BURNING CHARCOAL

GREAT CARE IS NECESSARY TO FIRE A "PIT" SUCCESSFULLY.

Labor Is an Important Item in the Preparation of the Product for the Market. Manufacturers Generally Sell Their Own Charcoal.

"Do you keep charcoal?" asked a reporter of a large coal dealer in this city. you.' "No, sir, we do not. I have sold lots of coal in my time, but never a pound of can do no harm," might, in Chinese charcoal. I don't even know how it is official language, be translated, "The

Leaving the wealthy coal merchant nevolent." the reporter sought one of those nondescript coal hawkers who make a livelihood by attending to the wants in the way of caloric of the very poor classes in the by streets and alleys.

Having found one of these coal holes the reporter approached the almost carbonized specimen of humanity, who was for the time being resting from his labors, and propounded the question, 'What's the price of charcoal?"

"Eight cents a peck," replied a gruff voice, and the little old man straightened himself out with an effort as he stopped filling the peck measure, which he judged to be about the newspaper man's capacity.

"We don't sell much charcoal," he continued, "only in small lots. Some manufacturers buy their charcoal by the great quantity. It is used in large lots by persons who make ice chests and beer coolers, as it is a poor conductor of heat. There's a lining of charcoal three inches thick in all sides of a beer cooler.

"Most country people bring their own charcoal to the city in wagon loads, and sell it for from fifteen cents to twenty. cents a bushel. We retail it at about twenty cents to twenty-five cents per bushel, and it is a dull sale at that."

The reporter now left the charcoal man, and approached an individual who had just disposed of a wagon load of the

"Yes, I make charcoal," he replied in answer to an inquiry. "In the winter and spring is the time when charcoal is made to the best advantage.

BUILDING THE PILE. "I am just clearing up a tract of woodland and am turning the refuse to account by manufacturing charcoal. Beech wood and hickory are the best for that purpose. Oak makes a very poor coal, and it is hardly worth burning. Generally the good wood is culled out, and then a huge circular pile is made of the knots and refuse. This pile is often 100 feet in diameter and from ten to fifteen feet in height. The wood is piled with great care in straight rows around a small opening, about one foot in diameter, which is left as a sort of chimney for the fire to be started in.

"As soon as the pile is completed it is covered all over with forest leaves or straw, and then the whole mass is covered with dirt to the thickness of three or four inches. It now resembles a small volcano, especially when the fire is started and the smoke begins to issue from the small opening left in the top. The fire is started by dropping shavings into the chimney which was left in the center, and then lighting them by dropping live coals into the cavity. A few holes are made near the bottom of the pile of dirt in order to create a draft, and as soon as the fire begins to smoke these holes are again closed.

st air enough to support comb If a high wind should spring up, as it of the college nine said; "he is 'long and often does, every hole is closed tight to lank and Brown." keep down the fire, and very often boards must be laid over the whole pile to keep out the wind. It takes from ten days to two weeks to burn a 'pit,' as it is called, cause 'he stoppeth one of three.' "and this time is a period of great anxiety to the charcoal burner, as the operation must be watched night and day, and a little negligence may cause the loss of weeks of hard work.

BURNING THE "PIT." "As the fire progresses part of the charcoal is consumed by combustion and the remainder shrinks to nearly one-half its original size. The shrinkage, of mon plebeian, for olives are handled only course, would cause the dirt to be left standing alone provided it would do so. In order to meet this difficulty the tender goes round and round, over and over the pile, packing the dirt with a shovel. This continual packing must not be neglected, for if a cavity should occur and the dirt cave in instantly, the whole pile would burst out into flame which nothing could stop.

"As the burning progresses holes are punctured through the dirt in such places as the tender thinks the fire has not yet been. These holes create a draft and at once bring the fire to that part of the pit, upon which the holes are again closed and the charring begins. As soon as the tender thinks that the work is complete he shuts up the chimney and packs every hole. He then spends about two days in packing the dirt, and watches for crevices through which smoke issues and closes them as soon as they are discovered. Barrels of water are now hauled to the pit, and workmen begin to

open up a side and take out the charcoal. If sparks of fire should be found they are at once dashed with water, and as the work progresses water is thrown into the pit, while the steam thus created penetrates to all parts of the coal and ens the danger of fire. As a rule all the coal is removed at once as a precautionary measure, and every man who has burned a pit is glad when he gets it off his hands. From 700 to 1,000 bushels are made in a pit. This is hauled away in wagon loads of 80 bushels to 100 bushels, and sold for about fifteen cents per bushel. Thus from \$120 to \$150 is realized on each pit."

According to chemists only 20 to 22 per cent. of the wood remains as charoal, the rest being driven off as gases Charcoal is 65 per cent. carbon.-Cincinnati Times-Star.

and destroyed part of the city.

Mr. Balfour, in his "Leaves from My Chinese Scrap Book," says that a most amusing chapter in the history of official etiquette in China might be written under the heading of "The Emperor is Thanked." He says he is reminded by this Chinese formality of a pedagogue who always insisted on his pupils' thanks an every occasion. If he asked a boy what time it was, the proper form for his reply was, "Half-past 2, sir, thank

emperor can do nothing that is not be-

An amusing incident occurred not long ago in connection with a Manchu officer of high rank, Wulahsich-ungah, the president of the board of ceremonies. This gentleman returned thanks for the honor of having been invited to a sacrificial feast by the emperor, and the next In the old one the apples were often day a terrible snubbing was administered to him.

It appears that the emperor had not invited him at all, and was much aston-

"His name," says the decree, "does not appear in the list of guests approved by us, and in thus thanking us he has been guilty of a great piece of careless-

The committee of the board of punishments allotted a penalty to poor Wulahsich-ungah, who should, according to etiquette, have been grateful for that also, though his thanks are not recorded.

Variations of the Compass.

Why the magnetic needle points northward has never been satisfactorily determined, but what perplexes and puzzles scientists most is its persistent variations. By observations in Paris it was found that in 1681 the magnetic needle varied 2 degs. and 30 mins. to the west; in 1865, less than 200 years later, 18 degs. and 30 mins. to the west. In London, between 1580 and 1692, the needle varied from 10 degs, 15 mins, east to 6 degs. west: In Dakota the average variation is 13 degs. and 30 mins. east; in Minne-sota 11 degs. east, while in Montana it it is 20 degs. east. It does not point due north except in a few localities, and at no place does it continue to point with a given angular distance from the north for any stated length of time.

In many places it changes secularly. annually, diurnally and hourly, and is, besides, further subject to fluctuations reducible to no method of tabulation.

In the vicinity of iron in any shape, or of magnetic sands, it is deflected toward the material attracting it. The needle has been known to vary 5 degs. in a distance of one mile, and 1 deg. and 30 mins. in two hours when left stationary in a certain locality.-St. Louis Republic.

The baseball field is not the place where one looks for literary wit, yet now and then it happens that a good pat saying is heard there which shows not only readiness but familiarity with lit-

It was on an occasion when a college nine was playing the nine from a fitting school, and the shortstop of the latter was an absurdly tall and thin fellow named Brown, apparently some ten years older than the boys with whom he was associated. He played very badly, muffing and fumbling, until it was sugthese holes are again closed.

"Now, if everything goes right, the for the joke of having so long a man as fire is allowed to smoulder away, with shortstop.

"He is like the Ancient Mariner," one

"He is more like the Ancient Mariner," quickly and wittily returned the friend to whom the remark was made, "be-Youth's Companion."

Character at the Table. At a grand hotel in Italy a guest had

arrived who made a great display of wealth, and of whom none could learn anything. At the table d'hote one day, helping himself to an olive with his fork, it was decided he was only a comwith the fingers among civilized people throughout Christendom. Table man-ners at many of our best hotels in our principal cities invariably shock the sensibilities of those accustomed to the graces of polite society. It is conceded that there is an exhilaration in the atmosphere of Paris, of Vienna and of Berlin that draws out any refinement one may have in his or her nature, and elevates to a higher plane than ever before experienced.-Cor. Boston Tran-

Abuse of the Dog.

I had a young Laverack gyp, which I building to build above a certain point, consigned to a waiter to take care of for me. That night just before retiring I hunted her out and found her tied to a block."-Dr. J. M. Ruckley in Christian block at the extreme bow of the steamer, right between the two hawser holes, through which the anchor chains run. The orifice was as large as a stovepipe, and as it was blowing a gale outside, a current of air as strong as that of a blast furnace rushed in and blew every hair of the dog upright. The poor brute was actually numb, and I am certain she would have died that night had I not rescued her and placed her in a sheltered warm spot.—Week's Sport.

What He Most Needed. Uncle Charles-And are you going to buy me something for my birthday?

Millie-Yeth, thir, I gueth tho. Uncle Charles—Please may I know? Millio—Yeth, thir. I'm going to buy ny dear Uncle Charlie a mithionary. Uncle Charles-A missionary! I'm no

Millie—No. But grandma thays you're a puffeck heathen.—Pittsburg Bulletin.

Among the Congo negroes when a man wishes a wife he secures one and keeps her on probation a year. If her In 1820 the sea at Acapulco ran off temper and deportment are satisfactory from the coast, leaving the roadstead he at the end of the year formally marries her. But should she prove an infourteen feet above its ordinary level cumbrance he sends her back to the paSWEET APPLE CIDER.

Old and the New Methods of Extracting the Saccharine Juice.

"The sight of a keg of sweet cider on the counter is more frequent in city restaurants nowadays than it was a dozen years ago. A piece of pumpkin pie and a glass of saccharine apple juice doubtless appeal to the country bred tastes of many a grizzled merchant and busy clerk, and call up recollections of rude old country cider mills and the great vats of amber liquor into which they once inserted the potent rye straw. Or possibly the pretty girl washing glasses at the counter reminds them of some country Pomona such as John Keats drew in his poem of "Autumn," who loved to sit beside a cider press "and watch the last slow oozings, hour by hour."

The romantic old time cider mill is being rapidly supplanted by the more thorough and trustworthy modern sort. ground by horse power. But most fre-quently the cider mill was pitched beside a small stream, the power of which, half wasted on a great "overshot" wheel, was made to do the grinding. Often the supply of water would fail, or the dam or other contrivances give way, and then there was a great temptation to water the cider to make up for lost time while waiting for the dam to fill up. The pressing was done generally by an upright screw into which iron bars were thrust and pushed around by brawny arms. The writer has seen a broad backed Dutch woman helping her husband at this arduous work.

The modern cider mill, however, shows by the puffs of steam that it does not depend on dams. To be sure, there may be a dam a foot high in the neighboring ravine, a fall of water enough to work a hydraulic ram and feed the boiler. The grinder revolves at a rate which makes the building hum. The ground apple, or pulp, falls down through the floor into canvas sacks, which are hastily closed and laid in a tier of a dozen on the platform of the hydraulic press. Then down comes the cover with irresistible power, and the essence of the apple gurgles into the vat. From here a pump, also propelled by steam, forces the liquid up into a large vat, from which it can be drawn into barrels by turning a spigot. In old times the loading of a barrel of cider, weighing over 400 pounds, occupied the close attention of several brawny men, as they rolled it up a pair of "skids," with a concert of "heave ons." But now a pair of barrel tongs, a rope thrown over a windlass, having a large wheel for the hand rope, and the muscle of one man lifts the barrel and swings it into the wagon.

It is a strong argument for the sweet cider drinker that the pomace left after pressing is absolutely worthless as a food for anything or as a fertilizer. The virtue of the apple must therefore go with the juice.

The best cider is that made late in the season from the best matured fruit. Cold weather also conduces to its keeping well. Russet apples make about the finest cider in the market, and it will bring an extra price. Some other varieties, Newtown pippins or crab apples, make very fine thick cider. If properly If you want a good lunch, give me a call. worked, cleared of pomace, and kept air tight in clean new barrels, it will keep all winter as rich and pleasant as a sherry wine, while, of course, less alcoholic and so less harmless.

The pleasure of "sucking cider through a straw" is not always attainable, as straws are not everywhere convenient at hand. An excellent substitute for the

Where Air Is Sold

The Bible house of Constantinople has been often described. I was conducted through it by the son of Dr. Bliss, so many years in charge of it, and who but a few months before had died at Assioot, on the Nile, as described in a former letter. The Bible house is very well adapted to its purpose, marked in all its departments by evidences of American energy, and also by indications of conservative management.

Looking out of one of the upper windows, I perceived a long, low block by the side of the Bible house, and said to Mr. Bliss: "Does the Bible house corporation

"It does not." "When that is removed, if buildings of the character of the others in the street are erected your magnificent views from these windows will be cut off." "No," said he; "they cannot do that.

We own the air."

own that block?"

"What does that mean?" "There is a custom in Constantinople of selling the air above the houses, which I was on a steamer going to Norfolk. makes it introssible for the owner of the and we have taken pains to purchase the air between here and the end of the Advocate.

Left Court for the Field.

Gen. Butler had a great practice before the war. For years he had two offices, one in Boston and one in Lowell, and a partner in each engaged in the preparation of cases. He was trying cases in court almost constantly for nine months in the year. Then, as now, he was punctual and methodical in his comings and goings between Lowell and Boston. When the war broke out he had one of the most lucrative practices in New England-worth probably \$25,000 a year. He was trying a case in court when the order came for the Sixth regiment of his brigade to muster on Boston common in readiness to proceed to Washington. By the courtesy of the opposing counsel and the court he was allowed to leave the court, and the case was stopped at that point.-Boston Ad-

A Solf Preserver. She-Who is that hearty, well pre

served old man? He-He is a living monument to the value of taking care of one's self.

She-Well, who is he? He-He's a French duelist.-PittsJ. M. HUNTINGTON & CO.

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