

A PUZZLE.

The following appears in the journal of a traveler through this region in early days:

"Drew near to Council Bluffs, and passed down from the high rolling prairie into the rich alluvial valley of the Missouri. The mounds, which some have called the work of unknown generations of men, were scattered here in all varieties of forms and magnitudes; and thousands in number, and perhaps I may say ten thousands. Some of these mounds were conical, some elliptical, some square and others parallelograms. One group of these attracted my attention more than any others. They were twelve in number, of conical form, with their bases joined, and twenty or thirty feet high. They formed about two-thirds of a circle, with an area of two hundred feet in diameter. If these were isolated, who would not say they are artificial? But when they are only a group of ten thousand others, which have as much the appearance of being artificial, who will presume to say they are the work of man?"

This need not have been near the present city of Council Bluffs, as there were many places which bore that name; but it was on the Iowa side, and somewhere between the Nishnabotna and Bellevue. Who can tell anything about the mounds mentioned? They must have been there, for it is no Spanish explorer who speaks, but an American minister of the gospel.

HUXLEY.

The new religion called Christian Science reminds one of the following remark of Mr. Huxley:

"Extinguished theologians lie about the cradle of every science, as the strangled snakes beside that of Hercules."

But the question "What is a Science?" interposes and one wonders whether the new religion can be truthfully called one?

Science has been termed by a learned man, John Ruskin, "The knowledge of constant things, not merely of passing events, and is properly less the knowledge of general laws than of existing facts."

Froude says: "Science rests on reason and experiment, and can meet an opponent with calmness; but a creed is always sensitive."

THE INDIAN POPULATION.

An interesting feature of the census soon to be taken is that relating to the Indian population. Some discussion was created recently by the statement in an Eastern paper that there were more Indians in this country now than there were in the time of Columbus. There seems to be a general impression that the red man is passing away, and will in a comparative short time become extinct. While it is true that in many

tribes no increase in births over deaths is shown, and some have become extinct, it cannot be denied that as a race the Indian is increasing rather than diminishing.

A unique reason is given by an official of the Indian office for the popular impression that the red man is passing from earth. When the government adopted the policy of segregating the Indians in the interest of the white settler by placing them on reservations, generous annuities were offered if they would consent to the removal. Those were the days when Indian agents waxed fat and rich on a small salary. It was to the interest of the agent to show up as large a number of Indians as possible in order to insure large disbursements, and, as the official expresses it, having nothing else to do with the money, the agent put it in his own pocket. It was at that period that the Indian population showed the most marvelous increases. In those days an Indian never died and thousands were fictitiously born. It was later developed that instead of there being a million Indians in this country, there were but a little more than 200,000. Hence the popular notion that the Indian is dying out, and would himself, in the natural course of events, soon solve the Indian problem. While the census officials do not expect to find a very material increase in the Indian population, a large decline in the population would be surprising to them and a slight gain is looked for.—St. Paul Pioneer Press.

DAVID HARUM A COMPOSITE PHOTOGRAPH.

Several persons in different parts of the country having been pointed out, or having pointed themselves out, as the origin of the titular character in "David Harum," a relative of the dead author has written D. Appleton & Co. to say that "David, the hero (John Lenox), and the heroine (Mary Blake), were not, to her certain knowledge, drawn from life. 'David Harum' may be called a composite photograph. All the other people in the book are entirely creatures of Mr. Westcott's fancy and imagination."

POETRY, PAINTING AND FURNITURE.

Rossetti insisted on everybody painting. Books, he said, were "no use to a painter except to prop up models upon in difficult positions, and then they might be very useful." "If any man has any poetry in him," was another saying of Rossetti's, "he should paint, for it has all been said and written, and they have scarcely begun to paint it"—a saying, by the way, which may be found also in the third volume of "Modern Painters." Morris obeyed the master, and took to painting. Even when Morris took to making furniture, that craft was at first regarded under

Rossetti's influence as merely a means of providing spaces for pictorial decoration. Morris built some enormous chairs—"such as Barbarossa might have sat in," said Rossetti, who proceeded to paint their backs with subjects from Morris' poems.—London Daily News.

A Wonderful Piece of Mechanism.



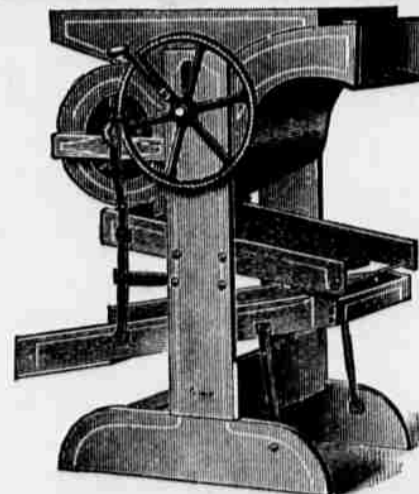
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