

## TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

### A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

It looks now as if Spain has discovered America again.

Rosebery is troubled by insomnia. Why doesn't he go to bed and sleep it off?

Some people refuse to see the truth and jump on it as soon as they recognize it.

A New York banker has paid \$14,000 for a dog, but his hired girl still gets \$3 a week.

When people profess not to care what becomes of them it will be noticed that they seldom are hungry at the time.

A Cleveland paper says that "China wants money bad." This ought to offer strong inducements to counterfeiters.

It is very easy to understand why February had only twenty-eight days this year. Two of its days were lent.

A New York paper asks why the wife of Prince Nawab Imad Nawaz Judd Bahadur travels with him. She bears his name.

Sarah Bernhardt was once a dressmaker's apprentice, but it is denied that she is responsible for the living picture craze.

A Pittsburg judge has ruled that a baby may be held as security for its own board bill. How old a baby may be held?

Sing Sing is trying to change its name to Waconda. But Sing Sing by any other name would be just as good a place to keep away from.

The bulldog at last has been properly classified. A man who was attacked by one has sued the owner for assault with a deadly weapon.

If Aldermanic votes are really marketable isn't it about time to inaugurate a system of advertising for bids, so that all can have a fair chance?

The poverty of poets is proverbial. Dr. Holmes left an estate worth \$72,117. Boston Globe. Does the Globe claim that Dr. Holmes was a poor poet?

The National Barbers' Association will try to abolish the 5-cent shaving shop. It will be a hopeless undertaking; the cheap shop has the biggest pull.

A dispatch from Mexico says that Orizaba is in active eruption and roasting the coffee grounds for many miles around. But why roast the coffee grounds?

A dime museum freak who ate window glass for a living has just died in Mobile. It is perhaps needless to add that his death was caused by a pane in the stomach.

A residence in the District of Columbia has one great advantage. A man can worry through the most exciting campaign without being accused of horse-stealing.

The bookkeeper of the Delaware State House explains to an investigating committee that several bundles of vouchers and receipts have been eaten by mice. Rats!

While in New York Count Castellane had 2,500 cigars made for his own use at \$1.50 apiece. It has often been predicted that one day Jay Gould's fortune would go up in smoke. It is going.

A Y. M. C. A. official in Springfield, O., has invented a gun which shoots 1,900 times a minute. That young man probably would make a good working member of the International Peace Association.

Figures are going about showing, among other things, that Chicago has 10,000 thieves and sixty-eight aldermen. Space could be saved and verily preserved by amending the first figure to 10,068 and expunging the remainder of the statement.

Wheat appears to be supplanting wool as the chief agricultural staple in Argentina. The 50,000,000 bushels of wheat produced last harvest are alleged to have brought \$37,000,000 in gold, while the 140,000 tons of wool produced there brought but \$34,500,000.

Prince Nawab Nawaz Jung Bahadur tells a New York paper that "the trouble with American workmen is that they get too much pay. Here they receive \$2 a day; in my country they get \$1.50 a month and they are happy and contented." Why not make them supremely happy by giving them nothing at all?

The temperance women adopted various resolutions before adjourning their convention, one being a protest against military drill for boys. Yet all experience goes to show that systematic physical training is the best known enemy to both dyspepsia and drunkenness. Military drill is not a promoter of war, but an insurer of peace. It is only people who know nothing of the rigor of discipline that want to engage in combat.

It is a significant fact in latter-day college history, that the Yale "Lit" Prize was not awarded this year, because none of the competing essays contained words of that distinction.

This has long been regarded as one of the greatest honors open to undergraduates at Yale, and it comes like a shock to older graduates that out of eleven hundred academic students, not a single one has produced a paper of sufficient merit to be considered for this prize. It looks very much as if those who believe that a decay in scholarship will result from the great attention paid to athletics in our colleges and universities have some ground for their alarm.

What is the use of Chicago making such a fuss over a gas ordinance, anyway? If advices from Cleveland, Ohio, are reliable no one will care very much about the present gas companies next year, and it will make no difference whether they want to charge \$1.50 a thousand or 50 cents. Cleveland has a new sort of gas which can be made to order at a cost of less than 2 cents per thousand feet and which throws ordinary illuminating gas into the shade. The new gas will be sold to consumers in a solid form in cans. It consists of a combination of coal dust and lime dust fused by electricity. A small quantity of this solid immersed in water liberates gas which beats anything now on the market. Let us hope this is something more substantial than a special correspondent's nightmare. If it is the truth, the lucky inventor of the new gas can call the world his own after 6 o'clock at night.

The "razorback," or native Florida hog is the subject of a pamphlet in the last number of the De Land Horticulturist. It says: "In spite of the prevailing business depression which now hangs like a pall over Florida, home-raised pork can be put on the market at 6 1/2 cents per pound. And as one-year-old pigs can, if turned into a chufa, peanut or potato patch, easily be made to weigh 125 pounds, the profits to be derived from this neglected branch of farming are obvious. Few people," said an expert in porcine pointers, "realize the value of the much-despised Florida hog. Smeared at by Yankees, reviled by insolvent truckers, and ignored by those who should be his best friends, the native razorback has certain qualities that should commend him to public attention. He is one of the few Floridians who can pick up his living in the woods. He is a natural chemist and carries about on four long, aesthetic legs a regular chemical laboratory in which he transforms into good white meat, pleasantly diversified with the proverbial streak of fat and lean, the waste products of our woods and swamps.

James J. Hill, of Minnesota, draws attention to an interesting development of recent growth. To a New York reporter Mr. Hill said the other day he had observed that "the movement from the industrial cities to the lands in the Northwest was daily increasing in volume." His opportunities for observation are excellent, inasmuch as he owns and controls an extensive system of railways that penetrates the Northwest; his own books would afford a measure of the reputed migration. Certainly there is every reason to hope that Mr. Hill's observations are correct. They have been in some degree confirmed by reports from the Northwest. The movement, if it really exists, must ultimately bring great relief to the congested cities in the industrial and manufacturing regions. For many years the tendency has been from the country to the cities, young men especially being attracted from the dull routine of farm life to the reputed gayeties and comparative ease of the centers of population. Two years of hard times must have done much to dispel this unhappy illusion. Great part of the suffering from hunger and cold that have befallen in the last two winters has been in the cities. The records of the charitable societies have been a doleful record indeed. Farm life may not be attractive or largely profitable, but in any ordinary times it affords at least a living even to the humblest of toilers. It removes the laborer from the curking and corroding contact with great wealth which excites the cupidity and hatred of the unfortunate without justifying their impotent desire. Best of all, it is a liberal education in the dignity and independence of honest toil.

"Aladdin," "All Baba." Some years ago M. Zotenberg completely vindicated the literary integrity of Galland, who was long believed to have himself invented a number of the tales in "Les Mille et Une Nuits," and deliberately foisted them on the public as Arabian compositions. As those tales—"Aladdin," "All Baba," "Prince Ahmed," "The Envious Sisters," etc.—are among the most fascinating in the whole of that famous story book, this was certainly paying a very high compliment to the great Orientalist's inventive genius, if it did impugn his honesty.

Some candid scholars there were, however, who strongly maintained that, though those narratives were not to be found in any Arabic text of "Elf Layla wa Layla," Galland must have taken them down from the recitals of professional story-tellers in the Levant. But the question was finally settled when M. Zotenberg discovered them in a manuscript copy of "The Nights," which had been recently acquired for the National Library at Paris, and published the Arabic text of the tale of Aladdin and his lamp, together with a monograph on the authenticity of the tales which had been hitherto commonly regarded as spurious.—Notes and Queries.

Customer—Do you know anything that is good for baldness? Barber—Did you ever try a wig, sir?—Yonkers Statesman.

When some people take a hint, they take their hats with it.

## THE FARM AND HOME.

### MATTERS OF INTEREST TO FARMER AND HOUSEWIFE.

**Breeding of Ordinary Work Horses Is Now Unprofitable—Care of Eggs for Hatching—Variety for Fattening Animals—Profit in Sweet Potatoes.**

**Our Changing Customs.**  
To illustrate the necessity of producers keeping pace with the times and the changing conditions of commerce, one has only to instance the introduction of the cable and the electric motor for street railroads to see how far they have discounted the use of horses and mules in the cities of this country. The time was, and it was not so very long ago, either, when in the city of St. Louis there were fully 10,000 animals employed in this service alone. To-day there are not 200. The same kind of change is going on in all the large cities of the Union, and will continue until there is not a line of horse cars in the country. If by the change from horsepower to electricity in this one city alone 10,000 horses are thrown out of employment and on to the market to be sold for what they will bring, what is to be the effect when all cities follow suit and do the same. An exchange presents the following facts:

The introduction of the trolley in Philadelphia is going to cause a revolution along certain lines of industry. An accurate estimate of the number of horses in the various street car stables indicates that from 12,000 to 13,000 animals will in all have been thrown upon the markets after the electric wires have been generally substituted. The placing of these horses on sale will be followed by a drop in prices. This will readily be seen when the fact that the Philadelphia Traction Company sold eighty-seven of its animals for \$430 is taken into account.  
Another passenger railroad company sold eleven horses for \$100. On an average 12,000 pounds of long hay and at least 114,000 pounds of cut hay is consumed by these horses each day. This will make a big difference to the producers who supply the hay to the Philadelphia market. It is said that the shrewd speculators are already calculating on a reduction in price that will follow the decrease in demand. These same horses each consume about sixteen pounds of cracked corn and bran daily, besides the amount of hay already mentioned. Another product of the farm will thus suffer. About 40,000 pounds of straw is also daily used in bedding the horses.—Exchange.

**Care of Eggs for Hatching.**  
Hot weather quickly adds eggs because it stimulates the growth of the germ. But the alternation of hot and cold is still worse, for if the germ has been at all forward it is very sensitive to cold. A very little chill will kill it. Eggs ought never to be placed in tin or earthen vessels. These absorb heat rapidly and are subject to sudden changes. Many think that because the egg is unfrozen it is all right for hatching. This is a mistake. Laying the egg in a wooden vessel with some woolen cloth under the egg, and, if need be, over it, is the best protection. Very many early hatches of eggs have only half the number they should, because the germ in the egg was killed before the hen began to sit on it.

**Variety for Fattening Animals.**  
Because a kind of food is poor in nutritive value, it does not follow that none of it should be given to stock which it is desired to force rapidly. Quite often the poor food is most needed to prevent undue clogging of the digestive apparatus. When we have fattened hogs on corn, a small quantity of wheat middlings in milk, or, if milk cannot be got, in water, was always greedily eaten. So, too, fattening hogs will eat freely of roots, especially of beets or mangels, though these have very small amount of nutrition. If neither the middlings nor roots can be had, give the hogs some chopped clover and see them eat it. They will not eat very much, but the little that they take is necessary as a divisor to prevent their richer food from cloying them. Fattening sheep will always eat a little grain straw if they have a grain ration that contains too much nitrogenous matter. Yet straw of itself is so poor a feed that if given with nothing else sheep will starve on it, and those that are not vigorous will die from lack of nutrition.

**The Sweet Potato for Profit.**  
Sweet potatoes are the most profitable crop that I raise. They will make from 200 to 800 bushels per acre; 1,000 bushels have been made, but under extraordinary circumstances, and the tubers were of poor quality. But with a yield of 200 bushels, and at only 25 cents a bushel, they beat 5-cent cotton a long way. They seldom sell as low as this, and in the spring bring from 50 cents to \$1. Extra fine varieties, such as the Bunch Yam and Spanish Bunch Sweets, bring from \$1 to \$3 a bushel, and the supply is not equal to the demand, and not likely to be for years to come.

There are so many farmers who by ignorance or negligence lose their potatoes that sweets for seed are always in demand at good prices, and often they are very high. I have kept them not only through the summer, but until the next spring, and they germinated, but it took them two or three weeks longer than those of the previous year's growth. The raising of sweet potatoes for seed is quite a business here, and they are sent to every State in the Union, to Canada and South America, and two tubers sent last year by mail to Queensland arrived in good condition. There thousands of acres are planted for the vines in feed milk cows, and it would pay him.

Many seem to think that the sweet

potato is only adapted to warm climates, but it will grow anywhere that the Irish potato will, and in many localities is a more profitable crop. Worn-out cotton lands, if allowed to rest a year, will make a fair crop of sweet potatoes. These poor lands, if planted in sweet potatoes one year, then in cowpeas, will then produce good crops of corn and cotton. Sweet potatoes improve instead of impoverish land, and, as they bring a much better price in proportion to their cost than cotton, it is to be hoped that more will be planted than heretofore. Of all the crops that are raised in the South, I can think of none that will equal Irish and sweet potatoes as mortgage lifters.—Alabama Cor. of the Orange Judd Farmer.

**Growing Wheat for Feeding.**  
Many years ago we heard farmers in a wheat growing section say that it cost no more for them to grow a bushel of wheat than a bushel of shelled corn. It was just after the complete wheat harvesting machines came into use, and these farmers doubtless reckoned the labor of cultivating and harvesting the corn crop as more than offsetting its larger yield per acre. It does not cost as much to cultivate an acre of corn as it used to do. The cost of growing an acre of wheat has increased, for it must now have a dressing of phosphate. But the wheat crop is more certain than it used to be. The fine middlings made from wheat in flouring it makes excellent hog feed. So, too, does the whole wheat when ground and mixed with ground corn. By combining these two feeds a good deal of the wheat crop may be profitably fed to hogs unless wheat prices are higher than they have lately been.—Ex.

**Crops After Buckwheat.**  
The buckwheat crop is one that makes trouble for the next season, as its scattered seeds will grow when warm weather comes. If spring grain is sown the buckwheat will grow up and ripen its crop before the spring grain is harvested. Some of this will be scattered on the ground, but some also will mix with the spring grain and spoil it. We have always heard that if sown in spring the buckwheat will blast without seeding when hot weather comes. It does not do so, however, when the buckwheat is scattered on the ground in the fall, and starts as soon as spring grain is sown in spring. It may be that if sown very early in spring buckwheat would yield as well as it usually does when sown in mid-summer. It often suffers from early fall frosts, and some years, as last season, it is injured by extreme drought and heat while it is growing.—American Cultivator.

**Barnyard Manure.**  
Speaking of barnyard manure, Prof. Bailey says there are sound scientific reasons for the high esteem in which this manure is held. It contains all the fertilizing elements required by plants in forms that insure plentiful crops and permanent fertility to the soil. It not only enriches the soil with the nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash which it contains, but it also renders the stored-up materials of the soil more available, improves its mechanical condition, makes it warmer and enables it to retain more moisture or to draw it up from below.

**An Enemy of the Apple.**  
The codlin moth can be kept somewhat in restraint by keeping the cellar where winter apples are stored well guarded from this time on. Recorded facts show that often hundreds of the moths emerge from barreled and stored fruit. L. O. Howard, now United States entomologist, enumerates several striking instances of this in his excellent account of this pest published in the report of the United States Commissioner of Agriculture for 1887, pages 88-115. Thus, in any case, it would be a good plan to have fine netting over cellar or storeroom windows from March to July.—Denver Field and Farm.

**Orchard Grass.**  
When farmers begin sowing orchard grass they never at first sow enough seed to make plants to cover all the ground. This makes a patchy growth of the orchard grass, which only gradually fills up so as to make a complete sod. Some of this patchiness is inevitable, however thickly the orchard seed is sown, and it is always better to sow clover with orchard grass, so that it may fill in the vacant spaces. Even the clover will require pretty early cutting to get the hay at its best. Orchard grass soon becomes tough and woody after it has headed, and it will head even before the clover and orchard grass will spring up and make a quick even before the clover, and orchard prove the soil so that the orchard grass will grow more quickly into a complete sod with than without it.

**Cultivation Develops New Varieties.**  
In all wild fruits and nuts there is usually very slight variation from the original type. But what there is can be explained when a seed has ripened in some locality where it has had unusual advantages or in an extra favorable season. But so soon as cultivation begins there is a larger variation in the product of seeds. Some will degenerate to the original wild type, but out of a large number a very few may be as good as or better than the parent plant. If among thousands of seedlings there is one that is greatly superior, it will pay for the labor on all the rest. The chances of success are greatly increased if seed for new varieties has been chosen in years which are especially favorable for the growing of perfect fruit among a crop injured by drought or cold weather. This is especially true of the grape crop. All the best new varieties of grapes were originated from seed sown when the fruit reached its highest standard in quality.

## EDUCATIONAL COLUMN.

### NOTES ABOUT SCHOOLS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT.

**The Adoption of Departmental Training in Primary Grades Is Being Strongly Urged—A Problem for the Children—Educational Notes.**

**Departmental Training.**  
The friends of the departmental teaching are strongly urging its adoption in secondary schools, and the arguments pro and con are warmly discussed in the educational papers of to-day. As is customary in all discussions of new theories, extremists take the foremost ground, and urge a complete change in existing methods. Not content with asking for the new regime for advanced pupils, they urge that the plan shall be introduced into all schools, and that the beginner as well as the mature student shall be taught by the departmental plan.

Waving the question as to the wisdom of introducing departmental teaching into academic work, let us consider for a few moments the advantages, or disadvantages, of attempting such teaching in primary grades. The advantages should be the same as are claimed for the plan in the higher grades. If a teacher devotes her entire time to the teaching of arithmetic, for example, and fits herself to teach this subject, it is claimed that she can do more for her pupils in this branch than the teacher who must divide her time and effort among the studies of the curriculum. She becomes a specialist in her subject; knows it from beginning to end. She can follow the child through his work from the first grade to the high school, if she is retained so long in her position, and thus the child will not only secure the advantages to be derived from her special training, but he will be free from the evils arising from the frequent change of teachers in all subjects. The work of to-day will be built upon yesterday's and will prepare for tomorrow's. Consecutive, systematic, coherent work under a specialist in every subject would, it is claimed, be for the advantage arising from departmental teaching. On the other hand, let us ask what the child must forfeit in order to secure this advantage.

A glance at any complete course of study which has been prepared by specialists shows the tendency of each to emphasize his specialty, without due regard to the claims of the other subjects upon the child's time and attention. Even the famous report of the Committee of Ten suggests this tendency. The teacher of science is sure that science is the basis of all knowledge, and that the child's attention and time should first be given to his subject. The teacher of language knows that language is the key which unlocks all knowledge, and is therefore sure that the child's chief effort should be given to this subject. The teacher of history opens volumes which are essential to the child's development, and demand a full course of historical reading. The teacher of drawing asks for exercises which demand hours of patient labor. The teachers of mathematics assign work which would monopolize one half the pupil's time. No one realizes how much he is asking, because each one looks at the child as a student of his own branch, without recognizing the relation of the subjects to one another and to the necessary development of the child. A natural and almost inevitable result of such teaching would be either the overcrowding of the child or the tendency to push him in the lines of his inclination, and to label him dull or indifferent in other subjects.

Again, the growing belief in the minds of faithful teachers of little children is this, that we are called to teach not subjects, but children. That the measure of our work is not mastery of a single subject or a group of subjects but his growth in power, skill, habit, character and ideal. The advocates of concentration are showing us how closely related are the different subjects of study, and how every one needs every other one to reinforce its truth and apply its principles. This concentration, this reinforcement is lost if the child passes from one teacher to another for his lessons. In order to secure true co-operation of the work one thought must be behind it all. The teacher who leads the child to observe the apple or the tree should be the one to read to him Thoreau's "Wild Apples," Burrough's essay on the same subject, or help him to commit to memory Bryant's beautiful "Planting the Apple Tree." His drawing of the apple or the tree would test and reinforce his observation. His language lesson should be a description of what he has seen. This language necessitates a mastery of certain words in spelling. The exercise calls for certain powers to write, but each one is helpful in proportion as it applies and strengthens the truth in other lessons.

All such connections, such co-ordination, is lost if the child passes through the hands of several teachers. Is the gain which we have acknowledged equal to the loss which he must sustain?

If we teach the child as well as the subject we must study the child as well as the subject. One disadvantage of the graded school system lies in the fact that the child must leave his teacher before she knows him well enough to do her best work for him. But because, under present conditions, she has the opportunity to study the child in all school relations, in all his growth and expression, she grows in power to teach and to help him as he remains longer under her care. The last week of the term ought to count for ten times as much as the first week. Her power to serve the child is essential.

**Notes.**  
France had in 1887, 85,554 schools, 136,800 teachers and 3,080,000 scholars. Germany has twenty-one universities, with 1,920 professors and 26,700 students.  
Yale University has 2,350 students this year, a gain of 148 as compared with last year.  
The controversy between the principal of the Petaluma High School, Cal., and the City Board of Education, concerning the re-instatement of a boy who had been expelled from school, terminated by the adoption of a resolution by the board ordering the dismissal of the principal.

tive. She mothers as well as teaches him.

No teacher who sees the child for a single recitation only can grow to this intimate knowledge of the child. She needs to see him under all the conditions of his school life; upon the playground—in his play with his mates—in his study—in his various recitations. He needs the constant, personal inspiring influence of her presence and friendship. If the teacher deserves to teach in any degree, she deserves this opportunity. Can the child who is handed from teacher to teacher grow into this close relationship upon which his ideals, his inspiration, his development so largely depends?

Were teaching an intellectual transaction the questions would be different, but it is more than that. Close contact with a true teacher means more to the child than the mastery of one or many subjects. We would make the relation of teacher and pupil, in the case of little children, closer rather than more separate. Can we do this, if we introduce departmental teaching into the primary school?—Primary Education.

**Good Manners.**  
It has been said that the best of us are only half-civilized—that there is a residue of barbarism in the best human society which is sure to manifest itself in every crisis which provokes strong feeling or puts good manners to the test. Though we know and practice what is just and delicate and fitting in some things, we betray our barbarism in others. An American writer says the English are proverbially lacking in that delicate courage which makes a stranger the recipient of considerate attention; the Germans are ungracious to the last degree when their pride is touched or their interests threatened; even the proverbial politeness of the French gives way when political passion and prejudice is awakened. We Americans, as a rule, are generous and kind-hearted, but we are greatly lacking in that self-restraint and repose which constitute the basis of good manners.

It has been discovered recently that the Japanese are not only the most artistic people in the world, but the best mannered, the most delicately and genuinely considerate of the rights and feelings of others, and that in the matter of real courtesy all other peoples must sit at their feet.

Prof. Edward S. Morse, in a recent address at Vassar College, gave numerous examples of the refined demeanor and polite bearing of this people, who are just now giving the world an exhibition of their sublime courage and exalted patriotism. They consider it inexcusably rude to come in bodily contact with another, and all crowding and jostling where large numbers are assembled is deemed insufferably vulgar. Prof. Morse says that in Japan "one could pass through throngs of thousands as easily as through an open forest."

The true refinement of this people manifests itself in simplicity of dress, house furnishing, and living, and these have their correspondence in neatness, order and cleanliness everywhere. Debris and litter are never seen on the streets or about their dwellings.

It is also said that vandalism, so common with us, is unknown in Japan. Property, public and private, is respected. Public buildings and furniture, monuments, etc., are not hacked and chipped, or defaced with names. Even the boys are too polite to be guilty of vandalism.

What if the Japanese should teach us good manners?

As a practical application of the subject, do we not need a revival of good manners in our schools?

A movement of this kind all along the line could not fail to be productive of good. In our eager pursuit of improved courses of study and better methods of formal instruction, of late, we have in a measure lost sight of the higher and finer ends of culture. Let us have in all our schools a revival of good manners, beginning with the teachers.—Ohio Educational Monthly.

**A Hint to Would-Be Orators.**

Apropos of Lord Randolph Churchill, an incident may be related which is interesting as showing his pluck and vigor. It relates to the noble lord's parliamentary life. He was determined to make an impression upon the House of Commons, but some of his friends doubted the wisdom of his resolution. He said little, but he left London and took up his quarters at an inn in Rutlandshire. Here he spent his days and nights for a period of six weeks, with only an occasional trip to "town" for a day, in writing and delivering speeches. He practically went into training upon every subject of debate. The landlady could hear her lodger hour after hour, day after day, walking about his room delivering speeches, now loud and angry, now soft and persuasive. Perfectly by practice, Lord Randolph Churchill left for town, seized the opportunity, made a big speech, and henceforth became a man to be reckoned with. Only to his intimate friends did he ever refer to his rural training in parliamentary oratory, which has been of such splendid service to him.—Tit-Bits.

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