

THE CHICAGO TOWER.

From The Chicago Journal of Commerce.

The Chicago Tower Company, recently organized with a capital stock of \$1,000,000, will erect on the West Side a tower 1,150 feet in height, 202 feet higher than the Eiffel tower in Paris. The foundation will consist of four four-cornered supports, each 50 feet square, and meeting in an arch 200 feet wide and high. On top of these arches will be a vast landing 250 feet square and capable of accommodating 20,000 people. There will be six other landings, with a capacity of 20,000 more, each smaller than the one below. The topmost will be provided with a powerful searchlight and telescope. Sixteen elevators will carry passengers to the first landing, eight to the second, six to the third, and from there four cars will take passengers to the 1,000-foot landing. A theatre, restaurant, booths and exhibits of every description will occupy the landings. The annual income is expected to exceed \$300,000, and the cost of management \$50,000. D. R. Proctor is the projector, and Francis La Pointe, late of Montreal, the architect. Many thousand tons of iron and steel will be required in the tower's construction.

THE INVENTOR'S WORK.

From The Shoe and Leather Review.

Misdirected genius has wasted thousands of horse-power of mental energy in bringing out new and wonderful things, to say nothing of the things that have not yet been perfected, such as perpetual motion and the flying-machine. In these ceaseless vigils and nerve-racking efforts the man at the foot has sat up late and sought out many inventions. There is, perhaps, no more pathetic sight to the practical, shrewd, money-making shoe man than that presented in the strange collection of relics in the patent office. Here are certain things called, by courtesy, shoes and accessories to shoes, the like of which is never seen outside of these mournful precincts. There are hygienic shoes in great variety, fearfully and wonderfully made; air-cushioned shoes, adjustable heels, patent attachments for tops and bottoms, springs and all manner of clockwork, incomprehensible to the average shoemaker. The retailer does not deal in them. Most of them haven't come his way yet, and never will. And this is another cause for devout thanks on his part. It would be "the last straw" under which he must inevitably sink.

NEVER QUENCHED.

The fire that is never quenched burns night and day in these United States, says the *Insurance Monitor*. If one could stand upon an eminence sufficiently commanding he would have—twenty-four hours per day and sixty minutes to the hour—a conflagration always in sight. As these occur hour by hour, they may be near together or thousands of miles apart. Of course, they revisit any particular locality at wide intervals of time, and this fact misleads many honest people into the belief that insurance rates are exorbitant.

Because they have paid premiums year after year and their property has never burned; because the town in which they live has never been visited by a disastrous conflagration; therefore they argue that the rates in their town are too high and should be reduced, not realizing that the logical outcome of such an argument would bring every individual risk down to its own specific basis; not realizing that insurance is a business which it is impossible to carry on at retail, the one great essential being that a company shall cover a sufficient number of risks not exposed to the same conflagration to secure an average income large enough to cover the average outgo.

Not only are the risks of a town, a city, a county, a state, bunched for the purpose of making insurance computations upon them; the business of the whole country is so bunched by each particular company in the making up of its balance sheet at the end of the year. It does not signify that fire has not visited a particular town, or forty particular towns; the great question is, how has the whole business averaged? for the whole business must be called upon to pay the conflagration losses of the whole, and the local critic who assumes to separate his immediate vicinage from the entire territory covered by a company, does so in

ignorance of the just requirements and natural laws of the business of insurance.

We commend these elementary facts to the consideration of those local men who, in their loyalty to their own towns, assume to judge of insurance results from the narrow view they are enabled to take. The caterpillar which climbed to the top of a currant bush, and then came down and announced to his fellows that he had seen the whole world, was undoubtedly sincere, but he was obviously mistaken.

RETAIL PRICES FOR TWENTY YEARS.

From the American Agriculturist.

Retail prices are not as much affected by the decline in values as one would think. The co-operative stores of the employees of Krupp's great gun works, Essen, Germany, have always bought their supplies in large quantities for cash, and retailed for cash at an advance just enough to cover the most economical management. Yet the following table shows that twenty-seven articles which retailed at a total of \$2.96 on the average in 1873, cost an average of \$2.83 in 1893. The reduction per unit was from 12c. to 11c. in the twenty years. The explanation seems to be that wages so advanced meanwhile as to more than offset reduced transportation and production charges. Our table is condensed from Department of Labor Bulletin 5, fractions omitted:

AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES FOR THE YEARS NOTED.			
Articles.	1873	1893	
*Potatoes, bushel.....	\$0 41	\$0 32	
Rye bread	0 02	0 02	
Beef, 1st quality	0 14	0 14	
Beef, 2nd quality.....	0 12	0 13	
Veal, 1st quality.....	0 14	0 14	
Veal, 2nd quality.....	0 12	0 12	
Mutton, 1st quality	0 14	0 14	
Mutton, 2nd quality.....	0 12	0 11	
Pork	0 15	0 15	
Pork sausage.....	0 16	0 17	
Smoked bacon	0 16	0 16	
American lard	0 12	0 14	
Butter, 1st quality	0 25	0 26	
Wheat flour	0 04	0 03	
Buckwheat	0 04	0 03	
Beans, white.....	0 03	0 02	
Peas	0 03	0 03	
Barley	0 04	0 03	
Rice	0 04	0 04	
Cheese, Holland	0 15	0 17	
Coffee, Java	0 25	0 29	
Salt	0 02	0 02	
Prunes, Turkish	0 07	0 06	
Sugar, refined	0 12	0 07	
†Petroleum, quart	0 08	0 04	
Totals.....	\$2 96	\$2 83	
Average12	.11	

*Per bushel. †Per quart, all others per pound.

SMALL ECONOMIES.

From the Railway Review.

Although success in business depends very largely upon small economies, it by no means follows that whoever practices small economies will be successful. There are indeed forms of economy which are disastrous in business. The "penny wise" man is often made a "pound foolish" one by his ideas being contracted, owing to their absorption in petty savings to such an extent that he is unable to see where, by spending his "pound," he can secure more pennies than he can save in a long period; or as a Chicago manufacturer once, in a more homely phrase, expressed it: "He keeps a one-dollar bill so close to his eyes that he can't see a ten-dollar bill within arm's length of him."

LOUISIANA RICE CROP.

New Orleans Picayune.

The present rice season will long be remembered by the rice growers of Louisiana as one of the most disastrous, as far as the crop is concerned, which the State has ever experienced. It must, of course, be admitted in advance that, discouraged at last season's poor results, the rice farmers planted a much smaller acreage than last year, but had there been a good yield from the area planted there would have been a fairly good crop. As it is, the actual yield of rice per acre will be very small.

Of course, the main cause of the poor crop

has been the long drouth during the growing season. The effects of the drouth were in a great measure overcome along the river by flooding the fields by pumping. In the prairie district, however, where the crop was entirely dependent upon the rains, the drouth was disastrous.

As to what the extent of the shortage will be it is impossible to accurately estimate at this period of the season, but, judging by the arrivals of rice in this market, the shrinkage must be considerable, as receipts are far short of last year, notwithstanding the fine harvesting weather and the early maturity of the crop.

While the very much better prices paid for rice this season will in a measure compensate producers for the poor yield, this advantage cannot apply in the Calcasieu district, where the crop has been almost completely ruined by the drouth. Farmers who have made a moderate crop will find compensation in the higher prices, but those who have almost entirely lost their crops can find no comfort in the better values.

It is evident that there must be a radical change in the methods employed in the cultivation of rice in this State if the industry is to be maintained upon a healthy basis.

A NEW MINING EXPLOSIVE.

Miners are becoming interested in a new mining explosive described by Prof. F. Kleinpeter, of Vienna, which is being introduced in Austria. The name given to it is Dahrnente A, and its strength is said to be 33 per cent greater than the best gelatine dynamite, and, in consequence of the large volume of gas which it produces—being approximately double that yielded by dynamite—it has a wedging rather than a pulverizing action, resulting in a materially increased fall of lump coal. Other advantages mentioned are that it can be compressed without losing any of its explosive force, and in this state it is claimed even to exceed dynamite. A weaker detonator is required to bring it to explosion than is demanded for any other known safety explosive, and it is better able to withstand the effects of storage, and no decomposition can take place when the packing is proper. Indeed, such is the safety with which it may be handled that the German railways allow it to be carried on any train.

GAMBLING IS ON THE WANE.

"I don't know why it is, but the American mania for gambling is dying out," said Tom Brewer, one of the best known of the Denver sports, at the Arlington. "Take horse racing, and over two-thirds of the tracks are closed. The breeding of fast horses is not nearly so profitable as it used to be, and there is not one race where there were ten, twenty years ago. Then faro. It is a fact that there are not as many open faro rooms in the United States as there were in Chicago or Denver alone a few years ago. I have not seen a keno card for ten years. There are a few rooms, but they are comparatively small. Poker is played privately and in clubs. There are a few poker rooms where strangers can get into a game, in all large cities, but there are not one-fourth as many as ten years ago, and the games are very much smaller, only occasionally a game being played for heavy stakes. The places of these are taken to some extent by crap rooms, of a much lower order, but that is being rapidly forced out of existence. There is probably less gambling among Americans now than among men of any other leading nationality."—*Washington Star*.

THE POPULATION OF FRANCE.

The London *Journal of the Society of Arts* says: "The population of France now amounts to 38,228,969 persons, as compared with 38,095,150 at the last census (1891). This very slight increase is almost entirely due to the increase of the urban centres. Twenty-four departments show an increase and sixty-three departments a diminution of the population; but there are cases where there is a falling off, taking the department as a whole, while the numbers in certain towns or industrial centres in these departments have risen. In five years there has only been an increase in the population of France of 133,819 persons, and the increase, according to all appearances, is chiefly attributable to immigration."