

Street railway contractors in New York the other day dug up fifty skulls. That has always been a great town for deadheads, anyway.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch says "that there is no State in the Union in which anybody but a funny writer says 'ab' for 'air.'" Yes, sub; that's so, sub.

It appears that an Alaska Indian, though 52 years old, has to ask his mother if he can go bear-hunting. This, however, may be a typographical error for mother-in-law.

A dispatch from New York says that "the kinetoscope pictures of the big fight are entirely satisfactory to all concerned." We never would have believed that of Mr. Corbett.

The department of agriculture at considerable expense has just issued an exhaustive treatise on "Mushroom Culture," which can hardly fail to interest farmers who devote their attention to this crop.

In Georgetown, Del., the other day a clergyman had a fight with a prize fighter and thrashed him soundly. But the saddest feature of this disgraceful affair was that it was pulled off before the kinetoscope people could be notified.

A Boston court has decided that a young man who paid assiduous attention to a girl last summer and treated her to ice cream several times practically engaged himself to marry her by indulging in such lover-like conduct. And yet it has been claimed that the Bardell case was overdrawn by Dickens.

Steve Crane must look to his laurels. His "death demon chattering in the tree tops" is in danger of eclipse. Yone Noguchi, the California poet, has recently been seeing "maiden goddesses love-chattering in the paradise of the clouds." This is pretty nearly down to the ideal delirium tremens standard which has been maintained so long by Mr. Crane.

Hon. John L. Sullivan says he yearns for a chance "to prove that he is the superior of Fitzsimmons, mentally and physically." We don't believe a physical contest between these eminent gentlemen should be encouraged, but we see no valid objection to a mental combat. An old-fashioned spelling bee or an oratorical contest by such gladiators ought to be worth climbing a tree to see.

The Hartford Courant tells a story of Yale in the old days. The boys used to bribe the printers "devils" to get proofs of the examination papers for them. When the college authorities put a stop to this practice a bright idea seized one fellow, and he saved the whole suffering party. He hired one of the printers (it was summer) to wear a pair of white trousers to the office and at noon to sit down on the "form" in which were locked the precious questions. The inked seat of that pair of trousers sold for a deal more than the clothes were worth.

The work of the life-savers along the sea coast and the great lakes is not appreciated by the public, as a rule, until the aggregate figures are published. The report of the General Superintendent for the year shows some extraordinary results. It appears there were 437 disasters within the districts of the life-savers during the year, involving 4,608 persons, and \$12,726,520 in the value of vessels and cargoes. Of these only thirteen lives were lost, and vessels and cargoes to the value of less than \$2,000,000. This is certainly an admirable record, and a signal tribute to the heroism of the men employed in the service.

Cattle men in the United States may be interested in knowing that the imports of foreign beef cattle into Switzerland have for the past seven years averaged 50,000 head, valued at \$5,018,000 per annum. Of the above, Austria furnished the largest number, and during the years 1889-90 her shipments to Switzerland were valued at \$2,895,000 each year. Italy's share for the same period was valued at only \$772,000, but since then she has increased her shipments to such an extent that her exports for the past few years foot up in the average \$3,800,000 annually. France supplies Switzerland with considerable beef cattle, and in 1892 her exports to Switzerland exceeded Austria's figures by \$106,000, but since then, she has again fallen behind, so that, to-day, Italy and Austria are the main sources of beef supplies, after which come France and Germany. The United States cut no figure so far in the Swiss cattle imports.

Mr. N. H. Darton, of the United States Geological Survey, is quoted in the Denver (Col.) Republican as saying that there is as practically inexhaustible supply of artesian well water under the plains lying at the foot of the sacred slopes of the Rocky Mountains, and that the geological survey is mapping this region, showing where and at what depth the water may be found. According to the interview quoted, lying under the foothills on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, there is a mass of sand or sandstone which goes into the ground, and the ground water is held in it.

Remarkable Newspaper. The most extraordinary journal in the world is published at Athens. Its contents are written entirely in verse, even to the advertisements.

Go fishing; and get rid of it. Every one goes fishing at least once a year, and the same is true of the same.

strata. The depth of this bed varies from fifty to 1,200 feet. It is not probable that the water is as plentiful everywhere as in the well-known South Dakota artesian well district, but Mr. Darton thinks that with reservoirs and other provisions for proper economy there is plenty of water to develop the rich desert soil to a profitable degree.

New York Times: Of course General Weyler is indignant because people here, instead of holding him, like other men, innocent of any charge until it is proved, insist on regarding him as guilty until he has demonstrated the groundlessness of the accusation beyond the shadow of a doubt's shadow. Who wouldn't be indignant at treatment like that? Still, it's hard to see what the general is going to do to make his anger effective. His record is so very, very bad; his character is so well known and his only hopes of success rest so entirely upon what he can accomplish by treachery, that really nobody can quite conceive that he may have been the victim of calumny. This is a dreadful position to be in, but that General Weyler occupies it is his own fault.

It is impossible to find a member of either house of Congress who will confess that his official salary enables him to more than cover expenses. What is it that they are all to enjoy after they have won the goal? First of all, the annual salary of \$5,000. For Representatives add \$1,200, allowed yearly for clerical service, but whose expenditure need not be accounted for to any one. For members of both houses add \$125 a year, allowed for stationery, the balance to be drawn at the end of each session, if not all used. It seldom happens that more than \$50 of this allowance is expended. There is no reason why a thrifty man should not save one or two thousand dollars during each term in the House. It is hardly possible for a Senator to save, however, since he has to spend a great deal of money to keep up with his greater social duties. To the millionaire member of Congress the annual salary is merely ornamental. It is the heavy swell thing for the legislator of this branch to turn over his five thousand a year to his private secretary, who generally has his employer's private interests to attend to in addition. It is said that Hanna not only gives his secretary his whole annual salary, but a thousand dollars in addition. Brice is said to have given his whole Senatorial salary to his secretary, while his social pilot probably receives even more—some say \$25,000.

The complaint that novels, biographies, essays and all other forms of popular literature are becoming "light and scrappy" under the influence of the newspapers may have some justification in fact. But even if such charges are fully admitted, it is merely a confession that popular literature is actually growing popular. There are book stores whose back shelves are filled with sweepings from the literature of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—folios and quartos, ponderous, impressive and capable of being comprehended only by the most strenuous exertion. Some of them are editions of once favorite authors with at least ten pages of notes, comments and learned "excursions" for every page of the text. The taste which made such books possible no longer exists. Or if it does it is only in rare cases, as an eccentricity or as a result of special studies. Instead of the laborious and pedantic works of the seventeenth century, intended only for the select few and "caviare to the general," our literature now is generally intended to reach the largest number of people. If the newspapers are responsible for this change of taste, it is one thing more to their credit. "The republic of letters" has become democratic, and those who would rise to high position in it must not follow the example of the now forgotten sixteenth century writer who boasted that he scorned the rest and sought to please the wise. They must seek to please and help everybody.

The Power of Habit. The power of habit is particularly exemplified in the effects produced by the company we keep. The utmost vigilance, therefore, should be exercised on this important subject. The great power and force of custom forms an argument against keeping bad company. However shocked we may be at the first approaches of vice, this shocking appearance goes off upon an intimacy with it. Custom will soon render the most disgusting object familiar to our view; and this is, indeed, a kind provision of nature, to render labor, and toil, and danger, which are the lot of man, more easy to him. The well-disposed youth, entering first into bad company, is shocked and disgusted at every turn at what he sight beholds, and what he is compelled to hear. The good principles which he had imbibed ring in his ear an alarming lesson against the wickedness of his companions. But, alas! this sensibility is of short continuance. The next jovial meeting makes the horrid picture of yesterday more easily endured. Rectitude is soon thought a severe rule—an inconvenient restraint; a few pangs of conscience now and then whisper to him that he once had better ways and thoughts. But even these by degrees die away, and he who at first was shocked even at the appearance of vice, may be formed by custom into a profligate leader of vicious pleasures.

Remarkable Newspaper. The most extraordinary journal in the world is published at Athens. Its contents are written entirely in verse, even to the advertisements.

Go fishing; and get rid of it. Every one goes fishing at least once a year, and the same is true of the same.

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

The Prince of Wales evidently has undertaken to reduce the swelling in the Vanderbilts' bank account.

It is very gratifying to note that Miss Nethersole has publicly confirmed the rumor that her osculation is to be domesticated next season.

The Japanese Government, instead of presenting medals to the soldiers who took part in the war against China, is to give them excellent Swiss watches.

Those who have been unfortunate enough to follow the Earl Russell divorce case carefully probably will agree that if he loved his mother-in-law it served her right.

An Indiana man has broken the matrimonial record in a new spot. He died, leaving six living widows. He left the last of these \$1,000. To all of the others he was paying alimony.

The one great element of strength which Turkey possesses is her debt. England may be relied upon to protect English investments in Turkish securities. Colonel Ab Hamid is not at all afraid of his creditors.

A Boston paper says: "Nansen's expedition consisted of thirteen members. No wonder it proved a miserable failure." But it didn't. It was the most successful polar expedition ever attempted. Nansen already has sold to the publishers more than \$150,000 worth of cold facts.

The Beaver County (Okla.) Signal, in writing up a recent funeral, thoughtfully remarked that "the corpse, tastefully arrayed in white, lay quietly in the coffin." We heartily commend that corpse for its quietude under such circumstances. A corpse which clambers out of the coffin and goes cavorting around is almost certain to get itself disliked.

The editor of the Clarksville (Tenn.) Chronicle evidently has the courage of his convictions. He says: "We want to go fishing for a week some time this spring, and shall call on certain fellows about here to get out a readable paper in our absence. What the average town wisacre doesn't know about editing a newspaper would puzzle Solomon to find out anyway."

The Blue Mountain (Miss.) Breeze remarks editorially: "As we were dining where we should corral a dinner last Sunday, our better 1/2 being still away visiting, and the deepest brown study having possession of us, there came a bountiful repast at the hand of Miss Willie Hardin. The feed was superb. Boys, let us whisper to you, she is an excellent housekeeper. Thank you, Miss Willie." And yet they say that journalism has no rewards.

Some surprise has been felt at the appearance upon the stages where "continuous performances are given of such actors as Maurice Barrymore, Rose Coghlan and others who were wont to appear with companies of their own in the higher priced theaters. But not only do these people find it easier to make large sums by such engagements, but their appearance at the cheaper houses introduces them to new audiences, many of whom never saw such high-grade acting before. In consequence of this the character of the work upon these stages is improving and the auditors are being educated to demand a better class of entertainment.

A judge of the Oldham County Court, in England, has given a decision on the subject of the cat's intellect which the New York Journal thinks will be disputed by many friends of that animal. He has decided that a cat is "a quasi-domestic animal, and that its owner is not responsible for its actions. A cooper who sued a signal man for damage sustained by the defendant's cat having killed and eaten thirteen of the plaintiff's chickens, therefore lost his case. The judge laid down the interesting proposition that a cat's intellect is not so extensive as to render it able to distinguish between chickens and small birds."

An Italian magician, Pigianna, has been very successfully performing a clever trick in Paris which has earned for him the cognomen of the "Man Ear." He has been performing in a very large hall in Paris and during the evening his assistant at the other end of the room finds some excuse to ask a question of a person in the audience, far away from the magician on the stage. In an instant the answer comes from the lip of the magician instead of his assistant, to whom it was addressed. The effect is very puzzling. The floor of the stage and the floor of the theater are liberally studded with metal nails, connected by wires under the floor. Those on the stage are connected by wires to a tiny telephone on the ear of the magician, which is concealed by his long hair. His assistant wears a receiver in his shirt front which is made of platinum, and to this is attached small wires running down inside his clothing, ending in metal plates on his shoes. When he steps on a nail the circuit between him and the magician is completed and whispers can be heard distinctly fifty feet away.

The part played by the Bank of Spain in floating the new loan destined to provide resources for the continuance of the war in Cuba has placed that institution in a very awkward position. It, in addition to the immense sums

which it has furnished to the government itself, it has advanced one way and another nearly \$40,000,000 to people who subscribed for the loan. The bank may therefore be said to have found the major portion of the money subscribed. Besides this, the bank is a creditor to the government under various heads to the extent of more than \$250,000,000. Inasmuch as the capital fully paid up of the bank, together with its reserve fund, amounts to only \$30,000,000, it will readily be seen that the strain to which this, the leading financial institution in Spain, is being subjected is tremendous and cannot be continued much longer before disaster ensues.

Here is a curious narrative from an English newspaper: At the Bradford Borough Court recently Milly Solomon, tailor, of 83 Diamond street, Bradford, sued Myer Levi, master tailor of Wellington street for £1 11s alleged to be due for wages. The plaintiff stated that she left her home to go to work for the defendant. She engaged at a standard wage of 12s per week (10s in slack times). About a month ago he had not found her work or enabled her to have anything to live upon for three weeks, so she left. In examination by Mr. Harris, who appeared for the defendant, she admitted that the account for making trousers, vests and jackets had been signed by her. The Stipendiary totaled up the articles, and it appeared that the applicant made or finished twenty-nine articles, including fourteen pairs of trousers, for 12s. The Stipendiary—"Well, I don't know what sweating is, but that seems to be to be an extraordinary price. Is that the basis on which you propose to pay her, Mr. Harris?" Mr. Harris—"Yes." The Stipendiary—"Well, it is not the basis on which I shall give an award. A pair of trousers for 4 1-2d is not a proper price." In the course of the case the stipendiary remarked: "There is not much Solomon about a person who takes 6d for finishing a coat and vest." Judgment was entered for the plaintiff for 10s and costs (8s).

A man writing to the New Haven Register asks where he can find a boarding house where he will not hear bicycle talk at breakfast, dinner and supper. We fancy he will have difficulty in discovering such a place. There is nothing in modern life which has taken such a strong hold upon the people as the bicycle habit, and the fact that men, women and children in all walks of life ride or understand them makes "bicycle talk" the commonest sort of conversation. The liveliest interest is shown by the devotees in the invention of a new bicycle attachment, and we fancy that a wheel on an entirely new principle would cause a wave of hysterical excitement to sweep over the country. Let a man place an ordinary wheel in his store window for convenience and from two to ten persons will stand in front of it all day, speculating as to its merits and defects. Let him leave it on the curb for a few minutes and staid business men will stop and examine it minutely, twirling the treadles and wriggling the handle bars in a critical manner, as if it were something dropped from Mars or the moon. Whole families are divided as to the advantages of certain sorts of sprocket wheels, and divorcees have been obtained on the ground of incompatibility of bicycle lamps. This interest is equally shared by the straddling sisterhood, the scorching brotherhood and the racing childhood. There is no escape from it in this world.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat briefly explains the method of mining nitrate in Chili: "The niter is found in a great plain between the main ridge of the Andes on the east and the coast range on the west. This plain is without vegetation, and is studded with bowlders, giving the landscape an appearance of complete barrenness, increased by the snow-covered summits of the lofty Cordillera. The surface of the plain is sand reaching to depths varying from a few inches to several feet, below which is a hard crust of impure gypsum from four to ten inches thick. This is considered of no value. Below it is a layer of compact earth and stones, sometimes as much as twelve feet thick, which forms a covering for the nitrate of soda. This is found in a sheet ranging in thickness from one foot in the southern part of the plain to twelve feet in the northern part. The nitrate is underlaid by very hard clay, resting in turn on solid rock. The method of mining the nitrate involves an ingenious engineering expedient to avoid handling the superposed material as much as possible. It has been described substantially as follows: A small vertical shaft is sunk through the nitrate bed and a boy lowered to the bottom, who undercuts the bed so as to form a chamber large enough to hold the charge of powder, sometimes as much as half a ton. When the chamber has been dug out and cleaned, the powder is packed into it and provided with a long fuse. The hole is then rammed full of earth and tamped down as firm as possible, in order to spread the effect of the explosion. When the mine is fired, the bed and overlying strata are broken up over a considerable area. The nitrate is easily separated from the other materials and hauled away to the factories. The powder used in the mine is made in the factories and was employed exclusively until within a few years, dynamite now being used somewhat."

Stop the Cow Kicking. The kicking cow, while milking, is an abomination, says a correspondent of the American Agriculturist. To prevent the kicking a small rope or large cord should be passed around the body

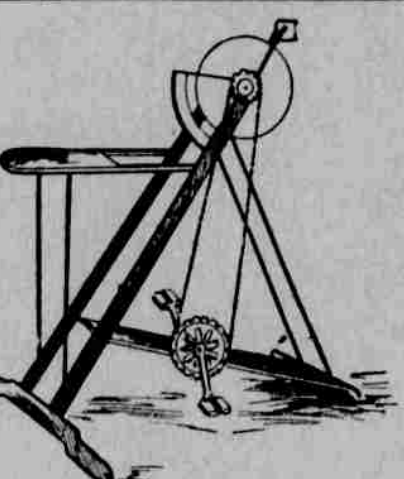
TIMELY FARM TOPICS.

MANAGEMENT OF THE FARM, GARDEN AND STABLE.

The Farmer Should Use Brains as Well as Muscle—Device for Turning the Grindstone—How to Stop a Kicking Cow—Saving Grass Seed.

For Turning the Grindstone.

A contrivance for turning a grindstone, by means of which one can turn and grind at the same time with comparative ease, has been devised by a correspondent of the Rural New Yorker. To construct the device, take the small sprocket wheels and chain from an old worn binder or other farm machinery, and gear it two to one; that is, the lower or crank shaft wheel must have twice as many cogs as the one on the stone shaft. Use a stone twenty or more inches in diameter, and be sure to get a good one. An Amherst is better than a Berea, for all purposes. If geared higher than two to one, it will turn hard, and if much lower it will



GRINDSTONE DEVICE.

not turn fast enough. It is the fast motion that cuts. One may find an excellent pair of cranks from some old bicycle.

System on the Farm.

On many farms the most apparent causes of failure are a want of system, wastefulness, and misdirected labor. It doubtless is far more difficult for the farmer to reduce his business to a definite system than it is for the average merchant, but that is no reason why he should abandon all attempts to do so, and work blindly. There are many farmers who are careful men, who are striving to reduce their operations to systematic rules, and who are doing a good deal in this line in the way of keeping daily records of the milking of each cow, in keeping ledger accounts with each important crop, and in carefully recording the average work done by faithful men in the several occupations of the farm. These are the kind of farmers who are, as a rule, successful. They quickly detect a leak when one occurs, and can usually tell, after a year or two of experience, which operations of the farm are profitable and deserve extension, and which should be abandoned as unlikely to prove profitable. The farmer's business as usually carried on is largely a mixed industry. There are usually a few staples produced for sale which the farm is adapted for by nature to produce; and, besides, there is a considerable variety of produce raised for home consumption by the family or by hired help. If the farmer would carefully count the cost of each of these products, he would doubtless find that he could profitably extend some of the small products, and sell the surplus at a profit, and not infrequently he would discover that some of the staples supposed to yield a sure profit are produced at a very small profit, or even at a loss. In short, the farmer who uses his brains, and does not solely rely upon the strength of his muscle, is most likely to be successful. The absolute failures are those who attempt to get along with a minimum expenditure of both qualities.

Stop the Cow Kicking. The kicking cow, while milking, is an abomination, says a correspondent of the American Agriculturist. To prevent the kicking a small rope or large cord should be passed around the body



SIMPLE PLAN THAT PREVENTS KICKING.

Just in front of the udder and over the top of the hips. It need not be drawn tight—just snug will do—and no cow to which it is applied will even try to kick. Sometimes a cow thus tethered will lift a foot as if to kick, but somehow she seems to change her mind and puts it down again.

Pet-It Prices of Cheese.

Considering the small risks run, middlemen make far too large a profit on cheese. Our five and even six cents a pound between the wholesale and retail prices is much too great a difference. When there is a good-sized family, all liking cheese, it does not take many days to dispose of a whole cheese. If more people would make cheese a staple article of diet, it could be used instead of meats with great advantage in summer.

Making Cornrows Straight.

Much labor in cultivation may be saved by making corn rows straight. It is very hard to hold the cultivator so as to miss hills that are alternately a few inches out of plumb line one side or the other. The result is that in trying to save the hills it is impossible to cultivate the soil as it should be or to

take off the weeds. With the corn in a straight line earth may be drawn from the stalk and thrown back again so as to destroy all the weeds while they are small. It requires not only a true eye in the driver, but an active, strong horse to draw the marker straight across the field. It is not every man or horse that can ever be taught to do it. Those who can should be paid extra for the job, for their work is really skilled labor.

Cutting Potatoes Feed.

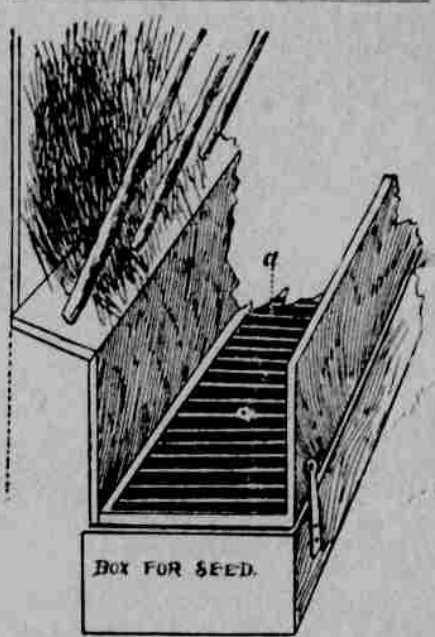
It is slow, tedious work to cut the potato seed for planting large fields. Yet with most kinds of potatoes the cut seed is a necessity, for if the seed is planted whole there will be too many small potatoes from crowding of so many stalks in a hill. It is true not all the eyes on a whole or even of a cut potato will grow, but if seed is planted whole there will be far too many for profit. It is dirty work cutting potatoes, not so much from the soil adhering to them as from the potato juice, which discolors and rusts the knife and stains the hands. This discoloring is easily removed by wetting the hands in pure water without soap, and then holding them over one or two burning sulphur matches. The fumes of sulphur are excellent to bleach anything.

Breeding Ground Hogs for Food.

Mr. Henry Singer, a well-known and thrifty farmer of near Duvall Station, Scott County, Ky., has for the past two years been domesticating the ground hog with much success. Mr. Singer found a burrow in which he captured seventeen ground hogs, and, taking them into a small lot on his place, he built a close wire fence through which none could escape. Last year the hogs increased to 205, and this year there were 1,073. Of this number Mr. Singer killed 1,000, which he salted away and will smoke dry, as Kentucky farmers do with ordinary pork. The ground hog when so cured is a great delicacy, and Mr. Singer has more than enough to furnish his meat for the coming year.—Southwestern Stockman.

Save the Grass Seed.

It is an easy matter to save hay seed from a slatted manger bottom (a), as shown in the cut. If the seed is fanned, it may be used for spring seeding. Or if weedy, as poultry never void undigested food, such seeds may be profitably fed to the poultry by placing in



A GRASS SEED CATCHER.

the scratch room each week.—Farm and Home.

Egg Plant.

The egg plant is not difficult to grow, and it is one of those vegetables not often seen on farmers' tables, but which, if provided, would help make an agreeable variety. The purple egg plant is most productive and best. The plant belongs to the same botanical family as the potato, and must be protected from attacks of the potato larva. The best way is to watch the plants closely so long as the potato beetles are flying, and kill the beetles before they have laid their eggs. If any larvae hatch a weak dilution of paris green will kill them.

Profit from Garden Herbs.

A few papers of herb seeds, such as sage, parsley and the like, should be found in every farmer's garden. They are easily grown, and a home supply will not only save paying out a good deal of money in the course of a year, but the surplus may be sold at rates which leave a good profit. The demand is not large in any neighborhood, but for the amount of land and labor required few garden products pay as well.

Work in Poultry Keeping.

Every year many people begin poultry keeping with a vague notion that it is an easy way to get a living, the work being done mainly by the hens. But such persons inevitably fail, as they ought. There is no easy way to success in anything. To keep fowls free from vermin and disease needs constant attention and a great deal of dirty and very disagreeable manual labor.

The Truly Good.

A newspaper man needs no Sunday and seldom gets one. His life is usually so pure and good that he goes into a state of chronic humiliation and regretful sanctification that is only a trifle below that of the angels. When several other inhabitants of this terrestrial sphere get out of old Charon's catboat on the other shore they will find several editors fishing along the banks for mud cats, and the new arrivals will have to dig bait and spit on the hook.—Ripley (Ohio) Bee.

The 20-cent piece was authorized March 3, 1876, and its coinage was begun the same year. Its coinage was discontinued by act of Congress May 2, 1878; great inconvenience and annoyance to the public arising from the confusion of this coin with the 25-cent piece.