

MISCELLANEOUS.

Human foresight often leaves its proudest possessor only a choice of evils.

The cost of the proposed Congo railroad is only 25,000,000 francs, about \$5,000,000. The entire length of the route is to be 550 kilometers, or about 300 miles, taking it from the coast to the neighborhood of Stanley Falls. It will soon be the "Dark Continent" no more.

Prince Bismarck's salary as Chancellor of the German Empire is only \$13,000 a year, or less than the Emperor receives in a week. However, he is helped out somewhat, having a house of great proportions, furnishings and belongings at the expense of the State.

They have found a new and very good use for castaway tin cans. The tin is straightened out, cut into rectangular pieces about three times longer than broad. These are automatically fed into a machine, which squeezes them up into square nail shape and puts a head on one end. The result is a nail stronger than the ordinary nail, and one which can be driven into hard wood without breaking.

The Future of Photography.

The ease with which photographs can now be taken by any one is destined to have an important influence upon science, art and literature. It must not be supposed, however, that with the cheapness of the material, and simplicity in applying it, perfection in the art of photography is any nearer to its votary than it was when the difficult wet plate was in vogue. Pictures can be taken more readily than formerly; but the conditions of light and composition remain as difficult as ever—and the amateur every year throws behind him his quickly taken photographs and discovers that art is still long. The improvements in photography have resulted from the labors of the chemist rather than from those of the optician and the makers of lenses. Indeed one of the most remarkable features of the photography is the simplicity of the apparatus which is necessary. This simplicity perhaps might have been foreseen by a careful study of the human eye. The eye of every person may be said to constitute a detective camera. The retina is a dry plate upon which all objects are focussed by means of the crystalline lens; the cavity behind this lens constitutes the camera, the iris and pupil the diaphragm, and the eyelid the drop-shutter. The latter, it is true, is a slow drop-shutter—not faster than a tenth of a second—whereas the drop-shutter that is employed to take an express train may move as fast as the one-hundredth of a second, or ten times as fast as the eyelid. The eye gives the brain a number of composite impressions of an object in motion, while the sensitive plate and the drop-shutter of the camera can give but one

phase of the motions. It does not seem just, therefore, that the photographer should insist that the sculptor or artist should copy certain instantaneous attitudes of animals in motion, for the eye does not see them.—*Scribner's for May.*

Drowning.

On Sunday last Eliza, the eldest daughter of Mr. B. Gibson, of Chili-whack, was accidentally drowned while playing with some other little girls in Hope Slough. The children had been warned against going near the place, but had yielded to the temptation, and the victim of the melancholy accident slipped off a log into deep water, and one of her companions in the attempt to rescue her was very nearly dragged in. When the children saw that their playmate was drowning they ran for help, but long before assistance arrived she had sank out of sight. A strange coincidence attending this sad story is that the very day this little girl was born, twelve years ago, her brother was drowned almost at the same spot at which the sad affair here chronicled took place. Mrs. Gibson is crazed with grief at her terrible loss, and her condition is considered critical.—*victoria (B. C.) Colonist.*

The Persian Gentleman.

In Persia boys and girls never play together. Even at home the inferiority of the girls is insisted on, just as much by the mother as by the father. The little girls have to invite playmates of their own, but their games are never lively ones. They generally prefer to sit by themselves under the shade of mulberry or pomegranate trees in the garden (which usually is laid out in the courtyard surrounded on all sides by houses or high walls) and listen to fairy tales which their mothers and nurses can tell very interestingly, indeed. While there is very little companionship or love between brothers and sisters, there is no quarreling or fighting, either, between them; and the boys, while thinking themselves above the girls, show them many little kindnesses.—*Ex.*

Snakes Stop a Ball Game.

A well-contested game of baseball between the Cities and Round House teams at Long Branch, N. J., was suddenly terminated the other day when the center-fielder, in fielding a fly ball, fell headforemost into a nest of thirty-two garter-snakes. The young man picked himself up, but again sank to the ground, almost prostrated by fright. The players with their bats succeeded in killing twenty-six of the reptiles. Some of the snakes measured three feet in length. It was fully half an hour before the young man who fell into the nest recovered sufficiently to walk. The game was postponed.—*St. Louis Globe Democrat.*

A Good Story of Lincoln.

A lawyer is presumed to be always able to suggest a difficulty, no matter how self-evident the case may

seem; but the truly great lawyer knows how to state a point so that even a brother lawyer cannot start an objection. According to the "Yankee Blade," Stephen A. Douglas and Mr. Lovejoy were once gossiping together, when Abraham Lincoln came in.

The two men immediately turned their conversation upon the proper length of a man's leg.

"Now," said Lovejoy, "Abe's legs are altogether too long, and yours, Douglas, I think, are a little short. Let's ask Abe what he thinks of it."

The conversation had been carried on with a view to Lincoln's overhearing it, and they closed it by saying:

"Abe, what do you think about it?"

Mr. Lincoln had a far-away look, as he sat with one leg twisted around the other, but he responded to the question: "Think of what?"

"Well, we're talking about the proper length of a man's legs. We think yours are too long, and Douglas, I think, are a little short, and we'd like to know what you think is the proper length."

"Well," said Mr. Lincoln, "that's a matter I've never given any thought to, so of course I may be mistaken; but my first impression is that a man's leg ought to be long enough to reach from his body to the ground."—*Youth's Companion.*

The Field of Invention Unbounded.

The impression is very generally prevalent that the field of invention is being reduced by the achievements of the thousands of bright intellects that are now working upon its various problems. As each circuit of a mowing machine diminishes the area of grass to be cut in a meadow, as each furrow turned by the plow lessens the work to be done on a farmer's arable acres, so it is supposed that every new application of science, or device for promoting the comfort, convenience, or profit of mankind, brings nearer a coming time when invention will be compelled by lack of room to come to a halt. This is natural, because we are accustomed to compare the immaterial and intangible with material and tangible things. When we speak of a field, whether it be for the plowman, the poet, or the inventor, we naturally think of measureable space. But the field of mental effort is not measureable, and, so far as we know, is unlimited. To fix its bounds would be to set an arbitrary limit to the progress of the human race. In science, art, literature—in all that exalts and embellishes life—the space yet available for progress comes as near infinitude as anything we are capable of conceiving. To one who stands in a valley the horizon is near; let him climb a hill, and his view is expanded. When he attains a greater height the prospect appears still wider. The inventive genius of the world is rising higher and higher every day. Its prospect never appeared so utterly boundless as now.