

being convicted thereof by the oath of one or more credible witnesses or witnesses, before any court of judicature or any one or more justices of the peace for the shire or stewary, or judge ordinary of the place where such offence shall be committed, shall suffer punishment without bail during the space of six months and no longer, and being convicted for a second offence before a court of judicature or at the circuits, shall be liable to be transported to any of his Majesty's plantations beyond the seas, there to remain for the space of seven years." What is to be done with this rock ahead? The Scotch say that according to their legal jurisprudence, acts of parliament expire in forty years, unless reclaimed by action within the period. Some of their best judges, however, say that when such a law exists, it remains in force if generally obeyed, and with all legal writers a very grave doubt is continually expressed whether that rule can apply to any other than acts passed by the purely Scottish parliament. This act in question being under "one of the Georges," evidently for safety requires repeal, and the sooner a notice is put on the papers of both Houses of Parliament the better. Noble Scotchmen of high birth and lineage have often graced the levees of St. James', the drawing-rooms of Buckingham Palace, and the balls of Windsor, in the gay and fascinating "garb of Old Gaul" (so kin to the garb of the ancient Roman), that it is a pity it should stand on the statute-book proscribed as a criminal offence to wear it inferring penal servitude. None are now more loyal than Her Majesty's Highland subjects. The great and good Prince Consort, whose taste for the picturesque, it is acknowledged by all, was not only of a high but of a first-class order, arrayed himself in this magnificent costume, and all the Princes of the Royal House, with the sanction of our beloved liege lady the Queen, have from time to time been dressed in Highland array, and therefore it only requires the slightest touch of the pruning-knife to excise this thorn from the stem of the thistle; and we assure our brave maintainers that the generosity for which they always give us full credit will be exerted to its utmost openness of liberality in assisting to cancel this penal clause. We shall be the first to take "a congratulatory snuff" from the cairngorm gold-mounted horn, when it dangles free beside the dirk, and shall most cordially shake the hand no longer required to sign over an indictment of guilty or not guilty of wearing a gauntlet to the knowledge of an assize! Purge the roll before the marriage day, and let the sheen of the claymore-hilt, and the burnished precious metals, ornate of the sporan, the buclar, and the belts, gleam back the reflex light of the emblematic light of "the altar lamp" as brilliantly as the holy flame of love beams from the blushing pair as the priestly words, "For better or for worse" make them one for ever.—*Court Journal*.

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION.

A contributor to the *Boston Journal of Chemistry* says: Any light that can be obtained on spontaneous combustion adds not a little to the value of real estate. We believe a large percentage of the fires charged to incendiarism are really owing to spontaneous combustion, so called. We purpose giving three cases, two of which have come under our own experience.

1. Within a year, twenty-eight rolls of cotton cloth in one of our large dyeing establishments were dyed black, and were delayed a few days before they could be starched and finished. Two of these rolls were discovered to be on fire—not in flames, but in a smouldering condition, or charred into tinder; a third roll was so hot that hands could not handle the cloth, and the wooden roller upon which the cloth was wound was heated almost to the point of ignition.

The rolls of cloth destroyed were the first dyed, and consequently had been longer exposed than the others, which in a measure explains why all the rolls were not in the same condition.

In the dyeing, the first rolls were dyed without washing, by an oversight of the dyer. This is the point of importance, as the chemical salts were left in the cloth. Logwood, potash, sulphate of copper, and sulphate of iron constituted the dye, and we suggest this explanation as the probable cause of the fire. The potash and sulphate of iron change to sulphate of potash and hydrate of iron, by the absorption of oxygen from the atmosphere or from moisture in the cloth, and the heat thus developed reaches the point of ignition. Cloth in drying is very liable to contain heated moisture.

2. Within a year a fire was discovered in a silk-mercer's shop in London. The fire originated in a lot of black-dyed silk, and was discovered, as in the first instance, before flame had burst out. The conclusion reached was that it was not safe to have black-dyed silk in large masses, and that each piece ought to be so placed as to allow a free circulation of air. We think it quite probable that the explanation of the combustion is the same as in the preceding case.

3. In trying to get rid of rats in a dwelling house, the floors were taken up in order to cut off their ingress, if possible. The box that held the hot-water pipes was found to be a favourite resort for the vermin, and had actually been on fire. The sides were charred, but there had not been sufficient air to sustain combustion. Upon investigation as to the cause of the incipient fire, we are not left long in doubt, for a store of remnants of greasy cloths used in washing dishes was found, which had been brought by the rats from the kitchen. Some of these were charred, and the others were well saturated with grease and oils. This fire was quite a distance from the kitchen range, forty feet at the least.

It would be very natural in all these cases, if the real causes had not been so apparent, to attribute the origin of the fire to incendiarism.

We have a very firm impression that the introduction of coal oils for lubrication of machinery has very materially reduced the number of fires from spontaneous combustion, owing to the fact that the coal oils do not absorb oxygen; and that for this reason, if for no other, insurance companies can afford to insure mill property for less rates than they do at present.

"John," said a father to his son one day when he caught him shaving the 'down' off his upper lip, "don't throw your shaving water out where there are any bare-footed boys, for they might get their feet pricked."

A fisherman of Trinity Bay, on opening a codfish one day last summer, found in it a wedding ring bearing engraved on the inside the words "God above continue our love." The fish had persistently refused to swallow a spelling book.

A PAPAL CRUSADE.

A correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, writing from Rome on the 13th ult., has the following:—"It seems certain that forces for the recovery of the Pontifical States are being mustered in Belgium, a country whose independence rests on its neutrality, and that when all is ready the Pope will leave Rome and put himself at their head to lead them to the field. The Quæstor of Rome has just seized at a house in the Corso a lithographic stone, representing the bronze cross assumed by the Crusaders on their enrolment. I send you a fac-simile of this badge, which bears on one side the inscription—'Cruciata Catholica Militia Jesu Christi;' &c., &c.; and on the other the words—'Christus vincit; Christus regnat; Christus imperat in æternum; pro Petri Sede et Ecclesia.' The whole is surmounted by a royal crown, with the motto 'Rex Regum.' Funds are pouring into the Vatican sufficient to meet every expense. During last month the Pope received 1,101,000 fr., and since the 1st of February this sum has been swelled by 400,000 fr. more. Nearly all the officers of the disbanded Pontifical army, and the bulk of the soldiers, have embraced the crusade, and are now receiving their old pay, while volunteers are mustering in every part of the Continent. General Kanzler is in Belgium, and the day before yesterday Commander Filippini proceeded to Brussels with despatches for the Nuncio and the Archbishop of Malines which are believed to relate to the expedition. An attempt will be made at the same time to effect a papal rising in Rome, and Monsignor de Mérode is labouring zealously to prepare this mine."—This story looks very much as if manufactured out of whole cloth. Had the Pope wanted to go to war, might he not have done so any time these last half dozen years, since Umbria and the Marches were pilfered from his petty domain? Surely he is not such a poor strategist as to wait until he loses all before striking—if he means to strike—for his own.

BEER SOLD BY THE POUND.

One of the brightest and strongest of Amhurst's jocular stories relates to the keeper of an ale-house, that stood near the Oxford Pound. To call attention to his liquor the tradesman announced by placard that he sold beer by the pound, whereupon the students made a run to the place of entertainment to see if they could not buy pudding by the yard from the tradesman who sold malt liquor by weight. Summoned to appear before the vice-chancellor and give an account of his commercial doings, the seller of beer, instead of satisfying the curiosity of his inquisitorial judge, began to spit about the vice-chancellor's parlour, to the lively astonishment and disgust of that great person, who demanded what the fellow meant by his unseemly conduct. "You summoned me to clear myself," answered the culprit, coughing and spitting still more profusely, "and I have come to clear myself—and I will clear myself." "Clear yourself, sirrah," roared the vice-chancellor, "I expect you to clear yourself in a different way from that. They tell me you sell ale by the pound." "No, indeed, your worship." "Don't you?—then how do you do?" To which inquiry the fellow responded, "Very well, indeed, I thank you, Mr. Vice-Chancellor; pray how do you do, sir?" The impudence of this answer infuriated the vice-chancellor, who, crying out, "Get you gone for a rascal!" turned the taverner out of the room. "Away went the fellow," says Amhurst, "and meeting with one of the proctors, told him that the vice-chancellor desired to speak with him immediately; the proctor in great haste went to know the vice-chancellor's commands, and the fellow with him, who told the vice-chancellor, when they came before him, that here he was. 'Here he is!' says the vice-chancellor, 'who is here?' 'Sir,' says the impudent ale-house keeper, 'you bade me go for a rascal; and lo! here have I brought you one.' But the poor fellow paid dearly for his jokes; his licence was taken away, and he was committed to the castle prison.—*Teafferson's Annals of Oxford*.

HOME PHOTOGRAPHS IN CAMP.—A letter from the special correspondent of the *Daily News* at the German headquarters gives a graphic account of the universality of home photographs amongst the German soldiers. He says:—"I never knew a German officer or soldier who was a family man that did not carry with him photographs of his wife and children. By this time the cartes are getting dirty and thumb-marked, for they are had out for inspection and admiration very often. You will see a couple of officers in the casino, or at the mess-table, interchanging sights of photographs, and then comes a gossip about the children's ages. I have watched the growth of a warm friendship between two gentlemen I have the pleasure to know, the first link in which was the discovery at one of these quiet talks over the pictures, that one had a boy and the other a girl, who were born on the very same day of the very same year. I have seen two huge hairy sentinels at a double post far to the front exhibiting one to the other the gallery of family portraits, fetched out of a sweat-besmirched pocket in the breast of the tunic. This afternoon I was standing by the white house on the hill behind Andilly, trying, with but little success, to get a glimpse of the firing through the fog bank, when there joined me two or three men of the 26th Regiment, and we naturally fell into conversation. Presently, as I turned to go, one of them remarked, in perfectly good English, 'Heigho! I wish this weary war was over, and I back in New York.' The man had been for some years earning his two dollars a day as a house-painter in New York, and had got married and begot sons and daughters. When the war broke out he threw down his brush, shipped himself, wife and daughter—the boys were dead—on board a North German Lloyd steamer, and had fallen into his place in the ranks with no more fuss, or consciousness of extra patriotism, than if he had come for a holiday. Of course, out came the photographs—he carried them, to be handy, inside the folded cuff of his great coat. 'Ah! isn't she a fine woman just; and isn't the girl a beauty?' He was proud of his belongings, and had no stuck-up reticence about owning up to his pride. As I walked home, after leaving him, I fell a pondering on the differences in national idiosyncracies, and there came to my recollection the pictorial contents of sundry French officers' knapsacks that German officers spoke of after Sedan and Metz, their noses in the air as if they had inhaled a foul stink."

A reporter thus graphically describes the effect of a storm in the North Sea:—"While the storm was at its height the vessel heeled to the larboard, and the captain and another cask of whiskey rolled overboard."

MISCELLANEA.

PAINTINGS OF THE ROYAL MARRIAGE.—Messrs. John O'Connor and E. C. Barnes have been commissioned by the Queen to paint the picture of the marriage of the Princess Louise.

WHY DO CHILDREN DIE?—In answer to this question, the *Medical Recorder* holds the following language:

"The reason why children die is because they are not taken care of. From the day of birth they are stuffed with water, suffocated in hot rooms, and steamed with bed-clothes. So much for in-doors. When permitted to breathe a breath of pure air once or twice during the colder months, only the nose is permitted to peer into daylight. A little later they are sent out with no clothes at all on the parts of the body which most need protection. Bare legs, arms, and necks, girt middles, with an inverted umbrella to collect the air and chill the other parts of the body. A stout, strong man goes out in a cold day with gloves and overcoat, woollen stockings and thick double-soled boots with cork between and rubbers over. The same day a child of three years old, an infant of flesh and blood, and bone and constitution, goes out with hose as thin as paper, cotton socks, legs uncovered to the knees, neck bare, an exposure which disables the nurse, kills the mother outright, and makes the father an invalid for weeks. And why? To harden them for a mode of dress which they are never expected to practice. To accustom them to exposure which a dozen years later would be considered downright foolery."

A BLACK COUNTRY LEGEND.—Early in the present century, when Bilston was a long straggling village, with one main street, which formed a part of the mail road from London to Chester and Holyhead, the Bull's Head (advertised for sale Lady-day, 1871) was the principal inn of the place, and a well-known hostelry on the old Irish route. It was naturally, and almost as a matter of course, the house at which the town worthies were wont to meet, drink good wholesome home-brewed ale out of the Staffordshire black-glazed pots, smoke their Broseley pipes, and talk over the politics of the day and the tittle-tattle of the neighbourhood. One bright summer's eve, while thus pleasantly engaged in the modest smoking-room (coffee rooms had not as yet come into existence), a gentleman rides up to the door, followed by his servant with the saddle-bags. There is, of course, great curiosity amongst the guests assembled to know who the stranger may be; and from the communicative valet they soon learn that he is an Irish officer en route to London. They become immediately desirous of his company amongst themselves, both for society and news' sake; but the gentleman unsocially keeps his own room upstairs. So that at last, driven to desperation, and perchance somewhat pot valiant, one of the company, Mr. Edward Woolley, of Stonefields, a screw-maker (i. e., of iron screws for wood), sends up the servant with his chronometer to ask the Irishman if he can tell what time it is by an English watch. Great anxiety ensues as to the result. Presently the servant returns with his master's compliments, and he will be down directly with the watch and an answer. A great shuffling of feet is heard overhead; and by and by appears Milesius, followed by his bodyguard bearing a tray with the watch and a brace of pistols on it. He unhesitatingly announces that he has come to challenge the owner of the watch, and hopes he will have the "dacency" to claim it and take up one of the pistols. (To the servant)—"Take the watch round, John!" "Is it yours, sir?" The old doctor, Moss, was the first thus addressed; and amongst others present were Messrs. Price and Bushbury. "No sir!" was the invariable answer from each put to this crucial test. At length it comes to the owner. "Is the watch yours, sir?" "No sir!" "Well then, John, since no one will own the watch, put it in your pocket; and as we do not appear to have fallen among 'jintlemen,' bring out the horses, and we'll ride on another stage." The tale, of course, soon got abroad, and to the end of his career poor Woolley, or rather "Ooley," as he was generally called, was accosted with "What's o'clock, Mr. Ooley?" Only within a year or two of his death, while riding quietly along in his carriage, a young urchin thus annoyed him; and in getting out to make a dash after him, "poor Ooley" was upset and grievously injured. So that he had good cause long to remember "his family turnip," and his prestige of Quixotic combativeness.—*Notes and Queries*.

HOW COAL IS DISCOVERED IN BENGAL.—The *Dombay Gazette* publishes the following:—"Coal was recently reported to have been found in great quantity and of first-class quality at Midnapore, in Bengal. The story, for there is a story, will interest more than merchants and mineralogists. We commend it to the notice of any sensational novelist of the period who may be in want of a subject. The bare plot of 'The Ticket of Leave Man, or the Black Diamonds of Midnapore,' runs thus: 'An Australian convict, named Henderson, who was serving out a high court sentence in the Presidency Jail, was sent to Midnapore to aid in sinking a well for the Central Prison there. Shortly after his arrival he reported that he had come upon coal—lumps of which were certainly produced by him from the shaft, and identified in Calcutta as "fully equal to the best English steam." The geological department, which at first had denied that coal could be found there, began to stammer out doubts as to the accuracy of its maps. Borings were made all round the site of the Central Jail—and the boring tubs, under Henderson's auspices, generally and judiciously brought up traces of coal. Great was the excitement of Dr. Mouat, great the credulity of the D. P. W. Already, in the vivid imagination of the inspector-general, furnaces flamed and chimneys smoked, and an eastern Birmingham covered the bare slopes of the jail plateau. Mr. Henderson, now out of his time, was appointed on a salary of 150 rs. per mensem, to aid in the borings; the Damooda Canal project got an extra knock on the head; Midnapore was to extinguish morally and finally all Rancegunj. It is now reported from Calcutta, and we fear with truth, that Mr. Henderson, the beneficent ticket-of-leave man, has disappeared, having spoiled the confiding traders of Midnapore of jewels and much raiment: with him, alas! has also disappeared the coal seam, and the trembling native well-diggers are confessing that, bribed or bullied by "the sahib," they had procured a few lumps of "belaiti koila" to drop down the well shaft, while a handful of coal dust shoved into the borer, when opportunity offered, seemed to make the burra sahi's so "khoosh," that it would have been quite a pity not to gratify him. No wonder the Midnapore coal was "equal to the best English steam," seeing that it was indeed that precise article."