

FAMOUS VIOLINS.

The Instruments Which Have Made the City of Cremona Celebrated.

The hot sun and splendid river, supplying the fine wood market, and the commercial prosperity enjoyed by Cremona, seems to have attracted and fixed there the manufacture of the best violins in the world.

On the same work-bench, as a student in the school of the immortal Nicholas, sat Andrew Guarnerius, finishing their master's violins and copying for years his various models with supreme skill and docility.

Almost next door, probably on the death of Nicholas Amati, Stradivarius set up his shop, opposite the west front of the big church; there for fifty years more he worked with uninterrupted assiduity; and next door to him the family of the Guarneri had their work-rooms, and in that little square were all the finest violins made in the short space of about one hundred and fifty years.

The incomparable Antonius Stradivarius, or Stradivari, lived between 1644-1737. His latest known violin bears date 1736, and mentions his age, ninety-two. He worked without haste and without rest. His life was interrupted only by the siege of Cremona in 1702.

Up to about 1668 he simply was an apprentice of Nicolas. We find scrolls and sound holes cut by the pupil on the master's violins. He even made and labeled for Nicolas. 1668 he leaves his master's shop and sets up for himself. But for thirty years this consummate student, while making every conceivable experiment with flutes, guitars and violins, practically copied closely the best models of Nicolas Amati.

The varnish, when not, as is usual, rubbed off, inclines to light orange with clear golden tints. The tone is so sweet and sensitive that it seems to leap forth before the bow has touched the strings, and goes on like a bell long after the bow has left them.

Although Stradivarius worked down to the last year of his life, still, after 1730, feeling hand and sight beginning to fail, he seldom signed his work. We catch one, and only one, glimpse of him as he lived and moved and had his being at Cremona in 1730, Piazza Domenico.

Money on hand—Silver half-dollar with hole in it; worked three days to invisibly plug it, but failed. In bank, \$300,000, less \$135 I owe there. NOTES—Seventy-six; but other men hold them. BONDS—Matrimonial; \$10 invested; subject to excessive taxation. Non-transferable.

REAL ESTATE—One corner lot—in grave-yard, one patch in potatoes, two patches in elbows, one residence—gained in this State. MONEY LOANED ON PLEDGE—None; but plenty borrowed on it. VALUE OF ARTICLES HELD THIS YEAR—Held a horse, valued at \$1,000, a few minutes one day last month, while owner went into store.

JEWELS—Set superbly mounted clothes-pins. Richly embossed Erasmus dray-pin. Set of imitation brass cuff-buttons. One elegantly inlaid black eye, warranted to wash. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS—One combination, over-seaming, duplex, eight-octave, high-pressure jewsbarg. One no-stringed, self-tuning, upright wash-board. One high-toned, long-range, base rocking baby.

GRAND PROSPECTS. What the Farmer Said and What the Patriotic Editor Wrote. A Dakota farmer recently called at the office of the local paper.

"How are the crops looking out in your neighborhood?" asked the editor. "Poor, very poor."

"What's the matter with the wheat?" "Oh, fust it was dry weather and then it was too wet, and the other day a hail-storm hit it. I don't count on more'n a quarter of a crop."

"How are other things?" "Purty poor. Flax ain't doin' much, the frost took all the corn and the bugs have 'bout et up the petaters."

THREE OF A KIND.

Anaxias Outdone by a Trio of Passengers in the Smoking Car.

They were snow-bound on a Western railroad, and killed time—and truth—with stories which, by the antipodal law of contraries, related to pre-eminently fast trips on the rail. Some of the passengers in the "smoker" confined themselves to their experiences, while others, less conscientious but equally generous, "chipped in" anecdotes that would have made the hair of a sane locomotive engineer stand on end.

"I had the good luck to get on the special train of a Presidential candidate in 1884, during the heat of the campaign. He had to open one meeting and close another on the same evening, and the two were sixty miles apart. I was on the train that did it, and we went so fast that the mile-posts ran together like a picket fence—so close, in fact, that the only man on board who got the figures correct was an instantaneous photographer."

No one smiled. In point of fact, at this stage of the game beverages were at a premium, while the second gentleman remarked, with the faintest suspicion of contempt:

"By a coincidence not at all curious I, too, had a ride with a Presidential candidate, and special dispatches which he received showed that he must make an awfully 'previews' sort of trip to reach the next town before the enthusiasm for him should get away. We had a train of three cars and, I give you my word of honor, we went so fast that, part of the way, by actual measurement, the rear of the last car was only four feet behind the front of the cow-catcher."

"Gentlemen," said No. 3, coming up with radiant courage, "your old foggy experiences remind me of the good old days of stage coaches and canal-boats. But it was my good fortune last fall to make a fairly quick trip from Bangor to Portland. I'm giving you the straight Kennebec river ice-house tip, when I say that in four minutes from the time we fairly got under way the ice in the water tank was boiling and melted lead from the seams of the cooler were burning holes in the car floor."

It is but fair to add that at this awful crisis some philanthropist produced a bottle of total abstinence antidote.—Drake's Traveler's Magazine.

TAXABLE PROPERTY.

Theodwick Goodfornought's Tax Duplicate for the Current Year.

Mr. Assessor, the following statement of my taxable property I am ready to swear (like smoke) is too true:

PLEASURE CARRIAGES—One baby buggy; but I consider it far from being a pleasure carriage to me.

LIVE STOCK—One cat and four kittens. One wife's mother; mine by right of storage.

STEAM VESSELS—One tea-pot and one full-rigged wash-boiler.

MONEY ON HAND—Silver half-dollar with hole in it; worked three days to invisibly plug it, but failed. In bank, \$300,000, less \$135 I owe there.

NOTES—Seventy-six; but other men hold them.

BONDS—Matrimonial; \$10 invested; subject to excessive taxation. Non-transferable.

LUMBER—Half-box matches.

REAL ESTATE—One corner lot—in grave-yard, one patch in potatoes, two patches in elbows, one residence—gained in this State.

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VALUE OF ARTICLES HELD THIS YEAR—Held a horse, valued at \$1,000, a few minutes one day last month, while owner went into store.

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Total valuation \$17,961. Deducting amount of debts 15,288. Amount left—very far left—\$2,673.—TU-Bits.

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"How are other things?" "Purty poor. Flax ain't doin' much, the frost took all the corn and the bugs have 'bout et up the petaters."

"Well, that is bad—I am very sorry to hear it."

The farmer went out and the editor grasped a pencil and wrote:

"We received a pleasant call from farmer Snoozeberry, of Wayback Township, Wednesday afternoon, who dropped in to renew his subscription. Mr. S. brought very flattering reports of the crops and was particularly enthusiastic about the wheat, which he says is actually becoming. He remarked that he would not be afraid to guarantee every man in his township at least thirty bushels to the acre. We would challenge any other section of the Territory to make as good a showing as this. He was very earnest in what he said on the subject and communicated his enthusiasm to every one. With only about half a crop in the other wheat-growing countries and a European war virtually assured we certainly have great cause for rejoicing.—Excelsior (D. T.) Bell.

—Every bachelor who purchases a fifty-dollar suit of clothes of a particular clothing-house at Hemmingford, Neb., will be provided with a wife.—Chicago Inter-Ocean.

VALUABLE VASES.

A Pair of Cappa di Monte Gems that Sold for a Fabulous Sum.

A pair of vases which fetched \$17,500 came very near being owned in this city. These exquisite pieces of pottery were of Cappa di Monte ware, and had been picked up in Rome by a connoisseur traveling in Italy commissioned by several friends to make some purchases for them of art treasures. The vases were bought for J. Forman Wilkinson, of this city. The cost in Rome was about \$330. Anything of the kind entitled to the name of Cappa di Monte was easily worth that amount, and, though the purchaser felt assured that he had not been deceived, he submitted the vases to leading experts in London on returning there. The ware bore every test thought of to ascertain its genuineness. One of the experts whose opinion was asked was so confident that the vases were a rare bargain that he then and there offered \$1,500 for them. The proposition was tempting enough to bring about a trade.

The next mail brought Mr. Wilkinson a draft for nearly \$3,000, the profit of the transaction, with an explanation of the circumstances. The purchaser refused to be reimbursed for his trouble. With some curiosity, however, he afterward watched the vases as they came into fame in the circles where fetti's manufactures of antique and curious workmanship are sought for. One day the vases turned up in the collection of a dealer whose customers are among the money kings and blood royal. The owner had set a price for his treasures which made the vases the cynosure of thousands of covetous eyes. It was not long before a collector, who never stops to count the cost, walked into the shop and paid \$17,500 for the vases. Six months had not elapsed since Mr. Wilkinson's connoisseur friend mousing around the neglected magazines of the ancient city had brought the vases out into the light of day to play a part in the art fiasco of the period.—Syracuse (N. Y.) Standard.

Texas has a new industry. The Clear Creek Crab-Canning Company has been organized in Galveston County, and is doing a big business in catching and canning crabs. The shells are removed and the crabs are packed in five-gallon cans, and are reconded good.

BAKING POWDER TRAMPS.

The danger to the public health from the indiscriminate use of the many lime and alum baking powders of commerce has been so fully exposed that every body desires to avoid them. As "forewarned is forearmed," housekeepers will thank us for apprising them of the special efforts at present being made to dispose of such powders in this vicinity.

The proprietors of some of the worst of these powders are now going from house to house, trying by means of a trick, or so called test, with heat and water, to show that their article is as good as the Royal Baking Powder, making the comparison with this brand because everybody recognizes it to be absolutely pure and wholesome, the object, of course, being to supply their own goods in place of the Royal, which housekeepers have for so many years relied upon to puff up the morning biscuit, and to make the light, palatable, and wholesome roll, cake, and pastry for which it is famous.

The housekeeper will do well to be on her guard against these baking powder tramps. Every intelligent person knows that any goods peddled from house to house in this manner, or that are given away in samples, or sought to be introduced by secretly traducing the character of other goods well known to be pure and reliable, have no merits of their own, and have failed to lead purchasers through legitimate means.

We are informed, as a matter of fact, that one of these tramps is trying to introduce a powder that has been found by the Government chemist to be 11.85 per cent lime, while the other peddles a powder that is 20 per cent alum—one a powerful caustic, the other a corrosive poison.

No such tricks or jugglery will be apt to deceive any intelligent person. The housekeeper who has used her Royal Baking Powder ever since she discarded cream of tartar and soda, knows more about its qualities than all the tramps in the country can teach her. The crucial test to which she has put the Royal Baking Powder—the test of actual and successful work in the preparation of pure and wholesome food, under which it has never failed—is entirely satisfactory to her. She has always had "good luck," with it in making light, sweet, and delicious bread, biscuit, and cake, and has placed it, to stay, at the head of her housekeeping favorites. She knows that it has been officially approved by the Government chemists as the best, and we imagine that the baking powder tramp who attempts to supplant its place in her confidence will find this a bad year for his business.

Telegraph Poles.

In England the Norway spruce is employed, known we believe in the English lumber market as "deal." Larches, of English growth, formerly employed, were found sadly wanting in durability. In America cedar is used where they can be had tall and cheap enough, but nothing is found better than chestnut, cost and durability both considered. Ten or fifteen years is the average duration of an American telegraph pole. The English are talking of iron posts, though it is conceded they cost four-fold those of wood.—Gardener's Monthly.

THE FRIGATE BIRD.

Its Amazing Warfare on the Fish-Hawks Familiar to Florida.

I was puzzled for quite a while when in Southern Florida at some mysterious antics of the fish hawks. These creatures, bold enough away from the sea, sometimes act in the most cowardly manner, starting from the trees into the open and returning again in fright. I soon learned the reason for this cowardice. Stretched at length on the deck of a boat in the early morning in the Pass of Boca Grande, one of the entrances to Charlotte's Harbor, I saw a fine specimen of hawk cross overhead and proceed seaward to find a dinner.

The excursion was successful as the pass swarmed with fish coming in with the tide. A fine one soon left its element and swung aloft into the air in the talons of the bird, which at once began its return. But a newcomer appeared upon the scene. A black creature which seemed all wings and dropped like a flattened letter M, snatched the hawk and confronted its prey and uttered a scream so brimful of mortal terror that it should have excited the sympathy of all living things within the compass of its sound. The hawk flew in fright to cover and I recognized the intruder as the frigate bird. On looking upward whence it had come I saw a score of frigate birds a mile or more from the earth, floating round and round on motionless wings. The dropped fish was seized in the beak of the bird long before it had reached the water, and with a sweep of exquisite grace, on tense wings, fronting a mild breeze, the corsair was lifted half a mile into the air, where another astonishing performance was at once initiated. A bite was taken from the fish, which was dropped. Down came the fish, and the bird, folding its wings tightly upon its body, dropped swiftly after it. The part bitten off being disposed of, another swoop downwards was made, the fish seized, and the process continued until the entire carcass was devoured.

On another occasion I saw a hawk seize a fish and start for the shore. A black corsair at once appeared and captured the booty as on the former occasion, while the frightened fish fled screaming toward the land. But now a change of programme took place. Another long winged creature from the group above appeared in front of and facing the frightened hawk, which turned seaward at once, mingling its notes of terror with one of despair. Every effort to side off towards home was frustrated by the gliding terror interposing its bulk in the intended direction, until the victim seemed to accept the inevitable and made an attempt to cross the gulf. The tormenting enemy then seemed content, and swung aloft among its companions. The poor fisherman, rid of the dire presence, wheeled on its course for home, and its frenzied flappings relieved of excessive tension, made very good time, when on reaching the very brink of safety the black wings again appeared, and the whole distressing business was re-enacted with increasing despair in the frightened cry. This went on for more than half an hour. Every effort at retreat was intercepted. During all the time the hawk kept up an incessant flapping of its wings, and its physical endurance was giving away under the protracted strain. This was apparent from the changing tone of its screams, which varied through all the gamut of despair, from unreasoning terror to supplicating misery. It was the Roman gladiator's "Caesar, the dying salute thee," with the ambition left out.

The frigate bird at length seemed impatient. It more promptly answered the movements of the hawk, and urged compliance with greater vigor, and finally introduced a new feature into the proceedings. Swooping upwards for one hundred feet it turned head foremost and plunged beneath the hawk, turning completely over as it did so, and, passing to the front, vaulted upwards and down again in the same path, thus describing an elliptical orbit around its victim. It swung near the hawk round the lower curve, causing upward flight, until at length, in an exhausted condition, it was introduced into the company of its tormentors, which had been descending from high levels and were now about four hundred yards above the water. Its strength was now well exhausted. Its cry was scarcely audible, and it barely had the power of directing its movements. In whichever way it went, excepting one, a black terror confronted it. It could rise unimpeded, but found resistance to every other course. It struggled upwards for some four hundred yards further, until the distance was so great as to make it difficult to keep the movements in the field of the glass, when it gave up the task, and rapidly floundered over and over through the air, its muscular power exhausted and its mass surrendered to the gravitating force. Down it came, the whole half-score of enemies circling about it, until it struck the water near the beach in the shallows of the offing. It was drowned.

Again several days later I watched a hawk catch a fish and saw a frigate bird seize the prey. But when the hawk started for the trees another frigate bird appeared. The second fish was surrendered to the second intruder. Thus the hawk was forced to catch a fish for every frigate bird in the flock. The mystery was clear. The frigate bird makes the fish hawk its slave!—American Naturalist.

The Sioux Indians of Dakota are adopting white people's customs, and recently a wedding party started on a bridal tour. One of the brides had married, and under the charge of a chief about fifty of the tribe took a tramp of several days over the Territory, pitching tents at night and giving dances and other entertainments.—Chicago Tribune.

Nothing is more likely to produce indigestion than to eat, even moderately, when mind and body are thoroughly wearied.—Fortnightly Review.

A NEW PHONOGRAPH.

The Marvelous Instrument Invented by Some Washington Electricians.

Some electricians in this city have been at work for several months to perfect a phonograph which can be used with such accuracy as to be an aid in reporting with precision the proceedings of courts and public assemblies. It is said that a state of perfection has already been attained which will warrant the introduction of this instrument in courts of justice. When the phonograph is perfected it will be a great help to stenographic reporters in one way and a great rival and hindrance in another way. One of the machines can be taken into a court for instance, and all of the proceedings will be recorded by it. At the close of the day it can be taken to a room and speeded to talk at any rate of speed—at thirty words a minute, which can be written out by an ordinary long-hand writer. If it is desired to get the proceedings transcribed as fast as they occur new cylinders are put in the phonograph as fast as the proceedings are written out. For instance, long-hand writers can put in a cylinder and let it remain ten minutes, then take it out and put in another, and transfer the cylinder which has the proceedings upon another instrument, and it is made to repeat the proceedings with accuracy, and, at the expiration of its term, is replaced in the phonograph and the other cylinder taken from it, and so on. One of the great difficulties is in securing the distinction of tone and voice. Heretofore the phonograph has not been sufficiently distinct in the pitch of the voice to make one voice distinguish itself from another if they are similar in volume and tone. It is believed, however, that the instrument will be perfected in a short time so that any one who has heard a number of voices in a room can readily distinguish them from the sounds the phonograph will give out. It is the distinguishing of one voice from another that gives the names of the speakers. For instance, if the phonograph is used to record the proceedings of the Legislature it will not, of course, have the names of the persons participating in the debate, and the person translating from the record of the phonograph will have to place the speakers by the tone of voice. It is said that some of the official reporters intend trying the phonograph within a short time and determining how it will work in public debates. In event it fails they will have the proceedings by the usual methods and no risks will be run. When the phonograph is perfected the stenographers intended to use it in their work as a safeguard. By its assistance they will be enabled to have every thing that is said in their room, and a number of persons speaking at one time and the rapidity of their speech will be no inconvenience, as the phonograph will catch every thing that is said. It will be of more use as an amanuensis than anything else, enabling one to dictate any amount of correspondence to the machine and leaving it so that any one can transcribe it, because the machine can be set to report the dictation at any rate of speed.—Washington Critic.

Horse-Flesh in England.

Hippohagy is now seldom heard of. A few years ago it was strongly advocated in many quarters; but the British public, although ready to swallow almost any thing in the way of food put before it, never took kindly to horse-flesh, and turned a deaf ear to the persuasions of those who recommended the adoption of this kind of diet. It is probable, however, that horse-flesh is often eaten unawares, and that its consumption is far more common than is generally imagined. Butchers whose consciences are not tender occasionally, it is feared, sell horse-flesh as ordinary meat to unsuspecting customers. An attempt is about to be made to put matters in this respect on a more satisfactory footing. At a meeting held for the purpose of eliciting an expression of opinion from the butchers of Manchester and Salford with regard to the sale of horse-flesh as human food, it was decided to appoint a committee for the purpose of getting an act of Parliament passed to compel butchers who sell horse-flesh to label it as such.—St. James' Gazette.

Nothing Like It.

No medicine has ever been known so effectual in the cure of all those diseases arising from an impure condition of the blood as SCOVILL'S SARRAPARILLA, OR BLOOD AND LIVER SYRUP. It is a specific for the cure of Scrophulous Swellings, Rheumatism, Pimples, Bores, Eruptions, Venereal Sores, Diseases, Consumption, Gout, Cancer, and a kindred diseases. It is no better means of securing a beautiful complexion than the use of SCOVILL'S SARRAPARILLA, OR BLOOD AND LIVER SYRUP, which cleanses the blood and gives permanent beauty to the skin.

For Coughs, Asthma, Throat Disorders, etc.

When Baby was sick, we gave her CASTLE'S. When she was a Child, she cried for CASTLE'S. When she became Miss, she clung to CASTLE'S. When she had Children, she gave them CASTLE'S.

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THE INCURABLES.

They are a large army. Homes and hospitals and asylums are built for them, and many a private household has its sorrowful individual members who, with chronic diseases, are given up by the doctor as hopeless cases.

Happy is the army of incurables who are not so large as some people think. There are many people who have been given up so but are yet alive and happy. Judge Flanders of New York was so far gone when he came to inquire if Compound Oxygen could do anything for him, the doctor hardly dared to express the faintest hope. Yet Judge Flanders is now daily attending to business. The Hon. Wm. D. Kelley thought his life work was done over ten years ago. He says now that he owes the prolongation of his life to Compound Oxygen. W. H. Whiteley, Esq., of Philadelphia, considered himself one of the great army of "incurables," yet Compound Oxygen made him a new man. And so with hosts of others. Don't despair however long you have been ill, or how ever hopeless may seem your case, write to Drs. STARKEY & PALMER, 10 Arch St., Phila., Pa., for their treatment. Compound Oxygen—It will be sent free.

Orders for the Compound Oxygen Home Treatment will be filled by H. A. Mathers, 615 Fowell Street, San Francisco.

Japan, according to the new census, has a population of 38,000,000, or about the same as that of the United States in 1850. In area Japan is about three times the size of Pennsylvania.

A MYSTERY.

How the human system ever recovers from the bad effects of the nauseous medicines of the doctor, is a mystery. It is literally poured into it for the supposed relief of dyspepsia, liver complaint, constipation, rheumatism and other ailments, is a mystery. The mischief done by bad medicine is more than that caused by disease. If they were weak, bilious, dyspeptic, constipated, rheumatic, would often be guided by the experience of invalids who have thoroughly tested Hosten's Compound Oxygen. They would in every instance obtain the speediest relief derivable from rational medication. This medicine is searching and at the same time thoroughly safe, remedial, derived from vegetable sources, and possessing, in consequence, its basis of pure spirits, properties as a most stimulating and invigorating tonic, and its stimulants often rendered very local, debilitated, dyspeptic and languid.

Natural gas has been discovered at Dallas, Wis.

THE MORNING DRESS.

It is said that a lady's standing in society can easily be determined by the dress at the breakfast table; and an experienced showy dressmaker candidly confesses that she has not yet learned the proprieties, and no one need be afraid of being called "shoddy" if her loveliness is as apparent by daylight as at the hops. Perfect beauty is never the attendant of disease; and all of those diseases peculiar to women, to which a ready cure is afforded by Pierce's Favorite Prescription, will be reduced to one dollar. By druggists.

There are now 128,073 miles of railroad in this country, 3,131 of which were constructed the past year.

THE LATEST AND GREATEST DISCOVERY.

DR. J. DE PRATTS' HAMBURG PILLS.—A crystallized fruit cathartic. Admiration of the greatest interest to the Medical Profession. A boon to every household. A most delicious laxative or purgative prepared from fruits and vegetables, perfectly harmless that they may be administered with entire safety to infants. So efficacious to adults that a single dose produces a specific cure, and so simple a preparation that it needs only to be presented to the public to become a necessity in every household throughout the land. For liver complaint, habitual constipation, indigestion, dyspepsia and all of those ailments to which travellers by land and they are invaluable; and they are positively unfailing in their action. This is the only medicine ever offered to the public that is acceptable to the taste and so pleasant that children will take it as eagerly as candy. For sale every druggist throughout the world. Price 25 cents a box. J. J. Mack & Co., Proprietors, 9 and 11 Front Street, San Francisco Cal.

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The greatest depth yet found in California, Oregon, is 1050 feet.

Above all other earthly ills, I hate the big, old-fashioned pills: By slow degrees they downward wear, And as they pass, they downward wear. With such effects are they fraught, Their good effects amount to naught. Now Dr. Pierce prepares a pill That just exactly fills the bill—A Pellet, rather, that is all—A Pleasant Purgative, and small; Just try them, as you feel their need, You'll find that I speak truth, indeed.

San Diego, Cal., expended over \$1,000,000 in building the past year.

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