

THE SUBURBAN CITIZEN.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

The fact that China is bossed by a woman is one to be borne in mind by those who discuss the woman question.

London dealers report that they can't half supply the demand for toy soldiers, guns and swords. The English toddlers have surely caught the war spirit from their sires.

The two great material conquests which mark the nineteenth century are the building of the Pacific railroads and the digging of the Suez canal.

The war department reports that there are now 10,343,152 American citizens eligible for military duty. These figures are enough to make the entire European menagerie pause and ponder before tackling.

There is food for thought in the recommendation of the New York State Prison Commission in its annual report to the Legislature that the lockstep and the hideous striped convict's clothes be eliminated from the features of prison life as unnecessarily degrading and incompatible with the reformatory idea.

Professor Axenfeld, the German physiologist, endeavors to prove that genius is the right of the first born, and that in most cases the third and fourth born child never show signs of talent; but the biographical cyclopedias show that Shakespeare, Dickens and other leading geniuses were not the first child of their parents.

One of the objections to the reformed spelling is that, if it were made thoroughgoing and children were taught nothing but the new style, in ten years there would arise a vast number of young people to whom our whole body of English literature from Shakespeare to Ruskin would have become as unreadable and as antiquated as Chaucer. The time that would be saved by the children would cost them familiarity with the chief treasures of their mother tongue, thinks the Christian Register.

Congress comes into possession of many beautiful tokens. One of the most interesting it has lately acquired is a memorial from the Hawaiian people, presented early in the session. The book is exquisitely bound in seal leather, the letter-press is in old German text, the capitals throughout are colored in blue and gold and beautifully decorated. It is the handiwork of people of Honolulu, and is valuable not only for the subject matter but as an evidence of what that people can do in an artistic way.

The annual report of the superintendent of the New York institution for the blind calls attention to the steady decrease in the number of children who become blind in New York after birth. This decrease he attributes to the rapidly increasing knowledge of sanitary science; the careful medical inspection of the public schools; the recognition by the ignorant poor of the danger of diseases of the eye, and their effort to cure, if not prevent, them; the increased knowledge of the medical profession about the eye and its treatment.

The Holland submarine boat has been rejected by the naval board that has been investigating the merits of the craft. "The officials who have reached this decision," says the New York Times, "may be quite right, but to the lay observer it looks as though they were taking a good many chances. Foreign Governments are spending vast sums in experiments with underwater navigation, and have produced nothing better, if as good. The time may come when we will wish in vain for the exclusive use of the invention now rejected by men set in their ideas and hostile to innovations and changes."

France is following the example of England and Russia in purchasing American-built locomotives for its railroads. The superiority of American locomotives is pretty generally recognized now all over the world. The increase in the exports of machinery of one sort and another in the past few years has been one of the marvels of the period. Moreover, the conquests of the United States in this field are likely to increase in number and extent as the years pass. Our advantages in the raw material and in inventive skill will probably make our precedence in certain branches of iron and steel manufacture permanent.

GODS OF OUR RED MEN.

THE HOME OF ALL INDIAN DEITIES IS IN THE BLACK HILLS.

The Great Spirit Sits Upon the Highest Mountain, Supposed to Be Harney's Peak—Ascribe Supernatural Powers to What They Don't Understand.

THE Indian has many deities. To him everything is "Wakan." The mysterious and unknown is ruled by the gods or deities of greater or lesser "Wakan." Anything that is supernatural, mysterious or superhuman is "Wakan."

The Black Hills of South Dakota, from an Indian point of view, is the home of the gods, from whom all power originates. The wind and the lightning are sent forth from the dark recesses of the mountains and the very foundations of the hills are made to tremble, when the Great Spirit gives vent to his anger. The old Indian tradition says that the Great Spirit sits upon the highest mountain in the Black Hills, supposed to be Harney's Peak, and from this exalted position, he directs the movements of the lesser gods and his own people. In his pleasant moods, he causes the sun to shine, the grass to grow and the Indian tribes to be at peace with one another. In his angry moments, he lets loose the winds and lightning and the world is made dark and the children of the Great Spirit are punished by famine and death.

Many years ago the Great Spirit kept a white man chained beneath the big mountain. The man trespassed upon the chosen hunting ground of the children of the Great Spirit and he was forthwith captured and made example of before all other trespassers of the paleface. The white man was a giant, whose footprints in the sands were twenty feet long and he was so powerful in his right arm that he could break the buffalo's back and could twist from its roots the lofty pine; yet the Great Spirit ruled him.

PRIMITIVE RAINMAKER.

The Great Spirit had a good many lesser deities, who were given power over animals and things. Onkteri was the god of water. This deity in outward appearance resembled an ox, being much larger. A great part of the religion of the Indians came from the wakan influence of this god. There are both male and female, the former having control of the water and the earth beneath the water, and the latter having an influence over the land by the side of the water. When the god of water wants rain to fall he lifts his tail and horns to the clouds and immediately the rain falls. Onkteri assumes an important part in the juggling and superstitious beliefs of the Indians. The medicine men obtain their supernatural power from this source. The god and goddess are mortals and can propagate their kind. They have power to impart from their bodies a mighty wakan influence.

Cha-ot-ter-dah is the god of the forest. His home is at the foot of the highest mountain and he lives most of the time in the top of the highest tree on the mountain-top. His companions are the birds of the air, who act as guards and sentinels. When he wants anything he flies to his perch in the tree-top, which is as smooth as glass. He calls together his friends and sends them hither and thither. He is in constant war with the god of thunder, Wah-keen-yon. When Wah-keen-yon passes over the mountain-top, casting here and there his bolts of lightning, Cha-ot-ter-dah, the god of the forest, enters the water at the foot of the tree and the lightning cannot touch him.

To the Indian, Wah-keen-yon is a mighty bird, and the noise that is made, which shakes the foundations of the mountains, is caused by the big bird flying through the air with his young ones. The old bird will not injure the Indians, but the young birds are foolish and do all the harm they can. The name Wah-keen-yon signifies a flyer. There are four varieties of the gods among the Wah-keen-yon. The image of the first one is that of a great bird, black in color, with a very long beak and four joints in each pinion. The second variety is yellow in color, beakless, and also has four joints in its pinions. The fourth god has remarkably long wings, each of them containing eight joints. It is scarlet in color. The fourth god is blue in color, and has no face, eyes or ears. Immediately above where the face should appear is a semicircular line, resembling an inverted half-moon. The Wah-keen-yon gods live on the top of a lofty mountain at the western end of the earth's surface. Guards stand at the open doors, which look out to the four points of the compass. A butterfly stands at the east door, a bear at the west door, at the north door a reindeer, and a beaver at the south. The Wah-keen-yon are destructive and are at war with most of the other gods. The Indians believe that the fossil remains of the mastodons that are found so frequently in the bad lands are the bones of the fallen god of water, and the burial places are held as most sacred. When the white man discovered these remains and, knowing their origin, commenced excavating them for rare relics, the Indians resented this invasion of the burial ground of their gods.

GOD OF GRASS AND WEEDS.

Whitte-ko-kak-gah is the god of the grass and weeds. The word, translated, means "to make crazy." The god is a seed himself and he has the power of giving whomsoever he will fits which make them crazy. The god has the figure of a man. In his right hand, he carries a rattle of deer hoofs with sixty-four deer claws. In his

Lake Vessels.

It is only a few years since the launching of a lake steamer with a carrying capacity of 4000 tons was believed to have marked the maximum limit to the size of such vessels. Now a steamer has been launched with a capacity of more than 9000 tons.—Cleveland Leader

left hand he carries a bow and arrow. From his cap streams of lightning flow, so bright that they dazzle the wild animals. In his mouth he has a whistle, which is used in the dance to invoke the assistance of the Great Spirit when the Indians have had bad luck in hunting.

We-hun-de-dan is the goddess of war. She is always invoked when the Indians go to battle. She is represented with hoofs on her arms and as many of these as she throws at the feet of each warrior indicates the number of scalps that will be returned to the camp by the warrior. If the party is to have poor luck, the goddess will throw to the ground as many broken arrows as there will be warriors wounded and killed.

One of the greatest and most revered gods is Tah-ko-sakan-shkan, who is invisible, but all prevailing. He is in the spear and the tomahawk, in boulders and in the four winds. He delights to see the warriors fall in battle. He is the most dreaded god of the Indians. He directs the movements of the fox, raven, buzzard, wolf and other animals of similar nature.

HAVE MANY GODS.

The Indians have as many gods and goddesses as there are imaginative minds in the tribe. Anything that is out of the ordinary or that appeals to the imagination is a god.

Contrary to the opinion so generally held, the Black Hills were never the home of the Indians. Influenced by the ever-present superstition, the Indian tribes held in reverence the pine-covered mountains and deep canyons, believing them to be the home of deities. The early pioneers in the Black Hills found evidence that the Indians frequently came to the foot-hills for tepee poles and firewood, but beyond an imaginary line the tribes rarely ventured. It is not to be wondered at, perhaps, that the Indians fought so bravely to retain possession of the Black Hills. To them the country was as sacred as the white man's heaven. The Indian battles in the '70s around and in the Black Hills were battles of a nation against a foreign people, who sought to dethrone and destroy a religion. Many of the Indians of to-day, surrounded as they are by the civilization of the whites, still hold in reverence the lofty peaks and the deep canyons of the "Pa-Ha-Sap-Pa."

Legal English in England.

Legal English and the English of the plain man were again in conflict yesterday. It was not "place" this time, but "bedding." A distress may not be levied upon "wearing apparel and bedding," and a distress had been levied upon a bedstead; was that right or wrong? In other words, is a bedstead bedding? One counsel quoted Chaucer to show that it was, which is rather weak, since, as the other said, so many people slept on shakedown on the floor in Chaucer's day. "The Absent-Minded Beggar" also was cited—"they'll put their sticks and bedding up the spout," but that also is weak, since "sticks" rather than "bedding" probably covers "bedstead." The plain man will agree that a bedstead is not bedding. But it is pretty clear that what the law meant in this case was "what a man sleeps on," which makes a bedstead bedding and the distress illegal, and it was so held. It might be well to invest one's wealth in a gorgeous bedstead for security, much as Indian women invest theirs in bangles.—Pall Mall Gazette.

Pointed Paragraphs.

If you are in doubt about it, don't do it.

In the world's great drama the ocean plays the principal role.

A sample room is dangerous when too many samples are taken.

The man who has nothing to do but clip coupons cuts quite a figure.

Every man has been, is, or will be handsome in the eyes of some woman.

The opinion of a child may be of no value, but they are at least honest.

A girl is invariably in love when she refers to the twilight as the gloaming.

The woman who paints her cheeks and the man who dyes his whiskers fool only one person.

A bachelor says that widows weep not because of the loss of a husband, but because of the lack of one.

Probably no person living ever saw a picture of Cupid that looked as though the little fellow had good common sense.

Figures may not lie; but when a girl looks like 160 pounds and only pulls the scales down at 116, there is something wrong somewhere.—Chicago News.

Incredulous as to Its Origin.

A party was being shown over the British Museum. In one of the rooms the keeper pointed out a collection of antique vases, which had recently been dug up at Herculaneum.

"Dug up, sir?" echoed one of the party.

"Yes, sir."

"What, out of the ground?"

"Undoubtedly."

"What, just as they now are?"

"Perhaps some little pains have been taken in cleaning them, but in all other respects they were found just as you see them."

The wise man turned to one of his companions, and with an incredulous shake of his head, whispered:

"He may say what he likes, but he shall never persuade me that they dug up ready-made pots out of the ground."—Pearson's Weekly.

Shakespeare's Name.

The name of Shakespeare can be spelled 4000 different ways. The poet himself spelled it twenty-two ways.

HOW PLANTS ARE BRED.

HYBRIDIZATION PROCESS NEITHER DIFFICULT NOR MYSTERIOUS.

Professor Galloway Describes Experiments by the Agricultural Department at Washington—Seeking a More Nutritious Corn—New Forms of Fruit.

THE breeding of animals is well understood and has been practiced for years, but you cannot say as much of the breeding of plants," said Professor B. T. Galloway, chief of the vegetable physiology division of the Agricultural Department at Washington. "It is true, nevertheless, that the breeding of plants has been carried on with most satisfactory results, mostly by private parties, but with little attempt to determine the principles involved. The possibilities in the breeding of plants are just as great as in the breeding of animals. We find all through nature a constant effort on the part of the plant to improve. There is a constant progressive tendency in all organisms, animal as well as vegetable, and in the question of breeding man only takes advantage of these conditions and uses them to his own interest. The fact is that most of the improved forms of plants we have to-day are derived in a more or less spontaneous way, and have been propagated by people who have discovered them and have taken advantage of the improvements. Nature has been made to do the work unassisted. As I say, most of our cultivated fruits and plants at the present time were developed by nature, and are therefore to be put down as accidents.

"Emphasis should be placed upon the fact that plants are not fixed entities," continued Professor Galloway. "I am aware that this is the general impression, but plants are exceedingly plastic and can be modeled within certain limits to meet almost any desire. Looking at plants from that standpoint the wide field and possibilities in developing new forms will be seen. The process of hybridizing plants, as this is called, is neither difficult nor mysterious, it being simply necessary to understand the general structure of the flower to be used. Flowers have sexual organs, the stamen and pistil, the former being the male, are usually several in number. The very numerous small, yellow, powdery grains of pollen, which constitute the male fecundating elements, are born in sacks, and when the portion of the flower which bears them, known as the anther, matures it bursts and the pollen is exposed. A quantity of this pollen must be transferred either by natural or artificial means to the stigma of the female organ in order to insure fecundation. The pistils, which are the female organs, occupy the center of the flower and are surrounded by the stamens. The upper portion of the pistil is usually somewhat swollen and more or less rough. It is on this portion of the pistil, known as the stigma, that the pollen must fall to produce fecundation. In the majority of plants the stamens and pistils are reproduced in the same flower, as in the orange, tomato and our common fruit trees, but in certain plants they are produced in different flowers on the same plant, and in others on different plants.

"The most important feature in the work of crossing is to exclude from the stigma all pollen except that which it is desired to use. In the manipulation of orange flowers mature buds nearly ready to open are selected, and the tips carefully pried apart until the stamens are exposed. The pollen is then transferred to the pistil of the flower selected, and a Manila paper sack or a gauze bag placed around it to prevent foreign pollen entering. The hybridizing process can be carried as far as the experimenter pleases. It consists of taking the pollen from the stamen and transferring it to the pistil. Where the two organs are found in the same flower it is necessary to destroy the stamen before it matures to assure that pollen from it does not interfere with the experiment. We have also carried on extensive experiments with pineapples, and have succeeded in getting crosses with certain important varieties in order to develop forms for which there is a demand. It is possible to produce plants and fruits to meet any demand. We are now working to develop a pineapple that has qualities different from anything we now have.

"These experiments I have referred to have been on the seacoasts of the country. Aside from these we are carrying on extensive experiments in the interior in the crossing of wheat, corn and other cereals. This year we did extensive work in Nebraska with corn. We have been trying to develop varieties that will have greater food value than those now in existence, and the food which the new varieties contain to be in different ratios from that which we now possess. There has been considerable talk of the possibility and desirability of increasing the nitrogenous contents of corn. That is one of the things wanted. The nitrogenous contents of corn are low compared with other cereals. If it can be increased, even by a small percentage, it will make its food value much greater.

"The experiment is being conducted something in this way: We find that there is a marked variation in the nitrogenous contents of corn not only in different varieties but in the different grains of the same variety, on the same stalk but in different ears. The nitrogen could be increased by crossing two varieties having other characteristics and value with high nitrogenous contents and by selection

of the ears and grains obtain a variety with higher percentage of nitrogen. By selection and by crossing corn known to possess high nitrogenous contents forms can be developed that will, if the experiment is carried far enough, result in materially increasing the value of corn.

"There are male and female organs in corn and the plant is one of the easiest in the world to cross, owing to the fact that these organs of reproduction are separate and not in the same flower. The tassel at the top of a cornstalk is the male organ that furnishes the pollen and the silk of the ears in the female organ. This silk is hollow, and the pollen, falling by nature upon it or placed there in crossing experiments, enters the silk tubes at the exposed end and proceeds through to the cob, where fecundation produces the grain. When crossing experiments are being conducted the tassel is cut from the stalk where the new corn is desired and the pollen from the selected stalk is scattered upon the silk. It is customary, however, to protect the ear, for otherwise pollen may be brought by the wind from adjoining rows of corn or even from a distance and interfere with the plan. We have just begun the corn experiments, and hope by breeding more varieties, among other things, to extend the northern corn belt by producing hardier varieties.

"With wheat we have worked longer, but in much the same way, our object being not only to increase the variety, but to produce a hardy species that will resist diseases and certain climatic conditions. We have worked to accomplish certain objects. For instance, foreigners are beginning to realize that our wheat is valuable for macaroni, and our own millers and bakers have discovered that wheat grown in certain sections is valuable for crackers. It is possible by studying the peculiarities of different wheat to determine that which is best suited for different purposes, and so we are proceeding by cross-breeding to improve them.

"The possibilities of plant breeding," continued Professor Galloway, "seem limitless. The extent to which improvements can be carried is boundless. Heretofore, as I have stated, most of the work has been conducted by individuals without any purpose of establishing principles. When plant breeding is better understood it will be possible to bring definite forms of vegetable life together and produce any result desired. A strange but truthful story is related by Professor J. H. Bailey, of Cornell, of a seed man in New York advertising in his prospectus that he would furnish his customers during the next season a bran new bean with a peculiar kind of pod. This nurseryman had in his own mind decided what he wanted. It had never been produced before. He called to his assistant, an expert in plant breeding, and, by drawing, explained the kind of bean he desired. It was like a man calling a contractor, displaying his plans and specifications and instructing him to proceed and erect a house. Yes, the nurseryman had his bean, just what he wanted, and furnished his customers as he promised.

"If some of us plant breeders had lived one hundred years ago we would have been burned at the stake. There is a man in California who makes it a business to produce new forms of plants and fruits. He decides what he wants, breeds to produce the results desired, and when he obtains something possessing qualities that will recommend it he disposes of a seedling to some nurseryman and then resumes his work for new results. The nurseryman having the seedling possesses a monopoly of that particular variety and is permitted by the California experimenter to dispose of it as he pleases."

Unexpected Reply.

Here is a sample of the "breaks" that dignified, abnormally self-appreciative men sometimes make when they undertake to be facetious and "talk down" to a younger generation. A certain physician who has seen more than one family experience the standard ailments through three generations was recently called to attend a woman who has employed him when in need of a physician for the last twenty-five years. On this particular visit he closed her mouth on a clinical thermometer and strolled around the room while it was doing its work. Stopping before a picture of Rosa Bonheur's donkey he remarked in a would-be funny manner to the daughter of his patient, "I suppose this is one of your friends." "Yes, sir," came the reply straight from the shoulder, "it's our family physician."—Boston Transcript.

Cause of a Rise in Stocks.

A curious souvenir is preserved in the Bank of England, in the shape of a note for £1000, with which Admiral Lord Cochrane, the grandfather of the plucky present Earl of Dundonald, paid his fine when he was falsely accused of spreading, with an interested object, a rumor that Bonaparte was dead, in 1814, so as to cause a rise in the price of stocks. The sum mentioned was raised, by subscriptions of a penny, by his Westminster constituents. The note is indorsed with the name of the intrepid, but ill-used salt, and has inscribed on it a sentence in which he expresses the hope that one day he will prove his innocence and triumph over his accusers. That consummation was not effected until eighteen years later, when he was reinstated by William IV.—London Telegraph.

Shakespeare's Name.

The name of Shakespeare can be spelled 4000 different ways. The poet himself spelled it twenty-two ways.

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