

A GEOLOGICAL CURIOSITY.

The geological wonder known as the Ringing rocks, says the Reading (Pa.) *Times and Dispatch*, are in Montgomery county. Ringing hill, as the people there call the eminence on which the celebrated rocks are found, is on the farm of Abraham Mensch, in Pottsgrove township, three miles northeast of Pottstown. The Ringing rocks cover a space of about three-quarters of an acre. In this tract, boulders are piled upon boulders of all shapes and forms, and so promiscuously arranged that considerable agility is required to walk over them without falling. As one steps from rock to rock, a ringing sound, produced by the nails in the boot-heels, is plainly heard. On tapping the stones with a hammer quite remarkable acoustic properties are revealed. Some of them give forth a rich, full tone which would probably vie with the best bell metal if the stones were fashioned into bells. One of them in particular, from its depth of tone, is known as the State House bell. This was at one time among the largest of the rocks. It has been broken off, however, but still has preserved its strong, full tone. The general sound produced by striking the smaller stones resembles that of a blacksmith's anvil, some having a little clearer ring than others, and no two sounding just alike. In passing from one to another of the larger rocks, one is reminded of the tapping of car wheels by the train inspectors.

We have not heard any satisfactory explanation of the cause of the ringing or bell-like sound of these rocks. Some say it is owing to there being a cavern under them. This, however, can have nothing to do with it, as when the rocks are removed they still have the same sound. One large and sonorous boulder was taken to the Centennial, and attracted a great deal of attention there. Another was sent to England a year or two ago. There is probably a metallic substance in this group of boulders to which the ringing sound may be attributed. We have not heard, however, of any geological analysis being made. Half a mile east of the Ringing rocks, and in the same range of hills, there is another group of boulders which is much visited. Here a lofty pile of rocks surmounts a cavity of considerable depth, the whole being known as the Stone House. Near by the Stone House is a huge boulder, some 15 or 20 feet high, which, from its peculiar contour, is called the Hay Stack. Besides their acoustic qualities, there is another singular circumstance about the Ringing rocks which visitors rarely fail to notice. Many of them have very strange marks or indentations. At some points these resemble the track of a horse's hoof. Others are like the track of a wagon. Some of the larger indentations are said to resemble an elephant's foot, and *fac similes* of the human foot are claimed to be found among the smaller ones.

AN UNEXPECTED COMET.—Dr. Gould, formerly of the Dudley observatory, Albany, N. Y., but now Director of the Cordoba observatory, South America, has telegraphed to New York that a great comet is in the neighborhood of the sun, passing northward. No large comet has been expected this year, and no small one at this season, Wincke's comet not being due until near the end of this year. Reports by mail are awaited with great interest. Should Dr. Gould's dispatch be confirmed, a new member must be admitted to our cometary system; and possibly the nations north of the equator may also be treated to a sight of it.

The amount of silver coin in Holland is estimated at 144,000,000 florins, or about \$60,000,000, of which there were recently about 75,000,000 florins in the Netherlands Bank. The gold circulation, inclusive of the bank's reserve, is estimated at 50,000,000 florins, or about \$21,000,000.

BARE BRICK WALLS—THEIR INFLUENCE ON HEALTH.

The New York *Times* of January 14th has the following: "At the meeting of the Board of Health yesterday, a report was received from Dr. E. H. Janes, Assistant Sanitary Superintendent, in relation to an inspection of the recent additions to the new court-house. Dr. Janes says: 'I found that the interior walls consist of brick uncovered by plaster or paint, and thereby present an absorbing and evaporating surface, which, in my opinion, is detrimental to the health of those who daily occupy these apartments. From its porous quality, brick readily absorbs not only air and moisture from the ground and atmosphere, but animal vapors and impurities constantly escaping from the lungs and skin of those confined between brick walls are also absorbed and exhaled in turn with the regular changes and purifications of the in-door atmosphere.'

"I am aware that the experiments of Potenkofer are cited as an argument in favor of bare brick walls, on the ground that air readily passes through them. But persons holding these views forget that animal impurities do not possess the diffusible power of gaseous bodies, but, on the other hand, adhere to porous structures; and while it may be claimed that foul air will, to some extent, escape through the brick walls from an unventilated apartment, the fact remains that air in finding its way through the wall leaves most of its foulness behind. Bricks so exposed become in time exceedingly filthy, and cannot be thoroughly cleaned by any amount of scrubbing. I would therefore recommend that the interior walls of these rooms be covered with some material that will prevent the absorption and subsequent exhalation of moisture and atmospheric impurities.' The report of Dr. Janes was transmitted to the Surrogate, whose clerks occupy the rooms referred to in the document."

THE COMING WAR SHIP.—Prof. Lowenthal, a German, thinks that the coming war ship will be made of India rubber. His idea is to make the entire hull of rubber one foot in thickness, strengthened below the water line by a light steel frame. The vessel will be driven by an ordinary steam engine, and will have no masts. At the bow will be a projecting spar, to which torpedoes will be affixed, and the entire crew, including the helmsman, will be on the lower deck out of the range of shot. When a cannon ball strikes the India-rubber ship, it will pass directly through it above the heads of the crew, and the hole made by it will instantly close. Paying no attention to such futile attacks, the India-rubber vessel will steam toward her adversary and explode her torpedo. The doomed vessel will instantly sink, while her elastic destroyer will be driven hundreds of yards backward by the recoil following the explosion. Such a vessel, says the inventor, could destroy all the navies of the world, and after her work was done she could be made as strong as ever with the aid of two or three bottles of cement.

THE LARGEST OF LAND ANIMALS.—In the *American Journal of Science and Arts*, Prof. Marsh describes the largest land animal yet known to have existed on the globe. Its name is *Atlantosaurus immanis*. The thigh bone of this creature is over 8 feet long, with a thickness at the larger end of 25 inches, though the bone has no true head. A comparison of this bone with the femur of a crocodile would indicate that the fossil saurian, if of similar proportions, had a total length of 115 feet. That the reptile was 100 feet long when alive is at least probable. The other bones of this animal that have been found are proportionately gigantic; caudal vertebra has a transverse diameter of more than 16 inches. All the bones of this reptile yet discovered are in the Yale College museum. They are from the Upper Jurassic of Colorado.

GOOD MANNERS.

A person's manner is quite a different thing from a person's manners. The former indicates very plainly the style and character of the individual, while the latter are the result of training and association. It has been well said, that a lady may possess very excellent manners, and yet have a very unfortunate manner, and the reverse. To illustrate: There is a girl who has been carefully taught from her childhood how to enter and leave a room, how to address and introduce people, how to behave at table and in company, yet notwithstanding continual lessons in deportment, she has a manner which is not winning. She is proud, or vain, or cold, or disdainful, and this is shown by her manner even when her manners are agreeable.

We often go into a little store kept by a woman whom we desire to help by our custom. But nearly always her air of supercilious indifference, and her icy remoteness from the least interest in us or our purchases, sends us away half frozen. There is an atmosphere of forbiddingness about the shop, and we are glad to get out of it into the sunshine. On the other hand, we know certain saleswomen in some of the great stores of New York, who are so sunny, so delightful in their way of serving us, that to buy from them is a perfect pleasure, and they often persuade us into taking what we do not really want, solely by the charm of their sweet, unaffected grace.

To have a womanly, dignified and cordial manner you must have love to God and your fellow-beings in your heart. To have good manners you must use them every day at home, and not keep them merely for company. Fine gold and diamonds never wear out, but are as beautiful after years of use as at first, and far more precious.—*Christian at Work*.

A new varnish for protecting metallic surfaces, especially that of iron, is believed to have been found in the application of euphorbium gum. The history of this suggestion is stated to be as follows: The workmen of Natal are said to have noticed that when they cut certain plants of the *euphorbiaceae*, a thin, adherent layer of gum remained upon them which effectually protected the blade from rusting. To determine the extent to which this protective influence could be relied upon, the experiment was tried of coating sheet iron with the gum and immersing it in the sea water of South Africa, which is highly detrimental in its action upon iron. The trial is affirmed to have proved so successful that a varnish was made of the gum dissolved in spirits, and this was applied to ships' bottoms and to other metallic surfaces. The adherence of the gum after the evaporation of the spirits is said to be perfect. A ten-years' trial of this preparation at the Chatham dockyard, in England, is reported to have given equally satisfactory results, the iron so varnished having remained uninjured after exposure, during that period, to the corrosive action of the water of the docks. In Africa, where the gum is abundant, it is said to have long been in use as a preventive of the ravages of the white ants. Its virtues are ascribed to its perfect insolubility in water, and to its poisonous qualities and extreme bitterness, which make it an excellent protective agent against the lower forms of marine and terrestrial life.

WOOD CARVING is an industry which is carried to considerable perfection among the Germans, and it is fostered by the establishment of carving schools, particularly in districts where the wood used for the work—the Spanish walnut, the finest and best walnut the Germans have—is plentiful. Eighty of these carving schools exist at the present time in Germany, and 80 in Wurttemberg; but so much importance is attached to the results, which have flowed or are expected to flow, from these institutions, that the number of the carving schools in Germany is to be increased to 200.