

STANDARD TIME.

To Ascertain and Promulgate It Is a Costly Task.

"What time is it?" Few questions are more common than this, and yet each day the United States government goes to a great expense in giving it an official answer. To ascertain the instant when it is noon on the seventy-fifth meridian and to send that information all over the country is a great and a costly task. The astronomical observatory in Washington computes the true time, which is thence transmitted by electricity to every important city and town.

About five minutes before the Washington noon the telegraph companies get off all their regular business except on lines where they have more than one wire. They then connect all important points, from which there may be numerous ramifications, with an electric wire going into the great clock in the observatory so that all over the country its tickings may be heard. For the ten seconds just before 12 o'clock there is silence, which is broken by the "noon bell." Regular business is then resumed.

In some cities the wires connect with a time ball which drops with the noon bell. The time ball in Washington over the state, war and navy department building is three feet in diameter and can be seen from all parts of the city. Crowds frequently gather about to see it fall, a distance of 21 feet, high in the air. The men whom some of the spectators suppose to be dropping the ball is merely there to hoist it again to its place.

In the building beneath are 23 clocks which are each day automatically corrected by it. An electrical device "sets" them, placing hour, minute and second hands exactly vertical at the instant the ball drops. The hands that are too fast are pushed back, and those that are slow are thrust forward.

Although Washington is on the seventy-seventh meridian, the noon hour as for convenience computed for the seventy-fifth, the time standard for the eastern part of the United States. In the central belt, which is governed by the ninety-third meridian, the signal from Washington means 11 o'clock, in the Rocky mountain belt it is 10 o'clock, and on the Pacific coast line it is 9.—*Youth's Companion.*

FEASTED ON SPARROWS.

A Diet That Did Not Agree With the Crane.

"Some time ago I had occasion to observe an interesting change in the habits and temperament of a crane which had been picked up in the swamps of Arkansas," said a gentleman from one of the towns on the Mississippi river, "and the change was startling too. The crane was placed in a small park which was literally filled with English sparrows. These pests did not like the visitor from the lowlands, and they made daily assaults on the poor bird. The crane was a pretty fowl, long, slender, pure white and with the stately stride of a tragedian. The sparrows would systematically sweep down on the crane in droves, and the attacks were fierce and vicious.

The crane stood the assaults with indifference for awhile, but finally the fowl from the swamps figured out a method of retaliation, and it was effectual. In some way the crane learned that sparrow was a pretty sweet morsel. From the time she learned it she feasted on sparrows. She would slip up cautiously on these pesky twitterers and throw her yellow beak out like a gig. She never missed the mark. She always landed a sparrow, and a singular part of the thing is that she would swallow them whole, feathers and all. But the crane would always dampen the bird by dipping it in one of the water basins of the park.

"The diet evidently did not agree with the crane, and she became a trifle droopy and showed signs of indisposition. She finally died, and the keeper of the park believes that the crane's death was caused by a severe case of indigestion brought on by eating sparrows."—*New Orleans Times-Democrat.*

Competent, but Uncanny.

A. A. Gallagher, district passenger agent of the Missouri Pacific railroad, while en route south was taken quite ill and was compelled to stop at Montgomery, Ala. He went to a hotel and sent for a physician.

The medical man said:

"You have a case of pneumonia and must have a nurse."
"All right," said Gallagher. "Do you know a good nurse you can send to look after me?"

The doctor said he did and would have the nurse at the hotel within an hour. In about an hour a colored woman who measured about nine feet in girth put in an appearance, and Gallagher asked her if she had ever nursed sick people.

"Yes, indeed," she replied. "I've had considerable experience with ailing persons. I nursed Marster John, and he died; then I nursed Mistress Lucy, and she died; then I nursed Mistress Lucy's sister. The doctor didn't think she was so very poorly, but she done died."

"Have you had any other experience in nursing?" asked Gallagher.

"Yes, indeed. Only last week I left Colonel Carter's house, where I nursed the colonel for five days."

"Well, did the colonel get well?" asked Gallagher.

"No. The colonel he died, too, but Dr. Jones, who tended him, run a big knife into the colonel and opened him up. The doctor had been out late the night before and was a little nervous. The knife sort of slipped and just about cut the colonel's heart out. Then the doctor said all he—couldn't save him."

"You seem to be a good nurse," said Gallagher, "and you're engaged."—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

Not So Far Gone.

The last letter he received from wife conveyed the intelligence that she was quite sick, and of course he was considerably worried. But he was comforted by the fact that she was with her mother. He wrote her an affectionate letter and told her to be sure and let him know if she grew worse. The next letter conveyed the intelligence that she was a little worse, though the doctor said it was nothing serious. But he worried a great deal.

The next afternoon a telegraph boy sauntered into his office with the usual nonchalance of a messenger boy conveying a "rush" message and shoved the book under hubby's nose.

"Is dis Mr. Blank?" asked the boy.

"Yes," gasped hubby, cold chills chasing up and down his spine.

"Message fr you. Sign here. De charges is 50 cents."

Thomas Jefferson as a Letter Writer.

Mr. Jefferson probably wrote more letters with his own hand than any other public man that ever lived. The extent of his correspondence may be inferred from the fact that 20,000 letters neatly folded and briefed were preserved by him and found carefully filed away at the time of his death, with copies of the replies sent to more than 16,000. These, however, were only a small portion of his correspondence, as he retained only those he considered of future usefulness or importance.

Stenography was not invented at that time. Every one of his letters was written with his own hand and with great care, although after breaking his wrist while minister to France it became a great labor to him. His penmanship was small, plain and legible, every letter being perfectly formed, and his account books are kept in so small a hand that many of the pages cannot be read without a magnifying glass.

Jefferson was ambidextrous. He could write equally well with either hand. When his wrist was broken, he learned to write with his left hand, which became as skillful as the other. It would have been impossible for him to have carried on his extensive correspondence without being able to relieve his right hand at intervals.—*Chicago Record.*

An Amber Museum.

Konigsberg, Prussia, has an amber museum valued at \$95,000 marks.

That Cough Hangs On

You have used all sorts of cough remedies but it does not yield; it is too deep seated. It may wear itself out in time, but it is more liable to produce la grippe, pneumonia or a serious throat affection. You need something that will give you strength and build up the body.

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will do this when everything else fails. There is no doubt about it. It nourishes, strengthens, builds up and makes the body strong and healthy, not only to throw off this hard cough, but to fortify the system against further attacks. If you are run down or emaciated you should certainly take this nourishing food medicine.

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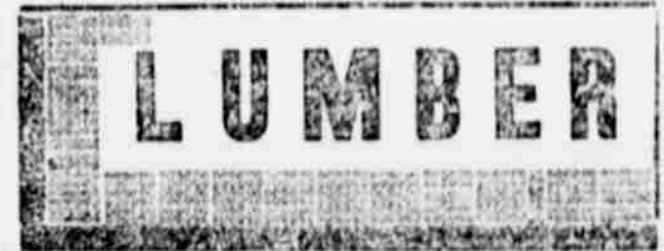
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