

# Men Who Build the World's Great Flying Machines

THERE has never been a time when the makers of balloons and air ships have been in such an optimistic mood as they are today. Dangling before their eyes is the incentive of the \$100,000 prize offered by the management of the Louisiana Purchase exposition for the swiftest and most practical type of air ship, and added to this is the fact that the recent exploits of the "kings of the air" have given an unprecedented impetus to their business, imbuing them with the conviction that it will not be long before the making of aeroplanes and dirigible balloons will be one of the great industries of the world. Thus it is that a visitor to any one of the famous aeronautic factories will find the employees working overtime on new models designed to capture the great prize or in desperately attempting to fill the many orders that have been pouring in upon them from private citizens and military authorities, for the war offices of the powers are beginning to realize that the "war balloon" has come to stay and are doing their best to stock up a goodly supply of these invaluable martial engines in the event of an unexpected contingency.

One of the biggest air ship factories is that conducted by the Spencer brothers at Hinchbury, England, where a formidable competitor for the St. Louis prize will probably be turned out. Of the brothers—Percival, Stanley and Arthur—Stanley is undoubtedly best known by reason of his record breaking trip over London last summer and his penchant for making high balloon ascensions, he having once attained the remarkable altitude of 27,500 feet. Percival and Arthur Spencer are also aeronauts of no mean repute, and all three have the reputation of knowing how to reduce to a minimum the dangers of aerial navigation. They certainly appear to be immune from accidents of a serious nature. It may be truly said of the Spencers that they were, like poets, born to their profession. Stanley in particular is a man without nerves, who makes as much of dropping from the clouds as an ordinary mortal would of stepping out of bed. He has once said that a parachute fall appeals to him as a good meal does when he is hungry.

The Spencer factory is a long, lofty, dome roofed structure, well lighted by many windows and with a shallow gallery at each end. Just at present the Spencers are completing a ship which will be equipped with a twenty-four horse power motor, six times the power of that installed in the vehicle in which the intrepid Stanley sailed over London. It is estimated that the new air ship will have a speed of twenty-five miles an hour, and the Spencers are confident that it will create new records in aerial navigation, to say nothing of casting in the shade the exploits of

their great rival, Santos-Dumont. Whether they intend to send it to St. Louis is impossible to say, but the presumption is that they will do so unless they evolve a still better machine in the interim.

Of course none but experts are employed in this factory, where everything is done under the watchful eye

reaches the top and is snatched correspondingly. It is significant from the standpoint of expense to note that in the manufacture of the average bal-

loon for transportation purposes are very costly. Of course there are all sorts of smaller balloons used for advertising or intended to be sent up during cele-

brations. The smallest navigable balloon is said to be of a capacity of 12,000 cubic feet, while the largest that was ever turned out at the Spencer shops had a capacity of 150,000 cubic

feet, would accommodate twenty-five passengers and was six months in the making.

Another world famed manufactory is that of Lachambre in Paris, where several of the famous Santos-Dumont machines were constructed according to models furnished by the Brazilian aeronaut. That the Lachambre shops are

## RAMON LACSON, A TALENTED FILIPINO.

The begowned Filipino shown in the illustration is a student at Georgetown university. Four years ago he could not speak a word of English, but today Ramon Jose Lacson, as he is named, is considered a literary marvel. He has defeated American high students in competitive examinations and has been



granted degrees never before given to one so young—he is but twenty years old. Possibly Lacson's greatest intellectual triumph was the winning of a gold medal offered by Archbishop Hordern for the best essay on the Christian religion, the essay to be written in English. His father, a rich sugar planter of Negros province, was one of the first natives to recognize the sovereignty of the United States.

### THE ORIGIN OF THE PEARL.

It was once a widespread belief that the beautiful pearl was formed in the oyster shell by the solidification of a drop of dew. Pliny the naturalist fostered the idea, and many a poet has decried upon it in flowing language. Columbus found the same notion prevalent among the semisavage tribes of the new world. But since science dealt with the question in her usual matter of fact manner it has been generally believed that the formation of a pearl is due to the presence in the shell of some small fragment of foreign matter, such as a grain of sand or a small particle of driftwood. This intruder irritates the mollusk, which pours forth an extra quantity of nacre, the secretion which solidifies into mother of pearl, so as to cover it, by which process it gradually becomes a pearl.



SCENES IN THE SPENCER AIR SHIP FACTORY.

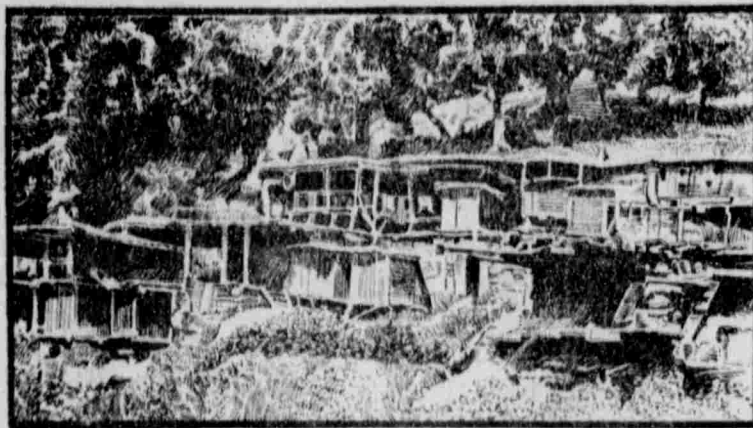
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# Persons, Places and Things Worth Reading About

## PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN WOODEN BOXES.



As the illustration shows, the aesthetic side of the Kafir race of Afghanistan has been sadly neglected. There are probably few people who know much about this strange race, whose country lies to the north of Afghanistan. A few years ago the Afghans invaded the Kafir territory, made slaves of many Kafirs and tried to compel the whole population to become Mohammedans. As a result many Kafirs fled to the Chitral country, where they have settled under British protection. That they are still in a low state of civilization is shown by their heneop homes, which must be insanitary in the extreme. On the flat roofs may be seen the little boxes in which they store dried fruit and grain for the winter. The village shown in the picture stands about 7,000 feet above sea level.

## A MAN WHO MADE A KING.

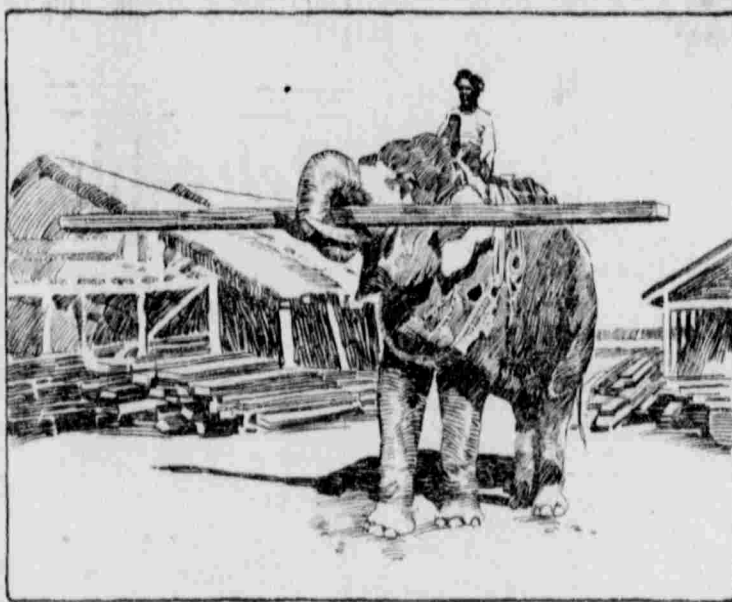
Judging from outward appearances, Colonel Maschin of the Serbian army is by no means the sort of man one would expect to find in the fore in a massacre, and yet it was Maschin who headed the



COLONEL MASCHIN.

force that wiped out the Obrenovitch dynasty in Serbia and placed Peter Karagevitch on the throne. Not only this, but Maschin played a prominent part in the slaughter of the late king and queen and their adherents, if all reports from Serbia are to be believed.

## AN ELEPHANT THAT HELPS BUILDERS.



It has long been known that a trained elephant, owing to his great strength, is one of the most useful of animals, but it is seldom that a photographer has an opportunity of catching an elephant engaged in building operations. The subject of the accompanying illustration is one of the most intelligent elephants in captivity and, as will be seen, is hard at work carrying a heavy beam. The most remarkable part of his performance is the way in which he balances the beam between his trunk and tusks.

## KING EDWARD'S PRIVATE SECRETARY.

Sir Francis Knollys, private secretary to his imperial majesty Edward VII, must have been working overtime for the past few months owing to the king's many junketings. In his cap-



SIR FRANCIS KNOLLYS.

ity as private secretary he not only reads all the letters addressed to the king, but answers many of them without troubling his royal employer with their contents. Sir Francis knows his business from A to Z, having been private secretary to Edward for many years.

## GOVERNOR OF THE TRANSVAAL.

Sir Arthur Lawley, who is now governor of the Transvaal, is the fourth son of the late Baron Wenlock and has the reputation of being a man of great administrative ability. For three years



Sir Arthur was a captain in the Tenth Hussars.

## THE FATTEST GIRL.

There have been fat women in plenty, but if Marie Lill continues developing adipose tissue at the rate she has maintained for the past few years she will break all records for stoutness. Miss Lill, who is now exhibiting herself in



MARIE LILL.

this country, is but seventeen years of age and weighs nearly 100 pounds. Her mother was also extremely stout, and therefore the young lady's weight may justly be deemed an inherited characteristic. Miss Lill's early life was passed on a farm in Yorkshire, England.

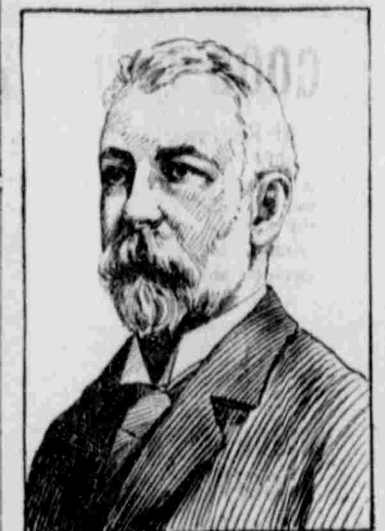
## RESTORATION OF A NOTED FOSSIL.



The artist who drew the accompanying picture has with the aid of scientists succeeded in showing what must have been the appearance in life of the prehistoric diplodocus, a skeleton of which was discovered in Wyoming not long ago. This specimen is sixty feet long. The diplodocus was an amphibious animal, but never came entirely out of the water because of its weight, which was so enormous as to need the aid of water for its support.

## A FAMOUS CANADIAN STATESMAN.

Among the really big men of the country to the north of us must be counted William Stevens Fielding, Canada's minister of finance. Mr. Field-



W. S. FIELDING.

ing was premier of Nova Scotia from 1884 to 1896, when he resigned to enter the Laurier cabinet, and since then he has been doing notable work for his native land. In his capacity of finance minister Mr. Fielding was particularly charged with the readjustment of the Canadian tariff, and, had Joseph Chamberlain's scheme of imperial protection come to a head, Mr. Fielding would doubtless have been called upon for assistance in the reconstruction of the British tariff.

## WIFE OF A SOUTH AFRICAN MILLIONAIRE.

Mrs. Lionel Phillips, who is shown with her charming little daughter in the accompanying illustration, has the distinction of being the wife of one of the world's wealthiest men. Her husband, a partner in the celebrated firm



MRS. LIONEL PHILLIPS AND DAUGHTER.

of Wernher, Beit & Co., is largely identified with the Witwatersrand gold industry in the Transvaal. Mrs. Phillips is described as a woman of brilliant personality and, as the illustration shows, is extremely good looking.

## LATEST PORTRAIT OF POET ALFRED AUSTIN.



Alfred Austin, whose blank verse tragedy "Flodden Field" fell rather flat when it was produced in London not long ago, has been poet laureate since 1896, when he was appointed by Queen Victoria to succeed Lord Tennyson. While his poetry has been subjected to some very hostile criticism, it is not and prose of a very high order. He is also an orator of no mean reputation. Mr. Austin's best known poem is "Jameson's Ride."

## AT HOME AND ABROAD.

It is told of the Marquis Ito, the premier of Japan, that when a youth he wandered about the streets of London penniless, ragged and hungry, a starving alien in a strange land.

Grass may be seen growing by the sides of London bridge, now given over to the work of widening.

The thinnest working model engine is

less than half an inch in height and weighs three pennyweights. It is made of gold, silver, brass and steel.

The United States has 73,000 post offices. Germany is next, with 45,623, and Great Britain third, with 22,400.

Mr. William Le Queux, the writer, has just had the title of chevalier conferred upon him by the republic of San

Marino in recognition of diplomatic services rendered to that country and to Italy.

Lord Mount Stephen, one of the two Canadian peers, recently celebrated his seventy-fourth birthday.

By a photographic method a German scientist has shown that a wink lasts two-fifths of a second.

All German soldiers must learn to swim. Some of them are so expert that, with their clothing on their heads and carrying guns and ammunition, they can swim streams several hundred yards wide.

Locked into his office by mistake, a Swiss editor, in order to keep an appointment with his wife, jumped out of a third floor window and broke his leg.

A steel-like grass from the volcanic slopes of Oran, Algeria, is so elastic

that it can be used instead of springs in the manufacture of furniture.

The Austrian emperor is the greatest of royal sportsmen. Between 1856 and 1897 he killed 1,341 deer and 730 chamois, besides thousands of head of other game.

A Japanese Buddhist dignitary was buried a few weeks ago. The police made the following terse return of the side issues of the ceremony: "Three hundred and eleven injuries, 75 fainting, 121 thefts, 374 pickpockets captured, 1,021 articles lost. Seventy-nine people fell into creeks or ditches."

A live bat has been found imbedded in the center of a twelve inch church wall at Columbus, O. It must have been there over fifty years without any air to breathe.

A farmer at Ballina, New South Wales, trained a black cat to act as a

retriever. The animal was also fond of diving in the sea for fish, and recently it brought out a two pound mackerel. Its career was ended by its being swallowed by a shark.

Taxes are paid on 29,000 dogs in Berlin. In addition to these there are 2163 watch dogs, 221 belonging to blind and deaf people, 2,632 used for drawing small carts and 115 belonging to the kaiser.