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WEST SIDE TELEPHONE.

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NEBULOUS PHILOSOPHY.

She came from Concord's classic shades, on Reason's throne she sat,
And wove intricate arguments to prove, in language pat,
The Whichness of the Wherefore, and the Thusness of the That.

She scorned ignoble subjects—each groveling household care—
But turned her lofty soul to prove the Airiness of Air,
And twisted skeins of logic 'round the Whatness of the Where.

To lower natures leaving the dollars, and the sense,
She soared above the level of commonplace pretense,
And moulded treatises which prove the Thatness of the Thence.

Her glorious purpose to reveal the Thinkfulness of Thought,
To trace each line by Somewhat on the Somehow's surface wrought,
To picture forms of Whynot's from the Whatnot's meaning caught;

To cultivate our spirits with the Whyfore's classic flow,
To benefit the Thereness with the Highness of the How,
To flood the dark with radiance from the Thisness of the Now.

"What good has she accomplished?" O, never doubt her thus!
It *must* be useful to reveal the Plusness of the Plus,
To illustrate with corkscrew words the Whichness of the Us.

Mock not, poor common mortal, when thoughts like these appear,
Illuminating our labor with the Howness of the Here,
And blazing like a comet through the Nowness of the Near.

Some day in Realms Eternal such grand mist-haunted souls
Inscribe their words of Whichness on Where fore antic scroll,
In that great world of Muchness which through the May be rolls.

Then shall we each acknowledge the Whyness of the Whence—
Each understand completely with Sensefulness of Sense—
The Thusness of the Therefore, the Thatness of the Thence.
—*I. Edgar Jones, in Chicago Current.*

FORESTS OF STONE.

Probing for Logs Beneath the Surface in New Jersey.

Trying to Chop a Tree of Rock—Trunks, Boughs and Leaves Turned to Stone —A Description of Some of Nature's Wonders.

"If you want to see something curious," said a friend who was a member of a Government survey, "go down with me to Woodbine." Four miles beyond Woodbine, out on the sandy stretch of old sea bottom or beach that is termed the Cape May Peninsula, we came upon Dennisville, where all the Dennises of all time had evidently settled. A local Dennis said there were twenty-five hundred of them and nineteenths were evidently children. They lived in scattered shanties or houses on a long narrow street, on each side of which malaria stalks abroad from the great swamps that constitute their boundary. The latter, however, that are perhaps over twelve square miles in extent, are the means of providing a living to nearly all the inhabitants of Dennisville, though the nature of their occupation would never be suspected from external observation.

"We're all in the loggin' business," said a tall, thin Dennis, yet as far as the eye could reach not a tree could be seen standing that would make even the ghost of a fair log. "They ain't a-growin'," continued the man. "They're underground. We dig for them, or spear them, as you might say. Here's the tool," and stepping into a low hut he brought out a crowbar that, like everything else, seemed attenuated and was stretched out into a long, slender-pointed rod. "We wade along," continued the man, "and probe with this feeler, and when we strike a log we feel around, and if it's a good one we dig her up, and if it ain't we let her soak; that's about the way of it."

"So down in Jersey you burrow for your logs?"

"That's about it," replied the man. "You know we're obliged to be a whit odd or so; we've got the name of it, onnyhow."

"The secret of this business," said my friend, the geologist, "is that ages ago all this area was covered with a fine growth of large trees, and the same are found growing in some parts of the swamp yet, but they have died out and fallen down and sunk into the soft mud, and so been covered up by mould and mud, until many other layers have grown over them; but in some remarkable way the wood is preserved and these sunken ancient logs are just as good for shingles and other articles as they were when alive; hence, for many years there has been a steady hunt for them, and Dennisville is a result of the industry. To the botanist the tree is the evergreen white cypress or cypressus thyoides sempervirens, and the numbers that once grew over this swamp and that have been entombed are beyond conception. The trees upon or near the surface are the only ones available, and fortunately are the best, but far below there are probably myriads of others turned to stone and representing the past geological ages of the earth. The logs were worked out by the men who are nicknamed 'Swampoodles,' and who live in the midst of the malarious district all their lives. When a log is found a ditch is made about it, into which the water soon flows. A great saw is then applied and the roots removed, and as a rule the log will rise to the surface and can be cut up and carried off, though in many localities the shingles are made right on the spot and dragged over the swamp on roads in many cases made of boughs and twigs. This curious business is not confined to New Jersey, but over in Delaware and Maryland there are similar swamps, where the shingle business has been carried on for years. One of the swamps in Delaware extends over twenty-five square miles, and hardly a house in Sussex County but what is shingled with the ancient deposit."

"I tell ye," said an old farmer from this region, "that we're a-livin' on a curious kind o' crust round here. In pi'nt of fact, my farm might be said to be perched on a reg'lar wood-pile; there ain't no end to it. I built a foundation to a barn some years ago down in Delaware on the swamp lot, and the further down I dug the more logs I came on to, and I reckon way down it's clean, solid wood, and when a fire breaks out in the swamp you want to keep your eyes peeled, now I'm a-talkin'. How so? Well, I'll jest give you a little of my experience. When I first married my old woman I bought a patch right on the edge of the swamp, and the land ran right into it about half a mile. That summer it was monstrous dry, and after awhile the fires began to break out, and afore we knew it it had crept up to within a thousand feet of the house. But we got at it with brush, and, as we thought, put it out, and did; but that night I was awoke by hearin' a crash so loud that you'd a-thought the hull house had gone down, and when I got out there was a blazing fire right over by my fodder house. I got there in about two minutes, and I tell ye I was scared. There wasn't hide nor hair of the house, but a deep yawnin' hole about fifty feet across, and the Lord knows how deep, and burning red hot, just like a volcany. I tell ye I got my folks out of that diggin's for a while now. Fortunately it came on to rain the next day and soaked it out, and I ain't a drawin' the long bow when I tell you that that hull kentry had been tunneled by the fire. You see, it had crept along under ground for nigh a thousand feet, eating away the wood, and finally when it got under the fodder, the weight of the stuff broke the crust in and down it went into a reg'lar pit of fire. I tell you it was an unsartin place to live on and I was thankful enough that it didn't get under the house. We'd never have known what hurt us; we'd just melted down quick. Yes, there's heaps of places in the swamp district that's eaten out jest the same way. The fire will run along for miles, sometimes and then crop out where it's least expected. I knew of one case where a party of shinglers left their hut one morning and when they came back it was gone and a fourth of an acre with it. If it had happened twelve hours later they'd have gone in. In the Delaware swamp you will find heaps of such places and green hands when they go down there always think there has been a volcany, and so there has, after a fashion."

"The subject of underground forests," said my geological companion, on our way back, "is an interesting one, and in the west there are some strange sights to be seen. I remember especially one locality about the head waters of the Lithodendron River; there are thousands of trees lying about, as if some hurricane had swept over the spot and leveled them to the ground, but in every case the tree has turned to stone and the trunks now weigh tons where they formerly could be tossed about by the wind. A miner that I met told me that in one locality that he had visited the trees were standing, and they came to camp there. At first they did not notice it, as it was late in the fall, when all the leaves were off the trees, but he sent a darkey out to chop some wood, and as the fellow struck a tree the axe glanced off and streams of fiery sparks flew off in such numbers that he was frightened half to death, and came rushing into camp shouting that the place was haunted. He finally went out again, but was terrified by finding that even the twigs that he picked up on the ground were as heavy as lead; they had all turned into stone. He described the place as a weird one, the great trunks standing around here and there like monuments, some of them being fifty or sixty feet high. The two most famous localities are at Fort Wingate, New Mexico, and the Lithodendron, about twenty miles from the Navajo Springs, Arizona. From these localities a fine collection has been taken for the National Museum at Washington.

"A detail was sent out under the charge of Lieutenant J. T. C. Hegewald, of the Fifteenth Infantry, and they secured some magnificent specimens. The Navajoes that were tending their sheep in the vicinity believed the fallen trunks to represent the bones of former giants that their ancestors had killed, and could not understand why the 'Great Father' at Washington should want them. In this place they actually covered the ground in some spots, the trunks often being of great size. All through the valley of the Lithodendron they are found, thousands of tons lying scattered along the slopes. The majority were in pieces of twenty or ten feet long, so broken by changes of heat and cold. Other trunks were intact, one measured by the Lieutenant was two hundred feet in length and nearly five feet in diameter, the cores often containing wonderful specimens of quartz. The specimens were hauled to Santa Fe, N. M., and there shipped East by rail; but in a year or go not a specimen will be found, as a company has organized to secure them, as, when cut and polished, they make fine table tops It is said that a house in Washington is to have pillars at the door made of two of these giants of a former age, that, when polished, showing the rich coloring will make something entirely new in the way of decoration.

"Last summer," continued the geologist, "I took a run up the valley of the east fork of the Yellowstone. There is a country for you, and, fortunately, in the National Park and to be saved from destruction. In going up the valley you have the beautiful Yellowstone Mountains to the north and to the south the famous Amethyst Mountain, that for its fossil or stone forests is extremely remarkable. Directly opposite the valley of the Soda Butte Creek rises the mountain, with an exposed strata at least two thousand feet high. The summit is about nine thousand feet up. As you follow up the trail you will at once be struck with the curious surface of the mountain, and there in one section you can count distinctly at least twenty-five forest levels formed in this way. The first forest, perhaps a million years ago, grew and died down; soil accumulated and then another forest grew on that, until finally the twenty-five have grown. In the meantime strata to the depth of two thousand feet has been deposited—that is, the distance from the present trees growing on top to the first one below is two thousand feet. You can count up to suit yourself how many years it took to accomplish this. For the first four hundred feet the display is not very striking, as the trunks are partially covered, but as your eye rises you are presented with a geological illustration that is a marvel. At 500 feet from the bottom the levels are as distinctly marked as if they had been made by hand, every trunk and the roots standing out in bold relief—the bas-reliefs of nature. Many are thrown out and prostrate, from fifty to sixty feet in length and from five to six feet in diameter. In cases where the roots are seen penetrating the solid rock the sight is an impressive one, showing how many years it must have taken to accomplish such results. Some of the trees imbedded are over twelve feet in diameter and, as only the tops show, they must have rivaled the great sequoias of California. One remarkable feature is that the bark-texture of the wood, grain, etc., are all as distinct and well preserved as if they had been taken from living trees.

"The trees, however, are not conifers: the solid rock about them shows this. Once covered with a soft green matting of grass, it received the falling leaves and seeds, and now they are found just as perfect as in life, only turned to stone. From these the botanist is enabled to determine what they were and how long ago they lived upon the earth. Lesquereux made the first examination, and pronounced them as belonging to the lower pliocene or upper miocene time of geology. They include such species as aralia, magnolia, laurus, tilia, fraxinus, cornus, pteris, alnus, ferns, etc. All around this locality the same old remains of forests could be found, and the fine collections of quartz and calcite that were spread about undoubtedly were all formed in the trunks of trees. On the opposite side of the river the same condition of things was noticed, and the trunks here were, if anything still larger and more certainly higher up, as the range was by actual measurement over eleven thousand feet high and contained the stony trees to the very summit. These forests are found in various parts of the world. In Heard Island there is a cave that contains a number of extremely large trees, and in most all coal mines large trunks are found that date back millions and millions of years. In some mines terrible accidents often occur from the presence of these great trunks, as when the bottom of the trunk is cut off down shoots the stony tree upon the miner without warning. In some mines where the trees are solid they are left to support the ceiling. I have seen a tree taken from a mine at Newcastle (the Jarrow mine) that was forty feet in length and thirteen feet in diameter. It was worked out of the coal as carefully as possible, but it could not be all removed as the trunk divided at the summit into over twenty large branches. The name of this coal giant was Lepidodendron Sternbergii. Some of the ferns of this time were gigantic, and in the Philadelphia Academy of Sciences there is a fine collection, showing many specimens from all over the world.—*Philadelphia Times.*

Composing Under Difficulties.

In October, 1787, after his return to Vienna, Mozart produced his greatest opera, "Don Giovanni." As late as the night before the performance the overture had not been copied. Mozart wrote on until late into the night, and his wife could only keep him awake by telling him the old fairy tales, such as he loved when a child; at times he would break from laughter to tears, until, growing more and more weary, he fell asleep. At seven the next morning, he arose and finished the score, the ink in some parts being scarcely dry when the copies were placed on the musicians' desks. The musicians had to play the overture at sight, but its beauties aroused the greatest enthusiasm both in the players and the audience. Mozart superintended all the rehearsals, and inspired the singers with his own ideas and feeling. He taught the hero to dance a minuet, and when one of the singers failed to conquer his score, Mozart altered it on the spot. At last the Emperor bestowed a court position on Mozart, but the salary was so meager—it was less than $500—that it was of little help to him, while his duty, to compose dance music for the court, was humiliating. Well could he reply, when asked his income by the tax-gatherer, "Too much for what I do;" too little for what I could do."—*Agatha Tunis, in St. Nicholas.*

BUILDING MATERIALS.

The Comparative Cost of Frame, Brick and Rubble Stone Walls.

The first idea that naturally suggests itself, after the general plan of arrangement has been perfected, is what material shall mainly enter into the construction of a building, brick, stone or wood. In nearly every portion of the Eastern, Middle and Western States, these three building materials can readily be had, and the cost of production does not vary much in any locality. Assuming, therefore, that the first cost is the same in the above localities, we may easily arrive at the ultimate cost of construction. For the purpose of this article we may assume the cost of good common brick, during the summer to be $8.00 per thousand; cost of labor and mortar to lay the same in the wall, $4.00 per thousand, wall measure. The cost of good quarry stone, assumed at $10 per cord; the cost of labor and mortar to lay the same in the wall, $8 per cord of one hundred feet. The cost of framing lumber $12.00 per thousand feet; labor and nails to put the same up $6.00 per thousand. With these prices as a basis it is a matter of computation only to arrive at the proportionate cost of each material after it has been worked into the walls. As an example, suppose we have ten feet square of plain wall to build, what will be the comparative cost? Ten feet square equals one hundred superficial feet. If to be built of brick twelve inches thick, estimating 22½ brick to the superficial foot, would take 2,250 brick; cost in wall per thousand, $12.00, equals $27.00.

To lay a good rubble stone wall, it should be 18 inches thick; therefore, 10 feet square, or 100 superficial feet of stone wall 18 inches thick, at $18 per cord of 100 feet, would cost $27.00. In estimating a frame or studded wall there should be included first, the studding, say, 2x8, 12 inch centers; second, the outside sheathing of 1 inch surfaced boards; third, the siding of clear pine. For this example we have placed the cost of rough lumber at $18.00 per thousand, put up. We will assume the cost of the inch surfaced boards for sheathing to be $25.00 per thousand, including labor, nails, and material. Siding at $40.00 per thousand, including lumber, labor, nails and waste. Ten feet square, or 100 superficial feet, of 2x8 studding, at $18.00 per thousand, equals $2.43. The same surface, covered with surfaced boards at $25.00 per thousand, costs $2.50; 125 superficial feet of siding, at $40.00 per thousand, equals $5.00, allowing one-quarter for lap and waste. Thus we find the total cost of the frame wall to be $9.93. Add to this the cost of painting the same, one square, at $3.00, we find the cost to be $12.93. Comparatively, therefore, we find the cost of one hundred superficial feet of wall built of the three leading building materials of the country as follows:

Common brick	$27.00
Rubble stone	27.00
Frame	12.93

The cost of window and door frames, cornices, etc., may be estimated about the same in either building. In brick and stone buildings we find the additional cost of cut stone window and door sills, water table, etc., but the cost of these adjuncts does not enter into the first cost of the walls, and should rather be estimated on separately or considered as additional items of cost that may be dispensed with if necessary.—*National Builder.*

A Queer Superstition.

Abram Reed, a farmer living in Beaver township, Pa., cut down a large oak tree on his farm, and in cutting it up he found, imbedded in the trunk, seven or eight feet from the ground, a small glass bottle and what had the appearance of a lock of hair. The bottle had been inserted in a hole in the tree made by an auger, then a pine plug was driven into the hole over the bottle, the hair also being held in the hole by the plug. The bottle was corked and contained a colorless liquid. Over the plug had grown six solid rings of wood, besides a thick bark. There was a superstition among the early settlers, and it is held by many of their descendants, that asthma and other affections could be cured by the victim standing against the tree and having a lock of his hair plugged in it while the hair was still attached to his head. It must then be cut off close to his head, and the afflicted person walk away without looking at it or ever passing by the tree again. While the use of a bottle was not included in this treatment, it is believed that the one with the hair discovered in the heart of the oak tree was put there in the early days of the settlement by some believer in the superstition to cure an ailment of some kind.—*Lumber World.*

Military Promotions.

A comparison of the new French army laws with those of Prussia shows that a French Second Lieutenant can become Captain in four years, while a Prussian Lieutenant requires at least fifteen years to be promoted to a Captaincy. The French Captain may become Major at the age of thirty-one, while the lowest age in Prussia for the attainment of that rank is about forty-four. In France it is possible to be a Lieutenant Colonel at thirty-four, a Colonel at thirty-seven, Brigadier General at forty and General of division, at present the highest obtainable rank in the army, at forty-three.—*N. Y. Post.*

STUNG TO DEATH

The Fate of the Big Brown Bear of Alaska in Mosquito Season.

A fair wind one day made me think it possible to take a hunt inland, but to my disgust it died down after I had proceeded two or three miles, and my fight back to camp with the mosquitoes I shall always remember as one of the salient points of my life. It seemed as if there was an upward rain of insects from the grass that became a deluge over marshy tracts—and more than half the ground was marshy. Of course not a sign of any game was seen, except a few old tracks; and the tracks of an animal are about the only part of it that could exist here in the mosquito season, which lasts from the time the snow is half off the ground until the first severe frost, a period of some three or four months. During that time every living creature that can leave the valleys ascends the mountains, closely following the snow line, and even there peace is not completely attained, the exposure to the winds being of far more benefit than the coolness due to the altitude, while the mosquitoes are left undisputed masters of the valleys, except for a few straggling animals on their way from one range of mountains to the other.

Had there been any game, and had I obtained a fair shot, I honestly doubt if I could have secured it, owing to these pests; not altogether on account of their ravenous attacks upon my face, and especially the eyes, but for the reason that they were so absolutely dense that it was impossible to see clearly through the mass in taking aim. When I got to camp I was thoroughly exhausted with my incessant fight, and completely out of breath, which I had to regain as best I could in a stifling smoke from dry, resinous pine knots. A traveler who had spent a summer on the lower Yukon, where I did not find the pests so bad on my journey as on the upper river, was of the opinion that a nervous person without a mask would soon be killed by nervous prostration, unless he were to take refuge in midstream. I know that the native dogs are killed by the mosquitoes under certain circumstances, and I heard reports which I believe to be well founded, both from Indians and trustworthy white persons, that the great brown bear—erroneously but commonly called the grizzly—of these regions is at times compelled to succumb to these insects. The statement seems almost preposterous, but the explanation is comparatively simple. Bruin, having exhausted all the roots and berries of one mountain, or, finding them scarce, thinks he will cross the valley to another range, or perhaps it is the odor of salmon washed up along the river's banks that attracts him. Covered with a heavy fur on his body, his eyes, nose and ears are the vulnerable points for mosquitoes, and here of course they congregate in the greatest numbers. At last, when he reaches a swampy stretch, they rise in myriads, until his forepaw is kept so busy, as he strives to keep his eyes clear of them, that he can not walk, whereupon he becomes enraged, and, bear-like, raises upon his haunches to fight. It is now a mere question of time until the bear's eyes become so swollen from innumerable bites as to render him perfectly blind, when he wanders helplessly about until he gets mired in the mud and starves to death.—*From Lieut. Schwatka's "Alaska."*

AN ICE BRIDGE.

Description of the Most Awe-Inspiring and Sublimest Specfacle on Earth.

The grandest sight in the park is beyond the lower falls of the Yellowstone. I have never seen, but have frequently read, of the beautiful sight presented by the falls of Niagara in winter and of the wonderful ice bridge formed at their base by the freezing of the waters, but I can not imagine how Niagara can compare, even considering its tremendous volume of water, with the sublime lower falls of the Yellowstone river in midwinter. Here was the ice bridge, too, or rather an ice mountain, which rose to a height almost equal to the descent of the falls. A feeling of awe creeps over one upon beholding in this wilderness such desolate grandeur as can not be seen elsewhere on earth. I stood on Lookout terrace, a short distance below the falls, and saw a great sheet of water shoot out from the land and with a mighty roar plunge fully 395 feet into the abyss beneath.

Nothing could freeze in the basin that received this deluge, for the force of the descending river must have broken any thing that came in its way; but the spray that shot far out beyond the solid stream froze as it fell and formed the beautiful ice bridge or ice mountain I have mentioned. The walls of the great canyon of the Yellowstone certainly are the most awe-inspiring, majestic, sublimest spectacle on God's earth. Nowhere in the wonderful park nor elsewhere on the globe can there be found such an extensive view of a combination of stupendous natural scenery and gorgeous coloring. On this wintry day, far in the depths of the park, away from humanity and alone with nature, I can not describe the feeling that came over me.—*Cor. Philadelphia Times.*

—The luxury of strawberries and cream was not always known to the world. As an interesting fact of the season, it may be mentioned that in 1509 Cardinal Wolsey first combined strawberries with cream in an exalted moment of supreme inspiration.