

This country just at present is giving India a mighty interesting show.

This is the season of the year when the defective fine causes the insurance companies to become overheated.

A Havana dispatch says that "Weyler's column is again in Havana." Better there than in the American newspapers.

The new comet is only 33,000,000 miles away from the earth, but it is a great deal nearer than some of the office seekers are to the office.

Halifax has a man who falls asleep every winter and does not wake up till spring. He is a wise "blue nose." By so doing he escapes attending to the furnace.

A California man is attracting considerable attention because he can sleep standing. Merely for information we would like to inquire if that fellow ever was a policeman?

It is announced that the revenues of the Western Union Telegraph Company show a material decrease this year. That is the case with a great many smaller firms which do business on tick.

A leading literary critic of London "favors shorter sentences." In this matter his position will be heartily endorsed by a well-known literary aesthete who is now doing the State some service by picking oakum.

The young women attending the Kansas State University have adopted a new fad rather vaguely described as "the bear walk." To keep fully abreast of the times now the boys of that institution should adopt "the ursine hug."

Mary J. Holmes, the novelist, has been granted an absolute divorce with alimony on the ground of cruelty and infidelity. Mary seems to have had a rare chance to study the work of the "heavy villain" without going outside her own family circle.

Youth's Companion: The interval between a presidential election and an inauguration affords about four months for entirely profitless newspaper speculation as to the make-up of the incoming President's cabinet. Coming immediately after the seeming hysteria of partisan appeals to voters, this variety of newspaper folly amounts almost to a public offense.

An Ohio magistrate has refused to unite in marriage a young woman with a convict just beginning a ten years' term of imprisonment, on the ground that the man would not be able to support and protect a wife. This ground of refusal is so reasonable, and so evident, that the wonder is that it is not a long-established precedent instead of a novelty of judicial view.

Greece mourns the loss of her first militant anarchist, Mr. Matsalis, a shoemaker of Patras, who has established a standard his followers will find it hard to live up to. After stabbing to the heart with a knife M. Frangopoulos, a rich banker of the place, and wounding with a revolver another banker, as a demonstration of the wickedness of wealth, he partook of a dynamite cartridge, which seems to have formed part of his outfit, in the cell where he was confined.

When Russia, France and Great Britain unite to compel the Sultan to yield to the demand for a reform of his policies it will be appropriate to frame felicitous praises for their joint purpose to protect the Armenians from outrage. But that union has not yet been signified by any demonstration of force by the allied powers and is still in the embryonic state. The unvarnished truth is that the European powers are so jealous of one another that it would be little short of amazing if any concert of action could be agreed upon.

A writer in the Bowdoin "Orient" says that four of the five living members of the class of 1833, Bowdoin College, and all but one of the six survivors of the class of 1834, are ministers. None of these venerable men are under eighty. Their united ages aggregate seven hundred and forty-four years. These facts furnish additional evidence in favor of the familiar conclusion that clergymen are long-lived men. It is a moderate and reasonable statement that religion has not a tendency to shorten human life. These survivors might be called as witnesses.

An "adventurer's share" in the New River Company was sold recently in London for six hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. The company was started in 1859 by Sir Hugh Myddleton to supply London with water from the Hertfordshire hills, forty miles away. Half the shares went to James the First as the King's moiety, the others to the thirty-six adventurers. Myddleton was retained by the government, but the company owes a great deal of money to the city of London and the Council of Middlesex and Shropshire. The interest on a debt of about thirteen thousand dollars is paid.

It is announced to us by a reliable source that the city of Washington is to be the scene of a grand display of fireworks.

a small-arm drummer is quoted as saying in the New York Sun. "Is less afraid of that same weapon in another man's hands than he is of a ruder weapon. An Italian padre once said: 'If an Italian ever attacks you with a knife, don't attempt to defend yourself with a knife. He knows all about knives. Is used to them, and is not in the least afraid of them. Use a club. Almost any Italian will run from a club, even after he has drawn his knife.' And even the toughest characters in the wilder parts of the South and West, expert as they are with the pistol, would rather face a leveled revolver than a drawn bowie-knife."

Mr. Frederick Saunders, the ninety-year-old librarian of the Astor Library, New York, has retired from his more active duties in connection with the library, although he will retain his desk there and will continue to receive his full salary. Mr. Saunders is an Englishman by birth, but he came to this country nearly sixty years ago, and was prominent among the band of distinguished men that include William Cullen Bryant, George Bancroft and Washington Irving, who made a vigorous struggle for international copyright. It was through Mr. Irving's warm friendship that Mr. Saunders was appointed to his present desk in the library, which he has held since 1859.

Not many years ago, when millions were more numerous on the Pacific slope than they are now, a man named O'Toole accumulated an immense amount of money and played a somewhat prominent part for awhile in the rivalry between the California Bank group and that which took its name from Nevada. While at the height of his prosperity O'Toole built a magnificent palace at Milpitas, in Santa Clara County. Now the palace has been turned into a poorhouse and its builder, whose fortune has disappeared to the last dime, is working near by as a hostler, with more than an even chance that before long he will be an "inmate" of the building where he was once master.

Youth's Companion: Great Britain and the United States have come to an honorable agreement as to the Venezuela affair. It is to be regretted that so large a number of newspapers in this republic have greeted the announcement with the cry, "England backs down!" England does not "back down;" indeed, she has so much of that sturdy self-reliance which is a characteristic of the individual Englishman, that it requires the best of arguments to convince her that she is partly wrong. If she has yielded a point to this republic it is not only because she feels herself so great and powerful that she can yield without loss of prestige to a nation as great and powerful as herself. It is a good omen when two governments, each believing itself invincible, come together having for the paramount consideration, "peace with honor."

The story of Theophile Le Blanc, the man who starved himself to death in New York that his wife might have enough to eat, is a sad one. Le Blanc was a graduate of a college in Canada, had a thorough technical learning as an architect, and was a very fair artist. He at one time received a large salary. For the last six years his life had been full of misfortune. He had been unable to pay rent and had several times been dispossessed. He and his wife were turned out of the house in West 32d street last winter. A proud man, he would ask no one for aid. He refused to eat, saying that he did not feel well or that he was not hungry. He took no food because the larder was scant and he wanted his wife to have enough to eat. His mind became affected and he was taken to the insane pavilion at Bellevue Hospital. It was found there that he was dying from starvation. His wife, who is as proud as he was, is a beautiful woman. She was educated at a convent in Montreal.

People who have followed the evolution of football into slughball, and the continuous advance made by slughball towards a "certain death" climax may have wondered whether human ingenuity would be able to devise brutalities fast enough to keep pace with the ardor of the slughball enthusiasts. The problem seems to be on the point of solution through an invention which for the present is to be devoted to the uses of the more innocuous game of baseball. A Princeton professor has fixed up a "short breech-loading cannon, twenty-four inches in length, and placed upon a two-wheeled carriage," which will discharge the baseball at the batter and provide the sphere with all the curves known to the most expert human twirler. It is obvious that a mechanism of this kind must not be wasted on baseball. There have been hundreds of instances during the last season in which the young men injured in slughball did not die or were not maimed for life, and something like this cannon is needed to correct this present inadequate extent of fatalities. The rules of the exhibition must be changed, of course, to admit a cannon into the field. Perhaps it could be arranged that a cannon should be handled by each eleven and that it should discharge a football made out of wood. Thus the teams could line up back of their respective weapons and, after the explosion, proceed to maim and hack each other in the usual way if any happen to escape annihilation by the wooden ball. At stated intervals the shooting could be repeated until one team had been entirely exterminated. Slughball has reached a point where some such innovation is necessary if the "game" is to show any "progress."



**Prairie Pimples.** Southwestern Louisiana is bordered along the coast with broad sandy and gravelly plains to which the name of "pimpled prairies" has been given. This curious title comes from the circular mounds, arranged in zones and along intersecting lines, with which large areas of the plains are covered. Formerly these mounds, which average fifty feet in diameter and attain occasionally a height of ten feet, were supposed to have been made by ants, with whose nests they abound. But recently Professor Clendenin, of the Louisiana State University, has found reason for thinking that the mounds were formed through the blowing up of mud by gas escaping from vents in the ground. The arrangement of the mounds in zones and lines is accounted for by supposing that the gas vents existed along the fractures radiating from an earthquake center.

**Ancient Insects.** Recent discoveries in the coal mines of Central France have furnished by far the greatest advance that has ever been made in our knowledge of the insects which inhabited the world millions of years, as geologists believe, before the time when man made his appearance upon the earth. In that wonderful age when the carboniferous plants, whose remains constitute the coal beds of today, were alive and flourishing, the air and the soil were animated by the presence of flies, grasshoppers, cockroaches, dragon-flies, spiders, locusts and scores of other species which exist but slightly changed at the present day. But the insects of those remote times attained a gigantic size, some of the dragon-flies measuring more than two feet from tip to tip of their expanded wings! The remains of these insects have been marvelously preserved in the strata of coal and rock.

**A Kite a Mile High.** Since an account was given in this column of the high kite-flying experiments at the Blue Hill Observatory, near Boston, all previous records have been eclipsed there. In 1895 the greatest elevation reached by a kite was 2,500 feet above sea-level, or 1,900 feet above the summit of the hill. During the past summer half a dozen times a kite was sent up more than a mile above sea-level, and on one occasion the height attained was 3,333 feet above the sea, being 1,520 feet more than a mile above the hilltop. The experiments are made with the so-called "tailless" or Eddy kites, and the "box" or Hargrave kites. The highest flight was made by an Eddy kite. The purpose is scientific, as the kites carry self-recording instruments by means of which the temperature and humidity of the air at great elevations can be measured. Sometimes the kites pass through clouds, the thickness of which is revealed by the record of the instruments.

**The Wonderful Phagocytes.** When a drop of human blood is placed between two plates of glass and examined with a microscope it is seen to contain, beside the minute disks which give it its red color, little whitish grains called "white corpuscles." If the glass is warmed to a temperature equal to that of the human body these corpuscles, or phagocytes, as they are otherwise called, will be seen to put out and retract minute processes, which, as if acting the part of feet, enable the phagocytes to crawl over the surface of the glass. The Russian naturalist, Metchnikoff, has discovered that the phagocytes in our blood feed upon the microbes of infectious diseases, when such microbes are introduced into the system. Sir Joseph Lister, president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, believes that this action of the phagocytes, which is scientifically named "phagocytosis," is the main defensive means possessed by the living body against its microscopic foes." Whenever a wound is made in any part of the body the phagocytes, like well-trained soldiers, rush to the breach and make war upon the putrefactive micro-organisms endeavoring to enter the system.

**Iron Quarries.** Very interesting facts, not generally known, about the iron mines of Spain, were discussed at a recent meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute of Great Britain. It is from Northern Spain, in the neighborhood of Bilbao, that the greater part of the iron ore imported for the use of British steel-makers is obtained. Steel is made by the basic process from iron ore containing phosphorus; but for the best qualities of steel, which is made by the open hearth process, a purer ore must be used, and it is that which England imports from Spain. "Nature," says the English scientific journal Nature, "seems to have designed the hills of Northern Spain especially for the use of the steel-maker." Until recently practically no effort has been made to manufacture steel in Spain, and most of the ore has been exported to England. The iron mines of Northern Spain are described as being rather quarries than mines in the ordinary sense of the word. The mountains themselves are just heaps of iron ore covered naturally with but a thin layer of earth. This is removed, and it only remains to break up the ore

and load it into fitting receptacles, when it is conveyed down to the water's edge by its own gravity."

**The Great Gas Industry.** The artificial gas interest of this country is an exceedingly important and extensive one. There are in the neighborhood of 1,200 cities and towns of the United States lighted in large part by manufactured gas. In addition there are thousands of homes in which gas is being largely, if not wholly, employed for cooking and heating purposes. About \$600,000,000 is invested in gas works property in this country, and the gas interest is perhaps second in importance only to the investment in railroad properties.

The gas industries propose to hold an exposition at Madison Square Garden, New York City, opening on Jan. 27, 1897, and holding for two weeks. At this exposition will be shown every practical apparatus and appliance which enters into the manufacture or distribution of gas as an illuminating or heating agent.

One of the features of the exposition will be cooking demonstrations both afternoon and evening, two competent demonstrators having been secured for this work.

A gas tower of large dimensions has been arranged for and will be one of the great curiosities at the fair; consisting of an extremely ornamental and most brilliantly illuminated spectacular piece, the dimensions of which will be twenty feet at the base, and running to a height of fifty-five feet, on which will be artistically arranged about 2,500 gas jets.

Evidently the gas people propose to demonstrate to the public that their product is capable of producing equal, if not superior lighting effects to those claimed for the electric light.

**Americans as Musicians.** Madame Emma Calve contributes a paper on the "Conquering Race in Music" to the Ladies' Home Journal, in which she specially addresses students of vocal music. She tells of the training required for the operatic and the concert stage, the impersonation of character, the value of suggestions, etc., and pays this tribute to Americans: "The Americans have, it seems to me, in the field of music, and especially in the field of vocal music, all the characteristics of the conquering race. They are possessed naturally of the most exquisite voices, which, when properly cultivated and trained, are almost unrivaled; they have indomitable energy, perseverance and pluck; they stop at nothing, are deterred by no trouble and prevented by no obstacle. Poverty, weariness, exertion, hard work—none of these living spectres which fright and terrify the average art worker has terrors for them. Their physique and their temperament seem made for toil and to surmount discouragement, and the success which they are daily achieving, in the field of both operatic and concert singing, is testimony to their natural fitness for accomplishment, and to their ability to excel. They seem, in fact, to be most lavishly fitted by nature for the parts they are assuming. To these gifts of voice, energy, pluck and perseverance they frequently add a beauty of face and grace of form and movement which the public recognizes as most important factors in the success of the singer's career. They have, too, the temperament which makes great artists and great actresses, the artistic feeling which has for its standard, perfection, and which is satisfied with nothing less."

**Quite Plain.** A coroner in Nevada recently reasoned out a verdict that was more sensible than half the verdicts usually found.

A certain Irishman, conceiving that a little powder thrown upon some wood would facilitate its burning, directed a small stream from a keg upon the burning piece, but not possessing a hand sufficiently quick to cut this off he was blown into a million pieces. The following was the verdict, delivered with great gravity by the official: "Can't be called suicide, because he didn't mean to kill himself; it wasn't visitation of God, because he wasn't struck by lightning; he didn't die for want of breath, for he didn't have anything whatsoever to breathe with; it's quite plain he didn't know what he was about, and so I shall bring in—(died for want of common sense.)"

**One Way to Break Glass.** It is scarcely credible, but it is a fact, that a glass can be broken by the voice. If you strike a thin wine glass while you hold it by the stem it will emit a certain note—in most cases a pretty deep one. On approaching the glass rapidly to your mouth, and shouting into it the same note as loudly as possible, the vibrations of the glass being thereby extended, it will be shivered into fragments. This used to be a favorite experiment of Labache, the renowned singer, who would thus break, one after the other, as many glasses as were handed to him.

**Eyes.** Artificial eyes were first made in Egypt. They were of gold and silver, and subsequently of copper and ivory. Hundreds of years later, in the sixteenth century, when they were made in Europe, porcelain was the substance used, and the maker usually stamped his address on the white of the eye.

Our idea of something awful would be to become a great musician with long hair, and then get bald.

When women oppose a candidate, it is usually because of some grudge they feel against the women folks.

Sweden believes that the devil has power over a child until it is baptized.

AGRICULTURAL NEWS

THINGS PERTAINING TO THE FARM AND HOME.

**The Winter Season a Good Time to Repair Fences—Farmers Advised to Stick to the Farm—Procuring the Winter Fuel—Storing Potatoes.**

**Repair the Old Fence.**

There are many farms bearing old rail fences that their owners have felt for years would be better torn down and rebuilt upon the same or other location, says Rural World. They have been built upon and added to until they contain at least enough good rails to construct a good straight fence. The undertaking is not a big one, and when it is finished the satisfaction of seeing the neat, newly constructed fence, in addition to the firewood, will repay the farmer for time and new wire. There is no more favorable time than just after the ground has frozen and before snow comes. A pair of bobshells can be used, even if there is no snow, when the site of the new fence is to be somewhere else than that of the present one. If the ground should be too much frozen to break the crust to set the stakes or posts, everything can be got in readiness to rebuild in the spring, and that will be found a great advantage when the building time comes. The sorting of the rails, cutting and sharpening stakes or preparing posts and sawing up the "done" fence timber into firewood, can all be finished in the slack season, and the putting up of the fence will be as nothing in the spring before seeding operations commence, when the ground will be so soft that the stakes can all be driven with a sledge hammer. If possible, do not put this work off. The commencement of such jobs that have stared one in the face for years, probably, is more than half the undertaking. The old snake fence is an eyesore and a harbor for rubbish and weeds, while the new straight one will save land and give the farm a tidy, prosperous appearance.

**Stick to the Farm.**

History proves that prosperity has always followed times of great depression, and history will repeat itself. No matter what comes, let us stick to the farm. We may work a few years for nothing, but what matters it so long as we retain in our possession the old farmhouse? We shall not always remain at the bottom of the wheel. In time, matters will adjust themselves. Then let us have a firmer determination than ever to know the details of our business, and make the coming year conspicuous for having made progress in reducing the cost of production, the curtailment of unnecessary expenses, and, above all, let us never forget that ours is one of the noblest callings given to men, and the little spot of ground we occupy is part of God's green earth, and let us manfully and hopefully till and care for it, that those who shall succeed us may point with pride to the work of our hands.—New York Tribune.

**The Winter Fuel.**

Every farmer who burns wood even partially for heating and cooking should, as early in the winter as possible, cut and pile enough wood to last a whole year. This will save many complaints during the summer, and be much easier done now than in warm weather. Besides, dry wood burns without the waste of heat, always lost in turning its sap into steam. When using green wood, chips and small limbs will dry out more quickly than will the body of the tree, especially if the small limbs are split.

**Storing Potatoes.**

Strictly speaking, no one should store potatoes in the house cellar. But as hundreds of thousands do every year, and will continue to do so, a word may not prove amiss. First, potatoes should be sorted while in the field. It saves the housewife much work, saves storage room and the work of extra handling. Potatoes for the cellar are best banded, as they are then movable when the accidents of time bring frost or water. Above all, they should be kept dark. Canvas sacks make good curtains to set off a portion of the cellar. And also good covers for the barrels. Light will ruin the flavor, and half-light will cause them to sprout.

**Best Food for Poultry.**

The very best use of shrunken wheat, some of which will be found in every crop, is as food for poultry. The grain, being shrunken, is deficient in starch, but it has all the greater proportion of gluten, which is the chief element of the egg, while the outside husk, or bran, is rich in phosphate, which helps to make the eggshell. The poultry dealer can usually buy shrunken wheat at a lower price than the perfect grain, while for feeding fowl it is really better for being shrunken.—Germania Telegraph.

**Apples for Cows.**

I do not think there is any better food for milk cows than ripe, sound apples. I am aware that the prevalent opinion is that apples have a tendency to make cows sick and dry them up. As a counterbalance of this I have heard of numerous instances where cows have broken into orchards and eaten their fill of apples and have been made sick, and in a few instances have died as the result. I also knew a case where a man ate an unreasonable quantity of baked beans, and it killed him. Now, the one case no more proves that ripe apples are not good cow food than that baked beans are not good human food. The proper way to feed apples to cows is to have them ripe and sound. Green or rotten apples are not good food for anything. The cows should never be given a full load of them at first or

given them on an empty stomach. At the first the cow should have no more than two or three quarts once a day.—Rural New Yorker.

**The Cow to the Acre Plan.**

Can the dairy be made to pay? We believe it can, but it must be done on the cow to the acre plan—better and fewer cows, better and more feed to the acre, and cows better looked after. There are men making money to-day from their dairies. How are they doing it? Condensed dairying. As fast as cows are demonstrated not to be making a profit they go the way that all poor things should, and leave their food to the cow that hath from two to five talents already. It does not pay, nor did it ever, to feed a cow \$20 worth of food to get \$15 worth of milk, let alone her drying off soon after the county fair, let the time of year be what it may. Think this matter over. An acre of corn fodder, another of oats, and a third of mixed crops, will keep two cows a year. Can corn, oats and the like be as well sold as to a good cow, her produce sold, and the fertility returned to the farm?—Cor. Practical Farmer.

**Some Good Ideas.**

Judging from the enormous productiveness of our common field corn, if anyone should ask me what is best to grow to fill a silo, I would say the best thing to grow is corn. The second best is corn, and the third choice in the section would be corn. Like the cow, every part of it is useful, and it is a forage crop, the lazy man's crop, the ignorant man's friend. On hillside or valley it brings a profitable return. It will do well with half a chance, even on a hard seed-bed, or with roots torn and bleeding. It is a great forager, and when nursed it responds with great possibilities. We have only half appreciated its wealth of helpfulness in the past. The silo and fodder machinery are giving a double value to it with a meaning of a large profit on our season's effort.—E. C.

**Chestnuts.**

The American chestnut has the sweetest kernel, but is smaller, and the trees must be some fifteen or more years from the seed before they bear. The European, or Spanish chestnut, has nuts nearly double the size of the American, but tamer in flavor. But the seed will bear at about ten years from the seed. The dwarf Chinquepin Chestnut will often bear the second or third year from seed, but the nuts are so small that they are not in general use. The Japan chestnut is a comparative dwarf, though a stronger grower than the American Chinquepin—but the nuts are as large as the European chestnut, with about the same taste. Like the Chinquepin, they bear early. But all the kinds bear early when grafted from bearing trees.—Mechan's Monthly.

**The Advantages of Sheep.**

They are profitable. They weaken the soil least, and strengthen it most. They are enemies of weeds. The care they need is required when other farm operations are slack. The amount of investment need not be large. The returns are quick and many. They are the quietest and easiest handled of all farm stock. Other farm products are made more largely from cash grains, while those from the sheep are made principally from pasture. There is no other product of the farm that has fluctuated so slightly in value as good mutton. By comparison wool costs nothing, for do not the horses and cow in sheeding their coats waste what the sheep saves?

**Working Butter.**

The object of working butter is to rid it of the surplus moisture, to distribute the salt, and to unite the granules and give the butter consistency; and it should not have any more than will accomplish this. One of the advantages of salting in the churn and allowing the butter to stand until the salt is wholly dissolved is, that much working is not required, as the butter only requires to be worked until the color is uniform, or when the streaks caused by the salt disappear.

**Killing White Grab Worms.**

Meadow lands infested with white grubs should be plowed and thoroughly cultivated in the fall, then planted to some crop that requires thorough cultivation the next season. The fall cultivation will destroy many of the insects which are then in a very tender stage in little earthen cells in the ground, and the thorough and frequent cultivation of the following crop will soon discourage the grubs.—Rural New Yorker.

**Poultry Yards.**

Broilers shrink about a half pound each when dressed.

Ducks average ten dozen eggs in about seven months' laying.

Forty dressed ducklings are packed in a barrel for shipment.

Feed chickens frequently, but only what they will partake of with keen relish. Never surfeit them unless at the last feed in the evening, then they may be allowed to have about all they want.

Look to the chicken-house windows, for a draught is deadly. This question of proper distribution of air is an important one. Let the houses be open every sunny day. Keep them cozy, clean and comfortable, and the reward will surely follow. The fowl's comb is an indicator of good or ill health, and can always be relied on. A full, bright red comb denotes health; a withered, faded or black comb is a sure sign that the fowl is sick. The hen that lays the most eggs in a year is always the one with the large, bright red comb.