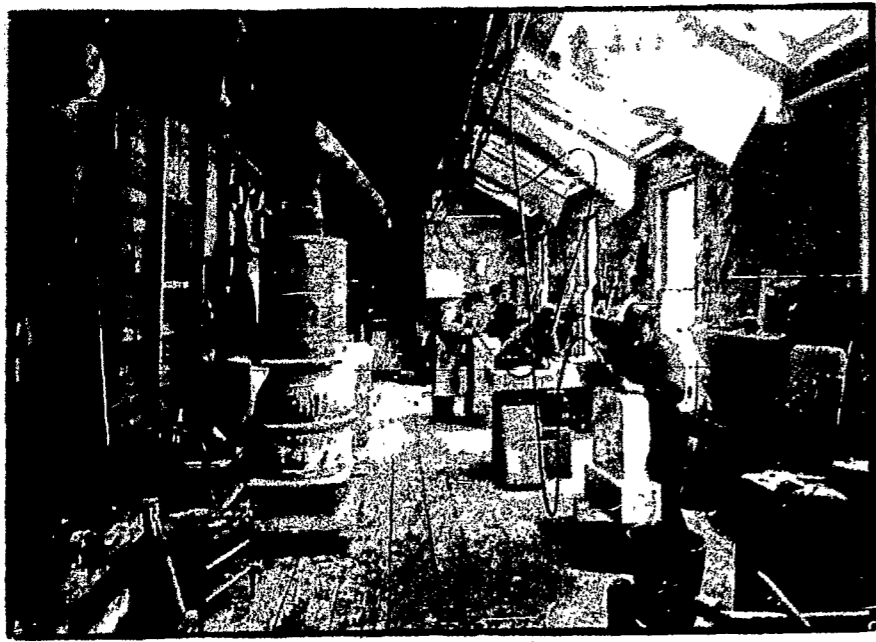


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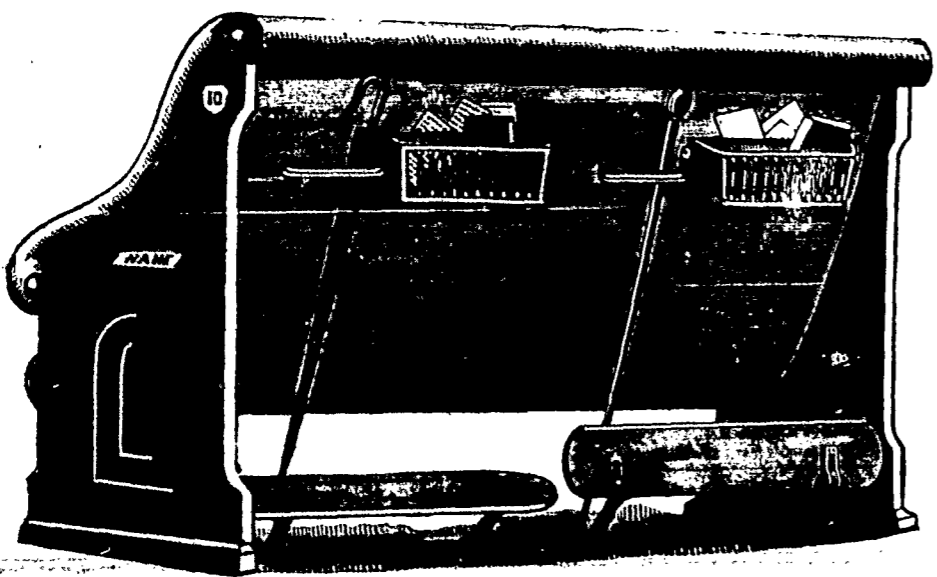
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WAR BALLOONS.

Big Workshop Established by the British at Aldershot.

The utility of war balloons was early made manifest to the British, and accordingly the factory at Aldershot, which we are about to describe, was established under the supervision of Lieut.-Col. Templer, an officer of engineers, who is recognized in all the armies of the world as one of the foremost authorities on military aerostatics.

Cel. Templer is always pleased to have an opportunity of showing his splendidly equipped factory, and the very first department into which he ushers the visitor is that in which long lines of girls are sewing together sections of gold beater's skin, out of which the envelopes of the balloons are made.

The workshops are all wonderfully interesting. There is one for the weaving and testing of the vast network of cordage that confines the envelope of the balloon, another for the construction of the wicker cars of all sizes; a third for brass turning, and so on.

When all the departments of the balloon factories have done their part toward forming one of these monsters, those parts are rapidly put together in a shed or barn of great height and spaciousness. The enormous cover is laid on the floor, the bewildering area of cordage laid over it, and then the center of the envelope is hoisted to the roof and work begun on the lower part of the huge machine. Usually at this stage a wagonload of tubes of gas arrives from the chemical department, and a preliminary filling is begun to see whether the skins leak at all at the joinings.

Wagonloads of these tubes accompany every military balloon in the field, whether it be of the "free" or "captive" variety. In connection with the factory, too, there are schools of military photography and cartography, and in these branches of military science young officers qualify themselves for special service.—Harper's Weekly

Czar's Influence at Court.

Socially, of course, the rule of the court is absolute, yet the influence of the czar upon the life of his capital is trivial, says Percival Gibbon in McClure's. His officers copy his beard, as the mild German clerk duplicates the ambitious mustache of the kaiser; but in regard to manners and morals, Nicholas is as little effectual as any of the priests about him. King Edward has helped to set the fashion of good form. Nicholas' opinion on points of behavior is unascertained.

Tolerance is a poor word to apply to St. Petersburg society, just as vice is a false one. Vice implies a deterioration, a defection into lower paths, but the uncleanness of Russian society has so broad a quality of novelty, so evidently an evidence of the attainment of a new standard, and the instinctive sense toward its lower codes of the Orient, that one hesitates to attribute it to a deliberate descent. The Russian character, a certain instability of morals, rules rather than a deliberate descent. The Russian character, a certain instability of morals, rules rather than a deliberate descent. The Russian character, a certain instability of morals, rules rather than a deliberate descent.

Marriage in Russia is monogamy at least by law, but the age of an importation. . . . And thus it is in the midst of a kind of sensual putrescence, in an atmosphere of moral irresponsibility, that Nicholas lives his little blameless life.

Elevators at 6 Cents a Trip.

In one of the newest skyscrapers where the elevators are run by electrically score cards are hung in each car. The man in charge of the car marks off each trip. If he fails to do so he is liable to be called to account at the end of the day, for a small instrument on the side of the car records the amount of electric force expended during the day as accurately as a cash register marks up a purchase—that is, it has so far, for the elevator register is a new device. There are four cars in the building, two running to the fourteenth and one each to the sixteenth and eighteenth floors. The instruments show that each elevator travels an average of ten miles a day and that each trip costs the company an average of 6 cents.

New Sea Sounding Device.

A Norwegian engineer has recently invented a new apparatus for sea sounding by which it is not necessary to touch bottom. This is accomplished by an acoustic method. The depths are also registered graphically upon a revolving drum. The operation of the device depends upon the time which sound takes to travel to the bottom and return, and the measurement of the time thus gives the depth to which the exploring apparatus is lowered.

Costs of War.

Herr Renauld, a colonel in the German army and a military and financial expert, has compiled some sensational estimates of the cost of war between two great European powers, Germany, he says, would be able to mobilize 4,000,000 trained soldiers and 6,000,000 partially drilled men, and they would cost the empire 3,500,000 pounds daily. A war between two powers would cost not less than 6,000,000 pounds daily.

TRAINING HORSES TO FACE FIRE.

The Effect of Smokeless Powder Upon Them in Battle.

Some authorities say that but for the introduction of smokeless powder and the great increase in the range and accuracy of weapons, it would be impossible to keep cavalry in hand under the fire of modern artillery. No doubt this is exaggerated, but certainly these new conditions in warfare must be taken into account when one considers the result.

When smokeless powder first came into use it was found that in many cases horses which would face the smoke of guns using black powder shied at the flash and road unaccompanied by smoke. It is generally agreed that the use of smokeless powder at night has a much more disturbing effect than the old powder, because the flashes of the guns are so much more vivid when unobscured by the smoke. Of course, this fear can be overcome among horses, just as the fear of the noise and smoke was before the smokeless powder was used.

When horses are recruited for the army they are put through a course of training to accustom them to the tumult and smell of battle. First they are drawn up in a circle around an instructor who fires a pistol. Some take the flash and report very quietly, and these are passed on to severer trials, while the others have lesson after lesson repeated until they are convinced that there is no danger to them, and before long a 70-pounder may be fired within a yard of them without making them turn around. After this they must face the fire in a sterner sense, that is to say they must gallop fearlessly up to a line or square of infantry blazing away with their rifles and charge batteries of quick firing guns.

Fur Bearing Animals Scarce.

That the days of trapping in Northern Minnesota are nearly ended, and that the industry will soon be a thing of the past, were the words spoken by George Denis, who has returned from the international border, . . . he has been on a combined fur buying and land seeking trip.

"I saw no white trappers on this trip," said Mr. Denis. "They were all Indians or half breeds. I got some fox, marten, mink and muskrat furs. Otter and beaver, you know, are barred. It is against the law to handle these furs in Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana and Manitoba. There are some beaver and otter yet in northern Minnesota, but they are no longer plentiful. I got a few silver gray fox skins on this trip and I heard of two black fox skins that had been sold up north this winter. The blacks are very scarce and are quoted from \$750 up, but there are some skins that bring as high as \$1,000. It all depends upon the quality of fur. I shall soon leave on a fur buying trip to the north of Winnipeg beyond the Porcupine Hills. There I will be at liberty to buy beaver and otter, and there are doubtless ermine to be had there also."

Czar's Horses and Carriages.

The czar's Russian has four separate stables of horses and carriages, namely the Russian, English, French and the gala sets. Even set comprises at least 50 horses. The Russian set accompanies the emperor wherever he goes, and at Gatchina it is used together with the English set. The gala and the French horses and carriages are housed at St. Petersburg in the winter palace stables. The czar's gala turnout consists of 50 Hanoverian horses, which are perfectly white, with blue eyes.

The Ways of Whales.

Prof. Goldlob has been telling the Christiania Academy of Science the results of his investigations into the migrations of whales. These creatures hang about the coast of Norway and Finland, until the spring is well advanced, and then go away on their travels. Some go to the Azores, others to Bermuda and the Antilles, and they cover these enormous distances in an incredibly short time. Some of them bring back harpoons which bear the names of ships and other evidences of where these migrants have been for their summer holidays.

Sergius Thanks Unought.

When the Russian Grand Duke Sergius, who was recently blown to pieces with a dynamite bomb, was governor of Warsaw he thought it would be a good idea if the people of that city would contribute a fund with which to buy sunflower seed to be given as a present to the Russian soldiers, who are very fond of chewing them. Sergius announced that every one sending money would be given a receipt, but those sending 1,000 rubles (\$510) or more would be thanked personally by himself. It is said that the response was excellent. But, though no one sent in 1,000 rubles and asked to be thanked personally by the grand duke, many sent in 999 rubles and asked for the receipt.

Rooted Stones of Falkland.

The visitor to the Falkland Isles sees scattered here and there singular shaped blocks of what appear to be weather beaten and moss covered boulders in various sizes. Attempt to turn one of these boulders over, and you will meet with a real surprise, because the stone is actually anchored by roots of great strength; in fact, you will find that you are trifling with one of the native trees. No other country in the world has such a peculiar "forest" growth.

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