

## TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

### A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

INDIANAPOLIS PUTS its unemployed to work on the stone pile, and seems rather pleased at her own generosity.

If a way has been found to control the power of Niagara Falls why not try it on the Niagara huckmen?

YOUNG ladies belonging to the charity organization known as the Doctors' Daughters desire it understood that they are not the daughters of physicians. Gallantry compels acceptance of the lucid explanation that they call themselves what they do because it expresses what they are not.

A SWORD-SWALLOWER of abnormal capacity thrust fourteen blades at once a-down his leathern gullet, and the medical gentleman who pulled them out did so so rudely that the eater of cold steel couldn't use his swallower for mashed potato now. The value of restraining the appetite has merely been illustrated again.

EDITOR STREED says that the daughters of rich men, selling themselves to broken-down specimens of nobility, should be pointed out with the finger of scorn. The finger of scorn, it is grievous to state, has not been trained on the lines suggested by Mr. Streed, and if detected in the act of pointing at one of these salable persons would involuntarily turn and point at itself.

A PRACTICAL charity is that undertaken, liberally, by Cornelia Bradford, sister of a New York divine, who proposes to bury for \$2 in decent style any deceased person whose family gives her the trust. Miss Bradford says truly the expensive funerals are among the curses of the poor. She will also loan money at 4 per cent in small sums to relieve actual distress, but reserves the right personally to investigate the character of the borrowers. This is monte de pieté, beyond even the government so laism of Paris. Miss Bradford's experiment will be watched with more than 4 per cent interest.

CHICAGO has again sustained her claims to the possession of the finest climate on earth. The blizzard hit us, it is true, but we suffered mildly compared with towns 500 miles further south, which are still buried in the drifts. The cold wave, too, which it was predicted would follow in the wake of the boreal visitor, was switched off somewhere in route from Manitoba, and as de from the inconvenience caused by piled up snow we are enjoying mild autumn weather. All that is needed to constitute Chicago a full-fledged winter resort is a bad-smelling mineral spring, high railroad rates and a lawn tennis court on the Lake Front.—Chicago Herald.

THE reported intention of the Navy Department to abandon the Hartford to rotten Row and final destruction does violence to a popular sentiment and has the further disadvantage of violating the instructions of Congress. The Hartford has been specially exempted from the operation of the law condemning vessels when the cost of repairing will run above 20 per cent. of the cost of a new vessel, and Congress appropriated the money needed for repairs. The \$600,000 that it will cost to put the Hartford in condition for service may seem a good deal to pay out for sentiment, but the Government has to depend in time of trouble on just the kind of sentiment that now demands the preservation of the Hartford, and it is a very good thing to cultivate.

THERE are occasions when the United States Government can afford to spend some money for a sentimental purpose. Such an occasion presents itself now. The historic ship of war Kearsarge, recently sunk on a West Indian reef, can be raised by the expenditure of a few thousand dollars. There should be no hesitation about ordering the expenditure. The old vessel may not be worth raising from a material standpoint, but she occupies a place in American naval history second only to that of the frigate Constitution. It would be pitiful economy to allow her bones to rot on a coral reef for the sake of a few dollars. She should be raised, towed to one of the National Navy-yards and retired from service as an honored veteran whose fighting days are over.

A DAKOTA divorce is better than none, and if it will enable the Princess Colonna to prevent her scalawag husband from seizing her children, by all means let her have it. An American girl who is fool enough to buy a foreign title with drunkard, gambler, and libertine in-

cumbrians is not the best imaginable guardian for children, but as she will probably have to spend most of her time in this country they may possibly benefit by some good influences. We pity this sim le-minded Ev. Bryant Colonna, but our pity is largely alloyed with contempt. She married with her eyes open to Colonna and his character (God save the mark!) and now when she finds she cannot escape the bitter consequences of her willfulness she deserves no sympathy. Her hard case is not uncommon enough to excite much remark, but it is well to call attention to it if it will be taken to heart by other American women whose mental vision is weak enough to be dazzled by the tawdry gilt of an empty coronet. Unfortunately, there appear to be many such.

NEW YORK PRESS.—Vaillant was an anarchist, animated by hatred of society, and also, no doubt, by love of notoriety. His last words, "Death to the bourgeoisie!" spoke at once the desperation and danger of anarchy. The "bourgeoisie" means, in broad language, the people who have a stake in the community—manufacturers, merchants, professional men, officials, tradesmen—indeed, everybody who would be recognized as a settled, industrious citizen. The anarchists assert that these are the rulers of the French Republic, and the assertion is undoubtedly true, with the qualification that the thrifty peasantry of France have at least as much to say as the "bourgeoisie," and that every man, no matter how humble his place in life, who chooses to exercise his civil rights, can do so fully and freely. To make war on the "bourgeoisie" is making war on the Republic itself, and is a hopeless war on the part of the anarchists. The first French revolution could never have achieved success, but for the so-called middle class, and, although it drifted beyond their control and became a reign of terror, they retained the helm and steered the Jacobin mob. That experience has never been forgotten by the middle classes of France, and it is the reason why wretched, as they meet in mercy when the mob is about to grasp upon them.

OLD Kearsarge deserved a kinder fate than to be pounded to pieces on a coral reef and deserted in a storm by the successors of the men who never deserted her under fire. It was part of a peculiarly hard and ironical fate that the famous old eleven-inch pivot gun with which Capt. Winslow did such effective work on the Alabama off Cherbourg nearly thirty years ago was the first object to be cut loose and thrown into the sea. But old ocean knows no sentiment. He was in his ugliest mood when he drove this noble corvet upon the relentless reef of Bancardor. Not only the gun had to go to save the ship, but even the masts were cut away. It was then only after a terrible night of almost superhuman exertion that a sorrowing crew escaped from a floating prison with their lives. Kearsarge was a hopeless wreck. There is no difference of opinion now as to the part which this famous ship was permitted to play in the war of the rebellion. As modern naval warfare goes she was almost a puny thing. She was a third-class wooden cruiser of only 1,550 tons. She carried only five guns and 160 men when she steamed into Cherbourg harbor June 19, 1864, and joined in battle with the craft which Capt. Semmes had made terrible to Union shipping on every sea. Yet the engagement was destined to be one of the most momentous in our naval history. It lasted but a few hours, but when it was ended the national fame had been vindicated and the ocean rid of a most dangerous enemy. The bravery displayed on both sides was creditable to all Americans, North and South, but the victory fell, as the right belonged, to the Union flag. It is a gratifying sign of the times to find, even at this late day, in so influential an organ of British sentiments as the London Daily News such words as these in praise of the American vessel and the American cause.

The Kearsarge deserved an honored place on the retired list of the Navy, having had claims to National gratitude only second to those of the Constitution. Its crew had a nobler idea of fight than had the medley of mercenaries who crowded the Alabama. It was a glorious victory.

No such peaceful fate was reserved for the brave old veteran, but her glory remains undiminished for all time.

**The Best Way Out.**  
Chumley—How the mischief did you come to marry that old widow? Why didn't you marry the daughter?  
Benedict—I thought over the matter carefully. If I had married the daughter, I'd have the mother on my hands, anyhow. Then I'd have had both on my hands, but as it is, now that her mother is provided for, very likely somebody else will marry the daughter, and then I'll only have one of them to provide for.

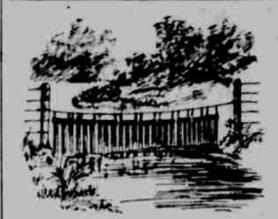
A MAN, like a watch, is to be valued for his manner of going.

## AGRICULTURAL NEWS.

### A FEW SUGGESTIONS FOR OUR RURAL READERS.

Learn the Chemical Changes of Your Soil and Then Make It Give Full Value—A Cheap Flood Gate—Don't Enlarge the Farm.

In sections where streams abound, the flood gate is quite as important as any other division fence or gate, and those that have experienced more or less trouble with other forms of flood gates will find the one shown in the illustration which is from the American Agriculturist, to be cheap, substantial, and self-regulating, and



INEXPENSIVE WATER GATE.

not liable to be swept away by heavy freshets. The supporting part is two or three strands of No. 8 or 9 annealed wire, twisted together and suspended from posts or trees about one foot above high water mark. Three two-inch strips of sufficient length to reach to within eight or ten inches of the bed of the stream, are nailed four inches apart to a strip of board and suspended by two wires to the overhanging wire. It is desired four or five strips may be nailed to form one section, using enough sections to span the stream. It is plain that in low water the sections will stand perpendicular, while, as the water rises, the lower end conforms to the rise and fall of the stream. Floodwood or other obstructions are allowed to pass uninterrupted. Twist the upper end of all the short suspension wires firmly around the main wire, that the sections may not move aside, or come t all the sections together at the top with short pieces of wire that will retain them in position yet allow the sections to move down stream during the high water of the rainy season.

Study Your Soil.

That there are active chemical changes going on all the time in cultivated soil is evident. This fact constitutes one of the greatest puzzles to the agricultural chemist. Certain things which he finds nearly soluble in one way in the soil become insoluble and available as plant food. The action of carbonic acid, the great decomposer in nature, sets at naught the work in the laboratory, and sets up changes, the full extent of which chemists have yet hardly realized, says the Pacific Farmer. Nature has a wonderful reserve power, and in some soils her store of food which only slowly becomes available seems to be entirely exhausted.

In all the red clays of the granitic formation east of the Blue Ridge, potash, one of the most essential elements of plant food, even the most worn and exhausted conditions of these red clay lands, seems exhausted, but slowly available. It is well-known that on some lands, particularly on lands near the coast, plaster is of little value, beyond what value the lime in it may have, while on other land it has an immediate and great effect.

Those who have noticed the deposits of plaster rock in the natural beds are aware that the outer part, exposed to the weather, loses its character as a sulphate and becomes merely a carbonate of lime, while in the quarry it is pure sulphate. And this is the secret of its action on soils abounding in potash. The lime greedily combines with the ever-present carbonic acid in the soil, and the sulphuric acid is left free to act on some other base, and attacks the potash, giving us sulphate of potash for our crops, an efficient help to clover and other legumes. Whenever plaster can be had at reasonable price farmers on these clay soils can usually get their potash more cheaply by the use of plaster than by buying potash in an already available form. The moral is, study your soil, and do not buy what you can get more cheaply out of your land itself.

Eighteen Tons of Potatoes Per Acre.

It is reported from France that M. Egasse of Arceville, in the Department of Eure-et-Loire, produced an average crop of eighteen tons of potatoes per acre, on forty acres. The tons were what Americans call "long tons," of 2,240 pounds. This result was attained by heavy manuring, the land having received, in addition to farmyard manure, a dressing of 280 pounds of superphosphate, 224 pounds of sulphate of potash and nitrate of soda per acre.

Don't Enlarge the Farm.

There seems to be a very general desire on the part of the farmers of this country to obtain a larger quantity of land. There are cases in which this is a wise ambition, but such instances are not nearly as common as is the wish to obtain larger farms. Under the present conditions of agriculture our farmers, as a rule, already have more land than they can cultivate to the best advantage.

As things are now, and as they are likely to be for a long time to come, the profits of farming are to be increased by securing larger crops per acre rather than by tilling a larger number of acres. Most of the farmers who wish that they had more land now own considerable areas

which have not yet been brought nearly up to their limit of profitable production. In these cases the owners will find it much more profitable to manure their present fields more liberally and cultivate them more thoroughly than it will be to spread their work over a large number of acres.—Farm News.

Fruit Culture.

The reason why comparatively few farmers succeed in fruit raising is because this business demands more constant and careful care in little details than stock, dairy, or grain growing, says the Massachusetts Houghman. It is easy enough to set out 1,000 trees, or 10,000 small fruit bushes or vines, but it is quite another thing to cultivate and care for them as they need, from one to five years before any return can be expected. Few men have the needed perseverance and steadiness of purpose, even if they have the money, to carry them through so long a period of fruitless labor which must be done to insure success.

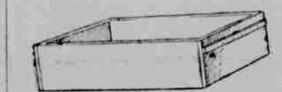
For this reason, perhaps, more succeed with strawberries than with vineyards or orchards. The strawberry brings a crop the year after planting, and the period of unproductive labor is shorter. Still, for those who have the pluck and grit to stick to it faithfully, fruit growing offers, and will probably continue to offer, a good margin of profit.

A Woman and Her Poultry.

Last fall I began my poultry experience with eleven barred Plymouth Rock hens and thirteen pullets, reports Mrs. C. L. Hale in Farm and Home. They began laying in December. From January 1st to May 1st they laid 1,294 eggs. I sold eighty-eight dozen for \$21.16. I fed small potatoes, turnips, beets, and pumpkins, boiled with cabbage, in the morning, and twice a week at night, chopped apple and cabbage, with pepper or ginger mixed with beef scraps or tallow, mixed with hot water or milk. I gave them two quarts of corn, thrown into leaves and chaff from the barn floor, gave water twice a day, and pouched all the bone and earthenware I could find. At last they began to pick the feathers out. I hung a piece of salt pork in the house that stopped the trouble. This is one woman's experience. I look all the care of them myself, and feel well paid, as my hens are tame, and I can pick them up any time.

Homemade Measures.

It takes but a little time to nail together several bushel or half-bushel measures. The former are the more convenient. A standard bushel contains 2,150 2-5 cubic inches, hence a



HOMEMADE BUSHEL MEASURES.

box eleven and one-fifth inches wide, eight inches high, and twenty-four inches long, inside measurement, contains one bushel. The bottom should be on the inside and firmly nailed in place, as shown in the engraving. Cleats, a one inch square, should be nailed across each end two inches from the top. The sides should be of half inch clear stuff, the bottom of the same, and the ends of inch stuff. All the boards should be planed upon both sides. The box will cost about 15 cents when materials for several are obtained at one time. They will be found almost as convenient to handle as a basket, and if there are several they will prove convenient to hold apples or other fruit or vegetables, and to set away full in the cellar until the contents are needed. A half-bushel measure should of course be one-half the length. Smaller measures are as readily made, but would not need the end cleats.

Agricultural Atoms.

MILK can always be used to good advantage in feeding pigs and poultry. SALT and wood ashes in reach of hogs are beneficial. Good for horses also.

SO LONG as good wool and mutton are a necessity, there ought to be good money made in raising them.

OATS is about the best feed you can give calves. Mixed with corn-mell it is a great milk producer for cows.

WHEAT land is too rocky for cultivation and too valuable for a timber lot, it will make a good sheep pasture or orchard.

DOUBLE the life of farm machinery by taking good care of it. The matter is possible for all because practiced by many.

TEXAS is at the head of the cattle-producing States, having about 7,000,000; next comes Iowa with nearly 4,000,000.

A NEW JERSEY farmer recommends as protection for an iron fence painting it with earthy red iron ore and crude petroleum. It is cheap, pleasing in color, preservative, but slow to dry on iron.

ONTARIO carried off the honors for honey at the World's Fair. Her exhibits have taken twenty awards, as against twenty-eight for all the United States and thirteen for all other countries.

THE farmer's wife has a half interest in what belongs to her husband. If he gets labor-saving implements for the farm, he should lose no opportunity to get something of the kind for the house.

KEEP a mixture of salt, charcoal and wood ashes constantly before hogs, so that they can take what they want and no more. Something of this nature seems to be required to arrest fermentation in the stomach and promote general digestion.

## THE GIRL WHO WAITS.

How a Young Man in a Street Car Interested Seven Women.

In a street car the other day was a young man and seven women, says the Detroit Free Press. The young man was in that condition known as betwiddled, and as the car rolled along he began to converse with himself, starting out with:

"It was a wild night. The wind moaned and the raindrops had a sobbing sound. I was lonely and could not rest."

He spoke so loudly that all in the car could hear him. Three of the women at once became interested, but the other four simply glanced at him and turned away again.

"At 5 o'clock I rang the doorbell," continued the young man, "and was instantly admitted and I found Miss Sweetbriar would be down in a moment. The dear girl was evidently expecting me."

The three women were doubly interested at this juncture, while the other four pricked up their ears and prepared to pay attention and wondered if they had not lost a good thing.

"She came down—my darling Clara. She never looked more beautiful. She greeted me warmly—aye! lovingly—and I retained her hand as I led her to the sofa on which we had sat and passed so many loving hours."

The entire seven women were now so deeply interested that none of them saw a runaway horse go by, and two of them hit her closer to the young man.

"After awhile," he said in a musing voice and his eyes on his toes "I put my arm around her slender waist and she laid her golden head upon my shoulder with the sweet confidence of a child. It was a moment of supreme happiness."

The two women who had hitched before now hitched again, and the five others followed suit, and all of them wanted to kill the newsboy who opened the door and shouted his wares.

"I saw the light of love in her eyes. I dared to press my lips to her maiden cheek. I knew that she was mine—mine forever. That's she was mine if I wanted her. Ah! that hour of happiness. Will I ever forget it?"

The conductor looked in to see seven women craning their necks and their eyes betraying the greatest anxiety. They were now so close to the young man that no one could hitch nearer.

"She waited for me to speak," he went on, opening and closing his eyes, as if she y, "but I was too happy. I didn't want to break the spell. Besides, how can I support a wife on \$8 per week? Besides I don't want to get married. The dear girl is still waiting."

"What! Didn't you ask her to be your wife?" demanded one of the females as she rose up with crimson face.

"No'm. Too happy. Told her I'd call s'm'other night. Eight dollars a week only buys my soda water and cigars, and how'm I goin' to sup?"

Seven feminine hands motioned to the conductor to stop, and one after another seven women dropped off the car and went their ways with angry looks and compressed lips, while the young man nodded and nodded and muttered:

"What happiness!" She waited for me to speak, but I was too happy. She's waitin' yet. Let'er wait—I'm goin' to sleep."

Flow of Solids.

Changes of form are very slow—though rapid enough to explain the motion of glaciers—but pressure increases their speed. Tresca of the French Academy has proved by his beautiful and varied experiments that under a certain pressure all solids "flow" like liquids, and that their molecules obey in such cases the laws of the motion of liquids. A block of lead, or of steel, or of ice, placed in a cylinder and pressed upon, is made to flow out of a hole in the cylinder exactly as a jet of water. It remains a solid all the time, but its molecules, whose paths are rendered visible by a special arrangement, are seen to have acquired a certain freedom of motion, and to flow in the very same way as molecules of water flow from a hole in a pail.

A cube of lead, steel, stone, or ice, placed on a solid surface, submitted to a sufficient pressure or loaded with a sufficient weight, "flows" sideways just as if it were a block of plastic clay. The only difference is that clay flows under its own weight, while steel requires an immense pressure in order to "flow" in its solid state. As to ice, it stands between the two—much nearer, of course, to the former than to the latter, if both are taken at ordinary temperatures. A thickness of a few hundred feet, or a corresponding load, would be quiet sufficient to make it "flow," though remaining solid, even over a quite horizontal floor, and to behave in its spreading over the floor like a lump of plastic mud, provided the temperature is but a few degrees below zero. This is the net result of Tresca's epoch-making experiments on "the flowing of solids" under pressure, and these experiments have been fully confirmed as regards ice by the experiments of Heilmholtz, Pfaff, and especially those of the Bologna professor, Bianconi.—The Nineteenth Century.

The Diamond.

Sir Robert Ball, in one of his peculiar addresses, described the diamond as consisting of an enormous number of separate molecules, swinging to and fro among themselves at a rate of some millions of vibrations a second, all in action together, and quivering with the shocks of impact.

The cause of the diamond's extreme hardness and impenetrability is that when a steel point is pressed against it the active molecules batter that point with such vehemence and rapidity that it cannot get beneath the crystalline surface. In cutting glass the molecules of the diamond drive the molecules of the glass before them, or mow them down like a mitrailleuse.

Smoking Hasheesh.

A favorite sweetmeat is obtained by making an infusion of the plant (Cannabis indica) in hot water to which butter or oil is added. The resin attaches itself to the melted butter or oil, and, when evaporated, is kneaded with flour and spices into cakes or pastilles, called "majun." Simple infusion of the leaves and flowering tops are also made and drunk in many parts of India by old and young alike at some of the festivities, just as alcoholic drinks are too frequently used in our own country on similar occasions.

Like opium, however, hasheesh is chiefly used for smoking, and when thus used it is almost always in combination with tobacco. First, a plug of tobacco is placed at the bottom of the bowl of the pipe, and on the top of this a small piece of hasheesh and over this, again, a piece of red-hot charcoal. Or this hasheesh is kneaded with the tobacco by the thumb of one hand working in the palm of the other until thoroughly incorporated, when they are transferred to the bowl and lighted, as in the previous case. Its first effect when thus used is one of intense exhilaration, almost amounting to delirium.

The victim uses the power of thought, and will carry on in the most extravagant manner imaginable, alternately laughing, singing, or dancing, all the time believing himself to be acting rationally. The English derivative of the word hasheesh gives a terrible and too well-deserved significance in this connection. Hasheesh is the term used for one who smokes "hasheesh," and the plural of the word is "hashashin," from which our English word "assassin" is said to be derived.

Doubtless, it is in this first stage of hallucination and frenzy that most of the crimes—and they have been many—attributed to the use of this drug have been committed; for the second is one of dreamy enjoyment, finally followed, if the dose has been full, by stupor so dense as almost to amount to a state of catalepsy. It has been said that a fortnight's use of hasheesh make its victim a complete slave to the habit, and its end, as in the case of the use of opium, is degradation and ruin, physical, social, and moral.—Chamber's Journal.

Wives Are Costly in China.

Pastor Gottschalk of the Berlin founding house in Hong Kong draws a somber picture of the effects of the custom of polygamy among the Chinese. Among these is the lack of marriageable girls. At present girls are sold at a very high price; a girl of 14 to 16 can scarcely be purchased for less than \$100—a price, which as Herr Gottschalk quaintly says, "poor people can ill afford." Some buy for their infant son an infant wife, who is occasionally nursed at the same breast as her future husband. If this economical device fails, the matter is regarded as serious, as they may have no offspring to perform the sacrifices at their tombs. Young girls, adds Mr. Gottschalk, dare not leave their homes for fear of being kidnapped, as they not infrequently are. In a place one day's journey from Hong Kong three or four years ago twenty young girls were stolen in a night, taken on board a junk, and carried no one knew whither. Unfortunately the Berlin founding house derives no benefit from the brisk demand for marriageable girls, partly because the institution limits its choice of suitors to Chinese Christians and partly because there is in China a superstitious belief that an evil fate hangs over a founding girl.—London Times.

Parents of Twenty-Six Children.

Manuel Cota, a tall emaciated sheep herder and ranchman, living about seven miles southwest of Pomona, has the distinction of standing at the very head of the procession of adders to the population of this country. Manuel does not know a word of English, has not \$100 either in money or property, and lives in a house that hundreds of men would not stable their horses in. He is the father of twenty-one boys and girls, and has fathered, first and last, twenty-six infants. Manuel and his wife were married in San Diego, in 1859—thirty-five years ago. Mrs. Cota was then a blushing girl of 17 and Manuel but one year older. Their eldest child is 31, and has started a nice little family group of his own, having seven children thus far. Mr. and Mrs. Cota's youngest child is 2 weeks old and bids fair to become as lively and strong as its twenty-five predecessors. Fifteen of the children are married, and Manuel at the last account found he was grandparent to twenty-one youngsters, all the way from 2 months to 13 years old.—Pomona (Cal.) Progress.

Good Market for American Apples.

Farmers who have orchards or land fit for orchards may find a useful hint in the statement of the British Export Journal that no fewer than 70,000 barrels of American and Canadian apples are sold in England in a single week between the beginning of October and the close of January, says the Baltimore Sun. The English pay \$2,500,000 a year for American and \$500,000 a year for Canadian apples. They also import from Belgium \$500,000 worth of apples a year.

SO GOOD services: sweet remembrances will grow from them.