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Ancient Origin of Modern Tools.

The story of the mechanical aids of human history has been much neglected. Thousands have described the sculptures of the Parthenon, yet no one has mentioned the tools that carved those fluted columns. We naturally suppose that our present day tools have far better forms than those of past ages. That is true in many cases, but not always.

It appears that the forms of the chisel were perfected 2500 years ago, and that the beauty of workmanship in Bronze Age chisels has never been exceeded.

The use of saws and crown drills with fixed teeth of corundum or gem stones for cutting quartz rocks was the regular practice in Egypt 6000 years ago. The cores produced were so perfect and clean cut that any modern engineer would be proud to turn out such good work with the best diamond drills. The saws were over eight feet long, and cut blocks of granite seven and a half feet long. That splendid work was forgotten; the Romans did not use such tools,

and some thousands of years passed before the same tools were reinvented 50 years ago.

The carpenter's saw was at first merely a blade roughly backed on the edge; by 4000 B.C. it had regular teeth, sloping equally both ways; by 300 B.C. the Italians gave a rake to the teeth to make them cut in one direction, instead of merely scraping as before. No ancient saw, however, made a kerf wider than the thickness of the blade; we do not know when the saw that makes a wider kerf was invented, but it was some time in the Middle Ages.

The Egyptians used a push saw as the earliest form; the pull saw was the only one in the west and the Roman world. The push saw came back into use a few centuries ago, although the pull saw in a frame is still universal in the east.

The world did without shears for many ages, cutting its cloth with a rounded blade knife. About 400 B.C. the mechanical genius of Italy invented shears, which in two or three centuries more were fitted to the fingers and so became scissors.

The "snuffers" referred to in Exodus is a mistranslation; the early tools for trimming a lamp were a small knife and a pair of tweezers to trim the wick and a point to part the strands.

In some cases it is curious to see how long men remained on the brink of an invention. Copper wire was made by cutting and hammering from 5500 B.C., yet the drawing of wire remained unknown for 6000 years or more. When the first drawn wire was made is not yet determined, but the art seems to have been unknown to the Romans.

Thick beaten wire was made into chain with round links as far back as the second dynasty, 5200 B.C.; and links doubled and looped through one another appeared in the sixth dynasty, 4200 B.C. Yet chains were not commonly used until much later. The Gauls excelled in such work, as they used chain cables and riggings in place of rope to resist strain.

The screw was a Greek invention and greatly used by the Romans as a means for producing motion; but centuries passed before the nut and screw for fastening was invented, and other centuries before screws for fastening wood appeared. It is less than 200 years since the common screw came into use.—Ex.

The Wage-Earning Girl Marries.

Ceasing to receive the pay envelope of the wage earner and thereby losing a sense of personal independence is what many brides-to-be have to consider to-day. It was different in earlier times when a girl, as a rule, married from her childhood's home into the new home. How one wage earner became a satisfied housewife is told by a correspondent. She says:

"Before marriage I was in business, with a salary which enabled me to save after gratifying all reasonable wishes. Therefore, my independence was dear to me, and this my husband respected.

"At the beginning of each season I have an allowance for dress expenses which I do not exceed; and each week I receive a certain sum of money for purely household expenses. The surplus from this latter (which naturally varies according to what stocks require replenishing, as I make it a rule to buy in quantity wherever possible) I retain, and lay aside, for presents, books, music, etc., and my contribution to any small special additions to our home upon which we have set our hearts and which we are not able to purchase out of ordinary income.

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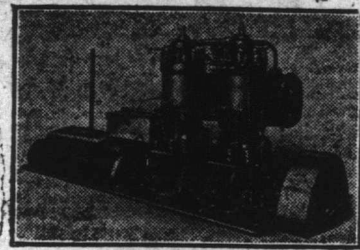
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Anglo-Japanese Alliance

(Boston Sunday Herald.)

There is considerable speculation as to what will be done about the Anglo-Japanese alliance when the date arrives for its renewal or dissolution. That will be in July next year. The original treaty was signed in 1902, and three years later it was amplified by an offensive and defensive alliance, applying to eastern Asia and India. Among the terms of the agreement are the preservation of the independence and integrity of the Chinese empire, and the maintenance of the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations in China. At the latest revision, in 1911, an article was added declaring that nothing in the treaty should entail on either ally an obligation to make war on a third power with whom it had a treaty of arbitration—thus excluding the United States as a possible enemy of Great Britain. On the whole, the alliance makes for the preservation of peace and fair dealing in the far east.

In what way did it affect the world war? It brought Japan into the conflict as an ally of Britain, and those two powers—not Japan alone—took Kiaochow bay and Tsingtao from the Germans. This was done promptly. On Aug. 23, 1914, Japan sent her ultimatum to Germany. Sept. 24 a small British expeditionary force was associated with the Japanese invading army; Oct. 31 the besiegers were reinforced by Indian troops, that same day the effective bombardment of Tsingtao began, and Nov. 7 the fortress capitulated. These are points to be remembered in connection with the promised restoration of the territory to China. In some quarters they may be conveniently forgotten, but the British people think of them when doubts arise as to honest fulfilment of the promise.

The capture from Germany having been effected with British co-operation, the honor of Britain is concerned in fulfilment of the obligation of return to China. And British residents in that country are speaking out on the subject. Equally with American commercial organizations, the British Chamber of Commerce at Shanghai and other similar bodies, notwithstanding their intimacy with Japanese enterprises, are publicly expressing their sympathy with China in her natural desire to regain full control of the province of Shantung. The chairman of the Shanghai chamber is quoted as saying that Japan "is taking deliberate steps to control the whole of the land surrounding the harbor, docks, wharves and railroad terminals," and that this means she "is not going to

allow any other nation to have an opportunity of trading on fair and equal terms with her own nationals." If this be so, it will involve a breach of the treaty, and, more specifically, a breach of the promise to return to China all the rights that were leased to Germany. Thus it appears that Britain and Japan approach a parting of the way in which they have walked together.

Age of Niagara a Mystery.

To the question, "How old is Niagara Falls?" geologists have returned replies varying by tens of thousands of years. At first it was estimated that the Niagara River came into existence through changes in the level of the land around the Great Lakes about 55,000 years ago. Later this was reduced to only 12,000 years. Lyell increased the estimate again to 35,000 years and still later other scientists reduced it to about 9,000 years. At one period, it appears many thousands of years ago, the height of the Falls was 420 feet.

Husband-Getting Charms.

It's all very well for women to insist that they are emancipated and the equals of men, and that marriage is becoming less and less desirable, and all the rest of it, but if straws are still an indication of the direction of the wind, then there are a few signs left to show that there hasn't been such a great change after all.

One of these lies in the great Cave of the Winds, in Colorado, a place visited each year by scores of tourists. For in each corner the visitor is always impressed by a curious thing that looks like a mattress and that turns out, on close acquaintance, to be an immense pile of hairpins, combs, barrettes and hair ornaments. It seems that there is a superstition that every widow and unmarried woman who leaves a hairpin or hair ornament there will be married within the year, and, though most of the women who visit the cave laugh at

the story and look very incredulous, not a few surreptitiously shake out an invisible pin or two before leaving, "just for luck."

Nor is this the only mute testimony to the ever-feminine credulity and belief in marriage charms. At Ramona's Wedding Place, also in the Western States, is a well, the bottom of which gleams bright with countless pennies and other coins, left there by passing visitors who were told that tossing a coin down the well would bring them a husband within a year. So the pennies accumulated, and already there is a small fortune lying at the bottom of Ramona's well.

Nor is this superstition of travellers the only evidence in the case. One has only to see the young girls—and some of the old—waiting to catch the bride's bouquet at a wedding in order to be the next bride, to know that they are all ready to test any husband-getting charm. And one may look in vain for the single girl brave enough to take the "last piece" of cake or candy on the plate and thus run the risk of becoming an "old maid."

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