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## THE WEEKLY EXAMINER

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### THE ATMOSPHERE.

BY A BANKER.

The air we breathe, although quite invisible to the sight, and when at rest scarcely perceptible to any of the senses, is notwithstanding a very substantial and tangible substance. The weight of the air pressing upon the surface of the earth is fourteen pounds to every square inch, the total weight of the air supported by the globe being no less than

5,500,000,000,000 tons, being the equivalent weight of a sea thirty inches deep, of quicksilver, over the whole surface of the earth.

To give some practical idea of the weight of the air it is only necessary to place the hand firmly over the open receiver of an air pump, and exhaust the air; it will then be found impossible, except to a Samson, or a Hercules, to lift the weight of air which is forcing the hand down upon the receiver, which, if the mouth of the receiver be eight square inches, will be exactly a hundred weight of air resting upon the hand. The air is estimated to extend to the height of about forty miles above the earth, but its density becomes less and less the higher we ascend, and at about eight or nine miles high it is too rare to support life.

Air is very similar in its composition to water, the one being composed of the two gases, oxygen and nitrogen, the other of oxygen and hydrogen; and although to attempt to breathe either pure oxygen or pure nitrogen would entail certain death, yet the two gases combined in the proper proportions (about 20 per cent. of oxygen to eighty per cent. of nitrogen) produce the atmosphere, which is as much a necessity of life as is water; and were either the one or the other to fail all life would become extinct, and the world would be a dead globe.

The atmosphere is subject occasionally to apparent organic changes. Amongst the peculiar phenomena caused by these changes, perhaps the most interesting is the mirage, or Fata Morgana. The effect of this most strange condition of the air is to bring within the range of vision objects many miles distant, and far below the horizon, and therefore invisible under ordinary conditions; and sometimes these objects thus brought into sight are inverted and sometimes distorted.

Sir John Franklin's ship is stated to have been discovered in this way, and occasionally an oasis in the desert has been revealed to the weary traveller by the aid of the mirage.

Captain Scoresby, the Arctic explorer, writes:—"One day in the year 1822, I saw, clearly traced against the cloudless sky, the image of a ship upside down; the real vessel was not in sight, not having as yet appeared above the horizon. I had often seen similar phenomena, but the peculiarity of the present one was the extreme clearness of the image, in spite of the great distance of the ship which it represented. It was so sharply defined that as I examined it with my telescope I could distinguish every sail and the peculiar build of the ships distinctly as to be able to recognize it as my father's. We found out afterwards, upon comparing our ships' reckoning, that we were nearly thirty nautical miles apart at the time, the reflected ship being about seventeen miles below the horizon, and several miles beyond the range of vision."

The writer a few years ago observed a most remarkable variety of the mirage. He resides opposite a church, and one morning upon rising he observed, to his astonishment, that the church tower was, as it were, raised half as high again as its usual height. This strange appearance lasted for perhaps a quarter of an hour, when the mirage faded away. The so-called "Spectre of the Brocken" is another variety of atmospheric phenomena.

The reason why the sky is of such an extremely blue color has long been a difficulty with scientists. Various theories were propounded, some of them by the most eminent in their profession; but none were altogether satisfactory, and all were more or less conjectures. Recently, however, the repeated attempts to lipify oxygen have been successful; and as a fluid oxygen is found to be such a beautiful blue color; it may fairly be assumed that to the presence of oxygen the azure hue of the sky may be attributed.

The effect of the atmosphere is to diffuse light. On the summit of a very high mountain, where the air is very much rarefied, the shadows are very much sharper and darker than at the foot of the mountain; and if there were no atmosphere a room would be in total darkness, even if the sun were shining full on the room, except in that part of it where the rays fell. Narrow streets to which the sun had no access would be in perpetual midnight, and thick

forests would never enjoy daylight. This effect can be well observed on the moon, which has no atmosphere, the shadows of the high mountains projected on the plains exhibiting an absolute darkness, which gradually increases in extent as the sun sinks below the mountain.

How exactly has the Creator adjusted the elements for the convenience and the comfort of mankind! "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." Surely mankind in return ought to exhibit some degree of gratitude to Him for His beneficence, and to display that gratitude by abstaining from offending Him, and by complying with His commands.

### The Amusement of a Tame Eagle in the Arizona Desert.

In St. Nicholas Wolcott Le Clair Beard writes of "Moses, a Tame Eagle," which was one of his pets while he was engaged in engineering in southern Arizona. Mr. Beard says he was very fond of the lizards with which these plains abounded, and one large variety, called swifts, from their remarkable speed in running, seemed to be especially coveted.

Whenever one of these was caught, which was not often, Moses would be brought out, and, after the swift had taken a ten foot start, would be set free. The lizard would promptly resolve itself into a white streak across the desert, and, screaming with excitement, half running, half flying, Moses would pursue, followed by the laughing crowd, of which only those on horseback had much chance of keeping up. It was in no sense a cruel sport. It amused Moses and us and didn't hurt the swift, for he got away every time, and if the feelings of our pet were a trifle injured as he returned, perched on some one's wrist or saddle horn, from his fruitless hunt these were speedily soothed by the prompt gift of a nice bit of fresh beef, so no one was the worse. The lizards, however, he seemed to view as a sort of dessert, and as he could absorb an unlimited quantity they were always in demand.

A certain stick kept on the veranda of our office was generally under the eye, and when any one picked this up and started for a walk across the desert Moses would hop gravely along behind, sure that some of his favorite dainties would soon be forthcoming.

Of course Moses was perfectly well able to catch the smaller kinds of lizards for himself, but there was less exertion in allowing some one else to do it for him, and exertion at this period of his life was a thing to which Moses was violently opposed. These occasions were almost the only ones when he would be silent for any length of time, for he seemed to understand perfectly that at the first note of his voice every lizard within hearing would run for its life to the nearest refuge, and only when a blow of the stick failed for the second or third time to reach its mark would he give utterance to his deep disgust at such clumsiness.



is insidious, and men do not realize that they are in its clutch. While consumption is a germ disease, the bacilli will not invade sound and healthy lungs. The lungs must first be in a diseased condition.

First a man feels a little out of sorts. Probably he is overworked and has given too little time to eating, sleeping and resting. His appetite falls off. His digestion gets out of order and his blood does not receive the proper amount of life-giving nutriment. The liver becomes torpid and the blood is filled with impurities. These are pumped into every organ of the body, building up unhealthy, half-dead tissues. The most harm is done at the weakest spot, and most frequently that spot is in the lungs. A slight cold leads to inflammation, the bacilli invade the lungs and we have a case of consumption.

Ninety-eight per cent. of all cases of consumption are cured by Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. It is the great blood-maker and flesh-builder. It restores the lost appetite, makes the digestion perfect, invigorates the liver, purifies the blood, builds new and healthy flesh and drives out all impurities and disease germs. It cures weak lungs, spitting of blood, obstinate coughs and kindred ailments. No honest druggist will recommend a substitute.

Mrs. Ursula Duham, of Sistersville, Tyler Co., W. Va., writes: "I had a pain in my side all the time, had but little appetite and grew very thin. The Golden Medical Discovery promptly cured the pain, restored my appetite and increased my weight."

The Nation says that in England at the present day the expression genteel is mainly a peculiarity of the underbred—of those with whom wives are ladies and of those who in their own sphere are known as gents and the like.

More than 10,000 persons are engaged in the manufacture of explosives in England. Last year 40 persons in the business were killed and 167 injured by accidents.

A satisfactory beverage for cutting parties is unquestionably Sovereign Fruit Syrup. Among its great variety in flavors all tastes are suited.

### Chirography of the Presidents.

The chirography of the presidents from Washington down to McKinley is as different as the chirography of the same number of any other men chosen at random from the various walks of life. Students of character contend that there are many points of similarity in the mental make up and equipment of our presidents, but if there are they are certainly not shown in the handwriting of these men. Of the entire lot I suppose old Zachary Taylor wrote the worst hand. I have seen numerous letters of his which I am confident no human being could read. It was cramped and awkward, like that of a boy just learning to write. Jefferson wrote a plain, flowing hand, and Monroe's writing was decidedly feminine, though not nearly so much so as Grover Cleveland's, whose chirography is small and delicate. Jackson's scrawl bespoke a nervousness and timidity of which nobody dared to accuse him while he was on the earth, and Lincoln's a smooth polish which his crude, simple mind did not bespeak. Of all our chief magistrates McKinley writes the best hand, and his chirography shows a painstaking ease and caution which are evidently the dominant factors of the man's character.—St. Louis Republic.

### A Bright Young Celestial.

Sao-Ke Alfred Sze, a young Chinaman, has just been graduated from the Washington high school. He has been a bright student and is well liked by his classmates. "Next fall," says the Washington Star, "he expects to enter one of the leading colleges, and, after taking a full collegiate course, to study law. This will necessitate his remaining in America for at least seven years more, and at the end of that time he will return to China and will probably be in line for the diplomatic service. He will be 27 years of age when he returns to his home, near Shanghai, after an absence of 11 years, but he will be fitted by education and training to fill almost any diplomatic place that may be offered to him. His many friends in Washington hope that some time in the dim future, while serving his country abroad, he may be sent to Washington as the ambassador of the Celestial empire."

### Mrs. Langtry.

Rumor has it that, now that Mrs. Langtry has secured her divorce, she will soon marry an Englishman of position equal to the task of restoring her to her place in society, in order that she may introduce her daughter. The girl, who has been very carefully brought up, is now of an age to go into the world, and as she has some of her mother's beauty and will probably be quite an heiress her possible marriage is becoming an important question.—San Francisco Argonaut.

### Queer Conduct of a Kentucky Tree.

There is a very remarkable tree in Mrs. Elizabeth Porter's front yard at her home in the suburban part of town. It is an old locust tree, and in the driest of weather a continued shower of mist or vapor can be seen coming from its branches. A shower can be had beneath its foliage at any hour, day or night.—Glasgow Republican.

Our straw hats must be sold, we don't want to carry one over, so we will take any fair offer for a straw hat. If you want one, come quick.—Prowse Bros.

British trade, according to the July statistics, continues to expand, which may be fairly taken as an index to the improved condition of the world's trade.

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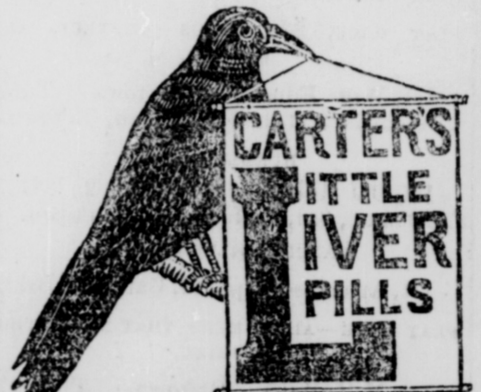
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### A Hand Written Book.

Colonel Noble D. Preston of this city has completed a most remarkable book. Except for some photographs and one or two lithographs, the entire book is the work of the author's pen. The workmanship could not be more perfect or beautiful, and it took Colonel Preston most of his leisure time of eight years to complete it. The title on the back of the book is "Preston's Pen Pictures, Medals, Songs and Sketches, Medal of Honor, Loyal Legion and Biographies, Bugle Blasts, Family Genealogies, etc.—Noble D. Preston."

On opening the book one's first idea is that the pages are fine examples of copperplate engraving, but a closer inspection shows that it is all pen work, done with a very fine pointed pen. Not from any irregularity in the work can this be told, however, as every letter is as perfect and every line as even as the best example of the engraver's art. Each letter is separate. Only a man of unbounded patience and absolute control of his nerves could have done it. At the heads of the chapters are bits of scroll work, done in ink of various colors, and the initial letter of each chapter is a remarkably beautiful piece of illumination. Besides this, there is scroll and margin work on some of the pages. Under the heading of "Preface," which is itself an exquisite bit of penmanship, the author says: "I made this novel volume with pen and ink for my children by special request." It possesses no literary merit and little of any other. The edition is limited to one volume and is not copyrighted. The main body of the volume is taken up by reminiscences of incidents of the author's career as a member of the Tenth New York cavalry.—Philadelphia Record



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