

THE DOUGHNUT COIN.

No Such Piece of Money Has Been Ordered to Be Issued.

Widely Circulated Story of a Three-cent Coin with a Hole in It is Entirely Without Foundation.

A curious story has been appearing in many newspapers that a strange new three-cent coin with a hole in the middle is about to be issued by the government.

This has been called the "doughnut coin." The Washington correspondent of the New York World recently asked Director of the Mint Roberts about it.

Mr. Roberts says there is absolutely no truth in the report; that no new coin can be made at the mint unless ordered by a special act of congress, and no such act has been passed.

But so widely has the story about the "doughnut coin" been printed that doubtless many people are daily expecting to get them in change and give them to their babies to string like beads.

According to the interesting but misleading stories that have been printed, the coin would be composed of nickel.

The theory of this idea was that the hurried hander will be enabled to at once detect the value of the coin by his sense of feeling. Some such safeguard was said to be necessary for the reason that it is very nearly the size and weight of the present five-cent nickel.

The size of the hole in the proposed new coin was to be of simple magnitude to make it simply a ring of metal and to occupy about one-half of the entire diameter. The new coin, it was said, was to do away with one of the great difficulties which beset the handlers of small silver coins when metal money first came into use after the circulation of paper collateral.

The coins which reached the hands of children and some classes in the more remote regions treated them as curiosities and as prizes. To insure their safe-keeping it was a favorite method to punch a hole in them, and, passing a string through the aperture, to hold the whole securely about the neck.

This practice, of course, destroyed the circulation value of the coins, and dealers who subsequently took them in were obliged to stand the loss. So general became the practice that a fixed scale was finally arranged for deduction for punched dimes, nickels and other pieces. The new piece could be struck without injuring it.

In the west and southwest the one-cent piece was slower in coming into favor than in the east, and the coinage of the new piece was supposed to be to meet a demand for which the five-cent piece is too large and the one-cent piece too small.

The five-cent nickel piece has been in use for over 30 years, having been first coined during the latter part of the civil war or just after that. Before that time for many years the only small change in circulation was made of paper 5-cent, 10-cent, 15-cent and 25-cent notes, being issued by the government. The subsidiary notes also included a 50-cent piece, and all of these were popularly known as "shin plasters."

RAISING AN ALLEY ON JACKS.

Clever Mechanical Feat Recently Performed at the Masonic Temple in Chicago.

A short time ago, owing to natural causes, the alley east of the Masonic Temple building, nearly 300 feet in length, sank 12 inches. The sinking was gradual, but when it ended the alley was resting upon the upper parts of the boiler and furnace mechanisms of the building which occupy the space underneath the alley's area. Fortunately for the hundreds of teamsters and truckmen who use the alley daily the sinking had been even, without a crack or caving in. The earth formation carried the asphalt paving down with it as regularly as if the sinking had been regulated by man instead of nature, says the Chicago Record-Herald.

The problem presented to Capt. Williams, superintendent of the Masonic Temple, was of either removing the old alley and constructing a new and artificial one or of attempting to raise the old one back to its old level without cracking or injuring it. He decided on the latter course. A series of jacks were worked under the sunken passage-way. They upheld a framework of wood, which extended to all parts of the alley. Workers then began to slowly screw up the jacks.

This screwing up process began at two o'clock on a Sunday morning and was finished at one o'clock that afternoon. During that time wagons loaded with coal and other teams drove through the alley, not noticing that anything extraordinary was going on.

The entire mass of asphalt and earth was finally brought back to its true level without cracking or displacement of any kind, and then given such a new foundation that it can never sink again. The expense was over \$1,000. It has been possible for some time to raise a brick house and move it away without injury to its parts. Stone buildings and stores have also been raised and moved, but Capt. Williams believes that this is the first time an alley has ever been raised by jacks without interruption of traffic or injury to the surface of the same.

LUCK'S PART IN A REUNION.

Father and Son Separated and Reunited by Failure and Success in Finding Gold.

After a parting of 45 years, a father and son were united in Sausalito, Cal., a few days ago under peculiar circumstances, reports a San Francisco paper.

In 1856 J. S. Bellrude, a local justice of the peace, left his home in the state of Wisconsin to visit California in search of gold. Behind him he left a young wife and an infant child, and he worked his way in the California wilderness with the thought ever before him of making a rich strike and returning to his little family with the wealth that would forever make them comfortable. But luck conspired against him, and while success after success crowned the efforts of the men digging in the hills about him, his own little claim only produced a heritage of debts. Ten years passed, and Bellrude learned that his wife was dead. The son was living in comfort with his mother's people, and the discouraged man, feeling that all was well with the boy, allowed him to drop from sight, and his very existence became uncertain with the father. Thirty years ago the father mailed his picture to the son, and since that time the latter has always tried to keep trace of the former's whereabouts.

A year ago the son, who had become 45 years of age, left his home, and, emulating his father's example of years before, struck out into the frozen regions of Nome to search for gold. Luck, which had never come to the father, showered its favors on the son, and the latter located a number of good claims, which, he says, will make him a wealthy man. A short time ago he returned to Seattle, from which place he located his aged father in Sausalito. He at once went back to that town, and almost the first man he met was Bellrude, Sr. The latter was sitting on the front seat of the hack which he drives when the calls of justice are not pressing, and he was at once accosted by the son. The latter held the picture sent him by his father 30 years ago in his hand, and carefully sized up the old man.

"Are you J. S. Bellrude?" the young man asked.

"Well," answered the justice, "I am."

"Well, do you know me?" asked the stranger.

"No, I don't know you, young man, and you can't sell me anything, either," responded the justice, who has not spent ten years on the Sausalito water front for nothing.

"Well, my name is C. M. Bellrude, and I guess you are my father," said the stranger. "Here is the picture you sent me 30 years ago in Wyoming."

The father recognized the likeness and then recognized his son. The pair walked home arm in arm, and the father's face was eaten in the judge's furnished rooms that night. The son intends to put his father on an independent footing.

ASIATIC SOLDIERS.

Under the Rural Attorney Officers There is Material for a Powerful Army.

The Saracens charged on and repeatedly defeated the mail-clad legions of Europe, and this when the latter were of the two the more animated by religious fervor, says a writer in the London Spectator. Hyder Ali's horsemen were as good troops as any in the world. Even in our own time the French feared Arabs when commanded by Abdel-Kadir, and the best Italian troops were defeated by Menelek. It is probable, too, that if Europe knew the details of the sporadic war which rages in Arabia between Turks and Arabs we should revise our ideas of Asiatic capacity, both for soldiering and for heroism; but still it is substantially true that the Asiatic soldier wants as a fighting man something which we call aptitude for discipline, and which the European officer can and does communicate to him. What that something is has been a matter of dispute from the day of Xerxes' invasion, and will probably never be settled till the Asiatic becomes self-conscious and a penman.

The writer once asked the first Sir Henry Havelock what he, with his great experience and knowledge of military history, believed to be the reason, and his answer, that "it was due in the long run to some secret want of confidence on the part of the men in their officers' capacity or honesty," though not completely satisfactory, is probably as near as we shall get to the truth. The explanation, however, does not so much matter. The grand fact is that any competent European officer can do the needed work, that such officers are in the market, and that, consequently, powerful Asiatic armies may yet be organized by soldiers of fortune purchased for the purpose.

The Poor in Porto Rico. Though there is much poverty in this beautiful island, there is also much happiness. The poorest classes are happy from morning till night. They use the bark, branches and limbs of the trees for the construction of their houses. Large gourds furnish them with buckets, and smaller ones with various vessels. Fruit and vegetables are plentiful all the year round. Two crops of corn can be harvested. They have oranges, bananas, plantains and mangoes in abundance. There is no cold winter and no need for extra clothing or fuel.—Porto Rico Letter in Chicago Times-Herald.

Advantages of Hospitals. A German professor declares that a poor man in a hospital is better off than a rich patient in his own house, and he hopes that this fact will help to overcome the prejudice against hospitals.—N. Y. Sun.

BATTLE OF GERMS.

Destructive Agencies Combated by Friendly Parasites.

Vast Field of Scientific Investigation Which May Yield Valuable Results to Animal and Vegetable Life.

The deeper science digs into the secrets of nature the more wonderful the balancing of forces appears, and not the least of these marvels of adjustment is the counteracting or breaking down of agencies destructive to life by the activity of other organisms.

In a vague way this balancing of the forces of life and death was realized long ago, but now investigation has revealed much that was formerly hidden. It has even become possible for man to protect himself and his property, to some extent, against harm by using minute living organisms to check and undermine those which are his foes, says the Cleveland Leader.

The most striking recent instance of this kind is afforded by the work of the department of agriculture in combating the insects that prey upon the fruit trees of California. Parasites of organisms which are themselves parasites of the trees are saving orchards and groves by destroying the foes of the fruit. A destructive scale, as the little creature is called, eats the trees, and it, in turn, is eaten by a ladybug imported from Australia. So the balance is restored, and benefits of life, viewed from the human standpoint, at least, have their due advantage over the forces of destruction.

The success of such ingenious levelling of microscopic warriors for some of man's hardest fighting suggests the possibility of destroying the smallest germs of disease which are living organisms by discovering something still more infinitesimal to prey upon these pernicious forms of destructive energy as they do upon man. It would be worth to say that this is going too far for human knowledge or resources.

Well-known and very significant facts indicate that just such agencies may yet be used to break the power of deadly germ diseases. Nature might well have some such way of preserving a fit and wholesome balance between life and death, in the highest of all her organic forms.

It is well understood, for example, that when a virulent disease is introduced where it never before existed its ravages are far worse than any havoc which it causes in countries where it has been a curse for generations or centuries. Smallpox simply slaughtered the Indians of America when it was brought into this continent from Europe. Pulmonary tuberculosis, or consumption of the lungs, has practically depopulated certain islands of the South seas where the natives seemed not to have encountered the disease before white men brought it into their earthly paradise.

On the other hand, in countries like Japan, where a race has been settled for many hundreds of years, with little change in the essential habits or conditions of life, the resisting power of the body when assailed, as it always is, more or less, by disease germs, appears to have been so developed by the survival of the fittest, or otherwise, that many cases of consumption result in cures which would be deemed wonderful in other lands. Is it not possible that this growing ability to come in contact with deadly germs and still retain good health may be due to the development of the right kind of organism or secretion of the body to attack, in turn, and destroy the most fatal foes of man?

There is a vast field of investigation opening in this direction which may yield results which now seem less substantial than any of the fairy tales of science. It may be that discoveries are to be made in the control of natural forces affecting the health and strength of the human body, its life and duration, which will be as revolutionary and epoch-making as any of those marvels of invention which made the last century famous forever in the history of our race.

REAL PANAMA HATS.

Made in Ecuador and Bring from \$20 to \$150, According to Their Fineness.

The so-called Panama hat, so extensively in vogue, is not the product of Panama at all, or even of the state of Colombia, but is manufactured in the neighboring republic of Ecuador in enormous quantities and of every variety of shape, texture and quality, and sold under the general name of Guayaquil hats throughout Mexico, Central America and South America, at prices varying from 50 cents upward, says a New York News letter.

The hat, however, that is known to the wealthiest classes of those countries as the Panama hat is quite a different affair, a veritable "article de luxe," selling at prices varying from \$20 to \$150, according to their fineness. They are worn indifferently by either sex, without ribbon or other adornment, as they come from the Indian makers' hands, without profusion of starch, and are the more highly prized from the fact that their closely woven texture not only renders them impervious to the sun's rays, but likewise waterproof, which last quality is highly esteemed where it is deemed expedient to keep the head dry during the constant equatorial showers.

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

Two hundred and ten tons of honey, worth \$12,000, are the yearly produce of Ireland.

A new insect has appeared in California in time to devour the eggs of the countless red spiders that injure the orange groves.

In the Rhine vineyards one of the methods of protecting the vines against frosts in May is to put paper bags around them over night.

The trustees of the British museum have recently transmitted a beautifully illuminated address to Emperor Menelik expressing their thanks for the assistance and facilities which his majesty has accorded of late to British travelers who have undertaken journeys to Abyssinia for the purpose of scientific exploration.

One of the simplest, cheapest and best sterilizers is sunshine, and it is important to allow as much sun in a sick room as possible. The same rule is applicable to the rooms of healthy people. The good effects of "sun bathing" in the treatment of convalescents is ample proof of the utility of the rays of the sun for therapeutic purposes.

The Prussian government has advised the various communities in Prussia that they should erect, at their own risks, cheap dwellings for employes, the laboring population, and persons of relatively small income. It also urges electric lines for quicker suburban communication, and mentions a number of legal steps which will prevent excessive real estate speculation.

In the years 1649, 1665, 1678 and 1690 smallpox spread among the inhabitants of Boston with great destruction of life. In 1702 there were 313 persons who died under its power. In 1721, 5,759 persons had it in a natural way, and that number was a large half of the sole proportion of whom 844 died. In 1730 about 4,000 cases of smallpox occurred; vaccination with the virus, being the discovery of Dr. Jenner, of England, was introduced here about the year 1800 by Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse.

KING COTTON.

Louisiana's Magnificent Display and Stunning Exhibits at the Pan-American Exposition.

In the Louisiana exhibit in the Agriculture building of the Pan-American exposition, King Cotton occupies the most conspicuous place. Forty varieties of seed and 60 of lint cotton are shown. The different varieties are displayed in miniature bales. Several full sized bales as they are prepared for shipment are also shown, says the exposition bulletin. Cotton seed is also shown in a large number of jars; cotton seed oil in tall glass bottles. The seed is also shown after undergoing different commercial processes. The cotton seed cake, which is a product after the oil is pressed out, is also exhibited. This cake, when ground, makes cotton seed meal, which is used as feed for cattle and as a fertilizer. Sulphur and rock salt are shown in the exhibit, the former of 99% per cent. purity and the latter 98 per cent. Both the rock salts are from the fields of Louisiana, which contain an inexhaustible amount of these products. An interesting feature is an illustration of the products of fat pine. A piece of the wood is shown together with its products, turpentine, tar, tar oil, cresolite, pyroligneous acid, wood alcohol and charcoal. The charred remains of the wood after these products have been extracted is shown beside the natural wood.

A striking feature of the exhibit is a sweet potato weighing 122 pounds. Thirty-five varieties of sweet potatoes are seen. Extremely large pecan nuts in 11 varieties are displayed. Along one end of the exhibit bales of moss are piled, one bale showing the moss as taken from the tree and others showing the prepared product, and the finished moss ready for use by the upholsterer. Twenty-two kinds of hay, some of it being the famous alfalfa variety, are shown in model bales, 12 varieties of wheat in jars and five of oats. An exhibit that will be most interesting to smokers is one of perique tobacco and cigars. Raw tobacco, and cigars in boxes are shown in considerable quantities.

Divide the Wreckage.

The wreck of the great ship Tantal Castle on the rocky shore of Robben island has attracted attention to the leper colony located on that speck of terra firma. The lepers, of whom there are several hundred, have a peculiar custom of dividing the wreckage of the island into portions, one portion being given to one leper. Whatever jettam is cast upon that portion becomes the private property of the individual to whom it is assigned. This unwritten law is rigidly observed and causes no disputes. A more dreary existence it is hard to imagine than that on this cheerless spot of sand and rock, which is subject to great heat in the summer and very boisterous winds in the winter.—London News.

Philippine Ferry.

The natives of Mindanao, in the Philippine islands, have a novel way of crossing the river in the rainy season when it is in flood. Instead of working the ferry by means of a rope or sweep they harness it to a carabao, or water buffalo, and "drive" across the river. These water buffaloes are used as beasts of burden in the Philippines, and the wealth or otherwise of a native chief is gauged by his neighbors by the number of carabao he possesses. Resembling a cow in all but horns (which in the case of the carabao are from four to five feet apart), these animals are equally at home on land or in water.

SHOOTING AT CLOUDS

Theory That It Prevents Hail and Frost Is a Delusion.

Methods in Use in France and Italy to Protect Vegetation Deprived by Our Weather Authorities.

The extensive reports of United States Consul Covert, at Lyons, France, relative to the success of cannon-firing in France as a means of protecting orchards and vineyards from hailstorms, and also for the purpose of mitigating or nullifying the effects of frosts upon vegetation, have prompted numerous inquiries by horticulturists in this country as to when, if at all, this government would adopt similar methods of protection. Prof. Willis L. Moore, the chief of the weather bureau, acting under the directions of Secretary Wilson, has, therefore, issued to the press the following statement:

"The use of explosives to destroy hailstorms and to minimize the effects of frosts has spread throughout Italy, southern Austria and southern France. In many places it is supported by both federal and municipal appropriations, and it is also maintained and practiced on a large scale by the owners of vineyards. It is especially exploited by certain manufacturers of cannon and explosives, located at Graz, Austria. I believe that the method in use is based upon a popular delusion, and that American horticulturists should not waste their time or money in the following of such an ignis fatuus."

"The inventor of the apparatus is Mr. Stiger, and the method is ordinarily spoken of as the Stiger method. It consists essentially in sending vortex rings of smoke and air upward toward the clouds; but unfortunately for the claims of our European experimenters the most powerful Stiger cannon that has yet been employed cannot send these rings higher than 1,200 feet above the ground, and, therefore, utterly fail to reach the clouds. On this account the distinguished Austrian meteorologist, J. M. Pertner, has maintained that if there is any virtue whatever in the idea of the experimenters they must use more powerful apparatus."

"But there is no satisfactory evidence that the cannonading or the vortices had any influence whatever on the hail. Both theory and practice agree in this conclusion. Theoretically it was imagined by Mr. Stiger that hail was formed in quiet spots in the atmosphere, where the atmospheric moisture could crystallize out in large crystals in a manner analogous to the formation of large crystals of salt in liquid solution. But this is a very foolish notion. Prof. Abbe says that there are no such quiet spots in the atmosphere and that hailstones are not crystals, but masses of ice with only a feeble or partial crystalline structure that even the perfect crystals of the snowflakes are formed in the midst of rapidly moving air, so that the whole theoretical basis for hailstorm cannonading falls to the ground."

"Practically, it is difficult to prove that a specific fall of hail has been especially influenced by the cannonading. Hailstorms are generally very local and erratic. Some have maintained that they are controlled by the hills and the contour of the country or by the presence of forests and lakes, but practically the whole question is one of ascending and descending currents of air that characterize whirlwinds and thunderstorms. In the midst of these complex motions, with the resulting rain, there occur here and there patches of hail, it would seem absurd to say that we can put our finger upon the precise influence that caused or prevented hail. If in the midst of a hail-storm, I fire off a cannon and the hail ceases to fall on my land and continues to fall on my neighbor's, it would be folly to maintain that this is due to the firing of my gun. Nothing but the continued repetition of this phenomenon under a variety of circumstances would justify this conclusion."

"Now, the fact is that in the various reports relative to hail shooting there has not been a fair presentation of the statistics upon the results. Nothing is told us as to where the hailstorms come from or go to, nor even if there were any hailstorms; but in most cases the record simply states that a threatening cloud was seen approaching, the cannonading began and continued until the cloud went away, and no hail fell on the region supposed to be protected by the cannon. But this is not all. The last congress on the bombardment of hail utterly refused to entertain reports from those who testified that the hail fell in spite of the cannonading. In fact, therefore, reports showing that in no case was the cannonading of any avail had to be published independently."

"After an examination of all that has been published during the past two years my conviction is that we have here to do with a popular delusion as remarkable as is the belief in the effect of the moon on the weather. The uneducated peasantry of Europe seem to be looking for something miraculous. They would rather believe in cannonading as a means of protection and spend on it abundance of money, time and labor than adopt the very simple expedient of mutual insurance against the losses that must inevitably occur."

PITH AND POINT.

A man is in a bad way when his future is all behind him.—Ram's Horn.

"What did you do on the links today?" "Hit one man on the head with a driver, slapped a caddy for laughing and lost nine balls."—Indianapolis News.

"It 'pears," said Uncle Eben, "like some men will turn plain, honest people down an' take up wif confidence men jes foh de sake o' de excitement."—Washington Star.

Jones—"I've just been doing something that always makes me feel cheap." Smith—"What is that?" Jones—"Comparing my salary with what I think it ought to be."—Town and Country.

The Careless Girl—"I've stuck a needle into my finger and it bleeds awfully." The Careful Woman—"Mercy! I hope you thought to wipe the needle; blood will make it rusty, you know."—Boston Transcript.

Quite Another Thing—"Floasie, if you and Harry can't stop quarrelling, I shall not let you play tea-party any more." "But this isn't a tea-party, mamma. We're playing married, and Harry is finding fault with my cooking."—Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.

Nervous Lady Passenger (to deck hand)—"Have you ever seen any worse weather than this, Mr. Sailor?" Deck Hand—"Take a word from an old salt, mum; the weather's never very bad while there's any females on deck a-makin' requiesces about it."—Fun.

Mrs. Jones—"Are you aware, Mrs. Skinsbone, that your dog has just bitten my little Willie?" Mrs. Skinsbone—"What, your Willie, who has only just got over the scarlet fever?" Oh, Mrs. Jones, if anything should happen to Fido, I'd never forgive you."—Glasgow Evening Times.

WORKING OF CURFEW LAW.

Satisfactory Results of Its Enforcement in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Newport has back its old bells and is ready for the introduction of the curfew law in this one particular. A word from the chief of police in Cambridge, Mass., has just been published in favor of this means for preserving the innocence of the children.

Cambridge was formerly one of the worst towns known for the extent of its juvenile depravity. All this is changed now, and the New England air of respectability is again a feature of Cambridge life by night as well as by day. The law affects the conduct of the children at all hours. For those who fear something too arbitrary for our system of life in this curfew law the explanation of the Bangor chief of police as to its enforcement may be a help in seeing the advantage of having it, says the Newport (R. I.) News. He says of the curfew:

"I believe it is a grand success. We have very little complaint now of childie being out after hours, but when one does come in it is from some section of the city not covered by the officers regularly, and an officer sent a few times to that locality speedily breaks it up. I do not believe our people would suffer the children to be out to any great extent without calling the attention of the police department to their duty in the matter. It was not long since that a friend who lives in a section of the city where children are, to say the least, very plenty, said to me that it was astonishing to him how soon the children disappeared from the street corners near his home at the stroke of the curfew. I presume that some people may have the same idea that the police were going to enforce this ordinance in an arbitrary manner, and that no child near the age mentioned would be allowed to be seen on the street after the curfew sounded. We did not intend anything of the kind. Children who, for any good reason, are on the streets are never bothered by the officers any more than before the passage of the ordinance. But when a child has been given fair warning and then keeps it up, it is locked up and punished."

Our Paper Industry.

Fifty pounds of paper for each individual was the amount consumed in this country last year. The United States puts 6,000,000,000 pounds on the market annually, according to the latest statistics, and has about 1,000 mills engaged in the paper manufacture. This industry has grown from one little mill that manufactured paper from rags in Philadelphia in 1690. While the output has increased so tremendously, and the demand has caused the substitution of wood pulp for ingredients used in the early manufacture, the principle on which it is made remains practically the same as that of China centuries ago. We not only consume more paper than any other country, but we are reaching out for the markets of the world, and with our output furnish railways and steamships with about 7,500,000 tons of freight a year.—Paper Trade Journal.

Costly Stakes.

Bill—Are you working for that doctor yet?  
Jill—Yes; but he's pretty small potatoes.  
"Is, is he?"  
"Why, yes; the other day I didn't feel well, and I left my work and went into his office to see what was the matter with me."  
"I see; he charged you regular price for a visit, I suppose?"  
"Yes, he did that and more; he doctored me on pay day for the time I was in his office."—Yonkers Statesman.