THE STARS' POPULATION.

If There Are Beings on Mars, They Have Queer Lungs.

The discovery of the philosopher's stone, supposing that phrase to imply a working scheme for transmuting an inferior metal into gold, would probably produce nothing beyond a period of terrible economic confusion, or perhaps a vast and disastrous, because overrapid, transfer of property, but the attainment of certainty that sentient beings with corporeal incasements, acting by effort and not by pure volition, existed in any one other planet would only enlarge the range of human thought and the force of the human imagination. Such a certainty would either increase to an extraordinary degree the reverence for the Creator—for we are all so limited that we reverence powers which we see exerted more than powers which we know in theory must exist—or would compel materialists to revise and widen their whole theory of the relation of matter to mind, it being evident that sentience could exist under conditions hitherto deemed impossible.

There are certainly millions and possibly billions of worlds of which no two are the same, and if sentient beings were found past question in any other world than ours the presumption that they existed under a variety of conditions and probably, therefore, in a variety of forms, practically unlimited, would become so violent that to reject the theory would soon be regarded as an evidence of a foolish, popular habit of disbelief in the unseen.

Man has some internal dislike to believe that limited beings with sentience can exist under conditions other than his own, and habitually assumes that a world without air is a dead world. Yet there is no proof that the ether, which we know to be everywhere, cannot support life, or that circumstances of which we know nothing may not modify either its intolerable cold or the effect of that cold.

In Mars itself there is some potency at work which, to the despair for the moment of terrestrial science, produces warmth where cold ought to reign permanently supreme. It is as certain as any deduction from analogy can be that air in Mars, though it exists, is as rarified as it would be at the top of a mountain twice as high as Mount Everest, and that consequently the normal and permanent degree of cold ought to be terrible.

The thermal income of Mars is less than half that of the earth, and its theoretical mean temperature is consequently—taking into account its low "albedo" or reflective power per unit of area—30 degrees centigrade below freezing. Yet the actual climate of Mars is mild. Snow certainly melts rapidly—that is patent to the telescope—vapor certainly rises—that is clear from the spectrum analysis — water flows, and there are indications, if not proofs, that a sudden vegetation follows the sudden thawing of the snow. What warms the air is unknown, but it is warmed past all question or doubt, and all arguments therefore as to the inevitableness of cold in other worlds must be pronounced imperfect, as are those which show the impossibility of sustaining corporeal life. All we can say with certainty is that if sentient beings with corporeal frames exist in Mars, the relation of the lungs to the body cannot be identical with their relation in man, which, as we are aware of fishes, is not an impossible exercise of the imagination.—London Spectator.

An Icebound South Pole.

It has long been a favorite theory with a certain class of scientists that the south pole is icebound and frigid to a degree almost if not quite equal to that of the north pole. Investigators have brought reports of icebergs encountered in southern waters that were so enormous and closely packed that sailing in their vicinity was attended with the greatest danger. The more recent explorations of this uninviting region confirm much of what was already almost an accepted theory. One authority tells us that vessels are much more likely to be obstructed by drifting ice in the south Atlantic than in any other of the much traveled highways over the seas. To the east of Cape Horn and the Falkland islands icefields and icebergs of the most amazing extent and size are frequently met with.—New York Ledger.

A Sanitary Authority.

"Gentlemans," said the chairman of the district council, a great sanitary authority, who had a reputation for eloquence both in Welsh and English, "it shall be quite plain to you that the death rate haf been very busy among us. If it was not for that and the statistics that play havoc with the vitals, perhaps we should feel pretty well. But I must tell you that during the past year people haf been dying throughout the distric' as never died before in any year whateffer. Well," cheerfully, "we must take care that they neffer shall die so much again."—Household Words.

The reflection from a flash of lightning travels nearly 1,000,000 times faster than the sound of the report. That is the reason that the thunder is generally heard several moments after the flash is seen.

Sign at a Louisville bone factory: "Persons leaving their bones with me can have them ground at short notice."

A MATCH.

If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf,
Our lives would grow together
In sad or singing weather,
Blown fields or flowerful closes,
Green pleasure or gray grief;
If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune,
With double sound and single
Delight our lips would mingle,
With kisses glad as birds are
That get sweet rain at noon;
If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,
And I, your love, were death,
We'd shine and snow together
Ere March made sweet the weather
With daffodil and starling
And hours of fruitful breath;
If you were life, my darling,
And I, your love, were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy,
We'd play for lives and seasons
With loving looks and treasons
And tears of night and morrow
And laughs of maid and boy;
If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May,
We'd throw with leaves for hours
And draw for days with flowers,
Till day like night were shady
And night were bright like day;
If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain,
We'd hunt down love together,
Pluck out his flying feather,
And teach his feet a measure,
And find his mouth a rein;
If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain.

—Algernon Charles Swinburne.

A Reasoning Dog.

"Talking about dogs," said a Woodward avenue lawyer, "I have one that reasons and has a memory. Last Sunday I went down to the postoffice, and my dog went with me. On the way he caught a sparrow and walked to heel for some time with the bird in his mouth. As I did not take any notice of him, he darted into a vacant lot near the park, and I saw him dig a hole and bury the bird.

"It was late afternoon when I went back, as I dined with friends in another part of the city. I had entirely forgotten the episode of the sparrow when I missed my dog. I looked about and whistled for him and heard him bark in answer, and then I saw him digging with all his might in the vacant lot, and he soon followed me with the bird in his mouth.

"Now, don't you see he had to do a lot of thinking and reasoning to first place the bird there and then remember it and stop on his return to get it? He was a hunting breed of dog, but had never been trained, as I do not hunt. How do you account for all those human like faculties?"

"Instinct," said one of the company. "It is often a safer guide than reason."

"Any dog will bury a bone," said another.

"I call it reason. I am sure I can follow the mental process of reasoning," said the lawyer, "and if all dogs can follow out a mental suggestion in that way, involving the faculties of memory and association, then dogs have brains. I am sure they can be developed."—Detroit Free Press.

When Suspense Is Horrible.

A good yarn has landed from the wilds of Australia. Two impecunious Scotsmen, traveling north in search of gold, came upon a drinking saloon. They only had sixpence between them, so they ordered one "nip o' whusky."

They were hesitating who should have the first drink, when an old acquaintance joined them. Pretending they had just drank, one of them handed the newcomer the whisky, requesting him to join them in a drink.

He drank, and, after a few minutes of painful and silent suspense, said:

"Now, boys, you'll have one with me."

"Wasna that weel managed, mon!" said one to his pals afterward.

"Aye, it was," said the other solemnly, "but it was a dreadfu' risk."—Pearson's Weekly.

Mozart's Work.

Mozart lived 37 years. His first mass was composed when he was less than 10 years of age, and the enormous quantity of his compositions was the work of the succeeding 27 years. Mozart wrote 41 symphonies, 15 masses, over 30 operas and dramatic compositions, 41 sonatas, together with an immense number of vocal and concerted pieces in almost every line of the art.

An illuminated bird's nest is to be met with in India. The baya bird of that country spends his spare time catching mammoth fireflies, which he fastens to the sides of his nest with moist clay. On a dark night a baya's nest is said to look like an electric street lamp.

A lamp should be filled quite full every day and then, thus used, will burn one wick many times as long as if it were only filled with oil when absolutely required.

In England it is thought to be an ill omen to meet a redheaded girl on Jan. 1 before 9 o'clock.

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IRONING BILLIARD TABLES.

Innovation Introduced by Roberts, the English Player.

On every rainy day there is additional work for the attendants of the large billiard parlors. Those who play the popular three ball game have unquestionably noticed how the cushions of a table are affected by the weather. Particularly is this so when a drizzling rain prevails outside. It is then that the cushions are found to be inactive and slow. Ten years ago it was not thought possible to make a billiard table fast without an expensive overhaul, which meant that the use of the table would have to be temporarily dispensed with. Now, however, it is possible to put a table in first class order in less than an hour. An immense flatiron, well heated, is used, and in the hand of a competent man a few turns around the green surface will soon take all the moisture out of the cloth. The hot flatiron is particularly serviceable on a rainy day.

None of the old time billiard experts thought of the possibilities of a hot iron until John Roberts, the crack English cue handler, came to this country to play a series of games with Frank Ives. It was the introduction to this country of the flatiron, and everybody present at the match laughed, but were astonished nevertheless, when an assistant brought out a big flatiron and handed it to the Briton.

The iron was as hot as the enthusiasm for Ives, and when Roberts started in to navigate the heated mass over the green table the audience broke into a hearty roar. It was noticed, however, that Roberts played at his best immediately after he had manipulated the iron. Roberts won that night's string, and won it handsomely. After the strife all the veterans of the chalk string crowded around the visitor and asked him what the dickens he meant by astonishing them in that way. He proved to them that a hot iron when applied to cushions made them lively. That was the beginning of the novelty in this country.

The attendants at the local billiard parlors have made an addition to Roberts' knowledge, however. They have discovered that not only does the hot iron improve the bed of the table when run over the cloth, but it also removes the chalk that clings to where the ball strikes the rubber and which sometimes steadily refuses to be cleaned away by the brush. Chalk on the cushions does not mean much to the average player, but the experts know that it frequently has an effect on the ball's true angle, and interference, no matter how small, is discouraging to the accomplished player.—New York Mail and Express.

THE PAID CHOIR.

Unnecessary Economy In Church Music a Grievous Mistake.

"It is very difficult for some very excellent and otherwise broad minded church people to realize that good music is one of the most powerful auxiliaries to successful church work," writes Edward W. Bok in The Ladies' Home Journal. "Music naturally appeals to a far larger number of people than preaching ever has or can, no matter how good its quality. A church desirous of reaching the largest number of people and doing the greatest amount of good must adjust itself to prevailing conditions. If good music will attract where other attractions fail, why not employ this auxiliary? But good church music can rarely be had from a volunteer choir. And I say this with all due respect to the thousands who each Sunday throughout our country volunteer their services in divine song. There are innumerable cases where a paid choir is out of the question. I have known of such instances where the singing by volunteer choirs was good. But they are the exceptions; by no means the rule. And it stands to reason that this should be so. Excellence in any kind of work calls for study and preparation. To be a good singer requires years of study and training. And years of hard, practical work must follow the study period.

"The voice must be cultivated; it must be trained. And this calls for infinite patience, time and money. Trained voices naturally cannot be expected to give the results of all this without compensation. And the fact that their services are asked by the church and in the cause of religion does not affect the justice of remuneration. Ministers and janitors are paid, and so should be our church singers if they have good voices. Where a church is able to maintain a paid choir and seeks to economize with volunteer voices, there is, in particular, a grievous mistake committed. Music hath charms, it has been truly said, and it has to every one. A church able to spend something on its music cannot afford to have aught but the best it is within its means to employ. Those who regulate the affairs of our churches should bear this fact in mind in connection with their approaching Christmas festivities and for their regular services in the new year before them. There would be far fewer empty pews in some of our churches if there were better voices in the choirs."

Not Particular.

"Do you want a shirt that opens in front or one that opens in the back?" asked the salesman.

"Don't keer where it opens," answered Uncle Silas, "so's it's got an openin at the top an bottom."—Chicago Tribune.

CLERICAL AMENITIES.

Sharp Speeches of Two Old Time Virginia Preachers to Each Other.

The amity and fellowship between Methodists and Baptists nowadays are in striking contrast with the feeling displayed in the beginning of the century as manifested then by the leading exponents of those churches. Then there were very few churches in this section of the country, and the preachers rode long distances and held services on Saturdays and Sundays, rarely getting to any one church oftener than once a month. The old men of today recall this period with great pleasure and never tire of relating their recollections of those good old times. The most noted expounders of the gospel in northern Virginia then were the Revs. Roszell of the Methodist church and Gilmore of the Baptist. They were rigid and unyielding believers, each in the tenets and doctrines of his own faith, and advocates of the church militant, considering it their duty to "hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may." In upholding their doctrines they not only attacked the opposing principles of the other church; but, these two being almost the only preachers of their respective denominations in Loudoun and Fauquier, they frequently indulged in sharp and vigorous personalities in the pulpit and elsewhere, which at this day would be apt to beget an unending animosity.

On one occasion they both had appointments in Leesburg on the same Sunday, and, as was the custom in those days, they received new members into the church at the close of each series of meetings. Returning to their homes after church, the two congregations met on opposite sides of the same street.

The Methodist divine, thinking to deliver a smarting thrust in the hearing of almost the whole of both flocks, called across the street to the shepherd of the Baptist fold:

"How d'ye do, Brother Gilmore. One of your members joined our church today."

"Ah, ha! That's all right," replied the placid immersionist, "backsliding Baptists make very good Methodists."

Constant themes of difference between them, upon which an opportunity to cross swords was never suffered to pass unnoticed, were close communion on the one side and the insufficiency of infant baptism on the other. One communion day in the Baptist church the Rev. Mr. Roszell made it a point to be present, having no service at his own church on that day. He had a seat on one of the front benches. Mr. Gilmore spread the communion table with great care just in front of where the Methodist divine was sitting, and when all was ready he cleared his throat and with great solemnity said in his powerful and impressive voice:

"Brother Roszell, if this were my table I should invite you to partake, but being my Father's, I dare not!"

Instead of sinking through the floor, Mr. Roszell calmly replied:

"Brother Gilmore, if this were your table, I should await your invitation, but being my Father's I shall help myself!" and, suiting the action to the word, reached over and with great seriousness and solemnity took the bread and wine without molestation, to the intense amusement of the congregation.

They were both great lights in their churches, dearly beloved by their people and possessed of a vigorous Christian fervor that made itself felt and resulted in great good wherever their ministrations were carried on.—Marshall (Va.) Cor. Washington Star.

French Canadians In Maine.

"There can be no longer any question," writes a "down east" correspondent, "that the French are in Maine to stay." Their numbers are placed at about 55,000, half of whom are congregated in the manufacturing cities of Biddeford, Saco, Lewiston, Auburn, Waterville and Brunswick. When they arrive from Canada, they are nearly always poor and unskilled, but they are quick to learn and are generally industrious enough to be valuable to their employers. Between 3,000 and 4,000 are owners of real estate, with property valued at something like $2,500,000. The French Canadians are nearly all Catholics, and to the strong hold of the church upon their lives is to be attributed their general good order and freedom from crime. They are making advances toward useful citizenship in Maine and must be counted a permanent and important element in the population.—Springfield (Mass.) Republican.

Two Patients Compare Notes.

A Calais man who has been drinking a glass of cold water before each meal for three months because his physician said it would make him thin met a thin man the other morning who has been trying the same plan six months on the advice of another physician, who told him it would make him fat.—Bangor News.

Electric Bitters.

Electric Bitters is a medicine suited for any season but perhaps more generally needed when the languid, exhausted feeling prevails, when the liver is torpid and sluggish and the need of a tonic and alterative is felt. A prompt use of this medicine has often averted long and perhaps fatal bilious fevers. No medicine will act more surely in counteracting and freeing the system from the malarial poison. headache, indigestion, constipation, dizziness yield to Electric Bitters. 50 cents and $1.00 per bottle at Streitz's Drug Store. 1

The Age of Trees.

The annular or ring growths of trees and their relation to the age of the average specimen of the "forest monarch" have been the leading subject of discussion in the scientific journals for the past few months. It is pretty generally admitted by the forestry experts that where the "zone test," as it is called, can be properly applied, the age imputed to the tree will not err in the way of excess. It is also admitted by the very best of the great host of writers upon the subject that a clearly marked ring infallibly denotes a season's growth. Assuming, then, that these growths are true age indicators, it is plain that where there is an unusually thin, or, perhaps, indistinguishable layer, one year's credit will remain unentered in the tree's life register. On this ring basis of computation a German scientist has been engaged in preparing a table of the ages of certain European trees. He finds that in Finland and Sweden the pine and fir trees attain to the maximum age of 700 years. The greatest ascertained age of the larch (this is Bavaria) was 274 years, while the silver fir of the same locality often grows until it is 400 years old. The oldest known German specimen of the oak is one of the "holm" variety, which formerly stood near Aschaffenburg, which the ring growths proved to be 410 years of age. The maximum ages of other German trees—as formed by counting the ring growths—is as follows: Red beech, 245; ash, 170; elm, 130; birch, 200; aspen, 210, and alder, 145.—St. Louis Republic.

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