

SURFACE GOLD MINING

The Awful Power and Work of a Natural Stream of Water.

A Mining Tragedy—An Unfortunate Celestial Who Suddenly Joined His Ancestors in the Kingdom of the Sun.

I KNOW of nothing in the way of a force of nature, controlled by the hand of man, that so inspires me with wholesome respect as the working stream of a hydraulic mine says J. Wordlan in the Philadelphia Times.

When, however, the dirt is too poor to work in this manner, a "sluice" or board trough is constructed, and through this a stream of water runs with considerable velocity.

First, a stream of water must be conveyed by ditches and flumes to some point not more than three or four hundred yards from the mine; the place in question must also be at least one hundred and fifty feet higher than the base of the bank.

The stream of water discharged through one of these nozzles has a destructive force that is almost incredible. At the tip of the nozzle, where it is constricted to a jet perhaps not more than six or eight inches in diameter, it is as solid as ice.

Many a time I have seen a pipeman turn a nozzle against a mass of rock weighing half a ton, and the irresistible stream would whirl it along as though it were a child's marble.

Against this detritus the pipeman would turn the water and in a few hours nothing would be left except boulders that were too large to be carried into the sluices.

One day business called me to the mine and I had just described to the scene of operation. There were about forty men in the day shift and Buck Wentworth was piping down gravel for the boys in a lively manner.

The men scattered as best they could, but unfortunately there was no way to get out of reach of the stream except by climbing over a pile of boulders, and this meant almost certain death, for every few seconds the stream would strike the pile and scatter a pile of stones around us in a peculiarly threatening manner.

In the meantime the man whose carelessness caused the trouble attempted to cross the open space and take refuge by the sluiceway. Immediately the pipe swayed and struck the unfortunate fellow in the back.

Between the nozzle and the bank there was an unusually large boulder. It had

cept by blasting. In the struggle of the men to get out of the harm's way, a Chinaman had taken refuge behind it. The poor fellow was curled up, frantically endeavoring to make himself half his normal size, when the stream struck the rock and rolled it over upon him.

When Buck got upon his feet, after having been knocked down and dragged around by the unruly pipe, he watched his opportunity, and, at a favorable moment, made a break for the reservoir.

Before I could quite get my scattered wits together I saw Buck signaling me to come to him, and thereupon I climbed up to the reservoir. When I had joined him, there, in plain sight, floating at the surface of the pent stock was the immediate cause of the disaster.

The Birth of an Iceberg.

The dynamical law by which the glaciers abutting on the sea generate their bergs is still somewhat vague. In earlier days it was held that the glacial tongue broke off by its own weight.

Another swallowed broken glass became the fish didn't bite. Another inspired idiot blew himself up with dynamite for the reason that the pie he had for dinner was burned on the bottom.

Under such a condition of society suicides were necessarily rare. If the fish wouldn't bite, our great-great-grandfathers didn't swallow glass keys.

While the causes of suicide have increased greatly in number and complexity the means of accomplishing them have also grown more varied and original.

His Aunt Was Visiting Them.

Teacher—Why weren't you at school yesterday, Johnny?

Johnny—We've got a new baby at our house.

Teacher—Ah! brother or sister?

Teacher—Neither.

Teacher—What's it?

Johnny—No, Cousin.

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ODD MEANS OF SUICIDE

Varied and Original Routes from This World to the Next.

How Homer, Demosthenes, Seneca, and Other Famous Ancients Departed This Life by Self-Inflicted Violence.

POWERFUL and lasting instinct of the human soul, and yet an Englishman of the last century shot himself because he was tired of buttoning and unbuttoning his clothes!

This act of self-destruction was unnecessary and absurd. Why did not the misguided man substitute hooks and eyes for buttons, and thus avert the catastrophe?

Men are characteristically absurd animals. They do absurd things all their lives, and it is not a matter of wonder that the tendency should survive in their methods of suicide.

For example: One man ran a key down his throat and held it there until he died. Why? Because, as the letter left behind declares, he "could not find sufficient air to breathe with ease."

Another swallowed broken glass because the fish didn't bite. Another inspired idiot blew himself up with dynamite for the reason that the pie he had for dinner was burned on the bottom.

Still another: An old man in a soldiers' home, finding his supply of grog cut off for some trifling infraction of the rules, killed himself. How? It was very simple, very absurd. He sharpened one end of his steel spectacles and jabbed it into his jugular vein.

Viewed concretely these instances seem positively humorous, but in the abstract they emphasize a very serious tendency. When it is possible for men to commit suicide for the reasons stated above there is something radically wrong with the social machinery.

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stroy himself, two of which were headache and a pain in the stomach. By the Justinian code suicide is not ranked as a moral offense of crime, and in some of the Roman colonies the magistrate kept at the public expense a poison prepared from hellebore leaves for the use of those who had a mind to suicide.

Among the ancients every facility was afforded a gentleman to "fly to evils that he knew not of" when those that he did know became insupportable.

Homer hanged himself. Demosthenes took poison. Cato stabbed himself.

When Lee Was Profane.

On Seeing a Coward Who Hailed From Westmoreland County, Virginia.

A gentleman who commanded a famous confederate battery during the war told a Commercial Gazette man that Lee had about the same record in profanity that Washington had.

Where are you going? "I am going to the rear, sir, for ammunition," was the frightened reply of the man as he recognized General Lee.

What state are you from? "From Virginia, sir," Lee flushed and asked: "What county did you come from?"

Westmoreland was Lee's county. The gentleman who told me this knew Lee all his life, and said that he did not believe he ever used an expletive of any kind during his life except on that occasion.

THE ICE JOKERS.

Ice dealers are now able to do business on a small scale, they give so few pounds to the ton—New Orleans Picayune.

Ice is expensive everywhere this season. Even the icebergs in the Atlantic are reported unusually high.—Boston Herald.

Wife (pleasantly): "I can read through this ice, it is so very clear." Husband (frowning): "It's only the bill that is hard to see through."—Hutchinson News.

Boston ice carriers now serve their customers by shooting their morning piece of ice through top bean shooters. The small piece for a dime enables them to do it.—New Orleans Picayune.

Mr. Wickwire: "Is everything ready now? Did you get the ice?" Mrs. Wickwire: "Yes." Mr. Wickwire: "By the way, where is the bill for it?" Mrs. Wickwire: "I used it wrap the ice up in."—True Hans Express.

"See here," said an angry housewife, "I thought you left me eight pounds of ice yesterday?" The iceman said he had. "You can't fool me," said the woman. "I had it weighed and there were only five pounds." "Well," was the crushing rejoinder, "you'll have to weigh anything."—Philadelphia Record.

"This is blamed tiresome," said Spilkens, reading about the making of artificial ice. "It's bad enough for a man to have to get out of bed at 5 o'clock winter mornings to make a fire, without makin' him liable to havin' to get up at 4 every mornin' in summer to make the ice. When it comes to that I'm agoin' to kick."

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