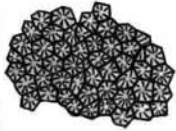


THE MADSTONE—A DELUSION.

Our article the other day, in relation to the madstone, has attracted the attention of Prof. David Christy, formerly of Cincinnati, but now of this city. In a note to us he says:—

"When in Southern Illinois, a few years since, I had my attention called to the subject of the 'madstone,' in consequence of a few cases of persons having been bitten in the neighborhood where I was stopping, by a dog supposed to have hydrophobia. Three madstones were said to be in that section of the country, at distances of twelve, twenty-four and eight miles, respectively. Being at leisure, I resolved to gratify my curiosity by an examination of these marvels. The first I found to be a cross section of a specimen of coral, of the structure presented in the annexed cut. It was about a half inch in thickness, and one inch and a half square. The second one was of the same species of coral, but of greater length. The third was a common pebble of the size of a small apple, and about the same shape—the depression at the stem of the apple being represented by a corresponding one in the pebble, with the addition of a drilled hole, a fourth of an inch in depth, from which it might be inferred, the stem had been pulled out. I had the good fortune also to obtain, when in Tennessee, a fine specimen of the 'bezoar' stone, taken from the stomach of a deer, killed in the Chilhowee mountain. It seemed to have formed in concentric layers. The outer layer had been broken by the hunter, and was somewhat rough on the outside, but the surface of the next one was as smooth as polished marble, as though worn by attrition against the inner surface of the outer shell from which it was detached—the surfaces of both being equally smooth. When divested of the outer layer, it was about the size and form of a common hen's egg. Its color was a light brown. It had not been used as a madstone, but was imagined to possess great virtues, not yet discovered. I presented it to Prof. Wood, of the Ohio Medical College, Cincinnati. I shall offer no comments on the coral and pebble specimens examined. The virtues attributed to them, of course, were imaginary. I may mention here, that I have witnessed the movements of a black snake in the supposed act of 'charming' birds, and that the facts, carefully observed, take all the poetry out of that popular delusion. At some future time I will endeavor to furnish an article on this subject for your columns."



Popular Photographs.

An English writer, in speaking of the sale of popular photographs, says:—

"A popular singer or actor or a successful prize fighter will sometimes have a run entering into tens of thousands of copies; but the demand will suddenly collapse and their names will be heard no more. Public men, whose names are distinguished in connection with the pulpit, with literature, science or art, or in the legislature, are in constant demand, notwithstanding that the especial rage of this collection of portraits has within the last twelve months considerably subsided. Royal portraiture is always popular, and perhaps nothing can more strikingly illustrate the loyalty of Englishmen than the constant demand for portraits of members of the reigning family. Just about the period of the marriage of the Prince of Wales, a photographer in Brussels had the good fortune to obtain sittings from the Queen and several members of the royal family, including the Prince of Wales and the Princess Alexandra, and the sale of these portraits exceeded two millions of copies. One photographer alone in this country has, during the last few years, issued upward of half a million yearly of members of the royal family. After the royal family, the popular statesmen are the greatest favorites; Lord Palmerston, during his life and for some little time after his death, being in greatest demand. If the sale of men's portraits afford any indication of the popularity of their principles, it is tolerably manifest that liberalism obtains very strongly in this country, the circulation of the portraits being in the ratio of ten of Gladstone to one of Derby, who is, however, judged by this

standard, the most popular of the conservatives. On the other hand, the portraits of Louis Napoleon and Garibaldi have about an equal popularity, the rage for the portraits of the latter being more spasmodic, and of the former more steady. After statesmen, popular literary men and clergymen are most in demand; and after these, men of science and artists; and lastly, popular actors and singers. Bishops seem to circulate by virtue of their rank, the Archbishop of Canterbury having the most extended circulation, while clergymen and ministers are prized only in virtue of their popularity. Mr. Spurgeon was for a time in very large circulation. Mr. Binney less extensively, but more constantly."

MISCELLANEOUS SUMMARY.

MR. GEORGE PEABODY has given one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to found and maintain a museum and Professorship of American Archaeology and Ethnology, in connection with Harvard University. A like sum has also been donated to Yale College for the foundation of a museum of natural history, especially of the department of zoology, geology, and mineralogy. Of this sum, a part, not exceeding one hundred thousand dollars, is to be devoted to the erection of a fire-proof building, planned with especial reference to its subsequent enlargement, when the bequest of a building fund of twenty thousand dollars shall have accumulated to one hundred thousand dollars. The remaining portion of this donation is to be invested, and the income from it to be expended, for the care of the museum, increase of its collections and general interests of the departments of science already named; the part of the income remaining, after providing for the general care of the museum, to be apportioned as follows: three-sevenths to zoology, three-sevenths to geology, and one-seventh to mineralogy.

OLD COLLODION.—*Humphrey's Journal* says that old collodion may be rejuvenated and made useful in the following manner: "Add alcohol and ether in equal parts, or a mixture of one-third alcohol and two-thirds ether is still better—until the collodion flows easily and is thin enough to coat the plate without streaks; furthermore, to each quart of collodion add sixty grains of bromide of cadmium, and put the mixture, after frequent shaking, in a cool, dark place. This collodion probably will become colorless and work as well perhaps as the best new collodion that can be made."

THE Michigan Southern and Chicago and Rock Island Companies, jointly, are erecting an immense depot, probably the largest in the country. The length of the building is six hundred and ten feet, width one hundred and sixty feet, and the height from the track to the highest portion of the roof is about seventy feet. The total cost will be about \$300,000.

THE turpentine product of Butte county, California, where three companies are now engaged in the distillation of that substance, amounts to about four thousand gallons per month. Another product of the coniferous forests of this country, is an oil distilled from the hackmatack, colorless and light as camphene, and valuable as a detergent, cleaning grease spots from the most delicate fabrics without leaving a stain.

A FRENCH savant has lately discovered that certain fish contain eggs enveloped in veritable silk cocoons. Each egg measures 35 centimeters long by 13 broad, and weighs 240 grammes, and is covered with silky filaments, which may be employed in weaving.

It appears from recent experiments conducted by the London Pneumatic Co., that one hundred and twenty tons of goods can be sent through their eighteen miles of tubes every hour at a cost less than 1d. a ton per mile.

THE total amount of tobacco produced throughout the world is estimated as follows:—Asia, 309,900,000 pounds; Europe, 281,844,500; America, 248,280,500; Africa, 24,300,000; Australia, 714,000; making in all 995,039,000 pounds.

THE wool clip of Buenos Ayres the present year is estimated at 160,000 pounds, and will be worth twelve millions of silver dollars.

M. H. MICOLON, of Paris, proposes a new alloy for the manufacture of all metal articles—bells, hammers, anvils, rails, and non-cutting tools. The alloy consists of 20 parts of iron turnings or tin waste, 80 parts of steel, 4 parts of manganese, and 4 parts of borax; but these proportions may be varied. When it is desired to increase the tenacity of the alloy, two or three parts of wolfram are added. When the cupola is ready, the iron and steel are poured in, the manganese and borax, and the vessel is filled up with coke.

A COMPANY has been organized, with a capital of \$400,000, to develop the valuable water-power of the Housatonic River, by constructing a dam 20 feet high, and 600 feet long, near the northern line of Birmingham. A canal is also contemplated on the Birmingham side, 50 feet wide, to that village, and another on the west side of the river, 100 feet wide and 7 feet deep, extending from the dam to a point opposite the mouth of the Naugatuck. This one is to be furnished with locks, thus enabling vessels to go up the canal and land or receive freight from the factories on its banks. The company expect to receive a rental of \$80,000 a year, or twenty per cent on the capital invested.

KRUPP'S great steel works at Esseh, Prussia, cover 400 acres of ground, consume 750 tons of coal daily, use the steam of 120 boilers, burn 7,000 flames of gas, and give employment to above 8,000 men and boys, whose wages amount to nearly £400,000 a year. The establishment last year turned out upward of 50,000 tons of cast steel, one-third of which was made into guns, the rest into bars, shafts for engines, axles, railway bars, tires of wheels, plates for boilers and ships.

THE electrical power of the Atlantic cable is now furnished by a twenty-cell Daniell's battery. The two cables have been joined, making a line of 3,700 miles, and signals have been passed through this entire distance in a little more than a second of time. The only power used was that given by a battery consisting of a lady's silver thimble filled with acid, into which were placed a bit of zinc and a bit of copper.

THE privilege of printing the catalogue of the Paris Exhibition was sold to a Parisian publisher for the sum of one hundred thousand dollars.

LEAD PIPE FATAL TO FISH.—Mr. L. M. Crane, of Ballston, N. Y., who breeds a good many fishes, states that it will not do to use lead pipe to conduct the water into the fish ponds. The fish soon die when lead is employed.

GREAT quantities of pencils are now made in England of a composition formed of sawdust and small pieces of lead, which are ground to an impalpable powder, mixed with some cohesive medium. In Keswick, 250,000 pencils are made in a week, or 13,000,000 a year, and 12,000 cubic feet of cedar are annually consumed.

EIGHT million bushels of corn have been exported from New York the present year; twenty-six million pounds of beef, seventeen millions of butter, sixteen millions of lard, nine millions of tallow and three millions of tobacco.

ROLLING MILL WANTED.—We are requested to call the attention of our readers to the advertisement, in another column, of the Calvert Iron Co., for machinery for a rolling mill.

DR. A. HILL, of Norwalk, Conn., has invented a simple process by which oil paintings can be executed on marble, with the colors as permanently fixed as in stained glass.

NEARLY twenty thousand boxes of eggs, of one hundred dozen each, arrived in Boston, from Maine, during the year, beside the large quantities received from Canada.

It is reported that a company at Lyman, N. H., is getting out quartz which yields a larger per centage of gold than the California or Colorado mines. Specimens have been assayed yielding \$364 40 to the ton.

A PETRIFIED human hand was lately found in red sandstone at Memphis, Tenn., in a perfect state of preservation.

MONTHLY steam communication has been established between San Francisco and New Zealand.