

PONY PENNING.

A Favorite Sport of the People of Chinototeague Island.

How Strands of the Little Animals Are Brought Up and Captured by the Men and Boys—A Gaily Occasion.

Chinototeague and Assateague have had their hundredth annual pony penning. Chinototeague is a small island in the Atlantic close to the shore of Accomack county, Va. Assateague is a long, narrow peninsula lying outside of Chinototeague and protecting it from the assaults of the Atlantic. Chinototeague is a glittering little island, brilliant with sand and salt water, densely peopled, well wooded and haunted by mocking birds. There is neither poverty nor crime there, drunkenness is almost unknown, and dooms are always unlocked. It is the boast of Chinototeague that no slave ever lived upon its soil, and that the island remained true to the union throughout the war. There are no better sailors anywhere than the people of Chinototeague, and there are no stancher little boats than the Chinototeague canoe with double leg-of-mutton sails.

Nobody knows positively the origin of the Chinototeague ponies. It is only known that they have roamed the marshy pastures of the islands for at least a century, and there is a tradition that the ancestors of the ponies came ashore from a wrecked ship in the eighteenth century. These, doubtless, were full grown horses, and the Chinototeague pony of to-day is a degenerate, through droughts in summer and exposure in the open pastures through long winters. But degenerate as he is, the Chinototeague pony is a fine, hardy, and often beautiful animal, with strength out of proportion to his size, and, when well broken, has strength, agility and speed. He is from ten to twelve hands high and from six to eight hundred pounds in weight. From two hundred and fifty to four hundred of these little creatures roam the island pastures. There are, perhaps, half as many on the lower end of Assateague.

A stallion leads upon the pastures a group of from ten to twenty-five mares and colts. The leader is on the constant lookout for danger, and at his start his whole polygamous family take to their heels. The ponies are really far from wild, and one may easily approach within fifty or twenty yards of a group at pasture. The older stallions become fierce and quarrelsome, and have to be removed from the pastures from time to time, lest they should destroy one another or the younger stallions. They are all excellent swimmers, and when the pastures become bare on Chinototeague they frequently swim to the neighboring islets, where the salt grass is still green. It is not uncommon to see from the top of Assateague light a group of horses bathing in the surf. The colts are born and nurtured in the open pastures, and the annual pony penning is for the double purpose of branding these colts and selling some of the older horses.

Pony-penning day is still a fete day on Chinototeague. The pen for the horses is built near the center of the village, and on the morning of the pony penning men and boys mounted on swift and well-broken ponies ride out to the pastures to drive in the wild creatures. The groups of ponies are slowly driven together on the pasture and then started toward a pen. As the pen is neared the guards thicken, so that the whole band is easily driven into the inclosure. Branding irons are heated; men with rope nooses on the end of long poles leap into the pens. The colts are thrown to the ground and held there while the iron is applied. The branding done, the auction follows. Unbroken horses fetch from twenty-five to forty dollars each. Others, broken to harness, fetch as high as sixty dollars. Well-matched pairs sometimes fetch one hundred and fifty dollars. The ponies have long been the pets of children of well-to-do families on the mainland, and of late years have been sold over a large part of the United States. They are larger than Shetland ponies and more beautiful.—N. Y. Press.

A FIFTY-MILE TOBOGGAN.

The Pine Ridge Lumber Flume Is the Greatest in the World.

In semi-tropical Fresno county there is a place which, for risky, delightful sport, beats all the toboggan slides on the continent. Think of the exhilarating joy of an uninterrupted slide of fifty miles through great forests, along the brink of precipices, and down rugged canyons, amid the wildest and most picturesque scenery to be found in the country—fifty miles without a break.

Such a thrilling experience has been made possible by the recent completion of the great Pine Ridge lumber flume. No other flume surpasses it, and it is doubtful if any other is equal to it in length and grandeur of the scenery passed through in a journey from the summit of one of the high spurs of the Sierra Nevada to the plains beneath, fifty miles distant. The flume has just been completed to the little town of Clovis, twelve miles north of Fresno, and is fifty-two miles in length.

Flumes for floating lumber are so numerous in California that description is superfluous except to say that this is in general like all others, consisting of boxes shaped like the letter V, and on trestles varying in height from a few feet to one hundred, depending on the character of the country traversed. The flume starts at Stevenson creek, one of the tributaries of the San Joaquin river, at an elevation of nearly six thousand feet above the sea, and after a winding course of fifty-two miles it terminates in a vineyard twelve miles out on the plains beyond the foot of the mountain. The V-shaped trough carries the water which floats the lumber. The flume boats in which the rapid journeys are made down the flumes are simple. They are made the same shape as the V boxes of the flumes. The up-

per end of the boat is closed by a board nailed across, but the lower end, which points down stream, is left open to let out the water which splashes over the sides of the boats from time to time. One, two or three short boards are laid across for seats, depending upon how many are to make the journey. A carpenter can manufacture one of these boats in less than half an hour. The boat is meant for only one journey, for none is ever hauled back for another voyage. Only a little preparation is necessary for a trip of this kind, and half a dollar will buy enough lumber for the boat, and a man is a poor carpenter indeed who cannot make his own vessel. The trip is made with but little danger. The principal trouble is, when once started, there are comparatively few places where one can stop. The current is generally so strong and so rapid that it makes landing impossible, and the voyager can only sit still and let the boat run.

THE MUSKRAT'S INTUITION.

As a Weather Prophet He Can Give Points to General Greeley.

Judson Rockwell, of Wapping, has great confidence in the meteorological wisdom of the festive muskrat, and certainly has some reason for his faith, says a Connecticut correspondent of the New York Sun. He believes that a muskrat can foresee cold weather and floods three or four days in advance with far more accuracy than General Greeley can with all his expensive weather bureau.

The muskrat is an odd animal, who builds his house in the shallow water of a pond or morass late in the fall, and his personal comfort hinges on his ability to foretell what the weather is going to be at long range. He must know when he puts up his comical mud hut just how heavy the February and spring freshets will be, so that the top chamber of the house will be out of the wet when the freshets swirl about it. On sunny days in winter when the waters of the ponds are free of ice, the muskrat claws upon the subaqueous floor of his dwelling and goes drifting about the sparkling lake, his sleek black nose and face just parting the waves and leaving a long triangular wake spreading afar as he sails. On such days he lays in a supply of trout and other fish, which he catches expertly, lurking behind a stump or rock. But he must know two or three days in advance of the approach of a cold wave that will fetter the pond, so that he can retire into his hut and solidly close up its submerged gate, banking it with turf.

Judson Rockwell has watched muskrats for many years, being a veteran trapper, and his knowledge of their traits enables him to predict the advent of a cold wave with a correctness that astonishes all his neighbors, who pin their faith to the predictions of old probabilities. Early one March while Connecticut was basking in April-like sunshine and people in all parts of the State were killing striped snakes and picking dandelion greens, Judson visited his muskrat traps and found three fine minks in them. But it was by no means glee on account of his profitable capture that irradiated his face as he went back to Wapping and hastened to the village store with his budget of news. He had made a discovery, and as soon as he recovered breath enough he recounted it. "The muskrats are closing up their holes," said he, "and you can bet all you're worth we shall have a cold wave in less than four days. Now remember that." Just three days later came the coldest weather of the winter, which flung a bridge of ice four or five inches thick across every lake.

The muskrat sign is new and the credit of it belongs to Judson Rockwell, of Wapping.

ANECDOTES OF THE QUEEN.

She Approved of a Trouncing That Was Administered to Wales.

Apropos of the queen's recent sojourn at Balmoral a north of Scotland newspaper has been gleaming from among the Deedsie peasantry some new stories about her majesty's early visits to her Highland residence. One of these relates to the boyhood of the prince of Wales, says the Scottish American.

The prince on one occasion, when he had temporarily escaped from the surveillance of the parental eye, played a trick on a young country lad whom he saw approaching with a basket of eggs on his arm, the result of the trick being to break all or most of the eggs. The lad was a tough Aberdonian and could not brook this injury, so he turned to and doubling his fists gave the prince a thrashing in spite of the latter's protest that he was the prince of Wales.

"Prince an' a' though ye be," said the boy, "ye'd nae business ta break my eggs." Just then the queen appeared, having seen part of the fray. She quietly said: "You are quite right, my lad; he had no right to break your eggs and he richly deserves what you have given him." Her majesty afterward made inquiries about the boy and sent him to school at her own expense.

Another story relates to her majesty's visit to the cottagers in the neighborhood. On one occasion, when she had been making calls among the cottage women, she dropped in, on her way back to the castle, at the house of an old woman who did not know her visitor. The old lady was both talkative and querulous; and, referring to a fete at which the queen had been present that day, complained about people, including her own household, "ramming like mad to see a common clay woman." Her grievance was that she had to wait till her folks returned in order to get their tea, for she was to.

The olive, oak, laurel, myrtle, rosemary, cypress, amaranth and parsley are all funeral plants among the Greeks and Romans. "To be in need of parsley" was a Greek euphemism indicating the death of the person so described. An Athenian army once marching against the Lacedaemonians was stumped on its way out of the city by meeting two mules laden with parsley, the oxen being that the whole army would soon be in need of that article.

FACTS ABOUT MARBLE.

How the Rugged Block Is Converted Into Polished Variegated Slabs.

Few people who stand before a finished monument or bust, or even a soda water font in a drug store, and admire the highly-polished variegated marble, says the New York Commercial Advertiser, realize the amount of time and labor that has been expended in the evolution of the completed structure from the raw materials. The highly-colored varieties are found chiefly in Italy, Spain, France, Belgium, or Portugal, though sometimes in Mexico or Algeria. The white stone is common in this State. Among the marbles which most frequently enter into composition of fancy apparatus are:

Italian—white, vernal and clouded, with bluish gray; Etrurian—pure porcelain white, Etruscan shaded cream white, veined with dark gray; Algerian and Mexican oya—transparent white, veined with opaline white, yellow, or pink; Bardiglio—delicately veined gray; Carrara—shaded pearl gray, dashed with carmine red; Sicilian—golden yellow, clouded with white and veined with olive and brown; Tennessee—chocolate, frosted with white; Georgia—green, bluish—richly mottled, yellow, purple, brown, white and red; Vermont—Boscawen—purple, mottled and veined with gold—yellow; Lorton—reddish; Grotto of France—deep red, shaded with red and brown; Grotto of France—purple red, mottled with pearl white; Warwick—brilliant red, veined with white; Belgium—velvety black; African—yellow, with purple veins; Congo Antique—deep red; Knoxville—grayish pink, with light blue veining.

The colored marbles retain their freshness longer and can be repolished after many years' use.

The marble is extracted from the quarry in oblong blocks cut out by means of wedges.

Except when designated for statuary or building purposes the first thing the manufacturer does is to place the block of marble under a gang-saw in order to saw it into slabs. The gang-saw consists merely of a series of parallel saws, to which an oscillating motion is imparted while they are kept fed with sand and water. When they come from the gang-saw the slabs are generally about 1 1/2 inches thick, so that they may dress to one inch when rubbed on both sides. The slabs are then inspected. To the inexperienced eye the rough slabs are much alike, and while the good qualities of the slab are only fully brought out under the polisher's mop, the imperceptible defects are also magnified very much. It is therefore necessary to detect flaws before the polishing begins.

The perfect slabs are cut into required lengths by a rip-saw and passed to the rubbing bed to be rubbed smooth. The rubbing bed consists of a solid horizontal cast-iron wheel about four inches thick and usually about twelve or thirteen feet in diameter. This wheel is fixed in a vertical shaft which revolves on two chilled steel friction balls, placed one upon the other, and inclosed in a cast-iron box which is kept well supplied with oil. The box itself is firmly imbedded in a stone foundation, and the entire structure is made as true and as steady as possible. It requires a great deal of care and attention to keep the rubbing-bed perfectly true; and it is sometimes necessary to rub it down for a whole week with bluestone in order to keep the surface smooth.

When the slab leaves the rubbing-bed it is comparatively smooth, and is ready to be cut out by hand into its final shape. It then passes into the hands of the polishers, who are provided with rubbers made of ordinary tacking rolled up into a mop of about three or four inches in diameter and sewed firmly through and through. With these they rub the surface of the slab back and forth, hour after hour, until they bring out the high polish so much admired. The marble is first rubbed with grit, then with pumice stone, and then with bone. On some white marbles oxalic acid is then used, and finally the finishing touches are given with putty of zinc. On colored marbles emery and French putty, prepared with sulphur and oil, are used. It is estimated that each square foot of surface polished costs one man four hours of steady work.

In gliding, four or five gold leaves are blown into a cushion made of a board covered with chamama. The glider cuts it into strips a quarter of an inch wide, lays them on the marble with his "tip," then "motions" it on, after which he rubs it down with a fine hair brush in order to smooth the tape and form an even and continuous surface. He then cleans off the edges with cuttlefish. Great dexterity is acquired by gliders, and they seem to handle with the greatest ease the delicate gold leaf which the slightest breath of air is sufficient to carry off, and which in inexperienced hands is utterly unmanageable.

The variegated, dark-colored marbles are most expensive, but they are also generally harder and more durable, as well as more beautiful, than those that are white or light colored. The common white marble, which is not so valuable from an ornamental point of view, has a separate value as being the best basis for the production of carbonic acid gas for the manufacture of a "soda" water and all other carbonated beverages, and a large trade is done in it for this purpose. It has succeeded whitening and bicarbonate of soda in this respect on account of its cheapness. A barrel of good marble-dust, weighing about 400 pounds, costs \$1.25. An equal quantity of white costs about \$5.00, and produces no more gas. A like weight of bicarbonate of soda produces a double amount of gas, but costs about \$7.

As far as chemical composition is concerned marble and whiting are analogous—both are carbonates of lime, and when equally pure both contain the same amount of carbonic acid. Whiting, however, is rarely, if ever, as pure as marble. It consists chiefly of the remains of extremely small animals.

Chinamen Use Big Cargoes of Twine in Their Cues.

Two or three curiosities of commerce are mentioned in the report of the commissioner of customs at Canton. Woolen goods, says the New York Journal of Commerce, are not much in demand in that latitude, but "woolen cord is now very largely used by the natives here for plaiting into their cues, and the importations of this article are steadily increasing." The import of kerosene oil at Canton increased from three million gallons in 1888 to more than nine million five hundred thousand gallons in 1891. It is peddled on the street. The empty cans serve a great variety of uses. The domestic servant delights in them as convenient and all-embracing receptacles, and readily fashions them into handy utensils for daily use. They are converted into lamps, boxes, toys for children, and all sorts of domestic articles. Flattened and pieced together one sees them generally used in conjunction with the usual matting as coverings for boats and sheds. They supply the packing tins in which hard and ginger are exported. "The tinware sent from here to the northern ports consists largely of lamps, boxes and various small articles made of old kerosene tins and ornamented with lacquer varnish." Evidently the shipment of oil to China in bulk is an expedient of great value.

UNHARMED IN FIRE.

German Fireman Wears the "Scaphander" and Secures Immunity.

There are some fire apparatus and appliances in which the firemen of Berlin, Germany, are undoubtedly ahead of us. Of these apparatus the most notable is the fire "scaphander." The word "scaphander," which means either "hollow man" or "hollow to receive a man," is generally applied to the suit of impervious material in which the diver arrays himself before he goes down into the water. The fire scaphander is on the lines of the diver's scaphander, the only difference, in fact, being that it is made of a different material. The fire scaphander is made of asbestos and rubber, and is absolutely proof against fire. It neither takes fire nor is permeable to the heat of fire. A man in an asbestos suit or scaphander can take a leisurely walk through roaring flames or through the thickest volume of smoke with comfort, or at least with complete immunity from being burned or choked. The helmet is joined apart from the rest of the suit and is hermetically fitted to the suit, the covering being so perfect that air is excluded. A plate of glass, specially prepared to stand great heat without shattering, is imbedded in the front of the helmet and allows the wearer to see plainly. To the fireman this trapped air is supplied, just as it is supplied to the diver at work, through a tube, the one end of which is held at the surface and the other end is in the helmet.

Dr. Chevalier, a German physician, has written a book in which he attempts to prove that most of the present general opinions have been or are insane.

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You have nice children, you know and nothing pleases them better than a nice nobby suit of clothes that keeps them warm and healthy. Baker has them and for but little money. Can you stand \$1.00 for a suit of clothes, or up to \$4.00? All these low prices you will find at Hiram Baker's.

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