

SCIENCE AND PROGRESS.

USEFUL DISCOVERIES BY MEN OF GENIUS

Changes in the Sun—A New Light-house—Preparation of Blue Prints—Watch Making in France—The Boomerang Myth.

Changes in the Sun.

But we cannot rest with the assumption that, since the sun is evidently no Mira and no Sirius, therefore it is practically an unchanging radiator which for an indefinite period will continue to cause the earth to bloom in the beneficent effluence of its life-inspiring rays. A sun may effect the welfare of its planets either through the gradual mutations which it undergoes in the course of its evolution, or through the more rapid and violent changes that characterize the stars that are ranked as variable. We have seen that most of these latter belong to the third and fourth classes, but there is reason to suspect that the majority of all the stars are variable to a slight degree, and evidence of variability in the case of the sun is furnished by the phenomena of sun-spots. A spectator, viewing the sun from a distant point in space, would perceive that its brilliancy was slightly increased once in about every eleven years. These accessions of light should correspond, not with those of fewer spots, but with those of more spots, because the energy of the sun's radiation is greatest during the maxima. At present a sun-spot maximum is approaching, and since last winter the face of the sun has frequently exhibited startling indications of the tremendous disturbances now affecting the solar globe. Our imaginary observer in space would probably behold at the present time a very slight increase in the sun's brilliancy, and this increase may go on for three or four years to come. While we dwell upon a globe that is bathed in the sun's rays, may be unable to perceive these variations directly, yet their effects have long been recognized by the changes that they produce in terrestrial magnetism. It is also highly probable that a perceptible influence upon the weather is exercised by variations in solar radiation corresponding with the presence or absence of sun-spots.—The Popular Science Monthly.

A New Lighthouse.

Mariners on the Pacific coast are rejoicing over the rapid progress of work on St. George lighthouse and fog-signal station on Seal Rock, about eight miles from the shore of Del Norte County, Cal., near the Oregon line. This point is one of extreme danger. The deep channel between the reef and mainland is filled with treacherous rocks, submerged beneath rapid and powerful currents. In winter the shores are lashed with huge waves, making the scenery the grandest on the coast. It was here that the ill-fated Brother Jonathan went down a few years ago with its freight of human beings and gold and greenbacks. The lighthouse was begun ten years ago, but, owing to the difficulties encountered at the site, it was with which Congress made appropriations, work did not proceed as fast as it ought. In cutting off the top of the rock for the foundations several lives were lost, and in the rude winter storms the fruits of a summer's hard toil were swept away several times. The granite blocks used in the construction have to be brought from Mud River, near Trinidad. In their original form they are huge boulders, which have to be blasted. These are taken to Trinidad, cut to the desired size and form, and transported by the schooner Sunol to the lighthouse. She anchors off the rock in 120 fathoms of water, being made fast by four huge cables on each side. These are anchored to the rock and to sunken anchors. A derrick is raised amidship, the granite blocks hoisted in strong nets to the top of the masts, carried to the rock on a line attached to a derrick on the pier, and placed in position. Each one is marked, and so carefully has it been cut that there is not an eighth of an inch between it and its neighbors. Although the tower now is forty feet above the water, the workmen are constantly drenched. The fifty-three men now employed will have the stone and brick work done by September. The number will then be reduced to ten, and they will complete the iron work, which is being made in Trenton, N. J. When finished the lighthouse will be 140 feet above sea level and cost \$750,000.—New York Evening Post.

The Boomerang Myth.

It is amusing to people who know Australia and the aborigines, says an old Australian in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, to read in magazines and newspapers scientific dissertations on the construction and peculiarities of the boomerang, based, I suppose, on the tales of travelers. None of the theorists seem to have found the most obvious explanation—that the travelers are simply romancing. The fact is that the boomerang is the black fellow's tomahawk. Sharpened on the outer edge and made of iron-bark wood, it is indeed a dangerous weapon as a club or a hatchet.

I have lived for twenty years in Australia, and have hunted for days in the bush with parties guided by aboriginal blacks. Not even the all-potent inducement of brandy or rum will persuade a black fellow to give an exhibition of his skill with the boomerang for the plain and sufficient reason that there is no skill about it. The popular belief that the boomerang in an expert's hand may be made to strike an object with unerring precision, traveling in a curve and returning by a circuitous flight to the thrower's feet, is pure nonsense.

When a traveler says he has seen a boomerang thrown so as to circle about a tree and strike an object behind it, he lies; that is all there is to it. At close range the boomerang can be thrown with effect, but no more accurately than a stone. I have seen a black fellow administer

THE ALLIANCE.

The Spirit of Kansas: The wealth of the country increases fast enough. There is no complaint on that score as the plutocratic papers want to make it appear. The complaint is that the people who create it do not get the benefit, but that it nearly all goes into a few hands, by methods that are no better than robbery.

The Alliance Vindicator.

The tariff is not the only wrong under which the American citizen has to labor. The national banking system and the want of a larger circulation of good, cheap money, are two of the greatest evils of the present day, and every farmer should bear this in mind—and in casting his vote should support the man who offers relief along this line.

Farmers Advocate: The Alliance has done more to educate the people than any other organization in this country. Men who took but little interest in the affairs of the country in the past are manifesting great interest in them now. Then again to show its power as an educator, you will find more men who were entirely ignorant on important questions, who now understand them very well.

The Alliance: If any man thinks that all the Tories are dead—the men who fought our forefathers, he is badly mistaken. They are here to-day and as active as they ever were. Whenever you hear a man talking about the necessity of a strong government; the inability of people to govern themselves and that "God Almighty made the only money," you can set that fellow down as a Tory—he is built wrong.

Leader: Let's see—doesn't Mississippi have to elect seven congressmen next year? It seems to me she does, and when that time comes, some of the present incumbents and some of those aspiring gentlemen who have sided with the opponents of the Alliance this year, will be found calling upon the hills and mountains to hide them from the indignation and wrath of a betrayed people. The fight hasn't ended yet. It has just fairly commenced.

The Farm Ranch: The object of the sub-treasury plan is to store the grain and the imperishable products in the section where they are produced until demanded for consumption, instead of crowding them into two or three grain centers to be controlled by grain speculators. By this means we will avoid the depressed price caused by throwing the crop onto the market after harvest, and the farmers will get the benefit of the rise in the price instead of the grain speculators.

The Oxford: Homes under mortgages, cotton below cost of production, our children in rags and out of school, public fund concentrating, tuition climbing, twenty-five years broken promises, lower wages, more officers, higher salaries, no money, no effort for relief, public works closing up, banks breaking, officers fleeing, corporations and syndicates forming, politicians fighting, parties dividing while the wealth wages are demanding "equal rights to all, special privileges to none."

Industrial Union: Let us suppose, for the sake of the argument that the proposition of the Democratic party, that the nine million mortgages on the homes of the people are the result of the "robber tariff," the question then is, how many mortgages could be paid by a 5 per cent reduction? This is the relief offered by a party that stands and howls that the country is going to the devil through a "robber tariff," and when asked what it proposes to do about it, says: "Oh, we will reduce it 5 per cent." Great reform that.

The Elk County Citizen: Several times a day we hear the remark, "You can not legislate money into a man's pocket." The fellows who so freely use this expression are the ones who are opposed to an expansion of the circulating medium and who tell us that we have plenty of money now if "people would only work more and talk less," and so on. The people have long ago learned that it is very easy to legislate money out of a man's pocket, and several of the fellows who talk so much about the present "good times" are so reduced financially by pernicious legislation of the past thirty years that they are unable to pay us bills of long standing. It becomes very tiresome when you have to listen to this cant about the excessive prosperity of the country from men who are unable to live and get enough money ahead to pay what they owe. The people are convinced that congress can, indirectly, legislate money into their pockets. An increase of the circulating medium to a point where it will be amply sufficient to meet the agricultural and commercial wants of the country will at least give the producing classes a chance to get some of it while under existing circumstances, they are practically deprived of that chance.

Oh, It's No Consequence. Over one million children in mines and workshops; more than a million of men tramping the country to find work; seven million women keeping death at bay with their needles and other hand-work, or worse still, compelled to find their bread upon the streets—and on the other side half a dozen men approaching the day when they will be billionaires! These are the conditions in which we find the United States to-day, and in the face of all this the plutocratic anarchist smilingly declares that this is a "free" country, not in need of political and social reform.—Machine Woodworker.

Can Kill at 200 Feet.

Augustus J. Bowie, of San Francisco, the author of a standard book on hydraulic mining, estimates that the stream from a six-inch nozzle, under a flow of 588,735 foot-pounds every second, equivalent to 1,070 horsepower. "It is absolutely impossible," says Mr. Bowie, "to cut such a stream with an axe, or to make an impression on it with any other implement." Mr. Bowie adds that although never, to his knowledge, has a man been struck by such a stream as it comes from the pipe, several accidents have occurred where miners were killed by very much smaller streams at distances of 150 or 200 feet from the nozzle.—The Era.

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