

POOR DOCUMENT

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ST. JOHN STAR, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1934.

STALE EGGS.

100,000 Years Old—Money Cannot Buy It.

A strictly fresh laid egg is worth three-halfpence, an egg thirty days old is worth one-halfpenny, and an egg one year old is worth one penny. What should be the value of an egg 2,000,000 years old? According to arithmetical rules, its value should be 2,000,000 times less than nothing.

The University of California has another answer to this sum. However, the University also has in its possession temporarily an egg which is believed to be fully 2,000,000 years old, and it is of priceless value. Money cannot buy it. The Department of Geology of the University has just issued a leaflet pamphlet concerning this egg, its history, construction, contents, measurements, and age, and announces that instead of being a mere relic of prehistoric days, the egg has already enabled science to determine the origin of life, a thing that has puzzled more investigators and aroused more antagonisms than almost any other problem of interest to the world of science.

When found, the egg, which, of course, is in a fossil condition, formed the centre of a rounded mass like that of a pebble, which may be called the capsule. The surrounding matrix had been partly removed, and the egg broken open before the University scientists first saw it.

In the interesting pamphlet devoted to the egg, and issued by the Department of Geology of the University, the following particulars are given:—
"The egg shell has retained its original composition and microscopic structure. A chemical analysis shows that it does not differ from the shell of a wild goose egg. A thin section shows the same structure as that exhibited by a similar section from a hen's egg."

"The form of the egg has been perfectly preserved, and from comparison with existing eggs we conclude that this specimen belonged to an aquatic bird. The egg corresponds fairly well to the type of egg laid by the cormorant. Objection might be made that the cormorant's egg is covered with a chalky layer, but when this layer is removed a pitted surface much like that of the egg in question is exposed. The minute markings of the shell are preserved in the matrix, and in this there is no evidence of any scratches such as usually occur in the chalky layer of the cormorant's egg. It seems improbable that the chalky layer would have been washed off without injury being done to the egg, neither is it probable that it was firmly united with the matrix and pulled away in separating the egg shell from the rock."

"While the specimen much resembles the type egg of the cormorant, it is so very much like the egg of the larger grebes or herons, the American bittern, and the limpkin. Again, while the ratio of the short to the long axis is somewhat less than that of the typical egg of a duck, it corresponds almost exactly with measured eggs of many of the larger species of this family. It is probable that when this egg was deposited the region was not near the sea. Under geographic conditions similar to those now obtaining ducks would be much more numerous than any of the other possible forms, and the probabilities, therefore, favor its identification as a duck. It is probable that the egg was deposited in a single nest, and that it is evidence that specific congeniality as to the percentage of any specimen can hardly be drawn from form alone."

"With the exception of a small space near the periphery, the interior of the egg is filled solidly with a beautiful crystalline mass of the mineral colemanite. In several places, the shell has been broken, and a dark brown semi-fluid tarry material, resembling asphalt in appearance and physical properties, has been extruded from the cracks. When cold it is brittle, showing a conchoidal fracture, with brilliant surfaces, the edge of the fracture becoming rounded on standing. As the temperature rises it grows softer, until at 100 degrees centigrade it becomes a fluid with considerable viscosity. Its specific gravity is a trifle less than that of boiling water. It is readily and completely soluble in petroleum, ether, carbon disulphide, and chloroform. Hence it resembles very closely that fraction of natural asphalt which has been known as 'petroleum'."

Dr. William C. Morgan, of the chemistry department of the University, who assisted in compiling the pamphlet, looked particles of bitumen from the egg.
"Hardly any scientific question has been debated more vigorously than that as to the origin of bitumen," Dr. Morgan declared. "It is a substance of universal occurrence, and solid asphalt is universally admitted to have been derived from a common source, the fact that these varied forms today being due partly to a process of natural separation and partly to chemical changes brought by water, air, heat, and pressure."

"One theory ascribes to them a purely chemical origin. Most investigators prefer to believe that all bodies of this nature are derived from an organic origin, one group holding the vegetable, another that animal is the source."
"Under these circumstances much time and thought have been expended in the endeavor to ascertain whether unquestioned evidence could not be obtained to show from what kind of matter natural deposits have been derived. Hitherto, while many things have pointed in one direction or another, there has always been two sides to the question as to the origin of any particular deposit, and evidence in support of both sides. The discovery of this fossil egg, partly filled with asphalt, in which all evidence points unequivocally to the fact that the asphalt has been derived from the natural contents of the egg, is considered of great scientific value."

A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

Residents of a certain part of Spruce street have often seen two charming old ladies, twin sisters who look so much alike that no one ever bothers to distinguish between them, coming out from one of the houses. The fact that they both dress almost alike makes it still harder to tell them apart.

Someone who lives in the old ladies' very well, relates that Ann, while making a hurried departure for one of the ensembles, happened by mistake, in walking through the store she came suddenly in front of a full length mirror, and stopped back in astonishment, saying: "Why, Sue! I didn't know you were coming down-town this morning!"—Philadelphia Telegraph.

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Soldiers Prayed for Death.

Apalling Scenes in the Russian Trenches—Whole Companies Were Swept Away.

The correspondent of the London Daily News, writing from Moscow, says:—
"Lent, Kustinsky has given a Russian correspondent the following vivid account of his experiences during the counter-attack on the Mottel-ling Pass."
"This was my first fight and such were its horrors at one time I hoped that a merciful bullet would make it my last. We set out in a thick mist, the junior officers having no idea of the object of the movement, whether to re-occupy the pass immediately or to make the enemy discontinue their attack. If the latter was our object it succeeded only too well."
"The mist was so thick that even in daylight we could not see the enemy. The Japanese were in the trench, and a dozen yards ahead, before dawn there was no road visible at all. Soon, however, it made no difference, for our battle was ordered to leave the road, and, under the guidance of a Chinese, march up the path and surprise the Japanese in the flank. That time, not knowing how far we were off, we expected a challenge, followed by a volley."
"The first Japanese withdrew without even firing. Then the mist blew off and along the hillside above us saw Japanese artillery, and trenches full of their infantry. As our bayonet charge through the mist, a man emerged from a sunken position, knocking over a dozen. Then we deployed and attempted to rush the slope."
"We got half way up without suffering serious loss. Then the Japanese fire became effective, and a trench on our right was suddenly revealed by a blast of firing which knocked over nearly the whole of our first rank. I was some way behind, but in the dim light I could see the strange effect of the fire, then men tumbling backward one after another like a card building. Then a man, kneeling, started, started twice, and, falling forward, impaled himself on his bayonet. The soldier behind him marched on doggedly, setting his foot on the falling comrade's head."
"APALLING SCENES."
"I saw nothing more, but then, for the first time, I felt the desire to rush on and be at the enemy regardless of results. In ten minutes a screaming, howling, ferocious mass of our men tumbled over the Japanese trenches, jabbed at with a bayonet from

GARDENS COST MILLIONS.

At Least 5,000 Involve An Annual Expense of \$2,600 or More Each.

It has been said that there are a score of noblemen in the United Kingdom who spend more every year on their gardens than would pay the official salaries of the entire cabinet; and, extravagant as the statement may appear, it is well within the limits of the truth.
Further than this, there are, on the one hand, a great many of the "greats of the night," or at least of the rich, the gardens of which cost their owners anything from \$2,600 a year, and which demand between \$1,000 and \$2,500 a year for their maintenance. Of these 10,000 British gardens an annual sum estimated at over \$10,000,000 is spent for labor alone, and another round million pounds at least goes in the purchase of seeds, plants and manures and the general upkeep of the gardens and glass houses.
It is difficult and perhaps invidious to say which are the most costly gardens in Great Britain, but among them are certainly those of Trentham Hall, Welbeck Abbey, Lord Bute's gardens at Cardiff Castle, the world famous gardens of Chatsworth and those of the Rothschilds, on which gold has been lavished like water.
One gets an impressive idea of the extent of such gardens as these when the kitchen garden at Welbeck covers thirty acres, that the houses in which peach, apricot and nectarine are grown stretch for a quarter of a mile and that to stock them cost as much as \$20,000. When a millionaire sets his heart on making himself a lordly pleasure garden he risks little of the cost of flowering so that the succession of exquisite flowers never fails the whole year round. Each plant bears its number as well as its name, and it is said that Mr. Chamberlain knows every one of his floral pets.
HE UNDERSTOOD.
Burton Holmes, the lecturer, says that the Indians of Alaska regard white men and canned goods as so closely associated that they are nearly synonymous. Whenever the white man is seen canned meats, fruits and vegetables are found.
When Mr. Holmes visited Alaska, recently, he carried with him a photograph, and it was exhibited to an old chief who had never seen a talking machine before. When the machine was started and the sound of a human voice came from the trumpet the Indian was much interested. He had gravely for a time, then approached and peered into the trumpet.
When the machine finished its cylinder and stopped the Indian pointed at it, smiled an expansive smile, and remarked:—
"Him canned white man."

WRITES TO FRENCH AUTHOR.

Letter From Rudyard Kipling.

An interesting and characteristic letter from Rudyard Kipling recently appeared in the Paris Figaro. It was originally sent to M. Robert d'Humières, a French author, in acknowledgment of his book, "The Island and Empire of Great Britain." The following is the text of the letter:—
"Dear M. d'Humières: I have read your book on 'The Island and the Empire.' It has given me real pleasure, and I thank you very much for it. There are few things more interesting than to see one's own country from the outside, and with eyes as penetrating (and as indulgent) as yours the liveliest pleasure is added to this interest."

"From the point of view of an inhabitant, I am specially delighted with the homage you pay to the energy of the race. Some of us today are troubled with doubts on this point. There exists—and I congratulate myself that you have discovered it—an England which, ruined by excess of prosperity, sleeps, and because it snores loudly imagines it is thinking. Remarks on Army Just."

"Your remarks on the army strike me as perfectly just. You put your finger on the vital point of our system when you speak of soldiers who 'understand' that they must not understand. I believe you touch there the secret of many of our reverses. It is the first thing that we teach our boys."

"Your studies of India are a sheer delight to me, particularly those on Rajputana, where I wandered when I was young, through Chittor, Jeypore, and other places. I know little of the southern India which has so fascinated you, although a great part of the poetry of dead India lies there. Peoples Need Each Other."

"I wish you had seen something of new India—the India of factories and railways, where the imperious native of the east moves among modern machinery and worships his god in the shadow of engine sheds and boilers. This India is not pretty, but it is significant."

"Believe me, I am with you heart and soul in what you say of the value which should be attached to a good understanding between our two countries, not only because of its present utility but for the sake of tomorrow. Our two peoples, it seems to me, are the complement of one another in temperament and destiny, logically and in reality."

Standard Bearer of Freedom.
"Even were this not the case, one must remember that there is no much liberty left in eastern Europe. The two standard bearers of human freedom can afford to dispute between themselves. Both have to do with enslaved peoples, with the inhabitants of blinded, of throttled lands, where the word of the monarch is the law. If we were to quarrel who would be the winner? The middle class, furnished with their weapons, anyone doubt this?"

I could manage to see you. I could discuss with more leisure some of the interesting points of your book, notably what you say about the coldness of our national temperament. Believe me, our 'chastity' is not all that it is cracked up to be."

"It is an administrative necessity imposed by the density of the population of 400 to the square mile, imbued with a sensuality at once refined and aggressive, that would be an irony, and business would suffer from it."

Meat Fed People.
"Besides, ours is a meat fed people, 600,000 of whom (more than a seventh of the whole) live in cities which for five months of the year are enveloped in semi-darkness, alternating with profound obscurity. We realize that here is a cause for irritation for certain nervous centres, therefore, we this people—take exercise in order to counteract this enormous stimulus."

We understand that you must not understand. To understand everything is no doubt to pardon everything. But it also means to comprehend everything."

"I have only one grievance against you, but it is a serious one. You say that I abuse Offenbach. Now, even if you are no musician, can claim some knowledge of agreeable notes, and I fear that you have misunderstood me. No, never Offenbach, unless on the barrel organ to bring back to my memory the songs of the music halls—my own perhaps."

"Really, I would rather be the 'aggressive imperialist' of the legend than a worshipper of Offenbach. Very sincerely yours,"

"RUDYARD KIPLING."

FOR THE CUCKOO.

The aggressive man finished his story and regarded us with such a superior air that we trotted out the little anecdote about the cuckoo clock.

"Yes, sir," we concluded, "just as he shouted upstairs that it was 12 o'clock, the man didn't have to do a thing but stand there on the stairs and cuckoo nine more to make 12."

We laughed uproariously and congratulated ourselves that the travels were effectively squelched.

"Well, go on," said he, with some impatience.

"On with the story," he replied.

"Why, man," we expostulated, "that is the story. Don't you see? Just as he shouted upstairs—"

"Oh, rats!" said the man. "Next morning, when the man was going to work, his wife said, 'Tom, don't forget to bring home a saddle powder.'"

"What for?" asked Thomas. "Why, for our cuckoo," said his wife. "I noticed that he had the hiccoughs last night when he struck 12."

SLIGHT LAPSE OF MEMORY.

(Detroit Tribune.)
A Toronto reporter corrects the Tribune for ascribing to Thackeray "what belongs to O'Connell" in the story of the Dublin fish wife. The Tribune is not above the commission of a slight error now and then, though it happens infrequently. Its apology can be cast in no better mold than that of the late lawyer, Van Amman, who died lamented by the bar of Michigan and by all creditable scholars. Attempting, in the course of a legal argument, to strengthen it with a quotation, the learned barrister attributed to St. Paul a passage by the court bowed profoundly to that dignitary and replied:—
"Think your honor for the correction. I knew it was one of the apostles but momentarily had forgotten which one."