

LIFE ON THE MEXICAN LINE

Remarkable Incident Leading to a Lively Border Fair.

CATTLE DYING IN COUNTLESS NUMBERS

Free Carcasses Produce Prosperity and a Grand Jubilee Interspersed with Bull Fights and Lotteries.

Southwestern Texas in the years following the close of our civil war was so overrun with cattle and their market value was so small that immense numbers were slaughtered annually for nothing but their hides and tallow. Such was the region that was suffering during the summer and fall months in the year 1872 from a long and protracted drought. Creeks became void of water, their bottoms being converted into highways by live oaks and prominent lakes and "water holes" became as dry as powder houses, bleaching skeletons of cow or horse marking their former location. Great seams opened in the parched, black earth, and half-grown chickens around the settlements in eager pursuit of some choice insect, would suddenly disappear without their unexplored depths, to be seen no more. All kind of live stock had to make long journeys from their feeding grounds to the principal water courses to satisfy their thirst. Time wore on, the fierce rays from a tropical sun burnt to a crisp the grasses, the tramping feet of thousands of live stock ground it to powder, fall winds came and blew it into the Mexican gulf, leaving the prairies as barren of vegetation as the desert.

It was in the beginning of the autumnal days of that year that vast herds of half-wild, half-starved cattle and horses, mules and horses, whose number was estimated but not counted, driven by hunger from the open country, invaded the "brush" unprotected in their progress by wire or rail. The tender trees and shrubs, the brush and debris vanished before that devouring army. Wild horses and cattle surprised in their secret haunts helped to swell the numbers of that wandering and homeless horde. Their creation, early winter was heralded in by cold "northers," but sprung from a tough, hearty stock the cattle hung onto life tenaciously. Heavily laden, black and prickly pear, with its palmlike leaves, protected by nature with thousands of tiny elastic needles, which pierced their mouths, incensed their nostrils and stung their throats. Still with stammering mouths, feasting tongues and swollen throats they fought off the grim tyrant death—they might as well starve and thirst by continuing to eat the cactus.

A GLITTERING LANDSCAPE.

The appearance of the new year, 1873, only added to their distress. Terrible winds from the north, with hail, sleet and ice, covered the hills and valleys. The trees were incensed with it, both above and below, and the wind was marked by the branches. Nature seemed to have been in a strange mood, for a warm, genial, sunny land and border, suddenly converted into a gloomy and inhospitable region. It was at that time that great herds of miserable, famishing cattle came trooping into the lower and border country from the north and east, seeking to escape the tortures of cold and hunger. Thousands exhausted and beumbed fell in their tracks, others succumbed to the vitality, sought sheltered spots behind bluffs or brush to rest or protect their emaciated limbs from the biting blasts, only to at last succumb to the elements and the army, impelled by the fury of the blizzard, tottered onward until checked by the precipitous banks of the Nueces river. There, blinded by the elements and the pressure of united numbers in their rear, thousands fell headlong into the sinking quagmire beneath, with sad, agonizing groans, and lingering death. The cattle owners, recognizing, in an area of country of so large an extent, and so sparingly settled, their inability to satisfy the needs of the humanity worthy of praise, gave free to all classes of the inhabitants whatever pelts they could save.

TOO MUCH PROSPERITY.

It was at that favorable time that the American and Mexican gentlemen of the "green cloth" met to devise means to fence the people of their treasures. Out of their evil consultations emanated and was at the proper moment born into life a measure which was opportune, good had made the people restless and they craved for excitement. The nature of their lives upon an exposed frontier, the necessities of their own selves and property from marauding bands of outlaws or from the raids of both Mexican and Indian robbers made their ideas of pleasure and enjoyment both wild and unorthodox. It made possible in what was called a law abiding community of immunity from arrest, and with the aid of both moral and civil law, it accounted in a great measure for the leniency with which the border part of the people viewed and patronized such festivities, as I shall attempt to describe.

It was announced that the fair would be held on the west side of the Nueces at a well known place called Rancho Grande, at a given date, commencing with a bull fight. This new being a crowd of head-cast over the land by wandering horsemen, was received with favor by the inhabitants. The writer, just reaching manhood, unacquainted with the amusement, but with a well filled purse made from the pell-bus, was, curiously enough, was an impatient spectator to commence as any freebooter abroad.

ANNIHILATION OF DISTANCE

The Principles of Sound Transmission Applied to Vision.

FACES REFLECTED AT LONG RANGE

Multifarious Methods of the Electric Incendiary—Improvements in Street Car Propulsion—Developments in the Electrical Field.

If communication by sound to great distances by electrical messages was such a wonderful achievement, what shall we say to the application of this principle to vision? Many will say this is impossible, and there is in Pittsburgh an instrument that will enable one to see in this manner, but the Pittsburgh Dispatch asserts, has so far perfected it that it may be said to have passed beyond the range of possibilities, and is among those things that are achieved.

Mr. Leon La Pointe has been working on this invention for a number of years, but he has recently made great improvements in the apparatus. The object of the invention is to do for the eye what the telephone does for the ear. That is, one can have this apparatus attached to his telephone by which he will be able to see the person speaking at the other end, or any object that may be presented before the transmitting apparatus. This is done by means of the Edison kinegraph, which is designed for the purpose of reproducing pictures of objects, representing them in movement, and even a succession of simultaneous photographs is taken, which, when placed in the apparatus and rotated, produces an effect on the eye similar to that of a picture.

But the telescope of Mr. La Pointe is entirely different from the ordinary telescope or scene placed before the transmitting apparatus, for instance, in New York or Chicago and attached to a telephone wire. In fact, it is to do for the eye exactly what the telephone does for the ear, and the same wire may be used for both instruments, so that one may talk with, and at the same time see a correspondent in a distant city.

The telescope, as originally designed by Mr. La Pointe, consisted of a transmitting apparatus which consisted of a dark box provided with a lens, and a black disc. At the focus where the sensitive plate is ordinarily exposed to the action of light is placed an open disc made of very thin and light material, and a six-inch diameter hole about 1-100 of an inch in diameter are perforated near the periphery on concentric circles, the difference between the radius of each hole, at a point being 1-100 of an inch, while the distance between two holes is equal to the width of the image painted by the rays of light on the superior surface of the disc.

The number of the perforations is such that the total of their diameter is equal to the height of the image. The holes being thus distributed on the surface of the disc and the disc revolving, the perforations traverse the surface of the picture or object to be transmitted, and the light rays, which are converted into electric rays, pass successively through the disc when the perforations are moving past them.

From this it will be seen that the rays of light from all parts of the object pass through the perforations in the disc in one revolution on its axis. The object of this is that instead of the light rays passing through a transmitter at once they can be divided up and transmitted successively.

CONVERSION OF LIGHT RAYS. The conversion of the rays of light into electrical currents of proportional intensity is done by means of a selenium cell of extreme sensitiveness acting by the influence of the heated light. The selenium has this remarkable property, that its resistance to current of electricity varies inversely as the light falling on it, especially heated light, so that the greater the difference between the temperature of the beam of light and the selenium itself, the more sensitive is the selenium to the variations of intensity in the light, and therefore the more will it vary the electrical current passing through it.

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE—MONDAY, MAY 21, 1894.

OMAHA LIVE STOCK MARKETS

Receipts for the Week Much Heavier Than One or Two Years Ago.

LITTLE CHANGE IN THE CATTLE TRADE

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WEEK CLOSURE DULL.

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In stockers and feeders there has been a fair amount of business transacted, and prices have ruled pretty well. Country buyers have been more numerous and have taken hold more freely, the result being a cleaning up of speculators' supplies and a better market for the week. The market for hogs was very active, and prices were held up all week with scarcely any fluctuation. There has been and continues to be a better demand for calves at farm figures. The market for bulls, oxen and stags has been indifferent supplied. Fat stock has sold a shade stronger than last week, but the ordinary and inferior grades have not shown any improvement.

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