

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

France is not content with one miscreant to punish she is welcome to the use of Johann Most.

Utah is welcome to come in, but the general understanding is that polygamy shall be left behind.

Like a strong swimmer whose pockets are filled with gold, we sometimes perish from the very excess of our riches.

If time is money, why can't a man pay his barber with the time he spends waiting for his turn? asks the Philadelphia Record.

A Washington man has invented a new talking machine. There is no necessity for such an invention in Washington.

There is one good thing about the man with a trouble in his mind. He doesn't break into your office with whistle or song.

Nothing is easier than fault-finding. No talent, no self-denial, no character, is required to set up in the grumbling business.

Henry Ward Beecher once said that society owes to the horse a debt of gratitude a thousand times greater than it does to thousands of men who abuse him.

The chief results of the Brazilian revolution up to date seem to have been the sinking of several fine warships, and causing the Government a colossal loss in money.

A cricket with four legs and three wings was recently hatched out in Georgia. No doubt there will be a great struggle among hotel-keepers to secure this prize.

While you are sleeping as well as when at work your advertisement is doing good service. It is the silent salesman and one that does not antagonize while it persuades.

A Colorado real-estate boomer has been subdividing mountain tops and selling them to con dining purchasers probably under the plea that they come high, but you must have 'em.

The New York Herald thinks the cholera scare two years ago was a good thing for that city, as it taught the authorities the necessity of increasing vigilance to keep out deadly epidemics.

Corbett says that he is a gentleman, and London seems to have taken him at his word. If Corbett can conceal a not unnatural surprise at this credulity he will probably enjoy his trip abroad.

The statement from South Dakota that you can raise anything there and make it pay is borne out by the fact that a man recently raised an \$18 draft to \$1,000 the other day in Huron—and got it cashed, too.

A Pittsburgh man says he has discovered a process by which he can make gold for \$ a ton. Now if it were coal that he proposes to manufacture cheap, he might be looked on as a public benefactor, in time.

The humped back bicycle rider is meeting with ridicule at every turn of the crank. There would be as much sense in every pedestrian toggling himself out in a racing suit as for every man that mounts a wheel doubling himself up like a jack knife.

A new variety seems to have been added to the domestic servant class. An "up and down girl" is advertised for as required in London. From the wage offered, it would appear that she is to wait on the servants, and save them all the going up and down stairs she can.

"Put your pants white while you wait" is a sign displayed by a Boston tailor. It is presumed he has some sort of retiring room for the gentlemen who are waiting for their pants. There would be pressing needs for such a room if the pressing place is located on a public thoroughfare.

The awful dogs of war have broken loose in Chicago and St. Louis. They are the terrors of the Chicago Tribune and of the St. Louis Republic, respectively, and are fighting over the following question: Did the Southern States have a right to secede from the Union? The latest advice from Richmond is to the effect that if the States had a right to secede they made a big mistake in doing so.

The New York Court of Appeals has given a decision of the highest importance as the subject of the liability of an employer for injury to an

employ through the negligence of another employe. A train dispatcher had given a wrong order for running a freight train, in consequence of which a collision occurred, seriously injuring a fireman on the train. The railroad company was held to be responsible for damages to the injured employe.

A number of large wholesale houses in New York were surprised lately by having thousands of circulars that they had sent out returned to them by the postal authorities for insufficient postage. The circulars were all sent out with the envelopes unsealed and were stamped with cent stamps. It appears, however, that the humidity moistened the mucilage on the flaps of the envelopes, and that they had sealed themselves and become a first-class matter.

Gotham has produced the most appreciative and gallant husband on record. Another man was locked up for annoying a married woman with unwelcome lovenaking, and the husband himself brought a substantial meal to his captive rival, alleging as the reason for his remarkable charity that his wife was so beautiful he did not blame other men for falling in love with her, as they simply could not help it. So ardent an admirer of his wife's charms and one so pitiful of her victims ought to be carefully preserved among the State treasures.

Young Kaiser Wilhelm has worked himself into a terrible state of mind against the realm over which his grandma rules and boldly announces that henceforth, like the great councillor whom he has once more taken into his affections, he means to fight very shy of everything English, including alliances, no doubt. This is probably a way of announcing that Germany intends to keep a free hand in the African business and not to pull any chestnuts out of the fire for Mr. Bull, who has pronounced objections to burning his own pants.

In searching for a bullet that has hidden itself in the interior of a man, the doctor uses a fine piece of wire, which sometimes follows its course and sometimes does not, with the result that as the operator has to depend entirely upon his sense of touch he is often quite a long time before he succeeds. This state of affairs is to be improved by a telephone, from the receiver of which two wires extend, one terminating in a metal bulb, and placed in the patient's mouth, and the other used to probe for the bullet. Directly the wire touches the lead, the doctor hears a rasping sound in the receiver.

It is announced that the advocates of the faith cure movement are arranging to give it a tremendous "boom." It is difficult to understand why the law does not strike at this astonishing delusion with such force that it will never make any more victims. The craze seems to have taken firm root in the soil of New Jersey. Out of the ranks of these deluded persons a certain number of victims will come every year. They will die because they have not received the medicine and the advice which every human being requires in acute illness. Is it not abominable that such a medieval absurdity should not be brought properly under the law, so that the annual sacrifices may be checked?

The English village school-teacher has a harder time of it than the American girl in a similar position. Her salary never exceeds three hundred dollars a year, and often about two hundred dollars, and for this stipend she is required to teach an ungraded school, and frequently to keep the schoolhouse and its sanitary appointments clean and in order, as well as teach in the Sunday School and play the organ for church services. Her need of labor is often a barn which is too dilapidated for its original use, cold, and penetrated by all the winds of heaven. And the young woman who is placed in the humiliating position is generally a college graduate of cultivation and refinement.

The Famous Constock. The famous Constock was discovered by chance. According to the story told, the ground on which the mine was afterward discovered was prospected by Constock, who located a claim but made up his mind that it did not amount to much and so abandoned it. Shortly after this an odd character named Finney was hunting in the neighborhood and shot a deer. The wounded animal struggled off, and while scrambling up the side of a hill dislodged some loose stones, disclosing signs of the presence of gold. Finney washed a little of the earth in a pan and was astonished at the result, for from the small quantity of earth tested came \$10 or \$15 worth of gold. When Finney and two of his friends were later working the mine along came Constock and demanded to know what they were doing on his claim. They were obliged either to kill him or take him into partnership, so they did the latter.

AGRICULTURAL NEWS

A FEW SUGGESTIONS FOR OUR RURAL READERS.

How to Make Wheat Flour at Low Prices—The Monopoly in Control of the Live Stock Market—Table for Assorting Plums—Farm and Home Notes.

Preparing Plums for Market.

In most cases experience has proven that pears, if shipped to market in ten pound crates, baskets, or boxes, will bring the producer a greater per cent. of profit than if shipped in half-bushel, or bushel crates or packages. A careful packer can fill the basket directly from the tree; but the usual plan is to pick into large receptacles, then, carefully sorting the plums, to place them in packages ready for the market. This recent handling removes a great deal of the bloom from the fruit, which removal should be avoided as much as possible. By the use of a single table, similar to the one shown in the engraving, the American Agriculturist, plums and other similar fruits are easily sorted. The top of the table should not be over three feet long and two and one-half feet wide. The sides and back, if of wood, may be eight in height at the back, tapering to three inches in front; the front guard, if of wood, should be less than three inches high, leaving a six-inch

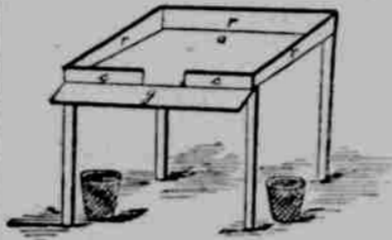


TABLE FOR ASSORTING PLUMS.

space between the inner ends; the standing board, if of wood, should be four inches wide. To operate it place the fruit carefully on the table, the sorter occupying a chair in front of the table, with a basket on his lap. Each hand can then be used in removing the leaves, limbs, damaged or imperfect fruit, throwing the refuse into baskets, in a convenient point upon each side. The perfect fruit, or that in need of picking, is rolled in front, and passes over the incline, into the basket. This table need not be too large, and may be made in its crude or elaborate form as wished. In working, the elbows can rest upon the guards, which will make the operation much easier. An ordinary table can be fitted with these simple appliances, and quickly removed after the shipping season is passed.

Some won't sow wheat again. The gradual shrinkage in value from the year 1890 has made them sick. They will have no more of it. Ten, twelve, and fifteen bushels to the acre at the present price, and 50 to 55 cents at the rail end, are doses of misfortune enough to sicken any man who depends a year in raising a crop, and then has to pay debts with the proceeds. But I've must grow wheat, and it appears that those who have adopted it as one of their crops, must continue to do so, as it is not possible to raise twenty bushels in place of ten, and thirty in place of fifteen bushel—God armers say it, and that too at little additional expense. This has been said before, but has been unheeded by those who, to day, grow such crops.

It has become evident to thinking men that in reproducing the same seed on the same land we are practicing a species of inbreeding and all know, or ought to know, that unless in the hands of men of the very highest genius this is impracticable and unprofitable. For example, the man who produces poor crops, as a rule is a poor farmer. His wheat weighs and measures short. Would a high class farmer buy his wheat for seed? If not, can the producer afford to use it? This is the problem in a nutshell. We must then have the best wheat to be had or seed, and the best and the best will cost but a trifling percentage over that of the poor.

Our land must be cultivated. The turning over the same soil from year to year is to wash in the same water. The soil must possess the provender the plant calls for or the matter will starve. The seed bed must be conditioned to the necessities of plant growth and climate conditions or the plant food already in the soil is unavailable. Here we have the chemical and the mechanical and the digestive condition allied together, and when these and the finest seed thoroughly cleaned and free of foreign and injurious weed-seed are forthcoming, we have done somewhat, at all events, toward securing a crop that even at present prices, will pay a profit.—Coleman's Rural World.

How to Grow Potatoes.

Every farmer should first arrange for the comfort and happiness of his family before he makes any efforts toward getting rich. He should make it possible to have a finer table than any hotel in the city even if it has French cooks. Some say they haven't time to tinker with a garden, but what are they living for? Why put off the enjoyment of life to some future time that we are not certain will ever come? Now every farmer, however humble, can get every real enjoyment that a millionaire can get. He can raise just as fine food as the millionaire can eat and he can enjoy it just as well. He can sleep in a cozy bed, and he can get all the mental rest he can desire, and there is no chance of loss of

time within the reach of the millionaire that the farmer cannot also get. Isn't it very foolish to struggle and start one's self to get rich for the sake of getting enjoyment in the future that we can have right now? To get all the luxuries that the millionaire enjoys you need:

- 1. A good garden, well stocked with vegetables, fruits, and dairies.
- 2. A good orchard, with fruits for all seasons.
- 3. One or two Jersey cows, strictly for home use.
- 4. Poultry, for the boys and girls.
- 5. A plenty of good books and papers.
- 6. Musical instruments.
- 7. Good educational facilities.

The farmer who has a farm paid for and the even conditions I have named, as a millionaire for he has all the luxuries that the millionaire can get that makes life enjoyable and grows it with a full rounded success.—Western Grower.

Monopoly in Meat.

The big three or four packers of the Union Stock yards, Chicago, in combination with the railroads, have a complete monopoly of the live and dressed meat supply of the entire country. The power of the combination is obtained, first in the centralization of the transportation companies and the delivery of all the Western cuts into a single market. These packers then fix up a rate with the railway managers for about one and one-third "rate" or the round trip, the gross beef in and the dressed beef out. This means the local country cutters a driven out of the market as purchasers direct from the farmers. And now the monopoly is in position to dictate terms to the farmers for the purchase of the live stock, and to sell it back to the consumers, producers include, at such prices as they may demand. All the principal cities and towns and many of the smaller ones, are supplied by dressed beef from Chicago, much of which is returned over the same railway lines which carried it to the central market on the hoof. This is, of course, only a beginning of what the farmers may expect if the strength of this monopoly is not broken as its a source of control of the live stock industry is becoming more complete year after year.—Stock Grower.

Bees and Fruit.

Because of bees stinging people who don't like them and are disliked to them often cause them to destroy their hives. Among these it is claimed that bees will sometimes injure the fruit. To determine whether this accusation is deserved or not an experiment was made. A quantity of damaged fruit was placed on a table in the open air and many bees, from neighboring hives, were quickly attracted to it. After they had gotten fairly to work upon it the damaged fruit was removed and sound fruit put in its place. In a few minutes the bees had all abandoned the table. Most of the damage charged to bees is done by ants, wasps and hornets, but the honey bee is not able to injure sound fruit.—Harvard Times.

Experiments with Corn.

A study in corn-growing at the Maryland Station had these results: The yield of grain where the rows were three feet in line apart, and the plants in inches apart in the row, was 9 bushels 50 pounds per acre; where the rows were a foot apart and the stalks 12 inches in the row, it was 40 bushels, 38 pounds. The stover on the narrow rows was 5,400 pounds per acre, on the wide it was 3,700 pounds. While cultivation did not exceed a depth of 3 inches, the yield per acre was 4 bushels 21 pounds of grain and 3,211 pounds of stover, where the depth was 6 to 8 inches, it was 20 bushels, 30 pounds of grain and 4,000 pounds of stover.

Windmill Irrigation.

A windmill will irrigate quite an area of land if arrangements are properly made for storing and distributing the water. A small patch of ground, to which the moisture can be controlled, will yield more than three times the area that is subject to drought and other drawbacks. With thorough drainage and proper facilities for irrigation the farmer will have complete control of the moisture required.

Farm Notes.

It is predicted that the price of corn will, in a few years, average higher than that of wheat, and that as corn is gradually coming into use in Europe, the demand will be very large.

Italian bees are said to be more energetic in resisting the attacks of the bee moth than are the common black bees. As a rule, moth invasion means a weak, queerness colony and neglect.

A writer expresses the opinion that it is often the case that the labor in the milk which is attributed to the eating of some kind of weed in the pasture is really due to unclean ness in some particular.

Crop-rotten often follow each other. We used to plant our potatoes in ridges. In the West they now make ridges like those made for sweet potatoes, and plant the tubers in the valleys between. There are no sun-burnt potatoes, and the cultivator but tumbles the weeds down hill into the ditches. The tuber roots are not in the way of the plow.

The rule that a certain proportion of food produces a given quantity of milk, butter, and meat is only true when all the necessary conditions are complied with. If an animal is exposed to severe weather the food will be taxed to repair the loss of warmth or waste of the body. The food and the breed are more important than all, but every condition for success must be complied with.

NAPOLEON AND MARIE LOUISE

Metternich Gives an Amusing Account of His Interview with the Emperor.

Metternich tells a curious story which reveals the strange self-distrust of Napoleon at times. The point he had not been made a Prince was sent to Paris to report to the Austrian court the manner in which Marie was received at the French capital by the people. Metternich says:

"I found Napoleon with the Empress. Conversation turned upon common lace tops, when Napoleon said to me: 'I wish the Empress to speak openly to you and tell you candidly what she thinks of her position. You are a friend and she ought to have no secrets from you.' As he concluded this remark Napoleon locked the door of the drawing-room, put the key in his pocket and disappeared through another door. I asked the Empress what this scene meant. She replied by putting the same question to me.

"Seeing that she had not been prepared to be rebuffed by the Emperor, I guessed that he wished to enable me to gather from the mouth of the Empress herself some ideas upon her domestic life, so that I might give a favorable report to the Emperor, her father. We remained to keep up together for nearly an hour, when Napoleon returned, laughing, into the room. 'Well,' said he, 'have you had a good talk?' 'I do not ask you a good or bad thing about me. Did she laugh or cry?' 'I do not ask you a report; those are secrets between you two and do not concern any third person, even when that third person is the husband.'

"Next day Napoleon found an opportunity of speaking to me. 'What did the Empress say to you yesterday?' he asked. 'On told me,' I answered, 'that our conversation did not concern a third person. Permit me to keep it a secret.'

"The Empress told you," exclaimed Napoleon, "that she was happy with me and that she had no complaints to make. I hope that you will repeat it to your Emperor and that he will believe you rather than other people."

The Lawyer's Fee.

The other's nothing mean about the lawyer when it comes to raking in the fees. The other day a well-to-do Detroit attorney ran short of a few dollars and went across the hall to a broker's office to borrow it.

"I'll be glad to lend you the money," said the broker, "but I'll give you my check for it."

"I'm not," responded the broker, "but I'll give you my opinion as to my ever seeing the ten dollars."

"My professional opinion?" inquired the attorney, entering into the spirit of the joke.

"Oh," said the attorney, "I should say it was a safe loan and would recommend it."

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in the air. In fact, the frigate bird can easily and almost without a flap of the wings not only maintain itself, but also fly with a speed of nearly a hundred miles an hour. The spread of the wings extended varies between 4 and 5 feet. It feeds, gathers material for its nest here and there, and even sleeps on the wing. This well proves that in this bird the notion of the wings is, in a manner, independent of the will.—London Public Opinion.

The Peacock's Feet.

Every one has read and heard that a peacock's feet are ugly, and that the bird is so conscious of it that it invariably tries to hide them when it finds that it is observed. This is a relic of not of modern origin, for it is to be found in ancient writings and in works as old as the classical Greek and Latin, and in old fables. It has been recorded as an ornithological truth by writers from the immemorial and even at the present day it is to be found in books—that are considered standard works on natural history. This constant reiteration of so nothing that has no foundation in fact is simply an illustration of how some writers will take as an accepted fact the assertions of some other writers who have gone before them and not exercise their own judgment and eyes. The assertion that peacocks have ugly feet is arrant nonsense, as any one can see if they will examine the next bird they see. The feet are slightly larger than those of a turkey, but a well proportioned, and small for the size of the bird.

The popular misconception regarding this bird's feet undoubtedly arose from the fact that the peacock, being by nature a wild bird, is apt to drop its beautiful fan tail to the ground behind him and scuttle away as rapidly as possible. The dropping of the tail, of course, hides the feet, and the impression is conveyed to the ignorant or unthinking that the bird is trying to hide his feet.

The Grand Duke Alexis.

The hand-omest, and if rumor says true the most brilliant and intellectual, of the Czars' brothers, the Grand Duke Alexis, is pronounced a doomed man. His position has excited his liver and his constitution is giving way under the strain of a life for which there is no name. Twenty years of riotous living will knock out even a man as grand as Duke Alexis. He is a magnificent specimen of humanity he was when he first came to this country. Every one said it is a shame he couldn't be a Emperor, for, though his father was to be assassinated years after, the second son was already the favorite. The Grand Duke had no beauty to boast of, and was kept in the background because he was heir to the throne, while his brother saw the world and all that in it is. Then came the day he fell in love with a girl not of royal rank, and married her. All the tragedy began from that time, and the hand-omest of the Romanoffs has ever since been at variance with his family and as reckless as Lucifer himself. Ages hence there will be a fine chapter in the history of Europe on courts for gossip to digest, and one of the principal characters to be "handed down" as a warning and an example will be the Grand Duke Alexis.—Boston Herald.

Having a Fortune Teller.

"Say, you are a fortune teller, aren't you?" inquired a gentleman the other day as he entered rooms occupied by a clairvoyant.

"I read the past and future, and give advice in business troubles, and give to gentlemen," was the reply.

"That's all right. The charges are reasonable enough," he continued quickly. "It's not my own fortune I want told, but my wife's. She's been down this afternoon, and I want to pay you something to advance," and he laid a dollar bill on the table, and after giving an accurate description of his letter half, continued: "It wouldn't be healthy for my wife to go to the seashore this summer; the fates are read that she would be drowned while bathing. She's undoubtedly going to have a fortune teller in a few years, and therefore she ought to be economical now, so she will be in a better position to find out over when she has the cash. I think it would improve her complexion to stay at home and do her own work, etc. You understand, don't you? Do your work well, and you will hear from me again." He left as abruptly as he came, leaving the well satisfied woman and a delighted man. Cost, only 50.

Medicinal Uses of Honey.

The following list of uses for purposes to which honey may be applied is compiled by a bee-loving contemporary.

"A teaspoonful of warm honey taken every fifteen minutes has a surprising effect on catarrh of the nose that in the early stages can be cured by honey taken warm.

"Public speakers should freely use honey. The formic acids which it contains causes a constriction of the mouth, throat, lungs and chest.

"A heaping teaspoonful of honey stirred into a raw egg is a very good corrective for a cough, and should be continued for several mornings.

"Coughing may be quickly relieved by mixing barley water with honey and the juice of lemon, and drinking it warm.

"A gargle made of sage tea, sweetened with honey, or pile made of a mustard, turp, and honey will be found very efficacious for croup and hoarseness.

"This is an excellent remedy for lung trouble. Make a strong decoction of horchound herb and sweeten with honey. Take a tablespoonful five times a day."