

CONVERSAZIONE.

Hotto for the Week:

Did the world come up to your truth; never take your truth down to the world's level. —(Rev. Anna Shaw.)

Producing Rain by Explosions.

(Christian Union.)

For many years there has appeared from time to time in the press speculations as to whether it might not be possible to produce rain in arid regions by means of explosions in the atmosphere. It is a well-known fact that very many of the great battles of history have been immediately followed by heavy rains, and there seems to be scientific reason to suppose that these rains were caused by the continuous firing of heavy artillery. A notable instance of this theory was lately brought out by Senator Stanford, who relates that when the Central Pacific Railroad was being pushed through a region where rain rarely fell, the heavy blasting necessary in cutting through the mountains was followed frequently and almost daily by heavy rains, which totally ceased after the work was ended. It is to scientifically and thoroughly test the possibilities of this theory that a party has been sent out by the Government, and is now engaged in some arid region in the Far West. The precise locality of which has been kept secret, in making the expedition and extensive experiments. A special appropriation of \$9,000 was made. The party is under the general direction of General R. G. Hyatt, who has with him a meteorologist, an electrician, a chemist and two balloonists. They propose to send up balloons inflated with a combination of hydrogen and oxygen gases, and to explode these balloons by electrical communication from the ground. The gas used for inflation furnishes precisely that form of explosive material which is believed to be the cause of the rain. Experiments are also to be tried with various explosives placed on the ground, and with huge kites, the tails of which explosives will be attached, connected by fine wire with an electrical battery. The work has already begun, and reports of the first experiments indicate that results at least to some extent satisfactory have been obtained. Of course besides the scientific theory involved there is the very practical question of expense to be considered. The complete reports of this novel enterprise—certainly the first thing of its kind ever carried out under Government auspices—will be looked for with great curiosity and general interest.

The Origin of the Thimble.

It is said that thimbles (which are claimed as a Dutch invention) have been found at Heracleum. The etymology of thimble is from thimble-bell, as it was formerly worn, like sailors' thimbles, on the thumb. The Germans call the thimble "finger-hut" (finger-hat). A silver thimble is a very small thing; yet it takes more than twenty men, besides a great deal of machinery, to make one. The manufacture of thimbles was introduced into England from Holland, in 1693, by John Soaring.

How to Keep a Wife.

Much has been written on how to keep a husband, as if a husband, in the modern sense, were a piece of very breakable ware, liable to go to pieces with careless handling, and we are told that if we would be able to still keep him in love after the knot is tied and he feels himself in the matrimonial halter, we must manage him very unmanly and carefully. We must flatter him with warm smiles; we must praise him in his daintiest dishes and tell him none of our worries; we must always greet him with a smile and never expect him to mind the baby; we must be economical and never discover that he is extravagant; in short, we must do many things that are impossible and some that are absurd.

Now there is another side to this question, as to all others. If the love of a husband is so difficult to keep undimmed under the wear and tear of everyday domestic life, does that of the wife suffer no danger of change under her more trying burdens and the frequent thoughtless negligence of the husband? Should he never fear that the happy and healthy woman, whom he persuaded to give her life into his keeping, might grow weary of a life that is not what it promised to be, and prematurely old in a monotonous existence?

Some rules should be given for the use of husbands who would learn how to keep a wife, and they will be found simple enough. Here they are:

Try to be as thoughtful of your wife's comfort as you were when you first tried to win her heart; she needs your thoughtfulness more now.

Don't forget all the little courtesies you used to show her and which made you appear so well in her eyes; if there were ought to endure her to you before marriage she should be a thousand times dearer to you now.

Let her tell you her grievances and help her to solve them; you may be able to tell her other, and you can surely comfort each other.

Help her with the children sometimes at night, when they are fretful and you have no tired help. Supporting you do put in the plea that you are tired and that you have been working all day; hasn't she been working all day, too, and isn't she tired?

Never do anything that will make you appear mean in her eyes.

Deserve her perfect confidence.

Remember that she is liable to nervous disorders, and be magnanimous with her fits and falls.

Give her money when you can spare it.

Be kind, and, above all, be sure to love her and to let her know it.

Heroism by Proxy.

An old seaman named Peters, stationed on one of the United States cruisers in the North Atlantic squadron, was a man of rough exterior, but of a warm heart. His warmest corner was reserved for a certain young ensign on board the same ship, whom Peters worshipped with unswerving constancy.

Whether or not this was to be attributed to some kind of speech of the young officer's is uncertain, but the devotion was a patent fact, and the occasion of more than one laughing comment among the crew.

One day it happened that an unpracticed landman, while attempting to come ashore, fell into the water. As he was unable to swim, he would probably have drowned before the ship could have been stopped in her course sufficiently to permit a boat to be lowered, had not an officer standing on the gun deck below sprung after him and, at the risk of his own life, gallantly held him up until assistance came.

A letter from the Secretary of the Navy, commending in high terms this heroic action, was sent to the brave rescuer, and read before the assembled ship's company. Old Peters viewed the whole proceeding with a feeling of jealousy, and after brooding over the matter for some days, he relieved himself in the following manner:

"Mr. Bradley," said he, sliding up to the

object of his devotion, "that letter which the Secretary wrote, that's a fine thing for a young man to have. You ought to have one, Mr. Bradley."

"Why, yes, Peters," said young Bradley, with his pleasant smile, "that letter is undoubtedly a thing for any fellow to be proud of, but I'm afraid I don't quite see my way to getting one like it."

"Mr. Bradley," answered Peters, in a hoarse, uninviting confidence, "the letter is not a thing for any fellow to be proud of, but I'm afraid I don't quite see my way to getting one like it."

"There's only one difficulty about the plan, Peters," said Bradley, preserving a grave countenance, but inwardly much amused; "unfortunately, you see, I don't know how to swim."

"Sho! is that all, sir," returned Peters, unmoved. "That ain't nothin'. I'll hold you up till the boat comes."

The Wrong Man.

The Pall Mall Gazette tells the story of a modern Jenny Geddes, who seems to have been as pronounced in her convictions and as candid in the expression of them as the original one. A startling incident occurred at the anniversary services of the West United Presbyterian Church at Kilmuir, entirely without a parallel in the history of the oldest inhabitants. On the afternoon of Sunday, April 5, the minister was calmly preaching his sermon, when a modern Jenny Geddes, infuriated at one of the male members of the choir being asleep, buried her Bible at the head of the delinquent from the gallery where she was sitting. The Bible missed the sleeper, but struck the shoulder of another man in the choir, who started up amazed. The minister became pale, paused in his discourse, and exclaimed, "What's wrong?" "The Bible struck the wrong man," she cried, rising in her pew, although her friends vainly attempted to hold her down; "I was meant to waken the sinful sleeper."

Neutral.

A New Orleans newspaper says that a squad of Confederate soldiers, who were wearing captured blue overcoats, rode up to a house in Tennessee during the civil war, and called out to the owner, "Well, old man, what are you, reb or Yank?" "Old Caution was puzzled by the blue coats and the gray trousers. 'Gentlemen,' said he, 'I'm neither, and I don't like either.'"

A similar spirit seems to have possessed a certain aged negro whom a writer for the New York World met some time ago while wandering over the battlefield of Antietam.

"Where you here where the fight took place?" asked the visitor.

"Right yere, sah," answered the white-haired negro.

"Then you saw it all?"

"Well, sah, not zactly, but I saw de dead folks arter de battle."

"Why didn't you see the movements of the troops?"

"Well sah, I was done embarrassed a heap dat day. I knowed G'n'ral Lee was dependin' on me not to whoop ag'in 'em, and so I done wen' down cellar an' sat on de head of a cider bar' an' let 'em fight it out de best way I could."

GLAD TIDINGS.

Canada. Two Chinamen were recently received into the membership of the Church of Christ in Knox Church, Winnipeg. They had both been under Christian instruction for several years and had given good evidence both of their acquaintance with the truths of the Gospel and of their desire to lead a Christian life.

American. The total Indian population of Canada is about 120,000, and of these about 30,000, it is said, are more or less under Christian instruction at the hands of the Methodist, Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches. There are in the United States 240,000 Indians, of whom only 58,000 receive any assistance whatever from the Government, and a large proportion of these are only slightly dependent.

No Reproach. There are those who wish to be Christians in secret, and those who even in lands where it is deemed no reproach to follow Christ. But we hear of Japanese workmen, who were necessary away from their shop most of the day; who put the following notice on the door: "I am a Christian, and if anyone likes to go in and read my Good Book while I am out, he may. Buddhist priests need not come here. I do not want them any more."

Evangelical Church in Italy. The twentieth report of this body, formerly called the Free Italian Church, shows that there are 29 churches and 24 stations, besides 16 places which are visited regularly. Connected with these churches are 2,350 communicants. Besides 13 ministers, there are 16 evangelists and 30 elders. The gifts of these churches for all objects amounted to 16,338 francs, which amounts to an average of nearly \$2 per member.

Windows Coming In. The Indian Witness reports that in Northern India there is no abatement in the work of baptizing converts from the lower Hindu castes. It is said that in Northern India and the Northern Valley of the Ganges, for two months past have averaged more than 30 a day. The missionaries are greatly perplexed as to what they can do in the way of training these converts, and they are recognizing the fact that their first duty now is to prepare leading men among the converts for this important duty.

A Penny a Day. World-Wide Missions sends out a ringing call to the Methodist Episcopal Church for a grand, general uprising under the head of Financial Possibilities, and with "One Penny a Day" as the watchword, bespeaks the speedy appearance of a second Wesley to inaugurate the revolution, to transform the scheme into solid fact, and presents some astounding figures which would result, such as \$3,000,000 for missions, \$1,000,000 for evangelistic work in cities, \$750,000 for Freedmen's Aid, \$400,000 for the Women's Foreign Missionary Society, etc. The total—\$10,000,000—though so great, is yet a small one for the vast Methodist host, numbering 2,783,967.

A New Experiment. The Irish Presbyterian Church has resolved on a new experiment in foreign mission work. Richthofen all the missionaries they have sent to India have been thoroughly trained men, and have each been of late years paid an annual salary of \$1,750. It has been resolved to commence work among the Bhils, to be carried on by lay agents under the name of "The Jungle Mission." The salaries of these agents will amount to only about a third of that paid to the other missionaries sent out by the church. For the present at least the means to sustain the new mission will not be drawn from the

regular funds of the church, but from private subscriptions which have been generally offered for the purpose.

Items of Interest. The London Missionary Society has faith in its ability to move forward to grand accomplishments, notwithstanding it requires a large increase in its funds to meet its present demands. It has listened to the pleas of its missionaries for more help. At a recent meeting it decided to send out 100 more missionaries during the next four years.

Mr. Whitton, writing in the Helpmeet, the women's organ in connection with the Free Church of Scotland, says: "You will have heard of the bill at present before the Viceroy's Council to raise the age of consent from 10 to 12. I am sorry to see that the Chinese native press are almost universally against this change."

Bishop Smythies, before returning to Africa, was presented to the Emperor William. The latter remarked significantly, "The Mohammedan religion is a very simple one, and takes great hold on those who profess it. Surely in the face of it there is great necessity for Christian missionaries to act suitably."

After 35 years of labor, the London missionaries have baptized a man and a woman, the first two converts of the terrible Matebele, between the Zambezi and the Limpopo. Hitherto, whenever promising dispositions appeared in any way under the long tyranny of Moselekat, the most despotic of tyrants, he had succeeded, but apparently somewhat less implacable.

AN APPEAL FOR AIR.

The poem below was originally published in the Independent 25 years ago. The need for the "apele" still exists.

A PEPE FOR AIR: 2 THE SEXTANT OF THE OLD BRICK MEETING-HOUSE.

O, Sextant of the meeting-house which sweeps And dusts or is suppose to make fires, And likes the gas, and sometimes leaves a scum of loss.

In which case it smells awful—was not lamp-like; And wrings the bell, and toles it when men dies.

To the great of survival partners; and sweeps paths; And for these services gets \$100 per annum. Which then thinks dear let them try it.

Kindlin' fires with the weather as most despise As Nero, and like as not green wood for kindlin'.

I wouldn't be hired to do it for no more, But O, Sextant! there are I knoweddy Worth more than gold, which doesn't cost nothink.

Worth more than anythink except the sole of man's shoe. I mean power are, Sextant, I mean power are! O, it is plenty out o' doors, so plenty it don't cost nothink.

Wat on earth to do with itself, but flies about Scatterin' leaves and blowin' off men's hats. In short, it's just 'as free as air' outdoors. But O, Sextant, in our church it is as scarce as loss.

Scarce as bankbills when ajunts beg for mislums. Wich sum say is purty often ('tain't nothin' to Wat I give ain't nothin' to nobody); but O, Sextant,

U shet 50 men, wimins & childrens Scatterin' dust, up in a tree place, Sum has bud broke—the wether is dead. Sum is f-y, sum is a-a, sum has had t-h, An sum hain't none, an sum ain't over o-n. But every 1 of 'em breathes in and out, and out.

Say 50 times a minit, or 1 million and a half breaths an hour. Now how long will a cherchful of are last at that rate. I ask you. Say 15 minits, and then wots to be did?

Why then they mus breath it all over agin. And then agin and so on till each has took it down. At lest 10 times and let it up agin. And wots more.

Thee indeviddible don't have the privilage. Of breathin' his own are, and no one's else; Ech one must take water over come to im. O, Sextant, don't you know our lunks is bellows.

To blo' the fire of life and keep it from goin' out and how can bellowses blo' without w-i-l-l.

And wot wind Arel I put it to your consensha. Are is same to us as milk to babes. Or water is to fish, or pendents to clox. Or wots and ains to an injun Doctor.

Or litle pints unto an oncapthor, Or boys to girls. Are is for us to breath. Wot similish you breeches, if I can't breath? Wot is to stomes who stomes who stomes who stomes? Ded for wot of breath? Wot, Sextant, when we do do.

It's only ooz we can't breath no more—the'n's alle. And now O, Sextant, let me beg of you 2 let a litle are inter our cherch (Pewer are is senter proper for the pew), And do it week days, up in a tree place. It ain't much to blo'—only make a hoat. And all the are will cum of itself.

It loves to cum in were it can get warm (O And O, how it will rouse the people up. And spurt up the preacher, and stop gapes And yawns and Bitts as effectual As wind on the dry Beans the Profit talks of.

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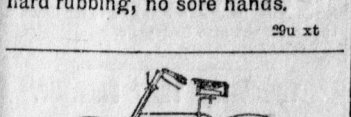
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