

## TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

### A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

New York must take better care of her lunatics.—New York Advertiser. Good!

It takes the average war correspondent a tremendously long time to suspend hostilities.

The use of croton oil for vaccination purposes in a small-pox epidemic is quite certain to be followed by grave results.

A New York man has just been arrested for stealing a Bible. He probably never had seen one before, but knew what he needed.

If the killing of Bowen puts an end to prize fighting in this country, we see no reason why Corbett should not found a school of oratory and elocution.

It is estimated that there are 3,000 marriages a day throughout the world. We haven't looked up the statistics, but presume the divorces reach at least 5,000 a day.

A dispatch from China says that General Wei, who was sentenced to be beheaded for cowardice, escaped by hiring a substitute. Such a scheme was certainly Wei's.

A new telephone company says that within a short time telephones will be sold for a string and every man will own and operate his own wires. We think they are "stringing" the public.

A wealthy man dying in the East refused to make a will, saying that he wanted his relatives to have a good fight. It is not often that one can be so certain that his wishes will be carried out.

Some bacteria thrive ten days in a solution of strychnine, a small dose of which would be fatal to man, but they can live only two hours in a solution of tannin which could do us no more harm than to pucker our lips.

The fact that the publication of Dr. Mary Walker's poem, "If You Want a Kiss, Why Take It," has not been followed by any sensational episode cannot be accepted as positive proof that the world is growing better.

The report comes from Hungary that an agitation has been started for the abolition of after-dinner speaking. It will be hard to better the proposal of the late Mr. Thackeray, that the speaking, like the carving, should be done at the side table.

An official of the Standard Oil Company has written a book to prove that the gravitation theory of Sir Isaac Newton is impossible. It long has been understood that the Standard Oil Company owns the earth, but we believe it ought to leave the law of gravitation alone.

There has been a season of terrible murders, in each of which several people were concerned. It would be comforting if the eye of prophecy could look into the near future and see a series of hangings in which the same people would be concerned. But the eye of prophecy is unequal to the task.

The possibilities of the trolley car are daily being demonstrated. At Camden, N. J., one of the machines bumped into a can of oil, fired it with an electric spark and the whole car blazed up so suddenly that the passengers barely escaped being toasted a seal brown. It is beginning to be believed that the trolley car can do anything malicious short of chasing a man up a tree.

This is a good time a year to remind some folks to "keep your mouth shut" for hygienic reasons—both day and night. It was an old superstition that devils would find their way into one who leaves the mouth open, but modern science gives better reasons for using the mouth only for eating and speaking, and depending on the nose for breathing. Shut your mouth and open your eyes, and you'll take in enough to make you wise.

The "trusted bookkeeper" of the Council Bluffs bank who shot an inspector was paid the munificent salary of \$45 per month. But before you begin to feel sorry for him remember that a trusted bookkeeper in the New York Shoe and Leather Bank who received \$150 a month managed to get away with \$354,000. The Council Bluffs salary may have been low, but look at the possibilities wrapped up in it.

The one protection against dishonest banking which outweighs all the rest is the relentless enforcement of the law. This does not exist in this country. The national banks come nearest to it, and defalcations and swindles are correspondingly less. But banks and bank officers are perpetually compromising these cases. The same day that the Shoe and Leather Bank in New York was robbed of \$541,000 another bank adjusted a smaller loss without criminal proceedings. The number of such cases which reach the papers is large, and the number which do not is still larger. Forgery is rare in the Bank of England because for three centuries the Bank of England has never compromised a forger, cost what it may. Only one case of dishonesty among its employees has occurred in half a century, and the last was careless and not dishonest banking, the cashier who was removed having made advances to favorites on poor securities. If American banks adopted the same rigid rule to prosecute all offenders, and if district attorneys were deaf to all pleas to

suspend prosecutions in order to aid the recovery of stolen funds, defalcations would be less frequent.

Emperor William's sympathies seem as correct as his imperial ambition is unlimited. While aiming at total abolition of free speech in Germany on a number of paramount subjects which the people should always be free to discuss, he turns around to send a delicate message of sympathy to the widow and family of De Lesseps. Something of Frederick the Good is in his headstrong son and may yet dominate a character full of contradictory impulses, in which medieval despotism blends with the simple and noble inclinations of modern manliness.

The appalling casualties to railroad employes are set forth in the latest report of the Interstate Commerce Commission. Out of a total force of 873,692 there were 2,727 killed and 31,728 injured last year, making a total of dead and wounded of 34,455. Many a great battle has been less sanguinary. One would suppose that the legislative enactment requiring the application of automatic couplers and other appliances on the locomotives and cars of the railways had been of no avail, but it must be remembered that the new system has not yet been put in actual operation to any considerable extent and that it takes time to get it into good working order. While there is special peril in railway service travel by rail seems to be exceptionally safe. With all the millions of passengers riding by rail only 250 were killed and 3,229 injured during the year covered by the report.

### SOME FAMOUS BELLS.

**They Are Scattered All Over Europe and the Eastern Hemisphere.**

The invention of bells is attributed by some of the best foreign campanologists to the Egyptians, who are credited with having made use of such percussion instruments to announce the sacred fetes of Osiris. In China they are said to have been known nearly 3,000 years before the birth of Christ. The Greeks and the Romans, it is said, never used bells of a large size. Yet the hour of bathing and the opening of the market places were advertised daily by ringing bells, and it appears to me that small ones would scarcely have answered the purpose.

In the time of Theophrastus, 400 B. C., the patrols who went the midnight rounds in garrisons and camps had a hand-bell, or codon, by which the sentinels were kept wide awake in their sentry boxes. You may read, too, in Theophrastus, how the priests of Cybele, the delicious Corybantes or Galli, always jingled during the wild celebrations of their festivities; and also that the priests of the Cabiri did the same while performing their obscene rites. Tydeus, one of the seven chiefs of the army of Adrastus, puts bells on the handle of his shield; and Rhesus, a king of Thrace, and a warrior of "difficult and ravaging hand," used them to decorate the harness of his swift and noted horses. As we have seen, India and China had very large bells before the rest of the world.

Two Arabs who journeyed through China in the ninth century have delivered down to us an interesting account of the great popular justice bells, then in use throughout the whole of that country. In each town there was a bell of a large size fixed to the wall above the head of the prince or governor, and to it was attached a rope a mile or so in length, and laid so temptingly along the main thoroughfare that the humblest sufferer from injustice seldom hesitated to tug at it without fear. As soon as the bell sounded, the governor sent for the petitioner, and "serious business, craving quick dispatch," met with instant and honest recognition. And even above the head of the emperor himself there was such a noisy friend to the people, but he who rang it without sufficient cause—and his celestial majesty was often difficult to please in this particular—was switched in a very lively manner.

### Our Own Jessie McLean.

The Hon. Mrs. Spencer Cowper, who has just been figuring in the London bankruptcy court with liabilities of about \$400,000 and assets of less than \$8,000, is no other than the once popular American actress, Jessie McLean, hailing from Newburgh-on-the-Hudson, and who achieved a great deal of celebrity in the United States and West Indies in "Colleen Bawn" and other similar plays. It was at Nice that she met and married the old rake who, although he figured in the peerage as the son of the late Earl Cowper, is known by everybody to have been a natural son of Lord Palmerston. It was he who sold Sandringham to the Prince of Wales.

### Three Divisions of Life.

When a little boy Sheridan Le Fanu wrote the following essay on the life of man: "A man's life naturally divides itself into three parts—the first, when he is planning and contriving all kinds of villainy and rascality; that is the period of youth and innocence. In the second he is found putting in practice all the villainy and rascality he has contrived; that is the flower of manhood and prime of life. The third and last period is that when he is making his soul and preparing for another world; that is the period of dotage."

### Why He Wasn't Happy.

Dr. Holmes, several years ago, asked a friend: "What is your idea of happiness?" And the prompt answer, "Four feet on the fender," gave him great satisfaction. Some time later, perhaps a year or more, this friend found Dr. Holmes in his study, sitting alone by the fire, looking not very happy. To the visitor's solicitous greeting came the reply: "Only two feet on the fender."

## CURE FOR CHOLERA.

### A REMEDY THAT SHOULD BE KNOWN TO FARMERS.

Recommended by the Report of the Bureau of Animal Industry—Convenient Feeding Cart—A Wood-Box on Wheels—General Farm Notes.

#### Will Prevent Disease.

Chief Salmon of the Bureau of Animal Industry, in an officially published article on hog cholera and swine plague, does not uphold the theory that these diseases are caused solely by germs in the food or drink. He says swine will contract hog cholera in this way, but also by inhaling the virus with the air, and less frequently by its gaining entrance through the surface of a fresh wound. On the other hand, "the virus of swine plague is generally if not always taken into the lungs with the inhaled air." The first effect of cholera is believed to be upon the intestines, with secondary invasion of the lungs, but the first effect of plague is believed to be upon the lungs, and the invasion of the intestines a subsequent process.

One or both of these diseases generally are at work among hogs, especially the young ones. They are estimated to cause the loss of ten to twenty-five million dollars' worth of hogs per year in the United States. It is understood that this winter the trouble is more prevalent than ordinary, and this fact is cited by some to explain the phenomenal activity with which hogs have been marketed in the last two months, with the accompanying decrease of not far from 10 per cent. in the average weight of the animal sent to the market. The hogs have not been kept to fatten so long as usual, but it is only fair to say that this may be in consideration in part due to scarcity of feed on account of the paucity of the corn crop in nearly all the Northern States except Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. Nevertheless, the suspected prevalence of one or both these maladies renders it of interest that the following remedy should be known by every farmer who is a hog grower, since it is recommended by the department as the most efficacious formula which has been tried: Wood charcoal, sulphur, sodium sulphate, and antimony sulphide, one pound of each, and sodium chloride, sodium bicarbonate, and sodium hyposulphate, two pounds of each. These are to be completely pulverized and well mixed. The dose is a large tablespoonful for each 200 pounds weight of hog treated and given only once per day, being stirred into soft feed made by mixing bran and middlings, or middlings and corn meal, or ground oats and corn, or crushed wheat with hot water.

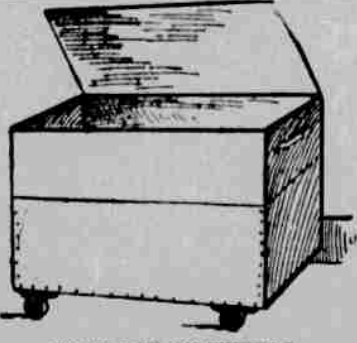
A great recommendation for this remedy is the fact that hogs are fond of it, and when once they taste of food with which it has been mixed they will eat it, though nothing else would tempt them. They should be drenched with it in water if too sick to eat, and most of those so treated will begin to eat soon after. The report recommends the medicine for use as a preventive of those diseases, for which purpose it ought to be put into the feed of the whole herd, presumably in much smaller quantity than above stated for sick animals. It is said to be an excellent appetizer and stimulant of the processes of digestion and assimilation so that it causes the animals to take flesh rapidly and "assume a thrifty appearance." Of course isolation should be attended to in cases where infection from other animals is feared.

#### Keep Sheep.

"Sheep," says a writer, "are a species of stock which are naturally as free from disease as any of our domestic animals, but when once attacked they give up easily and do not try to rally. In our own experience preventing disease by giving the flock common care—neither coddling nor neglecting—we have been fairly successful, and consider sheep one of the best paying branches of farm economy. A hog dies and we have nothing to repay us for the labor of burial; from a horse we have an inferior hide and perhaps his shoes; a cow's hide is usually worth taking off, but when a sheep goes the way of all flesh, it never dies in debt, that is, its fleece will always pay for what has been eaten since last shearing. Keep sheep."

#### A Handy Wood-Box.

This is a receptacle that can be rolled from its place against the wall when the kitchen is being swept, something that will commend itself to the housewife who knows there is much dirt and dust under and behind the heavy woodbox, but cannot move it an inch



WOOD-BOX ON WHEELS.

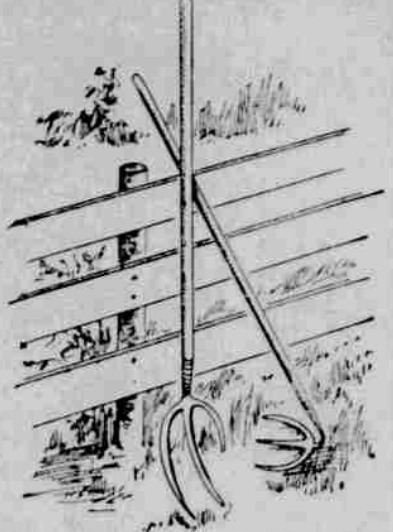
without too great exertion. Then again, it can be wheeled out into a woodshed where it joins the kitchen, filled with wood and returned to its place with ease. This box has a cover and also a front that has its upper part hinged to let down for convenience when the wood is low. Handles on either end make the box easy to move.

#### Spraying Blighted Pear Trees.

We have known blighted pear trees to live and grow after the blighted portions have been cut out, showing that when the disease has not gone far it may be checked. This fact makes us doubt the recommendation of Mr. Ma-

han to spray the trees with Bordeaux mixture, claiming that his will check blight after it has begun. In all cases cutting out of the part that the blight has affected should precede the spraying. A limb that has once blackened with the blight cannot be restored and is better off the tree than on it.—American Cultivator.

**They Make Good Garden Tools.** Broken pitchforks can be made to serve in the cultivation of the garden. The cut shows a broken-tined fork, and near it the same, with all



GARDEN TOOLS FROM BROKEN FORKS.

The tines cut to even lengths, and the shank bent so as to bring the tines nearly at right angles to the handle. In its new form it makes a splendid implement with which to loosen the soil and to cut down weeds.

#### The Cost of a Pound of Poultry.

The cost of a pound of poultry meat depends very much on the mode of management and the food used, the same as with any other class of stock. It is well known that the yield of milk from a cow is regulated by the extent and quality of the pasture and the amount of grain consumed. The cost is not estimated upon the amount of food, but by a comparison with the receipts from the products. No certain quantity of food can be estimated as a daily allowance for the reason that something depends upon the condition of the fowls. If warmer shelter is provided in winter, of course, the cost will be lessened, as a smaller amount of food will be necessary for the creation of animal heat. The hens must first warm themselves before they can be productive, and the food must be regulated to fit the requirements. It is estimated that each pound of poultry will cost 5 cents, but there may be mismanagement which will cause the expense to amount to double that sum. We are all willing to allow a maximum cost provided there is a good yield of eggs from the flock. A flock that pays nothing entails a total loss. If a hen should lay two eggs each week in winter she should more than pay her expenses.—Poultry Keeper.

#### Feeding Cart.

It saves time and encourages the proper feeding of pigs to keep the material near the eaters. Then if the troughs be many, a slop barrel on wheels will



FEEDING CART.

save the back. A tight box and cover is still better, for it is easier to mix the food, and with a flat bottom it keeps stirred by the motion of the cart. Again, it requires no bent axle. The engraving shows a model feed box. The axle first had two sticks laid on it 2 1/2 inches, long enough to support the box needed, and reach forward for handles or shafts. The box in hung under the axle from these shafts by long bolts which bind box and shafts together solidly and hold the axle firmly. The bolts are shown at 1, the axle at 2, and the place for the cover to the box at 3. At 4 a two-inch faucet is screwed into the box, and from it the slop flows into a trough conveying it to the feed trough. This may be pushed along and made to feed sixty to one hundred hogs in an hour readily.

#### Farm Notes.

Good stock and low prices will give better results than poor stock and good prices.

Potatoes and apples should be handled carefully, and not rolled down into the cellar through shutters or dumped out of wagons.

We buy over 30,000,000 pounds of currants from foreign countries and yet it is a fruit that thrives in nearly all sections of the United States.

No kind of fruit need be lost. If there is no market within convenient distance the fruit may be evaporated. It is not difficult to dispose of fruit in some form.

It is said that there is not now a single merino sheep in England. The British farmers make a specialty of mutton in place of wool and consider sheep very profitable stock.

As soon as the ground is frozen cut away the old wood of the blackberries and raspberries. A good shovelful of manure around each bunch of canes will benefit them when they start to grow in the spring.

Onions are imported into this country every year. We do not grow enough of them for ordinary use, while the supply of small white onions for pickling is seldom up to the demand at any period of the growing season.

While less than 300,000 acres were devoted to other cereals in Scotland last year, 1,000,000 acres were sown to oats. Scotland is not one of our competitors in the wheat line, but the wheat crop of India is 6 per cent. greater than in 1898.

## TEACHERS' MEETINGS

### PLEA FOR BETTER ORGANIZATION AND MORE ACTIVITY.

Work of the School-Room Is Greatly Unified, Simplified and Intensified by Good Teachers' Gatherings—Instruction in Manual Training.

#### An Iowa Teacher Talks.

It would be an interesting compilation if all the experiences of Iowa teachers in local association meetings were put together for the professional to read, writes one who signs himself "The Village Schoolmaster" in the Iowa Normal Monthly. There would be the tale of the ambitious organization which opened a winter's work with full-fledged constitution and by-laws and a set of offices that made provision for a place for every one who was eligible to membership. There would be, also, the tale of the organization that was so free and easy, with no formal inauguration, no set time or place for meetings, and no heavy system of any kind to induce formality and death. The recital would include that association where every member was so anxious to do that nothing was accomplished; and the association, too, where everyone was anxious to throw the labor and responsibility on the shoulders of some one else.

Out of all the confusion of aim and means, which these efforts have discovered, much good has come. The work of the school room in many communities has been greatly unified, simplified and intensified because of these occasional teachers' gatherings. The young teacher has been many times enlightened, and her daily duties made plainer. The experienced teacher has often been taught that her long-used methods and devices are not the best. And in many other ways good has been accomplished. But—

The word is used advisedly. The teachers of Iowa are often referred to in complimentary terms. The low per cent. of illiteracy in the State is often held up, and the men and women through whose efforts this condition of affairs has been reached and retained are lauded as beings of high intelligence and great devotion to their work. Yet, in comparatively few localities has this boasted intelligence on this much-lauded devotion been able to successfully exert itself in the line of effective association in teachers' organizations.

Who is not familiar with the ordinary routine of such meetings? The chairman, always an earnest and enthusiastic teacher, calls the meeting to order. If any business is to be done it draws, two or three making all the motions and doing all the voting. The papers prepared for the occasion, or the addresses less formally introducing a subject for discussion, are given one by one for the consideration of those present. The question is thrown open for general remarks. And the clock ticks. Perhaps, ashamed of the lack of interest or knowledge shown by the great majority of the membership, some bolder spirit ventures a review of the introduction of the subject; but even this breaking of the educational ice does not embolden the mass. And again the clock ticks. Another and another subject is introduced with the same result. And the clock ticks an adjournment.

The ambitious, active teacher, who sees the possibility of advancement in a live local educational meeting, becomes disgusted. She does not care care whether she attends any more of the dead ones or not, and is glad to find an excuse to stay away. The teacher who is really so timid, or so ignorant of the right view—or a right view—of the topic under discussion, that she cannot properly express herself in a public gathering, finds no encouragement or help in such a dead meeting, and is therefore not so strongly drawn to attend another.

Will anyone claim the situation has been overdrawn? Let him speak. In truth, the story has not been half told. Teachers within walking distances of many such advertised meetings very often pass the place of meeting on their way to town, to visit some friend or to go somewhere else. Is there not a large number of teachers in every county who are never seen at the educational gathering except under compulsion? What is the reason for all this? Let someone tell. Is there not a large number, also, whose voices are never heard in such places, even though they may often attend? They always decline to prepare a paper or lead a discussion when asked to do so by those who arrange the program. They are not sure they will be present; or they do not know anything about the subject; or they are too busy; or their health is not good. No trouble to find excuses when one doesn't want to do a thing! And yet these very people can find the most fault with those who do take part; can present, in many instances, as good a discussion—in some cases a better one than that to which they listened. If anyone can explain the reason, the writer would like to learn it.

This article is written, not to find fault, but to suggest a discussion that may result in opening the eyes of the class or classes of teachers referred to. If these silent creatures can be brought to see how they are standing in the way of their own advancement as well as in that of their fellow teachers, the educational world will be given a decided impetus toward greater activity, a better, higher and more professional life in the great mass of its members.

#### Peripatetic Pedagogy.

Dr. J. M. Rice, the well known authority on public school education, deals in plain criticism when he thinks it is needed. Having pointed out to the public schools in his articles in the Forum, what they ought not to do, he has now shown them what they ought to do by successfully planning and ac-

complishing a "school excursion" based on the method of teaching by travel which is an established accessory of school education in Germany. It was carried out last June, when he conducted fifty-three teachers and associates over a journey of 1,800 miles, from Indiana to Washington, D. C., and return. This unique experiment which the town of Anderson, Ind., was so progressive to undertake, ought to be the forerunner of many more such ventures in peripatetic pedagogy.

#### Teachers' Watch-Words.

Like teacher like pupil.  
Attend carefully to ventilation.  
Good discipline is a great time saver.  
The good teacher is always enthusiastic.  
Callisthenes each session are imperative.  
Let everything be done decently and in order.  
The stillest room is not always the busiest.  
Be neat and prompt in preparing all reports.  
Much useful teaching is done without talking.  
Education is a drawing out; not a filling up.  
Let there be plenty of original work by pupils.  
Successful teachers are continually experimenting.  
"Short lessons thoroughly mastered" is the safest maxim.  
Pupils are refreshed by variety in work as well as in play.  
The school room is the training ground for citizenship.  
If you wish your pupils to improve their English, improve yours.  
Pupils will be judged by what they can do; not by what the teacher knows.  
The real work done by pupils in a subject is exactly proportionate to their interest in it.  
Appeals to the superintendent to administer discipline should be the last resort.  
Keep the supplementary reading books and other such property in tidy condition. The cupboard is the place for them.  
To accomplish anything collectively, men require discipline and able leadership; as witness the church, the army, the navy. How much more, then, do immature children need the same two auxiliaries to success!—Marshall School Manual.

**A Schoolroom Idyl.**  
How plainly I remember all!  
The desks, deep scored and blackened.  
The row of blackboards round the wall.  
The hum that never slackened;  
And framed about by map and charts,  
And casts of dusty plaster,  
That wisest head and warmest heart,  
The kindly old schoolmaster!

I see the sunny corner nook  
His blue-eyed daughter sat in.  
A rosy, fair-haired girl, who took  
With us her French and Latin.  
How longingly I watched the hours  
For Ollendorff and Cassini!  
And how I fought with Tony Powers  
The day he tried to tease her!

And when, one day, it took the "Next"  
To stay some Gallic slaughter,  
Because I quite forgot the text  
In smiling at his daughter.  
And she and I were "kept till four"  
To study, after closing.  
We stopped the clock an hour or more  
While he, poor man, was dozing!

And there he sits, with bended head,  
O'er some old volume poring  
(Or so, he thinks; if truth be said  
He's fast asleep and snoring).  
And where the shaded lamp-light plays  
Across the cradle's rocking,  
My schoolmate of the olden days  
Sits, mending baby's stocking.  
—Ladies, Home Journal.

**A Good Showing.**  
The Journal of Education is elated over the small number of truant among the children of school age in New York and inquires: "How is this for the schools of America? New York City has a third of a million children in the public schools, and the truant officers in 1898 made more than forty thousand visits upon children whom they thought ought to be in school. They found but seventy-three children in the entire city in the whole year who were not in school because of poverty. Think of it! In that year of notoriously hard times, a third of a million children in the schools of one American city, but seventy-three kept out from poverty, and but fifty-three who stubbornly would not go to school!"

**Manual Training Taught.**  
For several years manual training has been one of the branches taught in the Brookline, Mass., public schools. All the arts which underlie the manufacturing industries and which apply in many trades are taught in the mechanical departments, and helps the pupil to decide as to his true destiny in the commercial world. So much interest has been shown by both pupils and parents that the limited quarters have become over-crowded, and in consequence thirty thousand dollars have been appropriated for a new building. The new building is to be modeled after an old English school house and will be unique in completeness and excellence.

**Notes on Education.**  
The income of Oxford University is \$350,000.

The Peabody Library is the best in the United States.

There are 2,800 students in the University of Michigan at present.

Pupil teachers in British board schools earn at first two to four shillings a week.

One-sixteenth of America's college students are studying for the ministry. The first school for the training of the blind was established at Paris by Haüy in 1784.

The late Czar founded an educational establishment for women, in the commemoration of the marriage of his daughter, bearing the name of the Xenia Institute.