THE SEMI-WEEKLY TRIBUNE

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NORTH PLATTE. - NEBRASKA

Impracticality of a Practical Education. I am even so optimistic as to think it not impossible that even the general public will revise its notions of practicality. At any rate, my experience as a teacher has seen one complete change of judgment in this matter, writes Dean Birge in the Atlantic. When I began to teach zoology my teeth were continually set on edge by the well-meaning friends who talked wisely of the practical nature of the study of science as contrasted with language. For the past 15 years, or more, I have heard nothing of this. All are now aware that the study of science is no more practical, and no less so, than the study of philosophy. Today that "practicality" which once seemed to inhere in science is placed in the study of history and of economics. In 15 years more the world may have learned that these new humanities are chiefly valuable, not as furnishing practical guides to the affairs of active life, but that they stand with the old humanities, with the sciences, with philosophy, as furnishing a way into the intellectual life. It may be well that students will learn that in coming to college they are seeking the intellectual life, and that the way in which they reach it matters little, so that the result have in it abundant vitality and many points of growth,

Sport for an Old Whaler.

Whalemen still live in Provincetown, Mass., though they are few in number and lead a life of retirement seldom stirred by events connected with their aforetime avocation. A few days ago, however, memories of other days were revived. The life-saving station reported a whale floundering in the fish weirs of the cove. Capt. Joshua Stickney Nickerson loaded up his bomb lance, and with his son rowed a boat to the scene. The harbor was lined with spectators who shouted encouragement. Capt. "Josh" ranged up alongside and, getting the whale as he rolled over on his side, fired the lance with its harpoon head into the vitals. The bomb exploded inside and the whale rolled over dead. It took some time to cut the body free from the wrecked weirs, but it was finally cleared. It proved to be the largest whale caught in this vicinity for several years, and of the rightwhale variety. He estimates the products of his prize at 30 barrels of oil and a couple of hundred pounds of bone, which will bring him \$500.

One grammar school of Chicago has solved the vexed question of graduation gowns for the girls, or rather the principal has solved it for them. Classes in the highest grade of the grammar schools have formal graduation exercises because so many of the pupils end their school days at that time, and it has become the custom to make quite a function of the proceedings. As many of the children come from families not able to provide elaborate costumes the question of dress has become a vexed one. The principal mentioned cogitated on the matter, therefore, and issued on order that each girl must make her own-graduating gown out of a specified grade of material, before she could have her diploma. These girls will now make their appearance in gowns costing \$1.39 each and with no soreness or hard feelings toward anyone. It was a happy thought.

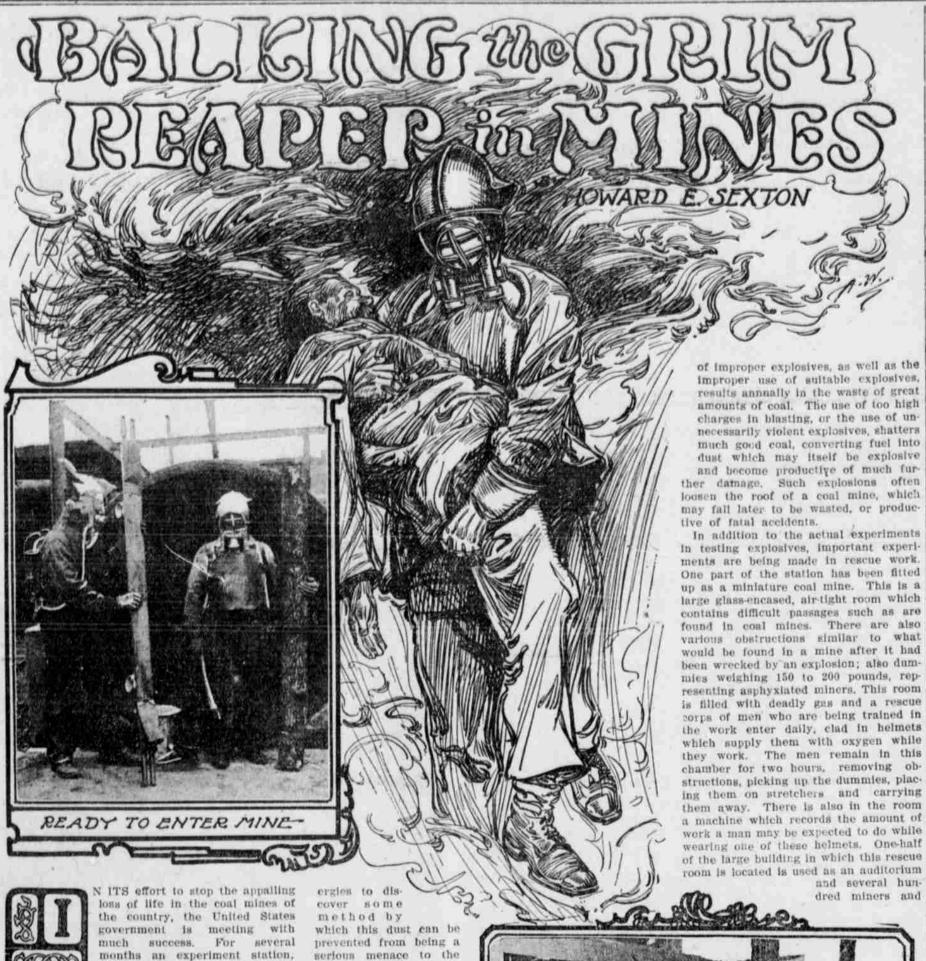
Toledo cathedral, one of the most magnificent specimens of Gothic architecture in the world, is in serious danger of collapsing, owing to the condition of the central dome, Large cracks have appeared and a recent slight earthquake greatly increased the building's peril. The ecclesiastical authorities are greatly alarmed, and they have ordered the priceless choir stalls removed. A committee of architects arges immediate extensive repairs. The government has been asked to grant \$50,000 for this purpose.

Very hard times are expected in Germany. From month to month the working hours in the textile factories are being further reduced, amounting now to but four days' employment in the Silesian district, while in southern Germany the working time of the textile mills has been curtailed by 14 per cent.

New diamond fields have been found in Africa, this time in German territory. It's going to take an international trust to keep up the price of engagement rings.

Mrs. Agues Knox Black, wife of Prof. C. Charleton Black of Boston university, has been appointed to the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts of the university as Shaw professor of elocution. Mrs. Black succeeds Prof. Malvina M. Bennett, who recently resigned.

An Indiana place player played for 25 hours in a contest and then fainted. Report fails to state how many of the neighbors were similarly put out of business.



serious menace to the miners. Experiments in wetting it have been going on for some time, but nothing of a very definite nature has as yet been learned, unless it is the fact that the coal dust does not ignite

amount of moisture in it, Every effort is being made at the station to come as close to the conditions in a mine as

when there is a great



~ RESCUE PARTY AT WORKS CONTRACTOR OF THE PARTY OF THE

explosions took the lives of 700 men, one of them-at the Monongah mine in West Virginia-being the greatest mining disaster in the history of this country. There were 356 victims. During 1908, there were but two accidents in which the loss of life was very heavy; one in January at the Hanna mine, in Wyoming, with a loss of 70 men; the other, November 28, at the Marianna mine in Pennsylvania, which resulted in 154 deaths.

under the direction of the tech-

nologic branch of the United

States geological survey, has

been in operation at Pittsburg, Pa., with the pur-

pose of discovering the causes of mine disasters

Along with establishment of this station and

the agitation which preceded the necessary legislation, there has been a falling off in the number

of deaths in the coal mines for the year 1908, and

while the official figures have not yet been ob-

tained, it is stated that the number of deaths

will be several hundred less than in 1907, which

was an unusual year. In December, 1907, four

EXPLOSIVES

and suggesting a remedy.

Already at the experiment station two discoveries have been made which will tend to decrease the number of deaths in the mines. It has been demonstrated that a number of the so-called "safety" explosives are anything but safe, in fact the statement is made that with the present

explosives used in mining, the miner takes his life in his hand every time he touches off a fuse. It is the purpose of the government to continue these experiments until the explosives of the country are standardized in such a manner that the miner will have a definite idea what these explosives will do.

After the government has gone far enough in its experiments, a bulletin will be issued recommending as permissible explosives such as stand the test. The facts learned concerning these explosives will be called directly to the attention of the state mining bureaus as well as the oper-

Perhaps the most important and far-reaching experiments so far at the station are those in which it has been definitely shown that coal dust is an explosive equally as dangerous as the deadly are damp. This has been a mooted question among mining engineers and miners alike, both insisting that it is impossible to explode coal dust unless there is gas present. That the coal dust will explode in the mine where there is no gas has been repeatedly shown to several hundred operators and miners at the testing station. The experts at the station are now bending their en-

possible. The tests of various dynamites and powders used in blasting coal are being made in a mammoth boiler plate cylinder which has previously been filled with gas or coal dist. The cylinder is 100 feet long and six feet in diameter. Safety valves have been placed all along the top and are left unfastened in such a manner that whenever there is an explosion the valves fly open on their hinges. A series of portholes on the side, covered with one-half inch glass, enables those conducting the experiments to witness the results from an observation house 60 feet away. An explosive mixture of fire damp and air, or coal dust and air, is pumped into the cylinder and the explosive which is to be tested is shot into it from one end of the cylinder, so that the flame goes right into the fire damp or coal dust. Natural gas is used at this station for fire damp, because it corresponds very closely to this deadly gas. The cannon in which the explosives are placed is fired by electricity from the observation house which is parallel with the cylinder itself.

- AFTER A COAL DUST BLAST -

and the last of th

These investigations are expected to accomplish a double purpose; not only a reduction in the number of men killed in the mines, but also a saving of the waste in mining coel. The use operators have watched the rescue drill through the large glass windows which separate the auditorium from the gasfilled chamber. Although there has been but little opportunity so far for the rescue corps to demonstrate its efficiency at the mines, still it has done some good work.

Once the helmeted men while fighting a mine fire succeeded in bringing an unconscious man to a place of safety where he was given oxygen treatment and recovered his senses in a short time.

It is not the intention of the United States government to furnish rescue corps whenever there is a disaster. The present corps was organized with the idea of encouraging the mine owners

and miners themselves to form such organizations. Invitations have been issued to operators throughout the country to send picked men to the experiment station, where they may watch the government rescuers at work and later go through the same training themselves, in order that they may gain the necessary confidence in the use of these helmets. Already a number of the large mining companies have taken advantage of this invitation and are organizing rescue corps at their mines, fully equipped with oxygen heimets.

In 1907 more than 3,125 men were killed in the coal mines of the country-a death rate of 4.86 for every 1,000 men employed. This is from three to four times as many men per thousand as are killed in any coal-producing country of Europe, where experimental stations such as the one in Pittsburg have been in operation for several years.

Full Beards for Farmers.

The protection of farmers and others who are exposed to the heat a great deal is a serious and difficult matter. Cancer is on the increase, and farmers furnish a large proportion of the cases, many of them being due to the direct effects of sunlight on the face and hands. A full beard for the farmer in most desirable for his protection.

LIFE TO

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of improper explosives, as well as the

improper use of suitable explosives,

results annually in the waste of great

amounts of coal. The use of too high

charges in blasting, or the use of un-

necessarily violent explosives, shatters

much good coal, converting fuel into

dust which may itself be explosive

and become productive of much fur-

In addition to the actual experiments

and several hun-

dred miners and

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about your case write a confidential letter to Mrs. Pinkham, at Lynn, Mass. Her advice is free, and always helpful.

Western Canada the Pennant Winner

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The government of Canada now gives to every actual settler 160 acres of wheat-growing land free and an additional 160 acres

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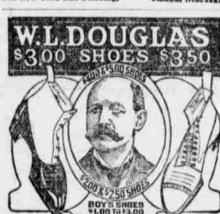
The crop of 1908 still keeps Western Canada in the lead. The world will soon look to it as its food-producer.

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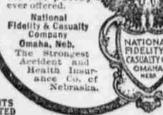
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