

A Wonderful Lake.

In Colorado is a ten-acre field, which is no more nor less than a subterranean lake, covered with soil about eight inches deep. On the soil is cultivated a field of corn, which produces thirty or forty bushels to the acre. If any one will take the trouble to dig a hole the depth of a spade-handle, he will find it to fill with water, and by using a hook and line, his four or five inches long can be caught. The fish have neither scales nor eyes, and are perch-like in shape. The ground is a black marl in nature, and in all probability was at one time an open body of water, on which accumulated vegetable matter, which has been increased from time to time, until now it has a crust sufficiently strong and rich to produce fine corn, though it has to be cultivated by hand, as it is not strong enough to bear the weight of a horse. While harvesting, the hands catch great strings of fish by making a hole through the earth. A person rising on his heel and coming down suddenly can see the growing corn shake all around him. Any one having the strength to drive a nail through the crust will find, on releasing it, that it will disappear altogether.—*Scientific American*.

Leeches and Shooting Fish.

Leeches are among the curious pests which swarm in the moist places of the Malay jungle. Solomon was acquainted with these blood-suckers, and used their voracity to represent insatiable greed: "The horse-leech hath two daughters crying, Give, give." The two daughters, a rhetorical expression of the intensity of the leech's appetite, often illustrate their tenacious sucking to the unwary traveler.

Directly the earth trembles with his step, the leeches stretch themselves out in savage thirst. By some means they manage to make a lodgment on his body. He may not feel them at first, but when at his journey's end he strips for a bath, he finds a score or more of the little blood suckers fastened to his legs and gorged with their sanguinary dinner.

He puzzles his head in vain to discover how they managed to get up his trouser-legs. But on resuming his journey, he ties his trousers tightly around the ankle, places them in his boots, which he anoints with lime-juice, an abomination to the little pests. Only in this way may they be kept off the person.

Another curious specimen of tropical life, though not a pest, which the traveler sees, is the little shooting-fish. It is an expert marksman, and kills his game by a water-shot.

An English gentleman, who kept one in a basin, reports that it would swim round and round, watching for a fly or an ant to appear on the edge of the vessel. As soon as one was in sight, the fish, poising itself, would shoot out a drop of water with such dexterity as to cause the animal to drop into the basin, where it was speedily swallowed. He also says that when three or four of these "shooters" are confined in a basin, they will fire in turn, with singular regularity.

A Spider Draws up a Mouse by the Tail.

A very curious and interesting spectacle was to be seen on Monday afternoon in the office of Mr. P. C. Clever's livery stable in this city. Against the wall of the room stands a tolerably tall desk, and under this a small spider, not larger than a common pea, had constructed an extensive web reaching down to the floor.

About 11.30 o'clock, Monday forenoon it was observed that the spider had ensnared a young mouse by passing filaments of her web about its tail. When first seen the mouse had its hind feet off the floor, and could barely touch the floor with its fore feet. The spider was full of business, running up and down the line, occasionally biting the mouse's tail, making it struggle desperately. Its efforts to escape were unavailing, and the tender filaments about its tail were too strong for it to break. In a short time it was seen that the spider was slowly hoisting its victim into the air. By 2 o'clock in the afternoon the mouse barely touched the floor with its fore feet; by dark the point of its nose was an inch above the floor. At 9 o'clock at night the mouse was still alive, but had made no sign except when the spider descended and bit its tail. At this time it was an inch and a half from the floor.

The next morning the mouse was dead and hung three inches from the floor.

The news of the novel sight soon became circulated, and hundreds of people visited the stable to witness it. The mouse is a small one, probably less than full grown, measuring about one and one half inches from the point of its nose to the root of its tail. How the spider succeeded in ensnaring it is not known. The mechanical ingenuity of the spider, which enables her to raise a body which must weigh forty or fifty times as much as herself, has been the subject of much comment and speculation, and no satisfactory solution of the difficulty has been found. All agree that it is a most remarkable case, and one that would be received with utter incredulity if it were not so amply attested.—*Lebanon, Ky., Standard*.

Storage of Heat.

Foreign papers during the past few months have contained accounts of apparatus designed for storing electricity, so that it may be transported and made an article of commerce. It is suggested that batteries may be charged with electricity generated by the power of wind or falling water, safely conveyed long distances and employed for surgical purposes, producing light and for running small machinery. Some think that electricity stored in this way may be used for lighting railway cars and for illuminating parks, public buildings and private houses on special occasions. It is also suggested that batteries charged with electricity will be furnished private families for running sewing machines, and that they will be recharged as occasion requires at small cost.

M. Ancelin, of France, also brings out an ingenious apparatus for storing heat that is adapted to a great number of practical purposes. It is based on the principle that metallic salts, especially those that are alkaline, absorb a large amount of heat when they are dissolved or melted, retain it while they are kept in a fluid state, and evolve it when the salts pass into a solid form. The substance he employs for storing and giving out heat is acetate of soda. The chemical heater consists of a metallic flask filled with the above-named salt, and soldered airtight. The flask is made of thin copper or brass. It has a loop or handle for suspending it in a vessel of hot water, from which the supply of heat is obtained. If the heater is not injured one charge of acetate of soda is sufficient for all time.

The time required for the apparatus to store up all the heat it is capable of will depend on its size, and the period it will continue to discharge heat will be in proportion to the quantity of the salt employed. A heater sufficiently large to keep the hands warm for an hour or more can be charged by immersing it in hot water for five minutes. A foot-warmer, however, intended to be put in a sleigh, must be immersed in boiling water for about twenty minutes. A foot-warmer that on removal from the water bath indicated 153 degrees of temperature, at the end of eleven hours registered 111 degrees. The most sudden fall was at the end of two hours. It then rose two degrees, after which the temperature gradually subsided until it became as cold as the surrounding atmosphere.

Some of the uses to which this piece of apparatus may be put have already been stated, and many others will suggest themselves to persons employed in different avocations. It will doubtless be found very convenient for keeping cooked food warm when there is occasion to remove it some distance from the fire. It may be advantageously employed for warming beds and sleeping-rooms in which there are no stoves. It can be placed in a carriage of any kind and used during very cold days in winter. It may be rendered very useful for warming cellars in which fruit and vegetables are kept on the occasion of severely cold weather, and may be suspended in a poultry-house when there is danger that fowls will freeze.—*Chicago Times*.

AN EXCELLENT WHITEWASH.—Prof. Kedzie, of the Agricultural College of Michigan, an expert chemist, recently said that a paint or wash made of skim milk, thoroughly skimmed, and water brine will render wood unflammable, and he proved it by experiment. He said this paint or whitewash, is durable, very cheap, impervious to water, of agreeable color, and as it will prevent wood from taking fire, he urged its use, particularly on roofs, out-buildings, barns, &c.