

The peace proclamation of the Emperor of China is a remarkable mixture of wisdom and superstition. It declares that continuance of the war was rendered impossible by the gross incompetence of the leaders and the terrible condition of the country, and clinches the argument with the words: "Heaven had not withheld its anger. The sea overflowed the coast and the camps were submerged." An enlightened reform administration would seem to be imperative in the Celestial realm.

Young Mr. Astor is a fine example of the power of money in literature. Having written a book—which, indeed might have been worse—he gets up an elegant copy and sends it to King Oscar by special messenger. Mr. Howells or Mr. Clemens or Mr. Stoddard would have been obliged to rely on a registered letter post, which would have been very uncertain. But Mr. Astor corners royalty with his messenger and insures a reception. It is useless for contemporaneous authors to buck against Mr. Astor.

Dr. DeSaussure believes that he has discovered that the negro race is dying out in the United States. He tries to prove his conclusions by local statistics which show more deaths than births of colored persons in South Carolina cities. In his deduction he is not supported by the latest census. It may be contended that the development of the American negro was far tardier than his friends anticipated when citizenship was given to him. Nevertheless, such development is actually taking place.

The Chilian congress has recently enacted legislation guaranteeing the capital of the Transandine Railway Company for 20 years at 4 1/2 per cent, which virtual subsidy will enable the completion of the road between the two oceans. The line will do a great deal for South America. Its completion will mean that the long journey around Cape Horn is only for cargoes and that passengers instead of prolonging a voyage about two weeks can reach the Pacific from the Atlantic or vice versa in 72 hours. The gain afforded by this route can be imagined. Chili is brought some thousands of miles nearer the United States and England, and she will be no longer a remote country.

Charles R. Sligh of Grand Rapids has just returned from England, where he has been looking over the prospects of establishing a furniture trade in the English market. He is very confident from his observations that a substantial and profitable trade can be established if the American manufacturers will comply with the English ideas of style and finish. It is useless, he thinks, to try to force goods upon the English market which are not built on the accepted lines, but by making necessary changes goods can be manufactured here and sold in England in competition with the English manufacturers at a substantial profit. It is his purpose to manufacture a line of goods especially for the foreign trade, following ideas which he gained abroad.

An experiment of some importance is reported, made with a view to determine, if possible, the origin of natural gas, irrespective of theories hitherto prevalent. For this purpose dried seaweed was steeped in water which had been freed from air, and on the third day gas appeared, continuing to be evolved in diminishing quantities until the tenth day, when 803 cubic centimeters had been collected. The evolution had evidently ceased, though after standing two years and a half thirty cubic centimeters more of gas collected in the apparatus; the second gas differed from the first, consisting, it is recorded, almost entirely of methane—the chief constituent of natural gas—from which it is inferred that this slow secondary decomposition of vegetable matter has some relation to the origin of natural gas.

Hall's Journal of Healthy says: "Don't economize in bath water. Don't economize sleep. Don't be stingy with fun. Laugh all you can. Laughing shakes up the system, makes the blood circulate, starts the digestion, warms the feet, relaxes the nervous system—in a word, it rests you all over." That settles it, if one had nothing to do but accept such advice. But how are you going to laugh when the rent day is at hand and the money isn't. Suppose you have a boil, or the blues, or the toothache. Everybody likes to laugh, but most people have got to be worked up into a funny mood. Got to have good digestion, a steady job, something to eat and something to wear. If every day were a circus and every night a minstrel show, that advice would bring as many testimonials as a patent medicine. If time were a clown and trouble only a jack-in-a-box, life would be one three-score-and-ten-year laugh. But it isn't. So far as the advice can be taken, it is good, very good.

THE WORLD MOVES ON.

INVENTION AND DISCOVERY MARK MILE POSTS.

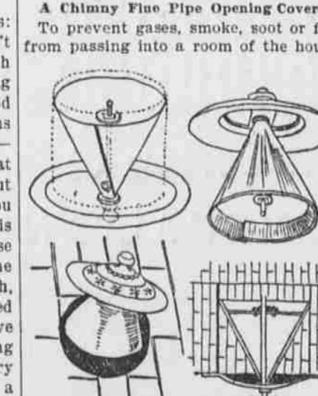
The Electric Properties of Wool—Something New in Windmills—A Toilet Powder Receptacle—Chimney for Pipe Opening Cover.

**A**LMOST any one who has the habit of observation has noticed that woolen garments will sometimes crackle and appear to be attracted by the warmth of the hand. This varies greatly in different temperaments; some people being so charged with electricity that it literally emanates from all of their wearing apparel. A number of instances are recorded where women have worn as inner wraps what are known as crape shawls, these being made of oriental silk heavily wrought with embroidery and with long thick fringe. After rapid walking, especially in the cold, if the woolen outside garment is suddenly dropped off, the fringe of the silk instantly rises in a horizontal line and stands out like rays all around the body. One lady has the power of creating this condition at will simply by throwing a woolen wrap over the silk one and walking smartly about the room for five minutes. This electric peculiarity is much more observable in silk than in wool, although in the latter material it is sufficiently abundant to cause no little annoyance in factories where the raw staple is worked up. The electric annoyance, however, is almost always coincident with the extreme cleanliness of the wool. If it is slightly wet and saturated with oil, there is very little trouble, and it may be so heavily weighted in this way that all inconvenience disappears. In olden times, when women spun their own yarn, it was often found necessary to use very pure and warm lard in order that the threads might run more smoothly, otherwise the fibers seemed to crinkle and kink, and the thread would be rough and of inferior quality.

**Something New in Windmills.**  
The old-time windmill—that towering skeleton of ribs and fans with which we are familiar—has recently been improved in a fashion that promises much better results—an increased rate of power and much greater ease of management. Instead of the fans or arms turning over and over, wheel-fashion, the conditions are reversed, the axle being perpendicular, and the fans turning from side to side. This arrangement has advantages, in that the machinery can be made stronger, and by an ingeniously contrived set of levers the fans open and close automatically. This is of great importance, as a sudden gale is liable to wreck an ordinary windmill on short notice. With this new device, it is claimed that no matter how rapidly the fans may revolve they will catch the wind only at the proper time, the other side opening to give free passage to the air; thus the higher the gale the higher the rate of speed and the more effective the machinery. It is said that in windy countries enough power can be generated to run a small dynamo. The greatest value of a windmill is in countries where continual pumping of water is necessary for purposes of irrigation. A windmill constructed on this new principle costs no more than the old style, is infinitely more effective, less liable to get out of order, and has a greater variety of uses than any heretofore made.

**New Treatment for Burns.**  
A Paris medical man of resources and alternatives had in hand a case of severe and extensive burning, caused by boiling water. So deep was the injury that the healing process was greatly delayed. The patient's family objected to skin-grafting, which seemed to be the only way to accelerate the process of recovery, and the doctor, as an experiment, applied the internal membrane of the hen's egg—the white film with which everybody is familiar. The injury must have progressed beyond the suppurative stage, and shown signs of healthy healing. A freshly laid egg is broken and the membrane immediately cut into narrow strips and laid carefully across the raw surface, then antiseptic dressings are applied with carbolic solutions, and the whole is covered by tin-foil. In a number of cases this procedure has been eminently satisfactory.

**A Chimney Flue Pipe Opening Cover.**  
To prevent gases, smoke, soot or fire from passing into a room of the house



from a pipe opening of the chimney flue, an inventor of Axtell, Neb., has patented the device of which several views are presented in the accompanying illustration. It has a dished cover, with an annular flat flange adapted to rest on the face of the wall, so that the

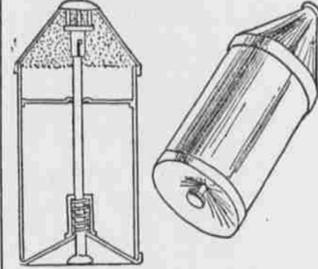
cover closes the pipe opening, and in the center of the cover turns a screw rod, with a knob on its outer end, while on its inner end screws a nut in a disk which engages the inner surface of a cone-shaped expansion thimble. The thimble has overlapping side portions connected with each other near the apex of the cone by a rivet which forms a pivot, permitting the base end of the thimble to readily expand or contract on moving the disk inward or outward by turning the screw rod. The device may thus be readily fixed in position in the pipe opening, and is removed without trouble when a pipe is to be placed in the opening.

Origin of Shaving the Beard.

The practice of shaving probably originated at first from its being found that the beard afforded too good a hold to an enemy in battle. This is the cause assigned for the origin of shaving among the Greeks, about the time of Alexander; and in most countries we find that the practice is first adopted by military men, and that the men of pacific and learned pursuits retain their beards much later. The Greeks continued to shave until the time of Justinian, in whose reign long beards became again fashionable, and remained in use until Constantinople was taken by the Turks. The Romans appear to have derived the custom of shaving from the inhabitants of Sicily, who were of Greek origin, for we find that a number of barbers were sent from there to Rome in the year 296 B. C., and the refinement of shaving daily is said to have been first introduced by no less a person than Scipio Africanus. At the expiration of the republic, beards had become very rare, and historians mention the alarm in which some of the emperors lived lest barbers should cut their throats. For the sake of concealing the scars on his face the Emperor Hadrian wore a beard, and this, of course, brought that appendage again into use, but the custom did not long survive him, although his two immediate successors wore beards in the character of philosophers.

A Toilet Powder Receptacle.

The illustration shows a holder for tooth powder, etc., arranged to readily deliver a certain quantity upon a tooth



brush, or where desired, without waste. It has been patented. It has a conical bottom and hopper-shaped top, with an apex opening closed by a valve with inwardly extending stems connected to a head carrying a sleeve with an L-shaped slot, engaged by a pin on the end of a plunger. The plunger is held normally in the position shown by a coiled spring and has on its outer end a thumb-piece, by pressing on which the valve is opened to pass the powder out of the receptacle, the plunger returning to normal position on the removal of the pressure, and at the same time seating the valve. The valve is removably connected with the plunger to permit of conveniently placing the powder in the receptacle.

Work and Weather.

So marked is the influence of the weather on certain temperaments that the employers of large numbers of men are beginning to take this into account in promising to fill large orders. In some establishments, it is said that in very gloomy and what is called depressing weather from ten to twenty-five per cent less work is done than on bright, clear days. A little investigation showed that accountants are much more likely to make mistakes in bad than in clear weather, and scientists sometimes decline to pursue their investigations when the atmospheric conditions are uncongenial. This being the case, there is little wonder that foggy, dreary, chilly days have frequently been called "suicide weather."

Simple and Stylish.

A simple and stylish costume is made of blue cashmere and silk. The plain skirt of cashmere has a band of silk at the hem and two narrow bands above it. The waist is plain, and there is a yoke of net lace over blue silk, the yoke edged with a trimming of silk like the skirt. The full sleeves are of silk, and there is a stock collar, with a large bow at the back of the neck.

Black Satin.

A dress of black satin has the waist made with a collar and pointed vest of embroidery. From the shoulder seams to the bodice points five folds are laid in the material. These are drawn over the bust and narrowed in to a very small space at the waist-line, where they are held down by three buttons on either side.

A Stylish Waist.

A pretty and stylish waist for a young lady has the collar and yoke of passementerie. A cascade front of lace extends from yoke to belt. This is worn with a cutaway or Eton jacket.

Shoulder Seams.

It is to be hoped that the fancy for extending the shoulder seams of dresses will meet with the same fate as the effort to introduce hoops. There is no more uncomfortable or absurd fashion, and women should emphatically protest against it.

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