

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

PROFESSIONAL sluggers and prize fighters had better keep away from Iowa in the future. The anti-prize fight bill passed by the Legislature provides a maximum penalty of \$1,000 for the principals, and a fine of \$500 for the accessories.

VIENNA is having its girl architects of the Emma Goldman type, just as New York had Fraulein Glass, a pretty girl still in her teens, with dark and wind-blown hair, has just led a successful strike there, and Amelia Filla, whose pretty head holds all the wiles of 17 years, is talking a archy two ours a day to immense audiences.

The World's Fair attracted to it the best people of the world, but unfortunately it also attracted the very worst elements that live. Multitudes of these remained, and this fact accounts for the crowded condition of the Chicago jail to-day with its 600 prisoners awaiting trials for their crimes. Fifty-two of the number are charged with murder. The courts of justice will for some time be taxed by such echoes from the great fair.

JUDGE EDGAR ALDRICH of Littleton, N. H., made a strong argument in favor of the present jury system at the recent annual reunion of the Grafton and Coos Counties Bar Association, urging that it is the fairest trial for the accused and the safest for the public. He did not favor the abolition of the unanimity requirement, saying that he had tried nearly 100 cases, civil and criminal, since he left the bar, and could recall but three disagreements.

The Suez Canal last year paid a dividend of 18 per cent. on its cost. This vindicates the judgment of De Lesseps, who always claimed that the enterprise would pay. Its cost was ninety million dollars. The Manchester Ship Canal cost seventy-five million dollars, and the revenue from it will pay dividends of 3 to 5 per cent. This for European investments is considered a good return. There is a growing interest in various American ship canals. One of these is through Cape Cod, to shorten the line for the growing coast trade along the New England seaboard. Railroad construction is declining. Perhaps now the time for more ship canals has come.

A BILL has been introduced into the Massachusetts Legislature providing for free employment offices for such cities as shall accept the plan. This has been done in Ohio, where a free employment bureau is attached to the department of labor. There are five cities which have bureaus of employment, where books are kept for registering the names and addresses of those seeking employment, and also of those desiring help. The first office went into effect June 26, 1896. Since that time 81,507 persons registered seeking employment and 63,564 calls for help were made by employers. The number who secured work was 38,538. The five offices in Ohio have cost the State less than \$10,000.

The Los Angeles Express recently contained an exhaustive statement of the fruit product of California during the last year. Riverside now is claimed to be the most famous orange-producing locality in the world. Last year the shipments amounted to over 2,700 car loads, and this year it is estimated that there will be over 3,000 car loads. There are now 8,500 acres of bearing orange and lemon orchards in Riverside, with an assessed valuation of \$6,000,000 and an actual valuation of \$18,000,000. The raisin crop of last year is estimated at 25 car loads. The last year also has been a notable one for Riverside in another direction, as the new County of Riverside has been formed, with the county seat at that city, by a division of San Bernardino County. The new county is forty miles in extent from north to south and 180 miles east and west—an area as large as that of Massachusetts. Everything grows big in California.

STANDARD Connecticut, which has so long been content to furnish the nation with nothing more startling than wooden nutmegs and cheap alarm-clocks, has turned out a "strong man." Not one of the paltry, everyday strong men, who support pianos with their sub-maxillary ligaments, but one who can smite a wild, dashing horse with his good right arm and send it to grass without visible effort. Middletown claims the man of might and brawn. At that historic spot a runaway horse attached to a stage dashed down a hill to a steep bank loaded with people. As

the animal rushed upon the boat, scattering the passengers in all directions, the hero stepped to ward with easy grace, swung his right, and landed on the forehead of the surprised horse. "The blow was dealt with such force that the animal fell to the deck as if struck with a sledge-hammer," says the report. There is a great future before the man with the sledge-hammer arm and fist. Efforts should be made to induce him to enter the prize-ring and the governors would have no need of the militia to suppress prize-fights, as there would be no more "mills." Connecticut has a treasure which it should make the most of.

AN invention has been made in France by M. Hermitte which promises to revolutionize the methods of disinfecting sewage water and flushing streets and sewers. The new disinfectant is simply electrolyzed sea water—sea water decomposed by the direct action of electricity. The worst and most malodorous portion of Paris was the St. Francis quarter. The quarter was "the hotbed of infectious disease." Its streets and sewers were flushed with the electrolyzed sea water. In some cases tanks were built upon the roofs of the worst tenement houses, and the new disinfectant was poured down through all the pipes and closets of the filthy dens. The effect was like magic. Every poisonous microbe was slain, and the locality became as sweet smelling as any in Paris. Undoubtedly this marvelous new fluid will soon be in common use in every seaboard city in Europe and in this country. Great masses pass from the harbor or sea adjacent to the central portions of a town where the electrolyzing plant is. It has been found that by passing the fluid through sewer pipe discharges they are thoroughly disinfected and made innocuous. By its means it is thought to be quite possible for sewerage pipes to discharge into rivers near a city without polluting the water. The chlorine still remaining in the sea water performs the office of disinfecting.

Here are a few plain considerations for the minds of plain people. In case of an individual who falls in business, he fails when he becomes so deeply involved in debt that he can no longer stand of payment. He was not obliged to go in debt in the first place. But he wanted to enlarge his business. He put a mortgage on his farm because if he had larger barns he could store more grain and feed more stock and thus get more money. Perhaps the family needed a larger, handsomer house to live in or clothing that there was not money to pay for. At any rate, all of the people who fail—manufacturer, farmer, merchant, or business man—go in debt trusting to future gains to be able not only to wipe off the indebtedness, but even to make them richer. The farmer owes the merchant, the merchant owes the manufacturer, the manufacturer owes the capitalist who lent him money to enlarge his plant. In times which seem prosperous there is almost a fatal temptation to glide down hill into debt. It seems so easy to pay up. By and by somebody wants his money. All have run into debt together, and somehow nobody quite understands how all must pay about the same time. They cannot do it. Then there is a panic. All the world must wait till it can pay its debts. When that is done, off it goes, heading, pell-mell, and repeats the process over again. Now, if nobody went into debt, but used only the actual capital that he has in hand, no matter what the temptation, how often would there be panics?

It was the Wrong Family. The weary wanderer's eyes gleamed with confidence as he stepped up to the back door and knocked. "I see there's horse-shoes over this door and the barn door, mum," he said to the hard-featured woman who came to the door. "Well, she said, with a strong stare. "I've noticed that where there's horse-shoes nailed up you always find warm hearts and a generous welcome," said the traveler, with a winning smile. "You don't say?" "Yes, mum, you people may be a little superstitious, but you are very kind to the poor." "Well," we didn't put them horse-shoes up," said the woman, drily. "The folks that did lives about ten miles from here now. It's a straight road—you can't miss it," and bang went the door. The weary wanderer felt an electric chill down his spine as he started up the road. "Say, you!" he heard her call. He turned to go back—she must have relented. "You might rip them shoes down an' take 'em along with yer, if you think them folk'll want 'em," and bang went the door again. —Boston Journal.

SOME men are extravagant at their own expense, and others are extravagant at the expense of their employees.

OUR RURAL READERS.

SOMETHING HERE THAT WILL INTEREST THEM.

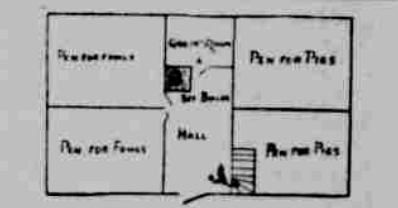
Convenient Combination Building for Poultry and Pigs—How Milk is Analyzed—Diversified Farming is Needed—How to Ship Fruit Long Distances.

For Pigs and Poultry. Where one desires to make a single building serve for the accommodation of both swine and poultry, he may find some suggestions in the accompanying illustrations. This house has two pens for fowls and two for pigs, and ample hall between the



POULTRY AND PIG HOUSE.

two, a set boiler for cooking food, and a grain room. If the nature of the location permits it, a cellar beneath the building could be utilized for the storing of roots, which might be made to serve as a large factor in the food of both fowls and pigs. The loft also provides room for setting hens, while one end may be used as a pigeon house, if these most interesting pets are kept for the delight of



GROUND PLAN OF COMBINATION POULTRY AND PIG HOUSE.

the children upon the farm. Yards may be arranged at either end, for the comfort of both the feathered and the porcine inmates. In the first illustration is seen a perspective view, and in the second picture the ground plan of the very convenient combination building.

Steady employment throughout the year is what is needed to procure and keep a trustworthy class of men to work on the farm. It is the fact that the farm only offers work for a few months, and those when it is least required for subsistence, and this drives the energetic and good hand to seek employment in the cities, where work will be continuous the year around. In the old days there was more winter manufacturing on the farm than is now possible. There are no more farmers who tan hides and make the leather into boots, and shoes, and harness. All these are put on the market so much cheaper and with so much better polish by the wholesale manufacturers that it is quite impossible for the home manufacturer, working on a small scale, to compete. There are still shoe repairers who are able to earn a living in cities, but they are often not so well paid as workers in large shops, and their number tends to decrease rather than increase. We have known some farmers to grow broom corn exclusively and manufacture at least a portion of the crop into brooms. This labor is not difficult to learn, and in this way, in certain neighborhoods, employment is given to large numbers of men, but the wages are not and cannot be very high. There is too much competition to allow the manufacture of brooms to be carried on during the winter, even on the farm, if high wages are paid, but if one or two farmers in a neighborhood should grow broom corn and manufacture and sell the products during the winter near home they might be able to get something better than wholesale prices, and so keep their men at work the whole year. This is a suggestion worth considering, difficult as it is becoming to procure and keep good farm help. —Philadelphia Inquirer.

How Milk is Analyzed. The chemical analysis of milk is not complicated or difficult, says a writer in the Dairy. A small dish is accurately weighed, the weight noted. Into it is now introduced a small portion of milk, and both are again weighed. By subtracting the weight of the dish from the weight of both, the weight of the milk is found and carefully recorded. The dish is laced over a steam jet, and the water of the milk evaporates, leaving a residue. It is this residue which passes under the name of "solids." A last weighing of the dish with the milk residue, less the weight of the dish, gives the solids, and by a single calculation the percentage is found. The solids of milk have been found by innumerable analyses to average about 13 per cent. and, while the fat varies in the milk from different cows, the solids left after extracting the fat is a very constant quantity, hardly ever falling below 9 per cent. This gives the chemist a positive basis for his calculations, and enables him to state with great certainty whether or not the milk has been watered. The fat or oil in milk is determined by dissolving it, by means of ether, out of the total solids, the residue remaining after the operation being termed "solids, not fat." The average fat or oil found in cow's milk is 3 per cent., and any amount less than this is commonly taken as showing that the milk has been skimmed. If analysis shows a decrease of fat, and solids not fat, it is said to be certain that the milk has

been watered, while, if the fat only is low, it shows that the milk has been skinned.

Wheat Growing in California. The yield of California wheat last year was 31,191, 90 bushels, which is the smallest for years, owing to unusual wet weather early, which prevented seeding. The State report of the State Board of Agriculture claims that wheat growing at present prices is still profitable. Land is cultivated with gang plows worked by six horses, with which one man will plow six or seven acres. Eighty pounds of seed, or one bushel and a third, is all that is sown, and the yield averages eight sacks, or sixteen bushels per acre. By the figures shown the California wheat grower gets his wheat at a cost slightly less than 29 cents per bushel. This estimate puts the cost of harvesting wheat, including the threshing, at only \$1 per acre. We do not believe any wheat crop was ever grown at such figures as the State Board of Agriculture puts forth. But its worst oversight is in making no account of the decrease of soil fertility. After two or three crops the yield inevitably runs down and the wheat farmer suffers accordingly. It is never safe anywhere to grow crops and leave out of the calculation the maintaining of fertility.

Diversified Farming Needed. The low prices of wheat and other farm products are teaching farmers to diversify their crops more than they ever did before. Those whose land is best adapted to wheat growing and who understand how to secure good crops will continue to sow some wheat, but even their area in this crop is certain to be smaller than usual until the growing demand requires all the wheat that this country can produce. For the next year or two other products, especially those requiring more labor, will pay better than wheat. It has been too easy on cheap land to grow wheat. No crop that is very easily grown pays large profits.

Farm Notes. THERE is not very much difference in the cost of feeding a cow that makes 100 pounds of butter in a year and one making double as much.

CHARCOAL is almost a necessity for hogs. Its cost is but little, and all that is required is to place a large piece in the pen daily, as the hogs will easily crush it for their use.

ANY animal will eat too much salt if deprived of it for a length of time. A little salt every day will be beneficial. If a lump of rock salt is placed where all kinds of stock can have access to it they will regulate the quantity for themselves.

The young pigs are pretty sure to be wintered at a loss if fed wholly or even mainly upon corn. If one-third or one-half of the ration is composed of that heating and fat-producing grain it will be quite enough. Feed for growth rather than flesh. Pork bone meal has been fed to hogs with advantage, and ground bone is largely used for poultry. Crows have also been known to lick bone meal. It serves as an occasional offering to stock, but whether it is safe to allow it regularly has not been determined.

NO kind of land should remain idle. It can be made to produce some kind of crop, or it can be improved in fertility in some manner. If useless for crops let it be given up to sheep. If this cannot be done plow it, and use lime on it, so as to enable it to become fit for cultivation in the future.

The potash in the soil is mostly in the form of a silicate, which is not readily soluble. All other forms of potash are very soluble. When lime is added to the soil it assists in breaking up existing combinations and renders the inert matter of the soil more easily taken up by the roots of plants.

Odors and Ends.

WASH all the vegetables with a brush, and thus preserve the hands. Try this for soft corns. Wet a piece of old linen with turpentine, and bind it over the corn. This should be done night and morning.

DRESSES of delicate tint, faded from exposure to sunlight, will sometimes return to their original color after having been kept in the dark for several months.

In hanging dresses away they should be suspended from two thin hooks, rather than one. This tends to keep them in shape, and also prevents a crushing of the draperies.

DINNER napkins should be three-quarters of a yard square. Anything smaller is insufficient, anything larger awkward. Breakfast napkins may be half a yard square.

AN iron weighing seven pounds does better work by passing it over the clothes once with a firm, steady pressure than a lighter iron hurriedly passed over the clothes two or three times.

SILVER used on the table should be wiped each day with a soft chamomile. Silver becomes clouded as much from the steam of coffee, tea, and hot foods generally as from actual use, and the daily polishing keeps it in good condition.

BLACK silk may be cleaned by sponging on both sides with weak ammonia water, then rolling up on a roller and leaving until thoroughly dry. Great care must be taken that every wrinkle is smoothed and the silk will come out very nicely and repay the trouble.

A SIMPLE remedy for a rough skin is to first wash the face thoroughly at night, then rub it with about a teaspoonful of cream and let it dry. The skin will look shiny and feel stiff at first, but in the morning you will be surprised to find how soft the skin will be.

VERY COSTLY CHESSMEN.

Paul Morphy's Famous Prize Set Which Cost \$5,500.

A set of chessmen is usually an inexpensive thing, but it may cost as much as a grand piano. Of course, you can get a small set of ordinary boxwood chessmen for a few dollars, a finer set of boxwood and ebony for \$12 or \$15, and a set of "Staunton" chessmen, of the best African ivory, large size, for \$750. And these are all plain sets. If you indulge in fancy carving, and have your set made to order from a special design and finely mounted, it may cost anywhere from \$100 to \$500. For a really expensive set, however, you will probably choose the precious metals, and there is absolutely no limit to the cost, says the New York Mail and Express.

Probably one of the finest sets ever made was the set presented to Paul Morphy in 1859 by friends in this city and Brooklyn, which is now owned by a New York merchant. The pieces are of solid gold and silver, carved and chased in exquisite designs. They are mounted on bases of red cornelian, the gold pieces representing civilization, the silver ones barbarism. The gold king is a statuette four inches high, weighing three ounces. He is in royal robes, bears an imperial globe upon his head, a sword and shield in his hand, while a crown and scepter lie at his feet.

The bishops are in full panoply, while the knights are represented as gracing horses, with eyes of rubies. The castle follows the Chinese design, being an elephant bearing a howdah on which is perched an eagle with outspread wings. Both elephant and bird have eyes of brilliant rubies. The piece weighs five ounces, or as much as eighty gold dollars. The pawns are statuettes two and one-half inches high, representing Roman soldiers.

The silver pieces are equally ornate in design. The king is represented as a leader like Alaric, wearing a bull's hide and winged helmet, while his shield bears the inscription, "Liberty." The other pieces are similar in design to the gold, except that the pawns are rude warriors armed with clubs.

The board has a body of rosewood, inlaid with silver. The squares are of mother-of-pearl and ebony. In each corner is a laurel wreath of gold encircling the letters P. M. An inscription on one side reads as follows:

To Paul Morphy
A Recognition of His genius and a
Testimonial of Regard
From His Friends and Admirers in
New York and Brooklyn.
New York 1859.

On the other side of the board is a list of the fourteen champions, all from the different countries, whom Morphy had defeated. In every detail the set is finished as finely as possible, the figures being chased under a microscope. It was made by a New York firm of silversmiths and cost \$5,500. It was presented to Morphy, fresh from his European triumphs, in the chapel of the University of the City of New York, John Van Buren, son of the President, making the presentation speech. After Morphy's death it was sold with his effects in New Orleans, and so came back to this city.

NOT PLAYED OUT.

Nor Will Be in Our Time Nor in Our Children's.

The business of breeding pedigreed stock is not "played out" neither will it be within the next century. As it has been for more than a hundred years past so it will be for more than a hundred years to come. The man who has an established reputation for breeding horses or cattle or sheep or swine of any particular sort than the general average will find other people resorting to him for breeding stock and he can always sell at a little above ordinary prices.

People are not now paying and perhaps never will again pay \$40,000 for a Shorthorn cow, but the man who produces better beef cattle than any one else will always find a people ready to buy his calves at a good price. Go in with the best foundation stock you can obtain, depending upon the merit that you can show rather than what history or tradition gives to your breed, breed with care; breed with brains; learn how to feed and breed and train and handle so as to develop the most desirable qualities; conduct the business economically; sell your surplus at what it will bring when it is ready for the best market; keep breed up retain so far as you are able the very best for your own breeding operations; aim at establishing a name in your herd or flock; study the science and art of coupling so as to produce desired results; learn how to feed and handle so as to develop the best points of what you breed and you are on a sure, firm, solid ground.

On a road that, while it may not lead to sudden opulence, is the King's Highway to sure prosperity. —Breeder's Gazette.

The Rule of the Road.

In England it is the rule for vehicles to keep to the left on the road instead of to the right, as with us. A recent explanation of the custom is that "in the good old times in England when 'stranger' and 'enemy' were synonymous terms, the foot traveler passed to the right that the shield on the left arm might be interposed to ward off a treacherous blow, and the right, or sword arm, free to strike. Horsemen, however, usually had mail to protect them, and there was more safety in being near the antagonist than in having to strike across the horse, as would have been necessary had they turned to the right. When vehicles came into

use later, the drivers instinctively followed the old horseback custom and turned to the left." If this is the reason for turning to the left, why is it not general in Europe. The same condition existed in medieval France and Germany as in England, but in France and Germany, vehicles, equestrians, and pedestrians all kept to the right. The English explanation is that vehicles keep to the left so that drivers, sitting on the right side of the box, are directly over the wheel, and in a crowded thoroughfare can easily guard against locking wheels with a passing team. It is remarkable that this advantage in keeping to the left has not been observed and adopted in other countries.

Gall Flies.

One of the most remarkable facts in the history of the gall fly is that different species acting on the same tree produce totally different results. Thus, one of them puncturing the wild rose gives rise to one of those most pretty moss-like tufts which so frequently adorn it. Another on the same plant produces round growths resembling currants in size and form. A much greater variety of form is produced on the oak tree.

No fewer than fifty species of gall fly, indeed, are said to produce their peculiar forms of growth upon it. One of the most common is that which produces the marble gall. This gall is produced on the twigs in the form of round bodies, soft and green at first, afterward brown and woody. The familiar oak apple is of more irregular shape, and prettily colored red and yellow like a fruit. Of a similar shape to the marble gall, but softer, and of a pretty red color when exposed to the sun, is the cherry gall.

Another fruit-like gall, small, round, and often appearing in clusters on the male catkins of the oak, is known as the currant gall. Still more remarkable, perhaps is the artichoke gall. In this case the gall fly has laid its egg in the center of a bud, and the vegetative growth, though distorted, has asserted itself in a systematic manner. The oval body in the center, containing the egg or grub, is covered with a series of imbricating or overlapping scales, so that the whole bears a striking resemblance to the involucre of a thistle. —Chambers's Journal.

The One Original Gift.

When one hears of a Washington bride who has to find shoving for thirteen dozen of decorated china plates and thirty-three bon-bon dishes, one wishes for a little more originality on the part of givers. A check is always original. Needlework is coming in as bridal gifts; house and table linen in carved chests—nothing could be more welcome. But even this should not be overdone. It is rarely possible to have too many doilies and table centers, luxurious and gratifying as these dainty bits of napery are. A French countess recently presented to his bride not only a hair comb lace handkerchief, but a beautiful bedspread in finest cambric and costly lace. In the middle of the spread was embroidered the family coat of arms. Now a counterpane of the sort worked by the bride's young friends would be a treasure, indeed, and would last, as only linen cambric does last, for a lifetime. —Philadelphia Ledger.

A Story of Gladstone.

Mr Gladstone, as a rule, is the model of punctuality at dinner-time both as a host and a guest. Last summer, however, while staying at the house of one of his wealthiest supporters, recently made a Baronet, in the neighborhood of Norwich, Mr Gladstone did for once keep both the host and the other guests waiting in the dining-room or several minutes after the servant had announced dinner. At last the Premier entered the room, smiling and rubbing his hands benevolently. Looking all around he inquired in his most genial tones: "Are we all mustered?" As the host happened to have accumulated a large fortune by the manufacture of mustard those present were for a moment inclined to unostentatiously suspect or perpetrate a pun at his entertainer's expense. —London Court Journal.

Charity.

There are not a few people the measure of whose charity seems to correspond with the distance at which it is exercised. Their imagination, soaring what is close to them, leaps over sea and land with the utmost celerity, and they easily sympathize with the sufferings and ignorance of far-distant natives and savage tribes. They willingly give their money or their time or their interest to relieve or to instruct such as these—and so far they are to be honored for it. But, when they are cold and deaf to the achingly needs of their own country, to the tale of distress in the next street, and to the immediate claims of their own families, they may well be reminded that "charity begins at home."

The Storage Battery.

It is maintained very stoutly by expert electricians that the storage battery is, after all, a success for commercial work; that the new processes for manufacturing them have cheapened their cost and that in train lighting they are especially eminent and economical. It is estimated that \$85 per horse power is the annual cost of the accumulator.

Rice.

Rice was known in China 2,800 years before Christ. It is not mentioned in the Bible, but it is referred to in the Talmud. It was known in Syria 400 years before Christ, and was first introduced into Italy in 1495 and into the Carolinas in 1700.