

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

Andrew Carnegie says it is a disgrace to any man to die rich. Andrew doesn't intend that any of his money shall be burned.

Andrew Carnegie says he expects to leave nothing when he dies. Mr. Carnegie is mistaken. He will leave a very unsavory memory.

A bookkeeper at \$1,800 a year who demonstrates his ability to steal \$354.00 in ten years is not without redeeming qualities. He has at least the distinction of being an Object Lesson.

Colonel Bob Ingersoll should sit down some day and devote a few minutes of his valuable time to the calm consideration of the question which of the two is doing the more real good in the world—himself or General William Booth, of the Salvation Army.

The Cincinnati firm that was said to have made \$90,000 out of Thomas Dean English's "Ben Bolt" need him for libel when he intimates that they had stolen it. The virtue of enterprising publishers is not to be assailed with impunity by presumptuous authors.

"Why cannot the eagle swim?" asks some foolish person. The American bird attends strictly to business and, not having advanced views of any sort, is satisfied to be beautifully natural in the sphere for which a long course of evolution has fitted him. High may he soar, and may his voice volume never be less.

Rubenstein was fortunate enough to reap abundant rewards of his artistic genius while he lived, and dead his memory is heaped with the flowers of adulation. His personality and passionate art drew all who came within his influence to his feet. They find it hard to realize that the nimble fingers and glowing mind which translated thought and passion into soul-stirring music are stilled. "Alas, alas, the one inexcusable thing."

Another of our cherished ideas has been ruthlessly destroyed, and at the hands of bacilli breeders. It has been believed that warm or hot bread was wholesome, but here comes Dr. Trocki, a Russian, who says the heat required to bake it kills all the pestiferous bacteria, so it is innocuous, while bread that is cold or has been cut is the home of myriads of these wrigglers with unpronounceable names. What will these scientists leave us?

Some geological sharp has announced that long ago, doubtless in "the good old times" we hear so much about, the great lakes were drained by way of the Illinois River, instead of the Niagara. He further alleges that the bed of the Illinois is about thirty feet above that of the Niagara. What a good opportunity this opens out to the rustlers of Chicago, to dredge the Illinois, say fifty feet deeper, and start the lake water to the Gulf of Mexico by way of the Illinois and Mississippi route and thus abolish the Niagara, falls and all, at a stroke of the spade!

When Barkeeper Barney Fuerstein, of Cinnamon's saloon in Newark, N. J., was ordered to hold up his hands by two robbers who had covered him with revolvers he didn't do it, neither did he spring for a gun or feel around for a bang starter. He simply yelled and ran. His two assailants followed his example. This is an example all householders ought to remember. If you awake at night and find a burglar in the room, don't try to get your revolver. The fellow would probably take it from you if you did. It is bad enough to be pounded with the butt end of somebody's pistol, but it is worse to be whacked with your own. Just yell as if you were an infant whose nurse had put a pin in the wrong place. Nine hundred and ninety-nine chances to one the fellow will fall out of the window in an effort to get away. We have never known of a case where it failed. Try it.

That Alaska is steadily progressing in civilization is shown in the annual report of Governor Heckley. During the year the fisheries have been successful, the mines have yielded profitable returns, the population has been largely augmented by immigration and the people have enjoyed a season of unusual progress and prosperity. The building of saw mills and the manufacture of lumber in the Territory has revolutionized the manner of constructing habitations in nearly all the native villages. The Indian police force of Alaska has been of great utility, preventing the making of native whisky in Indian villages, keeping the peace and preventing bloodshed and compelling Indian children to attend the government schools. Governor Heckley also says that the tendency of Alaska natives is to abandon a nomadic life and seek employment in the mines and mills, in which they can earn a living with certainty and enjoy some of the comforts of civilized man. The Governor recommends an increase in the appropriation for the education of children in the Territory.

It is evidently the intention of the czar of Russia that there shall be at least a little freedom in that country, which is a notable sign. People seem to get the permission of the police to do everything there, and if any one is arrested a fine of pay

ment is levied. Evidently the police are bound to assume that they have discovered a conspiracy. They are never slow about this, and consequently when the other day a lady put upon the front of her house emblems of mourning for the late czar, and did not first get the permission of the police they proceeded to make life unpleasant for her. She might have been half way to Siberia by this time, but the czar happened to hear of the case, and then he made it unpleasant for the police and actually had a chief of police placed under arrest. The czar therefore means that the people in Russia shall be free to put up mourning for the czar. This is the first step. Freedom for other things will come later.

It was not within the bonds of reasonable expectation that so important an event as the dedication of the new reichstag building in Berlin should have been allowed to pass without demonstration from the Kaiser. The new building, which is an elaborate and expensive structure, was dedicated with all proper ceremony, but not until after the Kaiser had signally displayed his trait of originality. For, in the first place, the young monarch, instead of going to the reichstag to inaugurate the session opening simultaneously with the dedication of the new building, had the reichstag come to him, a proceeding which might be paralleled should the President of this country insist upon Congress coming over to the White House to hear his message. And in still further emphasis of his sovereignty, Wilhelm there delivered a speech in which he alluded to bills which he desired to be passed and gave a stern admonition as to "the pernicious conduct of those who attempted to disturb the executive power in the fulfillment of its duty." It is safe to assume that the bills thus championed by the Kaiser will pass. The peculiarity manifested by Wilhelm on certain previous occasions shows that when parliament and Emperor come into conflict on any point it is not Wilhelm who will give way.

INVENTIVE EXPLORERS.

They Found Substitutes When Their Tea and Soap Gave Out. Explorers, perhaps more than any other people, are constantly proving the truth of the old adage that "necessity is the mother of invention." Many things which we hardly value because they are so common and so easily obtained seem often to these exiles from civilization of almost priceless value. Many are the expedients they employ to make good the loss when the last scrap of the highly-prized article disappears.

A while ago a German party under Lieut. Morgen were scouring the interior of the Cameroons to find out just what sort of a country Germany acquired when she raised her flag there. They were long in the far interior, and some of the supplies gave out. One day the last tea caddy was emptied, and there was great lamentation, for few things are more comforting to men in a tropical wilderness than a cup of tea. The party were mourning their unhappy lot when one day Mr. Weller returned from a journey from off the main route which had occupied him for several weeks. He brought with him a considerable quantity of a grass-like plant, with yellow blossoms, which he had found in a natural clearing in the forest. He was attracted by its aromatic smell, and it struck him that it might be made to answer as a substitute for tea. Sure enough, the men relished the new beverage greatly, though it did remind them a little of the camomille tea which their good nurses used to administer at home when they were sick; but it was so great an improvement upon that insipid drink that they thought it rather unjust to mention the two together.

Then the soap dwindled away and for some weeks before the last piece disappeared the men had been racking their brains for a substitute. An old Hausa woman came to the relief with a suggestion which helped them out of their dilemma. She told them to cut banana leaves into small pieces, mix them with palm oil and ashes in certain proportions, and roll the mixture into little balls. The result was quite satisfactory. The little black balls were by no means a perfect substitute for the best qualities of toilet soap, but, with due patience in their use, they performed their office very well.

Of course some of the men would not be happy if their tea were not sweetened, but life was still worth living after the sugar gave out. Lieut. Morgen extracted the sap from sugar cane and boiled it until it became a thick syrup and finally granulated into a coarse brown sugar. It didn't taste exactly like the product of a sugar refinery, but it was a good deal better than no sugar at all.—New York Sun.

Cable Way Over a Deep Ravine. Across the Devil's dyke, a deep ravine near Brighton, England, a cable way has just been erected and opened for traffic. From a single steel-wire rope, three inches in diameter, stretching 1,200 feet between two iron columns on either side of the dyke, are suspended steel anchors, two feet from fluke to fluke, by wire ropes of smaller dimensions and of varying lengths, so as to bring the line of anchors on a level. On the flukes are supported two wire road cables, one inch in diameter, on which run the pulleys which support the car. The cars are iron and wire cages, seven feet by five, carrying eight passengers. They are moved by an engine on the bank, driving an endless wire rope to which the car is gripped, like our cable cars. The cable is 220 feet above the bottom of the ravine, and the trip takes two minutes and a half.

When a woman says nothing when her husband quarrels, he regards it as the worst kind of talking back.

BARN FOR THE STOCK

BUILDING IN WHICH ALL MAY BE HOUSED.

Advantages of Having All Kinds of Stock Under One Roof—How to Have a Constant Water Supply—Weather Reports on the Farm.

A Convenient Barn. Some farmers would be glad to build contemplated barns so that all kinds of stock kept on a place devoted to general farming may be gathered under one roof. This plan has its advantages and its disadvantages—more of the former than of the latter, perhaps, if one places



FIG. 1. PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF BARN.

its proper value upon ease in doing one's work. The illustrations given herewith may afford suggestions for those desiring to build general purpose barns. The barn is of the ordinary shape, with a wing on either end, as seen in Fig. 1, the main or feeding floor being across the middle of the barn proper. The floor plan (Fig. 2) leaves little to add by way of explanation, except that provision may be made for feeding the young stock from the second floor through chutes at the end of the barn proper. It is intended for the young stock to run loose in the pen provided—which should have a cement floor—and that the manure from the cattle and horse stalls should be wheeled daily into this pen, spread

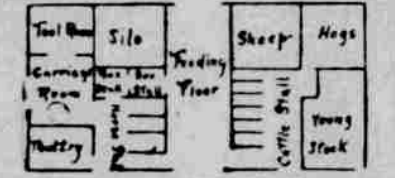


FIG. 2. GROUND PLAN

and covered with litter. It will thus be firmly packed and kept in the best of condition. If such a barn could be built where it could have a dry cellar, the manure could be dropped into the cellar, where also could be stored roots, while the silo could extend down through the cellar, the root room being, of course, partitioned off from the space devoted to the manure.—American Agriculturist.

Improving Meadows and Pastures.

In most meadows and pasture fields are patches of greater or less extent that are not nearly as productive as the remainder of the field, though the entire surface is uniformly seeded. These unproductive places are usually knolls or hillsides, from which the fertility of the soil has been exhausted by washing or cropping. During autumn they can easily be located and brought back to a state of fertility. First apply a good seeding of timothy, or other grass seed, and then cover the entire surface half an inch or more deep with well-rotted barn yard manure, or a heavy sowing of commercial fertilizer, passing over the spots several times with a spring tooth or other harrow. The early fall rains will cause the seed to germinate, and the whole surface should present a healthy, green appearance before winter sets in. Frequently a field that has been into grass for many years is well set with moss, in which case scatter seed over the surface, apply some rich manure, and harrow until the surface looks ragged, thus laying the foundation for an increased growth of herbage, and all at small expense, without replowing the field. These bare spots are not at all pleasant to look at, and do not speak well for the farmer.—Orange Judd Farmer.

A Wagon Jack. It should be made of seasoned hickory. The lever is 12 1/2 in., 4 1/2 in. long, the legs 1 1/2 in. long, cross bar 1 1/2 x 30 in. long; bolt legs to lever 7 in. from end, bolt crossbar 22 in. from same end, bolting loosely and using 1/2 in. bolts. For the pin in the end of the crossbar use 3/4 in. rod bent as at B.



WAGON JACK.

and insert the bar as at C; it should project 3 in. Give it a coat of paint. It is light but powerful, holds a wagon securely, is quickly adjusted, and when not in use will fold up compactly or can be hung up by the pin in the bar C.

Weather Reports on the Farm.

To show the need there is for the farmer to be in close communication with the sources of information, I will give an instance. In my business of farming I early realized how much success depended upon the weather, and made a daily study of the reports sent out by the Weather Bureau. These I arranged to have reach me each morning. One morning that gave promise of being the best day of the year, I sent two teams to cut a clover patch of sixteen acres. As soon as the day's weather report came I saw by it that a storm was coming from the west, and I hurried to my clover field and stopped the work there, sending the teams to cultivating in the corn field. The men were disgusted, and looked at me as if they thought I had lost my mind, as there was not an indication of a storm to be seen. I went to a neighbor, who had begun his cutting that morning, but he looked at the sky and declined to be advised. He "took no stock in weather

reports," and his field would be cut that day. The next morning it was raining, and for five days thereafter it rained. My clover was ruined and saved; my neighbor's crop was ruined. How many others were misled by the fatal brightness of that morning, or what the loss was I don't know.

A careful study of the weather reports has shown me that over 80 per cent. of the prognostications given by the Weather Bureau are correct. We farmers have as much right to have this information delivered to us in the day of it as has the merchant in the city.—Correspondence of the Philadelphia Ledger.

Farming at the Stations.

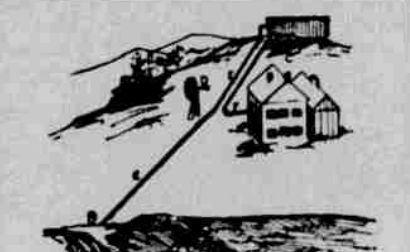
The work of a station is sometimes best performed in making examinations of the methods and results of practical farmers who have nothing to do with the experimental part of agriculture, and then in publishing these reports. Often the experiments are conducted under such peculiar conditions at the stations that it would hardly be a fair thing to conclude that the same results would happen on the average farm. The Illinois station seems to realize this, and the opinions and methods of feeding sheep, hogs, and cattle of over one hundred practical farmers and breeders are published in Bulletin thirty-six, making a most interesting summary of the state of feeding and breeding in Illinois. From this we learn that the majority of farmers or breeders whose opinions are given make corn and pasture the chief reliance for feeding, generally fed underground, and even unshelled by the majority, and stall feeding is only occasionally practiced. Very few feeds outside of corn and pasture are given, and ensilage, strange to say, is mentioned by only a few of these breeders of beef. On a few other points there is considerable disagreement, and the question of breed preferred varies, although among sheep Shropshires lead by a small majority, and among pigs the Poland-Chinas are the favorites, and among cattle the short-horns.—Germantown Telegraph.

Yield Per Acre.

The farmers of the United States produce less per acre than farmers in Europe, and this means at a greater proportionate expense, as double crops can sometimes be grown for the same outlay of labor. It costs no more to plow an acre of land that produces twenty-five bushels of wheat than for twelve, and nearly the same proportion of labor must be bestowed upon harvesting the smaller field as the larger. It is by compelling the land to produce more per acre that the farmer must in the future increase his profits.

A Constant Water Supply.

A system for furnishing a house and barn with a constant supply of water from a spring at some distance is shown in the accompanying illustration from Farm and Home. The reservoir on the hill is 50 feet above the buildings and connected with the spring B by the one-inch pipe E. The distance between spring and reservoir is 1,800 feet. Midway along this line of pipe is the windmill D which pumps the water into the reservoir. In the same drain with pipe E is laid



CONSTANT WATER SUPPLY.

another returning from the reservoir to the buildings. In the upper part of each building is a smaller reservoir. These are supplied from the larger one on the hill. Where it is impossible to place the larger reservoir high enough to make use of gravity as a means of returning the water to the smaller ones the water can be pumped direct from the spring to the reservoirs in the buildings. In this case it is best that the reservoirs be larger than where they are supplied from one of mammoth size.

Water Vegetables.

In China many of the shallow pools have their bottoms planted with edible lilies, lotus, water chestnuts, water spinach and other vegetables which thrive in marshy lands. These grow rapidly, and in the warmer sections produce more than one crop each year. It might be wise to try some of these water vegetables in this country, as they will furnish a greater variety of food than already exists here.

Farm Notes.

The consumption of mutton has largely increased within the past six years, and it will continue to do so. Here is an excellent field for the farmer to handle the mutton breeds.

The Germantown Telegraph says that if a cheese factory is located in a good dairy district and farmers persist in sending only inferior milk to it the closing of that factory is only a question of time.

If the cider does not turn to vinegar it is due to the lack of air (oxygen) and it should be poured out into tubs and a few days again poured into the barrel. Any method of admitting oxygen to the cider will answer.

A damp roosting place is an abomination, and yet fowls prefer a wet roost free from lice to a dry one covered with vermin which sap their blood and strength. This will explain why some people's chickens prefer to roost on trees.

Some sort of pears, notably the Bartlett, Chapp's Favorite and Lucretia, never fall of a crop, and by using care varieties may be planted so as to come in one after another. The pear is a sure crop all the time, and the wonder is that more of them are not to be seen about our farm houses.

IT DOES LITTLE GOOD

KEEPING THE CHILDREN AFTER SCHOOL HOURS.

All Scholars Are Not Capable of Doing the Same Amount of Work in a Given Time—Parents Should Interest Themselves in the School.

Staying After School.

"What are you keeping them for?" said Miss Wiley to Miss Sprague, to whose room she had come at noon.

"Why," to make up their work, of course," was the reply.

"Wasn't there time in school hours?" "Time for most of the class, but some of these were idle, and are dumb and slow, so they have to stay."

Here a boy came up with a slate, and Miss Sprague looked over his work. "All right but this last problem. Look that over and find your mistake." A girl came with sentences "left over" from the language lesson. Her errors were noted, and she was sent back to her seat. In the full, Miss Sprague said a little sharply, "I don't see how your pupils all get their work done at exactly the same time, so all can be dismissed."

"They don't all do the same work. There is no set, definite amount that must be done in a given lesson. John works hard all the time on one problem, while Henry gets seven or eight done. Henry is so much ahead to be sure, but I'm not going to keep John at noon to finish and so punish myself, and keep him at work more hours than the law allows."

"That must be a nice, easy way to get along, but I can't reconcile it with my conscience," said Miss Sprague, tartly. Miss Wiley felt herself growing hot, too, and as a delinquent brought his slate up at that minute, she "took her seat off." Which was right? As I am Miss Wiley, of course I think I am.

Suppose the last lesson of the morning was that in arithmetic. We are in simple interest. I have been at the board half an hour working with them, "explaining, persuading, expanding," all have worked with zeal; they've heard so often about reckoning interest, and now they are really doing it, and it "isn't a bit hard." Then I say, "Open your books on page 203 and you will find a great many of these problems, and I want you to see how many you can do by yourself before the bell rings."

Then they "buckle to," and, before the bell, two or three have them all done, some are still staggering among the first easy ones. The bell rings; I praise their diligent work and tell them how easy it will soon seem to them all, as they clear and put away slates. They all go out into the hall together, happy and content.

Some days when the work is not so new and fascinating, I have to urge lazy or flagging ones, and often assist dull or stupid ones. But when school is out I want to be, too, and I want no one to stay unless he stays of his own free will to ask assistance.

If a test or a composition is not finished at bell time, all stay as a matter of course until they have finished. But we try to begin in time, and those who are through first take little books from our library, to read until the bell rings.

Miss Sprague puts in a half hour's more work in a day than I do; the same children are there at noon and in the afternoon, languidly or sullenly "finishing up their work"; they expect nothing else; they will be the failures of the class in spite of her, and she might better save her strength.

Miss Sprague lately admitted that she didn't know but that I was right after all.—Missouri Teacher.

Minnesota's School Fund.

Minnesota has a large school fund than any other State; more than double that of any except Kansas and Texas, and very much larger than either of these. It is derived from the sale of land granted by the general Government and now amounts to nearly \$10,000,000, which sum will be doubled when all the lands are disposed of. The funds are safely invested, and will provide an abundant income for as many educational institutions as Minnesota will ever need. Both of the Dakotas have abundant educational provisions. North Dakota has over 3,000,000 acres and South Dakota has over 2,400,000. None of this land can be sold for less than \$10 an acre, and under the constitution of the State only the interest of the proceeds can be used. The fund is permanent.

Washington has granted 2,920,780 acres for its schools, of which 2,261,780 are for the common schools, and the rest for the State University and scientific institutions.

Dull Days.

Once in a while any will come when you go into the school room in the morning with a dull, tired feeling, that makes the very thought of work disagreeable. You wonder how you are going to drag through the day. Now what is to be done? We answer, go to work. Rouse yourself up and go to work. It may require a supreme effort; but make the effort and conquer the flesh by force of will. Begin with pleasant voice and countenance the work which you had planned, and in a marvelously short time the enthusiasm you inspired the class will react on yourself, you'll forget everything in the interest of work, and the day will slip away almost before you are aware. You may not think so, but just try it. Subliminal the dominion of the mind over the body; and work is a panacea the use of which is not generally remembered.

Now, if on the other hand, when you feel out of soul you allow the feeling to have dominion over you, you will act so that the day will soon be out of sorts, too, as a dismal day will be passed by all concerned. It is an excel-

lent time for one day that the work be changed out before, and you know how you are thinking just what you are going to do, for in some states of the nervous system it is easier to work than to think. There is one kind of physical weakness which needs nothing so much as a smart two-mile walk, while the other kind requires rest. Now, if you suffer from physical inertia of the morning, at all of the latter sort, as soon as the school is dismissed seek the lounge or easy chair, or grassy bank and rest as nature prompts.—Education Review.

A Hint to the Teacher.

Cutting is an excellent exercise. Scissors may be obtained at the hardware store for as little as 12 cents a pair. Well made and occasional application of oil these scissors may be made to do good and long service. The child draws around objects on paper; now let him learn to cut them out. It will take much practice, but it is work that may be made to pay. When the child can cut on a crossed or pencil line, straight or curved, encourage him to cut by the eye, to fold and cut, producing various units of design. Hang up a large sheet of colored paper, and paste the best units on it as they are developed. You will be astonished at the interest and pride of the little designers. Of course the children will fold and cut the various plane figures in connection with their drawing. Mount these figures on some neutral-tinted paper; make a school collection; encourage each child to have a set of his own.

Ask each child to bring a piece of flannel or thick cotton cloth to lay over his desk while cutting. This is to catch the pieces and deaden the sound of the scissors if they chance to fall on the desk. When the work is over, insist that every scrap be picked up, the cloth shaken into the basket, and rolled and folded. Empty spoon-boxes, largest size, make a good receptacle for these scraps, and if the scissors are rolled up in them they are not as likely to rust.—The New Education.

Some Pertinent Questions.

Are your children in school? Ask the New York Times. Do you know what they are studying and how far along they are? Have you visited their school? Do you know how much light they have in the schoolroom or anything about its ventilation or how many children are in the same room with them? Perhaps they do not get on well and their complaints against the teacher are loud and long. Have you investigated the matter, or do you think the blame is all on one side? A visit to the school might reveal what sort of person the teacher is, and why there is friction between her and your children. If the children have work to do at home, do you know if and how they do it? Do you give your school boys and girls nourishing, carefully prepared food, or do you let them have anything that is at hand? Do you see that they are early in bed and that they have plenty of sleep? Are you watchful that some time every day is given to outdoor play? And have you searched and discovered the little ambition every boy and girl cherishes, and, if it is a reasonable one, are you pleasing them and gaining their confidence by fostering an encouraging it? What of these questions, mothers, some or all of them?

Leader of the Kindergartens.

Miss Elizabeth Harrison, of Chicago, the recognized leader of the kindergarten movement on both sides of the water, is a Kentuckian by birth and a distant kinwoman of the Harrisons of Indiana fame. She completed her studies for kindergarten work fourteen years ago, and immediately began teaching in a Loring school. Her girlhood was filled with social triumphs, and she entered the kindergarten work against the wishes of her family, who did not suspect that underneath her rare social gifts lay the sterner qualifications of an educator and leader. She is dark, tall, slight, of distinguished appearance, and her manners are fascinating and elegant. She is a powerful speaker, and as a lecturer has attained her greatest notoriety.

How Teachers Waste Time.

1. Ignorance in organizing classes.
2. Giving unnecessary directions.
3. Coming to school without a definite plan of work.
4. Speaking when pupils are not giving attention.
5. Giving orders and immediately changing them.
6. Speaking too loud and too often.
7. "Getting ready" to do something.
8. Allowing pointless criticisms, questions and discussions.
9. Asking pointless, wandering questions, and going off on "tangents" in recitations.
10. Explaining what pupils already know.
11. Explaining what pupils should study out for themselves.
12. Repeating questions.
13. "Picking" at pupils.
14. Repeating answers after pupils.
15. Giving muddled explanations of conceal ignorance.
16. Using the voice where the eye would do more.
17. Asking questions that can be answered by yes or no.

A New University Endowment.

A contribution of \$1,000 to the University of Pennsylvania was received lately from John Sparhawk, Jr. It is to be used for the enrichment of its Latin and Greek courses with books, maps and lantern slides, illustrative of dress, statuary, architecture, etc., of ancient times, and to be for the use of both graduates and undergraduates.