

How to Deal with Rats.

A writer in *The Scientific American* says: "We cleaned our premises of these detestable vermin by making white-wash yellow with copperas, and covering the stones and rafters in the cellar with it. In every crevice in which a rat may go we put the crystals of the copperas and scattered it in the corners of the floor. The result was a perfect stampede of rats and mice. Since that time not a footfall of either rats or mice has been heard around the house. Every spring a coat of the yellow wash is given the cellar as a purifier and as a rat exterminator, and no typhoid, dysentery, or fever attacks the family. Many persons deliberately attract all the rats in the neighborhood by leaving fruits and vegetables uncovered in the cellar, and sometimes even the soap is left open for their regalement. Cover up everything eatable in the cellar and pantry, and you will soon starve them out. These precautions, joined to the service of a good cat, will prove as good a rat exterminator as the chemist can provide. We never allow rats to be poisoned in our dwelling, they are so apt to die between the walls and produce much annoyance.

To EXPEL RATS.—I have used the following plan with instant and unflinching success, procure copperas and sprinkle wherever they are likely to run, in and about their holes. Make it very fine, so as to enter the pores of their feet, and my word for it you will be "safely delivered" of rats in forty-eight hours. They always migrate to the nearest neighbor's premises.—*N. Y. Independent.*

The Sand Blast.

Says the *Journal of Science*: Among the wonderful and useful inventions of the times is the common blast. Suppose you desire a piece of marble for a gravestone; you cover the stone with a sheet of wax no thicker than a wafer; then you cut in the wax the name, date, etc., leaving the marble exposed. Now pass it under the blast, and the sand shall cut it away. Remove the wax and you have the cut letters. Take a piece of French plate glass, say two by six feet, cover it with fine lace and pass it under the blast, and not a thread of the lace will be injured, but the sand will cut deep into the glass wherever it is not covered by the lace. Now remove the lace, and you have a delicate and beautiful figure raised on the glass. In this way beautiful figures of all kinds are cut in glass and at a small expense. The workmen can hold their hand under the blast without harm, even when it is rapidly cutting away the hardest cutting-glass, iron, or stone but they must look out for finger-nails, or they will be whittled off right hastily. If they put on steel thimbles to protect the nails, it will do but little good, for the sand will soon whittle them away; but if they wrap a piece of soft cotton around them, they are safe. You will at once see the philosophy of it. The sand whittles away and destroys any hard substance—even glass—but does not effect substances that are soft and yielding, like wax, cotton, fine lace, or even the human hand.

THE CANTELOPE QUESTION.—The consumer of cantelope has observed that only about one melon in five is of first-rate quality. That one will have a high, rich, musky flavor most delicious to the palate. The others will vary in flavor. One will taste like raw pumpkin, another like unboiled sweet potato, and another, perhaps, like a hickory chip. What we want to know is if it is not possible for some careful and ingenious horticulturist to produce entire crops of melons which have the tempting flavor? Is there no method of extirpating the melon with the taste of chips and the melon that is akin to pumpkin, and making the good melon universal?—*Philadelphia Bulletin.*

An ancient and remarkable clock has been recently set up in the reading-room of the municipal library of Rouen. A single winding keeps it running for fourteen months and some odd days. It was constructed in 1782, underwent alterations in 1810, was bought by Rouen for 1,000 francs in 1838, has recently been repaired and just set going.

Silver that is not in use may be kept from tarnishing by burying it in a box or barrel of oat-meal.

A Great Naphtha Fire.

Although the existence of the naphtha springs in the neighborhood of Baku, Russia, has been known for centuries, it is only within the last ten years that measures have been taken for realizing their production, by using it for lightning purposes. From one of the chief wells the liquid shoots up as from a fountain, and has formed a lake four miles long and one and a quarter wide. Its depth is, however, only two feet, so that in very hot summers it is nearly dried up.

This enormous surface of inflammable liquid recently became ignited, and presented an imposing spectacle, the thick black clouds of smoke being lighted up by the lurid glare of the central column of flame, which rose to a great height. The smoke and heat were such as to render a nearer approach than one thousand yards distance impracticable. Suitable means for extinguishing the fire were not at hand, and it was feared that the conflagration would spread underground in such a manner as to cause an explosion. This supposition led many inhabitants of the immediate vicinity to remove to a safer distance. The quantity of naphtha on fire was estimated at four and a half million cubic feet. The trees and buildings within three miles distance were covered with thick soot, and this unpleasant deposit appeared on persons' clothes, and even on the food in the adjacent houses.

Not only was the naphtha itself burning, but the earth which was saturated with it was also on fire, and ten large establishments, founded at great expense for the development of the trade in the article, were destroyed. The fire ceased of itself unexpectedly, and thus the fears of a total destruction of the local naphtha industry have been allayed.

A CHINESE STATUE.—A statue of the Marco Polo, discovered in Canton, has been received at his native city, Venice. It is life size, made of wood and gilt. According to a foreign contemporary, the famous Venetian traveller is represented seated, wearing the Chinese attire, although the cloak and hat are after the European fashion. His moustache and beard, which surround his face, are tinged dark blue, and while the Chinese artist has given him a peculiar form the features in no way resemble those of a Mongolian type. Opposite the large, red, easy arm-chair upon which Marco Polo is seated is placed a porcelain bowl, intended to receive perfumes, with which he was honored in the same manner as is the protecting genius of China in the temple of Canton. The statue has at the foot an inscription in Chinese characters.

Bombardment of the Earth:

"It's lucky for us that the earth has such a good bomb-proof on the skyward side," said the astronomer, as he stood on the roof, watching the meteors.

"Why?" asked the reporter, through the scuttle-hole.

"You'd have seen if you had been up here with me for the last hour. Why, the earth has been undergoing a regular bombardment. It's not over yet. Look at that fellow, how he skims. You would call it a shooting-star. Well, there's as much reason for calling it a celestial shell. That meteoroid was moving twenty or thirty miles a second; yet it could not get through the bomb-proof that protects the earth."

"Where's the bomb-proof?"

"Why, right under your nose; it's the atmosphere. When the meteoroids strike the air, the heat produced by their tremendous velocity runs up a million degrees a second, and in a twinkling they are changed to vapor. If they could get through the atmosphere, no man could tell at what instant he might be struck down by a shot from the sky, for meteoroids are plunging into the atmosphere millions a day for the whole earth. The soft air is to most of them as impenetrable as a wall of steel. Some are able to penetrate to the earth, but they are few. When a meteoroid strikes the earth, it is called an aerolite. No good museum of mineralogy is without one or more specimens."

Prentice Mulford declares that two hours' work about a hot stove is more exhausting than four hours' work out of doors, and thinks the women who in Europe do men's work in the fields are better off than the American housewife, of whose life five-sixths are spent in the kitchen. There is more truth than poetry in this.