

ANTIQUITY OF MANKIND.

Belkic Places it at Between 250,000 and 500,000 Years.

In his work, "The Antiquity of Man in Europe," Professor James Belkic of Edinburgh University declares his belief that man has inhabited Europe between 250,000 and 500,000 years.

All such estimates are based on geological facts, such as the rate at which sediment is deposited or at which stalagmites grow, that are very hard to determine with any accuracy, but no one now doubts that man is far older than men of science originally supposed him to be.

"When we reflect," says Professor Belkic, "on the many geographical changes that man has witnessed—the submergence and re-elevation of enormous tracts, the erosion of valleys and general lowering of the surface by denudation, when we consider that he has lived through a succession of stupendous climatic revolutions; that he has seen widely contrasted flora and fauna alternately occupying our continent—tundras, steppes and great forests succeeding each other again and again—we must feel convinced that the few thousand years that have elapsed since the downfall of Babylon, Assyria and Egyptian empires are as nothing compared with the long aeons that separate the earliest times of history from the apparition of paleolithic man in Europe."

RIFLE SIGHTS.

The Drop of the Bullet in Its Flight Makes Them Necessary.

The average person if asked to explain why a rifle is sighted would probably be unable to do so beyond some vague remark about taking correct aim.

Sights are necessary because a bullet does not travel in a straight line, but, under the influence of gravity and friction, begins to drop almost as soon as it leaves the muzzle. Thus the bullet of the British service rifle drops six inches in the first 100 yards, but when it has gone 200 yards it will have dropped 24 inches, or two feet.

The drop increases by leaps and bounds with the distance. Were there no sights on the rifle and you wanted to hit a mark at 200 yards you would clearly have to aim two feet above it.

This would be awkward, for you would lose sight of the mark aimed at, to say nothing of the difficulty of correctly estimating a distance of two feet at 200 yards.

The sight of a rifle enables you to keep your eye on the mark, although the muzzle of the rifle is actually pointing above it. The movable slide of the back-sight enables you automatically to point the muzzle just so many feet above the mark aimed at as is necessary to counteract the known drop of the bullet at various ranges.

Teaching Cubs to Kill. Have you ever seen a cat catch a mouse and hand it over to her kittens to teach them how to kill? Well, a tiger is merely a big cat, and she teaches her cubs almost in the same way, only not with mice.

The Element of Chance. Human progress might be otherwise defined as human success in minimizing the element of chance. In science there is substitution of exactitude for the primitive accidents of the rule of thumb, just as in philosophy and morals, truth and untruth, right and wrong, are being unwashed from their relics of uncertainty and set clearly in opposition to each other.

Opposite Reasons. "Papa, why does the pretty lady frown?" "Because my son, the men watch her when she goes down the street." "Then, papa, why does the homely lady frown?" "Because they don't."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Cats and Rain. The fur of the cat is full of electricity, and before a thunderstorm it will be noticed that a cat is always extremely lively and playful, probably on account of its electrical condition.

Camomile Tea. Into a quart of boiling water place one ounce of camomile flowers and simmer for fifteen minutes, afterward straining. This makes an excellent emetic when taken warm and is a good tonic when taken cold. The dose is a wineglassful.

A Woman's Secret. Biggs—There goes a woman with a past. Boggs—Yes, and there are about twenty years more of it than she is willing to own up to.—New York Journal.

Meeting Bills. "He complains that he never can meet his bills." "Lucky dog! Mine always show up on the first of the month."—Judge.

The Seal's Ventilator.

Not many people know how the seal of the far north gets air when the Arctic ocean is entirely covered with many feet of ice.

The small spotted seal, which is a hair seal and not a fur beaver, is the hardy dweller of the northern waters. Under his tough, thick skin he has an inch or more of blubber. When the ice closes up the open water in the Arctic the seal selects a spot and begins to drill a hole to the surface by pressing his warm nose against the ice. Nobody knows how many hours it takes him to accomplish his task, but he manages it, and, although he is obliged to work most of the time because the surface of the hole is continually freezing, he keeps it open all winter and obtains air. Seals have been known to drill in this manner through fifty feet of solid ice. Whether or not they take turns in the slow drilling is not positively known.

Costs the Monkeys Wear. Have you ever wondered why nearly all the monkeys which accompany the foreign organ boys should be dressed in a red coat, with a sort of jockey cap?

The explanation is very simple. This costume is no fancy one, but is an almost exact copy of the winter dress worn by the organ boys' fathers in the distant valley of Piedmont, where the peasants usually wear a red coat, rudely cut, with very stiff little tails, and knickerbockers and jockey cap of the same color.

These clothes are spun and woven by the peasants and dyed red with the madder which grows in the valleys. The long roots are boiled, then mixed with alum and tartar, and the result is a red dye, which, though not very bright, does not fade. The monkeys' coats are made of the bits which are left over when the peasant's coat is cut out.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Gallows Work.

A curious note in "Popsy's Diary" refers to the unpopularity of hangmen in those days. Commissioner Pett, who had traveled, told Popsy "how despicable a thing it is to be hangman in Poland, although it is a piece of credit, and that in his time there were some repairs to be made of the gallows there, which was very fine of stone, but nobody could be got to mend it till the burgomaster or mayor of the town, with all the companies of those trades which are necessary to be used about those repairs, did go in their habits with flags in solemn procession to the place, and there the burgomaster did give the first blow with the hammer upon the wooden work and the rest of the masters of the companies upon the works belonging to their trades, that so workmen might not be ashamed to be employed upon doing of the gallows work."

"Sleeping" Bullets.

The distance which a bullet travels is divided into three parts. The first, distance the bullet travels in a wobbly manner, either up and down or side-wise, the middle distance it "sleeps" or moves on an exact plane, and the third distance, being partly spent, it wobbles in a serpentine movement again. When the bullet "sleeps" it cuts a clean hole through the part of the body hit, but when it is on the first or final distance it tears a jagged hole and moves either up or down and is likely to remain in the body. When the battle range is regulated in such a manner that the line of soldiers is exposed to the range of the "sleeping" bullets there is less work for the ambulance corps.—Chicago Tribune.

In Honor of Minerva.

The most notable festival at Athens was in honor of Minerva. All classes of citizens on this particular day marched in procession. The oldest went first, then the young men, then the children, the young women, the matrons and the people of the lower orders. The most prominent object in the parade was a ship propelled by hidden machinery and bearing at its masthead the sacred banner of the goddess.

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Not Complimentary. Mrs. Black—I don't want to make a scene, but that man over there is staring at me very offensively. Mr. Black—He is, eh? I'll speak to him. Mrs. Black in few moments later—Did he apologize? Mr. Black—Yes; he said he was looking for his aunt and thought at first that you were she!

They Avoid Odd Numbers. The Siamese have a superstitious dislike of odd numbers, and they studiously strive to have in their houses an even number of windows, doors, rooms and cupboards.

Ought to Be. Mistress—This isn't a clean knife, Jane. New Servant—I'm sure it ought to be, mum. The last thing I cut with it was a bar of soap.—Boston Transcript.

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THE "WHY" OF A "HOT BOX."

A Railroad Official Says the Cause is Simply Carelessness.

In answer to the question "What is a hot box?" a Kansas City Southern official has the following to say:

"A hot box is a sign that the safety first rule is not practiced by some car department man.

"There is no excuse for a hot box after a car is sent out if the train is carefully looked over by the car man at each terminal. Primarily a hot box is caused by poor waste and an insufficient greasing at the time it should have been done, and there is no excuse for one. A hot box is liable to cause a wreck, and a wreck on most railroads costs money, much more than the price of a sufficient quantity of waste and oil and grease to protect the journals of the car wheels.

"The farmer who buys a new wagon or a buggy has a pretty good idea of what a hot box means and the ways to prevent it. When he buys a new wagon he sees to it that the spindle is well greased so it will not get hot. He watches it closely and does not take any chances on the wheels running hot. The farmer's wheels on his new wagon or buggy would stick, and if he persisted in driving ahead he would soon have a bad spindle and a bad wheel.

"However, the results would not be so disastrous as they would be in a train of cars running at a speed of fifteen or twenty miles an hour. It's no wonder that trainmen use language unfit for a Sunday school class when they find a hot box in their train. They know that some one has been careless and blurring in his work and that he is to blame."—New York Post.

MENDEL'S LAW.

Shown in the Crossing of Pure Yellow and Pure Green Peas.

The following beautifully clear summary of the principles of mendelian inheritance is due to the Rev. W. Willis, the famous horticulturist, who developed the Shirley poppy:

If you cross pure yellow and pure green peas either way—it matters not which is seed bearer and which pollen bearer—you will get all yellow seeds. If you sow these hybrid seeds, each will, if it germinates, produce a plant which will bear, say, forty seeds, thirty of which will on the average be yellow and ten green. The green, if sown and sown and sown for countless generations, will always bear green seeds true to the original green parents (barring the always possible intervention of insects).

Not so the thirty yellow. These when sown will on the average produce ten plants bearing all pure yellow seeds, which will be constant and true to the original yellow parent for countless generations. The remaining twenty plants will be impure yellow, each plant producing, on the average, one-quarter of its seeds pure yellow, one-quarter pure green and one-half impure yellow, which last will repeat the process and proportion practically forever.

This is the law of inheritance which is the basis of all the studies of the eugenicists and, in fact, of all breeders of animals and plants.—New York World.

Cause of One War.

William the Conqueror lost his life in France through his horse treading on a red-hot cinder while he was superintending the burning of Nantes, but few people know the fact which gave rise to the campaign that cost William his life.

During the latter part of his reign he became abnormally stout and consequently the laughingstock of not only his subjects, but his neighbors across the water. One day his contemporary, Philip of France, compared him to a fillet of veal on casters and suggested that he should be exhibited at a prize monarch show. This so enraged William that he straightway made war upon his ridiculer, and the loss of thousands of lives was the result.—London Tit Bits.

The First Evolutionist.

The first to suggest the transmutation of species among animals was Buffon, about 1750. The eccentric Lord Monboddo was the first to suggest the possibility of man from the ape, about 1774. In 1813 a Dr. W. O. Wells first proposed to apply the principle of natural selection to the natural history of man, and in 1822 Herbert first asserted the transmutation of species in plants.

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Easy to Forgive.

A business man made an appointment with a friend a few days ago, and when the time rolled around he forgot the matter entirely.

The incident worried him so much that he dreaded to meet the friend and for several days tried to keep out of the latter's way.

Finally, however, the inevitable happened, and the two met face to face in the lobby of a downtown club.

Before the business man could voice his explanation the friend extended his hand and began to apologize humbly:

"I must beg your pardon, old chap, but really I quite forgot about our engagement the other day, and I am indeed very sorry to have disappointed you."

When he fully recovered from the shock the business man exclaimed, with a magnanimous wave of his right hand:

"Don't worry, old man; even the best of us will sometimes forget."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Cure For Nasbleed.

I sometimes read in the daily papers of death caused by bleeding at the nose. Here is a cure discovered by me and not known or practiced by any physician. I am an old shipmaster, have tried it in a number of cases and never knew it to fail. It is very simple. Any one can perform the operation.

Place the patient in a sitting position or propped up in bed, and with the forefinger press gently in the hollow of the throat just above the breast bone, and the bleeding will gradually cease.

To avoid bleeding at the nose, especially in the case of children, get a large bead the size of a large marble, put it on a silk or woolen string and tie it around the neck so that the bead hangs in the hollow of the throat and wear it night and day.—New York Sun.

A Remarkable Stork.

The white billed stork is found on a lake south of the White Nile. The lake has never been mapped and is bordered by extensive swamps. It is hard to tell where swamp ends and lake begins, for most of the water surface is covered with a dense mat of tangled vegetation. On this mat the white billed stork builds its nest. It is a very rare bird and is known to the Arabs as the Father of the Shoe, because of its huge shoe shaped bill. It is of solitary habits, blackish gray in color, with wide spreading long toed feet adapted for standing on the quaking surface of a floating field of vegetation. Its habits are sluggish, and it lives mainly on fish. Colonel Roosevelt describes it as "bunting sedately in muddy shallows or standing motionless for hours, surrounded by reed beds or by long reaches of treacherous ooze."

One Way of "Beating the Bounds."

The Cossack can do much in war, but in peace time he is not so bandy. Then he is either a fisherman or a farmer, but he knows little about land surveying and less still about land registration. When disputes arise there is a method of settling them. When the boundary has been settled it is registered not upon parchment, but upon boys' backs. All the boys are collected and driven like sheep along the newly surveyed boundary. The procession halts at each landmark, a certain number of boys are chosen, thoroughly whipped and then sent home. This is done in the belief that an unmerited whipping would always remain in the memory—a truly wonderful method of "beating the bounds."—London Chronicle.

Facts About Furs.

The costliest sable is the Yakutsk or Russian skin that runs "silvery"—that has, in other words, a number of equally distributed white or silvery hairs among the soft and silky brown ones. The black silver fox is most valuable when there is no silver in it—when it is a pure rich black throughout. Ermine, contrary to the general belief, cleans well and is an exceedingly durable fur. Sea otter skins measure 48 by 24 inches. The best color is a dark bluish brown, almost black. Fisher is a large marten found in Canada and the northern United States. The skin measures 30 by 12 inches.

Hymn 333.

A youth named Harry Jordan sat at an examination at one of the eastern colleges. When he learned the result he telegraphed to his people:

"Hymn 333, verse 5, last two lines, Harry."

The anxious father turned to his hymn book and read the comforting couplet:

"Sorrow vanquished, labor ended, Jordan passed"—Exchange.

Bonepicking.

Mrs. Biggs—So the Peddingtons are quarreling again? Mrs. Monty—Yes; their latest quarrel was about madam's pet dog and the expense of feeding it. Mrs. Biggs—Great Scott! They have bones of contention enough to feed a dozen dogs!

Orchestra.

Orchestra is a Greek and Latin term signifying the space in the theaters of the ancients between the stage and the audience where the chorus and dancers assembled.

Small Conscience.

Hewitt—You don't seem to think much of Binks. Jewitt—If he had his conscience taken out it would be a minor operation.—Exchange.

There is nothing so terrible as activity without insight.—Goethe.

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