

NAVY WANTS SAFETY

BUT SPEED TESTS CANNOT BE GIVEN UP, SAYS OFFICER.

Experts Working to Prevent Disasters Such as Recently Occurred on Battleship Missouri—Probable Cause.

With the newspaper reports from Washington and Pensacola as the basis for their conclusions, many of the officers at the Brooklyn navy yard think that the most reasonable explanation of the recent explosion in the 13-inch gun turret on the battleship Missouri is that the primer was inserted and accidentally exploded before the breech plug was closed and locked.

According to the reports, said one officer, the shell and a part of the powder charge for the next firing of the gun had already been put in place. If that was so it would have been impossible for the so-called blowback of the gases to have ignited the powder in the turret and in the handling room below.

The notion that some burning fragment of the powder had left over from the previous firing was still in the gun and ignited the next charge prematurely is also nonsense. That is absolutely impossible. The explosion of the 300 pounds of powder used in a single firing of a 13-inch gun generates such a terrific heat that everything is entirely consumed. There can be no burning fragments left.

The gun crew was at target practice, and every man striving to make a speed record. Every fraction of a second counts. A whole second, perhaps, may be saved, by putting the primer in before the plug is closed. This is against the rules, but the men were striving for a record.

With the primer once inserted, any one of several things might have caused its premature explosion and the driving of the ignition blast through the vent against the charge while it was being driven home by the men loading the gun.

The officer was asked if the efficiency acquired by the speed trials and competitive target drills was worth the lives of the men lost in the occasional explosions.

"Well," he said, "that is one way of putting it. But when all the navies of the world are doing the same thing to a quire the greatest speed and accuracy in the firing of big guns, no one nation can afford to quit and say 'the game is too dangerous, and I won't play.' To let down the standard of speed in gun fire for the sake of greater safety in target practice might result in actual warfare to the greater efficiency of an enemy that had kept on taking risks."

Don't infer from that that the naval officers of the United States are a cold-blooded lot, who are willing to sacrifice a number of men to make the danger without reducing the speed. The way has not been found yet in our navy, at any rate, although experts have been working with that end in view ever since the firing of big guns began.

QUAINT CUSTOM IN ENGLAND

Public Field Let to Tenant in Queer Fashion and Proceeds Used for a Dinner.

Old custom, the hard in merry old England. A certain field at Bourne, in Lincolnshire, was let by auction recently in accordance with a quaint tradition annually observed.

The auctioneer stood on a bridge in a part of Bourne township known as East Gate, and as each bid was forthcoming a boy started to run to a certain public house. So long as the last boy had not returned the auctioneer continued to take bids, that which was unchallenged when the last boy returned being declared the rent of the field for the ensuing year, and the bidder the tenant.

Then the company adjourned to the public house to which the boys had been running, where supper was provided out of the funds raised from the field, two trustees being appointed to dispose of the remainder of the rent by distributing a loaf of white bread to each of the houses in East Gate.

PRODUCTION OF PETROLEUM

Over 90 Per Cent. of World's Output for 1902 Supplied by United States and Russia.

Geological survey statistics recently made public place the world's production of petroleum in 1902 at 185,151,089 barrels. Of this the United States and Russia produced 91.4 per cent.

ON A TORPEDO BOAT.

HARDSHIPS ENDURED BY JAPANESE SAILORS IN WAR.

An Officer Tells of Effect of the Intense Cold and High Nervous Tension Under Which They Must Labor.

One of the officers commanding a Japanese torpedo boat, or destroyer, which took part in the attacks on Port Arthur, had some conversation with the Sasebo correspondent of the Jiji Shimpo. He declares that this is a most dispiriting war.

Since the 11th of February the cold has been intense and the sea boisterous. One destroyer's crew may be said to have slept under frozen snow, so thickly did the flakes penetrate to the men's bunkers, and another had its compass frozen, though alcohol was used as a precaution. Nothing but the high spirit of the men enabled them to work through it all, people on shore cannot form any idea of what the suffering means. Yet no one has suffered bodily from frost bite. That was because they had the experiences of 1894-95 to guide them. Very few caught cold.

The officer attributes this to the fact that they did not expose themselves to variations of temperature, as is the case with men in a big ship, where cabins can be warmed and heat generating processes employed. On a destroyer or torpedo boat the only source of artificial heat is a brazier, and braziers have two serious drawbacks: one that is a small craft, pitching and rolling badly, live charcoal is a dangerous companion; the other that as all apertures have to be closed to keep out the sea, the fumes of a brazier would be perilous. There was nothing for it, consequently, but to dispense with all heating appliances, and the men, living in a uniformly cold temperature, seem to have kept their health better than they would have done had means of generating artificial heat been accessible.

One great trouble was that the officers hardly ever had a quiet sleep. Their work was always at night, and the strain and anxiety of moving at high speed without lights, when every sense had to be keenly alert so as to avoid collisions, and yet keep in touch with the other boats, were something that soon became almost unendurable. It was not merely want of opportunity to sleep, what happened was that the long sustained serious tension made sleep impossible. Drinking sake brought no relaxation of the strain, and only by taking morphine could sleep be obtained in many cases. This was much worse than the actual fighting. Provisions were another great difficulty.

It is, of course, out of the question to have good fare on board a torpedo craft. But in very cold weather what a Japanese sailor or soldier desires above all things is plenty of food. The men on board destroyers, therefore, had to be lashed on the deck, and so it happened that heavy seas constantly breaking on board carried away or smashed many of the casks, to the men's great chagrin.

DISEASE AS A WAR ALLY.

History Shows That Sickness Has Proven Considerably More Fatal Than Bullets.

The dispatch from St. Petersburg to the effect that an epidemic of cholera and typhoid is threatened at Harbin, the Russian military base in Manchuria, is surprising only by reason of the fact that it was permitted to pass censorship.

What has been learned from experience in former wars seems to be easily forgotten. In the Crimea the French lost 236 men from sickness to 64 from wounds in each thousand. The death rate of the English was 179 from sickness and 47 from wounds. In Mexico the French lost per 1,000, 149 from sickness and 49 from wounds. In the Russo-Turkish war the Russians lost, per 1,000, 113 from sickness and 49 from wounds. The losses in the American civil war during two years, June, 1861, to June, 1863, were 53.2 per thousand, of which 3.6 were from wounds and 44.6 from sickness. In the Boer war, while the figures are not at hand in complete form, it is well known that sickness was vastly more fatal than Boer marksmanship, deadly as that was admitted to be.

DEATH REVEALS LIFE SECRET

Old Sea Captain Found to Be a Woman at Her Death—Was Inmate of Sailors' Home.

"Capt. John Weed," an inmate of the Sailors' Snug Harbor on Staten Island, who cut his throat with a penknife in the institution recently, is dead, and an examination revealed the fact that "he" was a woman.

"Capt. Weed" was admitted to the home for old sailors eight months ago, after being a captain on trans-Atlantic vessels for many years.

When the captain entered the home he was noticed to keep by himself and had little to say to the other inmates of the institution. He became ill and despondent and several days ago went to the basement and cut his throat.

When the coroner visited the body he ordered an autopsy, which revealed the fact that Weed was not a man.

Do Their Work Thoroughly. From all the indications, remarks the Chicago Tribune, the makers of Russian submarine mines use the best material in their manufacture.

OLD AGE NOT ESSENTIAL.

Advanced Years Are No Longer Necessary for British Army Officers—Part of the New System.

The new appointments to the British war office staff have resulted in a notable decrease in the age average of the senior officers.

The men selected for or retained in the chief posts show an average age of 49 years, the lowest figure known for the headquarters general.

Previously generals were sent to Ball Mall in their riper years. Now the older generals are kept in the field, where their ripe experience in soldiering is applied to the training of troops and the executive administration is placed in the hands of the younger men.

In the field the age of the commanders is much higher. Lord Grenfell and Sir Evelyn Wood head the list at 62 and 66. But the average is much lower than it was two years ago, and it will still further be reduced.

India is commanded by Lord Kitchener at 53, and Sir Francis Wingate is sirdar of Egypt at 42. Col. S. later will be quartermaster general of India at 48, and Maj. Gen. Rundle, Bruce Hamilton, Bedford, Mahon, Willocks, Alderson, Scofield and Rimington hold divisional or brigade commands while yet in the early forties.

"We desire to represent to the prime minister and to the secretary of state for war the importance of making as brief as possible the transition period between the abolition of the old and the establishment of the new system."

DEATHS ON BRITISH ROADS

Railway Casualties Increase Alarmingly in Past Year—445 Employes of Companies Slain.

British board of trade railway accident returns for 1903 have been issued as a blue book. It is disquieting to find that, compared with 1902, the figures relating to accidents both of killed and injured have leaped up in a somewhat alarming fashion.

The position will be seen from the following table:

| | 1902 | 1903 |
|------------------|------|------|
| Killed | 78 | 102 |
| Injured | 79 | 102 |
| Company employes | 25 | 72 |
| Other persons | 53 | 30 |
| Other persons | 14 | 30 |
| Other persons | 4 | 12 |
| Totals | 157 | 204 |

There must be added to these figures accidents to passengers from causes other than accidents to trains, including their own want of caution, etc. Under this head it is shown that 679 persons were killed and 2,207 injured, including 279 persons killed when trespassing on the line, and 163 suicides.

A third, and in some respects more important, category includes accidents to persons on business at stations, etc. No fewer than 445 servants of companies or contractors were so employed in the above table; 23 were killed and 506 injured while coupling or uncoupling vehicles; 12 were killed and 400 injured while moving vehicles during shunting; and 28 were killed and 435 injured by various other accidents during shunting operations.

Altogether, therefore, the numbers of persons killed and injured last year on railways in the United Kingdom were as follows: Killed, 1,159; injured, 6,755. This marks an increase over 1902 of 63 killed and 121 injured.

LIFE'S ELEMENTS IN SEA.

M. Quinton, Noted French Savant, Offers New Support to Darwinian Theory.

Ten years ago the injection of salt water as a restorative to patients dying from loss of blood aroused general interest. The discovery of this quality of salt water probably suggested to the French savant, M. Quinton, a long and patient research concerning sea water, the conclusion of which throws unexpected light on and adds support to the Darwinian theory of evolution.

M. Quinton maintains that sea water is the natural source from which, as Prof. Haeckel believes, elementary bodies rise which develop into all the species, including the human. The environment wherein the anatomical elements of living creatures exist is neither more nor less than a marine one. Our tissues and cells continue to exert their functions in a fluid where the composition bears the closest resemblance to that of sea water.

Hitherto the number of elements entering into the composition of the living body was considered about 15. M. Quinton has shown the existence of traces of at least 14 others, which are also found in sea water, such as copper, lead, silver and gold. Further if an animal is led to the point of exhaustion and the place of the blood supplied with sea water the animal regains its strength in one day, and there is complete recovery in five days.

M. Quinton injected into animals a quantity of sea water greater than their own body weight without toxic effect. The injection of pure water rapidly causes death. Thus sea water appears to be the true nutritive fluid for animals, in fact their natural plasma.

A Help to Genius. Poor spelling, remarks the Chicago Daily News, is a mark of genius in a young lady stenographer only when she has a full complement of dimples.

Might Stimulate Virtue. Virtue is its own reward, but, says the Chicago Daily News, to get \$5,000, 000 in addition for being a common, everyday hero wouldn't be so bad.

THE SERVIAN CROWN

AMERICAN FARMER DECLARED TO BE RIGHTFUL WEABER.

Interesting Story of Claim of John Boy, of Minnesota, to the Most Dangerous Throne in Europe.

The announcement that the king of Servia would like to abdicate has revived the story of the American heir to the throne, in the person of John Boy, a Minnesota farmer, whose father, August Boy, was said to be an heir to the throne of that country, and who, it is claimed, died in that country many years ago by the hand of an assassin.

A writer in the St. James' Gazette, in discussing the rumors that King Peter would like to let go because he is disappointed with his people, says the world contains a lot of pretenders to the throne who do not really pretend because they prefer to keep off that dangerous elevation. The most interesting of these pretenders, says the writer, is the Minnesota farmer, John Boy Vonbauer, believed to be descended from Mihos Obrenovitch, and through him connected with the Servian ruler.

The mother of John Boy lives in a modest little cottage among the evergreens and jackpines near Rum river, a few miles from Princeton, Minn. She is 84 years old, but for one of her age is apparently hale and hearty. Small of stature, and with her shrunken form bent with infirmities of age, she still shows that she was in her youth a comely woman for one of her race, and had Dame Fortune made her queen of Servia she would have graced the throne of that country of social and political volcanoes with as much dignity as many of the happy and unhappy rulers of Europe.

She did not know much about her husband's kindly inheritance which it has been claimed he went to Servia to seek. He told his folks he had a large inheritance awaiting him in Servia, and decided to go over to that country in 1847 and secure the wealth. His wife and children begged him not to leave them, but he promised to return soon with money enough to make them all rich.

He had no idea of attempting to regain his royal rights other than a portion of the fortune which was due him. He wrote his wife from Belgrade after his arrival. In a few weeks she received word through the American consul that her husband was dead. Subsequent events proved that he had been assassinated.

Residents of Princeton well remember Boy. He had a common school education, and was by trade a cabinet maker. The farm his wife now occupies was purchased by him. The son of old John Boy, who is the writer in the St. James Gazette asserts more nearly the direct heir to the throne than all other pretenders, lives a short distance from Princeton and near the home of his mother. Though he greatly maintains the inheritance, he is not worrying over the situation.

The grandfather when a mere child was rescued during an invasion of the Turks by being carried by his nurse into a field and hidden, he being the only member of the family to escape. The child was taken to Saxony, where he was brought up and in time married and raised a family. August (John's father) being the only son, it appears that the Turks wiped out the royal family from which the Boyns descended, and John's grandfather preferred to remain in peace in Saxony rather than try sitting on the insecure throne of his native country.

The nurse who rescued the grandfather also carried with her the family Bible and records, and when the child grew up he received the family record, which in time went to August, who kept it inviolate. When he returned to Servia he took the Bible with him, but the Book and all the records were lost, as they disappeared when he died in Belgrade.

MISER'S MONEY MILDEWS.

eccentric Pennsylvanian Hides Notes in Damp Place—Sent to Washington to Be Replaced.

"So securely did Abram Westbrook, an eccentric miser of Passett, Pa., hide away his savings that it has been necessary to send the old bank bills to the treasury department at Washington to have them redeemed, as they were worthless for passage when discovered.

Westbrook, who was recognized as one of the strongest and most eccentric men of his section, was recently found dead in bed in his old home. Although the old man was in apparent poverty, it was for years believed that he had some money secreted, the hiding of which he would not divulge. In vain did his friends endeavor to induce him to tell what he had done with a quantity he was known to have possessed.

Finally when Westbrook was taken sick he answered the inquiry as to where his funds were by directing his questioners to a place in the cellar wall where \$700 in bills were found. They had been so long hidden as to become one compact mass, and were covered with mildew. The dampness had such an effect upon them that it was impossible to straighten them out and separate them, and they were sent to Washington, after the old man's death for redemption.

Microbes on the Run. The health authorities of New York will not allow drylmen to wear beards, owing to the danger of affording a hirsute harbor for microbes. Whiskers are doomed, remarks the Atlanta Constitution.

BAD YEAR FOR J. P. MORGAN

Sixty-Seventh Birthday Finds Him Deposed from Proud Position of Leader of World's Finance.

The sixty-sixth year of John Pierpont Morgan, which ended the other day, was the most disastrous of his life. In the 12 months between his sixty-sixth and sixty-seventh birthdays he lost much of the prestige in the opinion of the banking world, which he had built in a lifetime of successes.

A year ago he was the recognized leader of finance the world over. Now he is referred to as "the man who was."

A year ago the money of the capitalists of the world was at his command. To-day Morgan ventures are regarded with suspicion not only by the great capitalists, but by the small investors. This changed attitude is more marked abroad, according to cable dispatches, than here.

The cause is the collapse in values of a number of the undertakings engineered by Mr. Morgan.

In April, a year ago, the common shares of United States Steel corporation sold at 38, now they are selling at 11; preferred stock sold at 85; it is now 61.

In the steel stocks alone the public is \$274,109,999 poorer than it was on Mr. Morgan's last birthday.

Mr. Morgan's other great enterprise, the International Mercantile Marine company, the steamship trust, was doing quite well a year ago. Its common stock was selling at 16, and its preferred at 35. The prices to-day are 5 and 18, respectively.

The exposure of the United States Ship Building company and of J. P. Morgan's firm in several phases in that notable effort was one of the happenings of the fateful year.

Another thing was the declaration by the United States supreme court that Mr. Morgan's great railroad combination, the Northern Securities company, was illegal. Friends of Mr. Morgan hope that the ensuing 12 months will be more kindly to the financier than the ones which have passed.

CHAMPION MEAT EATER.

Annual "Blow-Out" of Navaho Club Brings About Lively Competition—Tie Is Narrowly Avoided.

"Whispering Larry" Delmour, chairman of the board of governors of the Navaho club, of New York city, ate more than two pounds of beef the other night, and was proclaimed the champion beef-steak eater of the upper East side.

It was at the annual beef-steak "blow-out" of the club, and Mr. Delmour in a nice white apron and a white cap, was master of ceremonies. He himself had gone to a slaughter house, picked out two of the biggest oxen he could get, and had them slaughtered and prepared for the beef-steak "soiree." Those who attended that it was the juiciest beef they had ever tasted.

Mr. Delmour contested for the championship with the most prominent member in the Twenty-ninth assembly district, Katz, Edward S. Murphy, John J. Manning, William J. Hirschfeld, candidate for the assembly in the last election, and Albert Stern, clerk of the supreme court.

Mr. Stern, the stoutest man among the contestants, was the first to fall by the wayside. He had eaten seven pounds. Mr. Hirschfeld and Mr. Manning gave up after eating eight, and Mr. Murphy at eight and a half pounds.

It looked like a tie between Mr. Katz and Mr. Delmour, but when the latter, after eating ten pounds, called for another pound, Mr. Katz surrendered in despair. Mr. Delmour calmly remarked that had he been forced to keep up the struggle he could have eaten two pounds more.

ADMIRE AMERICAN WOMAN

Great French Artist Declares Her Superior to Her European Sisters.

Alphonse Maria Mucha, greatest of French poster artists, and noted also as an illustrator and sculptor, who is on a visit in New York, is an enthusiast of the beauty of the American women.

"She is the most superb creature under the sun," he said, "infinitely superior to the most beautiful women of Europe. The anaemic type of Parisian beauty in which all our artists find their ideals is a false one. Here the women are strong, vigorous, at once svelte and solid.

"In France I have been obliged to seek my models among country women peasants who pass the greater part of their lives in the open air. The Parisian woman, cloistered between four walls, is anaemic. Her smile, her walk, her every movement betrays weakness—feebleness. Here the women are large, robust and their lives dedicated to open air sports have made them the most beautiful ornaments of their country. There is a type as distinctly American as there is a Paris, a Slav or a Saxon type."

Automatic Gatemen for Fair.

Electric devices will take the place of ticket sellers and gatekeepers at the St. Louis exposition. Thirty-two turnstiles are being installed at the Lindell entrance, which will be the main gate way, and through this one entrance it is estimated that at least 500 persons can pass every 60 seconds. To gain admission to the grounds a person must deposit a half-dollar in a slot; the coin releases a lever that unlocks the turnstile for one person to pass through. The turnstile then locks automatically. Separate turnstiles are being installed for children, at which a quarter will operate the mechanism.

The Real Test.

Radium may still be worth millions of dollars an ounce, but, says the Washington Star, it is not worth as much a page in the magazine as it was.

"BED DRILL" LATEST.

LONDON DOCTOR ADVOCATES NOVEL EXERCISE.

Even Sick Persons May Take Part in Novel Physical Culture System—Said to Cure Sleeplessness and Brain Fag.

An exercise known as "bed drill" in which even sick persons may participate, is the rather novel physical culture system that finds its discoverer in Dr. Henry Bond, of London. According to the latter rheumatic people can profit by it. The man with insomnia may find in it a cure for his sleeplessness; "brain fag" lies before it, and the healthy man can suffer no hurt by taking a course of bed drill after he has retired to rest.

"The concentration of ideas involved in bed drill," says Dr. Bond, "may seem at first paradoxical. Bed, it may be said, is essentially a place for rest. And so it should be, if we were all of us living under perfectly natural conditions.

"But, unfortunately, we are not, and to most of us, especially as we advance in life, there occurs either during the still watches of the night or in the morning, when we are for a time satisfied with sleep, intervals of wakefulness when we must perform remain in bed, and it is irksome to lie there and do nothing, particularly if the alternative be brain worry.

"Then is the time to divert the attention to bed drill."

Below are a few of the forms of exercise which Dr. Bond advocates.

The Drill—Lie on the side with the knees drawn up. The muscles of the feet will then be operated on so as to cause the toes to move freely about. Even persons who at first find their toes immobile owing to the habit of wearing tight boots can by practice cause their joints to become as flexible as those of our alleged simian ancestors.

Ankle Drill—Just practice the knees and ankles slowly while lying on the side.

Hip Drill—Just practiced by lying on the flat of the back and lengthening the legs alternately from the hips, using all the muscles about the hips for the purpose.

The way to bed drill should be nicely paved by stopping a moment, repeated exercise which Dr. Bond says, from personal experience, is an advanced age, he has found a valuable means of restoring the equilibrium of the circulation after strenuous labor with brain or pen."

FAMOUS OLD ARITHMETIC.

In It Children Two-and-a-Half Centuries Ago Studied the Multiplication Table.

The present generation is inclined to think of Euclid as the father of arithmetic, and those who possess a copy of his work think they have a treasure. Indeed, The Elements of Euclid, representative, however, has the privilege of reviewing a text book in mathematics published 73 centuries ago, the famous "Abol" was born. The book is undoubtedly one of the oldest owned in Ohio county, and is considered a great curiosity by all who have seen it. It is the work of Edward Collier, printed November 27, 1677, by John Collier, two years after the author's death. The work is famous since it was for years considered a forerunner of Euclid, and in its day caused much discussion in the colleges of England. Collier, who was an actor and poet and an intimate friend of Edward Collier, displayed the manuscript for the first time to have been Collier's. The book was one of the most famous authorities on arithmetic of his day, and published many books. The work a copy of which was recently brought to light here was his last manuscript.

The book is nearly complete and in good condition. It is interesting from a typographical point of view, and the subject matter is most peculiar as compared with modern text books.

The fact that the multiplication table appears in the book gives some force to the common expression, "As old as the multiplication table." Primary pupils of to-day who are inclined to believe that this combination of figures was especially prepared to rack their memory should find some satisfaction in the knowledge that children of at least two and a half centuries have drilled upon it.

DANCE TO AMUSE DINERS.

Sprightly Stage Artists Are Employed in Paris Restaurants to Entertain Patrons.

Paris restaurant proprietors are continually introducing new fads, but none equals the innovation of M. Paillard, who owns a well known eating place on one of the boulevards.

A few nights ago Mlle Odette Valery, the well known Spanish dancer, was taking supper in the restaurant, when one of the merry company of which she was a member asked her to dance. She complied with the request, and the idea so pleased M. Paillard that he engaged her to dance every night after supper between 11 and 1 o'clock.

Other restaurant keepers are now following in the footsteps of M. Paillard by engaging stage dancing favorites to entertain their patrons. This is ruining the business of the small restaurant owners, who predict that a vauville performance will be given after supper by the prominent dining-room proprietors.

Wonderful Kansas.

Kansas is going to need 45,000 extra harvest hands this year to help gather in the crop, that, according to the Chicago Daily News, has already been destroyed three times, and has two more like accidents coming.