

of the light and the sensitiveness of the plates used. To focus accurately requires practice and patience, on account of the feebleness of the illuminated image on the screen. Between 10 and 11 o'clock of an evening of last May, two distinct and extraordinary photographs of the Eiffel tower were secured, the first showing the tower through a deluge of rain as it was struck by a belt of lightning; and the second giving a view as the shower had passed to the south and the clouds were clearly outlined by illumination from the distant flashes. The time of exposure in each case was about fifteen minutes.

English botanists have called attention to the suitability of the spore dust of certain fungi infecting cereals for use as a coloring matter in the paints of artists. Moistened with alcohol and mixed with gum, oat smut forms a water-color pigment of a fine sepia or deep brown shade, that may be lightened by mixture with white, and has proven to be little affected by sunlight. Similar spores, it further appears, are used by Japanese ladies as a pigment for painting the eyebrows.

A unique forest of immense palm-like stalagmites has been discovered by M. Martel in a natural pit in the limestone of the Lozere, France. They are at the lower end of an immense sloping chamber, reached by descending a perpendicular shaft about 200 feet, and many are very beautiful, while one is over 90 feet high, nearly touching the vault of the cavern.

The largest quartz crystal known is that found by Mr. J. E. Burton last December in a mine of Calaveras county, Cal. It is reported to be 11 feet 7 inches in circumference, 4 feet 2 inches long, 3 feet 6 inches wide and 3 feet 2 inches high, and to weigh over 2,200 pounds. It is thought that a large point in the center would cut a pure ball of crystal from 12 to 14 inches in diameter.

#### AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Raleigh, N. C., April 6.—Prince Alfred Impey, 20 years of age, a grandson of the famous King Khama of Bechuanaland, South Africa, is dead of consumption at Southern Pines. He entered Shaw University at Raleigh last August to study theology and medicine, intending to return to Africa as a physician and missionary. His father is King William, chief of the Kaffirs of King Williamstown.

Bowling Green, O., April 6.—Mrs. George Carr and her two small children were burned to death last night. The Carr home was discovered to be on fire and Mrs. Carr rushed in to rescue her two sleeping children. Before she could do so, however, the building was enveloped in flames and all three perished.

New York, April 7.—The correspondent of the World in Havana telegraphs his paper that he has learned the kind and size of torpedoes and mines in the Spanish naval arsenal there. He also avers he has learned that some were experimented with the week before the Maine arrived.

Two strings of torpedoes were run across the narrow harbor entrance recently. They are in small floating boxes two feet by one foot. They are called "mine torpedoes."

There are in the arsenal today fifty buoy mines loaded with gun-cotton. They are two shallow head spears placed together, four feet each in diameter and each about two and a half feet thick.

Eighteen mine torpedoes similar to those recently placed in the entrance

to the harbor were put aboard the torpedo chaser Philippines yesterday.

Independence, Mo., April 7.—The 46th annual conference of the Reorganized church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, now convened at Independence, promises to be a notable one in the history of the church.

Nearly 700 delegates are in attendance. Each delegate has a right to present something for the work being carried on in the various parts of the world. President Joseph Smith of Lamoni, Iowa, the head of the church and chief of the presidency of three, is directing the work of the conference.

New York, April 7.—Captain Eugene Griffin, formerly of the United States army, is at the head of a movement which has for its object the organization of a volunteer corps of expert electricians. Captain Griffin's plan is to organize corps of men who will be available for all kinds of exigencies where electrical knowledge and skill are needed.

The scheme has had the hearty support of the secretary of war and Gen. Wilson, chief of engineers, and is already well advanced. More than 1,000 men are enrolled and ready for service. Captain Griffin has asked for recruits from the whole of the electrical industry, and the response has been ready and enthusiastic.

New York, April 8.—Joseph Paul Libbons, the electrician who supplied submarine mines to the Spanish government, cables from London to the World:

The only submarine mines which have been supplied to the Spanish government since 1868 were manufactured under my patents.

I then supplied them with fifty-six ground mines, twenty-five buoyant mines, each with a charge of 500 pounds of gun cotton, and fifteen electro-contact mines, exploded either on contact or by service from shore, each containing a charge of 100 pounds of gun cotton.

The mines sent to Havana would still retain full effectiveness. They will last under water for an indefinite period.

In 1896-7 the Spanish government ordered a fresh supply of my patent mines. Whether they went to Havana or not is immaterial.

One of the mines supplied in 1886 is still capable of causing the destruction of the Maine.

In fact, I am convinced from all surrounding circumstances that no other agency could have caused it.

In direct contradistinction of the assertions of the secretary of the Spanish legation at Washington and of General Weyler that there are no submarine mines in Havana harbor, I absolutely affirm that I shipped the above mines for Havana and Ferrol in a Spanish ship, the property of the Spanish government and officered by Spanish naval officers, with two captains, at the West India dock, London.

My mines are in electrical connection with the shore and it is quite impossible that they could be exploded except by design.

I am convinced also that the explosion of the mine which destroyed the Maine was the work of one or two men, for these reasons:

First—A vessel swinging, either anchored or moored, upon striking the circuit closer case, would merely drop a shutter on the keyboard on shore, warning the officer in charge that she was in contact with the mine.

Second—Before the officer is in a position to fire the mine, he must obtain one of two keys. One is generally kept by the commandant, the other by the officer in charge of the firing station.

He then must unlock the glass door

over which the shutter has fallen and insert a red danger plug in the insulated switch.

Third—He must insert a plug in the switch of the firing battery earthenware.

Fourth—The firing key hammer must be pressed on to the contact anvil to complete the circuit that explodes the detonator, by which the mine in turn is exploded.

I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that the Maine was deliberately destroyed with a 500 pound ground mine as invented and supplied by me.

There is a consensus of opinion that the first explosion was internal. This was established on the following grounds:

The forward magazine contained 2,500 pounds of gun powder, which might blow up the decks, but it is problematical whether it would be capable of igniting the 5,500 pounds of powder in the middle magazine. Even if it did, the explosion of both would be quite incapable of detonating the 8,200 pounds of wet gun cotton in the after magazine. Had that quantity of gun cotton been detonated, not a vestige of the Maine would remain.

The only practical way of discovering the mine that sunk the Maine is by under-running the cable from shore to the junction box, and from thence under-running each individual cable to the mine, until one was found without a mine attached.

I am satisfied that the explosion was caused by a ground mine—not by a buoyant mine—for Havana harbor is too shallow to admit of the use of the latter.

I am prepared to satisfy by demonstration any jury of reasonable men that this is a true explanation of the destruction of the Maine.

Independence, Mo., April 7.—The forty-sixth annual conference of the Reorganized church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, now convened at Independence, this afternoon appointed a committee to raise the United States flag over the church in which the body is sitting, and adopted ringing resolutions in relation to the Cuban affair.

The preamble recites that the condition of affairs in Cuba is undesirable, owing to Spanish oppression, and praises the efforts of the Cuban patriots to free themselves, and "to secure complete independence for their island from the thralldom of oppressors."

The resolutions declare sympathy with the patriots, declare it to be the duty of the United States to render them all possible aid promptly, declare that the United States is morally obliged to aid them in their struggle, and declare that, much as it is to be deplored, it is nevertheless preferable, as a necessary means to the end desired, to a continuance of the conditions that have so long existed in Cuba. The resolutions were telegraphed to President McKinley.

Kansas City, April 9.—The general conference of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at Independence considered an invitation extended to the church by the Omaha exposition management to be represented at the exposition.

A resolution that the last Sunday of this month be set aside for offerings from the members of the church for the maintenance of an exhibit at Omaha was defeated, and the matter was referred to the president and bishops of the church, who will report their views on the subject to the conference.

Prague, April 9.—There have been severe earthquake shocks in the vicinity of Liberehowitz, ten miles southwest of Leitmeritz. In the village of Klafal seven houses collapsed and thirty-eight families were rendered homeless. The subterranean disturbances continue.