

**EXPLOSION OF AN OSTRICH EGG.**

Our sketch shows a scene in the basement of the Peabody Museum, New Haven, Conn., at the time of the explosion of an ostrich egg in the hands of Dr. George Baur, who was experimenting with it. An odor was produced in the building worse than condensed sulphureted hydrogen and rotten eggs combined. When Dr. Baur came to New Haven to assist Prof. Marsh in the Peabody Museum, he wrote to Dr. Atherstone, in South Africa, for some ostrich eggs. They were shipped on November 14, 1885, in the bark Aurelia. She was wrecked near Trinidad, but the eggs were saved, and reached New Haven several months ago.

On the day of their arrival Dr. Baur found four of them in the box, and began at once to get the embryos out of the shells, for they were what he wanted to observe. He had filed two little holes in two of the shells, and had blown out their contents successfully.

He wrapped a towel around the third, and began to file a hole in its shell. A hiss and an explosion followed, which knocked over and astonished Dr. Baur, and when he recovered he found himself cut and covered with the contents of the shell. None of the stuff had hit him in the eyes, but his face was considerably cut up.

Dr. Baur says that the first two eggs had been punctured and treated with sulphate of mercury, which prevents fermentation, while the third had not, and its long voyage had stirred up a lot of powerful gas inside its 18½ inch circumference shell, which burst as soon as the file had weakened it enough. The shell is an eighth of an inch thick, and so tough that it cannot readily be broken. As far as can be learned, it is the only accident of the kind on record.

**Plows and Plowing.**

Professor J. W. Sanborn, of the Missouri State Agricultural College, has issued a bulletin giving the results of experiments made by him, in which he shows that as plowing is usually done there is a great loss of power, resulting in either inferior work or overtaxing the team, from the improper adjustment of plows with reference to depth and width of cut, improper adjustment of harness, the use of colter of any form, and the non-use of wheel or truck under the end of beam to regulate the depth of furrow. The tests of draught were all made with the dynamometer, previously tested for its correctness, and its indications carefully noted, so that the results arrived at can be accepted as correct.

Most farm harnesses have an extension of the hip straps with a loop at the end, through which the traces pass to hold the latter in place when the team is unhitched. This loop is about on a direct line of the trace when the horses are hitched to a farm wagon; but when taken from the wagon and hitched to the plow, the double traces are so much lower than when on the wagon as to cause an angle in the trace from where it passes through the supporting loop to the whiffletree. Such conditions have been found caused a serious increase in the draught. The least draught is found where the trace extends in a direct line from its attachment at the hame to the center of draught in the plow when adjusted to its best depth for working.

The use of a colter of any kind also added to the draught, while the use of a wheel under the end of the beam—now fallen into disuse—lessened materially the draught. Thus, as a result of several tests, with and without the truck or wheel, the following averages were reached: Average draught per square inch of furrow turned with wheel on, 4.87 pounds; without wheel,

5.56 pounds; per cent of draught saved by use of wheel, 14.1. In the test of colters, the old and new style knife and rolling colters were used, with the following results: Average draught with colter on, per square inch of furrow turned, 5.77 pounds; with colter off, 4.99 pounds; loss by use of colter in per cent, 15.6, or about the same as the gain by the use of the wheel.

**Explorations at Sepharvaim.**

Mr. W. St. Chad Boscawen the other day delivered at the British Museum a lecture on the subject of the recent identification by Mr. Hormuzd Rassam of the ancient city of Sepharvaim. Mr. Boscawen began his lecture by saying that considerable interest had been aroused in the subject of Babylonian explorations by the statement that an American expedition was about to undertake explorations on the site. According to traditions recorded by Berossus, the city of Sippara had existed before the flood, and it was in the record chambers of its ancient temple that the books recording the

also, the remote antiquity of the inscription was certainly to be admitted.

Mr. Boscawen then proceeded to describe some other inscriptions found on this site, among which were some cylinders recording the restoration of the great canal known as the Nahr Malka by Khammurabi, a monarch who reigned about B. C. 2200. These inscriptions, coupled with others written nearly fifteen centuries later by Nabupalassar, the founder of the new Babylonian empire, showed that during the long time which had elapsed the Euphrates had shifted its course to the westward. In the remote period of the primeval Sargon (B. C. 3800) the river no doubt flowed close to the walls of Sippara, but in B. C. 2200 it had removed so far west that a canal had to be cut to connect the city with the river, and in B. C. 550 this canal had to be still further prolonged to meet the still receding river. These facts afforded geological evidence of the antiquity of the city. Mr. Boscawen then proceeded to describe the temple which Mr. Rassam had discovered, and pointed out the close resemblance which it presented

to the Jewish temple. Its internal arrangements, and even the names of the different portions, were identical with those of the Jewish temple. The Holy place (*hekal*) was separated from the Holy of Holies (*parrako*) by a veil.

The lecturer next passed to a study of the civil portions of the temple, and remarked how close a parallel these presented to those of the Mohammedan mosque. The temple was the treasury. It was also the school, and, like the mosque, was supported by glebe or *wakuf* estates and by a regular tithe. As an interesting example of the tithes levied in Babylonia, Mr. Boscawen quoted a very important tablet recording the payment of the tithes by the *major domo* of Belshazzar, and also a list of dues paid by the prince himself on behalf of himself and his father.

The lecturer then described the remarkable discovery made by Mr. Rassam of the treasury of the temple, in which several thousand tablets were stored. These tablets were of the greatest importance, covering a period reaching from the fall of Nineveh, in B. C. 625, until the time of Alexander the Great. These archives threw the greatest light upon all branches of Babylonian social customs, and enabled us to restore the life of the people in the bygone past with the fullest detail. Mr. Boscawen, in concluding his

account of the work, said that great as had been the light thrown upon the history of the city, of which a few years ago we knew so little, it was very meager compared with what might be done when the still buried portions of Sepharvaim shall have been thoroughly explored, and he trusted that the work would now be undertaken and thoroughly and systematically carried out.—*London Times*.

**The Canada Fishery Question.**

Fish, like insects, swarm around a light, and this fact may have an importance which the *Evening Journal* (Ottawa) thinks may have a bearing upon the fishery dispute between Canada and the United States. The United States steamship *Albatross* has been fitted up with electric lamps for fishing purposes. These lamps are incased in wire netting. The fish, attracted by the lights, swarm into the nets and are easily caught without other bait. If the electric light, as is now claimed, will answer all the purposes of bait, the Americans will have no occasion to buy of Canadians, and Canadian fishermen will lose one of the natural advantages that they now have over Americans.



**EXPLOSION OF AN OSTRICH EGG.**

history of the beginning and progress of civilization until the coming of the Great Cataclysm were placed by Xisathrus, the Chaldean Noah. Explorations on this site, although not indicating so remote an antiquity as antediluvian times, nevertheless clearly assigned to the temple of the Sun God, which formed the center of the city, an antiquity far exceeding any hitherto ascribed to events in Chaldean history.

The lecturer then described the discovery of this site by Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, in 1880, in the ruins at Aboo Hubba, about nine miles from the banks of the Euphrates and about forty-five miles from Babylon. The explorations in the temple resulted in the recovery of several inscriptions which clearly proved the existence of the temple and city as early as the 39th century before the Christian era. Mr. Boscawen carefully described the evidence on which the antiquity of the famous Babylonian Sargon's inscription was based. The historical statements on the cylinder of Nabonidus were in all other particulars accurate. The presumption was, therefore, strongly in favor of the authenticity of this remote date of 3,200 years prior to the restoration, in B. C. 550. On palaeographical grounds,