

Miscellaneous.

Surgical Operation.

A very difficult and skilfully performed surgical operation is noted in the New Orleans Bulletin. The subject was a negro girl about 15 years of age. For some ten years past the girl has had a bony tumor growing on the side of the lower jaw, which had increased to such a size that it almost prevented the utterance of speech. She was placed under the care of Dr. Stone, who, with his assistant, Dr. McIlheny, performed the required operation in the most successful manner. Having been put under the influence of chloroform, a semi-circular incision was made from the centre of the chin, and extending over the cheek, as far back as the point of the jaw nearest the ear. The whole of the left side of the face was then laid bare by the knife, and exposed to the bone. Dr. Stone then, with the saw, divided the bone through the centre of the chin, and through what is called the "symphysis," a point about an inch from the joint near the ear; and then, with a surgeon's chisel, took the piece out. The whole operation lasted about eight minutes, and the wound was bandaged properly before the patient awoke from her sleep.—Without any assistance, she got up from the table, and walked to her room, perfectly ignorant of what had been done until informed of it by the servants. Dr. McIlheny followed her up stairs, in a few minutes, and found her sitting in a chair, and enjoying with great glee a recital of the operation. The weight of the tumor with the bone was about ten ounces. The girl has since been pronounced entirely cured.

Handsome Editor.

We noticed at the Fair of the American Institute several splendid specimens of the "Daguerre Art," executed by Messrs. Roots, of Philadelphia. We also noticed a large swarm of ladies constantly in attendance, expressing much admiration. Our curiosity had become somewhat excited to know the cause of the immense attraction; which, however, was soon gratified upon discovering the likeness of Thomas Fitzgerald, Esq., the able editor of the "City Item." We have heard considerable said in regard to "Fitz's" beauty, but never supposed he was perfectly irresistible until we saw his daguerreotype. We would compliment Messrs. Roots, if they needed it.

Turkish Plan of Curing Founder in Horses.

The following is a singular circumstance, as related by the N. A. Farmer:—The late Commodore Porter, when Envoy of the United States at Constantinople, had a horse cured of founder by a Turkish farrier in the following manner: The Turk said the horse must be bled in the inside of the deceased leg. He put a nipper on his nose to keep him steady—then took up the left leg, and crossing it over the right, gave it to an attendant; he then struck his lancet into the vein, a little above the fetlock joint, and took from it about three and a half pounds of blood. The vein bled freely. He now said he had taken enough; he then went to the very opposite side of the leg, and striking his lancet into a vein above the knee-joint, a single drop of blood exuded, and both that and the first opened vein instantly ceased bleeding. There may be no novelty in this, but it certainly astonished me to find that opening two veins in the same limb stopped both from bleeding; such, however, is the fact, for I witnessed it. He desired that the horse should rest the next day—that he should then be rode with great violence until he was in a profuse perspiration—the diseased limb then to be rubbed with wet salt—to which I added a pint of hot brandy—then rubbed dry, and then walked about until cool, and covered with blankets; the same process to be repeated next day—which was done, and all lameness from that time disappeared; the horse the third day was perfectly well.

Bishop Chase told his congregation a short time since, in one of his sermons, "that there was among his females auditors corset boards sufficient to shingle a hog-pen."

Sponge Fishing.

Within the past month our city has exhibited the spectacle of great numbers of itinerant sponge pedlars. Pieces which used to be sold in the shops for one shilling, were sold by these pedlars for 3 cents. The first pedlar appeared to be Mediterranean French. All our finest sponges come from the Mediterranean, and the greatest sponge fishers are the Greeks.

The sponge of commerce is found attached to rocks in various depths between three fathoms and thirty.—When alive it is of a dull bluish black above, and of a dirty white beneath. There are several qualities, possibly indicating as many distinct species.

The sponge divers go in little fleets of caiques, each of six or seven tons burden, and manned by six or eight men. The season for the fishery lasts from May until September. All the men dive in turn. They remain in the water from one to three minutes. They descend to the bottom at various depths, between five fathoms and twenty, or even, though rarely, thirty. Very few of the divers can descend so deep as the above-named depth, and it is doubtful whether they can work in such case. In deep water, a rope weighed by a stone is let down, by which the divers ascend when they have gathered the sponges. They carry nothing about their person except a netted bag, which is attached to a hoop suspended round their necks; in this they place the sponges. A sponge is dried in the sun after being cleansed in sea-water; fresh water rots it and turns it black. The slimy or animal matter is stamped out by the diver's feet. When dried, the sponges are strung in circles.

The sponge fisheries were probably conducted among the ancient Greeks as they are now. Aristotle distinguishes sponges under two heads, those that might be cleaned, and those which could not. Of the last, he states that their substance was compact, but perforated by large canals. They were more viscous than other sponges, and when dried remained black. The description exactly applies to the common coast line sponges of the Ægean, useless for economic purposes. His account of the sponges of commerce is more detailed. He distinguishes three varieties: those which were lax and porous those of thick and close texture; and a third kind, called sponges of Achilles, finer, more compact, and stronger than the others. These last were rarest, and used to be placed in helmets and in boots, as projections from pressure for the head and feet. They all grow on the rocks, adhering not by one point only, nor by the whole surface, but by the coast which became suddenly deep.—He attributes the superior fineness of texture in these deep-sea kinds to the greater uniformity of temperature of water in such places.—When alive, and before they are washed, they are black. Their canals are often inhabited by little crustacea.

Expedition of Sir John Franklin.

The Cleveland Plaindealer, of Oct. 5, has a letter dated "St. Marie River," September 28th, announcing the arrival of Sir John Richardson, from the fruitless search after the lost Polar expedition of Sir John Franklin, of whose dreadful fate among the ices of the Arctic Ocean, there is left little or no room to doubt. Sir John Richardson having failed to find even the remotest clue to the Franklin Expedition, is now on his way back to England. He left there in April, 1848, and from the Sault Ste. Marie has made a voyage in canoes, and boats, and overland, a distance of three thousand and five hundred miles and back, by way of Lake of The Woods, Mackenzie's River, &c. After reaching the Arctic Ocean, they travelled five hundred miles along the coast. He speaks confidently of the existence of a northern passage; practicability, he says, is another question, the summers being only from 38 to 60 days long. He goes by the way of Toronto and Montreal to Boston.

An Oil Spring has been discovered in the country inhabited by the Chickasaws, at a water-fall near Fort Wachita. It is similar to British oil, exudes from a rock overhanging the falls, and is said to have effected astonishing cures of rheumatism and kindred diseases.

A Polar Bear.

A Polar Bear was recently shot, on the coast of Labrador, by the crew of the Lord Exmouth of Halifax. The animal was stuffed and sent to Boston.

Two of the crew of the Lord Exmouth were cruising in a boat, when they discovered the bear upon the Island. They immediately returned to the vessel, took in six others of the crew, and eight muskets, with which they returned to the vicinity of the Island. Upon approaching within gun-shot, the bear perceived and came towards them. The first discharge wounded him in several places, but did not in the least check his approach. Finally however, after receiving quite a number of balls in his body, he turned and slowly retreated, making his attackers shudder by the fierceness of his howling. It was then proposed by Dixon that they should land upon the Island, in order to consummate the victory. To this the majority of the crew demurred from fear. Three of the crew, however, including Dixon, landed, having armed themselves with two loaded guns apiece. The bear, as soon as he saw them upon land turned about and began to approach, when six more balls were put into his body without apparently checking his approach.—Before, however he got near enough to harm them, Mr. Dixon succeeded in loading another gun. At this moment the bear presented his side which he had not done before, and a bullet was lodged in his throat which caused the animal to fall. It was more than half an hour however before they dared to approach, as every few minutes the bear would by a desperate effort, get upon his feet with the intention of reaching them. After it was deemed safe, they ventured near, and found him to be dead. He was, with considerable labor, taken to the vessel, and found to be sixteen feet long and to weigh 2200 pounds. Five hundred pounds of fat were taken from him in Halifax and it was found that sixteen balls had lodged in his body. The contest lasted for an hour and a half, and the roars of the infuriated animal might have been heard for many miles.

The Vatican at Rome.

The Vatican, which crowns one of the seven hills at Rome, is an assemblage or group of buildings, covering a space of 1200 feet in length, and 1000 feet in breadth. It is built upon the spot which was occupied by the gardens of Nero. It owes its origin to the bishops of Rome, who erected an humble residence on its site, in the early part of the sixth century. Pope Eugenius III, rebuilt it on a magnificent scale, about the year 1150. A few years afterwards, Innocent II. gave it up as a lodging to Peter II., King of Arragon. In 1305, Clement V., at the instigation of the King of France, removed the Papal see from Rome to Avignon, when the Vatican remained in a condition of obscurity and neglect for more than seventy years. But soon after the return of the pontifical court to Rome, an event which had been so earnestly prayed for by the poet Petrarch, which finally took place in 1376, the Vatican was put in a state of repair, again enlarged, and it was thenceforward considered as the regular palace, and residence of the popes, who, one after the other, added fresh buildings to it, and gradually enriched it with antiquities, statues, pictures, and books, until it became the richest repository in the world.

Its library was commenced fourteen hundred years ago. It contains 40,000 manuscripts, among which are some by Pliny, St. Thomas, St. Charles, Borromeo, and many Hebrew, Syriac, Arabian and Armenian Bibles. The whole of the immense buildings composing the Vatican, are filled with statues, found beneath the ruins of ancient Rome; with paintings, by the great masters, and with curious medals, and antiques of almost every description. When it is known that there has been exhumed more than 60,000 statues from the ruined temples and palaces of Rome, the reader can form some idea of the riches of the Vatican.

"Can you tell us when the cars leave the depot?" "As soon as the seats are all taken, that will make the car-go."

Mr. Taylor, a correspondent of the Tribune, saw children digging gold in the streets of San Francisco.

The Scientific American.

The small size of the "Western World" prohibits us from giving our readers all the valuable information that we could wish. We can however often inform them where they can find the best and most reliable. The "Scientific American" always is full of most interesting and valuable matter upon scientific subjects. It contains a complete account of all new inventions, especially those for which a patent had been taken. In fact they have the best means for obtaining information on this subject of any paper in the country. When so many new inventions are being brought forward, it is often of great importance to the discoverer to know whether he has been forestalled, and thus save time and expense. We have frequently known instances where individuals have sent models to Washington, only to find that patents have been already issued for the same invention.

It contains a full account of scientific meetings in this and other countries, and chronicles all improvements in manufactures, agriculture, &c. &c. It is published weekly by Messrs. Munn & Co., at 128 Fulton st. New York, at the low price of \$2 per annum. Our readers well know that we do not often puff any work but when we know of one that really benefits society, we feel it to be our duty to let society know it also. Number 1, Vol 5, was issued September 22. It appears in new type, and with many improvements that materially enhance its value. Back members can be obtained of the present volume, if ordered soon.

[The above notice we copy from the Western World, published monthly at No. 50 Broadway, at 25 cents per year, by that prince of all good fellows Joshua F. Bridge. We are especially grateful to him for the many occasions he has taken to speak favorably of the Sci. Am. without the least hint or solicitation from us. It is always a matter of great encouragement to editors to find their labors, approved by their contemporaries. In this instance we have more than the usual acknowledgement to make as Mr. Bridge has asked nothing from us to render him under obligations to speak in our favor. Although but a young man, his articles compare favorably with Editorial experience, and are characterized by a sound and healthy morality which is much in his favor as a young editor. Success to him.]

Things as they Exist.

Almost daily are we receiving orders from various parts of the Union, for all the back volumes of the Scientific American; or letters of enquiry reading thus: "Can you furnish me with your valuable work from the commencement?" In reply to such enquiries we are induced to make the following statement, thereby saving many the trouble of making enquiries for volumes that we cannot furnish, and ourselves the time of replying to such enquiries:

Volume 1.—Entirely out of print: not a number left.

Volume 2.—Complete sets entirely exhausted.

Volume 3.—COMPLETE, Bound—A few copies only: price \$3.

Volume 4.—Complete, Bound: \$2,75—none in sheets.

We have left a few incomplete sets of volumes 2 and 3, comprising about 50 Nos., which may be had by remitting one dollar; and we have sets of between 40 and 50, Vol. 3, which we can furnish at the above price, and also about 40 Nos. of Vol. 4, which will be furnished for one dollar.

There are but a few sets of the above volumes left, as complete as stated above, and those who order first will receive the most numbers.

The back Nos. of Volume 5 we are yet able to furnish, but at the rate they are "going off" at present, we shall be unable to send the first Nos. in a few weeks, although at the commencement of the volume 4000 extra copies were printed for the purpose of filling future demands for them.

The amount of British manufactures now exported is said to be enormous. Up to August of this year, it was twenty-five million dollars more than the same period in 1848.

The last accounts from California are rife with the still abundant supply of gold.