

OREGON SCOUT.

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UNION. OREGON.

THE SONG THE SIRENS SANG.

In sea caves dark and rocks where hides
The restless wind that haunts the sea,
Where murmuring waves and moaning tides
Chant their unceasing melody:
In meadows bright with fading spring,
Where dead men's bones the light denies,
What were the songs they used to sing—
The sirens of this sunny isle?

Soft tender and tender, sweet and low,
Across the waters dark and wild,
The wanderer heard their numbers flow,
And all his soul their charm beguiled;
Swift through the breakers' snowy foam
He drove his bark with panting breath,
Forgetting wife and child and home,
While sirens sang him to his death.

We know their songs—they had but one—
Gossamer haunts the fatal thing;
And madness seized Laertes' son,
Who heard "The Flowers that Bloom in Spring."
And still unchanged in air or word,
The sirens sing, with tireless breath,
The same old song Ulysses heard,
And with it still sing men to death.
—Robert J. Burdette, in Brooklyn Eagle.

PNEUMATIC GUNS.

An English Journal on the Great American Invention.

It Admits That America Has Again Revolutionized the Science of War—Effect of Giant Dynamite Shells Upon "Invincible" Ironclads.

The problem of firing or, rather, propelling shells filled with high explosives may be said to have been satisfactorily solved by the Americans. Tentative experiments in that direction have been carried on for the last two years with powder guns by officers of the United States army. Early in 1887 trials were made with dynamite shells at Port Lobos, Cal., under the supervision of General Kelton, assisted by Lieutenant Quinan, of the Fourth United States Artillery. The piece of ordnance used was a condemned three-inch rifled wrought-iron gun. Mr. Quinan in person loaded the shells, each shell—an elongated three-inch rifle projectile—being charged with seven ounces of dynamite. The first projecting charge was a quarter-pound of ordinary powder as used in the United States artillery, subsequently increased to half a pound and one pound. In the first and second discharges, the shells did just what was expected of them: they did not explode until they struck the target, a rock one hundred yards from the gun. When the third charge was fired, however, the explosion of the charge, the bursting of the shell and the shattering of the gun, appeared to be simultaneous, the piece of ordnance being torn into fragments. This may be said to have been just what was expected and intended, the object being to demonstrate how far a shell loaded with a high explosive may be fired from ordinary guns if the propelling charge is properly regulated.

Subsequently, trials were made on the Potomac, near Washington, by the United States Dynamite Projectile Company with Snider dynamite projectiles. Four six-inch shells, carrying eleven-pound bursting charges of nitro-gelatin, were fired against a ledge of rock one thousand yards distant. The experiments were regarded as a success in every respect, and as a conclusive proof of the destructive power of six-inch shells, the latter exploding on striking the target, and doing good execution on the rock. But so far, all attempts to throw larger charges of high explosives out of powder guns have failed. At least four guns have been burst at Sandy Hook; one recently, having failed in the attempts to throw unencased explosive gelatin, the very much less sensitive camphorated explosive gelatin was resorted to. This is also less powerful than the uncamphorated, and requires very strong initial detonation by fulminate of mercury and dynamite or gun-cotton to attain its fullest development of strength. In no case have the requisite detonators of fulminate of mercury been thrown, as these are very sensitive to explosion, by the shock which they receive in the powder gun. All the experiments made were instructive, but they were also destructive of the guns.

The problem of propelling shells filled with high explosives, with safety to the guns and to those discharging them, was not satisfactorily settled until Lieutenant Zafinski, of the Fifth United States Artillery, brought forward his pneumatic gun, on the invention and improvement of which he had been engaged for some time. This gun is in reality a tube sixty feet long, made of half-inch iron lined with one-sixteenth of an inch of brass, and having a bore of eight inches. The barrel is supported and stiffened by a light but strong iron frame, at the center of which is a pivot, about which the gun may be revolved, the breech end being provided with wheels, which run upon a circular track. The gun is elevated and depressed by means of a piston, the cylinder of which receives air from eight reservoirs—each of which is twenty feet long, twelve inches outside diameter, and made of iron half an inch thick—placed upon the frame beneath the barrel, the air being supplied by a compressor. This piston presses upon the gun just forward of the trunnions to elevate the barrel. Upon the air being allowed to escape slowly, the barrel is lowered by gravity. To the pistons of two cylinders placed at the pivot are secured the ends of wire ropes, one of which is secured to the rear part of the frame, the other to the opposite side. The

gun may be rapidly turned in either direction by admitting air to either of the cylinders. An arm at the center of one of the trunnions, through which the compressed air passes to the gun, operates an auxiliary valve, which in turn moves the main valve, opening the passage to an air-chamber behind the projectile. From the instant of opening the valve, the full pressure of the air in the reservoirs is exerted upon the projectile until it reaches the muzzle, when the valves are automatically closed. The eight reservoirs contain enough air at one thousand pounds pressure to discharge the gun six times; but as they can be continuously resupplied with air by the compressor, there need be no delay in firing.

All the movements of the gun are controlled from the platform at the breech. The cartridge launched forth from the tube consists of two parts—a wooden tailpiece fifty-one inches long, which guides the projectile in its flight; and a head. The forward portion of head is a brass cylinder forty inches long, having a conical cap forty inches long. In the tube are placed one hundred pounds of explosive gelatin, through the center of which extends a core of dynamite; and in the center of the dynamite, again, is an exploder of fulminate of mercury, from which a rod leads to the point of the cap. As soon as the latter strikes an object, the charge explodes. In order that the charge may be exploded, in case of failure of the above arrangement, a dry battery, placed in a little recess in the tailpiece of the cartridge, is connected with the fulminate exploder. The battery begins to work upon being brought into contact with water, and the gelatin is then exploded.

For it is for naval warfare, in the first place, that the pneumatic gun of Lieutenant Zafinski is intended. And it must be admitted that, while the United States are still without the naval needed ships, fortifications and heavy guns, which would place the country on a level with other naval powers, these pneumatic guns will form very efficient defensive weapons. Besides mounting them on points along the coast liable to attack by a hostile fleet, they are to be employed in a more decisive way. It is admitted that the range of pneumatic guns is limited as compared with powder guns. An enemy's fleet might lie beyond the range of pneumatic guns, and bombard American ports and cities with impunity. But it is suggested, and appears perfectly feasible, to mount pneumatic guns on fast sea-going torpedo-boats. With such boats, aggressive action of a very decided and decisive character would be possible. Boats have been designed two hundred and ten feet long by twenty-six feet beam, carrying from one to three of these guns, of calibers of from ten and a half to twelve and a half inches. The speeds of torpedo-boats so armed are to be from twenty to twenty-five miles an hour. The shells are to be thrown at least one mile, and to contain from two hundred to five hundred pounds of explosive gelatin, the rapidity of firing them being from one to two shells every two minutes.

The effect of such shells upon even the strongest ironclads would be irresistible. If dropped upon the deck of an enemy's ironclad, they would certainly crush it, for their action would not be confined to a simple local perforation, but the crushing in would ensue over a considerable breadth. Besides the direct breaking action at the point of impact, there would be a very great transmitted shock, which would seek out and break up the ship at all weak points in the vicinity. The decks even of the most heavily armored vessels have less than six inches of armor, and they present by far the greater portion of the target fired at. Moreover, the most heavily armored vessels, leaving out of account their decks, have but a small proportion of the entire surface covered with heavy armor. Should the shell strike the portions of the armor too thick for perforation the tremendous blow, as stated above, would seek out the neighboring weak points by the transmitted shock. It might be assumed as almost certain that the effect of exploding a large quantity of dynamite or explosive gelatin upon the turret or the casemate of a ship would be such as to render the crew inside incapable for further action, even if the armor were not penetrated. Supposing, also, that the shell should fail to hit the vessel, if it exploded near enough, even if its explosion were not sufficient to disrupt the hull, it would certainly affect the motive power and the steering apparatus and thus practically paralyze the ship. Whilst twelve and a half inches is at present the limit of caliber, there is nothing to hinder the construction of a gun of sixteen and a half inch caliber, and such a gun would throw a charge of one thousand pounds of explosive gelatin. The effect of such a fearful missile exploding aboard a ship had better be left to the imagination; but it is well to bear in mind that throwing such charges long distances has become perfectly practicable by the introduction of the pneumatic gun. —Chambers' Journal.

—There is something half humorous in the paragraph which occasionally appears in one of our contemporaries, that "owing to the illness of Mr. — we are unable to present his 'Hints on Health' in this issue." —Salt Lake Herald.

—The Weekly Occidental is a San Francisco newspaper printed wholly in the Chinese language. —Cincinnati Times.

A MASTERLY STYLE.

The Indescribable Charm Which Literature Receives from Expression.

Gautier is one of the writers who prove how largely the form of expression gives literature its charm and ideas their interest. When the French say that the style is all important, they come very much nearer the truth than a class of English writers who regard it as unimportant. Gautier was a critic of much delicacy and justness of feeling, but he had no new ideas to bring into the realm of art or thought. No man had less claim to be regarded as a philosopher or a sage. His views of life were often intended to be amusing, and when not so intended they usually furnish amusement for their naïveté and their simplicity. They please us by the ignorance of life which they display. Gautier looked at life with the glance of a child, who finds in it much that is pretty and is wholly unconcerned as to whether there is ought to exist or not, picking flowers and chasing butterflies. But the style made every page that he wrote full of charm. He said of himself that his was a style of adjectives. He thought that the complications of modern life demanded a simple and complex mode of expression, that should seek words in all directions, colors from all palettes, harmonies from all lyres; his should be like the light of the setting sun, that reflects through burning clouds its varied hues. Few men knew or used so many words. He had the contents of the dictionaries from A to Z. With an eye that saw all things and a command of words that few could equal, he excelled in a gorgeous richness of description. The things which the eye could see, he saw more clearly, he described more vividly, than any other writer of this day. Of the things not visible to the eye, the whole world could show no one else so oblivious. His power of perception was the more intense, because he had no conception of the things which were beyond his observation. He never dealt with the thoughts of men, their inner life, their mental or moral development, with the mysteries of life or the problems of the future. For him such questions had no existence. But all things in life, of which the impression could strike the optic nerve, were to him things of joy. Spanish muleteers singing over the passes of the Pyrenees, Russian Priories wrapped in fables and the snows that enveloped the rolling steppes, the minarets of St. Sophia, the sun setting over the lagoons of the Adriatic, where the cry of the gondolier breaks upon the traveler standing in the shadow of St. Mark's—such things he could describe with vividness and richness which no one else could equal. He possessed also the two qualities which are found in almost all literature that can hope to survive its author, imagination and humor. His imagination was a pictorial imagination, one that was excited by subtle resemblances of form more than of feeling; but it gave life to every line he wrote, from a poem on love to a government report. Men like to be amused, and it more than thought, keeps books alive. Gautier's writings have not the wit of the great works, which are read forever because they forever entertain, but he had the humor which delights in the delicate congruities and incongruities of words and things—the humor that always pleases and never pierces. —Atlantic Monthly.

Built by Washington.

The mill that Washington built stands in a ravine about half a mile east of Perryopolis, Fayette County. It is still in operation and propelled, as he designed, by a stream flowing down a rugged run called after the founder of the mill. The latter is, as might be expected, a rude structure. Originally it consisted of but one story, and the lines where Washington left off and the improvements, such as they were, began are plainly discernible. The name of the present proprietor is Samuel Smith, who takes pride out of the fact that it has been kept in the Smith family since it passed from the possession of the illustrious founder. To the east of this is to be seen two of the black houses in which Washington's slaves were housed—the only ones remaining through the years since their occupancy. Still further east on the elevation stands the house of Mr. Hersey, one of the original owners of that portion of the grant to Washington upon which Perryopolis was built. —Pittsburgh Leader.

Capabilities of Wells.

Various attempts are in progress to get from artesian wells not only water, but power and heat as well. Machinery is already driven by the pressure, in France, and experience shows that the heat may be increased by adding to the depth of the well. At Grenoble a well 1802 feet deep, and yielding daily 500,000 gallons, has a pressure of sixty pounds to the square inch, and the water is so hot that it is employed for heating hospitals in the vicinity. The deepest well in the world is being sunk at Pesti, Hungary, to supply hot water for public baths. It now yields daily 176,000 gallons heated to 148 degrees, and the boring is to be continued until the temperature is raised to 176 degrees. —Arkansas Traveler.

Not a Fair Show.

Magistrate (to prisoner)—You are charged with being drunk and disorderly and assaulting a Dutchman. What have you to say for yourself? Prisoner—The policeman arrested me too soon, your Honor. If he had given me time for two more drinks I would have thrown my arms around that Dutchman's neck and called him "brother." —N. Y. Sun.

RENOVATING CLOTHES.

How to Clean Black and Pongee Silks, Satins, Cashmeres, Etc.

Black silk may be sponged with a decoction of soap bark and water, if very dirty, and hung out to dry; or, if only creased and needing to be freshened, weak borax water or alcohol, and, where possible, it is better pressed by laying pieces smoothly and passing them through the clothes-wringer, screwed very tight. If you must iron, do it after the silk is dry, between two damp pieces of muslin; the upper one may better be Swiss, that you may see what you are doing through it. This is a little more trouble than ironing the wrong side of silk, but you will be repaid; the hot iron gives the silk a paper-like feeling; above all, never iron silk wet, or even very damp.

Satin may be cleaned by sponging lengthwise—never across the width, with benzine, if greasy, or alcohol or borax water; this will not be injured by direct contact with iron; press on the wrong side. Black cloth may be sponged with ammonia and water, an ounce of rock ammonia to a wine bottle of water; or liquid household ammonia, diluted very much, may be used. Black cashmeres may be washed in borax water, and as indeed may navy blue. It should be rubbed only between the hands, not on a board, and the water only pressed, not twisted, out. Each width folded in four as smoothly as possible, and run through the wringer, then opened and hung up to dry, is the best way. Cashmeres, so treated, if it is of good quality, will look like new. Pongee silk is supposed by many never to look so well after washing; but if properly treated, it may be made up again with new added, and the difference can not be seen. But as usually washed, it is several shades darker, and sometimes has a stiffness to it, although it may not have been starched; this change of color and stiffness is due to its being ironed wet. Again, a pongee dress will come from the laundress covered with dark spots; this is where it has been allowed to dry and then been "sprinkled down;" the sprinkling shades. The remedy is simply to put it again in water, dry it, and iron it when quite dry. Pongee requires no more care in washing than a white garment; it will bear hard rubbing if necessary, but it must not be boiled or scalded. Treat it about as you would flannel; let it get quite dry, and if you use a quite hot iron, not hot enough to singe, of course, all the creases will come out and the silk will look like new. The reason it darkens it to iron it wet is this: If it were put into boiling water the silk would darken as flannel would. If you put a hot iron on the damp silk you convert what water remains in it into boiling water; it is thus scalded. A silk which has changed color in the wash may be partly restored by washing again. Partially, I may remark that this ironing them wet is the reason gentlemen's white silk handkerchiefs become yellow with washing. —Catherine Owen, in Good Housekeeping.

AFTER DECAPITATION.

Actions of the Head of an Animal After Its Separation from the Body.

At a recent meeting of the Academy of Sciences, M. Hayem, of the medical school, read a paper on the phenomena noticed in the head of an animal after decapitation, with or without transfusion of fresh blood. As soon as the head is separated from the body the eyes move convulsively and a look of wonder and anxiety is noticeable on the face. The jaws separate with force, and the tongue seems to be in a tetanic state. There appears to be some consciousness of what is going on, but this does not last more than three or four seconds. The eyes then shrink into the head, and some spasmodic efforts at breathing are made; the nostrils expand, the mouth opens, the tongue is retracted toward the fauces. This respiratory effort is repeated three or four times, but the senses seem to be inactive, and the will is lost. These phenomena last one, or at most two minutes, and the head then becomes utterly inert. If preparations have previously been made so that the head after separation continues to receive a fresh supply of blood, the voluntary manifestations persist as long as the blood supply is sufficient—that is, for half an hour or more. When a blood supply is furnished after the head has become entirely motionless, the phenomena are as follows: Some contractions, very weak and feeble, take place, especially in the muscles of the lips; then some respiratory efforts; reflex actions of the eye, first weak, then well marked, but the eyelids remain drooping; the senses are quite asleep, and no will is manifested. Of course the longer the period between decapitation and the restoration of blood supply, the longer the time before these phenomena are apparent. In conclusion, it may be assumed that decapitation does not produce instantaneous death. Conscious life and feeling continue for a few seconds. Whether or not pain is felt during this brief period can not be ascertained, most likely not, owing to the rapid death of nervous elements, with which alone sensation is concerned. —Paris Cor. Science.

—The quantity of sugar beets worked in Germany and France in 1885-6 was 10,514,000 tons. Thirteen years ago the amount was 10,349,000 tons. But during that time the German consumption of sugar beets more than doubled under the influence of the export rebate, while the French consumption was reduced more than one-half. —N. Y. Examiner.

ENGLISH COMPOSITION.

The Advantages of Condensing Sentences Into Clauses, and Clauses Into Words.

At its best, language is inadequate to express thought. Thought is of the spirit, and language is of the body; thought is infinite, language, finite. A far-reaching truth is rendered in the beautiful lines of the Laureate:

Break, break, break,
On the cold gray stones, O sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

On account of this incapacity of language our thoughts must be definite, before we can express them in words. Language can only be a Daphne oracle for vagueness. In an ideal sentence, there is an exact balance between the thought and the expression, so that there are just enough words to express the thought. Writers whose vocabulary is ample and whose ideas are comprehensive, strive to keep this balance of thought and language. Those whose ideas are vague are apt to be lavish of words. The English rustic relatively makes a greater draft upon his little stock of words to express his dim notions than did either Shakespeare or Milton to utter their grand ideas. The words of the wise are few and well chosen; every utterance shows that they would rather meditate than speak. Hence their sayings are often oracular, and if they err it is on the side of speaking too little rather than too much.

The sentence of Goethe, "Thought widens, but lanes; activity narrows, but quickens," will bear pages of expansion. When the cask is full, the gold runs in jets from the spigot; when it is nearly empty, the liquid comes freely. Yet to use too few words is a greater error than to use too many. Superfluous words may be removed, but missing words can not always be supplied.

But as few are wise enough to be too concise, and as thousands err in being too diffuse, we must notice the error of verbosity, or that of using too many words. In the discourse of a colored preacher occurred the following sentence: "After much consideration and serious reflection I have arrived at the deliberate conclusion, that in those cities where the population is large, there is a greater number of men, women and children, than in those cities where the population is less." Here a fact so apparent that it needs no statement is amplified so that on the minds of the hearers its nothingness would not be impressed. This needless amplification is too often the fault of the clergy; and many a bubble of conceited utterance might be blown into a drop by a breath of common sense.

A serviceable rule for such writers would be: Scan every sentence; then condense your sentences into clauses; your clauses into phrases; your phrases into words; and if you do not really need the words blot them out. A verbose writer, above all others, needs the unsparing hand of kindly criticism.

Circumlocution or indirectness is not always a fault. Sometimes it is better to suggest an idea than it is to express it. Chaucer did not wish to tell his readers that the sea captain drowned his captives, so he said he sent them home by water. In act first, scene fourth of "King Lear," Goneril takes fourteen lines to utter what the Fool conveys in two lines. When the gravedigger said to the miser, who hesitated about paying for the burial of his deceased wife, "Down with your dust, or up she comes!" he afforded a marked instance of the desirability of circumlocution.

In cases where it is not needed, it is a grave fault of style. In Dickens' sketch, "The Steam Excursion," he thus describes one of the characters: "Mr. Hardy was observed, some hours afterward, in an attitude which induced his friends to suppose that he was busily engaged in contemplating the beauties of the deep; they only regretted that his taste for the picturesque should lead him to remain so long in a position, very injurious at all times, but especially so to an individual laboring under a tendency of blood to the head." The fact was, Mr. Hardy was seasick; but when the author takes sixty-seven words to tell what can be told in three, it is a question whether he is not carrying the joke too far. —Prof. T. W. Bawer, in Chautauquan.

Don't Wake in a Hurry.

Never spring out of bed the moment you awake if it is possible to avoid it, and never disturb a sleeping child by lifting it suddenly out of bed before it is fully roused. Fifteen minutes spent in gradually waking up, after the eyes are partly open, turning over and stretching the limbs, set the blood in motion by degrees and equalize the circulation which during sleep becomes somewhat stagnant, and bouncing up a child when asleep sends the blood in an overwhelming quantity to the heart. Of course, some professions, such as the soldiers', the doctors' or the nurses', require rising at once; but unless it is necessary, take your "beauty sleep," as the French call the gradual waking up of a morning. —Detroit Tribune.

A Drawing Feature.

"It has got to be quite the thing for shows to have lightning crayon artists among their attractions," remarked one variety manager to another.

"Yes, and I am inclined to think that it's a very good thing."
"In what particular respect?"
"Why, these artists are pretty sure to draw well." —Merchant Traveler.

RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL.

—The colleges of this country contain eight or ten thousand female students. —The trustees of Harvard will establish an astronomical station in the Southern Hemisphere.

—The play-room of the children's play-house, shortly to be built in San Francisco, and for which Senator Sharon left \$50,000, will be thirteen hundred feet square.

—Dr. Matthew B. Riddle, of Hartford Congregational Seminary, has accepted the chair of New Testament Literature and Exegesis, made vacant at Allegheny by Prof. Warfield's call to Princeton.

—Methodists in England propose raising the sum of \$125,000 as a royal jubilee offering, the same to be devoted to the education and sheltering of destitute children in connection with Dr. Stevenson's homes.

—Thirteen members of a Baptist Juvenile Missionary Society in Halifax, England, whose subscription is limited to a halfpenny, must have been industrious last year, as they collected £22 5s. 6d., equal 10,692 halfpennies. —United Presbyterian.

—The capital of the New York branch of the Methodist Book Concern now amounts to \$1,500,000, and its sales last year were over \$1,000,000. The Western branch has a capital of \$500,000, and its sales last year were \$870,000. —N. Y. Examiner.

—Senator Stanford has decided upon his plan for his California university. The buildings will be grouped in a quadrangle, will be constructed of California sandstone, and will be Moorish in design. Work upon seven of the buildings will be begun this summer.

—All the training schools for nurses in Philadelphia are free. This is one profession for women that is not overcrowded, and where women can earn good wages. The chief qualifications are good health, good temper, general intelligence and a fair common school education.

—Princess Sarah Winnemucca is still successfully running her school at Lovelock, Nev. The Pute children are said to be apt scholars. The school-house is on the ranch of Chief Naches, and the little boys are to be taught how to cultivate the soil. The moving spirit in these educational projects is the princess. She has long been steadily striving for the advancement of her people.

—The stories of clergymen who go through the service for one auditor call to mind a case in Eastern Connecticut. The one auditor in this case was a young lady, a member of the clergyman's family. He not only went through the entire service for her sole benefit, but read to her a notice of a change in the time for meeting of the young women's guild which she had herself handed to him. —Boston Globe.

WIT AND WISDOM.

—Persistent industry is the best antidote for temptation. —Louisville Journal.

—The cockroach is always wrong when it attempts to argue with a chicken. —Hartford Sunday Journal.

—Many a man who thinks he is going to set the world afire, finds, to his sorrow, that somebody has turned the hose on him. —N. Y. Ledger.

—Degrees in excellence are often marked by degrees in effort than by degrees in talent, and the recognition of this truth is the basis of much that is best. —United Presbyterian.

—The fact that a man has not had his hair cut for ten or twelve years need not necessarily imply that he is eccentric. He may be bald. —York (Penn.) Dispatch.

—"Don't see so much of you lately as we used to, Dick." —"No, no; I reckon you don't see quite so much of me; you see I've been a little short this month." —Brooklyn Eagle.

—Fond Mother—Well, Bessie, now that you have seen your cousin Walter, what do you think of him? Did he leave a pleasant impression? Bessie—Oh, yes, mamma! he kissed me. —Lovel Citizen.

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