

**ARCTIC EXPLORATION.**

**POSSIBLE THAT THE DREAM WILL NOW BE REALIZED.**

**Eastman Peary Will Make Another Trip—Dr. Fridtjof Nansen's New Plan—The Route He Will Follow and the Equipment of His Expedition.**

It now seems possible if not probable that the dream of Arctic exploration will be realized, and that, too, before the close of the present century. Eastman Peary will soon set out again, and proceed this time with the benefit of a recent valuable experience among the icy fastnesses of the far north. He is to have a formidable rival in Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, a sturdy Norwegian, who will attack the problem on a new plan with approved accoutrements and in the light of the latest scientific knowledge of polar currents and ice-drift. The latter intends to set out next June with twelve men, provisioned for five years, in a vessel so constructed that it will rise from between the ice sheets in case of pressure instead of being crushed by them.

Two of the seven boats are capable of holding the entire crew, with provisions for several months and warm tents, in case the ship has to be abandoned. The vessel is rigged as a three masted, but has engines of 170 horse-power and will carry a balloon to be held captive for purposes of observation. The lighting will be done by electricity. The expedition will be undertaken under the most favorable auspices. King Oscar has taken great interest in the project and was the first contributor to the fund. Two-thirds of the expenses will be paid by the Norwegian Government and the rest has been subscribed privately, the Royal Geographical Society having also shown its sympathy by making a grant towards defraying the cost of the trip.

The chief of the expedition talks confidently of success. He does not know how long he will be absent. He says he may be away only two years, but feels certain he will be back by the end of five years, and come home by the opposite route to that taken at departure. His confidence is based on the now established fact that, besides minor currents which flow southward in the Arctic archipelago of North America, an immense volume of water flows southward between Greenland and Spitzbergen, much of which is believed to come from the rivers of Siberia and Alaska, and as these waters have a comparatively high temperature the danger from ice may not be so great as is generally supposed. Evidence of the existence of this current are numerous. Driftwood, both Siberian and American, is found every year on the coasts of Greenland and Spitzbergen. Pumice stone picked up on the shores of Norway has an undoubted Siberian origin, and so have the dust and wood which have been gathered from ice floes between Spitzbergen and Greenland. After narrating these facts in a recent lecture at the London University, Dr. Nansen stated it as his conclusion that "The natural way of crossing the unknown region is to take a ticket with floe ice, enter the current somewhere near the New Siberian Islands, and let it carry us straight across."

Dr. Nansen will proceed from Norway to Nova Zembla, and thence eastward to the mouth of the Lena, which is approximately in opposite longitude to that of Greenland. Thence he will sail northward till the pack ice renders further navigation impossible in spite of the most strenuous efforts to push the ship through the ice. The plan is to run the vessel as far as may be into the ice and let it stick there for the winter, or perhaps forever. The party will then move on in a northerly direction in the boats on the ice, the expectation being it will be assisted by nature instead of fighting against her. The theory is that the explorers will be taken by the drifting of the ice floes right across the polar region down into the East Greenland sea between Spitzbergen and Greenland, having in this way reached and passed the pole.

By next August or September the explorers will have reached the northern limit of open water north from those islands, and entered upon the region of ice, shut out from the rest of the world, and with no hope of return save in the currents which their leader believes to run right across the polar area. If he be mistaken they may never come back. If the theory on which he is working be correct, and no unprovided for occurrences prevent it, the party will "come out on the other side" after having mastered the problem which it has cost many lives and much money in the effort to solve. Many people may be of the opinion that the discovery, if made, will not be worth what it has cost, but we cannot be too sure of that, for some of the grandest practical results have grown from discoveries that at first seemed to be unimportant. There may be no legitimate ground for hope that a colony can be planted at or near the pole, or even that the new route will ever be commercially practicable, but the achievement may add vastly to the present sum of knowledge, which is almost every day turned to some new account in providing for the wants and increasing the comfort of humanity.—Chicago Tribune.

**Defects in Popular Education.**  
President Eliot's article in the December Forum on "Defects in Popular Education" is attracting the wide consideration it deserves. The Nation says it contains more meat than any other paper on the subject that has appeared a long time. It will do good especially by provoking discussion and by presenting old methods in a new light and thus tending to break up the routine and the formulas that are so apt to petrify in educational methods. He pleads especially for a better training of the reasoning powers in the child or youth and for the more systematic instruction in writing good English. "We have expected," he says, "to teach sound reasoning, and to teach it indirectly, just as we have expected to teach young people to write good English by teaching them foreign languages. It is high time that we taught the young by direct practice and high examples to reason justly and effectively."

**Subaqueous Photography.**  
Photographing under water has actually been carried out, so it is said. Experiments were made in 1886 in the Mediterranean to ascertain how far daylight penetrated under the water. In very clear water, near Corsica, and eighteen miles from land, the limit of daylight was found by means of photographic plates to be 1,580 feet.

**TRICKS OF THE MEMORY.**

**Speakers and Writers Sometimes Confronted With Embarrassing Difficulty.**

One of the queeresses with which writers have to contend is an occasional puzzleheadedness over a perfectly well-known point of orthography or grammar. A word that one has probably spelled correctly all one's life suddenly swerves into the doubtful orthography column. Is it "ingulf," "engulf" or "engulph"? one queries with pen poised. Is it "appal" or "apall"? "Fantasy" or "phantasy"? and so on indefinitely. To be sure, there is the dictionary, but wants to learn his A B C's over again or look up the spelling of everyday words! It is a curious fact that, left to themselves, the fingers will generally spell a word correctly. It is in the hesitation that certainty is lost. There can be no doubt that the fingers of a writer acquire a sort of automatic education. Even when a doubt as to the right spelling of a word has crossed the mind the hand will usually bring the letters into form if given its course. It is as if it consciously reasoned, "I have always driven the pen so and so, having begun so!" But once hampered by the spirit of investigation, the irresolute hand inclines toward the unabridged.

The matter is worse where parts of speech entangle themselves. Rules and regulations flatter themselves out and only a helpless floundering among pronouns, antecedents and correlatives seems for the time possible. In one of Wilkie Collins' published letters he writes: "For the last week, while I was finishing the story, I galloped along without feeling it, like the old post horses. Do you remember how the forelegs of those post horses quivered and how their heads drooped when they came to the journey's end? That's me, my dear, that's me. Good God! Is 'me' grammar? Ought it to be 'I'? My poor father paid \$80 a year for my education, and I give you my sacred word of honor I am not sure whether it is 'me' or 'I.'" Probably Wilkie Collins could have made a pretty straight guess on this point, but those little aberrations come upon us sometimes when we should be slow to stake anything upon our correctness, though another person, blundering in the same way, would be instantly arraigned before the bar of our correct and sanctified judgment just as we serve merited condemnation upon fellow mortals who display the identical faults of which we are ourselves guilty.

Voluble speakers and voluminous writers probably experience little of this trouble. The spouting geyser of words never fails them, and for this they are to be congratulated; yet it is a consolation to those of less oratorical ability to know that great writers and speakers learn to curb their flowing speech rather than give vent to it. Prof. Shedd states that in the last half of Webster's public life he learned to reject the vague words that come thick and thronging when the mind is aroused. He grew more select and precise, and presently, as one said, "every word weighed a pound." This style of speaking or writing cannot be driven through with the velocity enjoyed when one is more careless of results. The word fitly chosen is the word to be striven for, and such is the perversity of inanimate things, it is precisely the word that sometimes fails to come at call.

**How Noted People Have Died.**  
King David died of old age, says the St. Louis Globe-Democrat; Louis XVI. died on the scaffold; Richard III. was killed in battle; Abraham Lincoln was assassinated; James A. Garfield was assassinated; Charles I. of England was beheaded; Louis V. was poisoned by his queen; Mustafa II. was strangled in prison; Durius Codomanus was killed in battle; Attila the Hun died in a drunken spree; Millard Fillmore died of paralysis at 74; Andrew Johnson died of paralysis at 67; Achmet III. was strangled by his guards; Chester A. Arthur died of apoplexy at 56; Louis I. died of a fever during a campaign; James II. died in exile of gluttonous habits; Nerva was supposed to have been poisoned; General Grant died of cancer of the throat at 63; Emperor William of Germany died of old age; Tiberius was smothered by one of his favorites; Louis V. was poisoned by his mother and his wife; Solyman I. was deposed and murdered in prison; Henry VI. of England was murdered in prison; Mustapha I. was deposed and strangled in prison; Charles III. Le Fou, was deposed and died in prison; George IV. died from a complication of disorders; Feodor II. of Russia was assassinated in church; John Adams passed away at 91 from senile debility; Queen Anne died of dropsy, brought on by brandy; Gregory V. was driven from Rome and died in exile; Louis Napoleon died in exile at Chislehurst, England; Adolphus of Germany fell at the battle of Gelheim; John Tyler died at 73 from a mysterious disorder; Richard II. is supposed to have been starved to death; Jehoabaz, king of Juda, died in captivity in Egypt; Lothaire of France, was poisoned by female relatives; George I. died from apoplexy, induced by drinking; Pope Landus was supposed to have been poisoned; Feodor I. of Russia was deposed and died in prison; Gustavus Adolphus was killed in the battle of Lutzen; Sultan Mussa-Chelebi was deposed and strangled; Pope Donus II. died suddenly, presumably by poison; Pope John X. died in prison, it is believed by poison; Solomon died of weariness at the vanity of human life, and Josiah, king of Judah, was killed in battle at Mejjiddo by an arrow.

**Political Proverbs.**  
Purifyin' politticks is uphill work.  
Sivil servis reform gethers no mores.  
Some statesmen air small pertators  
few in hull.  
The main qualifikashun of a candidate is, can he git thar?  
It's a party hard job to tell political onesty when you see it.  
A patriot may die for his country, but ez a rule, he'd rather not.  
When the offis wates fer the man in this Dominion somethin' ain't rite.  
Wimmen that air well treated at home mostly ain't hankerin' for votes.  
The candidate that got 'em ain't goin' to worry about how sartin votes wuz got, ef nobody else don't.

**Oldest Manuscript of the World.**  
The oldest East Indian manuscript in the world, and one of the oldest existing manuscripts of any kind, has recently been dug up just outside of a subterranean city near Kuchair. It is written on birch bark and contains two medical sections, two collections of proverbial sayings and one invaluable charm against snake-bite given by the Lord Buddha himself to Ananda.

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