

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

You never need your self-control more than when you hear a friend tell one of your favorite stories badly.

That Detroit editor who is trying to invent a new dollar should save his energies and try to invent a way to get more of the old ones.

It looks very much as if we are hearing a great telephone and telegraph war. The public can stand cheaper rates with a great deal of patient endurance.

A Philadelphia young lady who sued her ex-sweetheart for \$50,000 for breach of promise compromised in court for \$10. It does not take the new woman long to size up a man at his true value.

Legal matters are getting mixed over in Kentucky, where a witness, imprisoned for refusing to testify, sues the judge and gets a verdict of \$10,000 damages. Witnesses have often been paid for holding their tongues, but not through this Kentucky process.

Mexico has decreed that train robbers captured in the act shall be shot forthwith at the scene of crime. There may be disadvantages attached to a course so rigorous, but as they all fall to the lot of the bandit it is surely his duty to come forward and enter whatever protest may be necessary.

If Jane Addams, the street cleaner of the Nineteenth Ward in Chicago, goes at her job with one-half the enthusiasm that marks the demonstrations of the average woman when she starts in to "clean house," the poor men will soon wish they were living in the primeval wilderness permanently tucked away in their tombs.

Because a minor pugilist said incautiously that Corbett could not knock his head off, this assertion being in response to Corbett's intimation that he would successfully execute that severe and necessarily unpleasant climax of the manly art, the champion demands an apology. The settlement of the question is not of vast importance, but it calls attention to the delicate code of ethics governing the ring. No wonder that so little fighting is permitted to occur near it.

A man convicted of having married three wives, without, in any case, having waited duty to "be off with the old one"—of being a trifle too partial and eager in matrimony—was recommended to mercy by the jury. The reason for the recommendation is not stated, but it must have been admiration of bravery. The Court "considered" the recommendation, and gave him three years—a year per wife. What would the Court have done without the recommendation?

La Gascoigne is evidently hard on piston-rod. Some ships always break the rudder, some always get the screw in trouble, some break the shaft; but the Gascoigne's specialty is piston-rod. Now then, it would be well for the company to have her overhauled, so as to determine whether the piston-rod are wrong, or whether the driving force is in such a condition that no piston-rod can last. Two good warnings are as many as one can expect.

According to a report to the State Department, Russia is about to make a determined effort to reach out for and capture some of the great markets of flour, such as England, the borders of the Mediterranean Sea, and Asia, which are at present largely supplied by the United States. The government is backing the project, and promising to afford special transportation rates and facilities for the export trade in flour, and to advance loans to the Russian millers to enable them to extend their operations.

We ought to raise our own violinists, our actors and actresses, our vocal musicians, and members of brass bands. We must have plenty of men and women for such kinds of business among our population of seventy millions. The American people have almost entirely neglected these profitable branches of industry. We do not believe it would be necessary for us to import any talent from abroad if we would give proper encouragement to the growth of the home article. By doing this we would retain millions of money in the country.

In one of his lectures on journalism, Mr. Dana has told young men in the profession what it is necessary for them to know. Among the things he mentions is the part the American Government is destined to play in the great drama of human affairs. Mr. Dana requires almost too much. If he knows this particular thing himself, he is wronging the age. To reveal it is nothing less than a duty. To the mere citizen, not competent to lecture, it appears that this Government does not sustain a leading role in the drama now on. It may, however, be observed in the orchestra sawing second fiddle.

Railroad activity is a touchstone of business. Here is a pointer: The ordinary wear of cars requires a replacement of nearly or quite 100,000 per year. The last two years, however, this has fallen off one-half and two-thirds respectively, as to freight vehicles alone, and as to passenger cars to next to nothing. The present year, less than six months old, sees as many cars placed for cars as were given in

1894. The cost will be over \$10,000,000; the number over 26,000. In business earnings the same results are shown. Seventeen roads alone in the second week of May exhibited an increase as great as eighty roads did during the first week. It may therefore be assumed that the earnings will be nearly a million dollars, as against four hundred and forty thousand. One-third of that increase comes from the great continental and Western lines. The balance is scattered over the land.

Englishmen, according to Cardinal Vaughan, have reason to regard the Maid of Orleans as the French feel for her, but also with no small amount of real gratitude. To sustain the latter assertion, he brings forward the remarkable argument that, but for Joan's intervention, the Plantagenets might have gained the throne of France, in which case they would certainly have chosen to live in that beautiful country and then there would have been no Kingdom of Great Britain! The Cardinal is evidently a man after Mark Tapley's own heart. It is extremely improbable, however, that the average Britisher will be able to follow the ecclesiastical gentleman's subtle logic to the conclusion he reaches, or to admit that as a place of residence France is so incomparably superior to England that anybody with the chance to live there would be sure to do it.

A kind of reaction has already set in against the theory in medicine that unmy, if not all, of the diseases which human flesh is heir to are caused by minute organisms or their poisonous secretions. As a logical result of this theory, the remedies were sought in substances which would kill the microbes or counteract their pernicious influence, because they are always present in great numbers in diseased tissue. To a large extent treatment still aims at this, but the medical fraternity has come to realize that the destruction of germs is often very difficult, frequently impossible, and at all times so troublesome that if we would have perfect sanitation we must prepare to spend much of our lives in great discomfort. The industrious, untiring microbe hunter has discovered germs everywhere and in everything. Bacteriologists now incline to the belief that microbes, so far from being harmful, are actually beneficial. In other words, microbes, taken in proper doses, assist the natural processes.

A man might invent a means for aerial navigation or perform a mission for the immediate enlightenment of the entire human race without winning the honors he could get as an opera tenor. His name would get into print and people would point at him on the street, this being some, "a peculiarly agreeable form of flattery." He might give a lecture now and then, and his audience would applaud with gentle appreciation. At dinners people would drink his health, and even present him with a fine loving-cup for which he would have no use. His life otherwise would be rather quiet and retiring, and the public would see him comparatively little. The other night the opera season closed in New York, the management giving a sort of haphazard pot-pourri from various operas in order to show off all its stars at once. The opera house was packed to suffocation; the people shouted themselves hoarse, piled the stage knee-deep with flowers and handed up baskets of expensive jewelry to the singers. After which the audience called out the leading tenor about two dozen times and remained shouting and applauding until the lights were turned out. Just what sort of fever it is that seizes an opera audience and converts it into a raging mob remains to be ascertained. The people who gave solid gold wreaths and watches and other trinkets to the singers in New York would have been thought lunatics if they had expended a like amount of money in doing honor to the greatest poet of the age, whoever he may be, or to the greatest statesman. It is apparent that if a man wants to clutter in some kinds of society he does not need profound intellectual gifts or enterprise. All he needs is a few fibers more or less in his voice and the ability to stand before the footlights and be admired.

Proud of His Plaid.
Prof. Blackie frequently staid at my house when lecturing in Glasgow. He was always at his best when we had him alone. One night when we were sitting up together he said in his brusque way: "Whatever other faults I have I am free from vanity." An incredulous smile on my face roused him. "You don't believe that; give me an instance."

"Being thus challenged, I said: "Why do you walk about flourishing a plaid continually?"
"I'll give you the history of that, sir. When I was a poor man, and when my wife and I had our difficulties, she one day drew my attention to the threadbare character of my surcoat, and asked me to order a new one. I told her I could not afford it just then; when she went, like a noble woman, and put her own plaid shawl on my shoulders, and I have worn a plaid ever since in memory of her loving deed!"—Good Words.

Bacteria in the Sardine.
A particular epidemic which attacks fishermen in the form of whitlows on the fingers. They are due, it seems, to the handling of fish which are infected by certain species of bacteria. An interesting feature in the observation is, we are told, that for the production of these whitlows two distinct species of bacteria are necessary.

Hope So.
Scientists predict that in a century's time there will be no disease that is not curable.

WOMAN'S VOICE

A DESIRE for the ballot, which distinguishes what is probably quite a small minority of our feminine population, is motivated by one or other of three considerations, writes the Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst, D. D., in the Ladies' Home Journal. The ballot is claimed by some because of the mistaken notion that suffrage is a right inherent in personality. Other women are suffragists not because they care anything for the ballot in itself considered, but because possessed of those masculine proclivities that make them restless at seeing men do anything that is not themselves allowed to do. Many of this class probably are not so anxious to vote as they are anxious to know that they can vote if they want to. It would be interesting to know how many of such women would be converted from their views if it should seriously be proposed to pass a bill requiring women to vote. Human nature is a peculiar thing, and it certainly will not be ungenerous to say that all the peculiarity is not monopolized by the male sex. Probably the particular stripe of suffragists I am commenting on just now would find the virulence of their distemper measurably relaxed by having the coveted privilege accorded to them for a time. It would work something as in the case of a jealous child who is cured of his jealousy by being allowed to hold it its own hand a little while the exclusive plaything of the mate it is jealous of. There are, however, in the third place a considerable number of women that are considering with a great deal of honesty and womanly seriousness the question whether the ballot, if put into woman's hands, would not be a means of correcting certain evil conditions in society that could be less easily reached in any other way.

It is very easy to have a pronounced opinion upon the effect which such an extension of the ballot would produce, although the data do not seem as yet to be sufficiently at command to give to such pronounced opinions any particular value. Our uneasy sisters would be making a substantial contribution to the cause they have so closely at heart if they, for instance, would canvass two of the wards in this city, say the Tenth and the Twenty-second, and by that means put themselves in condition to inform the public distinctly and authoritatively just what effect would be produced at our next election by having the privilege of suffrage accorded to the women of those two most important districts.

Cheap Writing Board.
Here is a picture of a very cheap and convenient writing board for the lap. Some people find a contrivance of this kind almost indispensable, and if they do not care to incur the expense of buying one at a store the following description will enable them to make it.
Get a flat board of well-seasoned wood and of such size as may suit your convenience. Cover it with cloth of some dark, serviceable color and tack it around the edges with flat brass-headed nails. Or you might get furniture tacks to match the cloth in color. Use



CONVENIENT WRITING BOARD.

hands of good silk elastic for holding the address book, calendar, envelopes, pens, etc. The bands should be tacked down securely. Inkstand, stampbox and penholder may be attached to the board or not, as you choose, but if they are attached it should be by means of carpenter's glue. Mucilage is not strong enough. A flap of cloth may be attached to one side of the board, and this will serve as a cover when the board is not in use. The illustration is from Cassell's Magazine.

A Stenographer's Lesson.
She was a stenographer. She was a pretty stenographer. Moreover, she was a bright girl and she understood her business. She came into a downtown office in answer to an advertisement. I noticed that the manager looked at her critically as she entered but there was no sign of recognition on her face. She expressed herself as desirous of the position and offered some letters of recommendation. The manager took them, read them through carefully and handed them back to her. She waited for his answer.

Again he gave her a searching look and then, as if convinced of her identity, said: "One day last week I was walking down 5th avenue. Directly in front of me was a tall, slender built woman alone. Two girls came up hurriedly from the opposite direction and as they approached I heard one of them say: 'Quick, Jen. See that guy. Isn't she a perfect walking skeleton?' The

other laughed and they passed on. But I noticed the woman blush painfully. Without a doubt she had heard the remark and comprehended its meaning. Do you remember the incident?"

The girl bowed her head and I saw the color creep around to the tips of her ears.

The manager continued: "That woman was my wealthiest client. Do you think it would be advisable for me to introduce you to her as a young lady who would occasionally take her dictation?"

The girl arose silently and passed out of the office. I don't know that she felt any sense of gratitude for the man's rebuke, but she should. Few men would have taken the trouble.

The Husband.
Who weds because we are so dear,
And then forgets—when it is here—
The anniversary every year?
The husband.

Who, when he's donning evening clothes,
Would with an angel come to blows,
And let the whole house hear his woes?
The husband.

Who sometimes makes us quail and quake
With tales about the bread and cake
His mother used to make and bake?
The husband.

Who calls the landlady with a frown,
And then slips out and goes uptown,
While wifery talks that landlady down?
The husband.

But when the clouds are dark and gray
And rain seems not far away,
Who takes the helm and saves the day?
The husband.

Who grumbles lots, as well we know,
That there no wine shall ever flow,
Yet in his heart is glad 'tis so?
The husband.

And so, in water pure and clear,
Fit emblem of our sisters here,
I drink the health of those so dear—
Our husbands.

Won by a Woman.
Women's rights advocates will find pleasure in the remarks of the Civil Service Commission on an examination recently held for library cataloguer and library clerk for the Agricultural Department. Of the thirty applicants



MISS E. B. WALES.

for the former all the men failed to pass, while five out of the sixteen women did so. Of the ten applicants for the latter eight men failed and two women passed. Although Secretary Morton wanted men for the places he was moved by these results to change his mind and appointed Miss E. B. Wales, of Chicago, clerk. Miss Wales received her training in the department of library science at the Armour Institute, and is a young woman of unusual natural ability and intellectual attainment.

Too Many Clothes.
The tired housemother, looking over her clothes closets in the fall, is apt to find them cumbered up with a large amount of old material. The majority of people in well-to-do circumstances have a great many more clothes than they actually need, though their wardrobes may be very unsatisfactory in quality. The average every-day housekeeper is apt to hoard her clothes and shut them up, as she does her piano and her best furniture in her parlor, away from moths and dust, bringing them out only on grand occasions. It is this practice that keeps so many women shabby the greater part of their days. They have a number of gowns put away for Sunday and these "occasions" that never come, while for the main part of their days they go in homespun and calico.

Woman's Sphere

Miss Gertrude Hall will soon publish a volume of Paul Verlaine's poems translated into English.

Mme. Augier, the widow of the celebrated poet and dramatist, Emile Augier, died in Paris recently.

Helen Price, the granddaughter of Rufus Choate, has written a novel. It is called "The Story of Christine Rochefort."

Mrs. Margaret Deland has a passion for dogs. She owns several thoroughbreds, among them a particularly tall and stately mastiff, who strides solemnly behind his mistress in her walks about Boston.

The doctor who pulled the old Xmeer of Afghanistan through his late illness is a young woman of Ayrshire, Scotland, Miss L. Hamilton, who took her medical degree three years ago in Brussels and practiced in Calcutta before she went to Afghanistan.

THE FARM AND HOME.

MATTERS OF INTEREST TO FARMER AND HOUSEWIFE.

Sorghum Needs More Attention than Corn—Valuable Information in Bee Culture—Secret of Making Good Butter—Improving Rented Land—Notes.

The Sorghum Crop.
Sorghum is usually planted in hills about three feet apart each way, or if the ground is not too weedy, in drills three feet apart, leaving the stalks at the last thinning about four to six inches apart in the row. If the crop is to be used for sugar or syrup, the stalks should be about six inches apart in the drill, or about five stalks in the hill. Six or seven stalks could be left in the hill where the crop is to be used for forage. About two quarts of seed of the ordinary varieties are required per acre, when planted in hills, and somewhat more than this amount when sown in drills. Early orange or early amber or some of the other early varieties, says the Country Gentleman, would probably be most sure to give a profitable crop. On land specially adapted to corn or sorghum some of the larger or later varieties might be grown, as they yield much heavier crops; but if any of the crop is to be cut so early as August, the later varieties will not do. The crop needs considerably more attention at the start than corn, but perhaps less after it is a foot or more high. The growth is rather slow for the first few inches, but very rapid at the close of the season. The outer glaze on the stalk is harder than on maize, and the stalks should preferably be fed whole rather than cut into short pieces, to avoid risk of cutting the animals about the mouth. The cane, when mature, will stand for a long time without much deterioration in quality, even after a severe frost, provided warm weather does not follow the frost, or alternating periods of warm and cold occur. Sorghum can be made into ensilage, but will not make as good ensilage as mature corn, being usually quite sour. Some growers have reported keeping sorghum for many weeks cut and set in large bunches in the field.

Items in Bee Culture.
Following are questions asked and answered at the National Illinois convention of beekeepers and reported in the American Bee Journal: Is it best to put the colonies on the old stands when taking out of cellar? Most thought it best if possible, though some did not do it. Is the eight or ten frame Langstroth hive the best? About half use the eight and the balance the ten frame hive. Is it advisable to supersede queens or let the bees do it? Most of the members thought it best to let the bees attend to it, and let the beekeeper watch them, and to supersede when the bees do not attend to it. Which is better, thin or extra thin foundation for sections? Thin. How many use full sheets of foundation in sections? Only one.—Dr. Miller uses full sheets. How many wire brood frames? And is it best? H. W. Lee thought it was not necessary, while others thought that it was. What is the best section holder? Dr. Miller thought the T super, with a follower and wedge, the best. Where a division board is used in the hive, will the bees work as well in the sections over an open space? Not so well.

Care for the Cows.
When you are not running your cows for all there is in them, are you not making a great mistake? Can you honestly say that during the past winter your cows have had the best of care that you were capable of giving them? Can you say that you have made the best butter that it was possible for you to make? If not, why not? Have you all the money that you want? Have you all the farming implements that you would like to have? Your cows would help you reach this desired end if you gave them the best care that you could.

There is no secret in caring for cows or in making good butter, says the National Stockman. Any one can do it if he will only try. It is hard to get out of the way of doing certain things in certain ways, but when there is money in getting them, "let's get it." It costs no more to make a pound of butter that will sell for 30 cents than it does to make a pound of butter that we have trouble in disposing of for 10. It costs less to get a quart of milk from a cow when she gives ten quarts, than when she gives five. Why, then, don't we make her give ten, and make thirty-five cent butter from the ten quarts, where we formerly made ten-cent butter from five quarts? It is slow work at the bottom of the ladder, it is rough always under the harrow; but our cows, if we only have two or three, will help us if we only give them the proper care.

Thick or Thin Seeding.
We remember two experiments in drilling oats which gave exactly contrary results and yet taught a valuable lesson. On the headlands, where the oats were in places twice seeded so as not to make a vacant space, the part where the seeding lapped gave the first year a much larger yield than the portion which had only one seeding. If we were then drilling at the rate of 10 and one-half bushels per acre, the yield was best where nearly or quite five bushels per acre was sown. But we forgot that the season was very wet and the land was rich, so that on the lightly-seeded part much of the grain fell down. Next year we drilled the oats both ways, sowing two bushels each way. The oats came up well, and looked finely until the time for heading out. Then a dry spell came and the oats were a very light crop. Thick or thin seeding depends on the condition

of the soil and the amount of moisture that may probably be expected. In very rich soil thick seeding of grain except in very wet seasons prevents it from growing too rank and the straw breaking down with its own weight.—American Cultivator.

Improving Rented Lands.
A really good farmer will not leave the farm poorer than he found it, even if he only rents instead of owns the land. But in this country every improvement made on rented land goes to the owner of the property, and this fact operates to prevent those from renting who know that their methods of farming make the land more productive. In European countries most of the farming is on rented land, and recently the laws have been changed so as to give the occupant who makes improvements a considerable part of their value. This is really better for both parties. It is not to the advantage of any owner of land to lease it so as to make temporary profit, but have its value constantly decrease until it becomes too poor for anybody to want to rent it.

Scientific Tomato Growing.
Prof. W. W. Munson, of the Maine Experiment Station, says of tomato growing: "The seedlings started in flats are, as soon as they begin to crowd, removed to three-inch pots, later to four-inch, then to the field. Frequent handing has with its been beneficial. Midsummer trimming has hastened the ripening of the fruit then set. Potash in the soil tends to increase the acidity of the fruit, while phosphoric acid produces a larger percentage of sugar, and nitrate of soda, in small amounts, increases the yield without delaying the ripening. Nitrogen is the ruling element in the growth of the tomato, although its best effect depends upon the presence of a full supply of other elements. The best fertilizers for the tomato are those that hasten growth early in the season. Failure to fruit well is due to insufficient pollen on the stigma. The remedy for this is, on bright days, when the atmosphere is dry, to give each plant two or three sharp taps with a flat or padded stick."

Dairy Farming in Virginia.
Mr. R. B. Chaffin, who has a dairy farm of 575 acres three miles from Richmond, Va., detailed his methods and showed how he kept 500 cows on 400 acres of land, says the Cultivator. He has made butter, but is now selling milk at wholesale, getting sixteen cents per gallon for six months, and fourteen cents for six months. He depends largely on selling, and gets three crops in the season, mainly of rye, German clover and turnips. He has had some difficulty with labor; finds negroes unreliable, inclined to quit on receiving a month's pay, and finds a partial remedy in making the month's payment on the 15th of the next, and enforcing his rule of forbidding more than two to leave at one time. He only employs them for field work, and pays \$10 per month. In the barn, he only employs whites, paying \$1 per month for each cow milked and limiting the number milked by one man to forty.

Pruning Trees in Leaf.
A great many farmers defer pruning until the trees are in leaf, in order to prevent "bleeding" or running of the sap, which occurs when the pruning is done earlier. It is probable that not much harm is done by this practice, though it is well to know that pruning in leaf is always a great check to vitality and vigor. It should therefore be practiced only on trees that are making too strong growth and whose wood is growing at the expense of fruit. There are some very vigorous varieties of apples, which, while young, are better for being pruned while in full leaf. The Northern Spy is one of these. It is slow in coming into bearing when the young trees are set on very rich ground and have nothing to hinder wood growth.

Calculate the Cost of Your Butter.
Do you know how much your butter costs per pound? A little calculation may point out better and more economical methods.

Notes.
Bitter milk comes from bad feed. The rag weed, which follows a crop of rye or oats, dog fennel and the like, although but little may be eaten, will often impart a bitter flavor to the milk of cows pastured in such a field.
Bran is an excellent ration for horses, especially if fed with cut hay, as it is not as heating as corn and contains more mineral matter than the whole grain. Bran and ground oats, mixed, make an excellent combination for summer.
When a horse refuses his food it is a sure indication that something is wrong. It is better, however, to delay giving any kind of medicine until a few hours have been passed, unless it is a case of emergency, as the cause may be due to some slight ailment that will soon correct itself.
The attendant who enters a stable to milk a cow with a pipe in his mouth is not the proper man to perform that duty. Milking should be regarded as the cleanest and most important work on a dairy farm, as milk not only absorbs odors, but is also quickly affected by any foreign substance.
Plant more peas for a later supply, and use the varieties that are not of the dwarf kinds. The Champion of England is excellent, but not so prolific as some others. If space is not limited more of them may be planted to compensate for sky bearing. The ground for peas should be rich and in fine condition.
Plaster is excellent in the hills for corn as a starter, and costs but little. It is claimed for it that it attracts both moisture and ammonia, and as it gives the young plants a green appearance, there is no doubt that it is beneficial in some manner. Its cheapness puts it within the reach of all, and 100 pounds is sufficient for one acre.