

## TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

### A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

There is enough red in the stars and stripes to suit the taste of any true American.

The emperor himself will admit that old Bismarck has once more become a bigger man than young William.

Baron's show has a woman clown. It seems strange that woman has not invaded this field before; she often has made a circus in the home circles.

H. H. Holmes, like many professional criminals, is a total abstainer, notwithstanding the likelihood that one of these days he will take a drop too much.

A Kentucky physician shot and instantly killed one of his patients the other day. Isn't this sort of professional slaughter contrary to the medical code?

I notice that a gentleman by the name of Dieterich, living at Mobile, Ala., has had five wives, but nobody seems to be digging in his castle for family skeletons.—H. H. Holmes.

As Germany has appropriated 100,000 marks to purchase bicycles for the army we shall probably hear less talk about preparations for a war being afoot in that country.

An editorial notice of a woman's grocery store reads as follows: "Her tomatoes are as red as her own cheeks, her indigo is as blue as her own eyes, and her pepper as hot as her own temper."

The discovery of a "conspiracy of filibusters to overturn the republic of Hawaii" was evidently unnecessary at this stage of the game. News may be scarce, but it isn't so scarce as that would indicate.

Helen Gould is traveling "out West" under an assumed name. If Helen doesn't like her name and wants to change it, we believe the matter could be arranged without much difficulty, if she herself favors the idea.

New York can afford many private residences that cost more than \$1,000,000 each, but for all that the recent police census shows that there are more than 50,000 children in the city who have been deprived of school facilities because of a lack of sufficient school buildings.

The new army regulations will make some important changes in the method of payment of troops, and probably will be found objectionable to all officers who command posts or companies. Instead of sending payments to the various posts throughout the country, the rolls will be made up at the headquarters of the army department, or at the posts where there is now located a pay headquarters. These rolls will be accompanied by envelopes containing the money due each officer and soldier, and will be sent to the commandant of each post by express. The commandant will distribute the rolls and money to the company commanders, and they will pay the troops and make the return.

An English lady was called on the other day by her footman, who announced that he had a grievance. Being encouraged to proceed, he stated his case as follows: "Your ladyship 'as how visits too many philanthropic and psychological women, and that sort of thing. They give such small tips that I feel ashamed of myself for receiving them. The temperance women give no tips at all. I suppose they think we servants spend all our tips in drink. Formerly the tips used to be nearly equal to the wages. I counted on them continuing so. This is my 'ole case, and I beg to inform your ladyship that I speak for Jimmie and Susan, the housemaids, and for Green, the coachman." The lady answered that she feared she must get a new set of servants, and that, whether she did or not, she would cause placards to be posted in all the guests' rooms to inform them that servants were not allowed to receive tips. She was ready to allow, however, a small increase in the wages. If that was not satisfactory all might leave, and at once, if they desired. They took her at her word.

Western railroads, represented in solemn council by their general passenger agents, have practically refused to make any special rates for passenger traffic to the Atlanta exposition. The agent agents present at the meeting declared their belief that the volume of traffic would not justify low rates. They assert that if under the rates they adopt business is rushing they will reduce the fare. This is as if a merchant should say: "I will sell this silk at \$1 a yard. If the demand for it is lively I will make it 50 cents a yard." What merchant would invert the laws of trade thus by selling cheapest that for which there is most demand? The shopman creates demand by low prices; profits by great demand by exacting high prices. The railroads, instead of selling cheap by the yard, sell transportation by the mile. Their logical policy is to reduce rates when sales are small, and to increase them when sales are large. The railroad passenger agents are doing just the opposite. They are increasing rates when sales are small, and reducing them when sales are large. Some women are such poor cooks that they should be ashamed to look their husbands in the face.

## THE FARM AND HOME.

### MATTERS OF INTEREST TO FARMER AND HOUSEWIFE.

A Silo Good as New After Eight Years' Use—\$20 Per Tree Profit in Cherries—To Keep Eggs in Cold Storage.

**A Cheap and Durable Silo.**  
When I built my silo eight years ago, all advice was that if I was foolish enough to build of wood I must have a stone foundation, grout bottom and no end of fixtures; but I concluded if a wooden silo would only last three years at most before decaying, so as to be beyond further use, a sill set in the ground well painted with gas tar and bedded in cement would be as durable a foundation as I should need, says a correspondent of the Country Gentleman, and so a sill was trenched in and cemented, and to the surprise of the prophets, the sill is still there, sound as ever, and the side walls, double celled with foot-wide cull-pine boards, are yet doing duty without a decaying spot to point to coming dissolution.

This silo is 15 by 15 feet, inside measure, and 22 feet deep, and cost less than \$50 all told. The clay floor made by hard pounding, and concave in the center to avoid strain on the sills, is in every way as good a floor as the grout and cement one in the companion silo. The single-celled silo was not invented when these silos were built, and I have nothing to say against them; but I am so fully satisfied with the walls of the double-boarded ones, and as two boards an inch thick can be purchased cheaper here than a good enough quality of flooring, and make so much stronger walls, I am still in favor of the old way of building. I was told that a double-boarded silo would soon rot out and the paper lining soon dissolve between the boards, but none of these things has as yet occurred; so I begin to think that a cheap silo need not of a necessity be a poor one or a bad keeper of ensilage, for, in eight fillings, there have not been ten baskets of waste, save on the top, and no costly silo could have been better so far as keeping the contents is concerned, that this \$50 silo of mine.

**Profits in Cherries.**  
The four cherry trees at our Rochester place yielded the former proprietor one season \$20 per tree, as he informed us. This is more than any one should expect to receive from a cherry tree, and must have been during a season of exceptional high prices, says Green's Fruit Grower. These trees have borne us heavy crops every year without one penny of expense except for picking and marketing, and in addition to what we have consumed and given away these four trees have yielded an annual revenue of from \$18 to \$25. But consider what an acre planted to cherry trees, each eighteen feet apart, 135 to the acre, would yield at this rate. The amount would be \$675 per acre at \$5 per tree. This would probably be more than could be realized on an average, but under a favorable yield the profit may be largely increased. I recall one farmer, whose farm is largely cut up by the highway, who planted cherry trees on each side of the road as far as his farm extended, there being perhaps a mile of cherry trees. These trees cost the farmer absolutely nothing except the purchase price and the expense of planting. These trees bear enormous crops, and their reputation extends for many miles around. Hundreds of people come every year to pick these cherries on snarles or to purchase them. Why not you plant likewise?

**Keeping Eggs in Cold Storage.**  
A subscriber wants to know how long eggs can be kept in a cold storage house. If the eggs are infertile, and fresh when put in, they will keep four to five months if the temperature is steady. If he wishes to keep a few dozens for his own use, he should pack them in dry, sifted coal ashes, or dry salt, says the Agriculturist, and down, not allowing one to touch another. Use boxes which hold six to ten dozens each. Fasten cover down tightly, and arrange the boxes so they can be turned twice a week without jarring. This can be easily done by any ingenious person. Be sure the eggs are fresh and infertile. The cocks should be removed from the flock at least ten days before packing begins. Prices for cold storage eggs depend largely upon the supply of fresh eggs on the market. They usually bring five to eight cents per dozen less than those strictly fresh.

**Rag Weed in Grain Stubble.**  
Whatever winter grain is sown there is sure to be in the stubble at harvest a growth of rag weed, which will usually overtop the clover. If left alone it will seriously injure the clover growth in the fall, especially if the stubble be pastured. It is a good plan as soon after the grain crop is off as possible to go over the field with a mower set so as to cut the rag weed and occasionally some of the tallest clover. This, left to fall as it is cut, makes an excellent mulch over the surface just heavy enough not to injure the clover. A better result is that it puts the rag weed back, and if a good rain soon comes the clover will quickly outgrow the ragweed so that very little of it will be seen that fall. This will not interfere with cutting a crop of clover hay in September from the seeding in March. We have known fully a ton of clover to be cut per acre on land treated thus, and the clover was left in better condition for winter than if it had not been cut. Managed in this way, the rag weed is cut each time before it can seed, and future crops of the past are thus insured. But if left to seed there will be no trouble with rag weed in the clover next year except in places where the

clover seeding may have missed. Rag weed does not start except where the soil is loosened in spring. But where the soil is loosened the rag weed seed will start to grow as soon as the frost is out of the ground, and its first growth is stronger and taller than that of clover, though after the clover gets a broad leaf it will smother most of the annual weeds.

## CHINESE DEMAND FOR GINSENG

The American Product Purchased Steadily at \$3 to \$5 Per Pound.

Passing through the wholesale district the other day a reporter stopped in at one of the large houses to ask about prices. When ginseng was reached in the list the dealer said:

"What the Chinese use ginseng for is to the masses one of the mysteries of the age, but that they gobble up every ounce of the herb that the known world supplies is nevertheless a fact. Because the most thorough inquiry has failed to bring about a complete unfolding of the secret is not regarded by the average American as sufficient reason for refusing from \$3 to \$5 per pound, on the average, which the celestial offers for the root.

"Some of the largest firms in China make a specialty of handling the American export of ginseng and coin money at it. Some of our shrewdest traders have coaxed for the secret and have offered money for it, but the gray matter at the other end of the Chinaman's queue doesn't seem to see it that way.

"The American ginseng is growing scarcer yearly. The cultivated root has not the wonderful power which fixes the value of the wild article, at least it does not manifest itself to the same degree. This fact renders the cultivation of ginseng rather unprofitable. It might be planted and allowed to grow well for years and years, and then be salable at good figures, but not otherwise. The older the plant the more pronounced the wonderful properties of the root. In view of the fact that it is growing scarcer unless the demand diminishes the price of ginseng must go materially higher within the next few years.

"The market here is largely speculative. The Chinese ginseng houses each year send their buyers from California to the east to buy up the receipts of ginseng. These buyers have not yet put in an appearance on the Eastern market, and consequently this year's price has not been fixed. Dealers are paying \$2.50 in Nashville for the reason that they believe they can secure the usual prices for all they take in. Some advices, however, are to the effect that the price will be 20 or 30 cents lower, owing to the fact that the demand has been cut off somewhat by the war.

"We encounter some funny experiences in buying the root. The diggers are often the poorest people, and far from enlightened. Well, the root is hard to get, and when it is thoroughly dried the weight shrinks like a nickel's worth of soap after a hard day's washing, so the digger resorts to all sorts of deceptions to fudge an ounce or two in a pound and reap more of the precious dimes and dollars. For instance, we have frequently gotten in root which was well dried, but suspiciously heavy. Upon investigation we found that many of the pieces were loaded with lead, thus almost doubling the weight of the whole lot. This was done with a great deal of cunning and ingenuity. When the root was green it was split, and the lead melted and poured in or driven in slugs. The root was then allowed to dry, and in the process the end seams entirely close up, completely hiding the lead, which, in a case like this, was almost worth its weight in gold."—Nashville American.

**Explosive Names.**  
He entered the outer sanctum of Clerk Dickey's office yesterday afternoon with a shambling gait, and a shame-faced air lingering about his countenance that told as plainly as words that he was after a marriage license. Inside the door he stopped suspiciously, but the gray hairs of Capt. Whitney at the marriage license desk and the absence of every one from the room reassured him.

He ambled up to the window, and Capt. Whitney reached for the license book.

"What's yer name?" inquired the court officer.

There was a noise like a clock falling down stairs and the final crash of the mainspring as it unwinds with a whirr that can be heard for half a block.

"What's that?" inquired the captain; "spell it out."

"T-e-l-l-k-a-S-z-a-c-h-t-o-u-s-k-i," spelled the prospective bridegroom.

"Now, what is her name?" asked the captain. Mary, with an awful sound on the end of the name was all that was hearable, and Telika had to spell that out, too.

"It was worse than the first, being: 'M-a-r-y-G-l-e-t-c-a-y-r-l-a-k-a.'"

The two names are the worst that were ever recorded in Hennepin County against two people going to get married, and when the last one had been perpetrated upon Capt. Whitney he had to go and take a bromo-seltzer to clear up his mind.—Minneapolis Times.

**Huxley's Sharp Retort.**  
At the meeting of the British Association in 1880, Bishop Wilberforce spoke for full half an hour with inimitable spirit, emptiness and unfairness. It was evident from his handling of the subject that he had been "crammed" up to the throat, and that he knew nothing at first hand. He ridiculed Darwin badly and Huxley savagely. Hurried along on the current of his eloquence, the bishop so far forgot himself as to turn round and ask whether Huxley was related by his grandfather's or mother's side to an ape. Huxley, when his time for a reply came, had this to say: "I asserted, and I repeat, that a man has no reason to be ashamed of having an ape for his grandfather. If there were an ancestor whom I should feel shame in recalling, it would be a man, a man of restless and versatile intellect, who, not content with an unambiguous success in his own sphere of activity, plunges into scientific questions with which he has no real acquaintance, only to obscure them by an aimless rhetoric and distract the at-

tention of his hearers from the real point at issue by eloquent digressions and skilled appeals to religious prejudice."

## A FENCE MADE OF SWORDS.

Blades that Were Used on Drummond Moore Made into a Steel Lattice.

That the swords of his gallant adherents who fell on Drummond Moore should be found by a descendant of his hereditary enemy of Argyle in a fence at Twickenham is certainly a very singular circumstance. In his pamphlet, "Notes on Swords from the Battleground of Culloden," Lord Archibald Campbell gives an account of his discovery with some notes on the blades and on Andrea Ferrara. Some years ago Lord Archibald, whose knowledge of drisks and claymores is extensive, heard that there existed such a fence of steel. Years passed again and then he found the fence in a backyard at Richmond. It is described by the Rev. R. S. Corbett in his "Memorials of Twickenham." Twickenham House belonged to Dr. Johnson's "very unclubbable" Sir John Hawkins. The next information came from Mr. Edward Ross, the famous rifle shot, who had seen the hedge of blades in situ. They were said by Dr. Diamond to have been made into the fence of a flower garden by a Lord Tweedale.

When Lord Archibald secured these heroic relics he found that six inches had been broken from the point of each blade, while the tang of the hilt end had also been shortened. They were welded into two horizontal iron bars. The paint which covered them has preserved the metal so well that they are as good as on the day when they were first forged. There are five kinds of swords—a broad, double-edged blade with a heavy center rib ("a heavy small sword"); a broad-backed sword with a single cutting edge. These are often stamped with a fleur de lis, and we presume, came over with Fitzjames' horse or from other French sources, but some are of English make. There are small swords, some without grooves, the ribs rising in the center. Andrea Ferrara's name is on the short groove of other small swords, a thing very unusual. There are Highland broadswords proper, with 1, 2, or 3 grooves or fluting. Andrea's name is in the grooves. There are a few Hanoverian swords; two bear a crowned G. R.

## Can't Be Done.

There have been many ambitious mathematicians in all the ages who have aimed at the squaring of the circle, and all, even those of the present century, with all modern suggestions at their hands, have been unsuccessful. The Elements' Gazette is authority for the statement that the oldest mathematical book in the world, which dates some 400 years back, and was written in Egypt, contains a rule for squaring the circle. The rule given is to shorten the diameter by a ninth, and on the line so obtained to construct a square, and this, though far from being exact, is near enough for most practical purposes. Since then the amateur squarer of the circle has been a thorn in the side of the professional mathematician. Learned societies, at last, in pure self-defense, made a rule that all solutions of the problem sent to them should, without examination, be consigned to the flames. In the last century a Frenchman named Mathusius was so sure that he had succeeded in squaring the circle that he offered a reward of \$1,000 to any one who proved his solution was erroneous. It was proved to be erroneous, if not to his own satisfaction, at least to that of the courts, and he had to pay the money. Mathematicians have long been convinced that the solution was impossible, but it is only a few years since they were able to demonstrate this. A German professor named Landman published, in 1882, a demonstration which was accepted by the scientific world as satisfactory, so that would-be squarers of the circle may now rest from their labors, seeing that it has been mathematically proved that the thing cannot be done.—Brooklyn Eagle.

## Books Upon the Water.

A scaled tin case, which, on being opened, was found to contain a copy of Milton's "Paradise Lost," was picked up in the lower part of the Penobscot river, Maine, a few days ago. Inquiry disclosed the fact that in a small town up the river lives an old tinsmith of literary tastes and some odd ideas, and that it is his custom to inclose all sorts of excellent books in tin cans, tightly soldered, and so constructed as to float easily, and to set them adrift in the river in the hope that they will be picked up by the residents of the many islands at the mouth of the river, who are not kept in close touch with culture, or else by sailors. He thinks the peculiarity of the way in which the books reach the readers helps to secure for them a reading.—Boston Herald.

## Litmus.

Litmus paper, much used in chemistry, is produced from lichens, which grow on the shores of the Mediterranean. The lichens are ground, moistened and treated with potash, lime and ammonia and converted into dough. It is then fermented, and afterward mixed with plaster of paris and dried and pressed.

"And the new man—" began Jones. "What of him?" snapped Mrs. Jones. "Well, I'm afraid the feminine traits will go to him, the condition be revised, and—" "Jones, what do you mean?" "Oh, that man will be embarrassed, bashful, ashamed in the presence of woman—" "Good heavens! He ought to be now!"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The man who carries a single State is accounted now of worth; but in early days old Atlas was the man who carried the earth.—Indianapolis Journal.