

Coney Island.

Coney Island comes in for a good share of notice in the New York Tribune, being given some five columns of description and illustrated by several maps. It is an extraordinary story of the sudden growth and development of a popular resort out of a barren sandy shore. Within less than ten years, four miles of the beach—a sandy tract on Long Island at the entrance to New York harbor—was a desolate waste, which nobody claimed and nobody visited. There were a few bath houses, and a small hotel where an invalid could half-live, half-starve. A single steamer did service as a tug-boat, lighter and passenger boat. One railroad ran down near the center of the island, but there was neither hotel nor depot at its end. Within four years, and mostly within the past two, seven railways have been constructed; in place of one dilapidated there are three elegant steamers, and four more excursion steamers ply as regularly as ferries, the single hotel with its five shabby rooms has been succeeded by at least twenty, three of which are as good as those at any seaside resort. Claimants are plenty for land which a few years ago nobody would own, and leases that then went begging at seventy-five dollars each are now held at \$30,000 for the two years yet to lapse. Where \$100,000 was not in 1874 invested in hotels, railways, steamboats and pavilions, now fully \$5,000,000 is employed, and where fifty persons found occupation three months in the year, now 2,500 find constant employment. It is remarkable that a place so convenient to New York and so well adapted for giving the hot and weary people of the city fresh air and water, should be so long given up to "clambers" and "crabbers," or to picnic parties of such a character that respectable people were obliged to keep away or submit to insult and possibly worse. Its rapid growth is equally remarkable, and its advantages and capacity for entertaining the constantly increasing patronage is being developed more and more each year.

A Man With Glass Eyes.

On Bremen avenue, a few doors west of Tenth street, there lives an eccentric old gentleman named Arthur C. Blackman, who is now in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and who although totally blind for the past thirty-one years, insists on wearing two glass eyes. He lost his sight when about twenty-four years old while suffering from typhoid fever. He was then quite a handsome young man and somewhat vain of his personal attractions and the admiration of a large circle of friends. The loss of his eyesight weighed heavily upon him. He was conscious of their sightless stare and ghastly whiteness, and if he were not, the sympathy and pity of those around him would soon have informed him of their condition. In order to hide his infirmity as far as possible, he conceived the idea of substituting glass eyes for those from which the light had gone out forever, and this he had done within a few months after his recovery. He has lived in St. Louis since 1867, having removed here in that year from Indianapolis, where he owns a little property, from which he receives a moderate living income. He is stopping with a sister-in-law, Mrs. Harding, on Bremen avenue, and very few of the people in the neighborhood knew anything of his infirmity. He was pointed out to an Evening Post reporter the other evening in Hyde park as "the man with two glass eyes," when he was sitting on one of the benches with a little child beside him, and from him were learned the above few facts concerning his peculiar condition. He is well-informed, and apparently as thoroughly up in the news of the day as if he had the sight of both his eyes and took half a dozen daily papers. He walks with a firm tread, alongside of his child and companion, who generally guides him, and in no way betrays his infirmity to the casual observer.—*St. Louis Post.*

A Boa Swallows a Blanket.

Speaking of snakes, Superintendent Brown, of the Zoological Garden, said he could tell a snake story and not a second-handed one either. About a year ago one of the large reptiles in the collection took sick and seemed to be going into a decline. Nothing that they could give him appeared to do him any good, and from loss of appetite and sleeplessness the snake became a mere wreck of his former self. A large blanket had been placed in the serpent's cell for him to sleep upon. One morning the keeper found that the blanket had disappeared. Search was made throughout the cage, but without success. At the same time the snake's body had swelled to the thickness of a good-sized sapling. He had swallowed the blanket. But the blanket wouldn't digest, and the snake became sicker than before. In this manner he rolled around like a wan dyspeptic for over four weeks. Finally the blanket was discharged by natural causes. Immediately the snake began to improve. The swelling in his body gradually dwindled down and he grew larger and fatter than before, till the box became too small to hold him. He ate like a gormand, and at times found room for two and three times the customary quantity of food. The blanket acted as a sort of medicine upon his stomach and cleaned him out entirely. Now he is fifteen feet long, eighteen feet in circumference, and is the healthiest boa constrictor of the lot. A change of color was the only visible effect on the blanket. Under the microscope it showed that it had become a little worn by being rubbed in an animal's stomach. It came out unattached and it was carefully packed when in the superintendent's private tent where it now lies.—*Philadelphia Record.*

Old Age.

Growing old gracefully is an art in which few study to acquire perfection, and yet how beautiful is age with the grace and tenderness that properly belong to the autumn and winter of life. There is a poetry that should linger about and crown it with respect, reverence and admiration. The later days should be set to quick, pleasant music, and only soft, sweet notes should ripple from the heart, where it is yet spring-time with all its cherished associations.

Old people deserve a sunny niche in the household; their loving faces should be framed in the memory, dearer and clearer than the gems that come from the artist's brush which called for our admiration. Their deeds of mercy and loving kindness, of patience and endurance through trials, of thoughtfulness for others and sympathy in the hour of need, should be printed on the heart in characters that will never grow illegible. If their hearts have been full of kind humanity and sweet friendliness and generous acts, then the coming nights should be gemmed with the stars of affection and devotion. Would they drift back with the tide, we often ask? Perhaps, if they could only redeem the errors of youth, could only stem the breakers more courageously and nobly, and make of life a richer poem. If their lives all the way through have been set to the music of high thoughts, noble aspirations and brave deeds, then the blossoms of admiration and honor should be laid daily at their feet by kindly hands.

To the old, the rush of early memories comes back like the lost notes of a song they once loved. They delight to live over the past; for them the meadow daisies grow again, the yellow dandelions are plucked with fearless fingers, the running brook murmurs no music sweeter than that they once knew in their hearts, and the fragrant clover-blossom breathes only the perfume of a vanished June. They carry with them always the poetry and sweetness of remembrance.

About those who grow old gracefully, there lingers forever the freshness and tenderness of youth. The silver hair wears "Time's gathered snows." The foolish hopes of mere worldly ambition fade away before the infinite longing for things higher and holier, and to those upon whom they depend there come verses which never can be written, of sympathy with sorrow, resignation in affliction, cheerfulness in disappointment, and the sweet faith that helped to overcome all obstacles. We oftentimes smile at their odd fancies, and wonder why they cling so closely to little keepsakes and treasures of the past; they may be but links in the chain of Time, that carry them back to a more golden dawn.

Old age is full of study. It has battled with life so long, and grown weary so often over its broken ambitions, its repeated failures, its vain hopes. They often forget the world once held for them so many aspirations; as they drift silently toward that unknown shore the rapture of that "strange, beautiful song" of youth seems only a dim reality, half-forgotten. The sunset hours of old age are filled with gleams of fading pictures, tinted with roseate, clouds or shadowed with tears, but if it be a season of contentment, restful and cheerful, it always wears a gracious coloring, the dew of its influence rests upon our hearts; and we insensibly yield admiration, reverence and love to the unconscious charm of peace, repose and serenity that crowns beautiful, graceful old age, and gives it a poetry grand and tender and sweet.

The Power of Niagara.

Dr. Siemens, some months ago, in an address which he then gave, referred to the immense quantity of power which flowed ready-made over the Falls of Niagara. In his Glasgow address he again referred to the subject, in order to show how this gigantic source of power might be utilized to produce action at a distance. "When," he says, "little more than a twelvemonth ago I visited the great Falls of Niagara, I was particularly struck with the extraordinary amount of force which is lost, as far as the useful purposes of man are concerned. One hundred millions of tons of water fall there every hour from a vertical height of 150 feet, which represent an aggregate of 16,800,000 horse-power. In order to reproduce the power of 16,800,000 horses, or, in other words, to pump back the water from below to above the fall, would require an annual expenditure of not less than 266,000,000 tons of coal, calculated at an average consumption of four pounds of coal per horse-power per hour, which amount is equivalent to the total coal consumption of the world. In stating these facts in my inaugural address on assuming the presidency of the Iron and Steel Institute, I ventured to express the opinion that in order to utilize natural forces of this description at distant towns and centers of industry, the electric conductor might be resorted to. This view was at that time unsupported by experimental data such as I have been able since then to collect."—*Nature.*

After Thirty Years.

Among the marriage notices in a recent issue of the Savannah (Tenn.) Transcript is the following. It tells how two sundered hearts were united after many years:

"At the residence of Mr. Lafayette Callens, by the Rev. J. T. White, Mr. Thomas White to Mrs. Rutha Polk.

"These parties were engaged to each other more than thirty years ago, and each married to other parties and raised large families. Death removed the barriers, and now they have fulfilled their former engagement.

"We should always fill our engagements."

Dangers of Lightning.

The accidents from lightning reported this summer have been very numerous. Many lives have been lost by them, both in England and in this country. A fear of lightning is often ridiculed, but those fatalities indicate too general a neglect of proper precautions in thunder storms. It is desirable that people should be sufficiently apprehensive of danger to adopt such safeguards as science recommends, especially where a failure to do so may be followed by such terrible results.

It will be noticed that lightning does comparatively little damage in the heart of large cities. The innumerable metallic conductors to the earth which modern architecture supplies probably carry off in silence many discharges of electricity which would otherwise be explosive. Then the highest points, such as church spires, are usually furnished with efficient lightning rods. Country dwellings, however, and prominent unprotected buildings on the outskirts of cities are liable to be struck, and it is these and country churches which have suffered most during the present summer. It is altogether probable that complete protection is afforded by lightning rods, when they are of the right size and material, and suitably distributed and attached. Such, at least, is the opinion of the great majority of competent physicists in all countries. Its correctness has been strongly confirmed by the experience of the inhabitants of the British colony of Natal. In that part of South Africa, at certain seasons, thunder storms are of constant occurrence. Sometimes there will be four or five in a day, each separate and distinct from the others, and frequently they are of great violence. The destruction of life and property effected by the lightning early demanded some preventive action; and this was taken by providing the houses of the colonists with metallic conductors of the most approved pattern. Since this was done accidents from lightning, which formerly often occurred there, are stated to have been unknown in the capital.

It seems plain enough, then, that country houses and barns should be protected by lightning rods, which, indeed, ought to be considered indispensable in districts visited by thunder storms. The need is more obvious in the case of country churches, which are usually the loftiest buildings of the neighborhood. It would be difficult to find a more dangerous situation indoors during a thunder shower than a lofty-steeped village church without any lightning rod. This view has been verified by sad and fatal experience in several instances within the last few weeks. Some churches, however, are in a worse condition than if they had no lightning rod at all. We have known of several in New England on which the rods had accidentally become disconnected from the earth by a break at a considerable distance above the ground, and were carelessly allowed to remain so for weeks at a time.

A foolish and dangerous habit which some persons indulge in—we are sorry to say to many of them are young girls—is that of sitting by an open window during the prevalence of a heavy thunder shower. Displays of lightning are doubtless attractive, but they are not worth risking one's life for; besides, they are best seen at a distance, and when thunderbolts are crashing all around the neighboring fields and hedges, it is wiser to withdraw from the window or close it. The practice we speak of is by no means prudent, even in a properly protected house; while in any other it involves very great risk. And even in cities there have been several instances within the last few years of death by lightning while sitting at open windows.

Neither is it wise to take refuge under a tree during a thunder shower. There is no objection to remaining in a wood—and, indeed, it is much safer there than on an open plain—if care is taken to avoid being near the taller trees. Sometimes, however, the traveller must choose between remaining on the open plain or seeking shelter under a single tree. Under these circumstances the best authorities seem agreed that the safest situation is a spot as far from the trunk as the tree is high.

While it is true that the comparative mortality caused by lightning is very small, we are confident that it could be largely reduced by the exercise of such precautions as we have indicated. In regard to lightning rods, we know that views differ greatly as to the best material and form; but perhaps the safest course in this respect, for persons without scientific training, would be to adopt the sort used by the nearest college or other prominent institution of learning. In so doing, they would be almost certain to secure a good system of protection, if not the best.—*New York Sun.*

Health and Slow Pulse.

Some interesting statements are reported to have been made at a meeting of the Clinical Society, London, showing that a slow pulse may in no wise interfere with health. The most remarkable case, perhaps, was that of Hewan, as related by himself. It seems that twenty-one years ago, after prolonged study and work, his pulse fell from seventy to fifty-five, and he felt very cold; from that time its frequency gradually decreased until about eleven years later, when it was but twenty-four beats per minute. Its present are about twenty-eight. Notwithstanding this he has not suffered from fainting fits or cold, is capable of great physical exertion—of which evidence is to be found in his ascent of a high mountain—and his digestion remains unimpaired. Another speaker said that Napoleon had a slow pulse, being about thirty to forty per minute; and another stated the rate of a horse's pulse to be only sixteen.

A Paragapher Goes Fishing.

I landed my first pickerel the first evening we were on Lake Minnetonka. I am not a skillful fisherman. I told the boys that I could do a little plain fishing, but I didn't want to be set down for anything with any kind of fluting, embroidery, knife-paring, or anything of that kind about it. I fished from the shore, by the side of a veteran fisher, Mr. A. K. Dunlap, of Titusville. He knows every fish in the lake by name. He can tell by the movement of the line what kind of a fish is at your hook. Something ran away with my line.

"It's a pickerel!" shouted Mr. Dunlap, in intense excitement. "A big fellow. Take out your lines," he yelled to the rest of them. "Give him plenty of room! Play him!" he shrieked at me. "Let him run! Keep your line taut! Don't give him an inch of slack! Look out! Don't let him do that again! Let him run! Now, bring him in this—Look out! Don't let him do that again!"

By this time I was so excited I was on the point of throwing down the pole and rushing out in the lake, intending to run the fish down and kick it to death. I screamed to Mr. Dunlap:

"You take the pole and land him; I never can."

He refused. He turned and hurled his own pole, lance fashion, into the woods.

"Here!" he shouted, rushing down the bank about twenty feet below me, stooping down and spreading out his arms. "Here! Now! Bring him in here through the shall water! I'll get him. Careful, now! Careful! Steady! Ah—"

And flip, flap, I had him on the shore. He was a beauty. A little sunfish, about three and a half inches long.

It was a long time before we said anything. Mr. Dunlap climbed a big birch tree, in the top of which his pole had lodged, and we resumed our fishing. Presently Charley Arnknecht coughed, and I said:

"How funny the frogs sound over in the marsh."

And then we laughed a long time at the frogs. A long, long time and very heartily. They were very funny frogs.

But Mr. Dunlap fished on very silently, and by and by he said the fish wouldn't bite when there was very much noise. So we held our hush and the fish bit. But they didn't bite any of us very badly.

The fishing is excellent almost anywhere in the lake. That evening on the upper lake one of the boys caught nine large pickerel. When we came to count the fish, however, it appeared that he had caught one pickerel nine times. It was a very large fish, and they are going to have its skin dried whole for a spectacle-case. I caught more fish than any one else in the party, but they were all, with one exception, catfish, and I learned, to my amazement, that I had disgraced myself and the lake. Why isn't a fish a fish, I'd like to know?—*Burdette, in Burlington Hawkeye.*

His Garden.

Four or five city hall officials were sitting on the steps on the Woodward avenue side Saturday afternoon, discussing politics and the weather, when a smallish man, seeming to be in considerable mental distress, approached them and inquired:

"Gentlemen, is there a scientific man among you?"

"Certainly there is," they replied in chorus.

"And you must be familiar with the laws governing storms?"

"We are," was the prompt answer.

"Well then," continued the stranger, "I wish to relate what may seem like a singular occurrence. I live on Division street, and though it began raining at midnight the other night and continued for twenty-four hours, not a single drop of water fell upon my garden."

"Is that possible!" gasped one after the other.

"It is the solemn truth, gentlemen, and I'd like to know by what law of nature you can account for it? It was a long-continued, drenching storm, yet not one drop fell upon my garden."

There wasn't even room for a suggestion. The crowd were astonished and silent. After a long minute one of the gentlemen turned to the stranger and asked:

"You must have a theory haven't, you?"

"I have."

"And what is it?"

"My theory, gentlemen, is that I rent rooms on the third floor, and had no garden for the rain to fall on!"

Five men rose up in chorus, brushed off their coat-tails, and followed each other into the hall in Indian file.—*Detroit Free Press.*

American Machines in Paris.

The American threshing machines on exhibition at Paris, are splendid specimens of workmanship, and they fairly astonish the elegant Parisians. The *Echo Agricole*, of Paris, speaks of them in the following complimentary terms: "To see these threshing machines, constructed with perfect taste as to shape, and with richness in the materials employed, true specimens of cabinet work and inlaying; these reapers and mowers, where all the metallic portions shine like silver, one does not imagine himself in the midst of apparatus destined for work which is reputed vulgar, such as cutting the wheat or mowing the grass, but in a store of enormous jewelry and among true works of art. Never, in any country, have been seen such grace and splendor. If by the magnificence of the machine we are to judge of the character of the workman who would not be inclined to suppose the American farmer to be equally fine, walking the earth, not in blouse and wooden shoes, as with us, but in full dress and with hands gloved."

TIMELY TOPICS.

Signor Cozzi of Verona claims to have discovered a powder removing all explosive power from petroleum.

The demand for postal cards since they were first introduced in 1873 has increased thirty per cent. annually.

Juan Gonzalez has been executed at Valparaiso for killing a shopkeeper in his shop in broad daylight. Though only twenty-three he had been twenty times arrested for murder, robbery and other grave crimes.

Thus far there have been nearly ten thousand mines recorded in the Black Hills, and they are still being discovered at the rate of about one hundred a week. For the year ending May 15, 1878, it was estimated that \$4,000,000 had been produced by the gulch and quartz mines.

Mr. Tucker, of Fond du Lac, Wis., broke his arm, and the doctors had to cut out four inches of the bone, including the elbow joint, though they left the muscles and ligaments uninjured. A clever surgeon has just fitted him with an artificial elbow joint that works like a charm.

In the valley near Bantas, Cal., a field of ripe wheat containing one thousand acres was recently destroyed by fire. Three hundred farmers fought the flames desperately with wet sacks, but nothing seemed to have any effect until the fire reached a belt of green wheat, there it stopped.

The marble quarries of Carrara, Italy, have been worked since the reign of Augustus. They embrace an entire mountain range. 40,000 tons of marble were sent to this country from these quarries year before last. The entire working populace in Carrara finds employment in them.

David Freshwater, of Carthage, Mo., had a fine farm, but the crops promised to be poor, and the other day one of his hogs died. His cup was full and, seizing a hatchet, he cut several frightful gashes on his head, then jumped into a lake too shallow to drown him, and finally, climbing a tree, jumped to the ground to dash his brains out, but caught in the limbs and was taken home to recover.

Once in a while a man is found who distrusts saving banks and safe deposit companies, and institutions that take money on investment; who thrusts his savings into old stockings or trunks, gets it out and counts it before he goes to bed, worries about it by day and dreams about it by night. Such a man Mr. King of Vesey street, New York, seems to be. He had thirty thousand dollars in an old satchel which he looked in a small room in the top of his house. The money was fingered over daily to see whether it was all there. When it came time to go through with that operation on a recent Saturday night the satchel was missing. Thieves had crawled through the skylight and had made off with the cash that was to make Mr. King happy in his old age.

An exhibition of the written addresses presented to the German Emperor after the recent attempts on his life has been opened at the Old Palace at Berlin. Besides thousands of telegrams, there are more than two hundred addresses, the number of signatures to each address varying between ten and ten thousand. Many of the addresses are perfect works of art, calligraphically executed and adorned with pen and ink drawings, water-color paintings and photographs. Most of the bindings are in blue velvet, the favorite color of the emperor, with gold or silver clasps, and alto-reliefs in the same metals. Of all the principal, political, municipal and learned corporations in Germany are added those from the German residents in Vienna, Pesth, Dublin, Brussels, Antwerp, Revel, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Switzerland, etc. Nearly all the addresses are in German, but there are several in Latin, Italian, Hebrew and other languages. The getting up has probably never been surpassed for taste, costliness and art.

Carrier Pigeons.

In his interesting manual of natural history which is now appearing in small installments, Scapaneri says that the carrier pigeons of good breed, although they may be started in company and bound for the same place, fly quite independently of one another. Each one selects its own course, some taking a higher, others a lower flight, and speeds on its way without taking any heed of its neighbor. The birds, in fact, seem to know that they are racing, and each one exerts itself to the utmost to arrive first at the goal. In the neighborhood of every pigeon house there are always certain places, trees, etc., which are usually favorite resorts of the birds, but when coming in in a race the well-bred pigeon never stops for a moment at any of these haunts, but flies straight to its own particular house, frequently arriving there in so exhausted a state as to be unable to eat the food it is most fond of. Birds which are sitting, or which have lately hatched young, are generally taken in preference to others for racing; but instances have been known in which carrier pigeons of good breed which have been taken to a fresh home, and which have hatched young there, have deserted their brood and flown away to their original home at the first opportunity they had of escaping.

The funniest punctuation mark is the hy-fun, of course. Next.—*Whitehall Times.* The queerest punctuation mark is the peri-odd, to be sure. Next.—*Rome Sentinel.* No, thank you, we are not so bold as-ter-risk making another.—*N. Y. Mail.*