

Topics of the Day

ABROAD.

THE ROYAL NAVY EXHIBITION.

The Royal Naval Exhibition, opened by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales last month at Chelsea Hospital, is the attraction of the summer. Few things go so far to make a successful exhibition as ships' models, torpedoed, guns, and the varied and wonderful instruments that have made our Mother Country supreme on the seas. The crowd of visitors is so great that the exhibition will remain open till October.

Three hundred thousand dollars have been expended upon it, but it is quite expected that not only will this enormous sum be drawn in again, but that a large surplus will be secured.

A Panorama of the Battle of Trafalgar shows the great historic fight at the moment when Nelson received his death-blow, and a model of H.M.S. *Victory* has all its guns cleared for action, and everything ready for the fight, as it was on the morning of the great battle. In the cock-pit, where the famous admiral died, the death of the hero is represented. Nelson lies dying. Capt. Hardy is bending affectionately over his commander. The doctor, chaplain, the surgeon, the steward, the purser stand by, and Nelson expires, breathing the words—"Now I am satisfied: thank God I have done my duty."

Among the other interesting features of the exhibition are relics from Sir John Franklin's expedition, bottles, tobacco pipes, telescopes, watches, spoons, forks, and Franklin's own Bible and walking-stick, a real whaling-boat, an actual representation of a travelling party about to encamp for the night, a 110-ton gun, the largest ever made; a model of Eddystone Lighthouse, 170 feet high, built of iron and steel, with a lantern 14 feet in diameter, and a light equal to three million candles; and a reproduction of a ship in the frozen seas, being nipped in the ice-pack, and the sledge parties preparing to leave for the mainland, over the ice-floes.

CHRISTIAN DOGS.

So dire a profanation is it for a Christian dog to set foot upon the sacred threshold of a Moorish mosque, that no amount of purification can ever make it fit for the faithful to pray in again. Some years ago the clock in the tower of the mosque got out of order. The Moors have so degenerated that it has been long since there was an artificer among them capable of curing so delicate a patient as a debilitated clock. The great men of the city met in solemn conclave to consider how the difficulty was to be met. They discussed the matter thoroughly but arrived at no solution. Finally, a patriarch arose and said

"Oh, children of the Prophet, it is known unto you that a Portuguese dog of a Christian clock-mender pollutes the city of Tangier with his presence. Ye know, also, that when mosques are builded, asses bear the stones and the cement, and cross the sacred threshold. Now, therefore, send the Christian dog on all-fours, and barefoot, into the holy place to mend the clock, and let him go as an ass!"

And in that way it was done.

WHAT THE OLD HEN SAID.

Into the house he came running,
And begged me to cut off his curls,
Over his head richly clustered,
As bright and as fair as a girl's.

"Why would you lose them, my darling?"

"Because our old hen," pouted he,
Screams, when we meet, 'Get-your-hair-cut!
Get-your-hair-cut!'—I know she means me!"

GEORGE COOPER.

A HOUSE-BOAT FOR OUR CANADIAN LAKES.

Our artist has drawn for us a beautiful picture. It is a representation of a house-boat that is very fashionable on the Thames in England. The idea is an excellent one for Canada, and we have pleasure in calling attention to it, and in urging its advantages. With our long summer, our glorious weather, and our magnificent lakes and rivers, there is no country where its charms ought to be so appreciated. It ought to become a peculiarly Canadian institution.

It may, of course, be a means of expending a small fortune. It can also be made and enjoyed for little cost compared to the return. A discarded grain barge, if not too aged, could be fitted up with inexpensive accommodation, and cheap and pretty chintzes in the hands of our fair young ladies, with chromoes and flowers, would make a palace "fit to set before a king." The saloon should be surrounded by permanent sofas and lounges that may on a pinch be improvised into sleeping quarters. A few family rooms, and a cosy kitchen would complete the interior arrangements, and outside hammocks, boats, canoes, and fishing-rods would supply everything else for a novel, economical, and most delightful outing.

Arrangements could be made to have the house-boat towed to our destination, and every week might see us in a new water. A barge specially built and fitted up with steam, while more luxurious, could not be more enjoyable. We add a description of one taken from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, from which also we have selected some of our illustrations:

"To begin externally, its appearance from the river is extremely pleasing, the dark wooden walls, leaded windows, and the boxes of well-chosen flowers looking really charming against the back-ground of willow and elderberry. The internal arrangements are equally prepossessing. The principal room or saloon, which is evidently furnished with an eye to comfort, has some very persuasive chairs, pretty hangings, and a piano. Electric bells and a speaking tube communicate with the servants at the other end of the boat. A corridor, out of which are the three bedrooms, connects the saloon with the kitchen, and is hung with red and black curtains. The bedrooms are also very comfortable. The washstand with adjustable toilette-glass is a useful invention, as it contains a cistern for water which pours into the basin by pressing a knob. The kitchen is fitted up, in the usual manner of kitchens, with a good cooking stove, sink, plate-racks, and swinging-shelf for decanters and bottles. All the lamps and candlesticks are hung in swivel-sockets. Coal is kept in bunkers behind the kitchen. Meat-safes and a refrigerator are also to be found."