

For the Desert News.

THE DESERT GRAVE.

A fragment from my note-book. In memory of Francis Crowther, from Birmingham, England, who died on the 10th of September, 1853, at the 4th crossing of Black's Fork, Green River County.

Alas! is't here the 'pilgrim' lies,
With all his trials past?—
The Saint's unwav'ring faith no'er dies,
Tho' faithless man in scorn still cries—
'Could he not find beneath the skies
A holier place to rest?
Where friends with flow'rs, could deck the tomb
To cheer the desert's sullen gloom.'

From home, and kindred, far away,
Where life's young years were spent,
O'er Sea, and land, hope star'd his way,
The gospel's precepts to obey.
In Bab'lon none would make him stay,
This was his heart's intent,
Tho' here he sleeps in solitude,
Who kept the camp in merry mood.

His loving brethren, sisters dear,
Sweet comfort did impart,
And faith inspired him to revere
His God, who left him not in fear,
Tho' scanty were the means to cheer
His worn-out fevered heart;
While from his soul a prayer he sigh'd
For all the lib'ral saints, and died.

Al! if the righteous scarce are saved,
Who venture far to roam,
Of home, and dear ones all bereaved,
That are upon their hearts engraved;
Of what shall men receive, depraved,
Who spurn God's laws at home,
Nor dare the desert, seldom trod,
To gather with the sons of God.—[LVON.
G. S. L. City, May, 1855.

How to make a Rifleman.—At Hythe the riflemen are taught in this manner:—

A line of 300 yards is measured out, which is then divided into equal parts of 50 yards each, and marked by perpendicular lines, the length of which increases in proportion to the distance from the starting post.

Thus, if the first perpendicular line, drawn at 50 yards distance, is 10 yards in length, the second, drawn at 100 yards distance, is 20 yards in length, and so in proportion.

A soldier, in the attitude of standing at ease, is then placed at the extremity of each division, and he is to serve as an object placed at a particular point of distance from which the learners are to receive instruction. The teacher then shows successively to the men the different marks which the appearance of the soldier presents to their view; for instance, his arms, his accoutrements, his figure, and dress, which are plainly visible at 50 yards distance.

The men are then questioned upon what they see, and they are made to observe particularly the difference presented by the same objects at the distance of 50, 100, 150, 200, 250, and 300 yards.

Their attention is also called to the state of the atmosphere and the brightness or dullness of the day. The same lesson is subsequently taught on different ground, and during different weather, in order that the eye may be trained to judge of the appearance of objects at particular distances under every variety of circumstance.

The men having been well exercised at distances, comprised between 50 and 300 yards, continue to practise the same lessons at distances between 300 and 600 yards.

They are then divided into classes according to their proficiency. No. 1 is limited in ability, and can only judge accurately of objects at a distance of 300 yards. No. 2 can estimate them up to 600 yards; and the skill of No. 3 extends to 900 yards. It is found in practice that about 50 per cent. of the men rank in the 1st and 2nd class.

In firing, the kneeling position is generally adopted, by which the soldier has a great degree of steadiness in taking aim. The position is this. Kneeling upon the right knee, he sits upon his right heel, with his left elbow supported upon his left knee, his left hand being used to steady the musket. The position is found to be both easy and advantageous.—[Ex.

RAILWAY BRIDGES.—The Britannia tubular bridge over the Menai Straits is undoubtedly the finest specimen of bridge architecture in the world. It has two railway tracks, contains 1,400,000 cubic feet of masonry, stands on three piers and two abutments, is 104 feet above high water mark, 1,492 feet long, and cost two and a half million dollars.

Crossing the river Dee, in the vale of Llangollen, near Chirk, on the Shrewsbury and Chester railway, is a structure that will vie with the grandest aqueducts of ancient Rome. This is a stone viaduct, a hundred and fifty feet above the river, and supported on nineteen arches of nine y feet span. Its entire length is about one third of a mile. Viewed from the valley beneath, its proportions and size appear grand in the extreme.

One of the finest railway structures in Great Britain, and perhaps the most pleasing to the eye, of all their bridges, is on the Glasgow and South-western railway, near Mauchline. It is a single arch of brick, 180 feet high, and 180 feet span, crossing the Ayr, about two miles from Burns' farm of Mossiel, and directly by the wood where the poet saw the "Lass of Ballochmyle." Standing in the bed of the river and looking upward, the arch is so high, so light, and graceful, that it appears like a rainbow in the heavens.

A splendid railway bridge, on two hundred and twenty-two arches, more than two miles in length, and constructed at a cost of about a million dollars, carries the steam-horse into the city of Venice.—[Life Illustrated.

"Is THAT So?"—The N. York Tribune states that on an average one murder is committed in New Orleans every eight hours. One thousand and ninety-five murders each year!

A last duty remained for me to perform, it was to communicate to Cæsar the details of this deplorable event, I did it the same night that followed the fatal catastrophe, and had just finished the communication when the day began to dawn.

At that moment the sound of clarions playing the air of Diana, struck my ear. Casting my eyes towards the Cæsarean gate, I beheld a troop of soldiers, and heard at a distance, other trumpets sounding Cæsar's March. It was the reinforcement that had been promised me—two thousand chosen men, who, to hasten their farival, had marched all night. 'It has then been declared by the Fates,' cried I, wringing my hands, 'that the great iniquity should be accomplished—that, for the purpose of averting the deeds of yesterday, troops should arrive to-day! Cruel destiny, how thou sportest with the affairs of mortals! Alas! it was but too true, what the Nazarene exclaimed when writhing on the cross: 'All is consummated!'

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THOUGHT AFLOAT.

[The following are extracts from the late lamented William L. Crandall's work, entitled, 'Three Hours School a Day.']

DISGUST WITH KNOWLEDGE.—The system of six hours school a day kills the body and kills the mind. By keeping the scholar confined so many hours in a day, we kill the body; by begetting an inextinguishable feeling of disgust with every thing that pertains to the acquisition of learning from books, we kill the mind.

IRREGULARITY OF ATTENDANCE.—From one end of the State to the other, complaints come up of the 'irregularity of school attendance,' and in some quarters it has been pronounced by school authorities one of the 'alarming' signs of the times. But it is a cheering, not an alarming symptom! It is a certificate to the integrity of nature. It shows that, by this process the natures of children have not been transformed into stolidity. The children can not stand it. They get rid of what they regard as imprisonment, by excuses, when they can—by truancy when they must. They do not know why, but they know the system is to omuch for them—that it is repugnant. This is all wrong, for children delight in school! Properly managed, it is as delightful to them as any other recreation to which they can be treated. By the very laws of their being, children and youth are inquisitive. They want to know all about it. Hence they delight in the acquisition of facts—of things new—of things unknown.

HEALTH IS WEALTH.—A strong and sound body—a body capable of not only endurance, but capable of resisting external influences to disease—is a capital for life, the value of which can not be computed in money. It is perpetual wealth—it is perpetual pecuniary independence—it is perpetual ability to aid others in the kind offices of friendship and love—a perpetual source of contentment and happiness.—This, I say, is the first object of school education—of any education fit to be called education; while the fact that it is made neither the first or the last, in our present system, proves that the present system is false.

THE TIME FOR EXERCISE.—The natural laws show that the exercise so imperiously demanded by childhood and youth should be had at the very time they are now confined in the school-room, in the afternoon. As an enthusiastic Frenchman might say, that it is the time for 'von grand' exercise, for the 24 hours. Shutting them' up, therefore, is contrary to law.

PRECIOUS CHILDREN.—Are we told that these unoffending, though not uncomplaining or unresisting victims, do really study during those six hours? are actually devoting that period to mental labor? Then ought the system to be abandoned instantly! For this is what no child or youth can endure, and maintain the integrity of his constitution. This it is which compels so many parents to walk beside the graves of 'bright' children—too good for earth, etc.; who do study six hours a day in school only to be transferred from the 'head of the class' to the headstone of the silent tomb. The hopes of parents are blighted; they feel keenly the loss of one from whom they expected so much of happiness in a brilliant future; and they wonder 'why it so!' This it is, again, which makes your philosophers at ten and fifteen, your blockheads at twenty-five and forty. The fire of their energies is burnt out; while, by the same progress, the furnace which should feed the flame for life, is made a wreck.

Electricity is the power of the man. Study exhausts—rapidly exhausts—that force, while at the same time it is doing little toward replenishing it. No, not he who compels or permits and intelligent child—one with a positive development of the electrical temperament and intellectual faculties—who is consequently fond of mental activity, and whose mind acts with celerity, and energy—to study in a school-room six hours a day, is a destroyer of the fairest of God's works. He is a destroyer of a well developed human being; a destroyer of the highest forms of human usefulness and happiness.—He is a curse to the race; and better, far better, that he had 'never been born.'

PLAY-ROOM NECESSARY.—Wherever there are children, there should be a play-house or play-room, with windows secured from breakage, for the use of the children in all sorts of weather which render out-door play unpleasant, unfit for the way of wear and tear of clothing, or exposing their health to injury. On these days, the children need the exercise as much as on pleasant days; they need to 'holler' that their

lungs may be exercised; while this arrangement will relieve the older members of the household from a racket which is not supposed to do them any good. It may be that such an arrangement would cost a little money and trouble; if the money is not to be had, that is an end to the argument; but to those who can command the trifle that would be necessary, I would say, you have no business to be in charge of a lot of children, if you can not take as much special pains with their education as you would with that of a fancy Shanghai, or with that of a pet colt for those children to ride.

NO SOUND MIND IN AN UNSOUND BODY.—Now the consummate folly of this business of school education is in the idea, that the highest interest and integrity of the body can be sacrificed, and at the same time the highest interests and integrity of the mind be maintained. Here lies the root of the folly. By quack educators—with faces as long and rigid as their brains are stolid—we will be told: 'It is very well, all this talk about the body; but it is the mind—the immortal mind—whose interests we are seeking to promote! It is the mind which is the man; the body is of no consequence compared with the condition of the mind.' And so in school education the body is substantially forgotten.—I say 'forgotten.' I claim a right to this inference, when the natural laws of the body—in the school system now in vogue—are hourly, daily, yearly, systematically trampled on. I repeat, that the inference from the action of parents and teachers, who, in school education, trample on the laws of the body is, either that they forget, or that they deny their existence.

They are of course incapable of the crime of knowing and disregarding them. For every tyro in the 'science of man' knows that so blended and intertwined are the relations of body and mind, that the integrity of one can not be assailed and the integrity of the other remain.—It is true that the body is not immortal; that it is the tenement of the mind during its stay on earth; but it is equally and forever true that the condition of the occupant is ever affected by the condition of the tenement. Nature and revelation unite in this testimony. Hence, they degrade the mind who set at naught the laws which govern the body.

The India-rubber Tree.

From a volume lately published in New York, by G. P. Putnam, entitled 'Scenes and Adventures on the banks of the Amazon.'

'A number of blacks bearing long poles on their shoulders, thickly strung with India-rubber shoes, also attracted our attention. These are for the most part manufactured in the interior, and are brought down the river for sale by the natives. It has been estimated that at least two hundred and fifty thousand pairs of shoes are annually exported from the province, and the number is decidedly on the increase.

A few words here respecting the tree itself, and the manufacture of the shoes, may not be out of place.

The tree (*Siphilla Elastica*) is quite peculiar in its appearance, and sometimes reaches the height of 80 and even 100 feet. The trunk is perfectly round, rather smooth, and protected by a bark of light color.

The leaves grow in clusters of three together, are thin, and of oboate form, and are from ten to fourteen inches in length. The centre leaf of the cluster is always the longest.

This remarkable tree bears a curious fruit, of the size of a peach, which, although not very palatable, is eagerly sought after by different animals; it is separated into three lobes, which contain each a small nut.

The trees are tapped in the same manner that New Englanders tap maple trees. The trunk having been perforated, a yellowish liquid, resembling cream, flows out, which is caught in small clay cups, fastened to the tree. When these become full, their contents are emptied into large earthen jars, in which the liquid is kept until desired for use.

The operation of making the shoes is as simple as it is interesting. Imagine yourself, dear reader, in one of the seringo groves of Brazil. Around you are a number of good-looking natives, of low stature and olive complexions. All are variously engaged. One is stirring with a long wooden stick the contents of a cauldron, placed over a pile of blazing embers. This is the liquid as it was taken from the rubber tree. Into this a wooden 'last,' covered with clay, and having a handle, is plunged. A coating of the liquid remains. You will perceive that another native then takes the 'last,' and holds it in the smoke arising from the ignition of a species of palm fruit, for the purpose of causing the glutinous substance to assume a dark color. The 'last' is then plunged again into the cauldron, and this process is repeated as in dipping candles, until the coating is of the required thickness.

You will moreover, notice a number of Indian girls engaged in making various impressions, such as flowers, etc., upon the soft surface of the rubber by means of their thumb nails, which are especially pared and cultivated for this purpose. After this final operation, the shoes are placed in the sun to harden, and large numbers of them may be seen laid out on mats in exposed situations. The aboriginal name of the rubber is 'cauculets,' from which the formidable word of 'caoutchouc' is derived.

The Strasburg Clock.

The priest and military have retired, and I am now sitting in a chair facing the gigantic clock—from the bottom to the top not less than one hundred feet—and many strangers are waiting to see the working of this clock

when it strikes the hour of noon. Every eye is upon the clock. It now wants five minutes to twelve. The clock has struck, and the people are gone, except a few whom the sexton, or head men, with a wand and a sword, is conducting around the building. The clock is struck in this way. The dial is some 20 feet from the floor, on each side of which is a cherub or a little boy with a mallet, and over the dial there is a small bell. The cherub on the left strikes the first quarter, and the one on the right the second quarter. Some fifty feet over the dial, in a large niche, is a huge figure of Time, a bell in his left, a scythe in his right hand. In front stands a figure of a young man with a mallet, who strikes the third quarter on the bell in the hand of Time, and then glides, with a slow step round behind Time; out comes an old man, raises his mallet, and places himself in front of him. As the hour of twelve comes, the old man raises his mallet and deliberately strikes twelve times on the bell, that echoes through the building and is heard round the region of the church.

Then the old man glides slowly behind Father Time, and the young man comes round again.—Soon as the old man has struck twelve and disappeared, another set of machinery is put in motion, some twenty feet higher still.

It is thus: There is a high cross with an image of Christ on it. The instant twelve has struck, one of the apostles walks out from behind, comes out in front, facing the cross, bows and walks round to his place. As he does so, another comes in front, turns, bows, and passes on. As the last appears, an enormous cock, perched on the pinnacle of the clock, slowly flaps his wings three times, so loud as to be heard outside the church to some distance, and so naturally as to be mistaken for a real cock. Then all is as silent as death.

No wonder this clock is the admiration of Europe. It was made in 1500, and has performed these mechanical wonders ever since, except about fifty years, when it was out of repair.—[Watchtower.

A TALL NURSE.—The Maine giantess, Silva Hardy has been engaged by Mr. Covert, to travel with his concert troupe. She is a native of Wilton, in Franklin county, Me.—is seven feet six inches in height—is rather lean than fleshy, yet weighs three hundred and thirty pounds—is nearly thirty years of age, and is still growing. She has theretofore maintained herself chiefly by service in the capacity of a nurse, having the reputation of being a most excellent one; but for a few months past, her health has not been good enough for her to practice this vocation.

Her mother is said to have been below medium size, and her father not above it. She was a twin, and at birth weighed but three and a half pounds. Her mate did not live. She has always been an unusually small eater, and accustomed to labor.

Her figure is not erect. Like too many tall people, she seems to appear shorter by assuming something more than the 'Grecian stoop,' which has the usual effect of making her look taller than she is. Her complexion is fair, her eyes blue, and the very modest and mild expression of her countenance is said to be a true index to her character.

We are assured that she never, as nurse, takes an infant in her arms, but always holds it in her hand. Placing the head upon the end of the fingers, its feet extend toward the wrist, and with the thumb and little finger elevated, she forms an ample and admirable cradle—the length of her hand being quite equal to the whole length of an infant.

She is unable to pass ordinary doors without stooping a good deal, and it is said that for convenience she usually puts her thimble and other little articles upon the casing over the door, instead of upon any lower object, as a table or desk.

An amusing incident is told of her, which runs in this wise, and which is said to be strictly true. 'While she was passing through the kitchen of a farmhouse one day with a large pan of milk in each hand, her hair caught upon a hook which projected two or three inches from the ceiling, and held her fast. She could neither stoop to set the pans down nor raise her hands to disengage her hair, and was compelled thus to remain, until her cries brought others to her assistance.—[Eastern (Portland) Argus, Jan'y 30.

GEOLOGICAL WONDER IN NEW SOUTH WALES.—A correspondent of the London Illustrated News, has, through that paper, presented a sketch of a wonderful scene in New South Wales. The rocks present the appearance of having been battered with cannon, and the ground is strewn with large globular blocks of granite. Some of these are plunged into the rocks as if the latter had been in a soft state when these geological balls were forced into them. It is one of the most mysterious features of geology yet discovered.

WATCHING HIS TURN.—A clergyman had come to preach a charity sermon, and the clerk was assisting him to robe before the service commenced, when he said to him, 'Please, sir, I am deaf.'—'Indeed, my good man,' said the clergyman, 'then how do you manage to follow me through the service?' 'Why, sir,' said the clerk, 'I look up, and when you shuts your mouth I open mine.'

A READY APPLICATION.—A mother admonishing her son—a lad some seven years of age—told him that he should never defer till to-morrow what he could do to-day. The little urchin replied—'Then, mother, let's eat the rest of the plum-pudding to-night.'