

Transatlantic Balloon Travel.

Dr. R. G. Wells, now in Cincinnati, tells an Enquirer reporter that he wishes to organize a balloon company to make a balloon big enough to carry 100 persons. "I think," he says, "that it would prove very profitable to the company operating. It would be attached to a cable which could be paid out to any length desired. Prices for the ascension would vary according to the distance, which would be from 1,000 feet to a mile. Should the people here fail to patronize it, it could easily be transferred to Louisville and other cities, where for a time it would undoubtedly prove a great attraction." "What about long-distance trips?" "That is just what I should like. If the car were properly equipped, there is no reason in the world why we could not make San Francisco, the City of Mexico, or even cross the ocean. An electric motor steering and propelling apparatus is practicable now, and I should not feel the least hesitancy in undertaking the voyage across the Atlantic. Of course a lifeboat that could live in any sea would be attached to the car. We would also have a parachute, which, in the case of the captive balloon, would prove a great additional attraction, as descents from high distances could be made before large crowds of spectators." "Balloon travelling is fast becoming practicable, then?" "I think so, and have no doubt but that before long some adventurous aeronaut will make the north pole in his air ship, and even sail completely around the world. I should like nothing better than to make the attempt, and think that an American should be the first to accomplish this great undertaking." "What other projects have you on hand, Doctor?" "Well, sir, I am at present working on some apparatus in which to pass over Niagara Falls. I think that some time this summer I shall go over the falls in a large hollow ball fifteen feet in diameter, or else attempt the same in a parachute. Then, again, if Russia and England make war, I shall ally myself with Russia, and use a war kite, which I have lately invented and will have patented. It will be in the form of an ordinary kite, made of steel plates, and will be large enough to carry two or more men, and will be used to inspect English camps and equipments from above."

Curious Customs among Russian Maidens.

On New Year, in the villages and among the lower class of the rural populace, the maidens—no married women or widows are admitted—assemble in some empty house, closely barricade the doors and cover the windows, lest some curious village beau should overlook the sacred rites. The guessing turns chiefly upon the probability of their marrying the ensuing year and on the personality of the destined, as the prospective bridegroom is called. To find this out the girls sit on the floor in a circle, and each has before her a small heap of wheat or some other grain. A fowl is placed in the centre, and the owner of the heap from which he will begin to pick may expect to be married in the course of the next year. In a basin filled with water each guesser drops a ring of the same form, with a slight mark not recognizable by touch. The lamp is extinguished till each maiden has fished out a ring, then relighted; and those who have found their own rings feel quite confident of their matrimonial prospects. They also come out in the street to ask the names of passers-by, believing their future sweethearts will bear the same. A guessing of more general nature follows: All participants but one leave the room; she places in a row on the table a bunch of keys, a ring, a thimble, small heaps of salt, earth, and so on. All these objects are covered with cups of the same pattern, and then the door is opened. Then the girls hasten to the table; each lifts the fatal cup, and becomes sad or merry as the contents may tell. A ring is speedy marriage; keys, an opulent household; salt is thrift; a thimble, industrious life; and earth, an early death. A curious vestige of an ancient custom, is the guessing with swimming lights. Both sexes participate. A large, flat dish, filled with water, is put on the table. Empty, halved walnut shells, with small burning tapers inside, are launched on the miniature ocean; each player watches his particular vessel; if it remains swimming till the taper has burned down, it signifies a prosperous career; if overturned, an early death or a fatal accident; if a man's and a woman's shell come in contact and swim together, it signifies marriage; if the owners are of the same sex, friendship. A game similar to this, but played on a much larger scale, is popular in some parts of India.

A Lesson in Advertising.

The lonesome Jersey sign-board, standing chin deep in the flood and over head in the rain, warning people not to have a picnic in flannel suits and lawn dresses that afternoon, brought to my mind a long dreary, dismal November day I once passed—how I passed it, only a merciful Providence knows—in Chapin, Ill. Chapin is a junction town not quite so large as good business office. It rained all day. It got up about daylight to rain and kept on raining harder every hour. I had to wait all day long for the train I wanted. In the afternoon, when my letters were all answered and my newspaper work was accomplished, I stood at the window and looked dolefully out on the flooded landscape. The trees stood knee deep in the water. Everything was soaked. Everything dripped, drip, dripped. Whatever could float floated. What couldn't float sank. Water, water everywhere. In the clouds, in the air, on the ground, drip, gurgles, splash, drop and stream, swamp and torrent. And right in all this universe of moisture a great big sign, painted in white letters, black shaded, on a board fence, a sign so big that you could read it half a mile away, and it stared me in the face

even when I shut my eyes and turned my back to it: "Bethesda Water at Hatch's Now, who the mischief wanted any of any kind of water on a day like that? It made me so mad that I tried to quit looking at it. But I couldn't. If I crawled under the bed, it was there; if I thrust my head into the flue, it stared down the chimney. By and by, in utter despair, completely knocked out and exhausted, I yielded to my fate, went out in the rain, went right straight to Hatch's and drank a glass of Bethesda water, and if there was anything in the world I hated, it was Bethesda water.

As a newspaper man I could only draw one moral from this: "Persistent advertising will tell."—Burdette.

Russian Funerals.

We learn, from Khol's work on St. Petersburg, that black coffins are seldom used in Russia; coffins are generally brown, but children have pink, grown-up unmarried girls sky blue, while other females are indulged with a violet color. Among the poorer classes the coffin is adorned with pine branches; while among the rich, the whole way from the habitation to the church is strewn with the same. Mr. Khol says:

"The coffin is carried to the church uncovered, that the acquaintances who may happen to meet it in the street may have a last glimpse of their friend's face. The lid is carried before. The coffin is followed, even in the day-time, by a band of torch-bearers, with broad cocked hats, and enveloped in long black mantles.

"All those who meet the funeral-procession take off their hats, and offer up a prayer to heaven for the dead; and so earnest are their devotions that they do not replace their hats until the cavalcade has disappeared from sight. This mark of respect is shown to every corpse—to Russians as well as to Protestants and Catholics. In the church the corpse is again set out in state, and the priests, clad in black and white, and holding in their hands wax lights enveloped in crape, supply the dead with everything they judge necessary for the journey. On his forehead is placed a fillet ornamented with holy 'saws' and images. In his hand is stuck a cross of wax or other substance. He then receives the passport.

"Even a plate of food is placed near the coffin. This funeral dish is termed *kulja*, and generally consists of rice cooked with honey, formed into a kind of pudding. This is stewed with raisins by way of ornament, and on the top lies a cross of the same fruit. The wealthy instead of raisins, use small pieces of sugar.

"After this a mass, in Russian ecclesiastical language, Panichide is chanted by the priests. During this the relations take the last farewell of the departed, all kiss his hand, and amongst the lower orders the most doleful and eloquent addresses succeed. If the deceased be a married man, the widow gives way to the most moving and poetical expressions of sorrow. Wringing her hands, and staring all the while at the face of the corpse, as if he were still alive, she cries now louder, now more gently,—

"*Golubtschik moi, Drushotschik. Alas! my little dove, my little friend, why hast thou deserted me? Did I not prepare everything at home for thee with love, that thou must spurn thy wife? Woe is me! How fresh and well didst thou sit with me and thy children only six weeks ago, and playedst with thy little son Feodor, who is three years old; and now thou art dead and still, and answerest not a word to thy wife and weeping children! My little friend, my husband, lord, awake! awake!*"

"Amidst this lamentation without end the lid of the coffin is closed, and the procession moves on to the burial-ground.

A Sketch of Chief Poundmaker

Poundmaker, one of the Cree chiefs, and beyond comparison the ablest Indian in the northwest, is a particularly fine specimen of his race, being over six feet high, of rather slight build, and singularly erect. He has an intelligent and rather refined-looking face, a high, prominent forehead, and a nose of the purely Grecian type, while their is nothing coarse or sensual about the lower portion of his face. His hands are small and delicate in appearance, his fingers being long and faultlessly tapered. Though a Pagan, he has more than once betrayed a strong inclination to embrace Catholicism. His father was a Cree and his mother a half-sister to the great Blackfoot chief, Crowfoot. His grandmother, on the side of his mother, is said to have been a Stoney, and this is corroborated by the great chief's peculiar cast of countenance. Poundmaker's career has been in many respects a remarkable one. It was he who accomplished peace between the Blackfeet and Crees, hitherto hereditary enemies. He had trouble with the Indian department last winter, and he is not a man to quickly forget any indignity offered to himself or his people. There is not an Indian in the northwest who knows the country better than Poundmaker. In 1881, when Lord Lorne went across the plains, Poundmaker joined the party for the purpose of interpreting the language of the Blackfeet into Crees as the Cree interpreter accompanying the party did not understand Blackfoot. Johnny Saskatchewan was taken along to act as guide, but between Battleford and the crossing of the Red Deer, the halfbreed lost himself, and for the last two days Poundmaker was "guiding the guide." After crossing the Red Deer, Poundmaker took the lead and traveled in almost an air-line to Blackfoot crossing, though there was no trail, and what was even more remarkable, arranged his "time-table" so that he hit the best grass and water to be had, just about camping-time on every occasion.

CAMPAIGN NOTES.

Engle Blasts from the Front.

Chief Little Pine is reported to have been poisoned by his relatives for pursuing a peace policy.

The Battle River has been bridged, and will be protected by a detachment of volunteers.

Rogers, of the Foot Guards, fell while handing tobacco to a comrade.

A proposition is made by Montreal militia officers that the government should reward the volunteers in the Northwest with a quarter section of good land, and that the orphans and widows of the slain be also rewarded.

The Governor General has consented to be patron of the St. John ambulance association.

The ladies of Toronto are continuing to send supplies to the volunteers at the front. They have commenced making up bedclothing, for the sick and wounded, and also fatigue jackets for the troops.

All the Indians arrested at Fort Macleod for cattle stealing have been released, as it was not deemed prudent to prosecute them.

The youngest volunteer in the engagement at Fish Creek, a young bugler of the 90th, named Buchanan, who looks no more than 14 years of age, is much praised for the coolness he displayed during the whole action. He rendered good service by carrying a reserve of ammunition from the wagons to the skirmishers. The ammunition ran about given out when the plucky youngster appeared on the scene, dragging along a box of Snider ammunition in one hand and a pair of Martini-Henry cartridges in the other. Despising the rebel fire he ran along the line shouting "This way for Martini-Henry ammunition." "Who wants Soldier cartridges?" and only retired to the rear when he was required to assist with some of the wounded at the hospital.

Great indignation exists among the troops at the proof which has been given that the rebels attempted to finish all of the wounded who were left for any length of time in exposed positions on the field. Poor Watson of "C" Company of Infantry, before he died, informed Dr. Ryerson, Surgeon of the Grenadiers, that while he lay wounded in front of the retreating line of skirmishers on the right, the advancing half-breeds, when within twenty-five yards of him, discharged their weapons at him, and the bullets whistled close by his head. After this he lay still and feigned to be dead, and he was not again fired at. All of the dead had several bullets in their bodies, and the wounded who were unable to gain cover were invariably the object of heavy fire until removed by the ambulance bearers.

The Duck Lake Fight is thus described by an eye witness:—The enemy had the advantage in every way as they fired and from behind a hill. There were 200 or 250 of them and 99 of Orzler's force. He puts the rebel loss at twenty-three killed and seventeen wounded, but this last may be doubtful. He confirms the death of Constable Garrett, making three policemen killed. Napier's last words were, "Tell my mother I died like a man." William Blake said, "I am shot—God have mercy on my soul." Morton said, "You can't do anything for me—I am shot through the heart. Take care of my wife and family. Tell them I died like a man on the battle field." Elliott, the policeman, said, "Fight on, boys; don't let them beat us." On Friday after the battle three policemen were buried outside of Carleton. Then followed the story of retreat from Carleton, being a string of sleighs a mile long, consisting of three hundred women and children.

Russia and India.

The misunderstanding between England and Russia gives new interest to the statements made by the late Col. Burnaby respecting the Russian army. That brave officer spent one of his leaves of absence in making a winter journey from St. Petersburg across the Russian Empire to the city of Khiva in Turkestan, a distance of about three thousand miles by road.

He says in his "Ride to Khiva" that the Empire of Russia is divided into fourteen military districts, each having its own army and its own governor. Thus, for example, the Polish provinces forming the district of Warsaw are guarded by an army of more than a hundred thousand men, while Turkestan, which is next to Afghanistan, has a force of less than fifteen thousand. These army corps number in all about eight hundred and fifty thousand soldiers, which could be increased to thirteen hundred thousand by calling out the reserves.

This has a formidable sound. But we are to bear in mind that the Russian army is scattered over a territory of vast extent. But, on the other hand, so strictly are foreigners excluded, and so strict is the censorship over the press, that it would be possible for the governor of Turkestan to assemble a force of one hundred and fifty thousand men, and form enormous depots of provisions and war material within three hundred and fifty miles of the Indian frontier, without anything being suspected of the movement, either in Europe or in India.

Colonel Burnaby further observes that "you cannot be with the Russian officers half an hour without remarking how they long for war." Nothing that the Czar could do, he thought would be so popular with the officers of the army, whether posted in Europe or in Asia, as entering upon a war with England for the possession of India.

Upon the whole, Colonel Burnaby, travelling in 1876, brought away from Khiva the impression that Russia would one day make a serious attempt upon India, and that this attempt would give England trouble.

SMELLING AN EARTHQUAKE.

A Sailor's Nose That Was Better Than Any Barometer Ever Made.

"We was anchored in the harbor of Manila," said a bronzed and weather-beaten sailor as he stretched his legs under the table and looked meditatively at a glass of beer which had just been placed before him "It were in the ship *Albert*, as I shipped into fur the voyage, and our old man's name was Cole. The old man was the best I ever see at scenting a blow. Why, bless ye, that nose of his were better than any barometer that ever was made. Many a time I've seen him walking up and down the poop with the sky as blue and wind as fair as anything. Suddenly he'd stop, cock up his nose, and give a sort of sniff like. Then he'd sniff all around the compass, and sing out to shorten sail and get ready for a blow. And the blow came, too. The old man used to say he sometimes lied, but he never made a mistake.

"Well as I was saying, we was anchored in the harbor of Manila. It was the most beautiful day you ever see. Not enough wind to ripple the water, and not a cloud in the sky. The old man went ashore. Bimeby he come aboard. As he stepped over the side he stopped and gave a great sniff. Then he sniffed harder and harder all 'round the compass. Then he looked scared like and rushed below to look at his barometer. He brought the barometer up on deck and placed it where he could keep his eye on it, and began to get the ship ready for a typhoon, for that was what he thought were a-comin'. The barometer didn't go down a bit, but that didn't fool the old man. He sent down the sky-sail and royal yards, bent on purventer back-stays, put double gaskets on all the sails cepting the fore and main tawp'sls, and did everything he could think of to get the ship in condition for a typhoon. We overhauled the sheets, halyards, buntlines, clewlines, and braces of the fore and main tawp'sls, and fixed the gaskets so as we could get um off in about two shakes of a lamb's tail, for you see we wanted to be able to get sail on her quick to keep her off shore if so be as she drag her anchor. We put out both anchors and all the chain we had, and it was a powerful lot I can tell you.

"Well, that night there want any sign of a blow—just as calm and pleasant as it had been and there was the old man a-walkin' up and down the deck purty much all night a-lookin' at that barometer which never moved an inch. The next morn'g the barometer did go down a little and the old man looked act'ly pleased, for you see he'd rather be in the biggest blow that ever was than be caught at a mistake in smellin' bad weather. Well about noon that day, while we were all at dinner there came a dull, rumblin' sound and the ship began to tremble all over like as if she had struck a rock. Then she began to go up and we rushed out of the fore'dle to see a great tidal wave sweeping into the harbor, and on shore the dust and bricks and trees was flyin' round in great shaps. We was all pretty well scared, but fort'nately we had out so much chain that we rode the wave in safety. In the midst of the confusion I saw the old man clinging for dear life to the fierail and heard him shout: 'A earthquake by thunder; I thought 'twas a typhoon.'

"Worth While."

Prince Albert Victor, the prospective heir to the throne of England, made his maiden speech the other day, to an assembly of lords of his own age. "Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing accurately," he said; "whether you sharpen a pencil or black your boots, do it thoroughly and well."

A young lad who was a pupil at Rugby school was noted for his bad penmanship. When his teachers remonstrated, he replied, "Many men of gen us have written worse scrawls than I do. It is not worth while to worry about so trivial a fault."

Ten years later, this lad was an officer in the English army, doing service in the Crimean war. An order he copied for transmission was so illegible that it was given incorrectly to the troops, and the result was the loss of a great many brave men.

A few years ago, the keeper of a life-saving station on the Atlantic coast found that his supply of powder had given out. The nearest village was two or three miles distant, and the weather was inclement. He concluded that as it "was not worth while to go so far expressly for such a trifle," he would wait for a few days before sending for a supply.

That night a vessel was wrecked within sight of the station. A line could have been given to the crew if he had been able to use the mortar, but he had no powder. He saw the drowning men perish one by one in his sight, knowing that his alone was to blame. A few days afterward he was dismissed from the service.

The experience of every man will suggest similar instances that confirm the truth of the young prince's advice to the lads of his own age.

Whatever is right to do should be done with our best care, strength and faithfulness of purpose. We have no scales by which we can weigh our duties or determine their relative importance in God's eyes. That which seems a trifle to us may be the secret spring which shall move the issues of life and death.

If, as is stated, the stomach of an ostrich is located at its back between the wings, after a hearty meal we imagine it might look a little roundshouldered.

A boy in one of the public schools while engaged in defining words, a few days since, made a mistake that was not a mistake. He said, "A demagogue is a vessel that holds beer, wine, gin, whiskey or any other kind of intoxicating liquor."

We don't know for certain there is a man in the moon but we are dead sure there is one in the honey-moon.

NORTH-WEST INDIANS.

What Captain Kerwan Tells The Americans About Them.

Writing from Swift Current, Captain Kerwan says:—Squaws are lounging about the fringe of the camp. They are of mixed tribes, the Crees and Chippewas, and they are picking up refuse with which to make their midday meal. They are gaunt, big boned, and hungry looking. Their faces are painted red and their blankets are of many hues. The old and middle aged carry paposes on their backs, and they are not good looking in our eyes. Even the children are not fair to the eye. As the men are dismissed the squaws squat around the camp kitchens and look at the cooks preparing breakfast as dogs look at their masters, while waiting for a bone. At this season of the year they cook and eat the fish and scraps, which the squaws collect while the bucks lounge around their tepees pitched on a neighboring hill. The fingers of the squaws are covered with brass rings and the lower part of their legs are encased in buckskin and often ornamented with bead work about the ankle. They all smoke, and as they open their "fire bags," which are usually nearly empty, they look at us and grin. This we interpret as a plea for tobacco, and an odd piece of plug or some fine cut is thrown to them by the soldiers. Some of their boys are amusing a group by shooting at a tin can with bows and arrows. At twenty paces they knock the mark over with an expertness born of practice. They never ask for presents, but they appeal by looks to the white men around them. Of "skidewagboos" or fire water they know little or nothing, for the sale of liquor is prohibited. An odd one among them may be found doing a little work around the village, and occasionally a buck will carry water for a small consideration. In winter they shoot black-tailed deer and antelope, and trade the meat and skins for groceries and knick-knacks. The faces of some of them are striped diagonally with black, and their heads are ornamented with the feathers of birds of many plumages. . . . There are nine canvas lodges in all, stained a dirty copper color by the smoke which struggles through the open crown. I am just in time to see two more families arrive in Red River carts. No iron is used in their construction. They are rough hewn and small. The squaws are walking and guiding the ponies. The paposes are seated on piles of rags within the carts. Two bucks follow with pipes in their mouths. As the carts reach the encampment the squaws unharness the ponies and take about a dozen light poles from each cart. They throw them on the ground where they intend to erect their tepees. A box containing the treasures of the family are taken out, and the buck sits down. The light poles are on their ends in a circle with one end stuck in the ground. The other ends intermingle at the open. A cord hangs from the upper end of one of the ropes, and a squaw, taking the rope in her hand, walks around the circle, and thus gets the rope to bind the upper end of the poles together. When the lower end of the rope is tied to one of the poles the skeleton of the tepee is made, and it is ready for the canvas. Then the squaw drags the tent covering from the cart. The crown is fastened to a pole that is on the ground. Unaided she strains at the weight and lifts it to its place, when she pulls it over the framework and fastens the door with pieces of wood for buttons, and the tepee is erected. A few old rags are thrown inside, some scraps of wood are collected, and the tepee is ready for habitation. The ponies are allowed to run loose, and the non-treaty nomads are at home.

The Planet and the Star.

A glance at the western sky "at evening," will show a star surpassing in size and brightness every twinkler in the firmament. This star is the planet Jupiter, the giant member of the sun's family, thirteen hundred times as large as the earth, and though more than four hundred million miles away, the most radiant star that shines in the heavens, Venus alone being excepted.

A short distance east of the princely planet, a bright star may be seen. It is Regulus, or Alpha Leonis, the leading brilliant in the constellation Leo, or the Lion and the lower star in the handle of the stary Sickle, the distinguishing feature of the constellation.

If planet and star are closely watched, it will readily be seen that Jupiter is drawing nearer Regulus. The approach will continue until the 30th of May, when Jupiter will pass to the east of Regulus and keeping on his eastward course, will leave the star behind. The stars have been near neighbors for seven months, having twice before been in conjunction or passed each other on the celestial road.

A fine opportunity is thus afforded for studying the differences in the movement of a fixed star and a planet. The star is apparently unchangeable in its position being carried westward by the eastward motion of the earth in her orbit.

The planet is rightly named "a wanderer," for seen from the earth he moves now forward, now backward, and now he is stationary. For this reason during the winter he has been sometimes on the west of Regulus, and his movements have been unusually interesting.

An observer judging from the appearance of the two stars, would consider Jupiter of far greater importance. In reality the planet is of little account by the side of the star. The former is a dark body, borrowing almost all his light from the sun, and invisible from the nearest fixed star. The latter is a glorious sun shining by its own light and piercing the star depths from a distance so inconceivable that if it were this nig blotted from the sky, it would go to shine there for many years to come.