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EDITORIAL NOTES.

It is estimated that the thirty-five railroads which enter Chicago will expend \$110,000,000 in increasing and improving their equipment and facilities for transporting World's Fair visitors and freight.

The rich mahogany which our ancestors chose for their household furniture is still plentiful in the forests of San Domingo, Mexico and Central America. The report which frequently reaches this portion of the world that there is a great scarcity of the beautiful reddish wood is quite unfounded, for the mahogany forests are in a flourishing condition. Expert woodmen are employed for felling the trees from which the lumber is most carefully prepared.

A new method of paying old debts, which is, however, not likely to become popular in this country, has been found by Prince Edmond Radzwell. His financial affairs were becoming very complicated—one creditor was very unfeelingly annoying him for the return of a loan of 12,000 marks, and there seemed no loop-hole of escape but bankruptcy. The Prince, therefore, has retired from the world, and has become a monk. His creditors are slightly amazed at this sudden change of base, and are slowly realizing that the noble recluse, being legally dead, cannot be sued.

One of the recent triumphs of the party who favor the higher education of women has been the opening of the doors of many German universities to female students. Now an almost unhoped for concession has been made by the British American Association. The 130 female practitioners in the United Kingdom can now be admitted as members of the Association. One by one the obstacles are being removed from the paths of the women who are striving to elevate the whole race of womanhood, and who demand both the privileges and the responsibilities of the sterner sex.

English residents in India are carefully contemplating the statistics of the government on snake-bites. Every effort has been made to exterminate the deadly reptiles, a government bounty is offered to serpent-killers, and yet the number of deaths from snake-bite in the year 1891 exceeds the number of deaths in any previous year. It is found that the natives have religious objections against taking the lives of animals or reptiles, and that they are obstinately opposed to proper medical treatment for the poisonous bites, believing rather in the curative power of charms. One hundred and four deaths from snake bite are reported for the past year.

Some curious facts about onions as cholera preventives are now coming out. It seems that in an English village where the disease spread in the last epidemic, one household, who were completely surrounded by the disease, escaped infection. The puzzled health authorities on examining the premises found that a net of onions was suspended in the living room of the cottage, and that the onions had, so to speak, absorbed the disease. The priests of France have long been in the habit of partaking freely of garlic before visiting cases of infectious diseases. So it would seem that the tear-inducing bulb has beside its bad odor many excellent qualities.

The manufacture of the well-known cotton-seed oil is almost wholly due to the result of experiments made some sixty years ago when the oil was first pressed out of the refuse of the cotton plant. The annual product of the oil mills is now estimated at 19,000,000 gallons, of which a large amount is sent to Southern Europe to be refined into the "olive oil" of commerce. Although the methods of crushing out the oil have much improved during the past twenty years, yet there is still a grand opportunity for inventors to improve on the present process. Ten per cent. of the oil is still lost in the manufacture, and an expensive and laborious method of refining it is still in vogue.

A tantalizing estimate has been made of the treasures which are known to be sunk in the deep blue sea. In the engagement in Vigo Bay in 1702 it is known that the French and Spanish squadrons threw over-board silver and gold to the value of \$10,000,000. This treasure has never been found, although for 10 years divers were constantly at work. Quaint maps of the bay showing the supposed sites of the sunken galleons are still in existence, so that it is not improbable that the hidden wealth may yet be brought to the surface. The ocean has also immense natural stores of gold, silver, coal and many other valuable minerals, but she guards her treasure well, and it is extremely doubtful if the ingenuity of man will overcome the immense natural obstacles in the way of using this wealth in the fathomless depths.

The late famine in Russia was no doubt due in great part to the lack of natural or artificial irrigation of the farming lands. Mr. Podolsky, A. C. E., has been speaking at St. Petersburg on the subject, and he suggests a simple and practical method of overcoming the difficulty. In many parts of Siberia a curious snow irrigation prevails. The villagers unite in building great snow banks in winter when the snow is soft. These banks are built on high land, preferably on mountain tops. They are covered with brush and earth until the air is almost excluded. Ditches are dug to lead the melted snow to the farming centres, and during the dry summer months a constant supply of water is on hand. Mr. Podolsky is of the opinion that this Siberian method of irrigation should be introduced into Russia.

While our contemporaries are enlarging upon the downfall of the famous pugilist, John L. Sullivan, and giving in offensive detail an account of the latest issue in the ring, we will ask our readers to look at another side of the question. Sullivan was unquestionably a highly developed type of animal—his years of training have succeeded in neutralizing the effect of his long continued defiance of the laws of health. His contests have been for the most part with men of his own type who were, like him, hard drinkers. At last a thoroughly healthy fighter contested the championship. Sullivan had simply no chance with Corbett, the temperance athlete, who had both the necessary pugilistic training, and a constitution which had never been insulted by alcoholic habits. There was but one possible issue to the contest, and while we regret that Corbett has chosen so low a calling, yet we cannot but feel that Sullivan's downfall is a triumph for the better living class of men, of which Corbett is the representative.

The Sailors' Union of Great Britain is very hopeful that the Ministerial support which is assured to them will, during the coming session of parliament, redress many of their grievances. They protest against deck-loads of lumber from Baltic and Atlantic sea-ports, and they ask that the expenses of disabled seamen abroad shall be borne by the ship-owners in whose service the accidents have occurred. Public opinion will of course be with the blue jackets on these points, but we think that a third clause, in which they demand the privilege of giving notice 12 hours before sailing is a thoroughly wrong one. If the privilege were allowed them the ship-owners would be placed in a most unfair position. A fixed scale of wages would be an utter impossibility, for the employers would frequently have to choose between two evils—one to comply with the demands of the crews—the other to avoid unnecessary dock-dues and delays. Unpopular ship-owners would soon be boycotted by the union, and great inconvenience would of absolute necessity arise.