

SEVENTH

Annual Tournament

Nebraska State Firemen's Association, to be held at Red Cloud,

July 16th to 19th,

PROGRAM.

First Day, Tuesday, July 16.

Reception of Firemen,
Meeting of Board of Control at 8 p. m.
Serenade in evening, Red Cloud Cornet band.

Second Day, Wednesday, July 17.

Grand parade at 10 a. m. Best appearing company, Silk Banner. 1 p m Green hose race. First prize, \$75, 2d 50.
2 p m,---Green hook and ladder race, 1st prize \$75, 2d prize \$50.
3 p m,---Chief's race, prize fine 32 comb Firemen's Helmet Hat, valued at \$15.
4 p m,---Foremen's race, prize, fine belt, valued at \$5

Third Day, Thursday, July 18,

10 a m,---Hose race, 39 class, first prize \$100 2d prize \$50.
11 a m---Hook and ladder race, 44 class, first prize \$100, 2d prize \$50.
1.30 p m,---Ladder climbing contest, First prize handsome tournament ladder, valued at \$50, 2d prize Silver Cup.
2.30 p m,---Coupling contest, first prize, State Championship Medal and \$15, 2d prize \$10 3d prize \$5
p m,---Champion wet run, 1st prize \$75 2d prize \$50

Fourth Day, Friday, July 19.

10 a m---Pompier corps, first prize \$50. 2d prize \$25
11 a m---Tug of war contest, first prize \$10 and State Championship Trophy, 2d \$5
1:30 p m---State Championship Hose Race first prize, 150 dollars and State Gant, 2d prize 75 dollars.
3 p m---State Champion Hook and Ladder Race, first prize 150 dollars, and Champion belt, 2d prize 75 dollars.

Reduced railroad fare, special hotel rates, Liberal premiums.

For full particulars, address A. J. Tomlinson, chm. ex. committee, Red cloud.

MAKING FIRE-WORKS.

The Process Described by an Argus-Eyed Correspondent.

How Roman Candles Are Constructed—Balloons of Various Shapes and Sizes—Catherine Wheels and Other Grotesque Devices.

It would seem to many that the manufacture of fire-works is a simple and easy matter, writes a correspondent of the Albany Argus. But as no machinery of any kind is used the manual work necessary makes it much more laborious than where all the process is performed by perfected machinery. A knowledge of the laws of chemistry is also essential. In order to give the reader some idea of the process let us select the Roman candle as the most ordinary of fire-works, and follow it in its journey from room to room and from building to building. The first department we enter is that where the cases are made. This is done in the following manner: Cartridge paper is cut into the length and size required and laid on a marble slab, where paste is spread over one side, care being taken that the paste does not get on the side touching the roller round which the paper is then wrapped, for if the roller is wet it will tear the paper in drawing it out. This roller is of brass or of wood and the case comes off it looking as though it had been made from paper of one thickness, although every boy who has dissected a Roman candle knows to the contrary. After this operation one end of the case is closed. An expert workman can make from fifteen hundred to three thousand a day of these, according to size. After rolling the cases are placed on shelves and sent to the drying room to be thoroughly dried. In this same department is a machine for trimming off the rough ends so that the possibility of any accident happening from unnecessary friction is lessened. These cases beside being used for filling have also various other purposes, such as mailing, etc. While the Roman candle is progressing thus far on the journey let us peep in at the laboratory door, where chemicals are being mixed. The performance of the principal part of fire-works depends much on the composition being very fine and well mixed; therefore great care is taken in this part of the work and particularly for the composition of sky rockets and also in all fixed works from which the fire plays regularly. The chemical mixtures are then distributed to the workmen, who in turn take them to the moulding room, where, with little manipulation, they are placed in moulds and made into "stars" or "balls" as they are more commonly termed. These are all colored, for the pale white light have given place of late years to those of beautiful tints. The colors of the stars seen in this department would deceive one as to that which they display when fired. The green produce a blue light and the blue turn to green. White is made from red stars, red from gray, and so on until every color of the rainbow is catalogued.

It is at this point where we meet the case again ready for the reception of the chemicals thus prepared. This is called the charging department. Before the workman is a frame capable of holding twelve cases upright, which he places in position, having first ascertained that the cases are entirely free by passing a rod through them. This precaution is necessary because any obstruction would cause the piece to miss fire. On one side of him, in separate compartments, are clay, composition, powder and stars of various colors, and on the other a mallet of considerable weight and several rammers of different lengths, the longest being about the same size as the case he is to fill. Taking in his hand an instrument consisting of twelve small scoops, connected in a line and exactly the same distance apart as are the cases on the frame, he fills them with clay and skillfully empties them into these cases. The same is done with the powder, the composition (which is used as a wad) and the stars. All these he then packs down by means of the longest ramrod. Repeating the same process again and again, except the clay is omitted, he uses a shorter rod each time until the case is fully charged, and pours in at the end more clay, as this material guarantees safe handling and packing and protects the explosives inside. The fuse is then inserted and lastly the outside colored paper is wrapped around for beautifying the Roman candle thus made. The whole operation described here also applies to rockets.

Fire-crackers come from China, where the country people manufacture them as a pastime, as the Germans do toys. They are imported in boxes similar to tea chests, the hieroglyphics on them representing advertisements of different firms, and they are used as ballast for the ships that bring them over. An idea may be obtained of the utter impossibility of competition when one is informed that it costs but two cents to make a pack of fire-crackers there. The Chinese were acquainted, as we all know, with the use of gun-powder long before its introduction into Europe in the thirteenth century, and the peasants have been for many generations adept in the art of making fire-crackers that it has become, we might say, second nature. Of course, in the fire-works, where a thorough understanding of the mysteries of chemical action and artistic skill are required, those manufactured in Brooklyn are a fair sample of the higher excellence of American work. But when neither of these qualities is requisite we are entirely out of the field.

Balloons of various sizes and shapes are also made here. Passing through this department a predominance of the fair sex among the hands is noticeable, which is accounted for by their superior dexterity, quickness and accuracy in cutting and pasting. The devices in use for balloons are very amusing, often grotesque, representing figures of almost every animal, from the elephant to the frog, and also several fishes, some gigantic in size. It looks ludicrous to see a huge whale or a mammoth pig rise in the air and gracefully float away. But the most striking of all seen in this department are the imported Japanese bomb-shells. What makes them still more wonderful is their insignificant appearance before being fired, appearing to be about the size of a baseball, but much lighter in weight. When thrown from the mortar, however, to a considerable height, they suddenly burst, and amid a shower of falling stars, a large, beautiful figure, made of Japanese paper, falls far away. The effect is brilliant and unique. Another interesting thing of this kind is a bomb-shell upon which the company prides itself. It consists of shells made of different sizes, so as to fit one inside the other and to contain colored stars. As the whole affair flies upward, one after another of these shells bursts and produces a long train of variegated stars, which, in turn, shoot off and burst until the entire heavens is illuminated.

Besides those already mentioned, there are many other forms of fire-works, such as Catherine wheels, tourbillons, grills, shells, pastilles and a variety of the retarding and ascending kind that produce the most pleasing comic effects.

FOOD FOR VULTURES.

A Methodist Missionary Describes a Strange Burial Rite.

How the Parsees Dispose of the Bodies of Their Dead—Flowers for the Earth and Bones for the Air—The House of Prayer and the Priests.

There recently returned to this city a Methodist missionary who twenty-three years ago sailed from these shores for India, says the Philadelphia Press. The other day he visited Laurel Hill, and there, among the monuments and graves, he told about the sacred burial-place of the Parsees upon the heights of Malabar Hill, some distance out of Bombay.

"I had heard so much about the 'Towers of Silence,'" he said, "that my curiosity was aroused to know what it was like. But I soon found that it was impossible for one not a follower of the great prophet Zoroaster to ever gain admittance inside of these towers.

"This strange sect, the Parsees," he continued, "are so scrupulous in their ceremonial and customs, and so strict in the observance of their rites, that you can readily see how reluctant they would be to allow an outsider, especially one who was teaching the doctrines of Christ, to observe the ritual they practice.

"I had been the means of rendering a favor to an intelligent and well-educated Parsee gentleman living in Bombay, between whom and myself there sprang up quite a feeling of friendship. When I thought I could safely make my request I made known to him my desire to visit the 'Towers.' He said he would see whether he could obtain permission for me to see the priests who guarded the sacred portals. There the matter dropped. I did not hear from him for some weeks, until one day he came to me saying that permission had been granted, and that we must be ready to start the next morning.

"I shall never forget," continued he, "the hot, cloudless day that we drove in our closely curtained vehicle, or gharry, out of the dusty, noisy streets of Bombay to the cool and shaded and silent place of Malabar Hill. The whole place seemed a veritable garden of the dead. Here jasmine, crimineo-lybicus and beautiful roses were spread in bewildering profusion about the walks leading to the entrance. The heavy, languid air was filled with the most fragrant odors and the sweetest perfumes. I could hardly believe that I was in a burying-ground. After alighting from the gharry we ascended the low, stone steps, which led to a closed iron gate. My friend showed our permission to the old and venerable Parsee, who threw open the gate, and within a few moments we were within the sacred precincts. One of the first things that I noticed as I gazed around was some five or six solid-looking circular buildings, perhaps eighteen or twenty feet in height. The walls of these structures were built of heavy blocks of stone and covered with a kind of white cement or plaster. The buildings themselves stood in a shallow moat, surrounded by tall pointed trees, heavy bushes of various kinds, and herbage growing wild and uncultivated. These, then, were the famous 'Towers of Silence.' Truly, they were well named. Save for the clicking of our shoes on the smooth stone, the stiffling swaying to and fro of the branches of the tall palms, and the occasional flapping of wings by crows and vultures on the trees, not a sound was heard in the languid, breathless air. The hot tropical sun beat heavily down on the bare white walls, and everywhere stillness and silence reigned supreme.

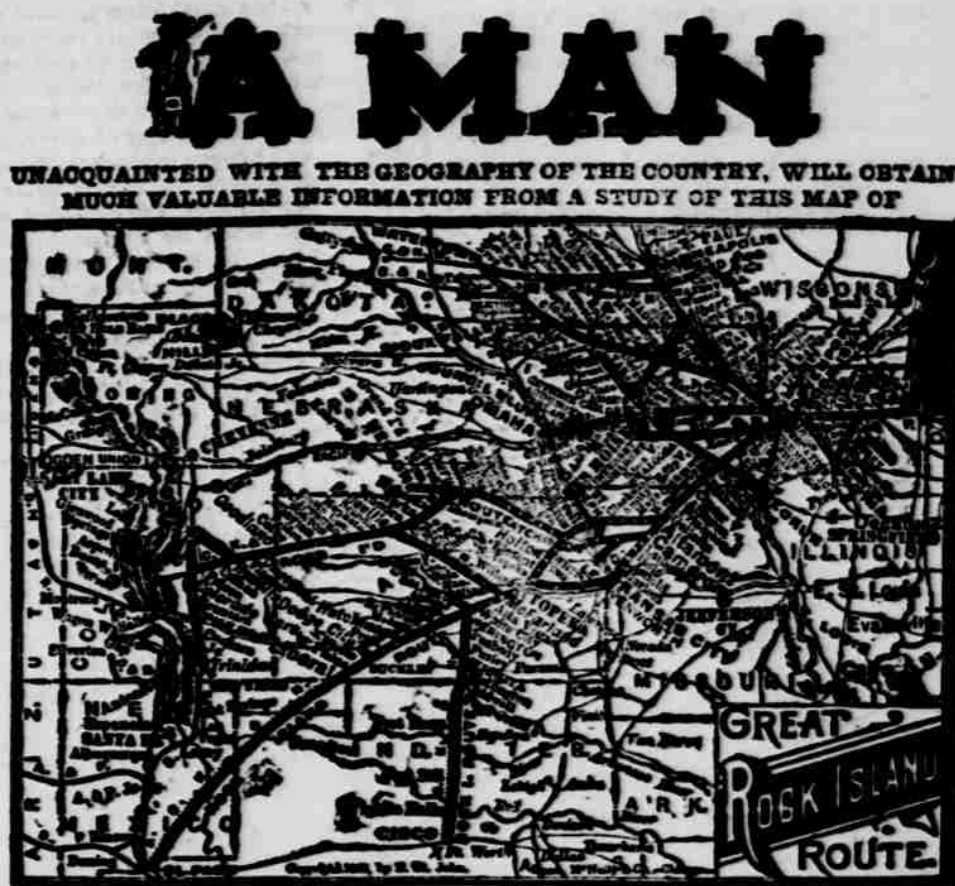
"How do the Parsees bury their dead?" "When you reach the top of the 'Tower' you will find that the entire circular surface is divided into three smaller circles, and between each circle is a narrow pathway. The circles are again divided into a great number of small, shallow spaces, or receptacles, as my friend called them, also separated by narrow pathways for the bearers of the body to pass. The top of the 'Tower' is surrounded by a sort of parapet, which hides the surface from outside view. Now comes the strange part of the Parsee burial custom. 'It was the teaching of our great prophet and master,' said my companion, 'that the dead should not defile the earth. Accordingly, no dead Parsee is laid in the earth, but his body is exposed to all the fowls of the air, to more quickly return to the dust and the elements from which it came. Here in the center of our 'Tower' you see a deep well, down which we put together the dry bones of all the dead—men, women and children, rich and poor, great and small. For the dead there can only be equality.

"We next went to what is known as the House of Prayer—a low, stone-arched building with colonnades all around. This is the house where the friends of the deceased repose while the body is placed on the 'Tower.' It is here that the sacred fire burns day and night, year in and year out, always watched by a faithful priest whose duty it is to feed the flames with precious woods. The air in this House of Prayer is thus redolent with the pungent aroma of sandal wood. The corpse-bearers live separate from the outer residence, and after each funeral they go to the bathing-house, change their garments, and purify themselves from the defilement of having touched the dead. Just as we were on the point of taking our leave I saw a small procession of white-robed figures marching over the narrow stone bridge to one of the 'Towers' and disappear in the small square opening in the wall.

"My companion must have seen the procession, for I noticed that his whole demeanor perceptibly changed as with bowed head he told me that a burial would take place only at sunrise or at sunset. Suddenly the place seemed to be astir, with life and motion. The tall palms shook as under a gust of wind. The black bodies on the trees, hitherto motionless, raised their heads, spread out their wings, and, with a whir and a hiss, swooped down like avenging furies on the top of the 'Tower.' Although I could not see the dreadful sight, I know that these birds of prey were doing their ghastly work of picking the flesh from off the skeleton. Instinctively I put up my hands as if to shut out the sight, and, taking hold of my friend's arm, we quietly retraced our steps to the iron gate through which we had made an entrance.

"Since that memorable visit to the 'Tower of Silence' I have often asked myself whether my first feeling of partial disgust was not one of sentiment rather than one of reason. I am frank to say that the impression of repulsion has almost worn off, and I remember that the birds only did quickly what decay does so slowly; when I remember that every thing was done with such care, tenderness and reverence by the clean, white-robed priests, amid the gorgeous garden of roses; when I remember the saying of my Parsee companion, that for the dead there can only be equality."

Reduced to Sad Streets.
"Bridget," said the mistress to the new hired girl, "you can go now and put the mackerel in soak." "Sure, ma'am, air ye refused to that?" asked Bridget, emphatically.



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