

A MOUNTAIN SILOAM.

PECULIAR WATERS FOUND IN THE STATE OF WASHINGTON.

A Medicinal Lake Without Visible Inlet or Outlet. The Strange Reputation that Deceived the Naturalists and was Wrongly Named.

There are in the world many lakes and inland seas, each having water peculiar to itself. Most noted of these is the Dead Sea, whose surface is 1,300 feet below that of the ocean and whose depth is another 1300 feet. The largest is the Caspian Sea, also below sea level, and with an unfathomable bottom. Exploration of the American continent has revealed a number of saline and alkaline lakes, all of which are above sea level. Salt Lake, the largest and perhaps the oldest, has an altitude of 4,200 feet. Lake Como in the new "State of Wonders" is 7,000 feet up in the mountains, while Tulare has less than 300 feet altitude. The waters of the last two are quite brackish, but light compared with Salt Lake, whose contents are 20 percent salt, being but little lighter than Dead Sea water.

The waters of Lakes Owen and Mono, on the eastern slope of the Sierra, have not been analyzed, but they are surcharged with sodium compounds. Borax Lake, in Southeastern Oregon, is named from the boracic character of its waters.

All these lakes and seas have a visible inlet, a fresh-water supply, that compensates for evaporation, but there is a little alkaline and saline lake in Southern Washington that has no visible inlet or outlet, the supply coming from two hidden springs. It is situated on the great Columbia river plateau, sixteen miles southwest from Spokane and 2,300 feet above the rim of the ocean. From the remedial virtues of the water it has been appropriately called Medicinal lake. It lies in the midst of a great basaltic region through which the granite crops occasionally, as on the western shore. The lake bed, too, is said to be granite. A high basaltic ridge to the westward is shaded by a pine forest.

Medical Lake has a maximum depth of sixty feet is half a mile wide and twice as long. No plant grows close to or in the water, and the quiet that reigns over the dark pool is impressive. The water has been described as amber-colored. If amber is dark with a greenish tinge, the description is good. Fresh water is to be found only a few feet below the surface not more than twenty feet from the lake shore.

The first date mentioned in connection with the lake is 1807, when it is said, Antoine Dufour, a prisoner of an Indian band camping on the lake shore, discovered the virtues of the water in an accidental and unpleasant way.

Exposure had made him a victim of inflammatory rheumatism, and one night while hobbling about in vain attempt to escape from captivity, he was admitted into the water. He barely missed being drowned, and expected the water to make worse his already stiffened joints, but to his surprise and delight next day he was better.

After this he frequently bathed in the water, and was soon free from disease and captors.

For three-score years after this we hear nothing of the healing waters. In 1872 Andrew le Fevre entered a quarter section of land where the town now stands. To this French Canadian the Indians were quite partial, for other white men were not allowed to stay unmolested. But they guarded jealously the "medical waters," for they had long known of their virtues, though they told the white men they were "bad waters."

Some of Mr. le Fevre's sheep, however, led him to think differently. They had "scab" and their instinct led them into the water, which they also drank and were healed. The shepherd soon tried it for his rheumatism, and was cured as if by magic.

The medicinal virtues of the water, of course, depend on the pressure of minerals held in solution. These are the chlorides of sodium and potassium, the carbonates of sodium, iron, calcium, magnesium and lithium; the silicate and borate of sodium; oxide of aluminum and sulphate of potassium. There are 101 grains of those solids to the gallon, which gives the water a specific gravity of 1012, and an alkalinity that makes the skin feel, after bathing in it, as if oiled. As in most such bodies of water, the sodium compounds predominate, nearly two-thirds here being the carbonate. For bathing the water is much preferable to sea or Salt lake water, and others, when rubbed on the head, like fine toilet soap.

Whenever a rough breeze brushes the lake surface the softness of the water is said to manifest itself in a lather foam that sometimes rises a foot high. A valuable toilet soap is obtained by adding a vegetable oil to the concentrated water. By evaporating the water the salt is obtained, and is sold where ever known for use in bathing as a remedial agent.

Animal life in this lake is not so scarce as plant life. There is a bug which sports on the surface, a species of tortoise living more on the bottom, and a curious animal called the "walking fish," which seldom comes to the surface. The last named, the Axolotl, is quite remarkable in appearance and one of the most interesting of American reptiles. The name "secretary tadpole" would be as appropriate as "walking fish," for the gills stick out behind the head in a way to remind one of the "secretary bird," and it much resembles a large tadpole, being eight or nine inches long. A finny membrane extends along the back, continuing along the upper and lower sides of the compressed tail. The fore foot has four toes, and hind foot five. The mouth, like the head, is large and ugly.

Our natural histories speak of the axolotl as a Mexican reptile, and it has been given a separate genus—*sirens*. It is so abundant in Mexican lakes as to be a source of food to the natives. Not until the discovery of Lake Como, Wyoming, was it known that the animal lived in the United States. Professor Marsh took some of them to New Haven from this mountain lake, and the scientific world was surprised to learn that in these new surroundings they passed through another metamorphosis, losing their gills and finny adornment, while their hitherto undeveloped lungs expanded so that they could live in the open air, and their eyes were protected with lids. In fact it is a true anamoloma, and had been wrongly named, having never in its native habitat reached more mature existence than the larval state.

The existence of the axolotl in Medical lake, or even the existence of the lake itself, is, perhaps, new to most zoologists.

It is also said to sport in the fresh water of Lake Washatucua, Washington.—San Francisco Chronicle.

A STATISTICIAN in Paris had the patience to count the number of words employed by the most celebrated writers. The

works of Corneille do not contain more than 7,000 different words, and those of Molier 8,000. Shakespeare, the most fertile and varied of English authors, wrote all his tragedies and comedies with 15,000 words. Voltaire and Goethe employ 20,000. "Paradise Lost" only contains 8,000, and the Old Testament says all that it has to say with 5,642 words.

SAILORS SHUN THEM.

Hard Work to get Crews for the Bennington and Concord.

The real trouble in getting men just now for the cruisers Concord and Bennington is due to the cramped quarters on those vessels. Even the officers are protesting against men being sent to sea in such ships. The space between decks is so cut up and lumbered with all sorts of gear and appliances as to compel hammocks to be swung in untenable positions. The machinists and leading men are compelled to sleep in the workrooms, and so crowded is the condition below decks that the ventilation is seriously affected.

Seamen, it is declared by naval officers, are human. It is bad enough, they say, to be packed in like sardines, but when this packing is accompanied by a life on a rolling and plunging ship and in an atmosphere poisonous from being breathed over and over again, the situation becomes seriously affected.

In the big wooden frigates of former days the seamen enjoyed plenty of room and at least good ventilation. Five hundred men were easily carried aboard vessels of the Brooklyn class. On the Concord and her sisters 160 men take up every available bit of space. It is so crowded on the Concord that officers wishing to go forward at night have to turn men out from the hammocks swinging near the door opening in under the topgallant forecastle before it becomes possible to open this door.

The only remedy, officers say, for the state of affairs aboard the 1,700-ton vessels is to reduce the fittings on these ships, and then follow it up by sending naval constructors to sea, affording them opportunity to personally observe how men live, and what is needed for their comfort. This latter recommendation has been carried out in the British Navy. Bluejackets assigned to a war ship serve on that vessel for three full years. From the fact that it is known that the Bennington is short in her complement bluejackets who have had experience in the navy refuse to enlist at the receiving ship Vermont. They know that the first draft sent out from the Vermont will be to the Bennington, and rather than serve three years in "that hole," as they term her, they are holding aloof together.

Of all the vessels in the navy now the Chicago is the most popular one with men-of-war's men. Her gun deck and room space below give the crew plenty of swinging room. Last year when five crews of war ships petitioned the Secretary of the Navy to withdraw marines from service afloat, these same crews asked that in future designs our war ships be given gun decks.

The value of gun decks is only appreciated by men who have actually gone to sea. Naval constructors who sit comfortably in their office chairs think only, naval officers say, of getting the greatest number of fittings into ships in the space and displacement allowed. There is little no consideration for the sailor. The fact that men have to spend three years in ships is entirely forgotten, as is also the fact that bodily comfort is a factor of prime importance in developing fighting efficiency.

The condition of affairs has become so bad in enlisting men at the Brooklyn yard that the commanding officers of the Yantic, Boston, and other ships needing a few men to fill up vacancies in their complements have received permission from the Navy Department to enlist directly for their vessels. In this way seamen in signing the articles of enlistment will be assured that they are not intended for the Concord and Bennington.

When the Concord and Bennington will succeed in obtaining full crew complements it will be entirely problematical.—[New York Times.]

To Tell Good Mushrooms.

The mushroom that is coming into market every day now by thousands of bushels is known to scientific men as *Agaricus campestris*, but of this there are many varieties. It will grow only on the open pastures, meadows and down which are exposed to the winds; the unwholesome members of the tribe like the shade and are clumsy to the touch. Even persons whose fields abound with this plant cannot always distinguish the wholesome from the unwholesome fungus, but whoever bears the following facts in mind will have no difficulty:

(1.) The table mushroom, or *Agaricus campestris*, is usually white on the outer surface, and has a skin which readily peels off. This is not true of the unwholesome mushroom.

(2.) The gills or under radicans are of a beautiful salmon pink in the *Agaricus campestris*, but the gills, as well as the whole plant, turn to a mohogany brown after it has been exposed to sun and air in the open for two or three days.

(3.) But this is the most definite test. The inner ends of the gills are not joined to the stem in the wholesome mushroom, but they are joined in all that are not edible. No one can be deceived by a poisonous plant if he keeps this in mind. Moreover, the flesh of the campestris is solid and the perfume sweet and nutty. There is another edible member of this family, known as the horse-mushroom, which grows four or five times larger than the one described; but it is course, stringy, and almost devoid of flavor.

The plant, however, above all others to be avoided is the *Agaricus fastidiosus*, it looks almost exactly like the edible fungus, but the gills are joined to the stalk, though many of them are of a salmon or coral pink on the under side.

—[Harper's Weekly.]

Birch Bark in Demand.

Birch bark is in great demand just now. The fad is to make boxes of the bark similar to the jewel cases of bevelled glass. They are used for monochromatic cases, glove boxes, bonbon boxes and jewel caskets. Most of these souvenirs are mementoes of some special occasion, and are all the more prized accordingly.

Jack cuts the bark, and Dorothy'sainty finger fashion it into two pretty boxes. One is a long, narrow case, lined with silk and perfumed; this is for the dear boy's gloves. Inside the cover are cut the initials J. D., joined by a true lover's knot. The other box is square; there is no lining and no perfume in this one; it is for candies, and Jack has nobly taken upon himself the duty of seeing that it is kept constantly filled, and only with Hayler's best. Poor misguided boy! Next summer he will be a wiser, but a very much poorer young man.—[New York Advertiser.]

MISS CONNERS' PLUCK.

How She Kept the Stars and Stripes Over Her School.

One of the prettiest stories of the year comes from a little town in Indiana, where lives a plucky young schoolma'am who has recently shown a spirit not unlike the good old Barbara Fritchie. Her noble defense of the American stars and stripes has brought her through the press to the notice of the public from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Miss Emma Connors, the heroine of the story, teaches a district school near Crawfordsville, Ind. She is greatly humiliated to think that the little cotton flag upon which she set up her school was torn down and destroyed by a crowd of men who had seemingly forgotten that the great

induced to leave their homes in America by the lectures of Bishop Turner, who recently traveled through the South talking about Liberia, and the opportunities which it presents for colored men. The Liberia Colonization Society gives twenty-five acres to every colored man who settles in the republic, and the land is said to be very fertile, producing three crops of coffee each year.

THAT WONDERFUL INFANT.

A Portrait of the Famous Midget—Her Lovely Outfit.

Baby Cleveland is a sweet, sleepy little girl, and a born boss who rules one of the most distinguished houses on Madison avenue, New York. She is quick-tempered, rebellious, and unromantic, full of vital energy and intolerant of neglect. When she wants a thing done or not done she kicks vigorously; if her wishes are not respected she doubles up her little fists, opens her mouth and yells vociferously. Her bright little eyes are gray-blue, and she has quite a shock of long hair, black as jet and fine as corn-tassels. Oddly enough, she is not a dimpled baby; nobody could call her roly-poly, and she hasn't even the suggestion of a magic bracelet or necklace.

Unlike the average baby Miss Cleveland does not tub it in a china bowl. She has a little rubber bath in which she flounders and splashes every other day, and after being dried she is hand-polished like a piece of fine old hogany, powdered until she is as dusky as a jelly-roll, and band-

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The surveyors of the projected ship canal to connect Puget Sound with the Union and Washington at Seattle, have completed the maps and estimates. The scheme, if carried out, will make Seattle one of the finest harbors in the world. The improvement would cost \$3,000,000.

The Astor family have a million sterling invested in English securities. The founder of the family left an injunction in his will that the family should always continue the investments in the English funds and in English securities that he had himself commenced. The sons and grandsons have always respected this command.

A FORTUNER per cent. tax on profits is a new discouragement to enterprise in Italy. The boast of having two of the most powerful ironclads in the world is scarcely worth what it costs the Italians—terrible poverty among the poor and a struggle for life even among the middle classes, owing to oppressive taxes.

The Fourth International Railroad Congress, which had originally been set down for September of this year, will, it is now announced, be held in June, 1892, at St. Petersburg. The first congress was held at Brussels in 1885; the second at Milan in 1887, and the third at Paris in 1889. Vienna has already been chosen as the place for the fifth congress, to be held in either 1894 or 1895.

It is said that the German public is heartily disgusted with the outcome so far of the expensive colonization schemes that the Government has been operating in Africa. People say that colonization costs too much in blood and treasure and yields too little in return, and frequent use is made of Bismarck's famous declaration, "I am not one of your colonial enthusiasts." On the other hand, it is reported that the Emperor is wedded to his colonial ventures, in which he desires to surpass England, and has several times refused to sell to English offerers trade concessions with his African provinces, that have so far paid Germany nothing of value.

The homely and comforting corn cob pipe, which may not inaptly be termed the representative American pipe, is made in three factories only in the United States, and they are at St. Louis, Greenwood, Neb., and somewhere in Kansas. The cobs, which are obtained from the Collier variety of corn, come from Missouri, and are heavy, hard and "woody." The stems are used of Arkansas swamp cane or reed. The cobs are cut the right size by a circular saw, and then pass on to the boring-machine, which hollows out the bowl with a lighting movement. A twisted drill makes the hole for the stem, and the bowl is sanded and varnished. About 10,000 of the pipes are made every day.

CAPTAIN REBEN, Commander of the North German Lloyd steamer Neckar, has written to the German Marine Observatory at Bremen, describing a most singular occurrence. When off Sakota, one night, the sea suddenly became milk-white with a glow that seemed to flame up from the depths like the increased luminosity of an electric lamp when the current becomes too strong. When soundings were taken no bottom was found. At ten o'clock the sharp edge between the bright and dark was reached, but twenty-five minutes later the glow again appeared. It slowly disappeared after eleven o'clock. The next night the phenomenon was visible in still greater intensity, but it was not again observed. Captain Rebent insists that there was nothing phosphorescent in the character of the display.

The happy young mother doesn't say much, but it is learned on authority that she is afraid her baby girl will be squeezed and hugged to death.

THE CHINESE RIOTS.

Scenes of Horrible Outrages Perpetrated Against Foreigners.

Considerable interest has been centered in the treaty ports in the interior of China, because of the horrible outrages there committed against foreigners. Christian missionaries especially have been subjected to the most cruel indignities and mercenary attacks in the treaty ports have not escaped the wrath of the Chinese fanatics. At Ichang and Wuchang, towns on the

Yang-tse-Kiang River, the mission houses have been burned, the residences of the missionaries plundered and then fired and even the consulate buildings have been attacked. The convent of the Roman Catholic Sisters of St. Francis was burned and the sisters were carried out and thrown into the river, from which they were rescued by converted natives.

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