TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

And still another Texas editor has fallen victim to the terrible double-leading habit.

The usually accurate Boston Herald says that "Li Hung Chang's head hangs by a single hair." From what?

Perhaps the fittingest thing to do with that Andree news by pigeon-post is to pigeon hole it until confirmed.

Although the British lion knows what tail torsion is itself, it spares no efforts when it comes to twisting the Chinese queue.

A horse named "Presbyterian" won the New Orleans Derby a few days ago. Heavens! Are there "fast" Presbyterians, too?

At the present time Wei-Hai-Wei doesn't really know whether it is Chinese, Japanese or British. It's always a case of Wei with it.

A Boston paper asks: "How can we prevent the downfall of American women?" Teach them to face toward the front when leaving the street car.

The Boston Traveler says that "clumsy kissing is certainly a shock to the Boston girl." Undoubtedly; kissing of any sort probably would surprise a Boston girl.

The Boston Journal remarks that "the dead man was struck by one bullet as he tried to wrench the door open." Served him right! No dead man ought to act like that.

A scientific exchange says: "The roe of the codfish contains more latent living creatures than the whole human population of the globe." And they're all in a roe, too.

A Western man claims to have discovered a way to send telegrams without a wire. But what this country really needs most is some way to send a telegram without a quarter.

A bright young man has discovered a way to beat the Tennessee law against flirting. He has escaped prosecution by marrying the girl. But that plan seems to have certain distinct limitations which will hardly appeal to the flirtatious.

A congress of mothers in New York the other day discussed the question of corporal punishment for children. It was agreed that a moderate use of the slipper was to be commended, but "the wise mother will endeavor always to strike the happy medium." Well, well, well!

Lady Yarde-Buller, who was arrested on a charge of insanity in California the other night, was released shortly afterward, and a press dispatch says that "the authorities were puzzled to decide whether the lady was a lunatic or was merely indulging in customs peculiarly characteristic of the nobility." Well, well, well!

It seems that football players in France are exposed to even greater perils than they face in the United States. Two football captains got into an altercation during a game in Paris recently, a challenge was made and accepted, and in the duel which followed both men were badly wounded. In this country the danger, however great, is over when "time" has been called.

Fatal warnings against the intemperate use of the wheel began early this season. Young Goeb, the strong, healthy, but foolish New York boy who began the season by taking a 120-mile jaunt on his bicycle, and who returned home to die of heart failure, unfortunately was not the only deluded youth of his kind. Wheelmen who feel that they must ride a century to preserve their self-respect and peace of mind should also remember that the first day on the road after a winter's inaction is not the best time to do it—unless they are anxious to furnish work for the coroner.

What are the young people made of nowadays that they dread poverty so much? Are not youth and health and a sufficiency of absolute needs, riches enough? Does romance count for nothing in these days of mammon? Riches take to themselves wings and flee away, and, as a matter of fact and of statistics, those marriages which, from a worldly point of view, seem most desirable, often turn out disappointing, while the young couple who begin life with modest wishes and simple requirements are apt in their middle life to bask in the sunshine of prosperity.

What is the Chinaman's loss is mankind's gain. It is a good thing for the world that the vast area known as the Chinese empire is gradually passing into foreign hands. Its resources are immense and must be developed. The Mongolian has held out against the onward sweep of progress as long as he can. He must stand aside for those who are more capable. It would be rather sad to see his country taken away from him, but sympathetic considerations do not influence the workings of the law known as "the survival of the fittest."

Wisest and best of all the marks of a true patriot is the possession and the practice of an intelligent interest in the public affairs of this country, says a writer in the North American Review. Manifest in the face of overwhelming evidence of selfish and self-seeking motives of men, blindly following a leader to whom they hand over the exercise of what is supposed to be their will as expressed by their votes, too many men of influence and character have withdrawn themselves from all concern in the administration of the government. And it is the attitude of cowardice and immorality. Conspicuous instances of failure in the attempt to bring about a better condition of political management are no doubt most discouraging; but ultimate and not immediate success is the wise expectation of thoughtful men. And, meanwhile, no forlorn hope was ever led by the kind of man who loses heart in the face or in the fear of failure. And personal duty is not to be measured by this rule. A man owes to his country even his life, if the sacrifice is demanded; and he owes the services of his time, his intelligence, his interest, his participation in high public affairs—himself in every way.

In his biennal report to the Legislature, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Mississippi urges that the newspaper be used for the teaching of history in the public schools. Without doubt, says the Outlook, the superintendent would select the kind of newspapers chosen. Certainly the newspaper is the history of to-day, and to teach a child how he is to increase his knowledge of the affairs of the present and even of the past; to show him how to read market reports, study and compare them; to read legal affairs as told in the newspapers, so that he may gain a certain amount of knowledge of his legal rights and disabilities; and how he is to study economic relations by watching disinterestedly the conflicts and the relations of labor and capital. It seems absurd for a boy to study ancient history and probably rank high in it who does not know that a franchise has been granted in his own city worth millions of dollars, under conditions which mean that his taxes, when he gets to be a householder, will be increased rather than diminished because of the conditions governing that franchise. Nowhere in life is it so possible to create an intelligent interest about citizenship as in the school where the daily events of the community may be discussed, under intelligent guidance.

Now it must be admitted on common-sense principles that the formation of hereditary societies has reached a natural limit, and it is time to cry a halt. The reasonable conclusion is that these societies should unite in work, if not in organization, and justify their existence by practical deeds. The end, however, is apparently not yet; the ancestor quest drives its followers to absurd lengths. Forefathers conjured up rise from the genealogical caldron in a sort of harlequin procession—the ancestor in buff and blue, the ancestor in scarlet tunic, the bewigged ancestor, the jack-booted ancestor, until from the dim twilight of heraldic tradition the crowned ancestor looms up in the shadow. Is there not something decidedly incongruous in the spectacle of descendants of those who bade defiance to the third George of the name seeking to establish kinship with royalty through Saxon chief or Norman freebooter? Does not this latest departure tend to prove that ancestor hunting has no limit; that it is simply a question of enterprise, research and credulity? If we may establish the Order of the Crown, why may we not in due course welcome a new hereditary society, lineal descendants of the Mariners of the Ark, the Ararat Chapter, with proper insignia—suspended from a navy-blue ribbon, a dove bearing the olive branch?

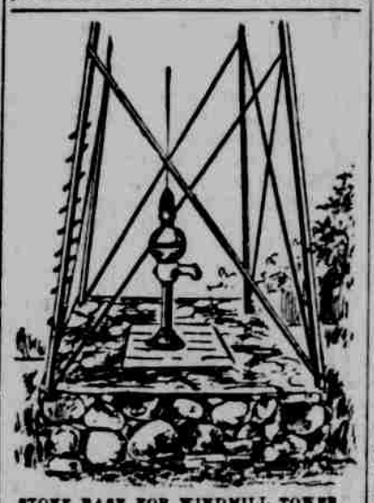
The other day a prisoner was brought to the bar in one of the Federal courts of the Indian Territory. He was told that he could have his choice of a jail or a penitentiary sentence. "Judge," said he, "let me go to the penitentiary. For God's sake don't send me back to jail." At Ardmore, the space between two brick buildings is inclosed by walls across the front and rear of the lot. A roof partially covers the inclosure. The gable ends are open, and a driving rain or snow storm wets the interior. The mud of the dirt floors is often ankle deep. Such is one of the United States jails of the Territory. Under this shed and in the mud the Federal prisoners awaiting trial are herded by guards, who patrol the front and rear day and night. At South McAlester is the second of these national disgraces. It is a stone building fifty feet wide by about eighty feet long. The sides of the building are without openings of any kind. In one end is a door. In the opposite end are two windows. The only air that can enter is by the door and the two windows. Men and women prisoners are confined in this stone building. Recently the number thus housed was 176. The smell which comes from the interior is such that few persons can approach the door without being sickened. At Muscogee is the third of the territory jails. A fire destroyed the old building in use, and a new structure, crude for such purposes, but a marked improvement on the other two jails, is now in use. These three places, two of them without counterparts in the whole country, are employed to hold between 700 and 800 prisoners, either awaiting trial or under sentence. They are the only jails for a population of 300,000 white people. After the first of the year the Federal courts will supersede the Indian courts, and the three jails may serve as well for the Indian population. To keep the 700 or 800 prisoners within these "black holes" the United States pays $40,000 a year to jailers and keepers. The course of the Government toward the Indian Territory has been reprehensible in many respects. There is nothing, however, which calls more loudly for reform than these horrible makeshifts for prisons.

The people do not love as deeply as they pretend.

AGRICULTURAL

A Covering for a Well.

The accompanying illustration, reproduced from the Orange Judd Farmer, represents an easily constructed platform for base of windmill tower. It is a square platform built of stone and mortar, about one and a half feet high, enclosing the tower posts. The wooden pump platform can at any time be removed if necessary for repairs. This solid platform of masonry is easily built from the stones so often found on prairie farms. It improves the appearance of the premises and adds to



STONE BASE FOR WINDMILL TOWER.

the strength of the tower. It also keeps all vermin, as toads, mice, etc., out of the well.

Is There a Substitute Money Crop?

The planter has been urged, prayed with and threatened to renounce his dependence in cotton in favor of varied products and even to adopt a substitute for his old reliable best friend and savior. Glittering generalities and economic theorizing have, however, constituted the bulk of the great volume of gratuitous advice given him and that which might be of practical worth has either rarely reached him or has been presented in a form he could not comprehend. It is useless to try to delude the Southern farmer into the notion that there is a substitute money crop for cotton. He cannot be made to believe it, which is a redeeming feature to his many acknowledged weaknesses. From present indications he will rightly continue to rely on the fleecy staple for his universal "standby," but he must realize the fallacy of mortgaging his life and property to cultivate every inch of his land in the growth of any single product for the principal benefit of somebody to whom he allows himself to become a dependent. The question, however, is not so much whether the crop is pledged, but whether in event of its failure as to production or prices obtained there will be enough of other things produced to insure an actual living and to prevent bankruptcy.—Cotton Planter's Journal.

Ingenious Tether.

Here is a tether made in adjustable sections, designed to contribute to the comfort of an animal feeding, while affording great freedom of movement within prescribed bounds, the movement of the animal in any direction being without danger of entanglement

ADJUSTABLE TETHER.

in the tether rope, says the Scientific American. The improvement has been patented by a Logansport, Ind., man, and will solve a long-felt want, as it keeps a horse or any animal in that part of a pasture where it is put and yet gives it space for feeding.

The Currant or Gooseberry Worm.

At the first appearance of the destructive currant worm, prompt attention is necessary if complete relief be desired, as the voracious appetite of this pest is wonderful, and the plants are rapidly denuded of their leaves. Probably the best remedy is white hellebore, which may be used without fear of injury in its contact with the fruit. It may be applied diluted in water and syringed with water and the powder dusted over them—or the latter following a rain. For a small number of plants, the powder dusted will perhaps be found the best, as it seems to attach itself more lastingly to the leaves. A second application, about ten days after the first, will usually be found necessary. In the course of an hour after the applications have been made, the ground will be found covered with the dead or dying worms, and the bushes entirely abandoned.—Meehan's Monthly.

Scale Insects.

The boy in Aesop's fables cried wolf! wolf! when there was no wolf. Nobody helped him when the real wolf came. In our own country, State after State has been quarantined against the San Jose scale. Germany has thought there was something more in this than a mere cry to get appointments for useless inspectors. So Germany started a quarantine on its own account. Scale-infested fruit has been yellow-papered. Germany is now told we were only in fun. There is nothing the matter with the fruit. But the truth is, the scale doesn't need looking after—not by law, for the scale will travel in spite of all law, and its useless expenditures—but by encouraging cultivators to look for them and destroy them. It is as sensible to make laws that there should be quarantines against weeds as against insects. Like love, they laugh at locksmiths.—Meehan's Monthly.

Drought After Planting Corn.

We used to hear farmers complain that on heavy clay soils which often turned up cloddy in the spring it was hard to make corn grow if a dry time followed planting. Such land should be fall plowed, and thus let the clods be pulverized the following winter by freezing and thawing. If the ground has been properly mellowed and prepared, dry weather following corn planting is a great advantage. It is the dry soil that is always the warm soil, and corn is of all the grains a lover of hot weather in its early growth. Too hot and too dry in fall may injure the crop. But in spring, if the ground is otherwise in right condition, dry soil is an advantage. It will have enough water to swell the seed, thus compacting the earth around it better than can be done in any other way.—American Cultivator.

Good Feed Trough.

A very strong trough may be made of sawed lumber, as shown in the accompanying engraving, taken from the Practical Farmer. For every three feet length of trough use a plank support two feet or two and a half feet long, twelve inches wide and two inches thick. Saw out from the middle of each piece a right-angled, triangular piece with the sides forming a square of the same length. Use boards one inch thick for the sides, and nail the trough together as usual with the tri-

STRONG FEED TROUGH.

angles sawed out of the two-inch stuff for ends. Now set the trough in the angles sawed out, but far enough away from the end piece to nail from the inside of the trough into the supports, and put the triangle sawed from the supports for the center, and nail that after cutting enough from the bottom corner to let water run through.

Gilt Edged Butter.

The dairyman who can produce gilt-edge butter, the genuine article, and do it with uniformity, is not dependent upon market values for his product, for he can get 5 cents or 10 cents a pound above market rates right along without any trouble. In fact, there are those who get double market rates every week in the year. When we can secure 50 cents to 60 cents per pound for butter by catering to a prime trade with a prime grade of goods we stand a good chance of making a dollar. Why not get posted, acquire experience and make something extra fine? There is always plenty of room at the top. The trouble with dairying in general to-day is that too much cream is annually made into a fat no better than so much soap grease. There is too much poor butter in the market. This demoralizes prices and profits to the trade in general.—Practical Dairyman.

Concerning Early Tomatoes.

Market gardeners do not often give away their "snaps," but one confessed not long ago that he had led the market in early tomatoes for several years by following two rules. As Northwestern Farmer tells the story, this gardener plants in north and south rows and lays the stalk horizontal in a shallow trench, leaning the plant to the north and covering all except the top of the plant. This plan lets the sun strike the ground over the roots and buried stalk hastens fruiting. His other rule is never to cultivate in any way which would wound the roots after the blossom has appeared. When wounded, the plant stops feeding the fruits until it has repaired the damage.

Spraying Mixture.

Every one now fully understands the value of spraying as a protection against injurious insects and fungus enemies. A spraying machine is now as necessary an article of garden furniture as a spade or a hoe. For fungi take two pounds of quick lime slaked in twenty gallons of water, and three pounds blue vitriol in two gallons of water. Strain the lime mixture through burlap into the blue vitriol water, mix and use with spray pump for all fungous diseases of plants and trees. If it is desirable to kill insects also, add one-quarter pound of paris green to this.

HOUSEHOLD DEPARTMENT

The Open Fireplace in Summer.

The open fireplace is a regularly recurring summer bugbear. What to do with it, how to ornament it or how to hide its usual ugliness. The illustration gives a hint on the last point. It may be hid, changed into a useful set of shelves with a tiny closet or cupboard in the middle. It would not cost very much to have the shelves made; they will be useful in any room in the house. In the sitting room the center, if fitted with a door, lock and key, would make a nice medicine case, or left with a curtain hanging in front it may hold many things that are to be put out of sight.

FIREPLACE BOOK SHELVES.

The size and quality of the shelves would be regulated by the space they are to occupy and the situation of the room.

The Best Cradle for Baby.

Take a very large bed quilt. Fold first lengthwise, then crosswise. Tie a half-spool in each corner so it forms a knot. Now tie small-sized but strong rope to each corner and suspend to the ceiling like a hammock; but when hung up the center of the quilt must not be stretched flat, but must hang considerably in the middle. Now place baby in with a pillow under him and a nice, easy one at head, fasten him in, give a good push and start him swinging, and if he is awake and kicks a little it will keep him cooing while you can attend to your washing or other work and know the cradle is rocking. If he is real still it will swing a long time of itself if started. Another advantage is that baby is off the floor and up where it is warmer in cold weather, and can be hung on a porch or somewhere when it is warm, and you don't have to stand right by him and see if a dog is licking his face or cat scratching him, as when he is in a cradle low down on the floor. I have tried this and know it is too good a thing to even allow the finest cradle in the world to be pulled out in my way. After using this babies don't cry to be rocked, but lie still on a bed, if wanted to, and sleep.

House Cleaning.

Yes, M'rilly's bin house cleaning 'n' I'm sleepin' in the shed,
With some buggy robes for kivers 'n' the wash bench for a bed;
There's confusion in the parlor 'n' a heap sight more upstairs,
While I kain't find comfort nowhere fer the varnish on the chairs.

First they tore up all the carpets; then they pulled down all the shades,
Till the place looked like a homestead after one of Moseby's raids;
Next the walls were renervated, 'n' the floors was soaked and scrubbed,
'N' M'rilly bossed the workers as they pounded, shook and rubbed.

Oh, I tell yer, 'tain't so funny when yer eatin' off the shelf,
'N' a feller has to hustle for a place to lay hisself;
Fer the wimen folks mean bizness 'n' they make a feller jump,
Till he's like a pesky camel with a double-action hump.
—Franklin W. Lee.

Spoon Dropcakes.

One cupful of flour, one-half of a cupful of rye meal, one-half of a cupful of cornmeal, one cupful of sugar, two eggs, two tablespoonfuls of molasses, one tablespoonful of melted butter, one sour apple chopped fine, one-quarter of a teaspoonful each of allspice, clove and nutmeg, one-half of a teaspoonful of cinnamon, one cupful of sour milk, one-half of a teaspoonful of soda. Drop by small spoonfuls into smoking-hot fat and cook golden brown.

Beef Broth.

Cut some pieces of lean beef into small pieces, cover with cold water, and boil until the meat comes to pieces; then strain through a colander and let the broth stand until cold. Take off any particles of fat that are on top, season with salt and pepper, and add small squares of toasted bread. Rice, sage and tapioca may be used instead of toast, if preferred. Other meat broths are made in the same manner.

Corn Bread.

One and one-half cups flour, one cup corn meal, one-third cup sugar, one-fourth cup butter, one cup milk, two eggs beaten separately, two teaspoons baking powder. Cream the butter and sugar together, add yolks, then milk, then corn meal, then flour, to which the baking powder has been added, and lastly the beaten whites.

Favorite Muffins.

One cup sweet milk, one egg, the yolk and white beaten separately, one teaspoon sugar, one teaspoon salt, one teaspoon baking powder, piece of butter the size of an egg, two cups flour. Bake in muffin rings.

Nebraska Notes

A division of the Salvation army has moved upon the citadel of sin at North Platte.

The bountiful rains this season have encouraged the people of Custer county to plant trees.

It is claimed that Osceola has more secret societies than any other town of its size in the state.

The Fullerton high school alumni held a banquet last Saturday which was attended by sixty graduates.

Elaborate preparations are in progress at Pawnee City for a mammoth celebration of the Fourth of July.

Bennie Heitzler, 8 years old, was drowned in the Missouri river opposite the Burlington depot at Plattsmouth.

A chunk of coal weighing 10,500 pounds was shipped to the Omaha exposition from Rock Springs, Wyo.

Scott's Bluff county had a rainfall of two inches in less than twenty-four hours. The wheat crop is assured.

The rainfall in Polk county for last month was a fraction less than four inches.

Colonel Wells of the Central City Democrat thinks he has the war department and general government bottled up. He is making it very warm for both.

The people of Ohiowa observed Memorial day as it should be. There were no unseemly sports permitted and no hollow mockery of a sacred and solemn occasion.

August Markle, an old and highly respected citizen of Nebraska City died last week, aged 72 years. He was born in Germany and came to this country at an early age. He has been a resident of this county since 1868. He was a blacksmith by trade and was a veteran of the Mexican war.

Claude Morris, of Fairbury, a lad of about thirteen years, was drowned here while swimming in the Little Blue. He was with a number of companions at the time, who thought he was diving and paid no attention to him until he had been under water several minutes. The water was about twenty feet deep where he went down. The lad was an expert swimmer and his misfortune must have been due to cramps. He was the only son of a widow living in this city.

John Place of Tecumseh has long been a terror at "pulling sticks." He considered himself a champion of the west and when a little fellow who called himself "Farmer Burns" dropped around the other day and offered to bet $80 he could pull a few himself. Place placed an equal sum to the contrary. He is no place now as a stickpuller, but it hurt his feelings worse to learn that he had been victimized by a professional athlete who played farmer for convenience.

Jake Troutman came within an ace of blowing the top off of his own head and incidently that of his brother John last Thursday evening. It seems Jacob is the owner of a Zulu shotgun that was fitted with a breech pin and he made one out of a pine block with a ten-penny nail for a plunger. Then he went out to see how it would work. It worked. In fact it worked at both ends, the breech cutting a gash in his forehead and the improved plunger going into his skull and sticking. The other end of the gun was also doing business, the charge going so near the face of John Troutman as to powder-burn his face quite painfully. Dr. Bridgman was called, who dressed the wound and outside the possible loss of his left eye Jake will soon be all right.—Butte Gazette.

Ernest Krause, aged eighteen years, son of Gottlieb Krause, a farmer of Grand Prairie township near Columbus was very badly injured in a runaway accident. He was coming into town on the running gear of a wagon after lumber, and when near the city limits on the north a team following him became unmanageable and ran away, jumping squarely onto his wagon and onto him, tramping him badly and running over him. He was taken to St. Mary's hospital, where it was found that he had suffered a fracture of the skull beside other injuries about the head and face. The chances are greatly against his recovery. His father who lives a few miles from the village of Creston was notified of the accident.

The section of Nebraska near Bancroft has never had a better outlook for a big crop at this season of the year than at present. Corn is all up and a part of it has been cultivated once over and is growing finely. The exceeding good stand is one of the principal facts in the guarantee that the growing corn crop is to be of the best in Nebraska's history. The soil was perhaps never in a finer condition as to moisture and a few days of hot sun will make corn fairly jump. Wheat, oats and barley, generally speaking, are in splendid condition. Vegetables and all kinds of garden stuff are making a wonderful growth, while the cherry crop and the different varieties of berries grown here are practically a sure crop.

Ed Ferguson's son Clyde, of Wilber last week found floating in the Blue river the well developed arm of a child that had probably been several weeks old at the time of death. It had evidently been in the water for several days. It was severed from the body at the shoulder joint, whether by intentional mutilation beforehand or eaten by the fishes cannot positively be told. There is no clue how it came there and may have floated a long distance as the water has been high of late.