

SEALS SWALLOW STONES.

Probably Taken In for Bailets, Ventures a Writer on Scientific Subjects.

F. A. Lucas, of the Brooklyn Institute museum, writing to Science on the swallowing of stones by seals, says: "So far as I am aware, no satisfactory reason has been advanced for the swallowing of stones by seals, and this statement may probably be extended to other animals. They are not taken in for bailets, for the empty seals keep down as easily as the others; they are not swallowed for the purpose of grinding up food, for they occur in the stomachs of nursing pups; they are not to allay the irritation caused by parasitic worms, since the two are by no means found together; they are not taken in with food, not merely because they are found in the stomachs of young seals, but in those adults that have fed on squid caught in the open sea. On page 68 volume III, 'Report of Fur Seal Investigation,' it says: "It is evident that these things are not swallowed haphazard, but are selected with considerable care from among the articles strewn along the shore, and that a preference is exhibited for rounded objects. This is shown by the fact that, as a rule, only articles of one kind are found in one stomach, although seals do not discriminate between fragments of barnacles and fragments of gastropods. "Moreover, pebbles of serpentine and chalcocite are now and then found on the hauling grounds under conditions indicating that they were brought there by the seals, while the pup seen gathering pebbles on Lukanin did so with great care, by no means taking the first that came to hand. The most striking example of this discriminative selection, perhaps, shown by the pup which had swallowed a buckshot while the chance of finding such a thing must be at a guess, about one in a million. "Furthermore, it may be said that as the fur seal ingests bones and other indigestible things, the supply of stones must be renewed from time to time. That there is any connection between the presence of stones and the presence of a gizzard does not follow."

BEDMAKING FOR LIVELIHOOD

An Occupation Which Provides a Living for Widows of Policemen.

The women who take care of the policemen's beds in every police station are called bedwomen. Most of them make a very good living, says the New York Sun. They only make the beds. It is obligatory on the policeman to supply clean bed linen once a week. If a policeman does not keep his bed linen clean he is liable to a complaint, and this offense calls for a heavy fine. In a large precinct like the Tenderloin there are two bedwomen. Each policeman pays 75 cents a month bed money. The money is not deducted from his pay, but the clerical man of the police station always makes sure that the policeman pays it. When the money is all collected it is turned over to the bed women.

In the Tenderloin station it amounts to \$110 a month. The force of men there is larger than in any other police station, and consequently the bed fund amounts to more. Mrs. Enright, the widow of a policeman who was killed some months ago by a burglar, is one of the bedwomen. She gets about \$40 a month. The other is also the widow of a policeman. She makes \$70 a month. The last woman had the job first, and needs it more than Mrs. Enright. Soon after Policeman Enright was killed several benefits for his widow were given in city theaters. Nearly \$15,000 was realized for her. The policeman's widow with whom she shares the Tenderloin station pay has five children and no other means of support except from this source.

In all stations the bedwomen are either the widows of policemen or the mothers of members who died while on the force. In every police station but the Tenderloin one woman does the work. It only takes a couple of hours each morning.

Drunkenness Cured by Wine.

The authorities in Norway have discovered a novel way of curing drunkenness. The "patient" is placed under lock and key, and his nourishment consists in great part of bread soaked in port wine. The first day the drunkard eats his food with pleasure, and even on the second day he enjoys it. On the third day he finds that it is very monotonous, on the fourth day he becomes impatient, and at the end of eight days he receives the wine with horror. It seems that the disgust increases, and that this homeopathic cure gives good results.

Living Stones.

The visitor to the Falkland Isles sees scattered here and there singular-shaped blocks of what appear to be weather-beaten and moss-covered bowlders in various sizes. Attempt to turn one of these bowlders over and you will meet with a real surprise, because the stone is actually anchored by roots of great strength. In fact, you will find that you are trifling with one of the native trees. No other country in the world has such a peculiar "forest" growth.

Independence.

Mrs. De Fashion—My dear, I have picked out a husband for you. Mrs. De Fashion—Very well, but I want to say, mother, that when it comes to buying the wedding dress I am going to select the material myself—Smith's Weekly.

Resistance of Lancwood.

A piece of lancwood, an inch square will stand a strain of 2,600 pounds before breaking.

CIVILIZATION OF BOSTON.

The Inhabitants Are Civil to Strangers and the Men Courteous to Women.

"In common with the rest of the American race outside of Massachusetts," said the woman just back from her vacation across the New York Tribune. "I had always laughed gently at Boston and the Bostonians and poked fun at them as a place and people dwelling remotely on a hill. "I thought their superiority was a joke, resting solely upon their own opinions and the necessities of the professional humorist. But on my way to my vacation grounds in Nova Scotia, I visited Boston for the first time. We made the city our headquarters for some time, while trawling over the surrounding country, and, as a result, I am ready to say that Boston civilization is superior to the brand we furnish under the statute of liberty. "My judgment is based in general on the manners of Bostonians and in particular on their treatment of strangers. And I don't know a more reliable test. When people are extremely uncivilized they kill strangers and eat them. Slightly less savage, they merely kill them. One grade higher, they enslave them. A little more civilized, they are simply very rude to them. Judged by this ascending scale, Boston civilization is superior to any to which I have been accustomed. "For instance, one day my sister and I stood at the entrance to the subway, debating how to reach a desired point. In our absorption we were blocking the way. We stepped aside, but far from pushing impatiently the woman just behind us said pleasantly: 'Can I help you?' "We told her where we wanted to go and she stepped aside and gave us full directions. Seeing our still puzzled looks, she deliberately escorted us to the proper car, saw us on and told us where to get off. "Another time we boarded an elevated train for South station, as we supposed. Pretty soon the conductor called 'North station.' We looked at each other in discouragement. 'We can't be on our way to South station if this is North station,' I muttered helplessly. A woman opposite leaned over and said pleasantly: 'You reach it eventually. The road circles around. And when she rose to leave the car she remembered us and said in passing: 'Yours is the next station but one.' The Boston railway system, with its combination of subway, elevated and surface, all transferring to one another, is calculated to puzzle the most mathematical mind, but the Boston people certainly lighten its difficulties. "We did not stand in a car during the entire time we were in Boston. Some man always offered his seat. The first time it happened I was almost stunned. But after a time, such is the adaptivity of Americans, I got so I could accept the courtesy without starting dumfounded in the man's face."

NOT THE ONLY NECESSITY

The Voice Is Not All That Is Requisite in an Opera Singer.

The voice, however, is by no means the only consideration in judging a young woman's equipment for grand opera. Other essentials are the dramatic temperament, in some degree, and attractiveness of face, says Heinrich Cordier, in Success Magazine. In Germany I would give a good part in an opera to a homely woman who is an artist, but I would hardly do it in the United States. Here there is not yet a sufficiently great and general appreciation of art in itself to render it advisable to neglect the externals. The ear and the eye must both be pleased. Audiences demand beauty on the stage, and properly so. The effect of a good operatic performance is sensuous. There must be nothing jarring or incongruous. The music is beautiful and to maintain an artistic harmony its exponents must at least appear beautiful. Therefore, a young woman who has not a graceful body and pleasing face would better not aspire to grand opera honors, however fine her voice may be, for she will be hopelessly handicapped. Besides appearance, there are mental weaknesses or characteristics that unfit many women for grand opera. I have encountered an innate timidity and self-consciousness that could not be overcome in a great enough degree to make it worth while or safe for me to take a singer up. All true artists suffer from stage fright, of course, but where the artistic feeling is strong enough the terror of the performance quickly banishes the embarrassment. But a self-consciousness that cannot be thus easily subdued is especially disastrous to a singer, because it chokes and weakens the voice. It has frequently spoiled scenes in opera, and is one of the factors in my consideration of an applicant's fitness for my company or school. After a careful trial I am often compelled to drop singers whose vocal equipment is fully up to the standard. The general term we use in describing such cases is, 'not suited to the operatic stage.' Alligator Farms. Several French dealers have recently visited America to purchase stock for an alligator farm, which they propose starting in the south of France. Alligator skin has become so highly prized throughout France that the animal dealers believe it will pay well to raise the alligators on this, the first farm of its kind in the world. No long ago President Loubet received a present of a hunting cap of alligator skin. This is said to be growing faster each year and there is always a great demand for it for boots, shoes, handbags, valises, purses, portfolios and toilet articles.

MORE WINE THAN WATER.

Large Consumers Among the Customers of New York German Wine Shops.

Wine drinking, a duty with some and a pleasure with others, is to many thousands of men and women in the German quarter hardly less than a science, says the New York Sun. The familiar half schoppen of native wine, red or white, which sells in the wine stuben at five cents, is rather more than a fifth of a bottle, or as nearly as may be a twenty-fifth of a gallon. Regular frequenters of the wine stuben drink these wines in lieu of water and much more freely than most persons drink the latter fluid. The ordinary citizen drinks from six to eight half schoppens at a sitting, and it is an exceedingly moderate man who stops at three or four. The old toppers go as high as ten or 15 glasses, and hard drinkers often consume 16 or 18. All of these keep sober. When men assemble to a wassail bout, as they occasionally do in the wine stuben, nobody knows just how much a man may drink, for the "dead men" are carried off after three or four have gathered on the table, and no further count is kept. The wassail drinkers buy by the bottle, but on ordinary occasions wine is bought by the glass. As a matter of fact the price is nearly the same one way as the other. Wine drinking really begins in the wine stuben about time for luncheon, say at noon. One rathskeller, however, has hit upon an ingenious plan of providing a free lunch from ten o'clock to noon in order to attract early customers, and the place is never empty after mid-morning. The fact that the hot coffee lunch is pretty rigorously cut off at noon does not prevent customers from crowding the rathskeller all afternoon. Midday drinking in the wine stuben, however, is after all moderate and a mere adjunct to luncheon, because most men have yet some hours of work before them. The regular business of drinking begins toward four o'clock, when many business men have finished their day's work and a few lucky men of leisure come in to meet their friends. Many a man drinks nearly half a gallon of wine between four o'clock and six and a few drink more. Some of those who spend the afternoon thus go home to a dinner at which they drink at least a pint more. The hour of eight o'clock finds the night business of the wine stube well under way, and now the number and the variety of drinkers are multiplied. Men far advanced in their seventies will sit two hours in a wine stube at night and drink ten or 12 glasses of wine. Even a few women drink as much, and some of the afternoon drinkers return at night to finish their score. Raw fish, limburger cheese and a few like delicacies, along with pretzels and sautstangen, accompany the wine. At midnight the last after leaves the place, and if he happens to be one of the regular daily and nightly customers he has probably consumed in the course of 12 hours well on to a gallon and a half of wine. That men who drink after this fashion live, keep moderately sober and are neither noisy or quarrelsome seems to argue highly for the soundness of American wines. The barkeepers, who have watched these goings on for half a lifetime, insist that the immunity of over-drinking is due in part to the fact that nearly everybody drinks slowly and in part to the almost invariable rule that nobody drinks without eating. As a matter of fact the regular customers of the wine stube usually cut down their daily supply of wine two-thirds or three-fourths once or twice a year and order doctors' orders, but very few actually mount the water wagon.

A WARNING INSTRUMENT.

It Registers the Slightest Movement of Milan's Duomo.

The fall of the Campanile of Venice aroused terror in the breasts of all those who have the care of the old buildings of Italy, and it was specially felt in Milan. The authorities to reassure the Milanese about the Duomo, at once had an instrument fitted up which registers the slightest movement. The mechanism is one of the most delicate imaginable, and most wonderful. It shows oscillations produced by the winds, and the most imperceptible inclinations in the pinnacles. It is hung in the highest pinnacle, and may be called the pedulum register. In itself it is of great weight, and very strong, thus obviating movements of its own, and is nearly 60 feet long, but at the same time is, as indicated, very sensitive. At once when put in position, it showed the periodical movements of the whole cathedral through the action of the sun on the stone. Who would have believed that this were possible, but it is! While, strangely enough, such being the fact it is also shown that through the special way in which it is constructed the chief pinnacle resists the action of the wind better than an ordinary tower. Special care has been taken that the point of suspension of the instrument shall not vary with the years. Thus Milan feels safe. Her great church cannot fall without fair warning.

American Rascals, English Snobs.

A Briton who was visiting American politics made a thrust which he imagined would suppress his opponent. "You are ruled," he said, "by a lot of vulgar rascals whom you never dream of meeting socially, don't you know?" "Yes," said the sharp-tongued American, "but in England you are ruled by a lot of people who would never dream of meeting you socially."

HE WAS UNCONVENTIONAL.

And Daughter "Ireony" Started In to Give Him a Few Corrective Instructions.

"I wish you wouldn't, pa," said the eldest girl. "Wish I wouldn't what?" asked the plain citizen. "Eat with your knife," replied the daughter; "it's so—" "So what?" asked the old gentleman, knitting his shaggy brows, relates the Chicago Daily News. "So unconventional." "Now, lookes here," said the plain citizen, "I'm 60 years old and getting older every minute, but I'm not too old to learn. If you can show me any way of gettin' gravy up to my mouth with a fork I'm willing to try it. I've got to use a knife." "People don't do it, pa." "You're mistaken about that. I know a heap of people that do it." "But not refined people, pa." "Ireony," said the plain citizen, "you make me tired. I believe in being polite where there's sense to it. Manners is manners and I always taught you manners when you was a young one. I wouldn't let you grab for the biggest piece of pie on the plate and I wouldn't let you spill, and when you drunk I made you drink quiet. You wasn't allowed to wipe your mouth on the tablecloth or speak with your mouth full. Them's manners. Jess so long's I keep my own knife on my own vittles I claim that it's my own business whether I put it in my mouth or not—ain't it?" "Well, perhaps it is, but—" "There isn't any 'but' about it. When I took you to the city last fall there was a feller setting at a table in the restaurant where we was; dressed to kill he was, too, and when he got through eating he lit a cigarette—and wimmin setting right there—member that?" "Yes, but—" "No 'but' about it. If he'd ben a boy o' mine I'd jerked him out o' the room and taught him manners. When that family was starvin' with us last summer you fussed because I sat down to the table in my shirt sleeves. The man he set down without even a vest and that was all right. I think it was all right, too, but why is muddin any more proper than blue and white striped flannel, and how is a belt any better than suspenders? They're both to hold the pants up." "Why, pa?" "I hope you don't mean to say that pants is unconventional. Ireony, you talk a lot of poppycock. I'm willing to be polite, as I said, but I'm going to use common sense about it, and I'm going to eat with my knife as much as I dern please and I don't want to hear any more out of you about it. Understand that, don't you, Ireony?" "Yes, pa," replied the daughter, meekly.

LITTLE HINTS ABOUT DRESS.

Odds and Ends of Finery That Are at Present Filling the Feminine Eye.

Tabl fish many a bodice back. Plush is much used in smart headgear. Soft fabrics prevail for afternoon wear. That French little velvet bow is being overworked. Warm colors reign supreme in the complete wardrobe. A curious ruff on the crushed strawberry Order is favored. Hand embroidery on tucks is dainty for the debutante's frock. The tiniest fans are of peacock feathers or tortoise-shell sticks. Skirt flounces caught down at the bottom in puff effect are new—old. Every gown has its own shoe or slipper to match and the stocking follows suit. Equitively lovely are the pale green art nouveau combs with jeweled floral tops. The blouse with strapped front and a long silk scarf pulled through is popular. Hats of moss, with clusters of red berries tucked in the green, are a lovely novelty. Velvet blouses, both simple and elaborate, are to be taken into consideration this year. Gold and silver touches here and there act as high lights to most of the evening gowns. A blouse that is "different" is of black taffeta with a tucked chemisette of white muslin. There are brown blouses so alluring that one wants to buy a bawny suit just to match them. Fascinating things are shown in warm room gowns of elderdown, quilted satin and cashmeres. Mass creamy white roses on the back of your evening toque where they will rest against the hair. To be chic the muff must be either big enough or little enough, between which extremes lies mediocrity. Such a pretty little frock for a debutante is a baby blue chiffon trimmed with narrow black velvet ribbon. Very lovely are the Louis collars of lace and ribbon-embroidery, with neckband and long front tab bordered by chiffon ruffles. Mock Cherry Pie.

THE OLDEST CONFEDERATE

Patrick Clark of Lucky Hill, Va., Veteran of Three Wars, Passes the Century Mark.

Richmond, Va.—In Patrick Clark, of Lucky Hill, on the Southern railway, between Remington and Bealeton, Fauquier county can boast of probably the oldest confederate veteran living to-day. Born in Ireland in 1794, he emigrated with his parents. At 18 he enlisted in the American army, and served through the entire war of 1812. In 1847 he joined the Eighth United States regulars, mailed from New York City to Vera Cruz, was placed in Gen. Worth's famous division, and took a very active part in all the fighting that led up to the capture of the City of Mexico. At the close of the Mexican war he was discharged at the Jefferson barracks in Missouri. He served four years in the confederate army, a member of the Sixth Louisiana infantry, Early's division, army of northern Virginia, and was a participant in some of the fiercest engagements of that bloody period. His general health is excellent. He can walk around, appears to be very cheerful, and experiences a great delight in describing the numerous conflicts in which he has taken part. He is entirely blind, is very hard of hearing, and almost entirely dependent upon a pension of \$12 a month, which he receives from the national government for his services in the Mexican war.

NOVEL SMOKING CONTEST.

German Clubman Wins \$125 by Making His Cigar Burn Over Two Hours Without Going Out.

Berlin.—At one of the clubs here a lively dispute has just been settled by a novel competition. A discussion having arisen in the smoking-room as to how long a cigar would last a smoker without going out, it was agreed that the six persons present should light at the same moment cigars of the same brand and thus settle the matter. One of them was unable to make his smoke longer than half an hour; another 50 minutes. The third smoked just an hour, the fourth an hour and a half, and the fifth one hour and fifty minutes. Finally the sixth alone was smoking, and he continued beyond the two hour mark, and won the prize of 500 marks, or \$125. Gum from Rubber Plant. Salda, Col., expects to have a factory for the extraction of gum from the "Colorado rubber plant" in operation soon. A building was recently donated by the business men to aid in establishing the new industry, and it is now being prepared for the reception of the necessary machinery, which has been ordered.

EULOGY ON A BRICK.

INSCRIPTION WRITTEN BY ORDER OF ASSYRIAN KING.

Is Translated Into English by Prof. Torrey, of Yale University—Block of Clay Made 2,700 Years Ago.

New Haven, Conn.—An interesting inscription, made upon a sun-baked brick some 2,700 years ago, by order of Shalmaneser II., king of Assyria, has just been translated into English by Prof. Charles C. Torrey, of Yale university. The brick has been in the possession of Yale for almost 50 years, but the cuneiform writing in the inscription is of a rude character, and a previous attempt at translation in 1870 was only partly successful. The inscription is a short eulogy of the king and his father. It ends in a manner calculated to remind one of the old nursery rhyme about "The House That Jack Built." The full inscription, as translated by Prof. Torrey, is: "Shalmaneser, the great king, the mighty king, ruler of the universe, king of the land of Assyria; son of Ashurnasirpal, the great king, the mighty king, ruler of the universe, king of the land of Assyria, son of Tukulti-Ninur, ruler of the universe, king of the land of Assyria, and he built the tower of the City of Calah."

What the tower of Calah was, and why it was considered of sufficient importance to be mentioned as the chief fact worthy of remembrance in connection with this ruler of the universe? An attempt was made some years ago to identify the tower mentioned as the Tower of Babel of Biblical fame, mention of it being made in another ancient Assyrian inscription as a noteworthy achievement. However, it is now generally conceded that the ground for supposing them to be the same is very slight. King Shalmaneser, the author of the inscription, is known in history as among the first Assyrian kings to make captives of the Hebrews. A description of his attacks upon them is given in Kings 29 and 30. From other sources it is evident that the king was also a practical joker of a grim sort. He himself relates in another brick, which was presented to Yale at the same time with one recently translated, that he conquered many tribes, and some of them he boiled in pitch and some he made slaves, putting rings in their noses to increase their tractability. He is also said to be the originator of the "turkey dance," now sometimes seen at country fairs, the principle of which is the well-known fact that a turkey, or "anybody" else, clings to a stand still when the floor beneath the feet is hot. Shalmaneser is said to have induced his captives to dance in a similar manner.

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ATMOSPHERE AS A PRISM.

Refracts the Sun's Rays and Produces the Peculiar Green Color Seen at Sunset.

A green ray at sunset is sufficiently well known to make unnecessary any mention of the beauty of the spectacle and the ordinary conditions of its observation. The ray may be seen on beautiful evenings on the seashore and elsewhere, although the intensity is variable in general, it is necessary that the state of the atmosphere be such that the horizon may be clearly distinguished as the solar disk sinks behind it. In explanation of the green ray recourse has been had to the theory of an optical illusion, due to the yellow-orange light of the sun, which at the moment of the disappearance of the last small portion of the sun becomes affected by the complementary color, green-blue. This has not been satisfactory, and it has been suggested, says a writer in La Nature, that the atmosphere acts as a prism, refracting the last luminous ray from the sun at the time of its disappearance and decomposing and spreading it out according to the spectrum of colors of the spectrum. The red, orange and yellow rays are the less deviated and are outflung with the solar point of which they have the color, but the eye perceives clearly the green and blue rays while the indigo and violet, which are the most dispersed and the most luminous, cannot be seen.

FIND GOLD IN NEW ZEALAND.

Quartz Bearing Rich Metal Is Found on Reef in Mokinaui Locality.

News has been received from New Zealand of the discovery of a wonderfully rich gold reef in the Mokinaui locality by a Yorkshire freeman, which information is verified by another Yorkshire man who is now living at West Port, New Zealand. The discovery was made, as discoveries often are, in a very singular manner. Winter, the freeman, having stooped at the edge of a creek to pick a piece of stone to throw at a bird, noticed that the stone was gold-bearing quartz. He at once returned to town, took out his miner's right, and with his mate, pegged off claims on the ground, subsequently selling out his interest for \$25,000. This is the biggest gold find ever made in New Zealand. Winter, who is now on his way home, is the son of a poor billposter at Shields, in Yorkshire, where his widowed mother is still living. The young man left his home three years ago, and had not been heard of since until a month ago, when he wrote from West Port. At that time he had evidently not made the discovery, as there is no reference in his letter to his amazingly good fortune.

Maine's Great Aquamarine.

The minerals of Maine are becoming of world-wide reputation. The great aquamarine, found in Stoneham, and probably the most valuable gem ever found on the American continent, has recently been purchased as a valuable acquisition to the crown jewels of Germany. The German prince, while in this country, saw the gem at Chicago and admired it so much that the government has been negotiating for it ever since, and recently sent a man over to this country, who finally succeeded in closing the trade, taking the gem back to Germany with him. At the world's fair at Chicago the gem was valued at \$30,000. It weighed 123 carats. By the way, one crystal taken at Paris, Me., this summer has been sold for \$500.

Snow Blinds Britishers.

Many of the British soldiers suffered greatly from snow blindness in Tibet. The native Tibetans escape snow blindness, as do the inhabitants of other snowy parts of the world, by greasing the face and then blackening the skin all around the eyes with a burned stick.