

CURIOUS CLIPPINGS.

In all wars Britain has won the splendid average of 82 per cent of the battles. This is the world's record.

It is a mistake to suppose that stone houses are the most durable. A well-constructed brick house will outlast one built of granite.

The best fly destroyer in the world is a common or garden wasp. An expert says that he has known one wasp to kill a thousand flies in a day.

Railway stations in Sweden where you can procure hot luncheons are known by a peculiar sign bearing the suggestive emblem of a crossed knife and fork.

In Venice many ladies have been seen shopping in bonnets made of glass. The crate has reached Paris, and it is said that glass bonnets will soon be sold in London.

A Berlin professor has discovered that for fat persons to employ any means whatever to reduce their flesh is likely to injure their health and to shorten their lives.

A lighthouse of bamboo has just been built in Japan. It is said to have greater power of resisting the waves than any other kind of wood, and does not rot like ordinary wood.

An experiment was recently made to see how fast a bee could fly. Its hive was attached to the roof of a train, which attained a speed of thirty miles an hour before the bee was left behind.

A local history of Cumberland avers that at Kirtle-Moor, in 1797, a "man and his wife, and thirty children, might have been seen proceeding to church to the christening of the thirty first child."

One of the queerest of aquatic devices is known as the "swimming machine," the operator being held up by an inflated rubber bag, on which he lies, while with his hand he turns a wheel. This wheel actuates a propeller, and thus he is supposed to progress through the water at a surprising rate of speed.

A new fire escape has just been invented for use in hotels and large buildings. It is formed of a large cushioned chair with a box in the seat, which contains a rope ladder to be attached to the chair, and hung out of the window.

It is said that land crabs of the West Indies once every year leave their native home in multitudes, and in regular orders march down to the sea. When in the water they frequently fasten seaweeds on their backs to hide themselves, and the growth selected are always in perfect harmony with the surroundings.

A Manchester confectioner has converted a bicycle into an ice cream freezer. Mounting his wheel, which, of course, is stationary, he pedals away at a good rate, the chain being connected with the freezer, causing it to turn very quickly. He can freeze a 17-gallon can of ice cream in twenty minutes.

It is easier to crush the hardest stone known than steel. Corundum was chosen for the stone in a recent experiment. A weight of 6 tons smashed the corundum, but 42 tons were required to crush the steel. With a loud explosion the steel flew into powder, and sparks are said to have bored minute holes in the crushing machine.

Few people know what the British South Africa Company has really done. In the first place, it has secured to the British Empire 750,000 square miles, which would otherwise now be held by the Boers, Germans, and Portuguese. It has opened out this vast territory, built seven towns, and completed 1,400 miles of telegraph wires and about 1,000 miles of road and 3,000 miles of railway.

The ship *Mowhan*, on leaving Belfast for the United States, took on board as ballast two thousand tons of Irish soil, which, when levelled off, made quite a stretch of ground. The ship's company proceeded to put it to good use by planting a stock of cabbages, leeks, peas, beans, and so on, in it. The seeds came up all right, and the plants flourished finely, and, when the ship was in the tropics, grew rapidly.

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