

THE VERY BEGINNING.

Something about the Formation of This World as It "Whirled in Space."

In the burning mass that composed our earth at first, there existed copper, sulphur and all the other substances that are on and in our earth now, only all were in a gaseous state.

What effect did this intense cold have upon the mass of fiery gas, sent spinning out through its depths?

Then came another struggle, as quickly as the rain fell on the hot crust, it was changed into vapor again, and sent up into the air to repeat its work.

During all this time there were terrific peals of thunder and flashes of lightning. Whenever any liquid is changing into a vapor, electricity is produced.

Even though the rain was about to immediately change into vapor, it must have cooled the earth's crust a little, coming directly from the icy realms of space.

There could have been no life in those days—neither plant life nor animal life. In the first place the crust was too hot; neither animal nor plant could live on it, nor in the waters that touched it.

The corpses could, however, be educated to deal with the bacteria, and the future of preventive medicines would be the education of the white blood corpuscles.

When I began steamboating along the banks of the Illinois, upper and lower Mississippi river, and it required a small army of men to handle the business.

When one came into general use it curtailed the traffic, and the fact that the river country was denuded of wood far back from the river wound up the wood business, so that now there are not more than three or four boats engaged in the traffic.

ANTIQUITY OF THE TELEPHONE.

The Priests of India Have Used It for 2,000 Years.

"The principle of the telephone has been known for 2,000 years in India," was the rather incredible statement made the other night by Fred Amersbury, who has just returned to New York after a two years' sojourn in the land of striped tigers and wonderful fakirs.

"I was in a town called Panj, about 200 miles from Madras, and while there became acquainted with an English officer named Harrington, who was a prime favorite with the natives because on one occasion he had saved a priest from drowning.

"There are two temples in the village about a mile apart. In the interior, and on the ground floor of each is a small circular structure which is guarded day and night from the natives as well as from strangers, and is supposed to be the abiding place of the 'governing spirit'.

"We were unable to determine the composition of the wire that connected the two buildings. It was some kind of metal, but neither steel, copper nor brass, although it closely resembled the latter.

"We learned that the telephone that we saw had been in use for thirty years. The priests were very old men and they remembered that the line of communication had been renewed only once during their incumbency.

When a burglar, murderer or other common Russian felon has been tried, found guilty and sentenced to penal servitude, he is, as a rule, released from the solitary confinement in which he has been held pending trial.

The number of books published in this country last year was 4,427. This is something more than 2,000 less than were published in 1896.

The old time colored people in the south, those who were slaves, have no other method of reckoning dates, occurrences, and especially births and marriages, than to refer them by associations to events that happened about the same time.

When the first earthquake in Norfolk County, Va., was felt, it was a right smart size gal den, and could spin an' weave my ten cuts a day for my ole misus. Dat's how ole I is."

THE PROFITS OF SODA WATER.

"There is much profit in the soda water business," well, I should say there is, remarked a druggist in New York.

"The proprietor is an ex-hoodlum who landed here in the island. This hoodlum lives his little pennyworth life in the gay capital, only to be overwhelmed by other land proprietors, who in their turn, appropriate the territory and make way again for hoodlums.

"To begin with, a saving is often made in lowering the pressure, and the result is the water doesn't sparkle. It is insipid, and you instinctively feel when you drink it that it lacks something.

"A Russian legend relates that when St. Joseph returned from his flight into Egypt he found his shoes in great want of repair.

"It is unfortunately the case that every small boy is not in a position financially to become the owner of a pair of roller skates.

Now, why should this be so? For what reason is it that the small boy is seldom as happy as the man?

Few, even among the most thoughtful of the genus homo, ever stop to consider the immense size of the great Greenland or Bright whale (Balena mysticetus, L.) Nilsson says that it will weigh over 100 tons.

The women inventors of Pennsylvania are many, and there is one bright woman who has a barrel hooping machine which brings her in \$20,000 a year.

"Why?" exclaimed the Jackal, "the Lion is a Lion, Thief, Robber, Ghoul and Murderer, and is not worthy of the Friendship of the Poolecat!"

A new lubricant, the use of which is advocated in The Austrian Railroad Journal, is mustard oil. It remains perfectly fluid at the low temperature of 14 degs. Fahrenheit, and will keep unchanged for years.

THE LANDLORD IN CUBA.

The proprietor is an ex-hoodlum who landed here in the island. This hoodlum lives his little pennyworth life in the gay capital, only to be overwhelmed by other land proprietors.

"Ob, well, now I don't care to give away many of the secrets of the business, but I don't object to giving the uninitiated a gentle hint.

No scenery is grand on an empty stomach. I remember a distinguished editor in New York asking me one time what was the best hotel to go to in the Catskills.

A curious centenary was recently celebrated by the women of Honolulu, in Hawaii. It was just 100 years since the man died who constructed a gigantic carbon vessel, which is kind of counterpart of the famed vase at Heidelberg.

"He marched with Sherman to the sea," said the foreigner, when the pony was brought to him. The boy said the "mag" would wake up after the first mile.

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