., that even a successful strike of a difference of, say, a tenth for a week is a loss, unless it is followed by 10 times a week of the higher wages, and so for any other fraction. Therefore, a six months' strike for a 10% rise, against a fall, will require five years of the higher wages to prevent it being a loss; and that is determined by other circumstances long before five years, or two, or one. An unsuccessful strike is, of course, a dead loss forever, and a double one, for it is first a loss to their men and their fellows, who are taxed for them by the union; and, secondly, a loss of all the masters' profits, which would have come back to working men in paying for more labor.

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A HEREFORD HEIFER.

In a former issue we gave our readers a portrait of the Hereford bull "Success," a Centennial-premium animal, owned by the leading breeder of Herefords in this country, Mr. T. L. Miller, of Fisher, Illinois. The heifer shown in this paper is a daughter of "Success," and if our readers will compare the two portraits, they will see how fully the grand old sire transmits his characteristic form and markings. We are glad also to show the breed because it is coming into prominence among graziers in this country and has many qualities to claim attention.

ZINC IN ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY.

At the recent meeting of the American Institute of Engineers, Dr. Thomas M. Drown read a brief paper on the employment of pulverized zinc in analytical chemistry, especially in iron analysis. He showed that by the very simple and direct zinc method results were obtained within one-tenth of one per cent., in quantitative determinations of iron in ores, of those reached with the hydrogen method.

