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LOADING COTTON.

The Work of Negroes on the Steamships Down South.

It is a problem in mechanics to load a cotton ship to fill every cubic foot of freight room with the awkward rectangular bales—and some men are so much more skilled than others in this science that it often makes a difference of 400 or 500 bales in a 2,000-ton ship.

In New Orleans they are nearly all white men—Italians, Swedes and Irishmen—and the riots that we read about in the papers were due to the introduction of negro packers and screwmen from Galveston to take the place of the whites.

The cotton comes from the plantation on the cars upon flatboats. The bales as they leave the plantation are loosely packed—generally four feet high—and the first thing when they reach the dock is to tumble them into a hydraulic press, which reduces their bulk by one-half and makes it possible to pack twice as many in the hold of a steamer.

The truckmen pass back and forth between the pile of bales and the ship in a procession, rapidly and in perfect time, and it is an awkward and "wretched nigger," as the foreman said, who ever touches a bale with his hands.

Some of them put on jaunty airs, strike attitudes, and introduce fancy steps as if when at a cake walk, particular when spectators are watching, but that is unprofessional, and the serious and self-respecting truckman "votes his back" without trying to attract attention.

The refrain sounded like "Oh rio rily oh, oh rio rily oh," and it was evidently nothing but gibberish. It appears that the several gangs have their own particular songs, and I judged from what the foreman told me that the words were usually without meaning, or simply a series of rhymed sounds with terminations that rhymed, invented by some one of their number, and sung to familiar airs.

The truckman drops the bale at the edge of the dock, or tosses it by a jerk of the handles of his truck over the gunwales of the vessel; then a man adds the grapple and the hook, and the foreman tells him to hold the bale until the other end against a piece of heavy oak timber four or five inches square, which is notched to keep the screw from slipping, and can be inclined against the side of the ship or the side of the bales.

All this is done to a musical accompaniment—I suppose a negro always sings when he works—but the songs of the screwmen are different from those of the truckmen, and the air that goes with the jackscrew is not the same that is sung when the screwmen are placing the bale in position.

These stevedores have work only about six months in the year, but while they are at it they receive good pay. They work by the piece—that is, so much money for storing away so many bales, and the foreman who gets the job and selects his own associates, gets one-half more than they.

During the cotton season, for 12 or 14 hours' work he will average \$7.50 a day and they \$5, if they are skillful and energetic. The truckmen are paid by the hour, and make from \$1.25 to \$1.50.

Between seasons the screwmen engage in other occupations, cultivating gardens, doing plantation work, or following any trade that they may have learned; but they are universally regarded as superior beings, like bull-fighters in Spain and baseball players in the United States.

A bale of cotton weighs from 450 to 500 pounds, and skillful packers can get from 2,000 to 3,000 bales in a 1,500-ton ship. The number of bales a ship can carry increases rapidly with its tonnage. For example, a 1,000-ton ship will carry 4,000 bales; a 1,500-ton ship, 6,000; a 2,000-ton ship, 8,000; and a 3,000-ton ship, 12,000 bales.

NATURAL HISTORY. The pomp and ceremony which serve as a barrier between kings, princes and grand dukes, and Americans of the common or garden kind, render it difficult for the latter to study the manners and habits of the earth's monarchs, and very long range, and fit to serve for the instruction of the young by the masters of etiquette, the artists who design magazine covers and other persons possessed of accurate information. It would be impossible to give a satisfactory account of their various modes of life.

SCROFULA CURED

Miss Della Stevens, of Boston, Mass., writes: I have always suffered from hereditary Scrofula, for which I tried various remedies, and many reliable physicians, but none relieved me.

From the trustworthy sources indicated above, one learns that Queen Victoria has in the evening of life developed an extraordinary fondness for various branches of prepared food, many of which are of American manufacture.

The prince of Wales has also been noted for many years for his fondness for extensively advertised toilet preparations and costly brands of cigarettes and champagnes.

The late czar of Russia having brought up from his childhood on a simple diet of caviare, tallow candles, vodka, caviare, tea, bear's grease, and other products of his native country, never distinguished himself as a consumer of prepared food and drink.

As evidence of the unimpaired testimony of the superb works of art which lure the humble museum seeker into the temples which are given over to the worship of the eccentric and the deformed, his imperial majesty assisted at the capture of several of the best known freaks of eastern Europe, and was always ready to accord special audiences to those taken in remote portions of his empire.

When prevented by officers of state from enjoying the excitement of the freak chase, his majesty always made it a point to give special receptions at his winter palace to such curiosities as were found in his realm, all of which were instantly brought to St. Petersburg that they might receive this special mark of the imperial favor.

While in Stockton, Cal., sometime ago, Thos. F. Langan, of Los Banos, that state, was taken very severely with rashes and diarrhoea. He chanced to meet Mr. C. M. Carter, who was sanitarially minded.

It is in discussing the characteristics of certain great men, a London journal calls attention to the fondness for children for which many men famous in history are noted. Conspicuous among these were Napoleon, who, it is said, used to take the infant king of Rome in his arms, and standing in front of the mirror with him, would there make the oddest grimaces in the glass.

Recently a large party of Australian Endeavourers traveled about fifty miles to assist in holding a week's evangelistic service at the town of Mt. Pleasant. Their earnest efforts were crowned with much success.



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