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(Illustrated articles are marked with an asterisk.)

Table listing various articles such as American agricultural machinery, Injunctors, Ink, invisible, Patent catching device, etc., with corresponding page numbers.

THE CENTENNIAL SUBSCRIPTION.

The centennial managers are taking the right course to impress upon the people the importance of the great celebration of 1876. The address which we publish in another column is a business-like, straightforward document...

There are scores of manufacturers who intend, beyond doubt, to be represented in the Centennial, who will partake largely of the advantages it offers and who are abundantly able to take up the remaining shares of stock without feeling the outlay.

It is too late also to continue an unseemly dissension over the question of a national or international exposition. By its official acts, which cannot be honorably recalled, the government has invited other nations to participate in our festival, and many have already signified their intention of so doing.

It is moreover to be the largest and grandest exposition that the world has yet beheld. In point of space alone, its

buildings are to cover 3,000,000 yards, against 2,530,400 and 481,500 square yards filled by the Vienna and Paris fairs. The time remaining is but two years, and the greatest activity will be necessary to complete preparations during that period.

THE FAMINE IN BENGAL.

Accustomed only to unbroken plenty, it is happily impossible for American minds to form any adequate conception of a state of things like that now prevailing in Lower Bengal. The haziness of our knowledge of Indian geography helps still more to lessen the effect of the pictures of human wretchedness outlined in the cable reports.

As mapped by Sir Bartle Frere, the stricken district is shaped somewhat like a clumsy boot with a thick foot and an expanded top—the toe resting on the Hooghly, the heel on the Brahmapootra three hundred miles away to the north, the leg covering the broad valley of the Ganges to the westward, a distance of five hundred miles, with a breadth from one hundred and fifty to three hundred miles.

Throughout this vast area, protracted drouth last fall caused the almost total loss of the rice crop, the principal food resource of the people, who have been brought in consequence to the brink of starvation. Indeed had assistance from without been less prompt or less generous, the victims of famine would have been numbered by millions.

The first part of the task is more difficult to perform in Bengal than in any other part of India. It is at once the richest and most unfortunate province of the Empire, the victim of greater wrongs and more pig-headed political blundering than any other. In no other part of India is there so great a lack of administrative machinery competent to grapple with the evils of scarcity and famine, the native system having been destroyed and nothing efficient put in its place.

The distribution of food is made still more difficult by the system of caste, stronger in rural Bengal than in any other part of India. The ordinary Hindoo diet is not only restricted to a very limited range of vegetable diet, but even that must not pass through the hands of one of lower caste.

It has also grappled with the second part of the problem with considerable earnestness. Many extensive works of internal improvement—railroads, canals for irrigation and commerce, and local roads which had been suffered to languish through false economy—are being pushed to completion by the thousands of agricultural laborers thrown out of work by the failure of the crops, and driven to the public works by need of food.

G. W. P., M. D., writes to point out that Mr. R. B. Forbes' suggestion as to calming the sea by means of oil originated with Benjamin Franklin, who saw the effects produced by the accidental upsetting of a barrel of oil, while crossing the Atlantic. It is described in Franklin's autobiographical work.

EREMACAUISIS VERSUS BURIAL AND CREMATION.

BY PROFESSOR ALBERT E. LEEDS.

Is there no other alternative in the disposal of the dead than our present practice of inhumation and the proposed cremation? The shortcomings of the former, and the long catalogue of hurtful consequences, are conceded; but are the superior advantages of cremation established? Passing by the social, æsthetic, and religious considerations involved, can the advantages which are claimed for cremation, by those who profess to advocate it on scientific grounds, be regarded as proven?

It would be well, then, before resorting to artificial devices and patenting improved forms of furnaces for most rapidly getting rid of the dead body, as it is feelingly called, that we should turn to Nature and take from her a few preliminary lessons. We shall find that she seldom applies the torch, while all the while accomplishing her end. There is not a rotting log, a fallen leaf, or a dead insect, worm, or animal, which is not burning slowly, combining insensibly with the oxygen which is present in the air or dissolved in water, and becoming converted into fertilizers.

Our error is, and has been, that, in this as in other cases, we have done wrong by interfering with or only partially obeying the laws of Nature. While professing a belief in the immortality of the soul and the perishability of the body, we have acted as though the body should be immortalized; and, by placing it in stone vaults of Cyclopean masonry or in non-oxidizable metallic envelopes, have endeavored to thwart the operation of natural forces and prevent the return of the effete to the realm of the useful.

This is not an empty suggestion. Chemistry points out to us what must take place, and suggests a variety of substances and means for accomplishing the desired result. The stoutest granite exposed to the action of air and rain eventually crumbles into sand; and for most rocks, a few years suffices. Great beds of limestone may be dissolved by the action of surface waters percolating through the ground.

We propose, then, that cemeteries should not be transient, or banished to distant spots, or allowed to be located in unsuitable places, or managed (as at present) as successful speculations, frequently in defiance of well known sanitary laws. Instead, let them be made permanent, bearing a definite proportion in size to the surrounding population: not restricted to the outskirts of cities, and swept away by the advancing tide of humanity, but located upon sites well adapted