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TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

Comments and Criticisms Based Upon the Happenings of the Day—Historical and News Notes.

Florida oranges are displaying some of the remarkable rallying powers of Michigan peaches.

Senator Lexow says he is done with Parkhurst. Ah! But is Parkhurst done with Lexow?

There is nothing quite so discouraging to labor as the aftermath of an unsuccessful strike.

The big theater hat will go just as soon as it becomes generally known that it is worn only by women with false hair.

A German scientist says that thinking is one of the chief causes of wrinkles. Perhaps this explains how our Congressmen preserve their good looks.

The male boa constrictor in the London zoological gardens swallowed his mate the other day. And now the scientists are trying to get at the inside facts of the case.

A Brooklyn paper prints a column of directions and explanations about preparing and cooking terrapin. What this country really needs is a good method of making snowballs palatable and nutritious.

The growing attempt to tyrannize over man has taken in Connecticut the malign form of a legislative effort to prevent the employment in shops of women who have able-bodied husbands. Can this be interpreted as anything less than consigning these husbands to the doom of toll?

Another method of exterminating tuberculosis has been discovered and there is hope that it may prove effective. The fact cannot be forgotten, however, that former methods, discovered from time to time and announced with assuring confidence, are still with us, and yet consumption continues to consume, with no apparent diminution of its ordinary appetite.

Always ready to give full recognition and credit to a meritorious bit of newspaper enterprise, we heartily congratulate the Chicago Herald upon the remarkable work of its marine reporter. As soon as La Gasconne was sighted the Herald's ship carpenter went to work with a will and before morning had completely overhauled and reconstructed the overdue Atlantic liner. He remodeled the steamer's hull, cut a series of portholes in her side, tore away part of her upper deck, knocked off several funnels and gave her two additional masts. This is great work for one night.

Is there to be no end to the list of defalcations? Every day adds new names to the long and ominous array of men in trusted positions that were supposed to be honest, but are now revealed to the world as thieves. That is the word. If a tramp steals your overcoat, you call him a thief. If a Sunday school superintendent takes money from a bank or from a corporation of which he is treasurer, he is only a defaulter. Why not call a thief a thief? The higher the position he holds in society the worse should be regarded his crime. Indeed, the well-dressed thief, with pretensions of piety, is by far a greater scoundrel than the fellow of the baser sort. Yet the latter is severely punished, while the former is let off with not half his just deserts.

In spite of all the many crises of a political as well as of an economical character through which France has passed during the past five years, she is furnishing evidence of a prosperity most satisfactory to her old-time allies and many friends in this country. For the first time in a decade the official statistics show a large superiority in the number of births over deaths, while no less than 2,680,750 persons are returned as belonging to the so-called leisure class—that is, possessed of sufficient wealth to enable them to dispense with the necessity of working for their living. There is no other nation in the world, not even our own great and glorious country, that can make such a remarkable showing in proportion to population of the individual wealth and prosperity of its citizens as France. Hats off to Europe's great Republic!

Hamlin Garland, the novelist, told a Chicago audience which had assembled in the interest of ethical culture, that he was a scientific anarchist—a theoretical anarchist—not a real, bona fide, red-shirted, beer-soaked, dynamite-loaded, revolutionary anarchist—but a gentlemanly anarchist who wanted to leave everybody else alone and who wanted to be left alone himself. We doubt Hamlin's sincerity. He doesn't want to be left alone. Why, bless you, no. He delivered his pretty talk in order to attract the public eye. And he is doing it very successfully, too. We don't blame

him. We admire his results but we do wish he would acknowledge that he is pounding his own drum. Why not be honest enough to do this? What sense is there in preaching theoretical anarchy? If that theory could be made practical every one would be truly good—too good to read Mr. Garland's books. But it will only be brought about when again the stars sing together. Theoretical anarchy would make Chicago a terribly poky place and take away all the fun and excitement of life. And we feel sure Hamlin doesn't want such a state of affairs as that.

The millionaires who have flourished on the Pacific slope in recent years furnish some interesting evidence on the subject of short lived fortunes. It is recalled that the owners of eight stupendous fortunes lived in San Francisco only a few years ago. Messrs. Stanford, Huntington, Crocker and Hopkins having millions made in railroads, while the immense wealth of Messrs. Flood, O'Brien, Mackey and Fair was made in mining. Of these great fortunes only that of Huntington remains in the original hands. Mackey is living, but his wealth has shrunk tremendously. The Stanford estate has been dedicated to public uses. The Crocker estate has to support several families. The Hopkins estate is small or now than when Mark Hopkins died. Flood and O'Brien saw their wealth diminish to ordinary proportions before their death, and Fair has just died, and his wealth will be divided into several parts in any case, and may be swallowed up by legal talent.

The North German Lloyd Steamship Company is not likely to win many friends or regain any of the prestige it lost through the sinking of its steamship Elbe by the manner in which it is treating the survivors of that dreadful disaster. Several of those survivors are now in this country, one of whom lost a wife and child in the wreck. They were preceded to the United States by a long cable message from the company's agents in London adjuring the people of this country not to put confidence in any accounts of the disaster they might give. Hoffman, who lost his wife and his son, was brutally described by the company's agents as a man making sensational and untruthful statements to magnify his own importance. With cruelty which seems almost devilish they even set on foot a story that he might have saved his family had he chosen, though he, for his part, declares that his wife was ordered from his side and his boy snatched from his arms when safely in the lifeboat. It is reported that Hoffman was kept under constant espionage by the company's agents in New York and practically made a prisoner. So far as the treatment of this man is concerned it justifies the conclusion that the chief regret of the steamship company is that any passengers were rescued to tell the story of the disaster. There appears to be every evidence that the officers and crew of the ship Elbe were ill-disciplined and cowardly. The mere fact that only one woman was saved, and she chiefly through her expertness in swimming, proves that sufficiently. That only one boat should have safely gotten away from the sinking vessel is evidence of the lack of discipline on board. The mere obvious facts of the horrible casualty condemn the company and what Hoffman or Verera may have to say adds but little weight to the condemnation. The steamship agents are as stupid as they were brutal in persecuting and maligning the few survivors of a disaster in which the servants of the company showed to such very great disadvantage.

Making Newspapers in Syria. A learned Syrian traveler, at present enjoying a sojourn in Buffalo, says that the Syrian papers probably contain not the most distant allusion to the massacres in Armenia. After observing the ways of American newspapers he declared that the Yankee editor was in Paradise and did not know it.

In Beyrout, said he, there is a censor, an officer of the Turkish Government, and to him must be submitted the first copy of every newspaper, and until he approves it not another one may be taken out of the pressroom. As there are some thirteen daily papers in Beyrout it is easy to imagine what an inconvenience this is. It will not do to give the censor proof slips. He must see the entire sheet as it is intended for circulation. While the press waits the censor runs his eye over the journal. If there is a line of news which the government would prefer not to have published, if there is a leader reflecting in the slightest degree upon the conduct of affairs in Constantinople, the censor draws his pencil through it and the matter must be taken out.

In anticipation of such an occurrence Syrian editors always keep in reserve several columns of matter in type. This is all most laudatory of the Sultan, of the Grand Vizier, of all Turkish officialdom. It is carefully made up in portions of varying lengths, stickfuls, two-stickfuls, half columns, and squibs. If the censor orders part of the first forms out these tales of fulsome flattery are immediately substituted, a fresh impression taken, the censor approves, and the presses are started up.—Buffalo Courier.



ROBABLY every girl has at some time or other formed a vague and misty picture of the man she intends to marry. This ideal husband, as a rule, is endowed with every mental, moral and physical grace. Faults are left out entirely from his general make-up, and yet he is by no means to be of such uncommon clay that he will be above exhibiting a demonstrative affection and adoring admiration for the woman who has so long enshrined his image in the holiest recess of her heart. Girls seldom marry their first ideals and it is a blessed thing that they do not, for those brain pictures have a kaleidoscopic fashion of changing, and the woman of 23 admires a very different creature from the girl of 17.

Again ideal men are not real men, and a woman wants something that she can more thoroughly rely upon than a bunch of visionary perfection. Let a man come alone whom the woman's heart recognizes as the one being in the world to make her happy, and away go those phantom pictures over which she has spent so many moments in maiden meditation.

The ideal man may have been tall and fair, the real one dark and dumpy, but if he is beloved he will be sufficiently beautiful to satisfy even the idealist conception. Men and women are but loving, breathing human beings after all, and it is much better for faults to be seen than to build up an exalted sentiment regarding frail humanity which is found by the very nature of things to be shattered at some time sooner or later. Isn't it ever so much more delightful to avoid this crash by looking matters fairly in the face and saying: "This man or this woman cannot be without faults," and with this prosaic and practical basis to start on bring into the home life those two fire-side pets, the bears of matrimony, "bear and forebear," and, though it may not seem as romantic as to begin life in adoring contemplation of a fancied perfection, it wears ever so much better in the long run and brings more complete happiness than the other form can ever hope to attain. Throw aside the ideals, enshroud the real with a little fiction, if you will, but never lose sight of the fact that the ideal man or woman has no place on this earth, and, if you have a desire for unclouded happiness, do not set up housekeeping with either an ideal man or an ideal woman.

Two Stylish Gowns.



A Girl's Marriageable Age. The age of marriage should be determined by the understanding of both principals as to the nature of their bond, writes Mrs. Burton Harrison in some very wise words under the title of "Heigh Ho! for a Husband," in the January Ladies' Home Journal. It must always seem to an older person who has had experience in observation of careers "made or marred" by marriage that the mistake is apt to be in impetuous judgment, rather than immaturity or the reverse. One has seen quite as many failures resulting from the mating of gray hair with middle ages as from the nuptials of eighteen with two-and-twenty. As a general thing, indeed, young hearts seem to grow more together, to accept the inevitable of life more frankly, to be more lenient with offending for love's

make than do their elders. Old lovers who have spent their lives together in their journey through life have a fund of tenderness in recollection of their common youth that is a fountain sealed at which they alone can refresh themselves. Then in youth hard knocks are borne so easily together; laughter is so apt to come after tears; hopes shared are sustaining even in disappointment! These thoughts make an early marriage sacred from the common gibes about "rushing blindfold into a pit," "tying a millstone around one's neck," "marrying in haste to repent at leisure," etc.

But materialism is the governing power of our age and society. When certain indispensables are now lacking to a home discontent and heartburning are as often seen lurking near.

A Modish Dream Robe.



Why Cindy's Nose Turns Up. Sweetheart Cindy's hair is faxen, Fine as cocoon silk. Tumbling over tempting shoulders White and rich as milk. Cindy's eyes are big as marbles, Liquid as the dew. Bright as morning stars and colored With the sky's own blue. Cindy's nose turns up a little—Not abrupt or high—But enough to challenge notice, And I wondered why, Till I found the lips below it Pouting with a kiss; Then I knew that Nature had not Fashioned it amiss. Clarence Outley.

Uncrowned Queens.

There are in Philadelphia fifteen working women's associations.

Miss Varina Anne Davis, daughter of Jefferson Davis, has her first novel ready for publication.

The Princess of Wales and her daughter have taken up wood carving as a means of pleasant occupation.

The physicians of Mrs. Humphrey Ward have ordered her to discontinue her literary labors for a long time.

Miss Clara Brett Martin, the leading woman lawyer of Canada, has been nominated for school trustee of Toronto.

Mrs. Maria Lawrence, of Palmer, Mass., has obtained a position as a member of the fire department of the town.

Mrs. Dodge (Anna G. Peabody, formerly of Newburyport, Mass.) is a member of the Hawaiian Board of Education.

The recent death of Miss Christina Rossetti has been the subject of many expressions of regret in the current English periodicals.

Mrs. M. H. Evans, of Watsville, Va., has carried the mail between Watsville and Temperanceville, eighteen miles, for the last six years.

The buckles which are sold separately for the decoration of stock collars can now be had in crystal, moonstones, rhinestones, silver, gold, steel and jet.

Mrs. Sarah Grand is at work on a new novel. She refused to tell an interviewer what the nature of the new book would be and would not even disclose its title.

Paris Skirt for Double-Width Cloth.



TOPICS FOR FARMERS

A DEPARTMENT PREPARED FOR OUR RURAL FRIENDS.

The Most Profitable Stock for the Farm—How to Measure an Acre—Independence of Farm Life—Hen House Should Be Warm.

Profitable Farm Stock.

In answer to the question as to the most profitable stock for the farm, Mr. Powell said at a farmers' meeting recently: "The first talk upon agricultural topics I ever heard was by Solon Robinson, and the first words of it were, 'Don't put all your eggs in one basket.' And I cannot give a better answer to your question than this. Study your conditions and carry more than one kind of stock, making each kind supplementary to the other or to some other purpose of the farm work. For the dairy farm a good line of pig stock will prove a profitable investment. This is especially so on a butter farm, or a milk farm where skim milk is returned. There is and always will be a demand for country fed hams, shoulders and bacon. It is impossible to overdo in the line of pig production. Or, raise lambs. Australia and South America can outdo us in the production of wool all the time, but we can hold our own when it comes to hot-house lambs. Mutton is the highest-priced meat in the market, and there is not a farmer or fruit-grower or dairyman that cannot carry a tidy flock of sheep with his other business, and, beyond first cost, hardly know that he has them until time for marketing comes. The hot-house lambs we grow bring \$10 each, and any one can get this who will bring a good article to the market at the right time. Another line every farmer should carry is poultry. Of horses, I will only say that the time is coming when there will be a demand for finely bred, closely matched driving horses, and whoever has them will find his profit."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Measuring an Acre.

Few farmers know the size of their fields or how many acres they contain. It is desirable—in fact, indispensable—for good work that a farmer should know this. Good cotton cord, the size of a plow line, should be kept for this purpose. To make one, buy sixty-seven feet of cotton rope, one inch round, fasten a ring at each end, and make these rings precisely sixty-six feet apart. This is four rods. Tie a piece of red rag in the center. One-acre of ground will be a piece four of these cords long and two and a half wide, equal to 16x10 rods, making 160 square rods to an acre. The advantage of the rings is that one person can measure by driving a stake in the ground to hold the rope while he stretches it out. The rope should be soaked in tar and then dried. This will prevent its shrinking.

Last year a neighbor of the writer had a heavy sod plowed by contract at \$2.50 per acre. Three persons stepped it off. One said it was four acres; another made it a little over five, and the third said it was three and a half acres. The contractor sent over and got this rope, and all five men measured it, and it was found to be just three and a half acres. He had paid to have the grass cut off it for three years at \$1 per acre, or \$5 each season, counting it to be five acres in extent, thus losing \$4.50 through ignorance.

Life on the Farm.

A prosperous and intelligent farmer sat in this office a short time ago discussing the events of the last year; the financial panic, the unexplained business depression, the industrial unrest and the progress of a rebellion against the government, which, if not arrested, would have ended in civil war. "Well," he said, as he rose to go, "I am going back to my farm and let the old world go on its own gait. I am happy there. Nothing disturbs me. In the worst year that can come I will have plenty to support my family. I will have my books and papers and know what is going on outside, but I am safe. Panic and trade revulsions do not affect me at all, and even a revolution would hardly disturb me in my quiet nook." Now, bright people have been cudgeling their brains to make out a picture of the future Utopia, but there is nothing, even in the dreams of visionaries, that is much nearer to a condition of material happiness than this? Hardship and struggle are there and everywhere. Life without struggle would be worthless. But there is also independence; and, with industry and frugality, absolute assurance against future distress. It would be an untold blessing if armies of the unemployed and of the unfortunate could be transplanted to the farm. In Minnesota alone there are opportunities enough for millions.—St. Paul Pioneer Press.

Dry Rot in Timber.

A correspondent of the Country Gentleman questions the correctness of Prof. Brewer's recent assertion that "posts set top end down last longer than those set butt end down." He says he once built a fence, and set a number of marked posts top end down. After twenty years the fence was built over and the marked posts were decayed the same as the others. He also doubts Prof. Brewer's statement that

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Warmth in the Hen House.

In the very coldest weather it pays to introduce artificial heat into the hen house. A small coal stove does not cost much, and a fire in it made once a day will keep the temperature right and the fowls will be as happy as in spring-time. It is cold weather quite as much as the difference in feed that makes eggs scarce in winter. Besides, in the coldest weather there is always temptation to feed corn for warmth. The stove in the hen house, carefully guarded against fire, is cheaper as well as better for the fowls than giving them a corn diet so as to keep them warm.

Tomatoes.

The tomato of to-day is actually the poor man's food and one of the rich man's choicest viands. They are in demand both in and out of season, and are a relished dish prepared in a hundred different ways. They are No. 1 to eat as plucked from the vine, no less so sliced with salt and vinegar, equally as well cooked either with cream or with butter, better as fried in butter and flour with gravy, and fine when prepared as oyster soup by cutting the acid with soda. Tomatoes can be grown on most any soil that will grow corn, though the better the soil the more likely you are to grow a paying crop. Fresh manure is to be avoided, as it produces too rank a growth of vines and has more of a tendency to produce rot. A good soil that will hold moisture well in a dry season is as good as any, especially if it is a clover sod.—Ohio Farmer.

Farm Notes.

For tree wounds various things are used. Perhaps the best material is tar, long used by Professor Sargent with excellent results. At the Kew garret tar and carbolic acid is used with entire success. The Robertson cow ration, including a mixture of sunflower seed, gave an increase over older methods of feeding, but not enough to pay for the extra trouble and cost, said the Vermont station director. The most successful poultry breeders separate pullets and cockerels as soon as they are half grown. They develop better, and in all respects do better. A few quarrelsome cockerels disturb the peace of a whole yard of fowls. Animals cannot be fed by a rule. Each one must receive what it may require, and this can be only known by observation. Animals differ, and the quantity of food that may satisfy the demands of one may be insufficient for another. As much as five hundred pounds of sulphate of murex may be applied to an acre of ground, and while it is best to do so in the fall, on very heavy soils, yet early in the spring is an excellent period for applying. If good wood ashes can be obtained cheaply they are better than salts. A heavy application of ground bone will produce excellent results for several years, for the reason that the bone gives off its particles slowly, and is not dissolved for several seasons. For immediate results acidulated rock or bone superphosphate should be used. In the latter form there is always a fair proportion of nitrogen. Watch a sod orchard. It will begin to fall before you know it. Barn manures are generally more economically used when applied to farm crops than when applied to orchards, yet they can be used with good results, particularly when rejuvenating old orchards. Everything points to crimson clover as the ideal orchard cover and green manure. Currants and gooseberries do quite as well in the partial shade of medium-sized orchard trees as if fully exposed to the sun. Blackberries and raspberries may also be grown between the trees in an orchard, but if so one must not forget to make double applications of plant food, otherwise the trees or the small fruits will be starved. Successful double cropping must be accompanied by double feeding. Although farmers may not find beef cattle profitable, yet prices are twice as high now as they were half a century ago. Farmers then found cattle profitable, and such should be the case at the present day, as breeds are superior to those of former days, and facilities for transportation to market are more numerous. The largest profits are obtained when the breeds are resorted to for obtaining size and quality.