Aluminum in Scales.

More or less aluminum is now utilized in the manufacture of scales, especially in the more delicate machines. Many makers use aluminum for beams, pans, riders, bars, levels, and bows, in making their line balances and weights. By using aluminum, greater delicacy can be attained in weighing than when the scales are made of heavier metal, while it is easier to make levels of aluminum, for the metal can be more readily spun around the glass of the spirit-level than brass.

Silk from Shellfish.

That silk may be produced from certain mussels or shells is a fact known, but only recently renewed attention was called to the matter by the receipt of the Berlin Royal Museum of a pair of golden brown silk gloves, made of byssus silk. This silk is obtained from the small silky tufts protruding from the byssus shell, which they use for holding fast to the ground rock under water. This fiber is silky and changes in color from greenish yellow to dark brown. The single threads are from two to three inches long, and after being cleaned and dried they are spun into yarn. Byssus silk woven into material is still a great curiosity, for the supply of material is so scarce that industrial development of the manufacture is out of the question. Only in certain small settlements on the coast of Sicily there is some effort to work with this material, the shell used being the so-called Pinna. Fishermen tear the shells with nets from the rocks, and after cutting the tufts spin them into basins of shallow water; the tuft will grow again within a year. It takes between 2,000 and 3,000 shells to obtain a pound of the yarn.

When $1,000 Looked Big.

Divide anything up into parts and you magnify it. A certain wise man took this way to give his wife an idea of how much $1,000 is. She had no idea of money. Her purchases were enormous. It happened one day that her eye fell upon a magnificent ring, and she coveted it. It cost $1,000. But what was $1,000 to her, in comparison with the ring? Of course her husband consented to the purchase. What else could a dutiful, affectionate husband do? But he tried this method of educating his wife concerning the great price of the ring. He instructed his banker to send her the $1,000 in small pieces—pennies, dimes, quarters. In came the money, bagful after bagful. She never had such an idea of $1,000 before. When the money was piled up before her it alarmed her; the price of the ring went up a hundred-fold, and was considered at once an extravagance which she of her own option abandoned.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Traveling Companions.

Travelers often prove by their experiences that under certain conditions all men are equal. A German banker traveling by rail in a first-class carriage toward Vienna, had as a fellow-traveler at one of the intermediate stations an old gentleman, who entered into conversation and proved very pleasant. The banker got out before his companion, and as he did so asked the gentleman how far he was going. The gentleman replied, "To Vienna." "I have a daughter very well married there," said the banker. "I should like to give you a note of introduction to her." "I have also a daughter very well married there," said the other. "Would it be too great a liberty to ask the name?" inquired the banker. "My daughter," the gentleman answered, "is married to the Emperor of Austria." It was the old king of Bavaria.

Suggestion of an Economist.

Excited Neighbor (to her next-door neighbor)—"Hurry! Run for the doctor. My husband has tried to commit suicide. He has shot himself four times." Next-Door Neighbor—"What's the use of getting the doctor? If you don't think any of his wounds will prove fatal, why don't you reload the gun for him?"—Cleveland Leader.

Why Ships Defy Lightning.

The reason why ships are not struck by lightning is attributed by German authorities to the general use which is now being made of wire rope for rigging purposes, as well as to the fact that the hulls of ships are usually constructed of iron or steel. Thus the whole ship forms an excellent and continuous conductor, by means of which the electricity is led away into the ocean before it has time to do any serious damage.

Unexplored Territory.

Throughout the entire world there are about 20,000,000 square miles of unexplored territory. In Africa there are 6,500,000 square miles; Arctic regions, 3,600,000; Antarctic regions, 5,300,000; America, 200,000,000; Australia, 2,000,000; Asia, 200,000; and various islands, 900,000.

A Destructive Hurricane.

The British West Indies were swept by a destructive hurricane on the night of September 10th. On the island of St. Vincent 300 persons are reported to have been killed, and 20,000 made homeless. On the island of Barbadoes, according to official reports, 10,000 huts were destroyed, and 50,000 persons made homeless. St. Lucia also suffered, and a number of vessels were lost. A relief fund has been opened in London to send food and other supplies to the distressed population.

The Railways of Japan.

The progress of railway enterprise in Japan in 1897 was phenomenal. Since 1872, when the pioneer railway was constructed between Yokohama and Tokyo, a distance of eighteen miles, the system has grown at an average rate of 100 miles a year. During 1897, 530 miles were constructed, making the total mileage at present nearly 3,000 miles. The railways owned by the state include by far the greater part of this increase in mileage. The railways in Japan are owned partly by the government and partly by private corporations.

Lots of It.

"Is there any movement in Botcher's new play?" "Movement? You ought to have seen the author move off the stage when the audience yelled for him after the first act."—Philadelphia North American.

THEY ARE ALL HERE.

The World's Tin Fields.

That the gold fields of the world are much more extensive than the tin fields is a fact which might strike the unscientific person with a curious feeling of surprise. The tin fields which are known to exist cover an area of less than 15,000 square miles, while the gold fields are something over 1,500,000 square miles. Therefore there are 132 square miles of gold-bearing regions for every single mile of ground where tin is known to exist. The importance of the tin industry is scarcely appreciated by those who have never made the subject a study. North America has no tin mines, South America but one, Asia has two, Peru and Bolivia contribute 4,000 tons a year, and Australia mines about 6,000 tons a year. While we are all practically familiar with what is called tinware, very few of us appreciate the fact that pure tin plays a very small part in the manufacture of these articles. The quality of tinware has within the past few years, deteriorated with amazing rapidity, all of which is attributed to the limited supply and great value of tin.

A Hotel Silver-Plating Plant.

One of the New York hotels has established a silver-plating plant for its own use. It is employed for replating the table utensils, forks, spoons and the like, used by the guests. As the work is insufficient to keep the plant in full operation, the operative is also charged with "burning," namely, polishing by machinery the tableware in general.

French Firing.

The French Mediterranean squadron, consisting of six vessels, gave an exhibition of firing in the presence of the minister of marine, M. Lockroy, at Toulon, the other day, the range being two miles. The ships fired 350 shells at a wooden ship before setting her on fire and sinking her. The result was not considered very satisfactory.

WISE AND OTHERWISE.

The mortal who never doubts never thinks.

Some men give according to their means and others according to their meanness.

The best qualities of the mind and heart are developed by sacrifice rather than by indulgence.

The man who is always waiting for something to turn up is usually asleep when it finally comes along.

A boarding house is the place to get substantial food. It is often so substantial that you can't chew it.

Woman is called the weaker vessel presumably because she is leaky and lets out all the secrets she hears.

What a sensible woman doesn't know never troubles her, but it causes her inquisitive neighbors hours of untold agony.

A Half-Year's Benefactions.

A careful compilation of the gifts and bequests of the American people for the promotion of charity, education and religion, excluding all public appropriations and all benefactions below $5,000 in amount, shows a total for the first half of 1898 of over $20,000,000. It is too soon to judge even approximately of the value of individual gifts to the federal government for war purposes, such as steam pleasure yachts for the auxiliary navy, free railroad transportation for the armies, buildings for warehouse and hospital uses, etc., or of special gifts of money and supplies for the starving Cubans and our troops in the field. Concerning the last, it may be said that the contributions to the American National Red Cross Relief committee exceeded $200,000 in cash.

Utilization of Waste Power at Niagara.

Visitors to Niagara remember the small cascades of water falling over the edge of the cliffs just below the Clifton Bridge. The waste of power thus represented has been stopped. The water is now received in a great pipe, or "penstock," and is used to drive water-wheels under its 210 feet head. Formerly it drove only wheels at the top of the cliff. An interesting feature of the installation is the use of large size aluminum conductors for the electric power distribution. It is a reflection on modern engineering that this source of power was for so many years neglected.

If people would frankly admit their ignorance lots of useless argument might be avoided.

If you want to borrow trouble you will always find people willing to lend it without security.—Chicago News.