☞ Any person who takes the paper regularly from the post office, whether directed to his name or whether he is a subscriber or not, is responsible for the pay.

The courts have decided that refusing to take newspapers from the post-office, or removing and leaving them uncalled for, is prima-facie evidence of intentional fraud.

IN SEPTEMBER.

Mornings frosty grow, and cold,
Brown the grass on hill and wold;
Crows are cawing sharp and clear
Where the rustling corn grows sear;
Mustering flocks of blackbirds call;
Here and there a few leaves fall,
In the meadows larks sing sweet,
Chirps the cricket at our feet—
In September.

Noons are sunny, warm and still;
A golden haze o'erhangs the hill,
Amber sunshine s on the floor
Just within the open door;
Still the crickets call and creak—
Never found, though long we seek—
Oft comes faint report of gun;
Busy flies buzz in the sun—
In September.

Evenings chilly are, and damp,
Early lighted is the lamp;
Fire burns and kettle sings,
Smoke ascends in thin blue rings;
On the rug the children lie;
In the west the soft lights die;
From the eims a robin's song
Rings out sweet, lingers long—
In September.

—*Elizabeth Cole, in St. Nicholas.*

TONS OF LETTERS.

Missives Sent and Received by Washington Officials.

Fifty Thousand Letters a Day Received by the President Alone—How the Mail Is Assorted, Distributed and Answered—Post-Office Notes.

The President of the United States receives daily an average of fifty thousand letters, which, as a rule, are answered or their receipt acknowledged on the day of delivery. To enable him to cope with this vast correspondence, much of which requires not simply a formal reply but considerable research and special knowledge, the Executive is furnished with about ten thousand clerks, who, for convenience, are divided into seven departments, according as their work has to do with our foreign relations, the army or navy, the fiscal machinery of the Government, its internal relations, the postal service or the administration of justice. The heads of these seven principal departments are asked by the President to meet once or twice a week at the White House and form what is known as his Cabinet. At these conferences the more important business of the several departments is discussed, so that the work may be done promptly and harmoniously; and so well regulated is the system that it is not necessary for the President to see personally but a very small part of the Executive correspondence. Two or three sacks only, out of the tons of mail matter that is dumped every morning on the floor of the Washington City post-office, goes to the White House.

This post-office is the third in the country in volume of business, though Washington is only the fourteenth city in population. This is on account of the enormous official mail that passes through Postmaster Conger's hands. During the fiscal year which ended June 30, 1885, the letters received were in excess of 25,000,000, or about 70,000 daily, and of this total it is estimated about 70 per cent goes to the departments.

The refluent tide is even larger, for the out-going delivery includes all the publications of the Government. Statistics in this field would be staggering. They would be on such a huge scale that the figures would lose their meaning. On some days, for instance, during the busy days of Congress, 2,000 large sacks, mostly of Executive documents, will pass through the office, and the average for the summer months is 20,000 sacks a month. Much of this is registered, for greater safety, so that the work thrown on the city force is prodigious.

Evidently, then, the Washington post office is a busy place. It is in a single building, but the clerks agree to endure its contracted spaces, dinginess and vermin on an understanding with it that it won't tumble down during office hours. The postmaster is a son of Senator Conger and an active Republican politician. The clerk in charge of the manipulation of the mail is Mr. Springer. He looks and acts much like General Francis A. Walker, and, like that gentleman, has a knack at turning off business quickly and well. There are "crews" of men in the office all the time, night and day, week days, Sundays and holidays. One section works from seven a. m. to three p. m., one from three to eleven p. m., and one from eleven p. m. to seven a. m.

The busiest time of the day for the incoming mail is early in the morning, when the great night mails arrive. From seven till nine o'clock the office seethes with activity. Shortly before nine o'clock the mail wagons for the departments and the outlying bureaus are hauled up in the rear of the office, and the mail is handed out to them for distribution. These vehicles are of every description, from heavy, red, circus-like vans to neat covered carriages, which have a strong suspicion of twilight and Sunday excursions about them. The heaviest mail generally goes to the Post-office Department, due to the routine correspondence between the department and the 50,000 postmasters of the country. Each postmaster has occasion to write at least four letters each quarter to the department, thus involving a mass of 200,000 letters every ninety days, or more than 2,000 a day from this cause alone. Then there is an equal volume of business in the Dead Letter Bureau, where all uncalled-for, misdirected or unintelligible letters are sent. The other two departments that receive enormous mails are the Interior and the Treasury. The mail for the Pension Bureau of the Interior alone often mounts into the thousands.

All the departments have a mail room where the letters are received and sorted. In the larger departments these rooms have quite a post-office look of their own, and exceed in the volume of business transacted the figures of many towns of considerable size. Here the sacks are opened and the contents distributed into trays or boxes which represent the office of the Secretary and the different bureaus. When thus sorted the letters go to the chief clerks, who go through the pile, whether "confidential" or not. Heads of departments are not supposed to have any guilty secrets, and they certainly have not the time to read all the missives which come to them as confidential matter. So the clerk rips open everything, and many "confidential" letters drop into his waste basket. Communications on business matters the clerk tosses into wicker trays, and these are borne by messengers to the chiefs of division and the heads of rooms having special supervision of the matter. If, however, the letter is seen to be important it is sent up instead of down, and eventually may find its way to the desk of the Secretary, or even to the President. In the ordinary routine, however, a letter first goes to the city post-office, then to the department, and then, step by step, to the chief clerk of the bureau, the chief clerk of division and the particular clerk who is assigned to attend to its subject matter.

Then, in due progress, the reply goes back, on thick white letter paper of official size, elaborately headed, and gathering indorsements as it proceeds—red marks and blue marks, numbers and dates, circles, squares and crosses—till it is finally signed, folded and mailed again. Necessarily there is some red tape, for unless a rigid system was followed there would be fatal confusion in a week in all the large departments. These mysterious marks all have a meaning, as the careless or stupid clerk finds out soon enough, for by them every step is registered and a blunder traced back to its source.

The last hour or two of each office day in the departments is devoted to finishing up the correspondence and signing it. The latter means great drudgery to the Secretaries and their responsible subordinates. Some days these officers sign their names for two hours as rapidly as they can write, with a messenger at their elbow to pass them sheet after sheet, and blot the signature as it is scratched off. Rarely are the contents of the letter noticed, it comes to the desk through the proper channels, and is assumed to be correct. If not, the one who suffers by the error will be likely to complain. Of course the more important correspondence is treated more carefully.

And now the reply begins its travels. Again the department wagons, from the heavy red vans to the suspiciously neat carriages, convey the sacks to the city post-office, where they are emptied and the letters hurried from clerk to clerk. One arranges them in piles, then the canceling stamp and the post mark are put on, and then the first rough distribution by States and chief cities begins. At the city post-office, also, a further distribution takes place to ease the strain on the railway postal clerks. About 20,000 post offices are located by the most direct railway lines, and letters are distributed for these lines, thus saving the railway clerks from a vast task that would have to be done very quickly.

The great official mail goes out to the North and West at ten o'clock at night, but as much matter as possible is sent at four o'clock to help the railway clerks. There are few busier spots than the postal cars on the ten o'clock train between Washington and Baltimore.

The Government mail consists almost entirely of sealed packages, so that little need be said of the methods of handling the lower grades of mail matter. Some parcels go open, however, and these are handled in connection with newspapers, samples, books, shoes, horned toads and other bulky articles. The size of these parcels does not admit of a pigeon-hole basis of distribution. The clerks therefore stand in the arena of a comic amphitheater of labeled pouches rising about them in overlapping tiers, and toss the bundles into the gaping mouths of the sacks. It looks easy, but it is a special art. One calm elderly clerk, who has spent a life shooting pouches, has a perfect aim. It is as beautiful to watch him as he pops the bundles into the proper holes as it is to see Dr. Carver break glass balls or Ewing throw to Gerhardt at second base.—*N. Y. Sun.*

MEETING OF EMPERORS.

They Do Things Better in the Land of the Free and Home of the Brave.

There is a lesson to young men in the preparations that are being made for the meeting between the Czar of Russia and the Emperor of Austria. No doubt many young men have ambition to become Czars or Emperors, but there is nothing in it. It is more trouble than it is worth. These two men, for they are nothing but common men, desired to meet each other and talk it over. Instead of one visiting the other, as ordinary men would do, they agreed, about a year ago, to meet half way, and engineers were set to work to take measurements, and find a town that was exactly half way between the two capitals. The town of Kremsier, in Moravia, was selected, and before it was made public what place they were to meet, the town was taken possession of by troops from both great powers, and surrounded by police and military, so that a mouse could not get in or out of the town without being stepped on. Then arrangements were made to transport the two great men to the meeting place, and railroads and bridges were guarded for fear some enemy would blow them up. Millions of dollars are being expended for protection, for decorations and for music and entertainment. The town is guarded all around and no person is allowed to enter or leave without a pass, and every person who enters the town is under police surveillance, has his lodgings pointed out to him, and he has to have everything he owns searched, to guard against dynamite. These crowned heads will be overcome with nervous prostration, and their bodies will be on nettles until they are once more safe home, and within their castles. They are "loved" by their people, and yet they expect to be murdered any minute. They will be dressed in purple and fine linen, decorated with precious stones, and live on the fat of the land, after some subject has tasted of each dish to see if it is poisoned, and they will seem to be having a real nice visit, but they will expect every minute to have their hind legs blown off by dynamite, or be shot, or poisoned. Why should they take all this trouble, and run so many chances, and go to so much expense, simply to talk together for a little while, when for a penny they could send a postal card containing all they want to say? The telegraph or telephone could do the work, and the great men could breathe freely, which they can not do when they meet as proposed. What business man in America, or what laboring man who is earning a fair living, would change places with the Czar or Emperor? America has lost two Presidents by assassination, but it was the work of cranks. Even with this record before us, our Presidents go where they please unprotected and unarmed. The American President rides about the capital and the country surrounding it like any private citizen, with no fear, while an Emperor, to take a ride, has to be surrounded with an army. The American President takes a tomato can full of angle worms and goes off to the woods fishing, with one or two companions, and is in no more danger than a private citizen. An Emperor, to go fishing, would have to surround the spot where he fished with an army, and then he would feel that he was afraid to get a bite for fear if he pulled on the fish it would blow up the lake. Poor Emperors, we feel for you.—*Peck's Sun.*

GERMS OF DISEASE.

The Different Methods of Their Multiplication.

Life in this world is, as it were, a balancing seesaw between different organisms, in which each helps the rest—a cycle of actions which are to a certain extent dependent on each other.

The molecules of the grain of wheat in part help to construct the muscle cells in a man's arm, and in part furnish fuel for motive power to these cells, while the excreted products of these cells in the form of carbonic acid, urea, etc., and finally the products of decomposition of these cells, may go to construct a new grain of wheat.

But to enable the vegetable to make use of the animal cell as food, the latter must be split up into simpler combinations, and this is effected by micro-organisms of various kinds. The great majority of these minute beings are harmless to man so long as they are confined to his skin and alimentary canal; in fact, every one carries millions of them on and within himself, and it is doubtful whether he could properly digest his food without their help. There are, however, some forms of these little granules and rods, or micrococci and bacteria, which are not so innocent and harmless, but which, on the contrary, produce disease and death in many of those to whose systems they gain admittance.

Some of these disease germs multiply only within the bodies of living animals, so, for instance, those which give rise to small-pox and scarlet fever, they retain their vitality for a time when thrown off in excretions; but they do not increase in number until they gain access to living tissues, and hence the diseases which they cause are propagated by contagion only. Other disease germs multiply, so far as we know, almost exclusively outside the living body, and produce their effects on man not by growing within him, but by poisoning him with their products, as common yeast may be said to be the cause of delirium tremens through the agency of the alcohol which it produces. Malaria is a type of this class.

A third kind multiply both within and without the living body, and some of these appear to especially multiply and flourish in human excreta. As yet we know very little of the life history of these disease germs, or as to how they produce their effects; we are not even certain as to whether they are distinct separate species or whether they may not be some of the common micro-organisms which by overfeeding or otherwise have become abnormal, microscopic monsters as it were, producing evil instead of good.

What we do know is that a very minute quantity of excreta from a case of cholera or typhoid fever may, when introduced into the alimentary canal of a healthy person, produce, in that person disease similar to the one from which the germ originally came; and we also have good reason to believe that if a few such germs fall into a mass of excreta, as in a cesspool, they may under certain conditions multiply very rapidly and render the whole mass of filth infectious, so that any portion of it will be capable of conveying the disease.

Their action is closely analogous to that of yeast, and the diseases which are supposed to be due to such action are known as the zymotic or ferment diseases.

Hence comes one great danger of retaining or storing in the vicinity of human habitations quantities of organic matter suitable for the nourishment of such organisms, for the channels through which such collections may become dangerously inoculated are so numerous and, in the present state of our knowledge so impossible to guard against, that casks of powder or cases of dynamite would be really safer neighbors.

Sewage is not only a source of danger in this way, but also through the products of its decomposition. The most important of these in this connection are the gases and effluvia evolved in putrefaction, such as hydrogen sulphide, ammonium sulphide, carbon dioxide, and certain organic vapors of very complex constitution, chiefly characterized by unpleasant odors.

When concentrated, as in old cesspools or vaults, these may produce suffocation and almost immediate death, or great prostration, violent vomiting and purging, convulsions and death in from one to two days.

The circumstances are rare which produce such effects as these; usually the gases are greatly diluted before being breathed, and the effects are less marked.

Constant exposure to such air impairs health gradually, but distinctly, especially in infants and children, the symptoms produced being loss of appetite, languor, slight headaches, etc.—*J. S. Billings, M. D., in Harper's Magazine.*

MAKING FOLKS HAPPY.

A Fable with a Particularly Pungent Moral.

A Kind-hearted Man who was nearing his End turned his Property into Cash and set out to make some one Happy. To the first man he met he said:

"I have About $3,000 in Money. How much of it would make you Content?"

"Only $3,000? Why I should put all of that into a Piece of Land and have nothing left to build a House!" was the reply.

The same Observation was made to the Second Man, and he promptly answered:

"It is only about Half of the Sum I owe, and as it would go to my Creditors and still leave me in Debt you'd better keep it."

The Third Man scratched his head for a moment as if Greatly Perplexed, and replied:

"While Modesty would Forbid me asking for the Whole Sum, Truth compels me to state that I wouldn't want to open a Faro Bank on less than Five Thousand, nor start in the wholesale Grocery Business with less than $20,000."

The Fourth Man would take the money and help him in a Lawsuit against a Neighbor; the fifth would take it to spite His Wife, with Whom he had Quarreled, and the sixth wanted it to bring out a new Weapon of Destruction.

The good man Returned home and divided the Money among his own children—an Idea which had altogether Escaped him before.

MORAL.

It's a Wonder he did.—*Detroit Free Press.*

—Rabbits are such a pest in Buena Vista Valley, Nev., that the farmers are providing the Indians with powder and shot in order to kill them off.

PIG-PEN PROFITS.

An Animal Which Deserves More of Praise Than He Gets.

During the past few years it has been the fashion of writers on stock-breeding to present the pleasures and profits of raising horses, cattle, sheep and fowls in a very attractive form. Some of them have declared that fortune and happiness can be secured by raising these creatures with greater certainty than by adopting any other pursuit. Even the life of the cowboy has been presented as fascinating. On more than one ranch are young men who by no reverse of fortune have left elegant homes to enjoy what are called the wild delights of the Far West. Many city gentlemen of wealth and leisure have adopted stock-raising as an elegant pursuit. They have paid extravagant prices for cattle and horses as others have for pictures and statuary. Some, who have not indulged in the costly luxury of a stock farm as a means of gratifying their pleasures, have purchased jersey cattle to ornament their lawns, preferring them for this purpose to costly plants or fragrant flowers. Others who have limited grounds have kept fancy fowls. In villages and cities the number of poultry-fanciers has greatly increased during the past few years. Most of these persons would keep cattle, horses and sheep had they sufficient space for the purpose.

But during the time in which the praises of horses, cattle, sheep, chickens and ducks have been sung few have spoken a good word for the pig. A great many bad words, however, have been spoken. Its flesh has been declared to be unwholesome even in its best estate. Many have been led to believe that the body of the average pig is the repository of a large number and great variety of parasites. The circumstance that American pork products have been excluded from several European countries has been regarded by many as furnishing conclusive evidence that they are not fit to be eaten at home. The haters of pork have never intimated that France and Germany have been led to place restrictions on our pork because we placed a heavy duty on their manufactured goods. An attempt has been made to revive all the prejudices entertained by the ancient Jews against the hog. One flippant writer has referred to the hog as "the animal into which a legion of devils went, and from which they never came out." Sensational accounts have been published of the ravages of certain diseases among swine, and the impression has been made on the minds of many that the hog is much more likely to become diseased than any kind of animal or bird used by man for food.

Still, pork continues to be the leading kind of meat among the laboring classes in this country as well as in most of the countries of Europe. It is the kind of meat that contains the smallest amount of waste. It can be cooked in its own fat, and, as butter is not needed to dress it, is more economical than other sorts of meat. Unlike beef and mutton, the fat contained in pork is much more valuable than the flesh itself. Lard, or any sort of hog fat, is used for cooking fish and vegetables, while the fat of cattle and sheep is rarely ever used as human food. It is employed for making candles and soap or used in the preparation of leather. The price of tallow is constantly declining, while that of lard is advancing. People who decline to use pork as a regular article of food are very fond of it as a relish. At the best restaurants in all large cities slices of fried salt pork or side bacon are served with oysters, steaks and chops. The flesh of no domesticated animal has so delicious a flavor as that of the hog. A large proportion of a steer or sheep, aside from the tallow, is of no value as food, but the head, feet and every portion of the pig furnishes excellent food. They are dissimilar in this matter of taste from the flesh of the body of the animal.

The hog is kept on most farms at less cost than other animals. It does not require costly buildings for its protection. It will eat and thrive on many kinds of food that other animals reject. During the summer it will gain in a grass or clover pasture. In the winter it will live on sweet roots or grain. It will utilize the surplus fruit and garden vegetables that are not wanted by the family. It will convert sour and skimmed milk and the leavings of the table into a marketable product. Hogs increase faster than any animals kept on farms, and on that account they are of great value to farmers of small means. Their fecundity renders it easy not only to increase the stock of them, but to improve it. Hogs can be prepared for market much quicker than steers or sheep, and their flesh can be more easily and more cheaply cured. Hogs supply a large proportion of the meat consumed in farm houses, as well as on shipboard, in mining-tents and logging huts. The sum of money derived from the pork products sent abroad is enormous. In the year 1884 it amounted to $59,062,981. Evidently the pig is not deserving of the abuse it receives from many quarters.—*Chicago Times.*

Native Animals.

If there is one animal more than another which fits a majority of uses, it is the native. The native cow supplies most of the milk, butter and cheese; the native sheep supplies the mutton and wool, and the Morgan horse, a native originally, with but very little blue blood in him, is the most useful for the farm, the saddle and the road. Too special advocates of the various pure breeds are entirely justified in their claims for the excellences of their favorites, which have special uses, but are not justified in their efforts to make farmers believe that these animals are suitable for every use and each is the most valuable of all kinds. Much injury has been done by too enthusiastic claims of this kind, as many regretful investors in Jersey cattle have found to their cost. The amateur farmer who can afford it may spend his money to please his fancy, but the working farmer should be careful how he competes with such men, and should consider how he is to get his money back again.—*N. Y. Times.*

—At Woolwich, Eng., a few days ago experiments were made with the object of testing the feasibility of photographing the interior of guns by means of the electric light, so as to detect any flaws. The subjects of the test were two eight-inch muzzle-loading guns. The light was introduced a few inches within the muzzle, and reflected, by way of a mirror, down the bore, the photograph being taken at the breech end. The experiment was fairly satisfactory.

—A gavel in use at San Francisco was made of wood from the ships Kearsarge and Jeannette.

IN A DENTIST'S OFFICE.

The Different Ways in Which People Face a Trying Ordeal—Strong Men Show the Least Nerve.

"Is the extraction of teeth as great a horror as it used to be?" asked a reporter of a Denver dentist.

"Well," he said, "there doesn't seem to be much change. The idea, which is worse than the thing itself, will always contain untold horrors for those who are very nervous, and the prospect can scarcely be expected to be pleasing even to the most phlegmatic temperament."

"Who are the most heroic in this particular?"

"Women, in every instance, particularly invalids. You see, women are accustomed to the endurance of considerable more pain than the world ever dreams of, and frail, delicate creatures sit down and have two or three teeth pulled out without murmuring. The more emotional ones usually look inexpressible gratitude at the dentist when it is all over, and exclaim eloquently as to their relief. Others say nothing, although their faces show that they are glad enough to be rid of the troublesome members."

"Who are your most refractory cases?"

"Great healthy men, who have never suffered an ache or a pain in their lives. They fidget and swear and bellow when they are touched, and usually also in the time the dentist is ready to operate they conclude suddenly that they will suffer it out yet awhile, and that it is not necessary to have anything done. They are perfect babes about their teeth, and never seem to think it worth while to disguise their fear. When accompanied by wives and sisters they are often laughed at for their own cowardice, but they never change countenance. They act as if they were going to be hanged."

"Do you object to the use of anæsthetics?"

"Not in the least. On the contrary, I am in favor of them, but we dentists have to be very careful where we administer them. I can usually tell by a man's looks whether his constitution will stand the application of anæsthetics."

"What, for instance, enables you to tell?"

"A person's manner and his appearance indicate to a physician or dentist whether or not he is of an exceedingly nervous temperament. Any organism may be rendered nervous through overexertion, physical or mental, or through some strain produced on the brain by trouble, but the naturally nervous organism is wholly different from these. It is to the latter constitutions that we refuse to apply anæsthetics, for the result is certain death. These persons invariably fog for chloroform or gas, and when we refuse to give it to them, they use all the efforts in their power to induce us to change our minds. They argue that there is no responsibility in case anything happens, but we know better, and we refuse to be made responsible for corpses. People in bad conditions of mind often come to us, when there is little the matter with their teeth, seeking, as we can easily see, oblivion, caring little what follows. We are very wary in such cases, and it not infrequently occurs that we are thus instrumental in preventing, or at least postponing, calamities."

"Is the effect produced by an anæsthetic uniform?"

"No, indeed. No two people are similarly affected by anæsthetics. Some very quiet people drop easily to sleep, but the majority of human organisms have a hand-to-hand struggle with their ruling passions, while the stupefying sensation is taking possession of them. I once administered chloroform to a newspaper man, and he repeated poetry for fully half an hour, giving the lines with fervor and expression.

"He finally fell asleep with a couplet on his lips. This is a good instance of the subject. Whatever is most strongly impressed on a man's mind, whatever he is living for, or struggling for, is pretty apt to come to the surface when his outer senses are steeped in repose. When his mind is awake it is filled with a certain pride and reticence with a desire to keep its inner workings safe from the view of other men. When it is under the influence of an anæsthetic these safeguards are let down, and professional men catch many unhappy secrets from their patients in the chair. These experiences are singular ones, and can never fail to interest psychologists.

"People think of having their teeth drawn rather than filled, do they not?"

"Some very old-fashioned people consider it cheaper and more effectual to have troublesome teeth drawn at once, but most more progressive sons and daughters prefer to have every effort made to save their teeth, rather than to sacrifice them. The trouble is, people do not have their teeth examined often enough. If they would have the pulp-head cavities attended to they would probably never suffer from toothache, and, in many cases, would never lose their teeth. There is a certain class of quack dentists who will draw a tooth that is nearly sound for the sake of earning a fee, to the everlasting discredit of the profession. It is our business to preserve the teeth, rather than to destroy them, and no tooth should ever be drawn which can possibly be saved and skillfully made to serve its purpose for a number of years."

"Are persons hard to deal in these teeth?"

"You would think so if you spent a day in this establishment. If a woman's teeth have been particularly bad she insists upon having beautiful teeth made, and to fit them into her mouth is a difficult matter. If they are not handsome she will never be satisfied, and there are many who are not willing to pay sufficient prices to enable the dentists to give as much time and thought to the manufacture of their teeth as they might do otherwise."

"Do you experience much trouble in pulling children's teeth?"

"None at all. We never force children into the chair, and if they show signs of nervousness we distract their attention by talking of other things, and sometimes send them home, telling them to call to-morrow, and when they return their little teeth pull easily, and it is soon over. No, sir, it is not the women and children who make the trouble in this business. It is the men, great, strong, hearty creatures who ought to be ashamed of themselves. There comes one of them now. Just look at him. He looks as if he had lost every friend in the world. He will begin by giving the detailed ailments of his teeth, and the vicissitudes through which he has passed with other operators, and I will begin by dosing him up with ether and closing him up. He's not troubled with nerves. It won't hurt him."—*Denver Tribune-Republican.*

—A new story is entitled "The Editor's Wallet," and the Lowell *Citizen* thinks that it must be flat.

STATIONERY.

The Styles That Obtain in Epistolary Writing.

Perhaps you think the headline is a misnomer, but it is not in one sense, and ought not to be in another. We are gradually approaching in these enlightened days that millennium in fashions when every one will adopt that custom and hold it in dress and all similar things which seem best in their eyes, and refuse to be swerved from it by any one else. It has not quite come as yet, and meanwhile each can do something to help it along.

In the matter of one's stationery, the very best "style" is to have a style of one's own. Select carefully the size, grade, tint and general fashion of paper and envelopes which you prefer, and adopt it as your own, using it constantly until it becomes distinctive. This is always possible if you choose a good standard style and grade, as such are kept constantly in stock by stationers, and can always be found, while the senseless and vulgar whims of the hour, the "honiton scroll" borders, the "ragged edges," the "crazy quilt" papers, the hideous orange, blue and red "El Mehdi" which is the latest curiosity, are mushroom fancies which disappear after a month and are known no more.

The plainer and simpler the paper chosen the more elegant. A linen paper, creamy white in tint and a little roughened in finish, is very genteel. Say is a perfectly smooth, satiny, plate finish, which some prefer as easier to write upon. The heaviest qualities of these papers should retail at less than fifty cents per quire, while lighter weights and the smooth finish, which is not plate finished, but looks nearly as well, can be bought as low as fifteen cents per quire.

That is, provided one purchases in quantities of not less than five quires at a time. This is almost the most convenient and cheapest way to do, yet old stationers say that the average woman buys her paper by the single quire ninety times out of a hundred, and changes her style with every change.

Nothing should vary the plainness of the paper except the address, which may be printed or engraved at the top of the sheet, or the crest and arms if one has them. Those are allowable, but monograms and fancy designs of all sorts should be frowned down.

The fashion of using sealing wax, which has recently been revived, is an exceedingly pretty and sensible custom. The seal used should be small, and may be one's crest, arms, monogram or initial, but never a pet name or anything of that sort. As to the wax, it is well to select some favorite color and use it habitually, though many people prefer variety in this, and it is perfectly allowable. A paragraph which went the rounds of the papers last spring gave the sentiments denoted by the various colors of wax, but this is pure nonsense, except that people in mourning should use black. The common color is red, though for a young lady pale green, gray or blue is very pretty. Don't use the wafers made in imitation of seals which one sometimes sees. They are not what they pretend to be, and shams should always be discouraged. The directions for using wax are sometimes elaborate and complicated, but it is really a very simple matter. Hold the stick of wax over the flame of a lamp or gas-jet, as a candle is apt to smoke and burn the wax. When soft, touch to the envelope, and if enough does not come off repeat the process. Make the spot of wax as round as possible. If your seal is round, and to do this a gentle pressure with the fingers does not harm it. Then hold the letter over the lamp, wax downward, till you see it is soft; lay the letter down, take up the seal, breathe upon it, and press it firmly upon the wax, letting it stand a moment to cool. It is well to clean the seal occasionally, and oil it with some fine wear oil to prevent its from sticking to the wax. A dull impression can be made by dusting a little powder, vermilion, of the same hue as the wax, which can be bought at any paint shop, over the seal before using. If it has fine lines, however, this is apt to fill them up and give an unsatisfactory impression.—*Boston Herald.*

Poetry.

"They tell me you're quite a lover of poetry, Gushee?"

"Yes. I love poetry as the eagle does the sunlight."

"What is your definition of poetry?"

"Poetry, my dear fellow, is the sublime in nature, the beautiful in thought."

"I see—the spring bonnet of common speech and all that sort of thing."

"Every man who loves the beautiful has something of the poet in him and feels at times a strange yearning to—"

"Plow the air and lift himself by the boot-straps. Yes, I do to get that way myself. Go on."

"Poetry is the perfume of life, the fragrance of love, the blossom of all good."

"And the distraction of every newspaper man."

"It tills the soul with windows, wings the feet, makes mountains speak and events commune together."

"But it can't pay the rent or put buttons on a shirt."

"Perhaps not, but it can fill a coffin with the manna of Heaven."

"But it can't pick a pie in a poor man's pantry."

"There's no use in wasting eloquence on you, old man. You have no poetry about you."

"May be not, but I've got a little money drawing interest, Tom, and the children are fat and hearty, thank you."—*Chicago Ledger.*

—One of the pillars of our State, a member of the Assembly, with no eloquence to speak of, but plenty of confidence and fearless for the sound of his own voice, grew excited during the last session over what he called "the pressure under a bill." "There's something mysterious in that bill," said he. "It struck me suddenly, as if a little bird brought the news. I can see it in the air, I can feel it in my bones. At any moment there may be an explosion beneath our feet, and then we will see how blind we are."—*Harper's Bazar.*

—The mosquito crop in Florida is said to be smaller than usual this year, owing to the discovery of a St. John hotel-keeper, who tried the experiment of throwing oil into ponds and stagnant bits of water. He found that it prevented the insects from hatching, and his plan is coming into general use in the State.

—A wedding-ring was lost in the sands at Fairfield Beach, Conn., the other day, and a search made for it resulted in the finding of no less than six of the finger adornments, but, strange to say, the sought-for treasure was not among them.—*Hartford Post.*

HOME, FARM AND GARDEN.

—When cooking beans add one-half teaspoon of saleratus.—*The Caterer.*

—Water in which borax is dissolved is good for the hair, and also to whiten the face and hands.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

—Deep cultivation and a fine condition of the soil are as important as the use of manure and superior varieties of plants.

—Sluggish streams and puddles which are used by hogs become very filthy in a short time and are often the cause of hog cholera and other diseases.

—A Sure Cure for Soft Corns. One drop of carbolic acid in sixty drops of water. Dampen a little cotton and put it on the corn. Apply two or three times a day. You can remove the corn in a week.—*Boston Globe.*

—Veal loaf made in this way is a nice relish for lunch. Mince half a pound of cold veal very fine and mix it with two ounces of bread crumbs that have been soaked in milk. Season with pepper, salt and nutmeg, and add beaten eggs. Put in a buttered mold, and boil for one hour.—*Serve cold.*

—The faulty plums, which fall before ripening, should be carefully destroyed, as the egg deposited in the fruit, which caused it to drop from the stem, will develop into parasites which may utterly destroy the whole plum crop. For this very reason hogs should always have the run of the plum orchard.—*Chicago Tribune.*

—It will interest the *British Medical Journal* to learn that the elevation of the head of the bed, by placing under each leg a block of wood the thickness of two bricks, is an effective remedy for cramps. Patients who have suffered at night, arising almost with pain, have found this plan to afford immediate, certain and permanent relief.

—There is more waste in the potato crop than in any other but if the smaller and scabby potatoes are boiled and mixed with meal for pigs they will pay nearly or quite as well as the sound potatoes, which have been marketed at low prices the past two years. Other vegetables may be added to give variety to the diet.—*Orange New Yorker.*

—Potpie. Sometimes when boiling beef or chicken, three-quarters of an hour before serving dinner I stir up a batter with one quart of sour cream, one egg, one teaspoonful of soda and one-half teaspoonful of salt. Make it still enough with flour to drop readily from a spoon. Pour it in with the boiling meat, and it makes a very nice potpie.—*New England Farmer.*

—Attention has been called in the daily papers to a practice prevalent in some parts of the country, which appears to illustrate the power possessed by milk of absorbing atmospheric impurities. It is that of placing a saucer of new milk in a larder, in order to preserve meat or game from taint. It is said that not only does it answer the purpose, but that the milk, after a few hours, becomes so bad that no animal will touch it.—*Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

—Sponge Cake. One and a quarter pounds of pulverized sugar, one half pound flour, twelve eggs, the grated rind and juice of one lemon, one and a teaspoonful of baking powder sifted into the flour, a little salt. Beat the yolks of the eggs and sugar very thoroughly, then add the lemon and the beaten whites of the eggs, and the flour. Do not butter the pans, and when baked turn upside-down to cool. It usually takes three hours.—*A. L. Lewis.*

SEED-CORN.

The Fall Selection of Seed. How to Insure Vitality.

The early fall is the best time in which to make the selection, because corn then selected can be so kept as to insure its vitality when used for seed, and also because selection at this time better enables the farmer to improve his corn by the choice of that which possesses the greatest number of good qualities. Trials of many varieties on the university farms, from different parts of Illinois and other States, have shown me that very many localities have varieties of great merit, often better adapted to the soil and climate than would be almost any variety brought from other regions. While I would encourage the trial of promising new varieties and experimenting in crossing, I count it unwise to abandon the cultivation of varieties which have been thoroughly tested and found satisfactory in any locality.

Selection of seed from the bin, especially if this be done in the spring, only gives opportunity for the choice of satisfactory ears. Selection in the field in the early autumn, gives opportunity to determine the comparative earliness of the chosen ears and the character of the stalks on which they were produced. And in both these respects great differences will be found in corn of the same variety, even when growing in the same hill.

Among undesirable qualities for any northern region may be named excessive size of stalk, in length or thickness, or the opposite extremes, the habit of bearing the ears very high up on long or very thick "shanks," ears of great thickness, or with marked differences in thickness at butt and tip, shallow kernels and failure to "fill out" well at the ends of the ears. Others of importance might be named. It will be seen that there is a much better opportunity of getting what we want, as in some of those named, by selection in the field than in any other way, and of some no judgment could be formed at any other time.

My own belief is that with the dent varieties, almost universally grown in the West, we have stalk, leaf and root enough to produce more than one good ear of corn, and that if we repeatedly selected with reference to the production of, say, two ears, instead of one, thereby selecting in practice from stalks producing but one ear, we would make a decided gain. Whether this be true or not, there are abundant reasons for early selection and from the field.

There is no necessity that corn designed for seed should fully mature in the stalk. Experiments have shown apparently strong vitality in kernels which were shrivelled up from the ears having been checked long before maturity. I would not advise this practice, but there can be no objection to picking seed-corn some weeks before it would do to put in the crib. The essentials in treatment of the corn seem to be that both kernels and cob shall become pretty thoroughly dry before there is severe freezing. Fire heat may be used to secure this, but it is usually not essential. The old plan of tying up the ears, pair by pair, by the husks, and hanging them up in a warm, dry room, will almost certainly give good results. I like better the use of the cork-screw wire, put in the butt of each ear and slipped over a vertical wire.—*Prof. S. B. Morrow.*