

Lady Siemens has presented a portion of the library of the late Sir William Siemens to the Physical Society, London.

Dr. W. Thomson is to deliver 18 lectures on "Molecular Dynamics" at the Johns Hopkins University during the first 20 days of next October.

Pure linseed-oil, an expert observer, has a bright amber color. It runs freely, sparkles when flowing from the can, tastes smooth and mild, and has the smell of a flaxseed poultice.

It is thought probable, says the Engineer, that the Government of Victoria will repeat the offer of a high premium for a combined reaper and thrashing-machine suited to Australian requirements.

According to Prof. Wanklyn the manufacture of gas from limed coal is a success, as it reduces the amount of sulphur compounds to three grains in the hundred cubic feet, and increases the yield of ammonia and tar by the abolition of the lime purifiers.

M. C. Decharne has performed new experiments showing that Nipoli's electrochemical rings may be imitated by means of a continuous stream of water falling from a cylindrical tube vertically on a horizontal piece of black glass moistened all over.

Ptolemy's Menuthias is regarded by M. A. Granddier, after an examination of the maps of the Middle Ages, as identical with Madagascar, and he believes that the Island was known to the Greek and Arab geographers long before its rediscovery by the Portuguese in 1500.

Tabulated results of 250 experiments with 42 distinct explosive compounds were published in March by MM. Berthelot and Vieille, of the Academy of Sciences, Paris, bearing on the amount of pressure developed at the moment of explosion, the temperature produced, and the specific heats of the gases, especially those of the compound ones, at various temperatures.

To obviate "kinks" in submarine telegraph cables, and consequently render these important means of communication less liable to break when subjected to a strain, Messrs. Trott and Hamilton have adopted the expedient of making each alternate layer of sheathing across each other. Thus if the inner sheathing of hemp has a right-hand "lay," care is taken that the lay of the next sheathing shall be left-handed.

A clock at Brussels has been going for eight months and has not required to be wound up since it was first set going. In fact, the sun does the winding of this time-piece. A shaft exposed to the sun causes an up-draught of air which sets a fan in motion. The fan actuates mechanism which raises the weight of the clock until it reaches the top, and then puts on a brake on the fan until the weight has gone down a little, when the fan is again liberated and proceeds to act as before.

The natives of the Chiloe Islands make use of a curious natural barometer, to which, from its having been first noticed by the Captain of an Italian corvette, the name "Barometre Araucano" has been given. This novel weather guide is the shell of a crab, one of the Anomura, probably of the genus Lithodes. It is peculiarly sensitive to atmospheric changes. It has a color nearly white in dry weather, but as soon as wet weather approaches small red spots appear exhibited, varying in number and intensity with the amount of moisture in the atmosphere. In the rainy season it is completely red.

Herr Johann Bielenberg, of Chemnitz, ignites silicious earths and rocks such as argillaceous porphyry, slate, sandstone, and clay, and even mud from rivers and the sea, and then subjects them to treatment with sulphurous acid. These materials thus acted upon attain in combination with lime hydraulic properties resembling those of the Trass, Puzzolana, and Santorine earths. Before being burned the silicious substances are mixed with coal, and during the process of ignition are acted upon by the sulphurous acid produced from sulphur, which is, together with coal, contained in pipes placed in the draught-holes of the furnace.

Gunpowder mills owned by W. H. Wakefield & Co., Gatebeck, near Kendal, England, are now lighted by electricity, and they are the first works of the kind to employ the new method of illumination. The works are about two miles in length, each dangerous building being about 200 yards from its neighbor, and the dynamo-electric machine is placed about the centre. Bare wires conduct the current on poles and trees having insulators to save incandescent lamps, each building having four or eight of them. The lights are enclosed in specially designed copper reflectors, enameled white on the inside, with tight-fitting plate-glass fronts, which project the light through tight-fitting hermetically-sealed windows into the interior of the buildings.

M. Widdeman insulates metal wires in this way: He prepares a bath of plumbate of potash by dissolving 10 grammes of litharge in a litre of water, in which 200 grammes of caustic potash had been added. Having permitted the solution to rest, he decants it, and the bath is ready for use. The wire to be covered with the insulating skin or film is connected to the positive pole of the battery, and a piece of platinum is attached to the negative pole. Both the wire and the platinum are then plunged in the bath, when metallic lead in a very finely divided state is precipitated at the negative pole, and peroxide of lead on the wire, causing it to assume all the colors of the spectrum, but a brownish black tint indicates the highest degree of insulation by this process.

A paper on distant vision has been submitted to the Royal Society, Edinburgh, by Dr. Maddox. It states that he finds that accommodation for a distant object in the case of most persons is naturally connected with a slight convergence of the optic axes so that the intersection of the optic axes is nearer than the object looked at. At a certain distance, different in different persons, and probably varying in the same person from time to time, the optic axes naturally converge at the distance focused for. When a nearer object is looked at the point of intersection of the optic axes is beyond the object. In ordinary vision these differences between the distance of convergence and accommodation are not observed, because the effort for single vision easily overcomes them and forces the optic axes into the position corresponding to the accommodation.

PERSONAL PARAGRAPHS.

About the Queen—DeLesseps—Emperor William—President Gevey—Prince Bismarck—and other Great People.

Lord Lyne is going to make an attempt to introduce the whitefish and lochs in the west of Scotland.

Queen Victoria has developed quite a passion for letter writing. One of her latest epistolary achievements takes the form of condolence with the Khedive of Egypt on the loss of his mother.

Lord Bute will give a prize of £500 for the best setting of music to the "Alcibiades" of Euripides. Lord Bute has also offered £50, through the National Eisteddfod Committee, for its translation into Welsh.

Mr. Matthew Arnold does not seem to have profited by his elocution lessons in the United States. On the occasion of his first lecture in England, after his return home, we learn from the London Truth that whenever he wished "to be particularly impressive he was perfectly inaudible."

DeLesseps is a devoted horseman, and may be seen daily galloping through the Bois de Boulogne with his eight children by his second marriage, boys and girls, mounted on ponies, in national costume, their hair streaming on the wind, their large collars turned over their shoulders, and their caps hanging over their backs—a little tribe, with thick dark hair and complexions, round their white-haired chief.

Dr. Gibbons in the Pacific Medical and Surgical Journal cites a case of hypochondria in which a farmer imagined his nose to be a bundle of hay. He took great care not to go near a horse or cow lest his hay nose should be destroyed. Man are more likely than women, says the Doctor, to have hypochondria, though women have hysteria oftener than men. The diseases are closely allied in their origin and nature.

Prof. Clelland of Glasgow University said in a recent lecture on terminal forms of life that man was "a terminus," anatomical evidence showed he had reached the limit of development in vertebrate life. Hence it was in the last degree improbable that in the future there would be a progression in the construction of the human body that would give birth to greater intelligence than was possessed by the sages of antiquity.

Among the presents received by the Emperor William on his birthday was a superb service of Sevres porcelain bearing the inscription "From France." As the gift was anonymous, there has been a good deal of speculation as to the source from which it has emanated. Meanwhile, it is affirmed that the German Emperor has been greatly touched by it, and that he never wearies of showing this particular present to the visitors who called to offer their congratulations on his natal day.

The College of Cardinals now includes the greatest genius and first divine among English speaking Roman Catholics, Cardinal Newman, and in Cardinal Ergentother, who was appointed in the same year, it has secured the greatest German historian except Dollinger. Haynald again, Archbishop of Colesce, and Prince Furstenburg, Archbishop of Olmutz, are also regarded as men of much mark. Haynald is considered next to Stressmayes the ablest speaker and most adroit logician in the Council.

The President of the French republic sent some little time ago to the French Ambassador of Constantinople three handsome cimeters made in exact imitation of the much-prized Damascus blades, for presentation to the Sultan's three sons. An oriental potentate receiving a present from such a quarter would probably have preferred some product of European art to a counterfeit of what he can get better at home. "If you wanted to make an Englishman a present," says a French paper, criticising M. Grevy's gift, "you would not offer him a dozen of pale ale, an article of Sheffield cutlery, or a coat made by Poole."

It has sometimes been brought against Bismarck that he does not believe in "resting on Sunday," and that he is rarely seen at church. This, Dr. Busch, his biographer, says, is partly due to the great amount of work that presses upon him. "There is so many a must in my life that the world can rarely be considered," Bismarck writes to his sister, and to the author he remarks that the day ought to be six or seven hours longer for him. Another reason for not going to church he gives in a letter to a clerical friend: "With regard to going to church, it is incorrect to say that I never enter a church. I willingly admit that I might go more frequently, but it is not so much from want of time as for consideration of my health that I do not go, especially in winter. To those who feel themselves called to be my judges in this respect I will with pleasure give further information about the subject."

Society in London is somewhat amused and very much scandalized at the daring robbery of Dr. Bill Run-russell's wedding presents. Every one knows that the celebrated war correspondent was married some weeks ago in Paris to a charming Italian lady. Presents poured in on the popular day. The couple on the auspicious occasion, these wedding gifts, of the value at least of \$5,000, were left during the honeymoon in the safe-keeping of a friend residing in Eaton square, London. One day shortly after a porter, wearing the badges of his respectable trade, upon cap and collar, rolled a cart to this lady's door and explained that he was sent by Dr. and Mrs. Russel for the boxes in her charge. Also, for us respecting womanhood! The lady gave up every bit of property entrusted to her by the bride and bridegroom. A day or two elapsed without message. Reason of the silence—they had not reached England. The plausible porter was a thief.

Some one has discovered that "Gosh" is swearing, meaning "My Lord," and was used by Eliot in his Indian Bible. Mr. Eliot is to be commended for not using a stronger expletive while engaged on that work. If anything is calculated to make a man indulge in swear words, it is writing a book in the Indian language.

I took Zuleika out to Dr. Carver's Wild West show one afternoon. She gazed in mingled trepidation and admiration as the Doctor did some of his best rifle shooting, and then turning to me with a fine enthusiasm glowing in her face, exclaimed, innocently, "Oh, how I should like to see him!"

POPULAR CRAZES.

Some of the Curious Ideas of Invalids—Drinking Call's Blood as a Cure for Consumption—The Mud-Baths, Sand Baths, and Blue-Glass Cures.

"Popular crazes," did you ask about, was the answer of a well-known physician made to a question propounded by a Telegram reporter, yesterday. "There are many kinds of peculiar crazes, and some of the methods people take to keep free from disease, or rather try to, are simply absurd. Take, for instance, the man who goes the year round with a pair of sea-beans tied about his neck, as a preventive to disease of a contagious nature. Some wear beans, some corn, some horse-chestnuts, and still others a plain piece of ribbon, all of which are more cases of superstition. There are many who, when suffering from a cold, will wrap a wet sock, which they have worn during the day, about their necks, and still others a piece of cloth saturated with lamp-oil. In the country it is a sand-remedy to wear a piece of salt pork about one's neck when suffering from a sore throat. This, by the way, is a good remedy. Some inhale the smoke from burning cherry wood, and others the smoke from oak chips in an open fire-place, as a cure for a cold in the head and nostrils. There are a great many persons who believe that when one gets thorough drenching with rain, or one gets thorough drenching with rain, or one gets thorough drenching with rain, but instead they should let the wet clothing dry upon them, as by so doing they believe they will never take cold.

"The 'hot water cure' which amounts to a craze in points in the east, where no breakfast is considered complete without the addition of a cup of hot water, to 'rinse and stimulate the stomach,' is the latest of a long list of odd cures. It is believed by a great many that to take a drink of this kind before each meal, or even a single drink on possible case of dyspepsia. Speaking of odd cures and fashions, a few of them may be recounted. Less than ten years ago, a Parisian physician of some note prescribed for a patient suffering from a pulmonary complaint a cup of fresh call's blood after breakfast, another at noon, and one just before supper. The queer remedy proved efficacious. The patient improved under it rapidly, and finally became a well and hearty person. A statement of the case was read by the mercurial, excitable, and curiosity-loving Parisians, and started an interest in the blood-cure that in a very short time spread among all classes and became a veritable craze. Every person in any way troubled with weak lungs became a convert. The slaughter-houses in the suburbs of Paris were thronged every morning with crowds made up of all ranks, who actually fought to procure blood of the dying animals. There were delicate women and men, old and young, who came, some in their carriages, attended by their servants, and some who feebly crept along alone. The most delicately organized persons and the coarsest were on a common level, and it appears that the uninviting-looking fluid was served impartially by brawny-headed butchers. The great majority manifested no repugnance to drinking the fluid, and with a great many a taste for it was developed that ran into a craving. It acted much like rum on many, and even fowls were killed by some who were unable to get blood at the slaughter-houses. The demand was great, and at some places the blood was sold at a high price, each slaughter-house having a large run of customers, who would reach the 'pen' where the killing was going on as early as 5 a.m. Meanwhile a hot discussion went on in medical circles over the merits of the cure. Many celebrated physicians were dragged into argument, and were taken to see cured patients. The burden of professional opinion was against the cure, pronouncing it non-serious and positively injurious rather than helpful. This craze reached its limit in a few weeks, the grief of the butchers, who had reaped a golden harvest.

"The mud found at a certain spa in Germany, a few years ago, was discovered to possess remarkable medical properties. It was intensely black, pasty, thick, odoriferous mud, but thousands of persons hastened from all parts of Europe to bathe in it. To bathe in it was simply to be buried in it for an hour or two, and then to spend several hours in a tub of water to get rid of the reminiscence. The bath is described as being pleasant, and its curative effects, in cases of rheumatism, gout, and other diseases, are well attested. The mud was analyzed, and was found to possess active properties, magnetic and chemical. The mud baths have had their day, and are now visited by only a few travelling invalids, whom it remedies does not frighten. Similar to the mud bath is the sand bath, of which Joaquin Miller relates a tragic story. A party of explorers were crossing the sandy deserts, carrying six of their comrades, ill of a peculiar disease. The sand bath was proposed to them. They all assented, and were buried in the sand, their heads alone being above ground. In this position they were left, chatting with each other, in a tent rads having retired for the night in a tent close by, and not the least noise was heard. In the morning they were horrified to find that wolves had visited the camp, and eaten off each sick man's head level with the ground.

"The blue-glass cure is too fresh in the public mind to need more than passing mention. Of the thousands and hundreds of thousands of early believers that the health-giving and strengthening principles of passing sunlight might be largely increased by passing rays through blue glass, there are thousands yet remaining.

"The sun-bath cure, the fish-oil cure for consumption; the simple diet cure for all kinds of ailments; the celery cure for nervousness, and many others were the beginning, more or less, of a craze. The best principle of each is now included in every wise physician's array of remedies. There have been cures for complacency that found armies of followers, as was attested in Byron's time, when every man who laid claim to be considered a man of fashion was thin and pale, in marked contrast to the well-rounded, comfortable-looking, modern young man."

"My dear," said Mr Muckleham to his wife, "those hams I bought the other day are so badly spoiled they cannot be eaten."

THE "RUSTLER" OF THE LEVANT.

How the Mourmourismen Takes, in Smyrna, the place of the Texan Cowboy.

Everyone who has lived any length of time at Smyrna knows that among the Greek population of the town there is a class of ruffians, heroes of the knife, who go by the name of "Mourmourismen." They may be compared with the desperadoes of California and Texas in everything save in courage. These persons enjoy the admiration of the society to which they belong: swagger and bluster, with the reputation of having murdered a certain number of their fellow-creatures, compass their stock in trade. They extort money by threats of assassination, and some of them have risen so high in the world as to keep brilliant saloons and cafe-chantants on the aristocratic quay. Two of these swells were pointed out to me as having scored respectively fifteen and twenty murders. When a Mourmourismen dies, or is killed in a drunken brawl, he is buried with more pomp than if he were a public benefactor. The immunity from punishment which these worthies enjoy is due to the fact that each of them has a certain number of protectors among the upper class of Levantine society. When he is in want of money, or gets into trouble with the police, he applies to Tchelebi Dick or Tchelebi Tom, his patrons, who are ever ready to help him with their purses or their influence. The familiarity subsisting between the Smyrna rough and members of the upper classes is a symptom of the unhealthy moral condition into which the Levantine society of that town, for many generations virtually deprived of intercourse with the civilized world, has gradually drifted. The patrons of the Mourmourismen are generally to be found among the "young men about town," the local jeunesse doree, by whom it is considered a legitimate object of ambition to be on good terms with some well-known cut-throat. Among his own class the latter is an object of respect and veneration, so that it is no matter of surprise if he generally manages to defy the police. Nor is it to be disbelieved that in a society where the professional assassin finds such effectual encouragement and support, the Greek brigand has no difficulty in obtaining secret information and assistance in time of need.—Levant Herald.

Brutal Soldiers in Tonquin.

More disagreeable to notice than this unwholesome tipping is the conduct of the soldiers towards the townspeople. The Anamese have regained sufficient confidence to come back to their houses, or to come back and build new houses where the old ones have been swept away, but they have no love for their conquerors. It is no great wonder. The first thing one sees in one of the comparatively narrow cross streets is a huge Turco swaggering down the middle of the way, twirling a vicious-looking stick. The women scuttle indoors; the men squeeze themselves as near the walls as they can; the children salam reverentially, and can hardly get out the usual "Bon jour, capitaine" for terror. A little further on we come upon a couple of marine fusiliers, one of whom takes umbrage at the animated tone in which an old woman is conducting a bargain. With a kick of the foot he scatters her tray and little pile of cash over length and breadth of the street, and his companions laugh boisterously at the poor creature's misery. Even the officers, as they stroll along, relieve their ennui by playful cuts of the cane on the buttocks of passers-by. The Anamese is a cringing, pitiful creature at the best of times, but he has still a little self-respect, and he scowls as much as he dares under such treatment. It is not wonderful, therefore, that when he finds a solitary European he proceeds to wreak his vengeance upon him and wipes out a store of long pent-up grievances. The Tonquinese is a very different man from the timid inhabitant of Cochinchina, and it will require many years and a strong military occupation before the country is brought to anything like a peaceable state.

The Suicide of Scorpions.

In the volume published last year, the title of which is "The Lion and the Sun," by Dr. Willis, for fifteen years medical officer in Persia under the Overland Telegraph company, is the following narrative: "A story was told me by the late Dr. Favergren, a Swede in Persian employ, who had been twenty-five years in Shiraz, to the effect that scorpions, when they see no chance of escape, commit suicide; and he told me that when one was surrounded by a circle of live coals, it ran round three times, and then stung itself to death. I did not credit this, supposing that the insect was probably scorched, and so died. I happened one day to catch an enormous scorpion of the black variety. In Persia there are only two kinds—black, and light green, or greenish yellow; the black variety being supposed to be much the more venomous. The full-grown scorpions generally are from two to three inches long; I have seen one five inches when extended from the tip of the claws to the sting, but he was phenomenal. The one I caught was very large, and to try the accuracy of what I supposed to be a popular superstition I prepared in my courtyard a circle of live charcoal a yard in diameter. I cooled the bricks with water so that the scorpion could not be scorched, and tilted him from the finger-glass in which he was imprisoned unharmed, into the centre of the open space; he ran rapidly round the circle three times, came back to the centre, turned up his tail (where the sting is) and deliberately by three blows stabbed or stung himself in the head; he was dead in an instant. Of this curious scene I was an eye-witness, and I have seen it repeated by a friend in exactly the same way since, on my telling the thing, and with exactly the same result. For the truth of this statement I am prepared to vouch." What the preceding curious experiment lacks by way of evidence one may well be at a loss to answer. The mental condition of the lower creation have within them several curious creations yet unsolved beyond those so nicely settled for us in modern philosophy.

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A Miner's Eloquent Prayer.

At a recent meeting of the residents of Pocahontas Va., the scene of the terrible mine disaster, Peter Smith, whose brother was a victim, asked permission to pray, which being accorded he arose, and doffing his hat, made a touching appeal. The men outside the building also stood uncovered and, with the rain beating on their heads, listened while the rough miner prayed.

O God Almighty, we ask that you will give us some comfort in this hour of affliction. We pray you to let us have back the bodies of our poor relatives and not to refuse us the chance of burying them. O Lord God Almighty, put out the fires and help us so that we can give back the bodies to that earth from which we came. Help us, so our action to-night may be wise and that we may not be reckless or do things which the law don't allow. O Great God, let your pity come to these here poor widows and children who have no man to get them bread. Let this great and rich country give a few dollars, so that we will not see them starving; pray, God, don't let them go down under their troubles. If some poor fellow down below is yet alive, O God, kill him quick or show us how to help him. In the name of a merciful Jesus we beseech you to show pity on this town and help us bear the burden you have given us to bear. God help us and teach us to live our life so we die in peace when our time comes to die. If, as some say, the dead go to purgatory, then we pray you be merciful to our dead. Let their agony in this deadly mine help to square their account. God help and comfort all in Pocahontas, for the sweet sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

During the invocation the crying of the women, at first almost inaudible, rose in unison, until the volume nearly drowned the speaker's voice. As he sat down tears were flowing from every eye, and great confusion prevailed, as several of the women completely lost self-control. The "keening" of the Irish women mingled with the frenzied lamentation of the colored women. The scene was distressing in the extreme to the few strangers who witnessed it.

A Chinese Notion.

The Chinese, so far as can be learned from history, are the oldest nation on the earth. They are, to us of extreme modern ideas, a strange people, and some of their ways and fancies are not to be explained. The most painstaking scholars and antiquarians appear to have failed, in many particulars, to discover the motives that actuate the individuals of this prehistoric race. Yet, doubtless, the ceremonies that we see them going through in mining camps on the Pacific coast are all, to them, as full of meaning as the rites of modern religion are to the believers in Christianity. The Chinese, in some respects, are not unlike the army of the orthodox in the church militant, who believe in a personal life beyond. The Chinese custom of decapitating their enemies slain in the war is explained by the statement that they believe that the appearance of a person in the spirit world without a head is prima-facie evidence of having committed some crime, and punishment is awarded accordingly. Hence, the horrible mutilation which took place on the evacuation of Shanghai by the Ta-pings, when the imperial officers gave orders for the decapitation of every rebel body; and even the coffins containing the remains of prominent rebel leaders were broken open and dishonored to insure their punishment hereafter. Hence, also, the anxiety displayed by the friends of officers who lost their heads during the rebellion to recover them and stich them on to the bodies again, as much as £133 having been paid by the officers of the imperial army for the head of a friend.—Eureka (New) Sentinel.

Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada.

The annual meeting of this company was held on the 13th of March. The statements there submitted and the report of the proceedings cannot but be very gratifying to all the friends of the company. The Sun was incorporated in 1865, but only issued its first policy in May, 1871. Its progress since then, both in size and solidity, has been steady and satisfactory; on the list of the ten Canadian Life Companies it now stands third. In 1871 it received life applications for \$400,000; in 1874 for \$600,000; in 1878 for \$1,600,000; and in 1883 for over \$2,300,000. In 1871 the amount of life assurance in force was \$400,000; in 1874, \$1,700,000; in 1878, \$3,300,000; and in 1883, nearly \$7,000,000. Its annual income is now nearly \$300,000, or nearly \$1,600 for every working day in the year. Its resources amount to nearly \$1,200,000. As was pointed out at the annual meeting, if the same rate of progress is kept up during the next ten years as has prevailed in the past the income will then amount to from one and a quarter to one and a half millions and the assets to about four millions. This prospect is by no means a visionary one. The Company has reached the stage at which it can hardly fail to make rapid progress. There is a grand future opening out before it, and the officers can hope to see the day when it will rank as one of the largest and most powerful financial institutions in the country. A perusal of the accounts will show how strong and prosperous its condition is. It will be seen that the amount of new life business, the amount of new accident business, the assurances in force, both life and accident, the income and the assets, are all larger than in any preceding year in the Company's history.—Insurance Society, Montreal.

Humors of the London Strand.

At any time the humors of the Strand about eleven o'clock at night are well worthy of study, though the observer must need be serenely indifferent to his money, and of course his life. He must be careless of his watch, affect a supreme disregard for the regiment of toots, and be ready to embrace a horse as if he were living with the Hounyhums. For excitement a charge of Osman's Aras is nothing to it. The investment of a shilling may further procure him much pleasure. He may buy a printed photograph of any of the reigning beauties for a penny, find a wife for another, a choicely painted match-box, or a gay button-hole, on the same terms. But there is no end to the prospect. These attractions were enhanced last night, when news gentlemen anxious to earn an honest copper were crying out "Resignation of Mr. Gladstone" and illuminating their text with lights of all colors from "the penny box or dynamite," the latest plaything of the street, which will foster a good, healthy tone in the breasts of