

FOREIGN ECHOES.

Underground Railway in Paris—Mormon Missionaries in Calcutta—Wine from Raisins—Public Instruction in Italy, &c., &c.

After twelve years agitation, a concession has been signed for an underground railway in Paris.

There have recently been two trials of the navigability of the canal from St. Petersburg to the sea, which is to be formally opened by the emperor before long.

The original Eddystone lighthouse—the work of Smeaton—has been erected on the Hoe, at Plymouth, and a formal opening of it by Trinity house officials recently took place.

The fund being raised in England for a memorial to the late Dr. Pusey now amounts to over \$151,500. Canon Liddon has recently put his name down for a second donation of \$2,500.

A party of Mormon missionaries has lately arrived in Calcutta. The leader is an elderly Englishman, who has spent many years in Utah, and one of his companions is a son of the notorious Orson Pratt. This is not the first occasion on which efforts have been made to obtain converts to the Mormon faith in that city.

Impeccable noblemen and gentry in England find disposing their ancestral libraries the most convenient way of raising money. The example of the dukes of Marlborough and Hamilton is to be followed by Sir John Thorold, who in December proposes to bring to the hammer the valuable library of Syston hall, in Lincolnshire.

An idea of the consumption of ice in Germany may be formed from the fact that in Stettin alone, since the beginning of the year, upwards of fifty thousand tons of ice from Sweden and Norway were imported in 116 steamers and sailing vessels. From eleven marks a ton, the price has latterly risen to twenty-four marks, and is likely to go still higher, in consequence whereof the manufacture of artificial ice is attracting much attention.

The islands of Mauritius and Reunion, in the Indian Ocean, which are 115 miles apart, are to have telegraphic communication with each other by means of signals flashed from the mountain tops. The instrument adopted for the purpose is the heliograph, a small mirror which is used in trigonometrical surveying. The population of the two islands is 400,000, and, as Mauritius is about being connected by cable with all parts of Europe and Asia, the heliograph will include Reunion in the system. The sun telegraph, which has already been tested, will be useful in transmitting intelligence from one island to the other of the approach of cyclones, which are common and very destructive there.

The number of works sent in to the Royal Academy this spring reached the enormous total of 8,093 an increase of 811 over last year. Of these only 761 were unreservedly accepted by the council, 2,116 being classed as doubtful, and 5,216 entirely rejected. In the end as many as 1,856 works were exhibited, and of these 1,656 were sent in by outsiders, the members of the academy being represented by a sum total of only 202 works. This total included 166 painting, 23 pieces of sculpture, 9 architectural drawings, 4 engravings, as against 906 paintings, 263 water color-drawings, 169 pieces of sculpture, 135 architectural drawings, 47 miniatures and engravings, 58 crayon drawings, and 97 engravings, all from the hands of non-members of the Royal Academy.

One of the industries of thrifty France is the making of wine from raisins, which is carried on especially at Marseilles, Cette, Bordeaux, and Bercy. About seventy thousand tons of raisins are imported into France from the neighboring high countries and Syria, costing nearly \$7,500,000. By softening into water, and the addition of sugar and alcohol, a harmless wine is produced, of which no less than three million hectoliters are made. Another dodge is to treat the settlings, the residuum of the native harvests of Spain, Portugal, Sicily, etc., with sugar, alcohol, and water, and make from the compound what is called "second vat" wines. Thus France, in spite of phylloxera, retains her position as the greatest wine-exporting country in the world.

An improved electric railway about 4 1/2 miles long, and 39 inches gauge is now in operation between the cities of Frankfort and Offenbach, the time being about 25 minutes. The four dynamo-electric machines are driven by two steam engines of 125 horse power each. In connection with the cables which conduct the current of electricity, a switch is provided to regulate and direct it. The conductors consist of tubes slitted along their entire length at the bottom and insulated on poles like telegraph wires. A small cylinder slides or runs in the tubes, and from this a conductor connects the car and the dynamo. The use of this conductor prevents interruptions and cut-outs, which are caused by frosts and moisture when the carriage runs on a conductor, as in the Berlin-Lichterfelde Electric Railway.

Great excitement was caused a few days ago on the Thames embankment by the chase of a porpoise up the river by men armed with rifles on board a steam-tug. The porpoise was a large and lively specimen, and gave his pursuers some trouble. He was three times fired at near Westminster bridge, the last shot evidently taking effect, as he gave a tremendous leap under one of the arches on the Lambeth side and then disappeared in deep water, the ebb running down very rapidly at the time. Only a day or two previous a porpoise was seen beyond Chelsea bridge, and several have lately been seen within the mouth of the river. A female porpoise, in fine condition, measuring four feet six inches, weight fifty-six pounds, was caught the day before off Suffern and Providence wharves, Belvedere road, by a lighterman, who succeeded in hooking it with his hither.

The Russians are reducing their army expenditure by \$4,500,000 per annum. According to the *Moscow Gazette*, this economy is to be brought about by extending the time of service and decreasing the annual number of recruits. Instead of the 260,000 recruits serving respectively three years for infantry and four years for cavalry, it was decided at the last meeting of the commission charged with the consideration of the subject: 1. To reduce the Caucasian re-

giments and the whole reserve forces in times of peace so as to diminish the standing army by 100,000 men, 2. To fix the period of service at five years for infantry and artillery and six years for cavalry, 3. To settle the annual contingent of recruits at 190,000 men serving a period of from five to six years, and at 44,000 men serving for nine months, which will diminish the annual levy of recruits by 25,000 men. If the reduction cost of a recruit, is put at \$45, this reduction will save more than \$4,500,000 per annum.

The Italian government has recently published some figures on the subject of public instruction in Italy. The budget of public instruction has risen from 16,300,000 francs in 1871 to 130,400,000 francs in 1883; the number of schools from 21,358 in 1811 to 42,510 in 1881; and the number of pupils in the same period from 1,008,674 to 1,928,700. There are, moreover, 701 gymnasiums or secondary schools with 3,674 professors and 41,124 scholars, and having a five years' course of study. Above the gymnasiums, again, are colleges to the number of 298, with 1,601 professors and 11,133 students, and a course of study lasting three years. In addition, there are 383 technical schools, with an attendance of 22,120. Lastly, the Royal universities, 18 in number, registered in 1881 10,592 students, the two most important being those of Turin with 1,651 students, and Naples with 2,851 students. There have still to be added 21 high schools independent universities, instructing and together 1,948 scholars.

This year's vintage in France are likely to be of quite exceptional excellence. A good vintage, however, does not, unfortunately, mean what it once did, the ravages of phylloxera during the past sixteen years having so largely diminished the number of vines. A few figures will show what havoc has been made by this scourge of French vinelands. Fourteen years ago there were 2,400,000 hectares of vineyards, and now there are scarcely 1,000,000 under cultivation. The production has fallen within the same period from 72,000,000 to 30,000,000 of hectolitres. Not only has exportation become immensely reduced, but importation has to be resorted to for the supply of this country. Within only the last four years wines have been brought into the country from Spain, Italy, and Greece to the value of 1,000,000 francs. Of the 1,500,000 hectares devastated, not more than 20,000 hectares have as yet been replanted, which is not to be wondered at, considering that it costs as much to replant as the soil itself is worth.

A Human Skye Terrier.

The passenger who attracted the most attention during the voyage of the City of Chicago from Liverpool to New York was Theodore Jo Jo, a boy of 16, whose face resembles that of a Skye Terrier. His face is covered with a long wavy mass of silken hair, which in color is between light red and silver gray. It hangs upon his brow down to his eyes, parting in the centre and waiving off to either side like that of a fancy terrier. It droops from his cheeks in long wavy locks, grows from the nostrils, and hangs from both ears. The length of this luxuriant growth of hair varies from two to four inches, and it is so thick that the skin beneath is visible only in scattered spots. The eyes of this dog-faced boy also resemble very closely those of a terrier. They are slightly bluish in color, almost perfectly round, and the whites are visible entirely around the pupils. His mouth is furnished with only the two canine teeth above and two incisors below, and all four are thin and sharp, resembling miniature tusks rather than human teeth. The entire body is covered with a growth of thin, light hair, but the thick heavy locks are found only on the face. He speaks Russian and German tolerably well, and a few words of English and took great pride in showing that he could write his name by signing it to the back of his pictures in large, flowing characters. The dog-faced boy was captured in the forests of Kostroma, in the center of Russia, about eleven years ago, with his father, who is described as a wild man, with the same peculiar face which the boy now possesses. Jo Jo was then little more than a baby, and his face was comparatively hairless. The father was exhibited all over Europe until three years ago, when he died.—*New York Times*.

Alaska Devil

Victor Hugo's description of the devil fish has always had for me a terrible fascination, but here in Alaska, this land of wonders, the Indians recount stories equally startling, and almost all of them substantially corroborated by good testimony. Yesterday an Indian hooked up from one of the wharf posts an octopus five feet from tip to tip, and to the query "What are you going to do with him?" answered: "Me eat him," and in fact with them the flesh is esteemed a great delicacy, although when alive the animal is an object of terror. The flesh when boiled is perfectly white, and tastes something like cod's tongues, but while eating it the recollection of what the faintly was when alive takes away all enjoyment. It is not such a harmless amusement this fishing for devil-fish, and one which everybody would choose for an afternoon sport. There is only one really skilful fisher in town, a mission boy, who fearlessly wades into the water near his haunts, and, seeing the animal, tears him from the rock. Of course his satanic majesty resents the intrusion upon his rights and retaliates by winding one or more arms around the limbs of the boy, but with a quick and peculiar motion the Indian tears them off with a noise resembling the ripping of heavy cotton cloth, at the same time slitting open the sack of the animal. It is a dangerous proceeding, and one which makes the beholder cringe to see the soft slimy arm of the octopus winding itself around and gradually taking hold with its innumerable suckers, surely and gradually drawing its victim down. Only on one occasion, historically speaking, has one of these creatures been found of sufficient size to attack a canoe and one Indian was the only survivor.

Increase of Wealth.

An English statistician maintains that the daily increase of wealth in the United States is upward of \$25,000,000, or about \$858,000,000 a year, which is one-third as much as the increase in wealth as the whole of the rest of the world. England, whose increase of wealth is next to our own, makes only a profit on all her business of \$300,000,000 a year, or but a little over a third of our own.

FALLING A MILE.

A Startling Adventure in a Balloon—Dropping Like a Shot From the Clouds to the Earth.

Monday a startling experience of Messrs. Gaston Tissandier and Frederick Gower, husband of Nordica, the American prima donna, showed that the practical dangers of ballooning are still far from being surmounted, however well actual disasters may be avoided by coolness and skill. These two gentlemen ascended from the Tissandier establishment at Anteuil about 1 o'clock, to continue a series of scientific experiments upon certain theories advanced by M. Gower. They sailed slowly past Paris to the southeast at a height of about 1,500 feet, and disappeared in the direction of Vincennes. In answer to the inquiry of a *Morning News* representative M. Gower relates what befell the voyagers afterwards.

"We were at a height of six thousand feet above the village of Fontenay. A fete was going on there, and the faint echo of drums, mingled with the cries of children and the barking of dogs, just reached our ears amid the awful silence of the heavens. We were among the clouds of the lower heavens, and had before our eyes the magnificent spectacle of their formation. The forces of nature moved them to and fro in a kind of sullen majesty, now piling them into a mountain just above our heads, and then, as the mass toppled to its fall, dispersing it suddenly, as by a blow from the hammer of some invisible Titan, making rifts through which we saw the fair, green lands, and quickly closing them, as the vaporous monster rolled into fresh combinations. It was the inner temple of creative power, perhaps the greatest sight revealed to human eyes, and we stood entranced in silent admiration.

"Suddenly we felt a breath of cold and biting air, as though the world had revolved beneath us and brought us over the pole. At the same moment the needle upon a vertical scale (from which I had been reading indications of level) began to travel with a startling speed. A sound like the roar of surf filled our ears for an instant and then gave place to the noise of the fete, which had now swelled into a cry, as it seemed, from every living thing below. Tissandier threw out sand, and the sand flew up in our faces. Our breath came short and hard, and we felt the rushing air as on a steamer against the wind. We were falling, suddenly, as though the great globe above our heads had given way! Yet nothing visible had happened, save that the undersurface of the envelope had all at once grown hollow and wrinkled, like the face of an aged man. The clouds were gone as by magic, and the earth was rushing at us, with its thousand voices in full cry. Tissandier stood cool and firm, dealing out the ballast with steady hand and counting the bags that remained.

"Stand by the anchor," he said, quietly, as if at his study table, "and be ready to cut away when I tell you."

"Down we went; the drag-ropes touched the earth—trailed across the fields, with scarcely perceptible difference in our fall. The ground seemed alive with men hurrying from every side, with here and there a horseman among them. A meadow was just beneath, and a quick glance beyond showed the edge of a forest. The balloon trembled as from a blow, and our speed across the field was suddenly doubled. We had fallen into a squall.

"Cut away," said the steady voice of the aeronaut, and the anchor fell. Over went a bag of ballast, too, and, thus suddenly lightening by thirty pounds, the balloon regained its poise at fifty feet above the ground, and our fall of a mile through the air was safely ended.

"Never was sound precept more quickly followed by practical illustration. Less than an hour before Tissandier had been dwelling on the need of reserving ballast as a precaution. 'There are in the air,' said he, 'occasional rarefactions into which a balloon can fall without the slightest warning. When you are near the ground it does not much matter. But no prudent aeronaut at a height of a thousand meters or more will allow his ballast to become even nearly exhausted.' And this was precisely what our own case showed so shortly afterward. We encountered a partial vacuum, a veritable pit in the air, where the lifted power of gas suddenly fell to almost nothing. Air was, of course, on the way from some area of a greater density to restore the normal pressure, and of this we had ample evidence upon reaching the ground. The anchor struck the soft earth in the most favorable position, buried half its flukes in the soil, and was snatched out with scarcely an effort by the flying car. Again and again the heavy iron bounded fifty feet into the air, and it was only when a score of stout laborers had laid hold of the drag-ropes (at cost of a few tumbles), that the gambols of our playful monster were brought to an end. And then Tissandier, while obliging hands folded and packed the balloon, produced a notebook and his map, and calmly completed his record of the excursion."—[*Paris News*].

A Tale for the Marines.

The sudden change in the weather reminded the young woman of her sealskin sacque packed away up-stairs.

She brought it down and showed it to her father.

"It looks a little worn and shabby, my dear," said the old gentleman; "I will give you the money to get a new one before cold weather sets in."

"Oh, no, you needn't, papa. A little cleaning and brushing and it can be made to look very well for another season at least."

She then went into the kitchen and made some biscuits for tea that reminded the writer of swansdown, only they weren't quite so heavy.

The name and address of this girl will be given to any young man whose references are satisfactory.

Paying for Value Received.

"How much did Mr. Smith give you at his wedding?" asked a minister's wife of her husband.

"Two dollars."

"Well, that's a very insignificant sum for a rich man like Mr. Smith to pay for such a service."

"It does seem a small amount," he replied, "but you must remember that he has been married before."

A bicycle to run on ice may be called an icicle.

A. P. 2

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