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 beauty of the $300 sacque is only sealskin deep.

A man's good work lives after him, but it isn't always identified.

Appearances are often deceptive and disappearances are usually more so.

There is danger that the water in the great trust flotations may drown the country.

Hall Caine is a living proof of the fact that it is possible to get rich in spite of the critics.

Nothing jolts the harmony out of an orchestra like the trombone player who gets off his bass.

Booth Tarkington made one short campaign speech and was elected. A word to the wise would be sufficient.

The woman who has company manners would be surprised to find out how many people besides her husband know it.

After Mr. Ziegler has sent two or three more expeditions to the Arctic he may not think so badly of Baldwin's effort.

Colonel James Jeffries claims that he is unable to find anyone who is willing to fight him. He'll come along one of these days, Jim.

It seems that about the only way the Gould family can keep their toy Count Castellane in the French Chamber of Deputies is to buy the chamber.

A German scientist advocates isolation as a cure for lying. Still a good many people will cling to their old belief in the efficacy of the club.

Young Mr. Rockefeller tells his Sunday school class that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Mr. Rockefeller himself is a very liberal giver—of advice.

Susan B. Anthony acted as a bridesmaid in Rochester not long ago. It looks as if Miss Anthony were beginning to concedede that man after all is to be tolerated.

When a person asks "How are you?" hasten, if you wish to retain his esteem, to tell him that you are well, so that he may not be delayed in telling you how bad he feels.

J. Pierpont Morgan is opposed to any change in our present banking laws, doubtless owing to the fact that he does not wish at his time of life to be compelled to master an entirely new financial condition.

A "College of Optics" offers to grant degrees to "classes of one thousand" for twenty-five dollars each. This ought to be an eye-opener to those who need the services of an optician. "Now is the time to get up clubs."

Asbestos towels are among the curiosities of the day. When dirty it is only necessary to throw them into a red-hot fire, and after a few minutes draw them out fresh and clean. In case of the office towel it has to be left in the blaze a little longer, if the fire doesn't go out to rest.

From the description of that prehistoric skull that the Kansas scientists are bothering their own heads over, the owner—"a glacial man, dolichocephalic, low browed and prognathous, having nearly the same stature as our people of to-day"—may very likely have been an early day prizefighter.

The President of Bryn Mawr solemnly informs women that cooking and dusting are not intellectual occupations. But neither is shopping. And there isn't anything very intellectual about the work at the ribbon counter or in the factory. Even the tyrant man has to put up with occupations that are not intellectual. But what of it?

We wear out words, says ex-Speaker Reed, and shed them as we do clothes. The philological fact saves the language from being permanently degraded by slang terms and phrases, for although some new words do not wear out, yet the shedding process never stops, and the lovers of undefiled English are unceasingly grateful that it does not.

"Some philanthropists," said General Booth, recently, "endeavor to reform men by washing their shirts. The Salvation Army proposes to wash their hearts, and teach them how to wash their own shirts." The illustration is homely but pertinent. General Armstrong once took to task a visiting minister at Hampton who prayed that the Indian students might have the rough places made smooth before their feet. "Not at all!" exclaimed the fine old soldier. "Pray rather that these Indian boys may march on over the rough places, not stumbling, and undismayed."

Shall the husband play second fiddle to the dog? Because Mr. Long was compelled to eat with his wife's dog at table he has filed an action for divorce; because Mr. Talbert disapproved of the conjugal attentions to Fido he "beat his wife into insensibility." Love me, love my dog, is not true of husbands, however forcibly it may be brought home to lovers. Hence the necessity of special homes for dogs, or special homes for husbands, as fancy may direct. Or, better still, a dog clause in the marriage contract. Yet there was undoubtedly much of truth in the sigh of the Gallic woman that the more I see of my husband the more I prefer my dog—an improvement on Mme. de Stael's generalization.

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that boys the world over will regret the death of George Alfred Henty, whose books for years have been their delight. Mr. Henty's career admirably fitted him for that special department of authoriship. He was of English birth and was educated at Cambridge. He served actively in the Crimean war for a time, but finally was invalided home. A few years afterward, in the capacity of a correspondent, he was in the field in the Austro-Italian, the Franco-German, and the Turco-Servian wars, and was with the Abyssinian and Ashanti expeditions, as well as with Garibaldi in Italy. During these years of exciting, perilous, and picturesque adventures in various parts of the world, from the walls of Paris to the jungles of central Africa, this trained observer accumulated an ample stock of just that class of materials adapted to stories which boys most eagerly devour. He told them tales, as did Othello to Desdemona—

> Of most disastrous chances,
> Of moving accident by flood and field,
> Of hair breadth 'scapes i' the imminent, deadly breach.

and, "this to hear," they not only, like Desdemona, "would seriously incline," but eagerly and enthusiastically "incline," and with such practical results that both author and publishers were delighted. No other writer for boys of the present period has had such vogue. He was remarkably industrious and wrote with the greatest facility. Two or three books a year was an easy task, and one was just as interesting as another. He never repeated himself, though he has produced between eighty and ninety stories for boys, and at the time of his death, in his seventieth year, was engaged upon more. The interest of his stories never flagged, and the sources of his adventures seemed well nigh inexhaustible.

Amongst the duties which public opinion in the present day is disposed to require of public school teachers is the training of the rising generation in manners. The schools are more and more expected to be the source of all good things to those who receive instruction in them; but there seems to be a danger lest, in making such large demands of the schools, parents may be divesting themselves of some of their own resopnsibilities. Manners should, in the first place, be taught at the home; and the atmosphere of the school ought to be favorable to the establishment of proper social habits; but we doubt whether it is desirable to impose on the teachers any direct or formal instruction in what may be called the technique of manners. If a child is rude or coarse in manner he or she should be suitably admonished and instructed, and made to feel that such and such acts are below the level of conduct which it is desirable to maintain in the school. A simple reference to the golden rule will generally suffice on such occasions; for the rudest person does not enjoy rudeness on the part of others. It is vain, however, to expect too much of average humanity. Every one cannot walk in the high places of the earth; everyone cannot gather the rarest flowers of human culture; everyone cannot be a Damascus blade. There is just one thing that is open to all men for the dignifying of their lives and the elevation of their characters. They can look into "the perfect law of liberty," and catch a vision of the equality of human rights. Here is the one true and practical foundation for manners—a sense of our own rights and of the rights of our fellow men. What gives the aristocrat his easy manners is the enjoyment and practice of equality in the circle in which he moves. Where social life is intense social usages become established and thoroughly understood; hesitation and mauvaise honte are banished. That source of good manners is not only a restricted, but it is to-day a dwindling and much perturbed one. A better and wider school is wanted; and it is to be found in the cultivation of a sense of human worth and of a consciousness of the essential equality of all men. Timidity and bashfulness, and mealy mouthedness in all its forms are fatal to good manners; and so, on the other hand, are swagger and self assertion.

Beautiful Marks o. Maple.

Nobody seems to know what cause it is which produces those delicate and beautiful lines in maple, known as bird's-eye. Some people think they come from the hundreds of little branches which shoot out over the trunk of the tree as soon as a clearing is made around it. Expert timbermen say that is not the case. The only way to tell a bird's-eye maple tree is to cut it. There are no outward signs by which one can judge. The Railroad Gazette tells a story of the late George M. Pullman. Many years ago he was offered a mahogany log for $3,000, to be cut into veneers. It was supposed to be a very fine piece of wood, but this could only be determined by cutting it. He declined the offer, but agreed to take the log cut into veneers for what it was worth. The owner had it sawed and was paid $7,000 for his veneers. Any one who can discover the secret of determining the interior nature of wood from the outside will have a fortune.

The man who wins a half-mile dash starts out afoot and comes in ahead.

ON TRIAL FOR LIFE.

Boy of Fourteen Years Before Bar of Justice—Opening of Borchers Case.

Columbus, Jan. 6.—Upon the convening of court Monday afternoon for the Borchers murder trial the attorneys for the defense asked for separate trials for the two boys who stand charged with the crime, and Herman the elder, who is alleged to have fired the fatal shot, was brought in court. Contrary to a common prediction, the securing of a trial jury was quite an easy matter, consuming only two hours and not exhausting the regular panel of twenty-four names.

The question asked the jurors by the prosecution was: "Have you any opinion upon the subject of capital punishment that would preclude you from bringing in a verdict of guilty in a case where the punishment would be death."

All but three or four of the twenty men examined answered "No."

The defense asked in every instance: "Have you any opinion as to the criminal responsibility of children under fourteen years of age that would prevent you from accepting the instructions of the court as the law in this case."

Nearly every man said "No." The trial jury consists of August Boettcher, John Deegan, J. F. Belford, Z. T. M ran, H. L. Kunneman, Henry Gehring, John Pinger, Lucius Hungford, T. C. Hogan, Gus Ernst, David Schupabch, Gus Halgrean.

The boy being a native of Germany it is an interesting fact that six of the jurors are Germans, three being Irish, two Americans and one Swede.

County Attorney O'Brien, in stating the case to the jury, sketched the crime in details as it has al eady been published, referring to Herman as probably over fourteen years old, and saying that the evidence would show that the gun used was bought for the specific purpose, with money tak n from the pocket of the man who was to be killed; that the boys minutely described the plot and its execution to the coroner's jury, and that the object of the crime was the possession of the farm on which they lived. He said that the third boy, eight years old, who was not held as an accomplice will tell the story of its perpetration, his story being the only direct identification of the foot and bones found in the straw stack as those of Gerhard Borchers.

A. M. Post, former chief justice of the supreme court, in making the statement for the defense confessed that the facts in this case are so peculiar that nothing of the kind has ever before come under his observation, and that he had never previously investigated the law applicable here. He declared that 300 years ago in England children were put to trial, convicted and punished for capital offenses the same as adults, but in our land in this day such an advancement in law has been made that the burden of proof rests on the prosecution to show, not only that the child has taken a life, not only that there was premeditated malice, but that it had capacity to know and did know, not merely the moral responsibility, as learned at the fireside or the confessional, but the logical consequences of the act as well.

He asserted that the defense would attempt to show that Herman Borchers, not fourteen years of age until next August, did not, and could not, from the nature of his home life, realize either the moral or the legal responsibility under which he acted, if it is proven here that he killed Gerhard Borchers. He described the step-father with whom the boys live alone as a man singularly morose, without those finer elements so necessary in the family life, holding no communication with the boys, other than instruction to do this or that and being almost a stranger to his neighbors. He said the boy was taken from school at the age of seven and since the mother's death had acted as cook and washerwoman. He said if the boy is guilty of any offense it is murder in the second degree, and called the atention of the jury to the fact that if the boy is convicted the judge will have no power to commit him to an industrial school which can be done with the most favorable conditions for his ultimate good in the event of acquittal.

By agreement of the attorneys, the jury was allowed to separate under strict injunctions of the court not to allow any one to approach them privately in reference to the case.

August Johnson, uncle of the boy, is the only relative or friend showing enough sympathy for him to take a seat within the bar railing, though another uncle and the maternal grandfather were in the court room. The latter's wife is a sister of the man who was killed, the families having inter-married. George and John Borchers, brothers of the deceased, were present, the latter being accompanied by the eight-year-old boy, John, whose testimony tomorrow will probably be the most intensely interesting part of the proceedings in court.

Shipping Quail in Coffins.

Carbondale, Ill., Jan. 6.—Quail are being shipped from Franklin county to St. Louis in coffins to escape the game laws, according to the confession of Noah Moore, who was arrested yesterday for violation of the game law. Moore says 1,200 quail are packed in a coffin and shipped as a corpse. Arrests are promised by the game wardens. The warrants have been out for Moore for about a year, but he had successfully evaded all officers.

FASTEN THE CRIME

THIRTEEN-YEAR-OLD BOY PICTURED AS MURDERER.

COLUMBUS COURT STORY

DETAILS GIVEN OF THE KILLING OF BORCHERS

YOUNG CHILD TESTIFIES

Child Brother of Defendant the First Witness But His Recital Plain—Others Corroborate Testimony

Columbus, Neb., Jan. 7.—John, the eight-year-old son of Gerhardt Borchers, for whose murder Herman, the stepson, is on trial, spent nearly the entire forenoon Tuesday, on the witness stand, the first hour being consumed in establishing his competency as a witness. Very diffident and apparently much frightened at first by the questions of the attorneys as to the nature of an oath and the divine punishment of falsehood, he lost his embarrassment and showed a clear understanding of each step in the crime when asked about it.

He told of the stealing of the money, buying of the gun, for the express purpose, on Herman's part, of killing the father, the hiding of the weapon and the firing of the fatal shot at the father as he sat in the house reading. He further detailed the dragging of the body to the straw stack, and the burning of it to get away with the father's Sunday clothing and the chair on which he sat when shot, relating also, that Herman had threatened his life in the event that he told of the killing.

George Borchers, brother of the murdered man, testified that the boys told him their father, after acting strangely for at time, had packed his grip, given them $3 and disappeared. The witness went to the home of the deceased, found the boys preparing hog feed with an outdoor fire, dangerously near the house and barn, and upon remonstrating with them was told that the place was theirs and that they had a right to do as they pleased. He hunted about the premises for the father and upon finding charred bones in the straw stack was told by the boys that they were chicken bones which had been thrown into the fire. This was before the foot and skull were exposed to view. Buckles and buttons were also found. He testified that a year ago last August Herman told him he was thirteen years old.

Former County Judge Robinson, a member of the coroner's jury, told of some of the preliminary work of that body, but was prevented, after considerable controversy, from relating the alleged confession of the defendant to that jury.

Sheriff Byrnes told of the stand of obtaining a confession from the defendant as first obtaining the story of the crime from the two younger boys stating that the confession was given without duress or compulsion, the boys being at the time under his surveillance, but not in custody, but no threats or promises being given to obtain the confession. He said Herman told him somewhat reluctantly of taking the money, buying the gun, practicing for a few days with it during the absence of the father, who was then away from home, of firing the shot which killed the father, according to the plan which he and August had talked over in the presence of John, and the subsequent details as revealed in John's testimony. It was an icy morning and the strawstack was several years' old and this was why a load of fresh straw was hauled from another stack to burn the evidence of the crime.

Must Stand Trial.

David City, Neb., Jan. 7.—Mrs. Lena M. Lillie must stand trial in the district court in the charge of murdering her husband, Harvey Lillie. This was the decision of County Judge Skiles Tuesday evening at the conclusion of a hearing which has occupied nearly two weeks, and around which has centered greater interest, probably, than any criminal case in the history of Butler county.

With the consent of the county attorney the defendant was released on bail in the sum of ten thousand dollars which was furnished by her father and another friend.

The concluding day of the hearing was given over to the defense, but the testimony of the few witnesses called was brief and calculated to disprove the theory that the revolver found was the one with which the murder was committed, and also to show that the relations of Mr. and Mrs. Lillie were amicable, and their conduct such as was to be expected from a devoted man and wife.

Murderer Tries to Escape.

Ogden, Utah, Jan 7.—William Brown, who yesterday was sentenced to a term of forty years in the penitentiary for murdering a Chinese gardner near this city several months ag, made a desperate attempt to escape from jail last night. When accidentally discovered Brown had succeeded in sawing through two bars of his cell and had almost severed a third. A most minute examination failed to locate the saw.

BREAK INTO VAULT.

Burglars Make a Good Bank Haul at Louisville.

Louisville, Neb., Jan. 9.—This city was the scene of a bank robbery at an early hour Thursday morning that gives evidence of having been committed by experts. It yielded its perpetrators the neat sum of $4,200 in gold, silver and currency, and unless the hounds are effective in tracking them the robbers seem likely to escape.

The robbery occurred some time between 2 and 3 o'clock this morning. The Bank of Commerce, which is the property of Tom Parmele of Plattsmouth, president of the independent telephone orangization of the state, is located next door to the postoffice, and entrance was gained to it by breaking into the postoffice, drilling a hole large enough to permit a man to crawl through the two-foot brick wall into the bank vault, thus avoiding the burglar alarm, and dynamiting the safe within. During the early morning hours people in the vicinity were awakened by a report of the explosion, but none seemed to have been prompted to deem it anything unusual. Shortly afterwards men were heard walking down the street adjacent, but no one got up to observe the meaning of the nocturnal visitation.

This morning when Jesse McGrew came to work in the printing office which adjoins the bank he peered in that institution and discovered the wreck of the vault, and investigation disclosed the meaning of the wreck. There was a burglar alarm on the door of the vault and the safe was ostensibly burglar proof, and the cunning manner in which the burglars avoided detection or interruption proves them to be cracksmen.

Quarantine Will Be Rigid.

Tuscon, Ariz., Jan. 9.—Information from the office of the secretary of state of Hermosillo concerning the plague situation is as follows:

The strictest quarantine is maintained at Guayamasa against Mazatlan. A cordon of soldiers has been established from the tidewater on the boundary line between the states of Sonora and Sinaloa, the soldiers being stationed within sight of each other along the entire distance with instructions to shoot anyone endeavoring to pass the line. The strictest kind of patrol is kept along the coast.

No passports are issued to ships to clear from Guaymas, and no ships are allowed to enter from any point. Guaymas is depending entirely upon her own resources for subsistance.

The most thorough system of fumigation and sanitary regulations has been adopted. Lime and sulpher are issued daily to the poor people and the streets and yards are cleaned daily. Governor Isabel has been placed in charge by the federal government. He brands the reports of the last few days to the effect that the plague has secured a foothold in Guaymas or in any of the border towns between Guaymas and Inaloa as false

Washington, Jan. 9.—A dispatch has been received at the public health and marine hospital service from the board of trade at Tuscon, Arizona, calling attention to the existence of bubonic plague in Mexico and requesting that necessary steps be taken to prevent its spread into Arizona. The president of the superior board of health of Mexico has officially announced to the authorities in Washington that the plague exists at Ensinada and Mazatlan, Mexico, and has requested the public health and marine hospital service to notify the bureau of American republics that the South American countries through them may be informed. Dr. Grubbs, a mediccal representative of the public health and marine hospital service now at Los Angeles, who has been investigating the situation in Ensanda, and Dr. Alexander, the medical representative at Ensanda, have been directed by the surgeon general to take necessary action in the matter.

Made Effort to Linch Him.

Reno, Nev., Jan. 9.—A special to the Gazette from Eureka confirms the story of the tragedy enacted at the Keystone mine yesterday, when Superintendent Taylor was set upon by twelve union miners. Two men are dead and another is just alive; still another has been given up by the doctors and a fifth is not seriously hurt.

There was intense excitement among the miners and it was thought that Taylor would be lynched last night. The sheriff succeeded in spirting Taylor and Assistant Gaskill of Ely for an unknown destination.

Details are hard to obtain, as Ely is a remote camp far from railroad or telegraph communication, being 150 miles southeast of Eureka.

Forgery Cause of Failure.

Nacogdoches, Tex., Jan. 9.—It is claimed that the developments in the failure of the Wettermark bank at Nacogdoches and Henderson show that forged notes and receipts to a large amount caused the suspension. It is also stated that investigations have disclosed $110,000 in fraudulent paper.

A member of the firm, it is claimed has disappeared and a warrant has been sworn out charging him with forgery.

Nebraska Notes

Mrs. Mary A. Hibbard of Utica, was found dead on her kitchen floor.

The amount invested in the Siberian railway is $401,700,000.

Pat Carter, 18, of Table Rock, had his hand torn off in a corn shredder.

Charles Miller is in jail at Fremont for stealing $40 from a saloon at Scribner.

Mihcael Clare, aged 79 years, died at his home in Cortland. A family of six children survive him.

At Elk Creek George Clark had his hand caught in a pulley and the flesh was torn from two fingers.

The county recorder's statement made shows that for the month of December the mortgage reduction for Otoe county was $10,929.50.

The G. A. Murphy farm, located four miles north of Beatrice, was sold to F. H. Kimmerling for $8,000 cash, or $50 per acre.

The Water and Light company of Nebraska City refused to continue their contract with the city for lighting the streets, and as a consequence the streets are in darkness.

At Elmwood G. W. Swacker's 14-year old daughter had the thumb of her left hand caught in a washing machine breaking the bone and lacerating the flesh.

Manager Carver of the Nebraska City water company is to be succeeded February 1, by R. P. Egan of Chicago, formerly of Lincoln and Nebraska City.

John C. Beard, a resident of Humboldt, dropped dead at his home of heart disease. Mr. Beard was an old settler and a member of the Grand Army. He leaves a wife and two children.

Because he lost his job as freight conductor on the Burlintgon thruogh excessive drinking, W. W. Hambell killed himself by swallowing carbolic acid. The suicide was committed at his home in Wymore, his wife and child being away visiting in Lincoln.

Charles H. McDaniels, one of Swift & Co.'s chicken pickers, died at Beatrice from the effects of sixty grains of morphine taken the night before. McDaniels and his wife, who came to Beatrice from Superior, Neb., two months ago, had quarreled and separated on account of McDaniels drinking heavily. The deceased was 36 years old and had $2,000 insurance in the Knights and Ladies of Security.

John Neville, a farmer living four miles north of Wahoo, met with a fatal accident. He was hauling corn and attempted to drive across the railroad track ahead of the Elkhorn passenger train. The train struck the wagon and demolished it and Mr. Neville was thrown some distance, alighting on his shoulders. He was picked up unconscious and brought back to Wahoo by the train and medical aid was summoned. He was about 45 years of age, married and had a large family. Mr. Neville died in the depot waiting room.

Several bad cases of cattle being poisoned by eating hay which contained ergot have come to light around Fremont. One herd of cattle northwest of Fremont is in an especially bad condition, nearly all of the 150 head showing symptoms of it. A number were ordered shot by the veterinary. The disease affects the hind feet, which swells up and in some cases actually rot and fall off before the animal dies.

A convention of sugar beet growers of that part of Nebraska is called to meet in McCook Saturday afternoon, January It is proposed to have an exchange of ideas and experiences from practicl growers of beets the past season for advantage during the next season. An association of sugar beet growers will also be formed during the convention for the purpose of promoting the sugar beet industry in southwestern Nebraska. A full attendance of farmers is urged, as the matter is considered of first and largest importance to them and to the locality.

Anna Morrell, whose husband was killed in a collision at Table Rock, Neb., December 16, while acting in the capacity of fireman, has begun suit in the district court in Gage county against the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy railroad for $50,000 damages. It is alleged that some of the crew were asleep on the train which crashed into the engine occupied by Fireman Morrell. The suit is brought on the grounds that the company violated the law in compelling its employes to work without the required amount of rest. It is the largest suit of the kind ever instituted in Gage county.

George D. Follmer, commisisoner of public lands and buildings, estimates the expenditures in his department at $64,780 for the next biennium. He recommends that the land of the penitentiary land fund be either sold and the money applied to penitentiary repairs, or lse attached to the educational lands. In fifty-eight counties 165,711.60 acres of land have been leased. All lands have been leased at a higher valuation than formerly.