

GREAT BELL OF ST. PAUL'S

It Tolls Only for Deaths in the Royal Family and British High Officials.

In the cathedral of St. Paul in London is a great bell on which the hours are struck. When the other bells peal from the belfry it is silent, and it never rings on festival occasions.

The sonorous booming of the great bell was the first announcement to the people of the death of Prince Albert, which occurred at 11 o'clock at night on December 14, 1861.

Whenever death comes to the royal family the home secretary is at once informed. It is his duty to notify the lord mayor, and it then devolves upon the lord mayor to send the news to the dean of St. Paul with a request that the great bell be tolled.

TEACHING GEOGRAPHY.

An Englishman Objects Strongly to the Method Employed in America.

"I am well satisfied with the American method of education," said an Englishman residing in New York, according to the Tribune. "In fact, for girls, especially, I consider that it is better in many ways than the English system. I do, however, object to some of the geographical ideas that they have in regard to England.

PLANTED BY THE QUEEN.

Trees That Have Been Started by Victoria Seem to Be Especially Long Lived.

The trees planted in Great Britain by her majesty and her immediate descendants, would, if they could be collected together, form a very fine grove; in fact, almost a wood, says the London Mail.

Visitors to Lancaster will find a handsome oak near the fine old gateway tower of Lancaster castle. On a copper plate fastened to the palisades close by it is related that the tree was planted on October 8, 1818, by the queen, on her visit to the town of Lancaster.

The queen seems especially successful as a tree planter, for the oak she planted at Muckross, on the banks of Lake Killarney, has far outgrown others that were planted at the same time.

FUNERAL CUSTOMS.

Manner of Placing a Coffin in a Room and of Carrying It to the Burying Place.

While in old times it was more or less the custom, in the interment of bodies, to bury them with their feet to the east, a custom now substantially superseded by the almost common practice of burying the body with the feet to the path along the front of the lot, so was it once more or less the custom to place the coffin in the room in which the deceased was to lie before burial with the feet to the east.

Nowadays, says the New York Sun, the disposal of the body in the room would be determined altogether by the shape and size of the room, except that commonly the feet would be placed toward the door.

Though the common way is to place the body in the center of the room, another way, in comparatively modern practice, is to place the coffin or casket across one corner of the room. This gives opportunity for a convenient and effective disposition of flowers and floral pieces, and it perhaps affords a better view of the face.

As to the manner of moving a body to its burial, that is always done with the feet foremost. It is carried out of the house in that way, put into the hearse feet foremost, and so it is borne to the grave.

PEACHES AND BLUBBER.

Both Were Easily Obtainable in the Land Which the Professor Knew Nothing About.

Canadians are very touchy on the subject of climate, as Rudyard Kipling discovered when he somewhat thoughtlessly dubbed the dominion Our Lady of the Snows. When Arthur Stringer, the young Canadian poet and author, first went to Oxford, he carried with him letters from Prof. Goldwin Smith, of Toronto, to Prof. York Powell, the distinguished historian of Christ Church, says the Philadelphia Post.

The old Oxford don, like one or two other Englishmen, had very vague ideas about Canada, and somewhat surprised the young stranger by inquiring if he got along nicely on English roast mutton after living so long on frozen seal meat. The young poet gravely protested that he perhaps missed his whale blubber a little, but the next day cabled home, and in less than a week the finest basket of autumn peaches ever grown in Ontario, carefully packed in sawdust, was on its way to Oxford.

A short time afterward the young author was again dining with the regius professor at Oxford, and that gentleman produced at the meal a fruit dish loaded with tremendous peaches.

"Most extraordinary," said the old professor, "but these peaches were sent to me to-day, and I'm blest if I know who sent them. From the south of France, I suspect, so I saved a few of them for you, Stringer—they will be such a novelty, you know!"

The Canadian very quietly took a steamship company's bill of lading from his pocket and handed it to the professor. The professor gazed at the bill, and then at the fruit, then at the poet.

"I had some whale blubber, too, professor," said that young man, "but I simply had to eat that. These other things were grown on my uncle's farm near Kent county, Ont., you know. He has 200 bushels of them every year, and he sent me over a basket of little ones, along with the whale blubber."

A TAME WILD RABBIT.

An Animal That Is Difficult to Domesticate—A Hunter's Story of One.

Two sportsmen lay in a Montgomery county field the other day, smoking and rejoicing in the possession of a good string of rabbits, says the Philadelphia Record. "Did you ever see a tame wild rabbit?" said one of the men. "No," they say they can't tame the wild ones," the other answered. "My boy used to have some domestic rabbits, though." "Well, my boy had a tame wild rabbit," said the first man. "He got it young, and in a week or two it would come up on to the porch and jump on your lap like a kitten. It would always be going for your legs, trying to make you play with it, and when you took it out the little thing would make naturally for the woods and underbrush, though if a dog got after it it would kick like the wind for the house. A very tame wild rabbit. My boy kept it in the yard with a tame guinea pig and alligator. Sometimes he would take all three out for an airing, and it was funny to see, on the pavement, going slowly along behind my boy, the rabbit and guinea pig, with the little alligator waddling awkwardly in the middle. They were the best of friends, but some bad youngsters from next door broke into the yard one night and killed them with an ax. That rabbit of my boy's was, I guess, the only wild one ever known to be tamed."

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

Experiments on Communication Between Balloons Six Miles Apart and One Mile High.

Experiments were lately made at Vienna on the possibility of communication between balloons and wireless telegraphy, and they met with some success. A captive balloon takes the place of the tall mast as used in the Marconi system. A copper wire is stretched between it and the earth, where the transmitting apparatus is placed, the second balloon, which ascends freely, carries the receiving instrument and is furnished with a wire 60 feet long hanging downward from the basket. The balloons received and transmitted messages up to a distance of six miles and at an elevation of about a mile. Of course, the great difficulty will be to establish a transmitting station in a free balloon, both on account of the weight of the necessary apparatus and also because there is danger of discharges from the powerful condenser so near the inflammable gas of the balloon. Future experiments will be looked for with interest by all who are engaged in making a study of wireless telegraphy.

Color in Commerce.

The United States consul general in Frankfurt says "that it is important to study the taste of people in the matter of color, as well as in regard to shape, in designing goods for a foreign market. Saxon makers of needles drove England out of Brazil by wrapping their goods in pink paper instead of black. Other Germans are catering to the fondness of Russians for red in their dress. France recently learned how distasteful green is to a Chinaman, but it cost a good deal of money to make the discovery."

Where Hats Are Not Worn. There are parts of Spain where the hat is unknown except in pictures. The men, when they need a covering, tie up their heads, and the women use flowers.

Volcanic South Africa. The southern part of Africa is of volcanic origin and the land in the neighborhood of Kimberley is so sulphurous that even ants cannot exist in it.

UNEXPECTED PRESENTS.

Peculiar Transposition of Words Frequently Found in Modern Writings.

If it happens that some public character becomes the object of a set of resolutions, a cane or other testimonial, the printed account of the function presents some singular features. Owing to a certain carelessness in the handling of the English language—elastic as that medium of speech is—the writer makes himself say exactly the opposite that he intends to say. A well-educated man and a regular writer for publication will make this glaring error in the majority of his productions.

For instance, the nation—that is, a small portion—made up a pocketbook to buy Admiral Dewey a home. In every published account of that function, headlines and all—none is barred that has come under the eyes of the writer—the text ran after this manner: "Admiral Dewey Given a House." The elision of the preposition "to," in the eyes of the writer of that line, seems to have atoned for the blunder. The effect is that Admiral Dewey was presented to a house instead of the house having been presented to the admiral.

Instances without number are printed wherein prominent educators, law-makers and others are formally picked up—in language if not in physique—and presented to walking sticks under the designation of canes. In ninety out of a hundred cases of this kind the recipient is made the subject instead of the object of the sentence. This is inconvenient for the men who are bestowing attentions on a corpulent person.

TESTAMENT FOR AN EMPRESS.

China's Sovereign Has Been Presented with the Costliest Copy Ever Printed.

The poorest can now buy the New Testament in English for a nickel and yet—strange contrast!—perhaps the most sumptuous copy of the New Testament in existence is that splendid edition de luxe presented to the dowager empress of China on the occasion of her sixtieth birthday, the presentation having been made in due form by the British and American ministers. The book, says Leslie's Weekly, is a royal quarto volume, 2x10x13 inches in size and was manufactured by the Presbyterian press and Canton silversmiths. It has silver covers, embossed with bamboo and bird designs, and is printed on the finest paper with the largest type, and with a border of gold encircling each page. It was encased in a solid silver casket, ornamented with symbolical designs, the whole weighing 10 1/2 pounds, and upon the cover of the casket there is a gold plate which relates that the book is the gift of the Christian women in China.

Not long after the presentation of this magnificent volume the eunuchs were sent from the palace to the bookstore to ask for a common copy, so that the empress and her ladies might compare the two texts. Surely the circulation of such a book is one of the wonders of the world! "Age cannot wither, nor custom stale, its infinite variety."

"IMPORTED" CHEESE.

Varieties Made Here That Cannot Be Detected from Those Actually Made Abroad.

"Certain kinds of so-called imported cheeses, which are made up in the central part of this state and Wisconsin, are about as good as the real article which they cleverly imitate," said a New York restaurant keeper. "Not long ago I went through Greene county, Wis., where the cheese industry is very important. The assessors' statistics for 1898 gives the amount of cheese from the factories there as 6,000,000 pounds, but it is doubtless more than that. This great product is shipped to the Pacific coast and from there to Mexico and South America.

"These factories turn out the big, round, Swiss cheeses, the fancy so-called foreign cheeses and Limburger. The business is almost entirely controlled by Swiss cheese makers who have been trained in their native country, and their Swiss cheeses are made exactly like the imported article. It would surprise you if you knew how large a proportion of the alleged imported cheeses are made in this country. There are foreign cheeses, of course, which cannot be counterfeited here because the pasture land is different, but the more common ones are easily reproduced."

Origin of "Crackerjack."

The Boston Herald thus explains the origin of the word "crackerjack": "In the hot southwest cañon whiskey, or mesquite, is a favorite preservative for a jag. The Mexican loaded with mesquite is much given to Castilian profanity and invective, his favorite verbal jewel being 'carajo,' pronounced carahoo. In time a gorgeous, red-headed, cañoniferous drunk came to be called a carajo jag—carahoo jag—and by corruption a cracker-jag or crackerjack. Hence, all things supreme, clever, first-class, were by analogy termed crackerjacks."

New England Theft.

The New England woman had been telling how much money she had made during the summer in eggs. Some one expressed his surprise that she could do that and have a husband of summer boarders besides. "How did you manage?" he said. "That was easy enough," she replied. "I just sent all those fresh eggs away and sold them at 35 cents a dozen, and then went to the store and bought limered eggs at 25 cents. The summer boarder doesn't know the difference."

A VICTIM TO SCIENCE.

The Personal Sacrifice of a Spanish Physician While Investigating the Plague.

A correspondent at Lisbon sends us some pathetic details of the death of Dr. Camara Pestana, who actually caught the plague through his anxiety to learn all that he could about it, says the London Times. He was dissecting the body of a patient who had died from plague, and in order to extract the virus more thoroughly for analysis he put aside his instruments and worked with his fingers. The poison entered his system under the fingernails and he was struck down with the terrible disease which he was investigating. He was at once moved to an isolated ward set apart for plague sufferers, and there he set himself to study his own case and to record for the benefit of humanity his own symptoms and the course of the disease. He refused to see his brother for fear of infection, and in every way, even in making arrangements for his own funeral, he took every precaution to prevent the spread of the plague. His mind and will conquered his bodily sufferings until the very end, and even as he died he was still trying to indicate to those around him the lessons of his own case. He left a letter for the queen of Portugal begging for her influence in favor of his colleagues at the Lisbon bacteriological institute. Dr. Pestana had believed himself immune on account of the injections of plague serum he had taken.

GROWING CROCKERY.

Rare and Beautiful Natural Phenomena Which Makes China Immensely Valuable.

Recently there was sold in New York, for no less a sum than \$1,000, an old-fashioned china plate of the extremely rare kind which is known to the collectors as "growing crockery." From the plate itself had sprung, to a height of more than a foot, a sort of eruption of beautiful crystal that seemed to take the form of elegant trees and miniature pagodas. The growing crystals were gradually rising higher and higher, and they had brought up with them the enamel surface of the plate at every point where they had sprung from the body of the latter. Such plates are a chemical manifestation of the rarest possible kind, and only a very few years ago a teapot, the property of a lady in Woburn place, London, that had become covered with beautiful crystals in this way, was sold to a collector for \$3,000.

The clay of which such china is made, says the Cincinnati Enquirer, contains alumina and magnesia, and in certain cases these are set upon by the presence of sulphuric acid to produce fibrous crystals that are, in reality, very much of the character of Epsom salts, or crystals of alum. Only few, very few, instances of this "growing crockery" have ever occurred, hence the "fancy" prices that examples fetch. The plate sold the other day had belonged to a poor person who had never attached much value to it.

DELUGE OF CALENDARS.

Each Holiday Season Business Men Overrun with Gift Offerings of Advertisers.

This is the season of the year when the business man entering his office trips over a pile of calendars, finds another bunch on his chair and has to lift half a dozen or so before he can open his desk. All day long queer-looking individuals keep peering in and dropping more and more calendars on his lap until the office calendar habit seems to grow with the year. Some time ago it was announced that the people beginning of each year, various patent medicine purveyors issuing the little pamphlets setting forth the phases of the moon and the other information of a chronological nature deemed necessary to human happiness. But the pictorial and highly-colored calendar has taken the place of the almanac to a large extent. Every insurance company, railroad company and printing and engraving firm of any pretensions seems to feel called upon nowadays to get out an annual calendar which will hang above the desk of the business man and keep the name of the firm which sends out the calendar constantly before the eyes of the occupant and his callers.

GEM IN HIS NIGHT SHIRT.

How Plucky Pete McDonald, of the Klondike, Attended Himself in a Seattle Hospital.

Pete McDonald, a brother of Alexander McDonald, the millionaire king of the Klondike, left the Seattle hospital a few weeks ago, having been there nine weeks with a broken leg. Pete McDonald, though not so well known as his brother, is rich, nevertheless, and when he visited Portland last winter he spread his money freely, as befits a generous Klondiker, says the Seattle News.

At the hospital beside Pete's bed, on a stand, was some \$300 in \$20 gold pieces. With these he amused himself, stacking them up and building little heaps to while away the time. For hours he would lie there, lovingly fingering his gold pieces.

But the funniest feature of it all was the fact that Pete insisted on wearing a \$500 diamond in the bosom of his night shirt. The diamond was as big as the end of one's thumb, and its glittering rays seemed to comfort Pete as he toyed with it in his hours of pain. Every night the millionaire would fasten the diamond in the bosom of his night shirt before going to sleep.

RUNG ON THE PREACHER.

The Serious Duty That Was Imposed on Church Members in a Michigan Town.

"You remember the chestnut bell, of course?" said the man who, according to the New York Sun, had got out of Chicago with only the loss of one of his shoe heels. "Well, I was greatly taken with it at the time, and when I set out to visit my old home in Michigan I bought a dozen bells to take along. Nobody in the town had heard of them, but I hadn't worn one over a day when the people caught on and I was fairly besieged. When Sunday came I prepared to attend church like a dutiful son, and at the proper time mother and I were seated in her pew. Just what the text was I can't remember, but the minister had solemnly announced it when six of my chestnut bells sounded among the congregation. The good man didn't mind them in the least, but went ahead with his work. He was rung up on his hymn, and he was rung up every minute or two in his sermon, and though there was something amusing about it I was also half annoyed out of my boots. As I had brought the bells to town I didn't know but what he'd hold me responsible, and open out on me. About the middle of his sermon he said something about Jonah, and 11 of those bells went 't-t-t-t' on him in succession. He stopped and looked around, and then calmly said: "Will those people who are jingling keys kindly jingle a little softer?" "I was thankful to get out of that church without a calamity," continued the bell man, "and I didn't do any laughing till the next day. Then it was because I learned that every blessed man who had rung up the minister was seriously in earnest about it and felt it a sort of duty, and because that minister himself called at the house and accepted my own bell and rung it up on mother within five minutes."

OUR FISH GOING ABROAD.

American Varieties Are Being Largely Introduced into European Waters.

There is hardly a well-settled part of our country where the aid of the federal or state fish commissions have not been invoked to stock the rivers with fish. This work, says the New York Sun, has been of great value and it is still carried on with so much energy that our lakes and rivers everywhere, whose resources in fish were found to be depleted or in a depleted condition, are likely in few decades or less to teem with fish to the value of many millions of dollars. But while our home progress in fish culture is pretty well understood it will probably surprise a good many persons to hear that a number of European rivers that were once almost destitute of fish have in recent years been well stocked with species prepared from fry obtained from this country.

About ten years ago young fry of American brook trout salmon were shipped to Scotland, and British fishermen say they have multiplied rapidly to the detriment of Scotch fish. The French streams since the introduction of the American bass have doubled in their productive value. Other varieties of fish have been shipped to France and elsewhere for experiments. The American rock bass has been introduced into several English streams, and the brook trout is today in a flourishing condition in the clear cold streams of Russia and other northern countries of Europe. The waters of Switzerland abound with many American salmon trout and brook fish, which make the angling there superior to anything in the past.

PONY EXPRESS REDIVIVUS.

Hebron, Neb., Witnesses a Revival of Famous Old-Time Cross-Country Riding.

Forty years ago the great plains of the west were crossed by a set of daring riders who were known as the "pony express." History, romance and tradition are filled with stories of the doings of this band of daring men. But that was at a time when it was dangerous to stroll beyond the parade ground at Fort Leavenworth unless one had a friendly standing or wholesale contempt for Indians. All others who were thought might fall victims to war medicine.

With the passing of the Indian as a predatory warrior and his adaptation to the arts of peace as an actor in an open-air drama the reason for the pony express passed also. But out in Nebraska, says the Chicago Chronicle, the land of sand dunes, they have recently witnessed a revival of this pony express. Not that a lack of railroads has caused the revival or that Indians abound, but that the express company at Hebron has come to the conclusion that a municipal tax is unwarranted.

Hebron needs money, and has taxed all companies which do business in the corporate limits. The express company declined to pay the license and moved out. So a pony express service has been established between Hebron and Belvidere. The latter town is a bit more liberal, so the story goes, and the company is attempting to hold its own with a few outsiders.

How the Lover Felt.

Extract from a love story in a popular magazine: "He had no sooner gazed his eyes to her, which were of a deep violet color, than his heart began to beat with rapidity. A choking sensation pervaded his entire being, and but for the presence of an arm-chair he would have fallen senseless at her feet. Rousing himself with an effort, he possessed himself of her hand and appraised her of his affection, to which she responded in excellent French."

BUNU AND DINIZULU.

Native Chiefs in Southern Africa of Whom the World May Hear a Great Deal.

There are three native chiefs in southern Africa of whom in the near future the world may hear a good deal—Lerethodi, the paramount chief of the Basutos; Bunu, "king" of the Swazis, who is only just beginning to feel his feet; and Dinizulu, the keen, clever, intelligent and lately repatriated chief of the Zulus, says the London Mail.

For a long time Bunu's position was akin to that of the emperor of China—he was overweighted and overshadowed by the queen mother, a very determined lady, indeed, and quite a character in her way. Bunu's position has always been a little curious, and to this day there is a good deal of indecision about his movements and character. He still lets "I dare not" wait upon "I would." He does not love the Boer. Bunu, with all his faults, is no coward, and perhaps the time is not far distant when he will prove himself—as he has not done up to now—worthy to be the head of a race whose valor is undoubted.

Dinizulu, chief of the Zulus, may be said to be on his trial. He has only been back a short time among his people, from whose society he in 1855 was banished to St. Helena for rebelling against British authority. This was some four years after he had succeeded Cetewayo. Curiously enough, Dinizulu's capture was effected by a party of Boers headed by Luka Meyer, who is now in command of a large Boer force against the British.

HAS A MONTHLY COUNCIL.

Anaconda, Mont., Is Happy with City Fathers Who Meet with the New Moon.

If a city council should reach the conclusion that all public business could be cared for at one meeting in a month the citizens of the favored municipality would rejoice and be glad. This might apply with force to Chicago, provided needed work could be done in the solitary assembly, says the Chronicle. But the United States contain a town where councilmen are plenty, but who are not so anxious to exploit their wares as to meet more frequently than once in 30 days.

This city—it is a city—has many things which go to make up a modern city in all respects. It is Anaconda, Mont. It is in the very middle of the gold-bearing regions of the upper Rockies, has a fine system of public utilities and is up to date. But the members of the council, or the man who drew up the charter, thought one meeting a month would do for all practical purposes. Hence it happens that the Anaconda papers make mention thus:

"The December meeting of the city council will occur on Friday night."

That is all there is to it, but it speaks. It means that the man who speaks a job confirmation of the council had best be on hand Tuesday, before, if he fails, he will be out in the cold for yet another moon. And it waxes exceedingly cold in the shadow of the Rockies, even in Anaconda, where the sets of furnaces which encircle the hills and city.

THE "DOPPERS."

One of the Most Extraordinary Superstitions in the World Entered into by Boers.

The Boer is deeply religious, and, moreover, so superstitious that he really believes that his people are superior to any other in the world, says the London Mail. The "doppers," as he calls them, are the descendants of the best tribes of Israel.

This was surely a daring proposition to advance, and as the heads of the households declared that they were temporarily sojourning in the wilderness and that during their stay they would be smitten for their iniquities the young Boers naturally came to regard the English as instruments of vengeance.

Even now there are Boers who on the strength of the holy words "O God, the heathen are come into mine inheritance," refuse to obey the orders of the field cornets to fight the English, not because they are afraid, but because they believe that the English being the chosen instruments of vengeance it would be an act of impiety to oppose them.

The land of promise is thought by some Boers to be in the neighborhood of the Limpopo river. This is no doubt one of the most extraordinary superstitions that ever took into captivity a human mind, but were it not for the Boers at the end of the campaign should be willing to adopt this land as their future home Great Britain, it is thought, would not refuse them the privilege.

The Bicycle in War.

The campaign in South Africa is the first in which bicycles have been used by regular troops. Bicycle riders have already done good service there, especially in conveying dispatches from besieged towns like Mafeking. Sir Redvers Buller, the commander in chief of the British forces, has given departmental officers at bases of operation the option of using their bicycles instead of horses and receiving no allowance in lieu of rations.

Asylum for Infirm Beasts.

A Calcutta paper contains an account of the workhouse or asylum for infirm beasts and birds that was established some 13 years ago by a society of influential Hindoos. It is near the Sodepur station, about ten miles from Calcutta, and is under the control of a manager, with a staff of 80 servants and an experienced veterinary surgeon.