

# THE UNION.

"FROM THE LITTLE ACORN GROWS THE MASSIVE OAK."

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## SHETLAND WOOL

It Is Plucked from the Backs of the Sheep.

The chief characteristic of Shetland hosiery is the extreme fineness of the wool used. This wool, says Chambers' Journal, is obtained from the native Shetland sheep, an animal of decidedly meager appearance, and which a southern flockmaster would be inclined to "have none of." Nevertheless, this humble beast, picking up a scanty living on the bleak hillsides where its larger relatives would starve, produces wool of remarkable fineness; and when it is mentioned that the natural colors vary from black and white to an endless variety of grays, browns, fawns, and chestnuts of many shades (locally called "moorit,") it will be seen that the Shetland people have ready to their hand raw material of the most suitable kind for their purpose.

In connection with the fineness of the wool, the method of taking it from the sheep is worthy of note. It is not clipped or shorn in the usual way; but at the proper season is literally plucked from the back of the animal, it being averred that shearing tends to deteriorate the quality of every succeeding fleece; and, of course, to keep the yield of wool as fine as possible is a real desideratum. The plucking referred to usually appears to strangers to be a cruel expedient; but in reality the sheep seems to suffer no more from it than from ordinary shearing.

## TRADE DEVICES ON WHEELS.

Trunks, Hats and Other Things Made to Serve as the Bodies of Wagons.

Various familiar articles of trade are used as models for the bodies of delivery wagons. Of those the trunk is, perhaps, the most commonly used, says the New York Sun. Wagons made with the body in the semblance of a big trunk may be seen in many cities, the delivery wagons of the dealers in trunks and kindred articles. Perhaps the next most familiar is the wagon with the body in the form of a great hat, the delivery wagon of a hatter. Another form not unfamiliar is that of the great shoe, made of metal and mounted on wheels, and used as the delivery wagon of a shoe dealer. Like the great hat the shoe may be painted or all gilded.

All of these devices have a seat outside, in front, and they have a door at the rear end. The shoe is mounted on the running part, with the toe to the front. The driver's seat is over the tip of the toe, or in front of it. The door by which parcels are got in and out of the wagon is in the heel of the great shoe at the back.

A wagon used for the delivery of packages from a laundry has a body in the form of a great wash boiler. Perhaps the latest of these trade devices on wheels is shown in a wagon used for the delivery of a proprietary article that is sold in liquid form. In this case the wagon body is in the shape of a great bottle.

## TRYING TO MAKE DIAMONDS.

No Great Success Has as Yet Been Attained.

The experiments of Moissan and his success in producing microscopic crystals of carbon, which, technically at least, were entitled to be called artificial diamonds, are well known. We now have, says the Engineering Magazine, further contributions to the sub-

ject of the crystallization of carbon by the well-known electro-chemist, Dr. Borchers, who contributes an article to "The Zeitschrift fur Elektrochemie" reviewing the past attempts in this direction. Moissan worked upon the line of crystallization of fused carbon under immense pressure, while Borchers attains the same or similar results by maintaining a carbon rod at the high temperature of the electric furnace for considerable time, the surface of the rod showing distinct evidences of crystallization.

The experiments have been carried out upon a small scale only, and, being unable to continue the researches, Dr. Borchers gives a full account of his method and apparatus, trusting that further investigations may be carried on by those who have powerful currents at their disposal and opportunity to carry out all the conditions which success demands.

## CIRCUS MAN'S RECOLLECTIONS.

Remembered a Giant Who Combed His Hair with a Fence.

"Giants?" said the old circus man, relates the New York Sun. "Oh, yes, we've had some big men in the show at one time and another. One of the biggest we ever had used to comb his hair with a section of a picket fence. That was a part of the street show when we made the parade in a town. Usually we had an arrangement in advance with the owner of the fence, and had a panel loosened so that the giant wouldn't wreck too much of the fence in picking up the part he was to use. When the show came along to this spot the giant would step up to the fence, take off his hat, and pick up the piece of fence—it always looked as if he had tremendous strength too—and raise it up and comb his hair with it. And then he would put the big comb down again and put on his hat and move on. This always tickled the people immensely. And he certainly was a big man, sure; but we had a bigger man once. I wouldn't dare tell you how big this other man was, because you wouldn't believe it."

## Flutes Made of Porcelain.

The latest styles of flutes come from Meissen, Saxony, where a factory is turning out these instruments in porcelain. The inventor asserts that the tone of a porcelain flute is much purer and larger than that produced on a wooden flute, and that the china instruments are not subject to climatic changes.

## American Asphaltum.

Last year the only states that produced asphaltum were California, Colorado, Texas and Utah. Indian territory also contributed some.

## Expense of the Queen's Jubilee.

The estimate of the cost which was incurred by the British government in the jubilee rejoicings amounts, it is said, to \$400,000.—N. Y. Sun.

—Floridians hoped that the red spider would destroy the water hyacinths in the St. John's river, but the plants seem to grow faster than the insects can do away with them.

—A \$1,200 farm in Tennessee has been paid for wholly in hen's eggs, the installments being remitted daily, sometimes at the rate of three cents a dozen for the eggs, delivered in four-dozen lots.

## ALMOST A MILLION A MILE.

A Costly Washington Railroad That Is a Curiosity.

Skamania county, Wash., has a railroad that is a curiosity. It is less than four miles long, but is said to have cost \$3,000,000. It is the old portage road from the Upper to the Lower Cascades, and was built by the old Oregon Steam Navigation company, and is now the property of that company's successor, the O. R. & N. There was a time when the road did an immense business, carrying all the products of the inland empire to tidewater, all the freight destined for the mines of Idaho, eastern Oregon and the vast region east of the Cascades.

The days of its glory have departed, and to-day it is scarcely more than two streaks of rust and a right of way. Its sole use now is to carry the salmon from the fisheries along the rapids to the Lower Cascades, from which point they are shipped to Warrendale, so the road really "runs" only with the run of fish. Mr. Jones, who has been employed on the road since it was first built, has entire control of it. He is superintendent, engineer, conductor, brakeman, fireman, section foreman and section crew—the Alpha and Omega and all the balance of the alphabet. Mr. Jones has grown gray in the service of the company, yet every day he gets out the solitary engine, gets up steam, and makes the round trip over the road. The engine has gotten wheezy, and to get up steam a fire has to be built in the smokestack to get up a draught.

Recently the railroad commissioners made a trip over the road, and to do honor to the occasion Mr. Jones got out the "directors' car," the one solitary passenger coach. It had been used for a long time as a storehouse for chicken feed, and occasionally the chickens had used it as a sleeper; but Jones oiled the hencoop up and gave the commissioners a ride over the road. He is good-natured, happy and contented, and thoroughly enjoys his unique position as a whole railroad company.—Dallas Chronicle.

## LOST TREASURE.

Argonaut Built to Recover Money and Jewels Lost in Ships.

Another attempt is to be made to recover the millions in specie, bullion and precious stones which have been lost along the coast of this and other countries in foundered ships. The means to be used is a submarine boat built for the purpose and fitted with wheels for running on the bottom, as well as with a propeller for navigating the surface. The inventor of this vessel, which was launched the other day at Baltimore and christened Argonaut, is Mr. Simon Lake, of Baltimore. The plan is to run the boat along the bottom until the wreck is reached, and then send out men in diver's armor, who will be supplied with air from the reservoirs on the Argonaut. The advantage over the old method is that the depth of water will be no factor, and work cannot be interrupted by storms. The vessel is 36 feet long by nine feet in diameter. She is built of steel and ribbed very strongly to withstand the pressure of water at great depths. Electricity is her propulsive, operating and guiding force. Mr. Lake says he has the bearings of several vessels sunk on the New Jersey coast which are said to have on board \$15,000,000 in specie

and bullion. Probably the first vessel that will be examined, says the inventor, will be the New Era, which sank off Asbury Park in 1852. She lies in about 45 feet of water. The Argonaut will be given a trial trip in Chesapeake bay in a few days.—N. Y. World.

## Lightning Kept the House Vacant.

Not far from Hodgenville stands an old house which has a wonderful power for the attraction of lightning. It is in an unused field, surrounded by shrubbery and undergrowth. It is only the frame of a once costly dwelling, and has been standing there for 40 years. Strange as it may seem, it has been struck by lightning every time an electrical storm has visited that section. The house was erected by a well-to-do farmer years ago, and was intended for a dwelling for his family, but had to be deserted on account of its habitual subjection to lightning. It has never since been occupied. During a thunderstorm one perpetual flash of lightning plays about the old house. On a dark night, and during a storm, a more beautiful scene could not be found. The whole sky and earth around the old house is brightly illuminated by the lightning. The house has been torn away, strip by strip, with each bolt of lightning, until now only a small portion is left standing. So far as is known no fatalities have ever occurred in the house.—Louisville Post.

## The Athanasian Creed.

The Athanasian creed, so long a stumbling block to English churchmen, is to have another chance. On the petition of Australia and Tasmania, the Lambeth conference has passed a resolution requesting the archbishop of Canterbury to take measures for "re-translating" it. Some people have great faith in the power of a translator, but unless he can manage to lose the original, we do not anticipate that in this case any rendering will substantially alter the damnatory clauses. However, nobody is compelled to go to the stake nowadays for not accepting the so-called "Athanasian" creed. In the gradual development of our popular theology from Calvinism to Catholicism, it has not been overlooked that the Roman Catholic church condemns the creed as unorthodox.—St. James' Gazette.

## The Language of the Future.

A writer in a leading magazine has made the prophecy that in 300 years from now the world will know only three languages—English, Russian and Chinese. The English language will be spoken all over North and South America, in Australia, India, New Zealand and the islands of Australia and the Pacific. The Russian tongue will have conquered all Europe except Great Britain, and all Asia except India and China.

## A Pyrenean Echo.

At a watering place in the Pyrenees, says a French journal, the conversation at table turned upon a wonderful echo to be heard some distance off on the Franco-Spanish frontier. "It is astonishing," said an inhabitant of Garonne. "As soon as you have spoken you hear distinctly the voice leap from rock to rock, from precipice to precipice, and as soon as it has passed the frontier the echo assumes the Spanish accent."