

FLOOD-WRECKED LEON INTERESTING PLACE

Happiest and Busiest City of Mexico.

Washington.—Nearly a thousand people were reported drowned when a dam broke and a wall of water descended upon Leon, fifth city of Mexico.

Plotting out of the center of Leon is a serious catastrophe to Mexico, says a bulletin of the National Geographic society from its headquarters in Washington, D. C. "Comparatively it is a greater disaster than the Johnstown or Dayton floods, because Leon is one of the most important manufacturing centers of Mexico.

Leon's extensive tanneries, cotton and woolen mills, and other manufacturing were close to the mountain stream which runs through the town. Gomez, the river is called, and when its waters broke loose it sent a flood through the heart of what has been called 'the happiest and busiest city of Mexico.' Into the wash of the flood the workmen's houses of adobe earth dissolved like lumps of sugar in hot tea.

Saw and Reap at the Same Time.

"Citizens of this industrial city cannot be held to account for not guarding against such a menace. After Leon had been swept, in 1888, by a similar flood which drowned 200 people, retaining walls and dikes more than a mile in length were built to protect the city. But apparently these walls could not cope with the rush of water.

Leon, full name Leon de los Aldamas, is on the main line of the railroad from Mexico City to El Paso, in the westernmost corner of Texas, and has a population of 58,000. It is 250 miles northwest of Mexico City, and therefore lies in the famous Mexican highlands where altitude has denied the rights of latitude. A region that ought to be steamily tropical or a hot desert has been elevated to a temperate-zone climate. It is not uncommon to see barley being sown in one field while it is being reaped in the next.

Leon lies in such a fertile valley that agriculture holds its own easily against the competing demands of mining and manufacturing. Irrigation, however, is at once necessary and picturesque. The fertile valley around is dotted with small reservoirs mirroring the clear blue skies.

"Citizens of Leon are proud of its industry. 'We are not rich,' they tell travelers, 'but we are workers.' They are proud of La Hormiga (The Ant) the largest factory in Leon and presumably in Mexico. They grow enthusiastic over the cotton and woolen and silk mills using modern New England machinery. Yet large smokestacked factories are not to be seen, for two reasons. First, that electric power is the first gift of mountain streams and second, much of the manufacturing is done in the home. The bridges and saddles for which Mexico is famous are made largely at Leon. Their beauty lies in the tooling, the embroidery and the intricate silver ornaments. This is a task for the craftsman, and like the craftsman of the Middle Ages, he works in Leon, at his home.

"Names of the garments made in Leon are new to the average American. Different fashions reign so there is the serape, the robezo, the manta, and the poncho. The robezo is the peon woman's equivalent of the expensive mantilla of the upper classes. The manta is the white cotton garment worn by laborers everywhere. The poncho and serape are woolen shawls which, serve as overcoat, blanket or raincoat as the need arises.

Circuit of Romance.

"A belle of Leon is very particular that her father shall live somewhere on Leon's street car line. It isn't that she is concerned that her father have easy transportation back and forth to work. It isn't that she worries about bringing the family supplies home from market. Street cars in Leon are vehicles of romance. Despite the Hollywood movies the senior does not come on a prancing mustang to his senorita in this corner of Mexico. He comes by street car.

"Wooling is called 'playing the bear' in Mexico. Once a young blood of most Mexican towns has fixed his fancy on a girl he stands long hours before her house. Sometimes he follows her as she promenades, but at a respectful distance. If his attentions are encouraged he receives an invitation to call with the family present during the session. But in Leon the belles and beaux begin differently. The street car line in the city makes a loop. The bear, therefore, find it expedient to board a street car and ride past the houses of their beloved. Not once but again and again and round and round, and as his car rolls along, each watches his special house for a signal. For the girls, of course, the custom introduces a delightful element of expectancy. One never knows just when the street car will round the corner. One never knows whether the 'bear' will be on that car. For the woosers of Leon it has this additional advantage, they get to see all the girls on the circuit."

Clever These Czechs

Berlin.—An automobile driven by a Czech in a speedway race looped the loop and kept on racing. It turned a somersault and landed on all fours among the spectators. Nobody was killed just then.

NAVAL ENGINEERS INVENT ENGRAVER

New Device Makes Charts and Maps in Metal.

Washington.—A new method of engraving charts and maps in metal has been devised by the United States hydrographic office of the Navy department. This process, the invention of J. H. Larrabee and T. Peter Lampe, engineers of that office, results in increased accuracy and a considerable saving in time, as its operation permits the engineer to compile charts and maps directly on metal printing plates without the necessity of preparing a finished drawing.

This machine, named the Pantograver by its inventors, produces a chart plate from which charts are made which contain oceanographic and topographic features necessary to navigation, these plates being approximately 90 per cent complete when they leave the machine.

As partial evidence of the value of this machine, Mr. Larrabee said, one of its attachments for engraving soundings easily can engrave 4,500 figures in a day, whereas a skilled hand-engraver can engrave only about 300.

Laying an acid-proof etching ground on a highly polished copper plate, the operator sets the instrument for the required reduction and compensation, to make allowance for any distortion of the tracing original, due to paper shrinkage, moisture or other causes. Carefully following the design on the data print, the operator transfers the design by the pantograph principle to the copper plate by means of a diamond point, varying the depth and width of the lines by weights supported by this engraving tool.

Although there are a few symbols which the machine cannot insert, it was pointed out, such as bluffs and sand beaches, it is possible to obtain absolute uniformity in the various symbols used in navigation as well as in the lettering, another of its ingenious devices being a method of inserting lettering on a curved line.

Infant Is Rescued by Novel Operation

Brooklyn, N. Y.—Removal of a copper ring with a bronchoscope recently from the throat of Joseph Kesselman, thirteen-month-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Leo Kesselman, intercepted the possible death of the child from choking at the United Israel Zion hospital. About a month ago Joseph was playing with a toy and in some manner he detached the ring and put it in his mouth. The parents were aware of the incident at the time, but took no alarm.

Later the child developed difficulty in swallowing, and after an examination the family physician ordered him to the hospital. An X-ray picture was taken, which showed the ring lodged behind the windpipe. The baby remained there for observation and two days later a second picture showed no signs of the trouble maker.

Despite the evident departure, Joseph continued to swallow with increasing hardship and a third picture again exposed the ring. By this time the child could hardly make a sound. With an instrument known as the bronchoscope, consisting of a long metal tube about half an inch in diameter and a small hook attached to a tempered wire, the ring was removed without any incident.

The tube, fitted with a small electric light bulb, was inserted in the child's throat. It was then a simple matter to reach down with the hooked wire and extract the ring.

"The process is similar to fishing," said one of the doctors, "only in this instance you do not wait for the fish." Recovery was speedy and the child returned home the next day.

Human Skull Unearthed;

Thought 20,000 Years Old

Gibraltar.—Miss D. A. E. Gard, a student of the Institute de Paleontologie Humaine, Paris, who has been excavating here, has made an important discovery of portions of a human skull belonging to a young person.

The find was embedded in hard tufa with typical Mousterian implements.

The skull is of the same age and type as the celebrated "Gibraltar skull" discovered at Forbes quarry in the 1840s and now at the College of Surgeons museum, and according to a conservative estimate it is probably not less than 20,000 years old.

Find Widows Prefer

Single Men Gentes

Sacramento, Calif.—Gentlemen may prefer blonds, and then again they may not; but it can be stated positively, on the authority of the state board of health bureau of vital statistics, that widows prefer bachelors. "Widows," says L. E. Ross, statistician of the bureau, who knows just how much business the marriage license clerks do each year and with whom, "show a very marked preference for single men."

Among widowers, on the other hand, single maidens are no more acceptable than widows when a second journey to the altar is contemplated, and either a widow or a single girl has a better chance of being proposed to by a widower than has a divorcee.

Clever These Czechs

Berlin.—An automobile driven by a Czech in a speedway race looped the loop and kept on racing. It turned a somersault and landed on all fours among the spectators. Nobody was killed just then.

SUN VARIABLE STAR, SCIENTIST ASSERTS

Measure Changes in Energy From Orb to Earth.

Washington.—The sun is a variable star. This central fire of the planetary system does not glow with a steady heat but flickers from day to day and from year to year, and the vagaries of our earthly weather must depend at least partly on the sun's variations. This opinion, which has been supported for many years by Dr. C. G. Abbot of the Smithsonian Institution, finds new support in evidence produced by a new system he has devised for measuring and recording the changes in the energy reaching the earth from the sun.

Doctor Abbot calls attention to the work of H. H. Clayton, who has announced that he finds variations of weather caused by solar changes. But many meteorologists have not been convinced that the sun really varies. They fear that the complicated measurements of Doctor Abbot, hindered as they are by the haziness and humidity of the earth's atmosphere, are not conclusive. The variability which he reports, they suggest, may all be due to unavoidable atmospheric sources of error.

Announces a Direct Test.

Doctor Abbot now announces a very direct test that should settle the question. Although it is impossible to do the measuring from a point outside the atmosphere, yet it is possible to select times when the transparency and other affecting qualities of the air are closely alike, and the sun stands at equal height above the horizon. At such times the solar heating should vary only if the sun does.

Selecting the month of July in the years 1910 to 1920 for his test, he collected results observed on Mount Wilson for all days of practically constant atmospheric conditions. The average monthly values thus selected he compared with those obtained by the usual process and heretofore published. He also compared them with the average monthly numbers of sun spots. The three curves that express his results run along very closely together. They show that the sun's heating in July, 1917, averaged over 2 per cent above that of July in 1910 and 1911. Correspondingly, the sun spot numbers were 117 in July, 1917, and only 14 and 8, respectively, in July 1910 and 1911.

Not content with this proof of the reality of long-range solar changes, Doctor Abbot rearranged the measures in a way to test short-interval solar variation. For this purpose he picked out from the new data all the days that gave high values of solar heating, and all those which give low ones. The average excess value for 51 high days was plus 1.43 per cent, and the average defect for 51 low days was minus 1.47.

Range Not So Great.

The same days, as already published four years ago, indicated on the average plus 0.51 and minus 0.42 per cent, respectively. Thus the days shown above normal by the new method of selecting times of equal atmospheric clearing had actually been shown as above normal by the usual process, and vice versa. Of course the range as formerly published could not be so great, because the errors of observation could not be expected to fall the same in the two sets of data. Some days would be high and some low, but because of the sun's condition, not because of the small observational errors helped to make them so.

Doctor Abbot's new method, he hopes, may be convincing of the sun's real variability. This will make all the more important and interesting his establishment under the joint auspices of the National Geographic society and the Smithsonian Institution of a new solar observatory on Brukkaros mountain in southwest Africa. This site he selected last March after studying on the ground conditions in Algeria and Baluchistan. The mountain is 5,200 feet high in a desert where the yearly rainfall averages only 3 1/2 inches. Roads and construction are rapidly going ahead under the supervision of A. Dryden, inspector of public works for the government of southwest Africa. The complex apparatus required has been prepared and the expedition is expected to go forward soon in care of W. H. Hoover, director, and F. A. Greeley, assistant.

Religious Bodies' Wealth Placed at Three Billion

Washington.—The total wealth of all religious organizations in the United States in 1922 is estimated at \$3,271,558,000 on a basis of returns received by the federal commission. The study is part of a voluminous report on national wealth and income made in response to a senate resolution.

The wealth of the religious organizations, it is disclosed, is slightly more than 2 per cent of the total estimated wealth of the country.

The largest single religious denomination, both in property and in membership, is the Roman Catholic church. Its membership embraced 38 per cent of the estimated entire church membership of the country in 1922. The estimated value of its church property represented 23 per cent of the total church property. In proportion to its size, however, the Protestant Episcopal church is the wealthiest of all, its church property being estimated at a value of \$223 a member.

POULTRY

FATTEN BROILERS FOR MARKETING

For the most part, farmers and poultry raisers who keep Leghorn chickens pay most attention to the production of egg sets. They think of eggs as the chief end of poultry keeping. My experience has been that by paying a little more attention to the fattening and marketing of Leghorns, the income from this source can be considerably increased, says a writer in the Successful Farming, Especially is this true when marketing broilers. Leghorn broilers fatten easily when confined and force fed for about two weeks. They will consume about two pounds of feed during this time and should show a gain in weight of one-half to three-fourths of a pound.

There are two methods which I have employed in fattening broilers. These are pen and crate fattening. The simplest and most logical method for farm conditions I have found is pen fattening.

Following this method, the birds are confined in small pens when about one and one-half pounds in weight and are fed the following mash: 25 pounds cornmeal, 15 pounds middlings, 8 pounds meat scraps, and one-half-pound salt. This is fed as a wet mash by adding sour milk, buttermilk, or skim milk. The birds are fed this mash three times a day and are permitted to eat for half an hour at a time, when the unaten portion is removed. It is important that the intervals between the feedings should be as nearly equal as possible.

The object of feeding this wet mash is to get the birds to eat large amounts of food so they will make maximum gains in the shortest time.

Corn meal and milk in any form should be the foundation of any good fattening mash. It should also be remembered that when milk is used in fattening fowls, not a too large amount of meat scraps should be used.

One reason for the widespread in prices paid for Leghorn broilers and those of the heavier breeds is because the Leghorn, being more active, will not take on flesh as readily as the heavier breeds when on free range.

Roosters Can Be Sold Now, Says J. H. McAdams

Now that the incubation period is over there is no further need for roosters in the flock and all but one or two of the best male birds can be sold, advises J. H. McAdams, extension poultryman at the Kansas State Agricultural college. Every flock owner knows, according to McAdams, that the male bird is unnecessary so far as the production of market eggs is concerned. Male birds now represent just so many extra mouths to feed, he says.

The hitch to selling male birds comes largely from the price consideration, according to McAdams, who says that when these birds were purchased last fall or early winter they were valued from \$2 up to possibly \$10 each. Today with old roosters commanding 10 cents a pound an exceptionally high price prevails, but as soon as the old roosters start moving to market the price will drop probably to about 10 cents a pound.

"Even though old roosters were such a drug on the market that he could not sell them at all, no farmer could afford to keep them in his flock," McAdams warns. "To live, a rooster must eat and the feed bill on each individual one will be at least 10 cents a month, making a total cost of at least 80 cents to hold the old birds over until February."

Poultry Hints

The results of chickens eating carrion or spoiled feed are limberneck or indigestion.

Egg eating is a vicious habit and the best method to combat it is the slaughter of the offending birds.

Convenience for both hens and caretaker should be considered—convenience means cleanliness and cleanliness means health.

A laying hen is about the only example of a going concern that can sit still and yet produce dividends.

The first quality that makes for success and profit in the poultry flock is vigor, vitality or constitution. Choose your own name for this quality.

A chicken that is liberally fed does not, as a rule, exercise enough to run off flesh but only enough to keep in good general health and to have a good appetite.

Eggs will remain fertile up to ten days after the male has been removed from the breeding pen.

Given a chance, poultry will clear good profits on the investment. Cleanliness is one of the best guarantees of success.

Poultry diseases spread principally in four ways: By the birds eating dead diseased birds, by contaminated air, through drinking water, and through the droppings of diseased birds.

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Yew Came From Europe The yew is a large European tree with dark green foliage. The leaves are long and narrow and given off from all sides of the branch. The fruit is in the form of a red fleshy cup nearly enclosing the bony seed.

'Czar' of Latin Origin The Slavic word czar (sar ultimately represents the Latin Caesar, but came, according to Mikloshic, through the medium of a Germanic language in which the word had the general sense emperor.

Scenery at Night Night mountain scenery in all its weird beauty is to be made visible along one of the transcontinental railway lines this summer by the aid of batteries of floodlights on observation car platforms.

Alarming Symptom. One of the best schoolboy definitions that we have heard is the definition of rhubarb as "a kind of celery gone bloodshot."—The Outlook.

Napoleon's Wooden Horse Probably the most expensive toy ever bought was a broken-nosed wooden horse that had belonged to Napoleon Bonaparte, and which was sold in Paris some years ago for \$2,400.

One Explanation Our troubles come often from this: We do not live according to the light of reason, but after the fashion of our neighbors.—Exchange.

Rank Foolishness After all, it's foolish to lose your temper. You can't expect anyone to rush around trying to help you find it.

Until Time's End The question of the hour is, "What time is it?"—Johns Hopkins Black and Blue Jay.

Alligator's Appetite An alligator weighing 1,000 pounds consumes 40 pounds of meat daily.

Fishermen's Enemy. One cormorant will destroy two and one-half tons of fish in twelve months. These birds are a serious menace to fishing, especially on the south coast of England.

Salt Bath for Goldfish. The bane of fisherfolk says that if the tail of a goldfish is fringed or frayed out, it is caused by a fungus growth, and it is advisable to give it a salt bath frequently.

Gold and Silver The value of gold compared with silver is said to have been estimated in the time of the Greek historian Herodotus, 450 B. C., about 10 to 1. At the time of the Greek philosopher, Plato, 350 B. C., it was 12 to 1; today it is about 30 to 1.

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