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TOO MUCH IDLE CAPITAL.

There are in the city of New York forty-five national banks with a capital aggregating forty-five million four hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The statement made by these institutions on the first of March showed that there was due to their depositors two hundred and nine million seventy-one dollars. Add to this enormous sum the millions in the vaults of the banks organized under our State laws, and with private bankers, as well as the great sums held by our Trust and Insurance companies, and it is evident that there is a great deal too much unemployed capital lying idle in this city.

If this large sum and the surplus funds in our other monetary institutions throughout the country could be put into circulation, it would give an impetus to all kinds of business, and bring about that condition of prosperity for which the public have been looking for the past few years, and are now realizing only in part.

PROPOSED AMERICAN EXHIBITION IN 1889.

It was in the year 1789 that the Constitutional Government of the United States was established, with Washington as its Chief Executive. The inauguration of the first President was celebrated in the city of New York. As this ceremony ushered in what will probably always be regarded as the greatest century vouchsafed to the nation, it has seemed highly fitting that its centennial should be commemorated by suitable observances in the same city which saw the birth of the new republic. It has therefore been proposed by the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee that such a celebration should be held in 1889 in the city of New York, and that it should take the form of a great National and International Exhibition of Science, Art, Industry, Manufactures, and the Agricultural, Mineral, and other resources of the United States, since this would seem to be the most fitting memorial of the intellectual and material progress made by a young people under a century of popular government.

The joint resolution passed by the Tennessee Legislature provides that such an exhibition shall be recommended; that its importance be commended to the President, with the request that he bring it to the attention of Congress; that the people of Tennessee be urged to assist the movement, and take steps to prepare a suitable State exhibit; and finally, that the Governor be requested to forward a copy of the resolution to the President and to the Governors of the several States and Territories. The occasion is one of such great historical importance, and the celebration proposed seems so eminently suitable, that we trust the movement started by the patriotism of Tennessee will receive the undivided support of her sister States and Territories, of the National Government, and of the President. Three years have already passed since this proposition was first brought forward. Three years remain in which to act. The history of former exhibitions shows that this time is not so long that any of it can be wasted. This should be particularly borne in mind when the importance of the occasion, as well as the competition offered by other exhibitions already organized, both demand that the attractions shall be greater than ever before if the celebration is to be such a success as will satisfy the national pride.

Fluid Extract of Camellia.

Within the space of a few months, Dr. E. R. Squibb has called the attention of the medical profession to the fluid extract of camellia, or tea, which has been thus proposed to take the place of guarana and coca. He states that the testimony in regard to the effect of tea, coffee, Paraguay tea, and kola nuts is all of a similar character to that given with regard to coca. Each of these substances appears to have come into use independently in widely separated countries, in order to produce the same effects, namely, to refresh, renew, or sustain the physical and mental organism; and it is a curious surprise to find that after they had been in use for a very lengthened period, and although each came from a different order of plants, the same active principle, namely, caffeine, could be extracted, in different proportions, from all of them.

It is even more curious to find that for centuries past a plant called coca, yielding a different principle, has been in use for a similar purpose, the effects of which, says Dr. Squibb, differ but little from caffeine, "simply producing a similar physiological effect in much smaller doses."

Comparing the power of these drugs in their tendency to counteract sleep, or promote wakefulness, the author found that three grains of caffeine were equal to three fluid drachms of the extract of coca, and to seventy minims of the fluid extract of camellia. These seventy minims of the latter extract equal seventy grains of tea, and this yields a little over two grains of caffeine. These are Dr. Squibb's figures.

Latterly, Dr. J. B. Andrews has reported on a long series of experiments with fluid extract of camellia and hydrobromate of hyosine in the treatment of insane patients. With the first of these drugs he noticed a

remarkable uniformity of action, the pulse being decreased from ten to twenty-four beats under the influence of various doses, while the force and tension were invariably increased. The full influence of the remedy was experienced in half an hour to one hour after administration. After remaining stationary for about half an hour, the pulse began to increase in frequency, and regained its normal condition in the course of another half hour, the effect of the drug disappearing in about three hours after taking it. It was used clinically in a number of cases, as a heart tonic, with favorable results.

New Use for Cold Air Machines.

Most persons have heard of the process for facilitating the drilling of artesian wells through strata of quicksand by freezing the quicksand with liquids brought to a very low temperature, and circulated through pipes introduced through the well tubing. La Revue Industrielle gives an account of an ingenious modification of this process, put in practice by a Swedish contractor for his own benefit, which deserves to be kept in mind for future occasions. The contractor had undertaken to drive a tunnel through a hill, on which stood a number of large houses. As the excavation went on, it was discovered that the surface of the hill was underlain in many places with masses of gravel mixed with sand, and saturated with water, which ran out immediately into any excavation made in it. The escape of any considerable quantity of this material from under a building would infallibly ruin the building; and the foundation was so soft that the tunnel could not be lined with sufficient rapidity to prevent serious escapes. To underpin the houses from the level of the tunnel would have been a costly undertaking, and the contractor was obliged to have recourse to his wits for a solution of the problem. Fortunately, these did not fail him. It occurred to him that, if the wet gravel could be frozen, it might be worked as well as a hard material; and he considered whether it might not be possible to throw a stream of cold air upon it from one of the cooling machines now so often used. Inspired with this idea, he crossed the sea to England, and bought a Lightfoot ice machine, which he brought back with him and set up in the tunnel. The result surpassed his expectations. Before the cold blast the quicksand became a rock, which could be cut and worked easily and safely, and within a few weeks he passed under two five-story houses without experiencing any trouble.—Amer. Architect.

Fatal Effects of Alcohol.

According to Dr. Richardson, alcohol cuts down by disease, in England and Wales alone, 1,000 persons a week. What, adds the Doctor, if any other cause of mortality did the same? What if 1,000 persons per week died, in the same area, from the bite of the rabid dog or the snake, by the swallowing of arsenic, opium, or prussic acid? What if some thousand persons a week were known to be killed by the secret devices of the slow poisoner, who, under the guise of friendship, went about and instilled into his victims some subtle drop which led to the shortening of their life and to the production of lingering organic fatal disease? What, indeed, then would be the cry and the action? Why, all through the ranks of the great profession of medicine there would be a tumult of labor and toil, such as never before was seen, to remove the calamity. Men would be ambitious to be first to discover by experiment, by experience, the cause of so fearful an evil, and to remove it instantly; while he who won the victory over the calamity would be extolled as illustrious, and, crowned with honor, become a household word from among the children of Esculapius. Yet here one single cause quaking this deadly havoc, a cause well known and easily removable, in spite of its evils and in face of its easy removal, is permitted to remain in sight with a majority of the army of medicine looking on in apathy, pitying us "poor foolish fanatics" who are exercising our limited powers to uproot it, and some, with the rest of the world, so sharing the calamity as to become copartners in the destruction which follows from the participation.

Frozen Fishes.

On Nov. 18 a fishmonger of Paris, M. Heydendare, received from Gonda (the center of fisheries in the region about Rotterdam) a large consignment of fishes packed and preserved in ice. They could not have been caught later than the 16th, and were probably caught on the 15th. On unpacking, a jack was seen to move its gills slightly, and the idea occurred to wash it with fresh water, and immerse it in a vessel. In a few hours the fish was in its normal state, and very lively. M. Heydendare sent it to the Trocadero Aquarium, where it is to be seen now; it is a fine animal, about 2 ft. 4 in. long. Here, then, is a case of a fish out of water more than 48 hours (probably 3 days), packed with little care, along with dead fish and pieces of ice—traveling thus 280 miles, and coming to life again. The lowering of temperature was doubtless very favorable to maintenance of the vital functions.