

A GREAT PREHISTORIC SEA.

It Reached From the Gulf of Mexico Far Up Into New York.

A prehistoric sea or arm of the ocean which extended from the Gulf of Mexico far up into New York state is described by the United States geological survey in reporting to a correspondent on a rock sample.

"The rock was formed very long ago, many millions of years ago, in what geologists call the Devonian period. At that time a large part of the eastern United States was occupied by an arm of the sea which extended northward from the Gulf of Mexico into New York state. The eastern shore of the sea was not far east of the present line of the Blue Ridge and the Highlands of New Jersey and southeastern New York, and still farther east lay a great continent which extended an unknown distance into the area now occupied by the north Atlantic. The northern shore of the sea was somewhere near a line drawn from Albany through Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo. The present site of the Catskills was thus near the northeast end or head of this sea or gulf, with land not far away on the east and north.

"The sea teemed with life, almost wholly invertebrate animals, and marine plants, and the larger part of the life appears to have inhabited the sea bottom. Brachiopods, though rare now, were very abundant then, and many other forms of animals crawled about or grew upon the sea floor. As the streams washed in sand and mud from the neighboring lands the sea gradually filled up, and the shells of many brachiopods and other shell-bearing animals were thus buried in the sand and their forms preserved till now. By slow upward movement of the earth's crust the sea was drained from the region, and the beds of sand and mud that had been hardened into sandstone and shale were lifted thousands of feet above sea level to form a great land. The Catskill mountains have since been carried from this uplifted mass of rock through the cutting of valleys by the streams."

BURMA'S COLOSSAL BUDDHA.

This Statue Is Said to Be the Largest in the World.

The largest monument of the human form existing in the east today, if not in the world, is the great reclining statue of Buddha near Pegu, in Burma, around which the government erected a building with lattice steel pillars to protect it from the elements. This colossal was brought to light during the construction of the railway that runs northeast from Rangoon to Mandalay.

While the permanent way was being banked up to protect the lines from occasional floods the engineer in charge required for the purpose of his work a harder ballast than the alluvial deposit over which the line was running could give him. Less than a mile away was a tree-clad mound, and here, it was thought, suitable material might be found. The task of clearing away some of the trees took but an hour or so, and then shafts were sunk to find the needed stone. Before the diggers had gone down more than a yard they struck an enormous and fairly preserved figure of Gautama.

In actual length the statue is 180 feet and fifty feet high at the shoulder. The figure and its pedestal are of brick, covered with plaster. Since its discovery the plaster has been removed and painted over, the box at the head and the finger nails gilded and the head decorated with glass jewels. The statue is thought to be about 500 years old, but no one knows its history, no reference whatever being made to it in Burmese legends or traditions.—Wide World Magazine.

Ruddy Mars.
There seems to have been no reason other than its suggestive color for the selection of the planet Mars as the celestial symbol of the war god. Yet it was universally so regarded in ancient times.

If we could tell why Mars is red we might hit upon the whole secret of that strange planet. Its color is probably due to some peculiar quality of its soil. It may be principally composed of material resembling our red sandstone, or it may be stained red by an abundance of iron in its rocks.

Suits to a T.
The clause "It suits to a T," meaning it fits exactly, is as old as the familiar instrument, the T square or T rule, so called from its resemblance to the letter T, used by mechanics and draftsmen for marking angles true and for obtaining perpendiculars. The expression was in common use in the time of Dr. Johnson, who is quoted by Boswell as saying of Warrington, "You see they have fitted him to a T."

Condescension.
"Isn't the style of music you have been playing rather lacking in classic quality?"
"Oh, yes," replied the highly accomplished girl. "But one must show some consideration for the tastes of one's parents."—Washington Star.

Dad's Portion.
"I notice an eastern paper runs an attractive mothers' department headed 'Frocks and Frills.'"
"Some of these papers," growled the old man, "ought to run a fathers' department headed 'Shocks and Billa.'"
—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Where Her Thoughts Were.
Daughter—To tell the truth, pa, I didn't think much of the close of the sermon. Father—Thought more of the clothes of the congregation, eh?

TRAPPING A PYTHON.

The Monster Is a Victim of His Own Greedy Appetite.

The python's weak point is its stomach; it is a glutton. Not satisfied with a full supper, it will start at once on next week's breakfast if by chance that future meal happens to be within easy reach.

A python generally lives in a hole in the ground or a hollow in a tree, but if it can find an old ruin in the jungle—and there are many old ruins in India—it likes to take up its sleeping quarters there, because even in the heaviest rains the water runs off the ruins quickly, whereas a hole in the ground is likely to be flooded. The python needs to eat only once a week, and to get that meal it lies flat along the bough of a tree near a stream and waits for its prey to come to drink.

When the natives see the long trail that the python's body makes near the bank and find a heap of ruins near by they make a hole in the ruined wall just exactly big enough for the python to get through. Then they tie a pig to a stake near the hole on one side of the wall, and on the other side of the wall opposite the hole they tie another pig to a stake. They also tie a wire to the leg or the tail of the near side pig, and as evening draws on they twist it from a distance, and the pig squeals. As the python comes home to bed it hears the squeal.

So the python comes along merrily and seizes its supper at a single bite. Down goes the pig into the big snake's throat, sucked in slowly by sheer muscular action. In about half an hour the pig has passed completely down the long neck, and in another half hour it is down a couple of yards farther into the python's stomach.

Most animals would go to sleep right away after a gorge like that. But meanwhile the second pig on the other side of the wall has realized its unhappy brother's woeful fate and has set up a most distressing noise. The python puts its head through the hole and sees it.

"Ah!" it says to itself. "Here's my next week's breakfast."
And instead of waiting for next week to come that greedy python allows the second pig too. The wily natives wait until the second pig is well on its way down the python's body; then they have the snake caught. Pig No. 1 prevents it from advancing, and pig No. 2 prevents it from retreating. The natives lasso the python around the neck, break down the wall and pass a coil of rope between the two famished pigs before they can amalgamate. Then they bear away the python to captivity.—Wonders of the Jungle.

Interviewing a Mummerist.
"Good morning, Wagge. What's on the carpet today?" asked Singleton.
"Dust," said Wagge.
"Clever boy! But I mean what have you on foot?"
"Shoes," said Wagge solemnly.
"Oh, come off, Wagge. What are you up to these days?"
"Data," sighed Wagge.
"I'll give you just one more chance, you poor fellow, you. What are you doing now?"
"Everybody," said Wagge.
"As usual, eh?" said Singleton as he shored the remains down the nearest available coal hole.—New York Times.

The Old Capitol Building.
The structure in Washington city known as the "Old Capitol building" has a memorable history. It was erected in 1800 and was originally designed as a tavern or boarding house. On account of poor management the tavern was closed after a few years. During the war of 1812 the British captured Washington and burned several of the public buildings, including the capitol. The government then purchased this tavern building for the use of congress, and here both houses met for several years. Within its walls two presidents were inaugurated, and in it John C. Calhoun died.

How a Meaning Changes.
"Cheat" is a word that now has a very ugly sound. To cheat a man is to defraud him. Originally the word conveyed no such meaning. The old word "escheat" referred to the dues that fell to the crown. It came from the French echoir (Latin, excedere). The modern meaning that attaches to the word tells a sad tale of the extortion and greed that must have been practiced in collecting the dues.

Characteristic.
"Did my housemaid testify 'at the trial?"
"Yes, but her testimony was stricken out as incompetent."
"How very like her!" murmured the party of the first part.—Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Looking Backward.
"Boss, I can't live on \$2 a week any longer."
"Strick it out for awhile," urged his thrifty employer. "Think of how you brag about it when you've made your fortune, my lad."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Naturally.
Muggins—Those two fellows don't seem to be on very good terms. Buzzins—No; they are rival dentists. Muggins—Don't pull together, eh?—Phila. Delphia Record.

Hardly Polit.
"Don't you think the baby favors his mother?"
"Hm! Looks like him, but I wouldn't call it a favor."—Baltimore American.

The making of friends who are real friends is the best token of a man's success in life.—F. B. Hale.

CELLS IN THE HUMAN BODY.

How the Colonies Live, Thrive, Increase and Do Their Work.

Our bodies and the bodies of all physical life are composed of cells. Man's body is a great colony of cells, each cell having its own work to do to keep the colony alive.

These body cells are among the tiniest things in nature, being, of course, microscopic. They are so minute that one can scarcely imagine anything so tiny, and these cells are made of protoplasm, which is like the white of an egg.

Bones, muscles, blood, nerves and body tissue, all are made of just such cells, and they increase their numbers by dividing themselves. When cells become too old to divide any more they grow into the shape they are to keep.

In all plants the sap is carried to the different parts of the plant by passing on from cell to cell.

A muscle cell builds muscle, a tissue cell tissue. Some cells make blood; others carry it where it is needed, and others still—the nerve cells—help transmit sensations.

Dr. Virchow stated that he believed that all disturbances of health were due to some disturbance of the individual cells of some particular organ.

If you should hurt your arm or your foot it heals by new cells forming on the injured place and taking the place of the old ones.

Now, protoplasm is a strange thing, made of four natural elements—oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen and carbon. These are called dead elements, and no one of the four by itself can be alive, but when they are all combined in the wonderful form called protoplasm the combination is alive.

When our bodies die they separate into these four same elements again.

The very lowest form of life we know at present is composed of only one cell. This animal is called the amoeba, and it lives in water, slime and mud. If you should put a bit of mud or slime on a dish and look at it under a strong microscope you would see a tiny moving mass that resembles transparent jelly, and it would be alive. It would move and grow. And, again, if you should scrape the green mold off the outside of a flowerpot and cover it with water, keeping it always wet, in two or three weeks you might see amoebas through a microscope. All bacteria grow like the amoeba by dividing themselves in two.—Pittsburgh Press.

Football.
The game of football is said to have originated with the early Celtic inhabitants of England. It is certainly as old as the Christian era. The game was immensely popular all through the middle ages and appears to have been from the start the same dangerous thing that it is today. It was repeatedly censured and opposed by the authorities, and an attempt at its suppression was made under Henry IV., Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, but the game continued to be played until about 1650. Revived about the beginning of the eighteenth century, it has since then steadily grown in popularity and is today one of the most popular of English and American sports.—New York American.

Effect of Laughing.
As the effect of laughing is to increase the action of the diaphragm, it moves at every ejaculation in laughing. Every time one says the syllable "ha" the diaphragm hops up and down and shakes up the contents of the stomach.

A hearty laugh is an excellent aid to digestion, not simply because of the pleasant state of mind, which makes the condition favorable for all the functions of the body, but because of the actual mechanical assistance given to the process of digestion.—Milwaukee Wisconsin.

The Bird and the Man.
A country stable keeper was driving a salesman from one town to another when, in passing through a wooded section, the salesman seized the lines and brought the horse to a halt.

"What is that noise?" he queried, listening to a peculiar sound coming from the woods.

"That? Oh, that's a partridge drumming," replied the driver.

"Well," mused the salesman, letting go the lines, "I hope he's had better luck than I have today."—Boston Herald.

Back to King Alfred.
Spinster is an Anglo-Saxon word. The fleece which was taken home by the Anglo-Saxon farmer in summer was spun into clothing by the females of the family during the winter. Alfred the Great in his will called the female part of the family the spindle side, and it was an axiom in old England that no young woman was fit to be a wife till she had spun for herself a set of body, table and bed linen; hence the maiden was termed a spinner or spinster.—London Chronicle.

SOME OLD MONSTER GUNS.

A Curiously Constructed Mortar Was "Mad Meg" of Ghent.

The ancestors of the monster guns of today were performing their deadly work at least five centuries ago, says Die Welt der Technik. The barrels of the early guns were made of cast iron, wrapped with forged iron rings to strengthen them. Later the guns were cast in bronze.

One of the first mortars that astonished the world was "Mad Meg" of Ghent, which was made in 1382. The gun is still preserved in Ghent. It was made in two parts, which screw together. The front part, which is really the barrel, is composed of thirty-two forged iron strips, held together by forty-one rings, like an ordinary hooped barrel. It is screwed to the back part, which contains the chamber for the powder. That has twenty rings round it. The caliber of the gun is 79.5 centimeters, which is almost double that of the greatest howitzer of today, the 42 centimeter. The chamber held sixty kilograms of powder and shot about 340 kilograms of stone, pieces of iron and glass. It is thought that "Mad Meg" had her christening in the siege of Oudenarde.

Another famous gun was mounted at Edinburgh castle. That was not very successful. In the first place it was so heavy that its weight nearly wrecked the bridge that led over the castle moat, and one of the first discharges from the gun lodged a great piece of shot on the sides of the barrel, and it took forty-eight hours to extract it. When they finally succeeded in discharging the gun the shot went so high over the enemy's heads that it did no damage. Eventually it was used for firing salutes until one day the recoil sank it so deep into the earth that it was put out of commission. The old gun was finally melted up.

Fifty years later a Greek cannon founder who worked for Sultan Mohammed II. made a giant gun of bronze that performed good service in the siege of Byzantium in 1453. Urban, who had his foundry at Adrianople, took three months to make the gun. It required sixty oxen two months to draw the gun to Byzantium. The caliber was 60 centimeters. The gun ended its existence by bursting and killing its maker.

Then came the gun of Mohammed II., which was cast in bronze by Munir Alir and later given as a present to England by Sultan Abdul-Azis and preserved in Woolwich. It was a 79.5 caliber gun and weighed 7,500 kilograms (eight tons).

The largest type of mortar ever made—and the least destructive one, for it has never been fired—is the "Zari Puschka" at Moscow. It is 114.8 centimeters caliber and weighs 39,000 kilograms. It was cast in bronze by Andreas Tschachoff in 1586.

Twilight.
Twilight is considered to last until the sun is 18 degrees below the horizon and to begin when the sun reaches a similar point in the morning, or 18 degrees before sunrise. When the line on which this position is measured is shortest, then the twilight will be the shortest, and vice versa. This causes the shortest twilight to occur in the winter months in northern latitudes and longest in summer. In other words, the difference in the duration of summer and winter twilight is due to the relative positions of the earth and the sun.

Made a Cigar Lighter.
"Ma," said a nine-year-old prodigy, "if I change this box of cigars into a cigar lighter will you give me a nickel?"
"No," said his mother. "But you can't do it."
"Er—yes. But you can't do it."
"You just look. See, I open the box, take out a cigar, and now it's a cigar lighter. Gimme the nickel."
—Exchange.

Humanity In War.
The first man, so far as history can speak on the subject, to do anything to mitigate the hardness of the usages of war was Marcus Aurelius, the noblest of the Roman emperors. Of this illustrious man De Quincey writes, "Marcus Aurelius first resolutely maintained that certain indestructible rights belonged to every soldier simply as a man, which rights capture by the sword or any other accident of war could do nothing to shake or diminish."

Even Sol.
"Just fancy! There's a fasting man who has been living for forty-five days on water!"
"That's nothing. My father lived for twenty years on water."
"Go on!"
"Yes; he was a sea captain."—Chicago Herald.



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