

## ARABS IN AFRICA.

The Three Classes Found Along the Coast of Zanzibar.

The so-called "Arabs" may be divided into three classes—the true Arab, the Mswahili, (plural Washahili) and, lastly, any wild up-country native who may have willingly or unwillingly joined the Moslem caravan, particularly if he can sport a garment and tie a dirty piece of calico round his head by way of turban. The first is the pure-blooded Arab of Arabia; the second comes from Muscat. The generally comes from Muscat. The Zanzibar coast has been connected with Southern Arabia from the earliest historic times. Two immigrations of Persians are recorded, the last about 1000 A. D. The Arabs and Persians intermarried with the natives, and their descendants in the Mswahili of the Zanzibar coast. The Mswahili are useful, in that they are willing to undertake long journeys. Considering themselves vastly superior to the Washenzi, or wild men, who are the best porters from Zanzibar, they are to a certain extent capable of leading, and are valuable as headmen over a caravan. On the other hand, they have inherited the worst features of the Arab race, treachery and cunning, while they are as lazy as the aboriginal African, and delight in cruelty to man and beast. An Arab caravan leaving for the interior would usually consist of one or two white Arabs, accompanied by half a dozen relatives of darker blood; a number of Mswahili of the better class to act as guards, headmen, artisans, etc., and a rabble of porters, consisting of the lower Mswahili, often personal slaves of the Arab; and frequently a contingent of up-country natives returning home, preferably Wanyamwezi, who are excellent carriers. They take with them the usual barter goods, with a large proportion of guns and powder; but the success of the expedition depends too often on their savage warriors. Arrived up-country, they seem to have several methods of procedure. Should ivory offer in the country of a powerful chief, they have recourse to purchase in the ordinary way; but it pays them much better to go further afield among smaller tribes, where fire-arms are unknown. Here, should they consider themselves strong enough, the usual murderous raids upon peaceful villages, the horrors of which have been so often described, begins at once. Should their forces seem insufficient the end is as certain, but the destruction is delayed. There is generally some discontented brother or cousin of the chief ready to welcome any opportunity of obtaining the supreme power, in which case he and his followers are supplied with the arms and ammunition bought for this purpose from the coast and civil war begins.—Murray's Magazine.

## HABITS OF RAVENS.

The Black Character Attained by the Evil-Genius of the Fable.

Most persons have faint ideas on the habits of ravens. Not a few merely know them as the sable birds which fed the prophet in the wilderness, and are helpless from sheer ignorance in solving the celebrated riddle of "Alice in Wonderland." "Why is a raven like a writing desk?" The poets depict ravens obscure, ill-omened, carrion-eating fowl. No artist ever painted a battle or the march of an army without them, and if the time be winter and snow has fallen upon the battlefield ravens are, it must be confessed, effective adjuncts, as Vorestehagen found them. Perhaps the farmer would hardly hold the bird in equal esteem, as he connects it with the slaughter of his sickly sheep and tells grim tales how ravens invariably pick out the eyes of any weakling among the flock and next devour its entrails, and, supposing he fell on the mountain side in a fit, would do the same kind office with equal nonchalance for himself. Etymology declares that the bird's name has no connection with the verb "to ravine," being derived in reality from its hoarse croak, a root *ra* which underlies the word raven in all modern languages; and yet the verb well expresses the marauding nature of the raven. A hawk or a crow is thievish; a raven is thievish with the addition of violence. Its habits may be studied in many an innyard, (for hostlers, from some remote reason—is it because hostler is derived from old stealer?—to keep it as a pet.) Where it is especially common, bold and defiant. It takes what it chooses from the poultry, digs its tremendous beak into children's unprotected calves, sometimes over the stable cats, and ruffles up its feathers and shows fight to all strange dogs. It forms an excellent type of the bully, a disappearing as soon as its master appears with a stick, and retiring for the next hour to sulk behind the old coach which forms an excellent roosting place in the hen house. Considering the black character which it has obtained, it is not surprising that the raven is diminishing in numbers everywhere in Great Britain. Its existence is incompatible with regular farming, nor can it bear the advance of population upon its old haunts. It is the largest fowl that in many places the young farmer armed with a gun and a dog, has proved very fatal to the raven. It is the first victim to all to the keeper, and what is far worse for the race of ravens than mere shooting is the tearing down of their nests.—Gentleman's Magazine.

## AN AERIAL TORPEDO.

A New Engine of Destruction Invented by A Kansas Physician.

For over a year Dr. H. W. Parsons, of Wamego, Kas., has been at work upon a machine called an "aerial torpedo" for which he has obtained a patent in his country. The War Department officials have written favorably of the new invention, and it has awakened a lively interest among war officials in European kingdoms. Briefly described, the "aerial torpedo" is a cylinder containing numerous barrels or recesses from which dynamite cartridges are dropped, the cylinder being suspended from a balloon and the explosives released by a simple mechanism controlled by electricity. The model, it is said, works to the entire satisfaction of all who have seen it tested.

While a balloon that can be directed or guided in its course may be used against an ordinary atmosphere, and steered and controlled by the operator, who also discharges the bombs, yet Dr. Parsons holds that he can accomplish with a captive balloon all that is needed to display the extraordinary features of his invention. The location of the balloon could then be regulated by the reeling or unreeling of the cable which holds it captive, just as a boy changes the position of his kite by winding or unwinding his kite-string. It is not the inventor's idea that this machine can be aimed at a man and kill him with a gun, nor that it will do away with cavalry, artillery or infantry, but that another corps of, say, 300 men manning 100 machines, and drilled to handle them, will accompany every brigade, and being supported by the infantry, cavalry and artillery will, when occasion favors their use, do more effective service than the whole brigade could possibly do, so that the General in command would maneuver his troops in such a manner as to bring his corps into action and allow them to do their work, the infantry, artillery and cavalry thus forming but auxiliaries to the band of 300. Now, watch their work. It is estimated that each siege balloon will contain from 200 to 1,000 half-pound cartridges of explosive 60 per cent dynamite, arranged in such a manner that they are under the control of an operator, who is stationed on the ground and can discharge one bomb at a time. One hundred machines will give this corps 20,000 bombs at one charge, after which they may be reeled back and charged again every two hours or less, making six voyages in twelve hours and carrying the enormous load of 120,000 cartridges, or throwing the astonishing amount of sixty tons of explosive into a fortification in a single day. Dr. Parsons believes that by using this apparatus modern military tactics will be revolutionized, and that between nations having such powerful resources at command arbitration will speedily usurp the place of war.—Chicago Journal.

## SOME SHARP TRUTHS.

A Few Pictures of New York's "Aristocratic" Society Leaders.

Some of these days sharp pens will toll facts about New York society people. They are rapid, they are ignorant, they are conceited, they are thick-skinned, they are selfish, they are small, they are narrow gauged.

Many of them are freaks in physical development.

If I were a girl and were built as some of the occupants of the boxes in the Metropolitan Opera-house on opera nights are, with bones prominent, with figures utterly undeveloped, with knuckly fingers, with conspicuous ears, lacking in every element of physical attraction, so help me heaven I would go into a convent and spend my days on bended knees imploring an early departure to some land where physical conditions were not a necessity. And, as the women are awkward and bony and angular and impertinent and disregardful of the comforts of others, so some of the men are the very people of all God's creatures who should be labeled and stuck on the plat-forms of our dime museums. Their heads are little, their eyes are weak, their mustaches are more or less developed, their necks are long, their chests are narrow, their legs are knock-kneed, their expressions are vacant, they loll and lie and suck canes and giggle and sipper, and seek to convey the impression that they are women in disguise. Some of them strike you exactly as female impersonators do in the negro minstrel show.

But worse than this.

Worse than that? Certainly; and very much worse. When you come into the parlor of a bank, into the parlor office of a great insurance company, into the sanctum of a man in charge of a daily newspaper, into the inner recesses of potency and influence, and find grave men discussing the flap dolefulisms of social distinction and social etiquette, what are we to think? The descendants of a peddler lead New York society to-day. The descendants of a flatboatman stand side by side with them. Fishmongers, beef sellers, onion dealers, old clothes men, tailors, butchers, wagon makers, brewers, storekeepers, rich, after years of self-denial, stand like golden statues at the gateway of society, barring entrance against men of mental worth, of moral excellence, with unfiled pockets. I don't think the American people begin to appreciate the blindest of nonsense, of silliness, of the fat-wittedness of New York society.—Howard, in Boston Globe.

—The poultry droppings on the plot intended for onions, and have the best as fine as possible before putting out the seed or seeds.

—Our friends conversations, our thoughts as we pass along the streets, our spirit in the transaction of business, all have some amount, small though it be, of moral value.—Gould-bourn.

—Hello, Jones! I hear that Charley has married Miss Smith. Who solemnized the marriage, Mr. Textual or Parson Creed? "Neither, my dear boy. It was Miss Smith's mother. She's living with them."—Boston Transcript.

## THE LIMEKILN CLUB.

Major Jones Is Accused of Grave Offense, But Is Allowed to Escape.

The opening of the meeting was delayed about a quarter of an hour by the eccentric conduct of Judge Keho, who took a drink of water on entering the hall without having first inspected the dipper. In cleaning up the room during the afternoon the janitor had found an overcoat button, a bradawl, a pocket-comb, a knife blade and six shirt buttons, and had carelessly tossed them into the dipper and forgotten the circumstance.

When Brother Keho had gurgled down a pint of water he paused in astonishment. Then he began to kick and claw and cough and dance, and it was not until he had run over Pickles Smith and trampled upon Giveadam Jones that any one suspected the cause of his hilarity. He was then seized and held against the wall while the pocket-comb and bradawl were extracted from his teeth, and with the aid of a number of thumps on the back from various sources he managed to cough up most of the other missing articles, although in so doing he broke down a bench and upset Elder Toos. As soon as the meeting was opened he was fined \$27,000 for disturbing the peace, and was ordered to make all repairs at his own cost.

On the opening of the meeting the secretary announced a communication from Eufaula, Ala., making charges against Major Drawbar Jones, an honorary member of the club. He was charged with:

1. Going on a rabbit hunt while his wife lay at the point of death.
2. Putting burrs under the saddle of his old mule to get up an artificial enthusiasm.

Brother Gardner said that it was a question for debate, and Giveadam Jones arose and observed that he could never vote to convict a brother on the first charge. While there might be no question that Major Jones went out to hunt rabbits while his wife lay dying, what was his object? Was it for amusement, or was it to provide her with rabbit soup? The accused should be given the benefit of the doubt. As to charge No. 2, that was a different matter. A man who would put burrs under his saddle, whether the saddle was on a horse or a mule, deserved the severest condemnation.

Waydown Bebees couldn't excuse the Major for going on that rabbit hunt. A dying wife does not care for soup of any sort. As to the burrs under the saddle, they might have got there by accident. Even if they were put there by design there was no evidence that the mule objected. He owned a mule whose demeanor could not be changed one iota by all the burrs in the State of Michigan.

Shindig Watkins, Elder Toos, Samuel Shin and others argued pro and con, and the question of whether the Major should be bounced was put to a vote. The vote stood 43 for and 44 against, and it was thus escaped by the skin of his teeth.—Detroit Free Press.

## RINGS IN HISTORY.

Interesting Information Furnished by a New York Antiquarian.

"Is there any thing of interest regarding old rings? Why, yes, the subject is full of interest. Finger rings have not only for many centuries been used as articles of adornment, but they have also been associated with important affairs of life. The King's ring formed part of his insignia of office. Eternity is represented in the form of the ring—no beginning, no end—and who will not recognize it as the lover's token?"

"The very earliest Biblical writings mention finger rings; settings of rubies, emeralds and chrysolite were particularly valued by the ladies of Palestine.

"Homer makes no reference to rings and they were probably introduced into Greece at a later period; but in the time of Solon a freeman of Greece always wore a signet ring of gold, silver or bronze. Greeks at a later period wore several at a time and frequently set with precious stones, which would indicate from that time down they were considered as ornaments.

"Plain gold rings were the pride of the Spartans. Iron rings were worn by the ancient Romans; only those of distinguished rank could wear gold, and they were of so large a size that it was necessary to discard them in summer, and different kinds were used for different seasons. Some were of great value, that of the Empress Faustina cost \$200,000 and that of Domitia \$300,000.

"The making of rings was an important part of the goldsmith's art in the Middle Ages. For a time the place of gems was usurped by rich enamel, and the workmanship was often of the highest character. Cellini being foremost in producing artistic results.

"The importance of rings as insignia has diminished, but they are still used officially. A newly made Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church is at the present day invested with a ring, by which he is married to the Church. The Pope's ring of steel is in the keeping of the Cardinal Chamberlain, and is broken with a golden hammer on the Pope's death and a new one made for the new Pope.

"Every sergeant-at-law of the English courts, on being sworn in, presents rings of gold, inscribed with mottoes, to such persons as attend the inauguration feast. The value of the rings is proportioned to the rank of each recipient and one of large dimensions is presented to the Queen."—Jewelers' Weekly.

—The countries between Texas and Cape Horn contain about 65,000,000 people, and their territory is about twice as large as ours.

—A Bayville (Ga.) horse which lost all its teeth in a recent accident has been fitted with a set of false ones.

—The following advertisement lately appeared in a Parisian newspaper: "A lady having a pet dog whose hair is a rich mahogany color, desires to engage a footman with whiskers to match."

—Widows have the call in the East. With all the superfluity of women in New England it is said that seven out of every ten widows under thirty-five re-marry within two years after widowhood.

## UNCLE SAM'S SPECIE.

How Silver Coin Is Transported from Philadelphia to Washington.

Through the Adams Express Company the United States Government is engaged in transferring \$7,000,000 in specie from the \$21,750,000 in the big vaults in the post-office building to the United States Treasury in Washington. One million dollars' worth of the precious metal molded into United States coins is being daily carried out of the post-office building, loaded on Adams express cars and shipped to Washington. The removal of coin is made under the supervision of Major James Mullane, assistant cashier of the National Treasury. He is accompanied by two assistants from Washington. Twenty laborers from the Philadelphia mint, under the direction of Superintendent Fox, complete the working force. The workers are guarded by secret service detectives attached to the Treasury Department, who are unknown to all but the officials from Washington, and their glances never wander from the mountain of silver dollars in the vaults of the post-office.

The specie is tied up in heavy canvas bags, each containing \$1,000, which weigh sixty pounds. These bags are sealed with the Government seal, and before passing from the vault they are carefully scrutinized. After being satisfied as to the correctness in weight and the perfect state of the bag, the express company's inspector seals it with the company's seal. The slightest imperfection is sufficient cause for rejection by the express company's officials. A thousand-dollar bag with a small hole was recently rejected, and had to be recounted and verified before it was allowed to pass the inspectors.

Fifty bags, each containing 1,000 silver dollars, and weighing in the aggregate 3,000 pounds, are loaded upon a carriage or truck. Guarded by two uniformed officers and the eyes of the secret-service detectives, the carriages are wheeled to the elevator and taken down-stairs and through the passage-way to Chest street. At the rear entrance stands a heavy wagon of the Adams Express Company. The contents of the carriage are transferred to the wagon, and, manned by four detectives, the load is conveyed to the main office of the company at Sixteenth and Market streets. These \$50,000 installments are conveyed to the depot until the million dollars are stored at the care of each detective carries two loaded pistols ready for instant action. Two pairs of the finest automatic hand-cuffs and a blackjack complete his defensive outfit. Any attempt to molest the precious load would invite a volley of pistol balls from every detective, as their orders are to shoot upon the slightest attempt at robbery.

When the sixty-pound bags of silver arrive at the main office they disappear as completely as if the earth had opened and swallowed them up. The money is never seen again until its arrival in Washington. Each bag of silver is placed in a heavy oak keg bound with iron and sealed with the Government and express company's seals. These kegs are loaded upon an express-car built expressly for this service and lined with wrought-iron. Each car will carry \$1,000,000 in silver or \$10,000,000 in gold specie. About the movement of the car the closest secrecy is observed. But one person knows when it will start on its journey and to what train it will be attached. Awaiting his orders is a corps of armed detectives.

A few moments before the starting of the train selected to bear the money the car is attached. The detectives are informed, and one detachment is placed in the car. Other detectives distributed through the train closely watch the movements of the passengers. This system of surveillance is continued until the train reaches Washington, when the same method of transfer is employed as occurs at the sub-treasury vaults in this city.—Philadelphia Record.

## THE MOLLUSK WORLD.

What a Naturalist Saw on a Shell-Straw Hat.

But how shall we describe the wealth of the mollusk world which meets us in our researches in the treasury of a coral reef on the tide? Let us land on this shell-straw hat of sand. Why, the whole place is alive! Can it be that the mollusks we have just been visiting in their quiet homes among the sea-weeds have taken to walks abroad, and on dry land, too, in their leisure moments? For as we jump ashore numberless shells of all shapes and sizes start suddenly into life on the beach and run aside to give us place. Legs they must have to get that pace over the uneven shore. There goes a turritella! We shall be safe in handling him by reason of the spiral pyramid which those legs—legs they must be—carry upon their back. Moreover, he makes comparatively bad time in getting out of our way, for a turritella is an unwieldy thing for legs to carry over an uneven shore. We lift him up gingerly with thumb and forefinger to look for those legs, and the secret is out. Of legs we can see nothing, but closely fitted into the opening of the shell, as if originally made for the place, we discover the brilliant scarlet and white mandibles of the hermit crab. These, then, were crabs that were in such a hurry to get out of our way—crabs, certainly, and of considerable size, too, some of them; some babies among them only big enough to fit the smallest whelk; others large enough to fill with their mandibles the opening in a marbled turbo, largest of its species. But why call these gentle, they are the most gregarious of their kind. Of their battles to secure a coveted tenement we could tell some stories.—Blackwell's Magazine.

—Inventor Edison, together with Hon. Thomas Lowry, of Minneapolis has patented a steam "linguagraph." This "linguagraph" is designed to be used on locomotives in place of the steam whistle. The machine talks instead of shrieks. Instead of whistling once for down brakes, it bellows the word "brakes." It is all a question of pipes, valves and keyboard, and when the thing is finally perfected it will tell the names of all the stations along the line.

## PLANS FOR CRIME.

Cowardice and Fear of Burglars and Other Law-Breakers.

The public hardly realizes how very much the safety of the ordinary citizen depends on the carefulness, the sordidness, the calculatingness of crime. Of course that is a characteristic of crime which renders it rarer and more exceptional, if the whole criminal class is willing to take what we call "spot shots" at plunder and violence, when opportunity occurs to them that they have a chance of plunder, or a chance of preventing detection by violence, no police that we could organize would be in any degree equal to their work. The reason why they are at all equal to their work is that we can generally count on the criminal class concentrating their efforts on reasonable chances of success. If they once get, as a class, as reckless in attempting crime as the Muswell Hill burglars, we can not conceivably see how the police could engage successfully skirmishers whose tactics would then be so ineluctable. Hitherto the representatives of order have justly counted on the timidity, the cowardice, the general discouragement of their foes. But if they should ever be unable to count on that, if the fear of society once disappeared or greatly dwindled in the unusual class, worst of all if ever that fear should be replaced by contempt for society, the number of points of attack would be multiplied so enormously that not all the rashness with which the attacks might be made would in any degree compensate for the enormous increase of their number and range. Suppose that all the cheats—who are, of course, criminals at heart—could divest themselves of the fear of the law, and, in consequence, become robbers, where would society be? And yet the cheats are nothing but robbers at heart restrained by the fear of consequences. If the levity which was shown by the Muswell Hill burglars ever took possession of the great army of impostors and rogues so that they suddenly swelled the ranks of the more violent criminals, no machinery of justice of which we know any thing would be equal to the emergency. It would break down as completely as the ordinary machinery for feeding a country would break down in a time of regular famine, and we should see the meaning of moral anarchy. That is why we do not think any sign of genuine levity in the criminal class a trivial matter. If it extended, as we hope and trust it will not, it would be one of the most serious of social symptoms. It would mean a collapse as fatal of the proper means of overpowering crime as there would be of the proper means of conquering disease, in case the number of sick people were suddenly multiplied by ten, and in case the great majority of them should be disposed to pay not the smallest attention to the orders and prescriptions of the brave little army of desperate doctors.—London Spectator.

## OVERWORK ON RAILROADS.

A Practice Which Should Be Prohibited by State Legislation.

If we are to accept in evidence the figures of a contemporary, the minds of railway directors do not seem to feel severely their responsibility for the overwork of their employees. A statement lately published by this authority informs us that during last month almost all the signal-men, engine-drivers, firemen and goods guards on one line were at some time or other on duty for longer than the usual period. Probably as much might be said of the men employed by many other companies. On the line in question thirteen or fourteen hours appears to have been quite a common term, fifteen and even eighteen by no means unusual. It is at the least very doubtful whether the practice of working overtime should be permitted in the case of railway officials. The conditions of their calling are very different from those of other workmen. The responsibilities, the need of alertness and vigilance, and the perplexities of their position are much greater, while at the same time the difficulties and risks interposed by changing weather, fog and darkness are increased also. In these circumstances most un-justified persons will admit that a working day of twelve hours, with little or no interruption of duty, must try materially the senses and energies of any ordinary man. If the teaching of repeated and disastrous mistakes hitherto attributed to fatigue is of any value, there is danger to public safety when this limit is much exceeded. We are well aware that pressure of business, weather and the like may occasionally necessitate overtime work, but such apparently systematic excess as that above mentioned is not to be explained by merely accidental circumstances. The very prevalence of such a condition is proof that a department is doing its work short-handed. What is really needed is a larger staff of employees. The lack of these may, indeed, effect a present gain to the dividend, but this might prove too dear a saving if it were secured at the cost of a railway disaster, and experience teaches that this contingency is not an improbable one.—London Lancet.

The Venus de Medici's head measures around the temples 29 1/2 inches; allow for the wavy hair a half inch and call it 29 inches. I make the waist 27 inches, but as the figure is bending slightly forward it may vary, according as the measure is applied. The neck is 13 inches. A lady friend was so kind as to measure several other young ladies for my benefit, and I do not find such a marked difference. The heads are generally larger and the waists smaller, it is true, but like one instance: Head, 21 1/2 inches; waist, 24 1/2 inches; neck, 13 1/2 inches. The measures were taken over the waist of the tunic. One would suppose the measures would be less if taken after the classical manner, but by some mysterious dispensation of Providence, the waist of the modern woman is acknowledged to measure more when untrammelled. N. Y. Art Student.

—An opportunity to "the population" there are more Massachusetts people in the State of Iowa than in Massachusetts.

## POPULAR SCIENCE.

Researches Into the Velocity of Light, Electricity and Sound.

From an observation of the eclipses of Jupiter's first satellite, in 1675, Roemer, a Danish astronomer, deducted the velocity of light, his calculations establishing for it a velocity of 190,000 miles per second.

M. Foucault succeeded in determining the velocity of light experimentally by means of an apparatus based upon the use of the rotating mirror, and calculated it to be 185,137 miles per second. In 1849 M. Fizeau measured the velocity of light directly, by ascertaining the time it took to travel from Sauresnes to Montmartre (a distance of 28,334 feet) and back again, making a total travel of five and three-quarter miles, nearly. He made use of a toothed wheel revolving at certain known velocities; a pencil of rays being transmitted through an interval between two teeth of the wheel, which was placed at Sauresnes, was reflected by a mirror placed at Montmartre, through a series of tubes and lenses, directly back to the wheel. He found the velocity of light to be 196,000 miles per second.

The mean of the three values above given is 190,385 miles, and the value generally taken as the velocity of light very nearly agrees with it, being 190,000 miles per second.

Wheatstone, by the employment of a rotating mirror and an interrupted coil to give sparks, ascertained the velocity of electricity to be 288,000 miles per second. Kirchhoff estimated this velocity in a wire where it met with no resistance to be 192,924 miles per second. But according to MM. Fizeau and Guennele, its velocity with an iron wire is 62,100 miles, and with a copper wire 111,780 miles per second. These measurements, however, were made with telegraph wires, which induce opposite electricities in the surrounding media, thus producing a resistance which reduces the velocity. The nature of the conductor has some influence on the velocity; but not the thickness of the wire, nor the tension of the electricity.

Direct measurements to ascertain the velocity of sound were made by Moll and Van Beek in 1823. Two hills near Amsterdam, 57,971 feet apart, were taken as stations, and cannon were fired at stated intervals simultaneously at both stations, and the elapsed time between seeing the flash and hearing the sound was noted by chronometers. From these experiments the velocity of sound was estimated to be 1,092.78 feet per second in dry air. But it has been found that the velocity varies with the temperature—i. e., at 32° Fahr., the velocity of sound is 1,090 feet per second and that for every degree of temperature above this 1 1/2 feet must be added to the velocity. Fogs or rains unaccompanied by winds, do not interfere with the velocity of sound, but wind alone will interfere with its velocity materially. There is some reason to believe that loud sound-travel somewhat faster than low ones, which was first remarked by Prof. Mullet while carrying on blasting near Holyhead.

In water the velocity is about 4,700 feet per second, nearly four times as much as in air; in wood, from 12,000 to 16,000 feet; in iron, 17,500 feet; and in copper, 10,500 feet per second.—Safety Valve.

## A PLEASANT VOICE.

It Is to the Heart What Light Is to the Human Eye.

There is no power of love so hard to get and keep as a kind voice. A kind hand is deaf and dumb. It may be rough in flesh and blood, yet do the work of a soft heart, and do it with a soft touch. But there is no one thing that love so much needs as a sweet voice to tell what it means and feels, and it is hard to get and keep it in the right tone. One must start in youth and be on the watch night and day, at work, at play, to get and keep a voice that shall speak at all times the thought of a kind heart. But this is the time when a sharp voice is most apt to be got. You often hear boys and girls say words at play with a quick, sharp tone, as if it were the snap of a whip. When one of them gets vexed you will hear a voice that sounds as if it were made up of a snarl, a whine and a bark. Such a voice often speaks worse than the heart feels. It shows more ill-will in the tone than in the words. It is often in mirth that one gets a voice or a tone that is sharp and sticks to him through life, and stirs up ill-will and grief, and falls like a drop of gall on the sweet joys of home. Such as these get a sharp home voice for use, and keep their best voice for those they meet elsewhere. I would say to all the boys and girls: "Use your guest voice at home." Watch it day by day as a pearl of great price, for it will be worth to you in days to come more than the best pearls hid in the sea. A kind voice is a lark's song to a heart and home. It is to the heart what light is to the eye.—Farm and Fireside.

## He Didn't Finish the Job.

Winks—I didn't see you around yesterday.

Minks—No. I had a room that needed papering and painting, and I thought I'd stay home and do it myself. But can't stop to talk—I'm in a hurry.

"What's up?"

"Well, I've got to take my business suit to the dyer's and cleaner's, my wife's best dress along with it, and I must stop at a store for a new carpet, and then hunt up some painters and paper-hangers to—put the finishing touches on that room, you know."—N. Y. Weekly.

—Philip Volkert, a sun hat manufacturer of Cincinnati, was working away quietly one day lately when a customer entered and hazed him his hat to be ironed. Something besides the evident antiquity of the title attracted Mr. Volkert's attention, and upon turning down the leather he recognized his private mark, placed there when he made the hat as a "jour" hatter, over thirty years ago. The customer departed with a new hat, and Mr. Volkert possesses the other as a precious relic of the way they did things when he was a boy.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

—A dry humorist—One who is "pumped out."—Puck.

—In 1860 the ladies of the country wore \$2,464,000 worth of wire in their hoop skirts.

—Ice was artificially manufactured by the use of chemical mixtures as early as 1783.

—A silver pipe, on which is the inscription: "Presented by Major General Harrison, U. S. A., on behalf of the United States, to the Shawanese tribe of Indians, 1814," has been presented to President Harrison by a gentleman who secured the relic in the Indian Territory.

—Coughing and sneezing can be stopped by pressing on the lips in the neighborhood of the nose. Pressing in the neighborhood of the ear, or pressing very hard on the top of the mouth, inside, is also a means of stopping coughing. The will has immense power also.

—A farmer in East Corinth, Maine, wouldn't give a copper for a bounty on crows. He is able to take care of his own crop. When he gets his corn planted he carries out two coops, each holding a rooster, and sets them on the two ends of his field. As soon as he begins to grow light the roosters begin to challenge each other and their music scares all the crows away.

—Here is a remedy for cramp, suggested by Dr. R. W. St. Clair, of London: Let the patient provide himself with a good, strong cord and keep it always by him. When the spasm comes on let him wind this cord around the affected part, take an end in each hand and give them a good sharp pull. It will hurt you a little—it is useless if it does not—but the cramp will vanish at once.

—A mechanical scarecrow has been invented which represents a man standing with his gun in hand, ready to fire at the first intruder. The arm that is holding the gun is made to move by electricities in the surrounding media, thus producing a resistance which reduces the velocity. The nature of the conductor has some influence on the velocity; but not the thickness of the wire, nor the tension of the electricity.

Direct measurements to ascertain the velocity of sound were made by Moll and Van Beek in 1823. Two hills near Amsterdam, 57,971 feet apart, were taken as stations, and cannon were fired at stated intervals simultaneously at both stations, and the elapsed time between seeing the flash and hearing the sound was noted by chronometers. From these experiments the velocity of sound was estimated to be 1,092.78 feet per second in dry air. But it has been found that the velocity varies with the temperature—i. e., at 32° Fahr., the velocity of sound is 1,090 feet per second and that for every degree of temperature above this 1 1/2 feet must be added to the velocity. Fogs or rains unaccompanied by winds, do not interfere with the velocity of sound, but wind alone will interfere with its velocity materially. There is some reason to believe that loud sound-travel somewhat faster than low ones, which was first remarked by Prof. Mullet while carrying on blasting near Holyhead.

## INVASION OF CATS.

A Mean Job Perpetrated on the People of a Mississippi Town.

"When I was living in a steamboat town on the Mississippi," remarked an old man in a barber's shop a few days ago, "there was a fellow who put up a very neat job on the inhabitants, against whom he must have had some terrible grudge. He came into the town one day and distributed handbills right and left, taking special pains to get as many of them as possible into the hands of farmers who had come in to sell their grain.

"That was before the railroads came to take business away from the river towns, some of which had an immense trade. The place I was in had 5,000 or 6,000 inhabitants, and was the shipping port for all the grain raised for miles around, as well as the place where the farmers obtained all their supplies. The last time I was there it had dwindled down to a village of 2,000, and perhaps by this time it has no existence at all, even on the map.

"These bills that were so freely scattered about stated that the advertiser had a contract with a certain steamboat company for furnishing a large number of cats to destroy the rats and mice that were very numerous about the warehouses at different landings along the river. He, therefore, offered \$3 for each full-grown Tom cat, \$2 for each female puss, and 50 cents a head for kittens old enough to get their own living. All the cats were to be delivered at a certain place in the town on a Thursday evening—the night that a particular boat was due.

"Well, that Thursday afternoon came and the streets of the town were just crowded with people. They came in wagons, on foot, and on horseback, and every person carried a sack, some of them several.

"By evening between 3,000 and 4,000 cats had been brought into that defenseless city. They were left in and about a vacant building near the landing. The man who was to purchase the cats was nowhere in sight. The country people were making inquiries for him everywhere. A crowd of boys attracted by the caterwauling went to the old building and began to amuse themselves by untying the bags and letting out the cats. Of course the cats began fighting and raised a noise like 10,000 demons. Suddenly a stampede occurred and the animals rushed pell mell into the crowd, crawling over people, jumping and fighting, and climbing walls and roofs in a mad race for liberty. The boys took after the cats, and the men joined in, determined to rid the town of the feline invaders. The next morning there were a good many stray cats seen about in back yards, and a good many dead ones lying in the streets and alleys. One boatman said he counted over 400 dead cats in the river. The man who perpetrated the joke was never seen in the place, luckily for him."—Pittsburgh Dispatch.

—A young exquisite who thought that an eyeglass would improve his appearance, went into an optician's and was a long time trying to find one to suit him. None of them would do; they were either too strong or too weak for his sight. At length he found one that was just right, and inquired the price. Surprised at the selection he had made, the optician, after looking at him in blank astonishment, ventured to ask what number of glass he would like for the empty frame he had picked out.—N. Y. Ledger.