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NEW AND CURIOUS.

The Application of Explosives.

Explosives find application in many industries. The farmer uses them in breaking boulders, grubbing stumps and felling trees.

The iron-founder uses them in breaking up large castings; the iron-smelter, to clear out obstructions in blast furnaces while the latter are still in operation.

Dynamite has been employed in fishing, since submarine explosions of it will kill or stun fish for a long distance about the charge. This method of fishing has been prohibited by law, but guns are employed for projecting harpoons in the whale fishery.

Nitro-glycerine is used for shooting oil wells to free them from the solid paraffine with which they become choked.

Dynamite has been used to knock out the blocking from the ways when launching ships. Fired on an iron plate placed on the top of a pile and covered with a tamping of clay or earth, it has successfully and economically replaced the pile driver. It has been found efficient in excavating holes in which to plant telegraph and telephone poles; in breaking down ice dams to prevent inundations; in blowing up buildings to prevent the spread of conflagrations; in razing unsafe walls of burned buildings; in destroying wrecks which endanger navigation, and even in freeing vessels which are hard aground on shoals.—[Prof. Charles E. Munroe in Popular Science Monthly.

A new railway bridge is in course of construction over Loch Etive, at the Falls of Lora, in Scotland. When completed, its span of 500 feet will be the second largest in Europe, coming next to that of the Forth bridge.

The Houston and Texas Central Railway has recently created the office of Chief Gardener, says the Railway Review, the incumbent of which will have charge of making and taking care of the depot grounds and flower gardens at all points along the line from Groesbeck and Dallas, Texas.

The London Lancet has recently cited some instances where diseases were communicated by holy water, and many samples were taken from churches in different parts of Holland. The result was the discovery in most cases of abundant bacterial growth, with the occasional presence of staphylococci and other pathogenic forms. Two guinea pigs that were injected with the sediment from a font of a church in Amsterdam died in thirty hours.

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