

LORDS VS. COMMONS.—An amusing practical conflict between lords and people took place recently in the town of Barkhamstead, England. Earl Brownlow chose to enclose the town common, two miles long, and a mile broad; but Mr. Augustus Smith, as the owner of an adjacent estate, and therefore as a commoner, acted in concert with his neighbors, determined to test his right to this course in a very practical way. The whole of the iron railing, consisted of stout uprights, five feet high, and with broad metal bands at intervals, was thrown down before daylight. Mr. Smith and the commoners taking all responsibility, chartering a railroad train, and engaging one hundred and twenty men to do the work. The men were told off in detachments a dozen strong, the joints of the railings were first loosened by hammers and chisels, and crowbars did the rest. Before six o'clock in the morning the whole enclosure was leveled to the ground, each stout upright having the metal bands, its tributaries, first folded around it, and then laid upon the turf. The people came in by thousands, strolling over the common, and cutting and taking away morsels of gorse, to prove, as they said, "the place was their own again."

MAXIMILIAN'S EUROPEAN HOME.—A writer in Blackwood thus describes Miramar, Maximilian's palace on the Adriatic:

On a grand bold bluff over the Adriatic stands one of the most picturesque chateaux I ever beheld, almost covering the plateau, save where a little space is stolen from the projecting arms of the building for a flower knot or a fountain. It displays all that can be accomplished by irregular outline and varied color. Tower and minaret and buttress, projecting window and deep shadowing cornice, with ornamented architrave and stained glass, have done their best, and made one of the most delightful houses to live in, and one of the handsomest to look at, in Europe. Splendid gardens lie to the rear, backed by a noble forest, stretching away to the foot of a mountain.

This elegant establishment was built by Maximilian, who lavished upon it all the resources which wealth and refined taste could command, to make it an earthly paradise; yet he has left this scene of peaceful enjoyment for the cares and dangers of imperial life among a hostile people. It is only another illustration of the restlessness of man, and the folly of preferring shadow to substance, and empty honor to substantial comfort.

PROBABLE EXISTENCE OF A GREAT CAVERN UNDER LANCASTER, PA.—It is a well settled belief among many of the most intelligent residents of Lancaster, Pa., and vicinity that there exists beneath their city and vicinity a vast cavern. The most plausible theory on this point seems to be the following, which we clip from the *Scientific American*. The writer says:

The city is located within the great limestone belt extending across the southeastern part of the State, and of all the geological formations limestone most abounds in caverns, many of which are known to be of vast extent. In sinking wells in various parts of Lancaster city the bottom crust breaks through before reaching the water, and the pump is suspended from above by chains.

There have been several well authenticated cases in the vicinity of the city of the earth breaking and engulfing farm animals. In two instances men engaged in ploughing saw their teams disappear beneath the surface, and only a funnel shaped cavity remained to mark the spot. Several shocks, like those of an earthquake, felt in Lancaster last September, are accounted for by this theory.

Huge masses of rock breaking from the roof of the cavern and falling into the depths beneath may cause such a quaking of the upper crust and dull rumbling noise as that which astonished the inhabitants of that day. But one of the most convincing proofs of the existence of this subterranean cavity is the discovery of an eyeless catfish in the waters of the Conestoga, a stream flowing past the city and supposed to connect with the waters beneath. This fish is entirely destitute of organs of sight, having only small spots in place thereof. In a celebrated grotto in Italy eyeless fish have been found. It is inferred that the eyeless fish of the Conestoga must originate in a similar underground locality and escape through the fissures of the rocks.

It is said that in Manchester, England, and its suburbs, there are now over 50,000 children who receive no instruction whatever.

NEWS ITEMS.

PRINCE SATRUMA, of Japan, is turning his attention to the manufacture of silks for the English and American markets.

At a printers' festival, on Franklin's birthday, the following was one of the regular toasts: "The editor and the lawyer—the devil is satisfied with the copy of the former, but requires the original of the latter."

The remittent fever, which a year ago committed such ravages at St. Petersburg, Russia, has broken out again with great violence at Moscow and Orenburg. At Moscow a new hospital has had to be opened for the accommodation of the sick.

In boring for an artesian well, near St. Louis, a five feet vein of coal was struck at a depth of 50 feet, and a bed of superior fire-clay, 28 feet thick, at 70 feet.

The Tycoon has sent several young Japanese to Russia to learn the language and to study naval and military science.

The cost of the Chicago Fire Department last year, was \$170,485. The losses for the year amounted to \$1,157,961, of which \$803,192 was covered by insurance.

A YOUNG man was killed in London, recently, by crinoline. Walking along the street, his foot caught in a lady's skirt and he was thrown to the pavement. The coroner, on the inquest, stated that he knew of four recent cases of death from similar causes. The jury rendered a verdict of "accidental death from treading on a woman's crinoline."

The candle fish—a most curious specimen of the finny tribe—is caught on the coast of British Columbia. It is of marvellous fatness, and the natives use it as a lamp by drawing a rush pith through it, when it will burn steadily until consumed, and give a good clear light for reading or other purposes.

SOME astronomers say that the moon is gradually drawing nearer to the sun—about an inch a year.

THE results of the first census of live stock in Spain have been published. There are 36,622,313 animals comprising 672,559 horses, 1,001,878 mules, 1,290,814 asses, 2,964,598 cattle, 22,054,967 sheep, 4,429,576 goats, 4,264,817 pigs, and 3,104 camels. The area of Spain is about 125 million acres, and its population is 15,673,481 persons.

GRAIN that has been injured and become musty, may be restored to nearly its original sweetness by pouring boiling water over it, and permitting it to stand till cool. The scum which rises to the surface of the liquid during the process of purification, should be carefully removed. Unless the gluten of the grain has become chemically affected, which is rarely found to be the case, except in very old grain—every trace of mustiness will be removed, and the grain rendered fit for use.

OF 22 lots of kerosene oil lately tested, at providence, R. I., only five were safe for illuminating purposes. The rest were as explosive as gunpowder.

THE volcanic eruptions in the crater-harbor of the island of Santorin are increasing in violence. The new crater, which has shot up from a depth of 100 fathoms, sends forth constantly augmenting showers of red-hot stones and cinders; great sheets of fire are occasionally seen quivering in the depths of the sea, and the roaring noise, coupled with the slight shocks of earthquake has so terrified the inhabitants that the whole of them—14,000 in number—are preparing to leave the island. The English, French and Turkish Governments have ordered vessels to be ready to transport them from Santorin.

It is announced that a substitute for magnesium has been discovered, which will produce a light nearly as brilliant as that given by the burning of magnesium wire, at a much lower cost. The new light is produced by burning a mixture of twenty-four parts of well dried and pulverized nitrate of potash, seven parts flour of sulphur, and six of the red sulphide of arsenic.

AN Englishman in New Zealand has suspended a wire rope across the Molyneux River, to enable persons to cross and recross that river. The passenger has only to seat himself in a sort of chair, and with little exertion on his part he is carried across the river in a very short space of time.

ROMAN TOMBS.—Queen Victoria has presented to the British Museum one of the Roman tombs recently discovered upon the Crown property at Old Windsor. The other tomb is presented to the town of Windsor, and is to be deposited in the contemplated local museum.

It is reckoned that in Belgium, at the present time, there are three thousand musical societies, with seventy thousand executants, including one thousand choral societies and thirty thousand singers. These statistics show that the little kingdom of Belgium surpasses all Germany in its number of choral societies, and, in conjunction with instrumentalists, their prosperity exercises a salutary effect on the manners and social habits of the working classes in Brussels and the Provinces.

THE first party to reach the summit of Mount Mansfield, Vermont, this year went up on the 12th of April. The road up the mountain for three miles was filled with snow, from three to five feet deep, and near the summit it was ten feet deep. More than half the rooms at the Mansfield House, which will accommodate from three to four hundred people, have already been taken for the season, and it will be opened this year, several weeks earlier than usual.

WHETHER on account of the great number of dead bodies found in the lake, or because of the mysterious murders which the local papers report every day, or from fear of cholera, Chicago, Ill., is just now exhibiting a general begira of its population. One evidence of this is found in the fact that a single auctioneer establishment has the furniture of nineteen hundred families to sell.

A CHICAGO, Ill., paper asserts that a tobacco firm in that city, employing from twenty-five to thirty hands, have adopted the eight hour system. Their experience is that as much work is turned out in eight hours as used to be in ten, and as a fruit of their experience, they pay the workmen the same wages under the new as they paid under the old system.

A MATCH type-sticking race came off between two compositors a few days ago at Iowa City. A. J. Kenny of the Iowa City Press and O. B. Bell of the Council Bluffs Nonpareil, each setting four thousand ems solid bourgeois in two hours. The speed is unprecedented.

THE journeymen house printers of Washington D. C., have been on a strike since Monday last for \$3.50 per day, failing to receive which they have organized themselves into an association for the purpose of procuring work on their own responsibility, thus defeating the "bosses."

THE Maplewood Institute, at Pittsfield, Mass., has been a second time visited with a fatal epidemic, and is again closed. Two years ago the breaking out of a fatality among the pupils led to the suspension of the school, and the principal, Mr. Spear, endeavored to prevent a return of the disease by perfecting the drainage of the premises. The institute was reopened and the school term progressing when about two weeks ago, as we learn from the *Troy Times*, one of the pupils, a young lady from North Carolina, was taken ill in church, and died within a few hours, of what was believed to be an epileptic fit. Last Thursday two more young ladies were seized with sudden illness, and a council of physicians was called. The doctors decided that the disease was spinal meningitis, a terrible and fatal scourge. It was thereupon decided to close the school and send the young lady pupils home. Up to Sunday P. M., six of the scholars were ill with the fatal disease, two of them lying at the point of death.

NO FENCES IN GERMANY.—The Secretary of the Ohio Agricultural Society, who has been traveling in Germany, speaking of the country near Dresden, says: "Every foot of land not in the forest is cultivated. There are no fences; the field is plowed up to the roadside, and fruits and flowers are growing by every roadside that I traveled; no one disturbs them. The cattle, sheep, and swine are kept in stables, or, if taken out, are under the charge of a shepherd or herdsman. Here and there, dotted over the landscape, we saw sheep in pasture, but have seen no stray cattle or swine."

VALUABLE SHAWL.—The Paris correspondent of the *Boston Advertiser* tells of a shawl that is coming from British India for the Great Exhibition. Ten years of careful labor have been devoted to it. Lady readers may like to know the proportions of this dainty garment; its length is about five yards and a half, its width a yard and three-quarters, the ground is red, and its arabesque designs are said to reach the extreme point of delicacy. It was ordered by the Queen of Oude before the revolt of the Sepoys and the siege of Lucknow.

SCHOOL BENCHES AND DESKS.—The attention of Berlin pedagogues has lately been directed to a subject of considerable importance to the well-being of the rising generation. Dr. Parow, who is the originator of the movement in question, has been for many years the director of an orthopedic institution at Bonn, and has given it as the result of his experience that a very large proportion of the cases of deformity among young persons arises from the improper construction of school benches and tables. Such a statement from such an authority certainly deserves very serious consideration. As the proportion between mind and body is very variable, long legged dunces and short legged geniuses necessarily meet in the same classroom, whereas all the benches and tables are all of the same size. Whether the bench be too high or too low, the position is uneasy, and produces fatigue after many hours. Besides this the tables are too far from the benches, and when a boy is writing he is obliged to lean forwards and bend his head over his copy-book. This posture has two very bad results. It contracts the breast, thus interfering with respiration and producing in time a narrow chest; and it sends the blood to the head, which, besides other unhealthy consequences, produces shortness of sight. Dr. Parow proposes to remedy the defects by introducing benches of different heights into the same classroom, and by placing them much nearer the table. In order that the boys may be able to get their places, the tables are to have a leaf which turns over on a hinge, and can be turned back when the boy has taken his seat.—*Berlin correspondence "Morning Star."*

A LOBSTER factory, to prepare 5,000 lobsters per day, is to be started at Sullivan, Maine. The fisherman only get two cents and a half for the lobsters, so that the business of preparing them for market must be tolerably lucrative.

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