

A WONDER OF THE WORLD.

Letters to be Sent Across the Atlantic in One Hour or Less.

There passed through Toronto on Thursday on his way to Chicago, a gentleman who has the most gigantic project in view ever known to the world. If he should prove successful in his scheme the commercial world will be revolutionized, space will be almost completely annihilated, the wonders of the cable and telephone will be cast into oblivion and electricity will become a secondary power. Mr. Nathan Bernstein, one of New York's most notable bankers and stock brokers, is the man. His scheme is to span the Atlantic Ocean with a pneumatic tube, which will convey letters from New York to Liverpool within the space of one hour. Speaking to The Empire last evening Mr. Bernstein said, "I suppose you think the idea a wild and idiotic one. That was what people, and very knowing people, said regarding the Atlantic cable when the projectors were endeavoring to secure financial aid. I remember at the time my father was a London banker. He was induced to put £5,000 into the first company formed. When the Great Eastern left England to lay the first cable I think there was no more enthusiastic man on earth, notwithstanding the fact that his friends laughed at him, as did thousands of other practical business men at the project. Well, of course, you know the ship slipped her cable and had to return. Everybody said, "I told you so." My father became disheartened and sold his stock for £50. The man he sold to put up more money, the cable was ultimately completed, and my father's stock would be worth to him now, if he had held it, an immense amount of money. Now, of course, there are a class of people who will laugh at my present scheme, and will ridicule the idea of its proving a success. Let them laugh. I am positive that within three years there will be at least

THREE DAILY MAILS EACH WAY between England and America. One very strong feature in our favor is the fact that already there is a pneumatic tube working in a limited way between London and Liverpool, but I cannot say that it has as yet proved a decided success. There will be another in operation between Chicago and St. Louis during the World's Fair next summer, and with this we will be able to prove that our scheme is practicable. We calculate that the cost of laying the tube across the Atlantic will be in the neighborhood of \$25,000,000. We have raised nearly half of this sum already, and after the test at the Fair we have no doubt but that we will have sufficient funds to lay another across the Pacific ocean. We calculate that the cost of the tubes will be paid in five years, even if we have to depend alone upon New York and London, but this we do not propose to do. When the business world finds that we can send letters across the ocean in one hour, a movement will soon be on foot to connect every city and town in the world with the tube termini, in precisely the same manner as the telegraph system of to-day operate. Just fancy the revolution this will be. Fancy a business man sending a letter from Toronto at 8 o'clock a.m., and receiving a written reply within four hours from London, England! How your readers will laugh when they read all this! Remind them, however, that 15 years ago they would have laughed the same old laugh if you had assured them that they might talk with a gentleman over a wire, say, down at Detroit, I am on my way to Chicago now to complete arrangements for the laying of the tube between St. Louis and that city. We expect to have it in working order a month before the fair opens, and it we succeed our curiosity will prove the drawing card at the exhibition.

NEWS ITEMS.

A farmer named Fagan, of Colborne township, had seven head of cattle killed by lightning on Saturday. The county of Oxford will spend nearly \$8,000 for furnishing for the splendid new court house in Woodstock. All the soldiers have been withdrawn from Homestead, Pa., except 1,000, a battery and a small squadron of cavalry. The steamer City of Owen Sound, which has been sunk near Clapperton island for five or six years' has been raised. A shortage of \$14,523 has been discovered in the accounts of Frank C. Foster, cashier of the Buffalo Ice Company. Foster is in jail. A combine in fur has been formed to be known as the George C. Treadwell Company, with a capital of \$10,000,000. Newark, N. J., is the headquarters. The Oakville schooner Kate capsized in the Bay of Quinte Thursday, and Mrs. Papa, the cook, and a sailor named Solomon, of Toronto, were drowned. Private Iams, who was strung up by the thumbs by Col. Streator for shouting in favor of the assailant of Mr. Frick, has taken action against Gen. Snowden, Col. Streator and Col. Hawkins for \$10,000.

OBEYING MILITARY ORDERS.

The Soldier Who Executed a Command to Destroy His Own House.

The story is told in a French newspaper of Pierre Barlat, a poor laborer, who lived near Paris with his wife Jeanne and their three children. Industrious, frugal, knowing nothing of the way to the wine shop, Pierre saved all his spare money, working harder and harder, and at last bought the tiny cottage in which they lived. It was a tiny cottage indeed—built of stones, with tiled roof, standing amid shrubs and covered with clematis. It always attracted the eye of the traveller, on the left, as he crossed the Sevres bridges. Pierre and Jeanne worked and scraped and saved until the little cottage was paid for, and made a feast when it was all done to celebrate their ownership. A landed proprietor, to be sure, does not mind an occasional expenditure to entertain his friends. All this Pierre and Jeanne had accomplished just before the war of 1870, with Germany, broke out. The conscription fell upon Pierre, who, moreover, was an old soldier and belonged to the reserves. A gunner he had been, famous for his skill in hitting a mark with a shell. Sevres had fallen into the hands of the Germans, but the French guns were pounding away at them from the fort on Mont Valerian. Pierre Barlat was a gunner at that fort, and, one wintry day, was standing by his gun, when Gen. Noel, the commander, came up and leveled his field glass at the Sevres bridge. "Gunner," he said sharply, without looking at Pierre, "the Sevres bridge is to be saluted."

"Do you see the Sevres bridge over there?" "I see it very well, sir." "And that little cottage there, at the left, in a thicket of shrubs?" Pierre turned pale. "I see it, sir." "It's a nest of Prussians. Try it with a shell my man." Pierre turned paler still, and in spite of the cold wind, that made the officers shiver in their great coats, one might have seen big drops of sweat standing on his forehead; but nobody noticed the gunner's emotion. He sighted his piece carefully, deliberately; then fired. The officers, with their glasses, marked the effect of the shot after the smoke had cleared. "Well hit, my man! well hit!" exclaimed the General, looking at Pierre with a smile. "The cottage couldn't have been very solid. It is completely smashed."

He was surprised to see great tears running down the gunner's cheeks. "What's the matter, man?" the General asked rather roughly. "Pardon me, General," said Pierre, recovering himself. "It was my house—everything I had in the world"—Tid-Bits.

Australian Statistics. Divorce petitions in Victoria appear to be just twice as numerous, in proportion to the population, as in the mother country—a circumstance not surprising when the numerous grounds on which divorce is granted by the recent Act of the Victoria Legislature are taken into account. Generally speaking, the sexes are placed by this law pretty much on an equality, though in the case of adultery, as regards the man, the offence must have been repeated or committed in the conjugal residence, or coupled with conduct or circumstances of aggravation. Among the specific grounds of divorce also are desertion of a wife for three years; habitual drunkenness for three years on the part of either husband or wife. In the husband's case, however, the desertion must be accompanied by cruelty or neglect to provide means of support. Conviction of serious crimes also constitutes a ground on certain conditions. In order to enable them to continue their education at the best grammar schools two hundred scholarships have been annually awarded in the colony of Victoria since 1886 to the most clever and industrious pupils of state schools, selected in accordance with the results of competitive examinations, the conditions being that all must be under 15 years of age and in the sixth class. Each scholarship, according to the report of the Government statist, is of the value of £10, tenable for three years, on condition that the scholar attends at and obtains favorable reports annually from the authorities of one of the public grammar schools, one of the schools of mines, one of the agricultural colleges or some other school approved by the Minister. If the scholar does not live within three miles from the approved place of education, the Minister can allow him such sum as will cover his cost of transit to and fro, or may commute the scholarship for one of £40 tenable for one year. The holders of commuted scholarships at the end of a year may compete among themselves for renewed scholarships offered to 30 of the best students. In the following year these 30 students may present themselves for a further renewal offered to the best 15. The subjects for competitive examinations are stated to be, with an unimportant exception, solely those taught in state schools.

Skirt-Dancing in English Homes. Skirt-dancing is an established fact in what is known as the "smart set" in London. I have seen lately accounts in American papers of Lady "So and So's" "large feet" and of Countess "This and That's" "heliotrope hosiery," but I went to an "at home" last week in a splendid house not many miles from Queen Anne's Gate, where at a given signal the pretty daughter of the house, a young lady in her first season, tripped into the middle of the big reception room and began a dance that for grace, abandon and high-kicking quite came up to the excited pas set of professionalists, evading standing. The girl's mother stood by, evidently proud and pleased to see her daughter display such agility, and as the dainty little white silk-clad feet flashed as high as her head this fine-siecle woman whispered to a man whose blase and aristocratic face seemed rather less bored than usual, some questions evidently concerning this fair young creature's prettiness and airy grace.—London Letter to Chicago Herald.

Duties of Daily Life. Life is not entirely made up of great evils or heavy trials; but the perpetual recurrence of petty evils and small trials is the ordinary and appointed exercise of the Christian graces. To bear with the failings of those about us—with their infirmities, their bad judgments, their ill-breeding, their perverse tempers—to endure neglect

when we feel we deserve attention, and ingratitude where we expected thanks; to bear with the company of disagreeable people whom Providence has placed in our way, and whom He has provided on purpose for the trial of our virtue, these are the best exercises of patience and self-denial, and the better because not chosen by ourselves. To bear with vexation in business, with disappointments in our expectations, with interruptions of our retirement, with folly, intrusion, disturbance—in short, with what ever opposes our will or contradicts our humor—this habitual acquiescence appears to be more of the essence of self-denial than any little rigors or afflictions of our own imposing. These constant, inevitable, but inferior evils, properly improved, furnish a good moral discipline, and might, in the days of ignorance, have superseded pilgrimage and penance.

What Mothers Should Do. As the boys grow up make companions of them; then they will not seek companionship elsewhere. Let the children make a noise sometimes; their happiness is as important as your nerves. Respect their little secrets; if they have concealment worrying them will never make them tell and patience will probably do its work.

Allow them, as they grow older, to have opinions of their own; make them individuals and not mere echoes. Remember that without physical health mental attainment is worthless; let them lead free, happy lives, which will strengthen both mind and body.

Bear in mind that you are largely responsible for your child's inherited character and have patience with faults and failings. Talk hopefully to your children of life and its possibilities; you have no right to depress them because you have suffered.

Teach boys and girls the actual facts of life as soon as they are old enough to understand them, and give them the sense of responsibility without saddening them. Find out what their special tastes are and develop them instead of spending time, money, and patience in forcing them into studies that are repugnant to them.

As your daughters grow up teach them at least the true merits of housekeeping and cookery; they will thank you for it in later life a great deal more than for accomplishments.

Try and sympathize with girlish flights of fancy, even if they seem absurd to you; by so doing you will retain your influence over your daughters and not teach them to seek sympathy elsewhere.

Matrimonial. Bulfinch—How are Naggedat and wife getting along together? Wooden—Oh, I don't know; what makes you ask? Bulfinch—Oh, nothing; only when they got married they had one of those mottoes, "God Bless our Home" in the sitting-room, and now he has it up in his smoking-room with "As Far as Possible" written underneath it.

VIEWED A CLOUDBURST.

A THRILLING EXPERIENCE IN AN ARIZONA CANON.

Fleeing From the Torrent—It was a Ride for Life—Saved by an Overhanging Bush—The Clouds Rolled by and Nature Smiled Serenely Again.

"Speaking of cloudbursts," said Col. Grayson, "I had a little personal experience in that line once, and never want it repeated. It was in the summer of 1872. A young fellow named George Brown and I were prospecting in the Huachuca Mountains in Arizona. It was a comparatively unknown country at that time, and filled with dangers of all kinds, against which we were amply prepared. We had a fine outfit, well stored with provisions, and we carried good arms and an abundance of ammunition. This for the double purpose of killing game and defending ourselves against possible attacks of Apaches, who were bad at that time. We had been out from civilization about six weeks, and had made some small discoveries, but nothing which we felt would justify us in working at that time, so we pushed further up the mountains, following up a canon as far as we could go with the team, and when we could take our wagon no further we made camp, and each day prospected the country around it, packing our tools and water on our mules.

"We had started out early one morning on one of these expeditions. The air was remarkably calm; not a breath stirred, nor was there a cloud in the sky. The sun came up clear and hot, and Brown remarked to me as we toiled up the narrow canon that we were sure of a fine day at any rate. We reached the scene of our operations about 9 o'clock in the morning, and tying our mules to a clump of bushes proceeded on our climb up the hills. We had not gone far when the air became intensely sultry and a mass of light, fleecy clouds began to gather overhead, apparently the vanguard of two denser masses which were forming north and south of us. Then a few drops of rain fell and the cloud masses thickened, became blacker, and seemed to rapidly approach each other.

"Seeing that a storm was upon us, Brown and I started down the mountain for our mules, the clouds above us in the meantime coming together, the darkness increasing, and drops as large, apparently as saucers falling around us. We redoubled our speed and regained our mules as the two cloud masses met. It was now almost as dark as midnight, and the raindrops increased in size and rapidly until it seemed as though the clouds had veritably burst, and there was a rush of water like a Niagara coming down from the heavens.

"We had reached our mules and were springing down the canon for our lives. The hillsides were a raging cataract of water. Great trees were washed out by the roots; huge boulders were rolled down into the canon. The water pouring down the hillsides found small depressions and in a few minutes tore them out to ravines. In places we could see the soil washed clean to the bedrock, and the whole mass tumbling into the canon through which we were riding.

"It was a ride for life. Behind us was a solid wall of water fifty feet high, coming with the roar of a thousand cataracts. The noise was deafening. In the face of this wall of water was a mass of debris—whole trees turning end over end, huge boulders large as a house—being swept for-

ward by the force behind as dust is swept before the broom of the housewife.

"We were urging our poor beasts to their utmost limit of endurance, the water around us growing deeper and deeper each second, the rain still falling in torrents, while that terrible wall behind us was increasing in height and velocity and steadily gaining on us. I was a little in advance of Brown and shouted to him to break for the hills, but the horrible din behind drowned my voice and I could not hear it myself. I spurred my mule up the sidehill, and looking back to see if Brown were following, saw that irresistible current fairly lick him up, and in an instant he, with the mule he was riding, was absorbed in the mass which was rolling down the canon as one might disappear in the maw of some monster.

"I could not stop to look further for him. The rolling ball of water was coming down the canon with the speed of an express train, and every second lessened the distance between it and me. It was a matter of self-preservation—a race for life with the elements. I had got down the canon to a place where it was widening and the stream spread out in width, losing somewhat of its depth, but still it seemed to press on like some hideous monster intent upon its prey and fearful lest it should be baffled. I was gaining on the sidehill, but the current was gaining on me. Moment by moment it came nearer. It was now but a few feet distant. If I could but force my poor beast a few feet higher up the mountain we should be above its force and be safe. I thrust the rowels deep in his side, and he gave a mad plunge. The water had reached us, and I felt him carried off his feet. I grasped an overhanging bush, and he was swept away in the torrent, leaving me suspended, my feet just touching the surface of the water. I hung to that bush for my life, and despite the strongest exertions on my part it was all I could do to keep from being carried away.

"In a few moments the fury of the storm had passed, the water abated sufficiently to permit me to obtain a footing, and I forced my way higher up the mountain to a place of safety, where, drenched to the skin, I awaited the subsidence of the waters.

"The storm cleared almost as suddenly as it had begun, the whole time occupied having been little more than I have taken in the telling, but in those few moments a dry canon had been converted into a raging torrent, the mountain sides had been denuded, thousands upon thousands of tons of earth and rock had been carried to the valley below, and the whole face of the country had been changed. The clouds had expended their force, and in a few moments resolved themselves again into fleece and then disappeared. The sun shone bright and clear, the torrent had rolled away, and nothing was left to tell of the awful cataclysm but the scene of devastation left behind. A mark on the mountain side, far above the level of the canon, told its depth. Trees uprooted and scattered marked its course. Immense boulders, which had been carried far from their original resting place and left in its course, showed its power, while the desolation around me proved its destructiveness.

"As soon as I could safely descend from my place of refuge I went into the canon below and made a thorough search for poor Brown, but could not find the least sign of him. The mules we had ridden had also disappeared, and not a vestige of our camp remained."—San Francisco Chronicle.

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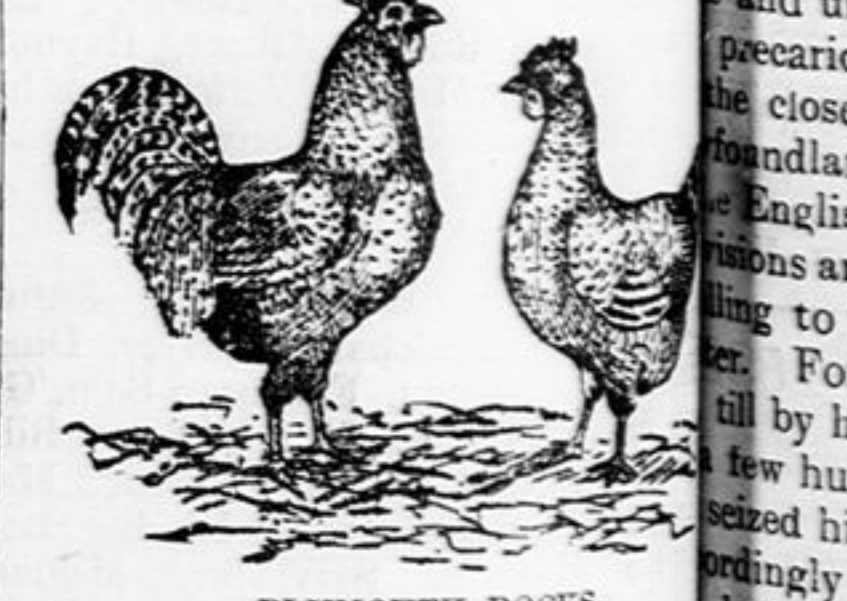
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