

COSTLY POLITENESS.

Exchange of Courtesy Between Nations Comes Very High.

Instances of the Exchange of Courtesy Between Nations Comes Very High.

International courtesy is one of the most expensive of all the costly indulgences of the world powers, and there is apparently no way out of it, even if it is essential to the peace of nations.

The visit of Prince Henry of Prussia to the United States is a good example of the courtesy that are applied to the political relations of one government with another.

An illustration of the same spirit of courtesy is shown in the case of the relief ship Resolute, sent out by England in 1894.

Being a derelict, and the British government abandoning its claim, it became the property of the United States.

When, 34 years later, the old ship was broken up, a handsome deed was made of the timber and sent by the queen as a present to the president.

The visit of President Loubet to the United States in April last was no cheap matter, either.

Just at present Great Britain is running up a big bill for the purpose of keeping the good will of the United States.

The most striking example in recent years was the action of the United States when the news was received that the island of Martinique had been devastated by an earthquake.

Another case of American good will was shown during the recent famine in India.

A big subscription was got up among people all over the union to buy wheat for the starving Hindus.

Decide of a New York school teacher because her pupils misbehaved only indicates how far we have got away from the golden age of the rawhide.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

Twenty percent used the railways of Bavaria last year.

More than 100,000,000 pounds of white fish and trout are taken from our great lakes every year.

At a recent meeting of the Swiss Alpine club it was stated that 400, or 50 per cent. of the Swiss guides are insured.

Molokai, the leper island of Hawaii, is overrun with many thousands of red deer, the descendants of a few that were imported from England to stock parks.

It is not only in the United States that cantaloupes are an uncertain quantity. Even in Spain, the paradise of melon eaters, they have a proverb that buying a melon is like getting married.

The taxpayers of the United Kingdom pay 35 shillings three pence a year per head of the population toward navy and army, while the most heavily-taxed colonialist pays no more than three shillings five pence a year per head of the population for naval and military purposes.

Despite opposition at Athens, where the price was strongly opposed to the scheme, the municipal council of Corfu has ratified the contract which the mayor of Corfu made with a syndicate of European capitalists to allow the establishment at Corfu of a gambling casino on an elaborate scale.

California ranks third among the states of the union in the number of vegetable canneries, having 130 such factories, against 111 in New York and 71 in Maryland.

Men who laboriously labor over statistics are almost unconsciously classed among those to whom a good hearty laugh is an unknown quantity.

They belong, at least in the popular mind, to the class which, in its scientific enthusiasm, can, with no inherent sense of impropriety, "botanize on a mother's grave."

With the instinct of a friend whose pulse is evidently kept beating with a circulating fluid deriving its actuating influence from an overflowing ice water tank, he seriously asks a human world of average sympathetic tendencies to imagine these same unfortunate babies to be carried past a given point in a coherent procession, at the rate of 20 a minute, in their mothers' arms, one by one, the awful line being kept up night and day until the last hour of the 12 months of a year has elapsed.

Do parrots understand what they say? A scientist relates that he has a Brazilian parrot which is a fluent and accomplished speaker.

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Four Thousand Godfathers. Princess Irene of Russia, is better provided for in the matter of godfathers than any other woman in the world.

A NEW EXPLOSIVE.

Hathamite is the Latest Addition to the Long List of Powerful Detonators.

The most powerful explosive known is "Hathamite," a recently discovered substance, which showed remarkable qualities under recent tests, reports the New York World.

Boards having the maximum of explosive power, this strange material, which is the discovery of G. M. Hathaway, of Wellboro, Pa., is the most difficult to explode.

To test it on this point the following seemingly dangerous experiments were tried without effect: Lighted matches were thrown into it.

It was pounded to powder on a sledge. Shells were exploded near it. Rifle balls were fired into it.

A small charge was exploded between two cakes of ice, each weighing over 150 pounds. All that remained was a small pile of actual snow—not finely crushed ice.

In the second test on quarter-inch steel in the open air the plate was placed on a collar of steel. The steel was cut out over the collar.

About an ounce of Hathamite was exploded in a regulation United States government one-pound steel shell, and very thorough fragmentation of the shell occurred.

The explosion of a small charge of Hathamite produces a sharp report, somewhat resembling the crack of a rifle, and there arises a rather thick cloud of greenish smoke, but this quickly dissolves in the air.

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JOHNSON GRASS A NUISANCE.

A Farmer of Louisiana Starts a Movement to Exterminate the Troublesome Growth.

Congress was asked at its last session to make an appropriation to be used in getting rid of the water hyacinth in the streams of Louisiana and it voted the money.

While the water hyacinth is damming up the streams the grass is at work in the fields, crowding out the rice and corn crops.

For the past two years the sugar planters have been complaining of the damage done by it. The efforts to get rid of it by ordinary means having failed, the legislature was appealed to for relief.

The head of this movement was William Polk, a member of the legislature from Rapides, who introduced a bill declaring that the grass was being scattered over the entire state by the railroads, and, therefore, requiring them to keep all grass along their lines cut down as on a lawn.

But, although defeated in the legislature, the campaign against the troublesome grass is not ended.

Though there are many goats in Malta they have no regular grazing ground, but the herds are driven along the roads and hillside, where they pick up anything they can find.

Prof. John Fiske is authority for saying that a man can travel the whole length of the earth's circumference in less time than it would have taken Herodotus to go the length of the Mediterranean.

BLOW TO LETTER WRITING.

Women Now Send Out Invitations Over the Telephone for Conventions.

One reason why the art of letter writing is dying out is that the telephone is being used more than ever as a means of communication between friends in the matter of invitations.

Those who cling to the old forms seem to be in the minority to-day. The younger generation refuses to be hampered by the time-consuming methods of several years ago, when a note of invitation, for instance, could not even be sent through the mail, but must be delivered by hand.

The modern youth or maiden picks up the telephone and dispatches an invitation to luncheon or the matinee, and even for so serious a function as a dinner it is quite common now for a hostess to call up a friend at the last moment, frankly admitting by the action that she only desires to fill some place that has been left vacant at the last moment.

In fact, there is a fad for telephoning messages of some sort nowadays. When it first gained entrance to the residences the telephone was intended as a means of communication between a man's office and his home chiefly; then it began to be used for the ordering of cabs, for marketing, for buying up slow tradesmen and the various uses connected with housekeeping.

By degrees friends began to make use of the quick method of communicating with each other, and it was so delightfully informal that it became a vogue.

The informality of the telephone method of communication is what appeals to the younger generation of society. An invitation given or accepted or rejected in this way has not the importance attached to the old method of a note delivered by a messenger.

But the message over the wire is different. One does not have time to study questions as to motives, dress, the people one is to meet, or any other of the small problems that frequently arise on the reception of a formal invitation.

The telephone bidding reeks of the up to date. It simply states that the occasion is there waiting and it calls for quick decision. There is no reading between the lines and no time to ask why and wherefore.

SQUIRREL OUTWITS A CAT.

By the Exercise of Clever Strategy the Nutsacker Escaped from Tabby's Claws.

Squirrels evidently understand the cat's limitations and take advantage of the knowledge for their own protection and sometimes, apparently, for their amusement. An exhibition in Central park lately leads to this conclusion, says the New York Herald.

Mr. Squirrel was not long unsuspecting, for he soon discovered his stealthily approaching natural enemy, and darted up the nearest tree, but only far enough for a position of advantage, and then viewed the situation.

When the cat found that she was discovered she also made a rush, and the squirrel, with quite evident close calculation, waited until she had gained good momentum and was at the very root of the tree, when he darted horizontally around half of its circumference.

Down went the cat and from the ground circled the tree, but she was able to catch only glimpses of the cunning squirrel as it traveled around the bark, keeping the tree between them.

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Oil of Rattlesnakes. In Pennsylvania the oil of rattlesnakes is preserved most carefully as a liniment especially good for sore joints and for rheumatism.

A COVERED RACE TRACK.

East Aurora (Ill.) Has a Trotting Course That is Completely Enclosed.

Few things in the world are "absolutely unique," but this term applies precisely to the Jewett covered trotting track at East Aurora, which is one mile long, reports a Chicago exchange.

The covered track is situated on a 400-acre farm about two miles west of East Aurora. Henry C. Jewett built the track in 1897, when he was heavily interested in the breeding business.

The building is in the form of an oval and incloses about 70 acres. The structure is of wood, 30 feet wide, with gable roof. The height of the building is about 15 feet. At intervals of every eight or ten feet on each side are large windows.

The interior is whitewashed and the footing is of tanbark, affording an ideal surface for fast trotting and pacing. When in use the track is harvested every day, giving the required elasticity. The building is well ventilated.

There are two stands on the track—one at the head of each of the stretches. These are commodious and heated by natural gas. Separated from the track proper by windows, a fine place for an owner to watch the horses at their work is afforded.

Two large barns are directly connected with the track by covered runways. Each of these contains box stalls for 100 horses, with ample room for saddles, carts and the like.

Locating at Jewett's as now begins to fly, a trainer need not take his horses outdoors until the next spring unless he desires. Stabled in roomy quarters, he can look to a cart in the morning and jog through the runway to the main track, then sending his trotter or pacer, as the case may be, as many miles as he pleases.

The farm is widely known among harness horsemen, and some top-notch reinmen have wintered there. When Ed Geers, who trains for the Hamdens, does not go south he uses the Jewett track as a place to make speed. W. L. Snow, the well-known Hernalisville trainer, has wintered at the track, and Alonzo McDonald, the prominent grand circuit driver, had a stable at Jewett's last winter.

CLEVELAND NEARLY KILLED.

Guide Tells How He Found Former President with Loaded Gun Pointed at His Own Heart.

A desire to view the statue erected to the memory of Roswell P. Flower, whom he had guided through the wilderness and whose homespun character he greatly admired, led "Chick" Bruce, a well-known guide of the Upper Raquette country, to tramp over the blazed trails of the divide between Massawepie and Cranberry lakes and make a journey on the "Huckleberry" train from Benson's Mines to this city, says a Watertown (N. Y.) report to the St. Louis Republic.

He spent two days viewing the sights. In the evenings he related incidents of his adventurous career as a woodsman to the many friends he made here during his brief stay.

"Chick" was for several years one of the guides who piloted Grover Cleveland through the Adirondacks, when the statesman, then president, laid aside the cares of office for diversion with rod and gun. He relates the following experience with the chief magistrate:

One day, while hunting on Saranac lake, "Chick" says he placed "Grove," as he familiarly calls the sage of Greycourt, on a small island in the lake, and in company with another guide put the hounds out upon a near-by mountain, where they soon started a fine buck. The dogs drove the game into the lake, and with a boat "Chick" steered the buck up to a point near the island, where the president shot the deer.

While skinning the buck on the island shore, "Chick" noticed the president sitting with the muzzle of his double-barreled shotgun resting against his ample breast, pointing just above his heart. Forgetting in the anxiety of the moment the respect due to the chief magistrate of the nation, "Chick" shouted: "Is that gun loaded?" Mr. Cleveland replied that it was, and found both barrels at full cock.

"Chick" says that had a fatal accident occurred he would undoubtedly have been hung, as there was no one around for a witness and he and the president were of opposite political parties.

He says that he felt after that whenever he guided "Grove," that the fate of the nation as well as his own depended upon his vigilance, and used to take his boy along to do the guiding work, while he kept his eye on the presidential gun.

Asked if Cleveland was a good man to guide, "Chick" replied that "he was good enough, but that like everybody else who came into the woods he asked a lot of foolish questions."

The salaries of teachers in Italian public schools is at most \$600 a year, after 25 years' service. University professors get from \$750 to \$1,200.

THE PERILS OF PEACE.

Brave Men March Daily to Work in the Shadow of Death.

Occupation of Hundreds of Thousands of Artisans in Which a Single or a Careless Move Means Destruction.

More than a dozen different forms of employment are followed in the city of New York more perilous than the work of the soldier in the field. That hair's breadth that lies between joyous life and instant and horrible death is not incidental to the battle-field alone, nor is personal courage in the face of imminent danger the exclusive characteristic of the man behind the gun, says the Herald, of that city.

A dozen different callings in New York will show a proportionately greater loss to life, taking into consideration the number employed, than the army in time of war. Even the peaceful citizen whose work is confined to a great office building runs more risk of life and limb every day than the man in the United States army.

The men who go to their work on the great steel structures, in the tunnels, on the piers, as chauffeurs of automobiles, as motor drivers on the surface cars, artisans on the big bridges, on the paint scaffolds, etc., take their lives in their hands as completely and trustfully as those who work in powder mills.

Go and see those employed in the labor of constructing piers along the rivers. The great sticks of timber that are driven into the river bottom must be floated and roped and poled into position for hoisting, when the floating derrick and pile driver picks them up and pegs them down. But the bringing into position requires the strength and skill and daring of half a dozen men. They work on the rolling, tumbling logs, themselves sometimes knee deep in the water, and when the tide sets in strongly and the waters become a perfect whirlpool of conflicting currents that defy the skill of the oldest pilots it is a thrilling battle with death. For a single misstep—a single slip on the treacherous timbers—and no human aid would be able to rescue the unfortunate.

Or stop and watch the workmen far up in the swinging seats, as in hand, placing shoring timbers against some high blank wall. Hundreds of feet below him is the solid rock. Two or three men manipulate the slender rods that swing between him and destruction. With nothing to brace himself, he must work a hole into the wall or fix the head of the swaying timber and drive the wedges that are to hold it secure. To look down would be enough to unnerve the strongest man. He gives orders to raise or lower himself by a wave of the hand. He has not even the security of the so-called "steepie Jack," for the latter is responsible for his own hoisting apparatus. This man must trust wholly to his fellow workmen below.

Thousands of men are working calmly and steadily every day among the big steel frames of skyscrapers within a step of death. Thousands more toil beneath the treacherous ledges of rock and earth in the dark subways, doubly threatened by their own carelessness and by their surroundings. The shocks of dynamite and the concussion of passing cars frequently loosen great masses of stone and earth, while the swinging cranes spill rocks upon the men below occasionally, and blocks and huge sticks of timber used as shoring give way unexpectedly every day. It is a daily life of mere chance.

Those who go wildly about every day in automobiles take big risks. So do those who have to fodge them. If any man were fool enough to drive a spirited horse through the crowded streets at the top of the animal's speed he would be arrested on the first block; yet the chauffeur runs at such a speed. Indeed, few horses can trot at the ordinary speed used by the average chauffeur. There is a species of intoxication in mere speed and some amateur chauffeurs are drunk all the time.

The hundreds of thousands of brave men who march forth daily to face and work in the shadow of death are not preceded by trumpets or bands of music, or waving flags, or glittering swords. They fall like flies, obscurely and uncounted. Their widows and orphans receive no pensions, their graves are never decorated on national holidays. No government monument tells of their courage and heroism to future ages. Yet in a single year more men fall in the business of the railroads alone than fell in one of the greatest battles of the rebellion. And every year more men die with their boots on in the city of New York than have perished in the same time either in the war with Spain or in the Philippines.

A Long Way from the Pines. The Cape-to-Cairo railway would be 2,700 miles long in a direct line between Cape Town and Cairo. At the present time the rails are laid to within 200 miles of the Zambesi, or about 1,500 miles from Cape Town, and there is now a railway from Cairo to the junction of the Nile and white Nile, or 1,400 miles from Cairo. It is thus seen that a line 2,800 miles long must yet be built to connect these terminal systems. The Uganda railway is built, connecting the port of Mombasa, on the Pacific ocean, with Fort Florence, on Lake Nyansa; the length of the line is 500 miles. The Bulawayo-Beira railway connects the system with the ocean at the last mentioned port. At Bulawayo the line is 4,400 feet above sea level.