

PLATINUM REALLY AN ALLOY

The Use by Jewelers and Dentists is What Has Made It a Costly Metal.

The mineral called platinum is really a natural alloy of iridium, rhodium, palladium and often osmium, with varying amounts of iron, copper and gold. It is usually found as small nuggets, scales or rounded or irregular grains. Its color is steel gray. The specific gravity of the crude platinum varies from 14 to 19. The output of platinum in the United States is practically limited to California and Oregon. Owing to its high melting point and great resistance to acids, platinum is extensively used for laboratory utensils. Platinum salts are employed in chemical analyses. In the manufacture of sulphuric acid the metal has been used in making large concentration kettles, but of late gold has been substituted for it. In photography, dentistry and electric installation much platinum is used. Of late the manufacture of jewelry has consumed large quantities of it. It is extensively used for chains and for the setting of diamonds, the claim being made, not only that it is more resistant than silver and harder than gold, but that the stones are better offset by platinum and appear larger than in any other kind of setting.—From a Geological Survey Report.

ICES A UNIVERSAL DELICACY

People of the South of Italy Remarkable for Their Fondness for This Simple Refreshment.

If you wish to realize what devotion to ices means you should go to Palermo. All over the south of Italy ices are eaten to an extent of which we do not dream, but in Sicily and Palermo in particular the custom has attained amazing proportions. Ices are eaten by people of all ranks and ages from morning to night. Where a true Briton would demand a glass of beer, the Palermo man asks for an iced. Morning, noon and night the consumption of ices goes on. They are in wonderful variety and cheap. The stranger in that beautiful country finds the cafes invaded between 4 and 5 o'clock by ice eaters. He sees officers and men of the army, merchants and work people, the rich and the poor of both sexes consuming ices with gusto. No one evades this pleasant duty. Lines of carriages draw up at the side of the pavement before the cafes, the occupants, the coachman and the footman all with their favorite delicacy. At first the stranger wonders, then he falls a victim.—London Chronicle.

Reward, but No Claimant.

Despite the view that players are extravagant and do not save their money, Ada Lewis is a frugal actress and she has been putting her money away for years. She is the owner of an apartment building in New Rochelle. When she went down there to make arrangements for building the apartment she was waited upon by some members of the chamber of commerce, who congratulated her upon her enterprise. "Will dogs be allowed in the building?" was asked. "No." "Will children be barred?" "No, indeed," was the quick reply. "And I will go you one better. I will give a month's free rent to the parents of every baby born in the apartment." This pleased the committee immensely, and as they bowed out she smiled a little and remarked: "But I forgot to say, this is to be a bachelor apartment."—Cleveland Leader.

Lots There to Capture.

During the civil war there was an Indian of the Thirty-sixth Indiana, who, while on the skirmish line at Dallas, saw a good chance to capture a confederate. He availed himself of the opportunity, captured his man, and was passing to the rear with his prisoner, when one of his comrades called out to him: "Pat, let me have that man. I will take him over to General Gross, our brigade commander." "Niver mind, me boy," replied Pat. "I left a million back over the hill there. Go yourself and fetch one of the lads over and take him to General Gross."

Enough on "Good Samaritan."

Frank Kestech, a laborer, was put on trial at Gras for his action in saving the life of a would-be suicide. He had found a man dangling from a tree, and had promptly cut him down and taken him to a hospital. The man recovered from the effects of the hanging, but complained of a scalp wound he had received when falling to the ground, and he brought a charge of personal injury by carelessness against the man who saved his life. Kestech was acquitted, but declared he would take care never to act the Good Samaritan again.

Cure for Love.

"Yes, I finally got rid of him," she said, "without having to tell him in so many words that I never could learn to love him. I didn't want to do that, because he's an awfully nice fellow, and I should have been very sorry to cause him pain." "How did you manage it?" her friend asked. "Why, you see, he's subject to hay fever, so I decorated the house with yellow red whenever he sent word that he was coming."

COST THE LEOPARD HIS LIFE

Baboons Had Revenge for the Seizure of One of Their Number, Though Many Were Sacrificed.

The leopard likes the meat of certain monkeys, but the indulgence of his taste sometimes costs him dear. A remarkable battle between a leopard and a company of baboons, seen by a traveler in Africa, is described in Das Buch fur Alle. I was sitting in the shade of a ravine, resting from the midday sun, when a company of baboons came clambering down the opposite wall toward the water that trickled through the gully. I sat still and watched them. A big male led, and after satisfying himself that all was safe, uttered a few deep notes. Reassured by the call, the others quickly followed; a mother, with an ever-watchful eye on her two young ones, brought up the rear. Suddenly, like a streak of lightning, a leopard sprang from behind a rock, and with one blow of his paw, felled the little baboon nearest him. But before he could make off with his prey, the furious mother attacked him. The attack had come so quickly that the rest of the company hardly realized what had happened. But at the mother's cry of rage they all at once turned and fell upon the robber. In a moment the leopard was surrounded and almost covered with furious baboons. The battle waxed hot. Although numbers of baboons went down before the powerful paws of the cat, their places were immediately filled by others. It was not long before the leopard began to tire; he could make no noticeable impression upon his assailants, and his strength was sapped by their sharp teeth. He struggled bravely, but in vain; slowly he sank out of sight beneath the fiercely chattering foe that he had despised. The baby baboon was avenged.—Youth's Companion.

WORLD OF HIS OWN CREATION

Great French Writer in His Absent-Mindedness Lived Far Apart From His Fellow Men.

A writer in the St. James Gazette tells us that Theophile Gautier's absent-mindedness amounted to actual somnambulism. He so identified himself with his mental pictures as to lose all consciousness of time and place, and for the time he would actually live in the scene that he had created. We are told that rarely, if ever, has a man had such a gift for getting out of himself. He would enlarge on his magnificent golden tea and breakfast service, when the most humdrum china lined his shelves. And though his servants were all treated in the most fatherly way, Gautier would tell you that he never permitted them to utter a word in his presence, that he only employed negroes. "I give my orders by signs. If they understand my signs, well and good. If they don't, I kick them into the Bosphorus." And there is no doubt that he actually heard the wave closing over the head of a black slave. He actually meant what he said. The street outside was actually for him the Bosphorus.

Doctor of Agriculture.

The time is coming when every rural community of sufficient size will have one or more agricultural experts—men professionally trained to serve in an advisory way all the farmers of the community for a fee. These men will understand the chemistry of the soil and plant growth; their laboratories will be busy with soil analysis and the study of local plant diseases; they will be entomologists and bacteriologists, and their value will be obvious to the enlightened farmers of a new age. These farmers, no longer content to depend on the free clinic of the state experiment station, will seek the advice and prescription of the local doctor of agriculture. The dignity and the rewards of this profession are bound to increase, for it is founded upon the basis of our greatest industry.—World's Work.

Women Run French Town.

Folsay, a small town halfway between Paris and Amiens, in France, is said to be the only civilized community in which the municipal affairs are entirely in the hands of women. The mayor is a woman, and so is the superintendent of the railway station, the switchman, the mail carrier and the town barber. Mme. Lesoboro is the telegraph messenger and Mme. Druhouchard is the drummer whose duty it is to announce each proclamation of the mayor. Mme. Druhouchard is described as an octogenarian who has held her post through wind and rain for upward of twenty years. The letter carrier, Mme. Doubour, has held her office for more than ten years and goes about with her letters regardless of the weather.

Married in Mourning.

Six couples dressed in mourning came to the garrison church at Potsdam recently to be married. They are known as the "Louise" bridal pairs," for every year these funeral weddings are celebrated at 9 o'clock on the anniversary of the day and hour the good Queen Louise died. In the year of her death a Lutheran bishop left a sum of money, the interest of which was to be divided between couples married on its anniversary, and the traditions he left for the ceremony are still observed. This year each couple received the acceptable sum of \$110 in return for their sacrifice of the bridal finery.

WISDOM OF GREAT PAINTER

Meissonier's Comments Show That He Was a Philosopher as Well as a Superb Artist.

We always like to know what a great man has said about his work, and how he feels about other things that are of interest to every one. Fortunately, Meissonier left a record of many of his feelings and opinions, published as his "Conversations." Of all the painters, Rembrandt was his favorite. Among his sayings were the following: "Let well enough alone" is the motto of the lazy. "The man who leaves good work behind adds to the inheritance of the human race." "The master is an artist whose works never recall those of some other artist." "I would have drawing made the basis of education in all schools. It is the universal language." "No artist would paint if he knew he was never to show his work, if he felt no human eye would ever rest upon it." "I never sign a picture until my whole soul is satisfied with my work." "To will is to do" has been my motto. I have always willed. Oh! how I regret the lost time that can never be made up. As I grow older, I work harder than ever.—From Charles L. Barstow's "Famous Pictures" (Meissonier), in St. Nicholas.

REAL LAND OF THE AUTOMAT

Germany, Probably More Than Any Other Country, Makes Use of These Simple Devices.

Germany might almost be called "the land of the automat." Automatic devices of all kinds are popular and are used for a thousand purposes. At all postoffices, stamps and post cards are sold by automatic machines; at the railway stations, platform tickets and suburban tickets are sold by automats; automat restaurants, where one can secure a glass of beer, wine, or liquor, a sandwich, square meal, cup of coffee, chocolate, etc., by dropping a coin in the slot, abound everywhere. Every city of 15,000 or 20,000 population and over has from one to several hundred such restaurants. At railway stations automats sell chocolate, candy, picture post cards, and even a little kit of "first aid to the injured," containing a few drops of pain-killer, bandages, needle, thread, etc. Ten pennings in a slot opens the doors of toilet compartments, delivering a towel or piece of soap. A coin in a slot obtains a cigar, a tune from a mechanical music box, a pair of shoe strings, a collar button, or a visiting card.

Editorial Confessions.

The following confessions have been made by Thomas E. Thompson: "I once had a round key check with my name on it—about the size of a silver quarter. Occasionally when at church I found myself dead broke. I would drop that key check into the hat for a bluff and the next day the brother treasurer would bring it around and I would redeem it. But one time it went out and never came back, and now I have to put in the coin or give the sign of distress." "Once when I was on earth the first time I tried to make love to a giggly girl. She laughed me out of court and I was firmly convinced that she was not capable of a sensible, serious thought. I saw her not long ago and she looked as if she hadn't giggled or even smiled for a score of years and I was glad she treated me as a joke in the other days."—Kansas City Star.

Fit Word.

The class had been discussing recent affairs in China. A few days later the fate of a man who was eaten by his savage enemies was referred to. Anxious to enlarge the limited vocabulary of the children, the teacher asked what name was given to men who ate other human beings. "Savages" and "man-eaters" were the only words most of them could give. At last the eagerness of a bright-eyed boy indicated that he thought he had a better word. He had. It was "Manchus."—Youth's Companion.

Nature's Sun Dial.

There is no need for clocks on the Aegean sea any day when the sun is shining. There nature does not vary, though the centuries pass. This natural time-maker is the largest sun dial in the world. Projecting into the blue waters of the sea is a large promontory which lifts its head 3,000 feet above the waves. As the sun swings around the pointed shadow of the mountain just touches one after the other of a number of small islands which are at exact distances apart and act as hour marks on the great dial.

To Tax Bill Boards.

The newspapers of Paris the beautiful are loudly demanding that the "gigantic bill boards"—gigantic bill boards—that disgrace some of the most prominent places in the city be eliminated. They hold that the only means to obviate this barbaric invasion is for the city to tax these boards at such a high figure as to discourage the big advertisers from using them. The French parliament has already passed a law taxing bill boards in the country, where they do not add to the beauty of the landscape.

WONDERFUL WORK OF DOGS

If These Are Not Inventions of Drummers, They Surely Are Remarkable Animals.

The grocery drummer from Chicago had just made some remarks about household pets, which awakened a memory in the mind of the agent from the New York Bond house, out selling securities: "Speaking of that," said he, flicking the ashes off the end of his cigar, "I'm very fond of dogs. I have a pointer at home that's a wonder. Taking him altogether, he is the most intelligent animal I ever saw. You gentlemen may not believe it, but it is nevertheless a fact that whenever I go out riding in my motor through a hitherto untraveled country I always take Roger along with me, and he sits up alongside of me in front. Whenever we come to a crossroad, and I find myself up a tree as to which turning to take, I simply put the question to him, and in every blessed case he has instinctively pointed in the right direction." "I can well believe that," said the grocery drummer. "I have a retriever in my house that is quite as wonderful. I don't believe my wife and I could possibly get along without him. If my wife mislays anything, from a rolling pin to a bridge score, anywhere around the house, all she has to do is to set Bob after it, and he finds it. When I am in a hurry to catch a train in the morning and my collar button slips out of my hands and disappears, as collar buttons are almost certain to do at such moments, good old Bob goes to a yelp of delight and goes after it, saving me no end of trouble, much time, and some lan guage."—Lippincott's Magazine.

LIBEL ON ARIZONA WEATHER

Tale Impressed Englishman, Who Probably Went Home and Wrote a Book About It.

"Hot weather reminds me," said the fellow who is always ready to tell a story when he gets an opening. "I was riding down through Arizona last summer on a train on which there was a party of Englishmen. You never know what hot weather is until you ride through some of those southwestern states in the summer. The heat rolls up in waves and smites you. Everything except the rattlesnakes and the Indians stay out of the sun's rays as much as possible. "On a station platform stood a dilapidated sprinkling can. It was full of dents and the spout was lying near the can, both evidently not having been used for months. "You know I have been telling you we have some hot weather out here," said a westerner to one of the Englishmen. "Well, look at that sprinkling can. It has been so hot that it has melted the spout right off! And the farther west you get the hotter it gets," the native son finished as he noticed the awed look on the foreigner's face."

Mind-Reading.

A young man and his wife, accompanied by their two children, a boy and a girl, entered a street car and sat down on one of the side seats. The girl was a beauty, while the little boy, with strongly marked features and freckled skin, was quite the opposite. Directly across the aisle sat two ladies, evidently a mother and daughter. The younger of the two looked critically at the children. Then she scrutinized the parents. Then she turned to the elder lady, smiled, and made a whispered remark. The young man, who had been watching her, leaned forward. "Madam," he said, "you are quite right. The girl fortunately looks like mother, and the boy looks like me." That he had guessed accurately what was passing in her mind, her look of confusion left no doubt.—Youth's Companion.

Took Care of It.

A nice, new mackintosh was little Bessie's birthday present from her father, and the seven-year-old was very proud of it. That very morning, as she set out for school proudly attired in the mac, mother called after her: "You'll be very careful of that nice cloak, dear, won't you?" "Yes, mother," said Bessie dutifully. On coming out of school, Bessie started in horror. It was pouring hard; great, big drops of rain that splattered on the pavement. Hastily rolling up the nice, new mackintosh, she thrust it under her little pinafore and started for home. "Why, dearie, you are drenched!" cried her mother, in surprise. "Why didn't you put on your mackintosh?" Bessie eyed her in sorrowful anger. "You—you told me—to take care of it!" she sobbed indignantly.—London Answers.

Early Pneumatic Tires.

It has been discovered recently that as early as 1847 efforts were made to construct a pneumatic tire. At that time a patent was granted by the patent office of the United States to an Englishman, whose invention covered several forms of tire, one of which was maintained in a distended position by means of air under pressure. Other forms, kept distended by means of springs, were also contemplated and described by him at that time. In relating the advantages of his invention he called particular attention to the fact that a vehicle thus equipped was propelled with greatly decreased power.

BEST ASSET POOR MEMORY

Why James is Regarded With Favor by the Inhabitants of His Boarding House.

James is a very popular negro in a boarding house and is accounted unusually reliable. He receives, therefore, frequent gratuities and is exceedingly prosperous. This in spite of the fact that he has one of the greatest capacities for forgetting any one to be met with even among the employes of a boarding house. What, then, is the secret of his reputation for being a reliable man? One boarder has studied the problem and gives the answer: "He never refuses to execute a commission, is always apparently attentive to any order given him, and when the angry boarder blows him up for his failure to do what he was told he takes it meekly and stoically. "He seems such an easy mark that the boarder goes on and on with his abuse until he feels that he has gone too far. Then he grows ashamed of himself and slips James a quarter. "Thank you, sir," says James, and they both feel better, and the boarder remarks, "James is a pretty good boy after all."

GOT AHEAD OF THE PAPERS

Height of Wisdom Exhibited by Mr. Tobe Sagg on His Periodical Visit to Kansas City.

"Whenever I am in Kansas City," stated Mr. Tobe Sagg, of Goshkooning, "and feel stealin' go'er me a low, ferlie yearning to put myself in the clutches of a total stranger, ramble 'round in apocryphal places and fill my system with aqua fortis and dog feed, to be found next morning by the pious monks of St. Bernard, groping dazedly and ready to burble to the police my real name and address and the customary fee that I have been trimmed of \$3,752 in cash and notes—well, when I feel any such microbes gnawing at my liver or to my room in the hotel a pitcher of ice water and look the door, clink the ice awhile, look through the bottom of the empty tumbler 46 consecutive times, and then go to bed with my \$25.15 under my pillow, to make next morning serenely content in the knowledge that I have deprived the newspapers of an interesting item and cheated the folks at home out of a story that would have been told on me unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me."—Kansas City Star.

Arctic Bounty.

The account of the four years' stay of Viljalmar Stefansson and Dr. Anderson in the Arctic regions of America, during which they made long journeys alone with nothing to depend upon for a living but the hospitality of the natives and their rifles furnishes a new illustration of the remarkable productiveness of the far north. Persons are likely to suppose that it is the tropics which are most spontaneous in the production of food for human beings. The fact is that the contrast between equatorial and Arctic regions is not so very great in this regard. Early explorers of the region of the upper Amazon found they must carry supplies or starve to death. There is game there, but it cannot be reached in the jungles. This was the experience of James Oton, the American traveler, and in his work on the Amazon he recalls the fate of the mighty Pizarro, who tried to penetrate that country, but retreated from it upon a diet of fish, arda, dogs, saddle leather and sword belts just in time to save his life. Similar experiences are to be encountered in much of tropical Africa. It is true that some tropical islands give their inhabitants a free but monotonous living, but then, so will the ice bound country around the mouth of the Mackenzie.

Generous Offer Declined.

Dr. Portal, the favorite medical attendant of Louis XVIII. of France was offered an unusual reward for his services. Having cured Vestris of a severe illness, the famous dancing master said to him, "My dear doctor I should never dream of offering you money. Between artists there can be no dealings except those of gratitude. To demonstrate mine, I will give you a valuable hint as to your deportment. I have often noticed that you have a most ungraceful way of carrying yourself. I can remedy that in a few lessons, and teach you how to enter a sick room in such a way as to please the most exacting patient. We can begin now if you like." Much to the amazement of Vestris, Portal declined this offer, and so lost the esteem of his illustrious patient.

Device Needed by Aviators.

Aviation devotees are giving some attention to the demand for a magnetic compass which will not be affected by the vibrations of the machine. The same difficulty is being experienced by the airmen as was encountered by those who had occasion to descend in submarines. Some English flyers are experimenting with a device which has been tried with more or less success on submarines and which was devised by the commander of a submarine boat. It consists of the usual mariner's compass, floating in oil, contained in a case which rests in a bed of horsehair. The horsehair is not packed at all densely, but its springiness is so great and enduring that it makes an excellent protection against the vibrations of the motor.

NEEDED THAT OTHER ROOT

Patients of Dentists Will Appreciate Story of "Nerve" That Comes From Kansas City.

In Kansas City there dwells a man whose boast is that he has "the nerve," and at least one dental surgeon will support him in his claim. The man with "the nerve" suffered from the pangs of an aching molar and at last sought out his friend the dentist and announced that the tooth must come out. The man with the forceps made a hasty examination and suggested that a filling would relieve the agony, but to no avail. "That tooth must be pulled," said the "nerve man," "but I want to warn you right now, Doc, that you won't get it the first yank. I have had seven teeth drawn and no dentist lives who can pull one of my teeth the first trial." The dentist prides himself with the numerous compliments paid him for dexterity in extraction and "the nerve" man's words were a challenge. "I'll get that tooth the very first time I pull it." "Bet you the drinks you don't," was the patient's retort. "Done," said the doctor. The professional man motioned his patron to the operating chair and selected the proper forceps. The cold steel clamped firmly on the tooth, and with a slightly rocking motion the dentist began to pull. The tooth held firm and it looked as if the dentist's reputation as an extractor must suffer. At last, just as little beads of sweat were forming on the operator's brow, he smiled and in another second the three-pronged cause of the trouble lay on the swinging bracket by the dental chair. No word or sign had been given by the sufferer, who then raised from the chair, grasped the removed tooth in his fingers and gazed at its three roots in contemplation. There was a tone of real sadness in his voice as he regretfully said: "If that thing had only had another root, I'd have won the drinks."—Kansas City Journal.

WAS TAKING NO CHANCES

Casey Unwilling to Take the Word of His Rival When It Would End Hostilities.

It had come to blows at last. After many threats and sundry flat-shakings not to mention odd brick-kneds which were thrown, Casey and Riley determined to "have it out," so they adjourned to a neighboring field, followed by an enthusiastic, admiring crowd. Before they commenced their display it was agreed mutually that who ever wanted to quit should say "Enough," and with that they started. After a few minutes Casey got Riley down, and was hammering him unmercifully, when Riley shrieked out several times, "Enough!" As Casey paid no attention, but kept on administering punishment, a bystander said, "Why don't you let him get up? Don't you hear him say that he's got enough?" "I do," said Casey, "but he's such a liar you can't believe him."—London Tit-Bits.

Worried High Official.

Custody of the great seal is one of the most important duties undertaken by the British lord chancellor in return for his \$50,000 a year. This responsibility gave Lord Brougham an unhappy time during his tenure of the chancellery. When staying with the duke of Bedford, in Scotland, some of the women in the house amused themselves by abstracting the seal from Brougham's room. The chancellor was so frantic when he discovered the loss that his tormentors promised to restore it on conditions. So they blindfolded him, hid the seal in the drawing room, and told him to find it, guiding him in his search by a tune on the piano, which grew louder when he drew near it and softer when he drew away. After an hour's scrambling the seal was found in a tea caddy.

Judicial Spelling.

A probate judge in western Kansas wrote to the judge of the juvenile court in Kansas City asking for information as to how the court should be conducted. He spelled it "juvenile" first, then "juvinal," and finally "juvanile;" three tries, and a clean miss in all three. Charles Blakesley of Kansas City recalls that there was once a probate judge in his town who spelled it "probat jug" and a constable who used to spell his own title "cuncible." The celebrated Judge Nugelle of Wisconsin, and a good judge he was, too, once told a prisoner at his bar that he, the court, knew the man to be a fraud as certainly as if he saw the letters F-R-O-A-D stamped on his forehead.—New York Mail.

Protection During Fog.

Two brothers named Hodgkinson have invented an apparatus which acts as "ears" for a ship will afford a protection now lacking in time of fog. Tests in the Mersey at Liverpool appear to substantiate the claims made for this invention, that it will definitely determine the direction of sounds. The invention consists of a drum nine feet long by five feet in diameter set up aloft so as to miss sounds on deck, but to receive other sound waves on a "receiver" divided into units for each direction. An electrical appliance connected with a lamp shows by a small light the direction whence the sound may be coming.