

for such refreshment? Yet if one wants it at Troy, Albany, Newburgh, Springfield, Hartford, Middletown, New London, Trenton, Norfolk, Louisville, St. Louis, Memphis, Vicksburg, what is offered? What was lost for Brooklyn when the brow of its heights was wholly given up to paved streets and private occupation! What resources is Burlington wasting!

The wayfarer in Lynchburg may come to know by a chance glimpse at a street-corner that that city holds one of the greatest treasures of scenery at its command; but if he would see more of it, he must ask leave to climb a church-steeple, or, what is better, plod off by a dusty road to a point beyond the city's squalid outskirts, where the James river will give him undisturbed space for western contemplation. Many such illustrations of the general fact might be given.

But one who believes that Ruskin is describing tendencies of civilized movement rather than stages attained, as he looks over our land, is not left cheerless. Years ago a traveler arriving in Buffalo asked in vain where he could go to look out on the lake. "The lake?" he would be answered in the spirit of the middle ages; "nobody here wants to look at the lake; we hate the lake." And he might find that two large public squares had been laid out, furnished and planted, leaving a block between them and the edge of a bluff to be so built over as to shut off all view from the squares toward the lake and toward sunset. But lately land has been bought and prepared, and is much resorted to, expressly for the enjoyment of this view. This new public property also commands a river effect such as can be seen, I believe, nowhere else,—a certain quivering of the surface and a rare tone of color, the result of the crowding upward of the lake waters as they enter the deep portal of the Niagara. Is the regard paid to these elements of natural scenery by the city less an evidence of growing civilization than is given in the granite statues on its court-house or in its soldiers' monument? San Francisco holds a grand outlook upon the Pacific; New Haven has acquired a noble eminence overlooking the Sound. Be it remembered, also, that at Chicago and at Detroit, at Halifax and at Bridgeport, sites have been secured at which the public interest in great, simple, undecorated waters may be worthily cared for.

Between the two neighboring cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis the Mississippi flows majestically. Its banks are bold and nobly wooded, a virgin American forest. Mr. Horace Cleveland, a veteran artist, a kinsman of the President's, is urging upon the people of these two cities that they secure the opportunity thus offered for a public ground common to both with which no other city recreation-ground could be brought in comparison. If Mr. Ruskin be right, it speaks well for the health of these two wonderfully growing communities that the suggestion has been gravely received and is earnestly debated.

A small space, it should not be forgotten, may serve to present a choice refreshment to a city, provided the circumstances are favorable for an extended outlook upon natural elements of scenery. This is seen in Durham Terrace at Montreal, the inward as well as the riverward characteristic scenes of which Mr. Howells has described in "Their Wedding Journey." Another illustration of the fact may be found in a queer little

half-public place, half-domestic back-yard, from which the river may be overlooked if any one cares for it, at Hudson, New York. Yet another may be come upon at Providence, a public balcony, not more than a hundred feet square, thrown out from a hill-side street. A trifling affair, but a trifle that expresses much of public civilization.

For low-lying towns upon the sea or lake coasts, promenade piers will generally offer the best means to the purpose. A simple promenade pier built with tree-trunks from neighboring woods, nicely hewn, nicely adzed, nicely notched, nicely pinned, without a bolt or strap of iron, with no paint or applied "gingerbread," built by a village bee, would be a work worthy to be celebrated in a wood-cut poem of THE CENTURY.

Frederick Law Olmsted.

Ocean Signal Stations.

THERE is, perhaps, no question in science in which there has been so large an admixture of speculation and fact as in the attempts made to reduce to general rules the phenomena attendant upon storms, the reason being that meteorological observatories were too few in number, and too widely separated to procure the necessary data without drawing largely upon conjecture.

The introduction of the electric telegraph has contributed greatly to the solid advancement of the science of meteorology, which, more than any other, must depend upon extensive and carefully conducted observations. In this respect the United States stand preëminent, having at the present time nearly eight hundred observing stations. One of the results of the increase in the number of meteorological stations on the land, is the valuable system of storm warnings, or weather indications, now so widely studied.

From the ocean, however, until recently it has not been considered possible to obtain accurate knowledge of meteorological conditions, except such as might be compiled from the logs of incoming vessels.

In order to overcome this serious defect in the world's weather service, I have prepared the following practicable plan for the collation and distribution of meteorological data from the North Atlantic Ocean. The system as designed embodies the construction of a number of lightships of peculiar form, which are to be moored at intervals across the Atlantic Ocean, displaying weather and code signals, and the laying of a submarine telegraph cable connecting each of these floating stations with the telegraph systems of Europe and America. The hull of the station is cylindrical in shape, the bottom or lower end being flat, securing a maximum buoyancy. The top, or upper end, is convex, with a pitch of thirty degrees, presenting a minimum surface of resistance to either wind or sea.

The hull, when in position, will be submerged nearly to the level of the upper deck, maintaining at all times an equilibrium as nearly perfect as is possible. For regulating the depth of submersion, two large tanks having a capacity of many hundred tons of water ballast are placed in the lower hold.

From the upper deck, a skeleton-like tubular iron framework arises, at the top of which are placed the lantern and lighting apparatus, the latter consisting

of a Fresnel lens of the first order and an electric arc light, forming a beacon of the greatest range of illumination and brilliancy.

The tubular columns supporting the lantern serve as smoke, steam, and ventilating shafts, one being used as a stairway to the lookout and signal box, situated just below the lantern.

The interior of the station is subdivided into cabins, observing, electrical machinery, and other departments. For ventilating purposes, two of the tubular columns will contain powerful fan-wheels, the one supplying pure fresh air, while the other exhausts the foul air and gases accumulating below the decks. These fans are calculated to furnish seventy-five hundred cubic feet of air per minute—a quantity more than sufficient for all necessities.

For mooring purposes, a peculiar form of anchor, known as the mushroom, is to be used in connection with a light steel cable of small diameter, the great buoyancy of this form of station readily sustaining the immense weight of cable required to anchor in the great depths of the ocean, varying from one thousand to three thousand fathoms, the average depth on the telegraph plateau being two thousand four hundred fathoms.

To provide electrical communication between the stations and the two continents, a submarine telegraph cable is to be laid between Europe and America, and connected with each of the intermediate stations. In order to avoid strain or injury to the main cable, the local or direct connection will be made by means of a secondary cable, buoyed in the immediate vicinity of the station. The motion of these ships in heavy weather will be slow and easy, and with absolutely no strain upon either the hull or mooring cable. The fact of the stations being so nearly submerged and presenting but a minimum surface of resistance to the elements, places their ability to ride in safety through the severest Atlantic gale beyond all doubt. Comfortable quarters are provided for the meteorologists, electricians, and crew necessary to properly attend to the management of such stations.

The system is also intended to record the movements of shipping at sea, especially of the great fleet of passenger steamships, the observers reporting the location and condition of each ship as signaled. By reason of the almost constant knowledge of the progress of steamships, the anxieties of the world would be greatly allayed when, by disabled machinery or other mishaps, a steamship compelled to proceed under sail-power alone becomes long overdue.

The stations, being moored in known latitudes and longitudes, will become points of departure for mariners who through stress of weather have lost their reckoning and bearings.

F. A. Cloudman.

RONDOUT, N. Y.

Pronunciation of Alien Words.

I WOULD like to ask through your columns the proper treatment of such words, in the matter of pronunciation, and perhaps of spelling also, as have come into daily use among us from other languages, many of them being proper names, as of persons, geographical, etc. As an instance, I had occasion a few days

ago to mention the Simplon in connection with a small collection of Alpine flowers I had gathered last year on this famous pass, and pronounced it, according to its spelling, in English sounds. I was met with an interrogation from one of my audience, "The Samplon?"

Again, I used the word to express a person employed by another, and spelled it, as I pronounced it, employée. My spelling was corrected to employé.

How are we to escape between the Scylla of misspelling on the one hand, and the Charybdis of mispronunciation on the other? If we pronounce *Simplon*, *employé*, and other like words according to the rules of their respective languages, are we to set any limits? If so, what limits? If not, must we become familiar with the pronunciation of every language under the sun, words from nearly all of which we meet with in our daily papers? Must the continental traveler speak of *Paris*, and the pulpit of Calvin, as these are pronounced abroad? Or shall we adopt the rule of pronouncing from all languages according to the sounds of our own, and thus maintain a uniformity and consistency that is otherwise impossible to any but a polyglot?

The writer would like to see this question discussed for the benefit of your vast and intelligent *clientèle*.

Marcellus.

THE proper answer to the above questions is not very favorable to those who have not the gift of tongues. For the pronunciation of words which are altogether foreign to the English language, there can be but one rule: pronounce them as nearly as possible as they are pronounced by those to whom they are vernacular. This rule is dictated by both good taste and common sense. The only excuse for violating it is ignorance, of which, in the case of the majority of languages, most of us must, of course, plead guilty. Every well-educated man, however, is to-day supposed to have a knowledge of at least French, German, and Italian, sufficient to enable him to pronounce correctly the few words from those languages which he is likely to meet in general reading. For Chinese, Burmese, and the like, he must consult the authorities or trust to Providence. A blunder in Russian or Choctaw is in a high degree excusable. What is true of pronunciation is equally true of spelling.

But our correspondent's questions—to judge from his examples—cover also a large class of words to which the above rule does not apply; which, in fact, are not really foreign words, but anglicized pronunciations and forms of such words, established and recognized as integral parts of the English language. The language-makers are not fine scholars, and in their mouths French, German, or Italian words, if frequently used, or if especially difficult to pronounce, soon acquire an English sound; and when usage lifts this new sound above the rank of a blunder, we must all recognize it as the only legitimate one. When change of sound is accompanied by a change of spelling, this necessity is obvious to all; when it is not so accompanied, it is common—among certain would-be accurate people—to discard the English and affect a foreign pronunciation. Thus, for example, to say *München* for Munich would at once be condemned as affectation; but it is equally affected to use the German pronunciation of *Berlin* or the French pronun-