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Selected Miscellany.

TIMES GO BY TURNS.

[AN Englishman, Robert Southwell, wrote the following lines of much merit, two centuries and a half ago:]

THE lopped tree in time may grow again,
Most naked plants renew both fruit and flower;
The sorriest wight may find relief from pain,
The driest soil suck in some moistening shower.
Times go by turns, and chances change by course,
From foul to fair, from better hap to worse.

The sea of fortune doth for ever flow,
She draws her favors to the lowest ebb;
Her tides have equal times to come and go,
Her loom doth weave the fine and coarses eb.
No joy so great but runneth to an end,
No hap so hard but may in time amend.

Not always fall of leaf, nor even spring;
No endless night, nor yet eternal day;
The saddest birds a season find to sing,
The roughest storm a calm may soon allay.
Thus with succeeding turns God tempereth all,
That man may hope to rise, yet fear to fall.

A chance may win that by mischance was lost.
That net that holds no great takes little fish;
In some things all, in all things none are crossed;
Few all they need; but none have all they wish.
Unmingled joys here to no man befall;
Who least, have some; who most, hath never all.

THE BOARD FENCE.

BY RUTH CHESTERFIELD.

"SHOO, shoo, get home, you plaguy critters!" cried Mr. Babcock, waving his arms as he chased a dozen sheep and lambs through a gap in the fence.

It was a wooden fence, and when he had succeeded in driving the animals the other side of it, he lifted it from its reclining position and propped it up with stakes. This was an operation he had found himself obliged to repeat many times in the course of the season, and not only of that season, but of several previous seasons.

Yet Mr. Babcock was neither slack nor thriftless; in fact he rather prided himself on the orderly appearance of his farm, and not without reason. How then shall we account for his negligence in this particular instance?

The truth was that this fence formed the boundary line between his estate and that of Mr. Small; and three generations of men who owned these estates had been unable to decide to whom it belonged to rebuild and keep it in repair. If the owners had chanced to be men of peaceable dispositions, they had compromised the matter and avoided a quarrel; but if, on the contrary, they belonged to that much larger class who would sooner sacrifice their own comfort and convenience than their so-called *rights*, this fence had been a source of unending bickerings and strife.

And of this class were the present owners. Again and again they had consulted their respective lawyers on the subject and dragged from their hiding-places musty old deeds and records, but always with the same result.

"I say it belongs to you to keep it in repair; that's as plain as a pike-staff," Mr. Babcock would say.

"And I say it belongs to *you*—any fool might see that," Mr. Small would reply, and then high words would follow, and they would part in anger, more determined and obstinate than before. The lawyers' fees and the loss by damages from each other's cattle had already amounted to a sum sufficient to have built a fence round their entire estates, but what was that compared to the satisfaction of having their own way?

There were not wanting in the neighborhood peace-makers who would gladly have settled the affair by arbitration; but to this neither of the belligerents would listen for a moment.

At last, one day, Miss Letitia Gill, a woman much respected in the village, and of some weight as a land-owner and tax-payer, sent for Mr. Babcock to come and see her on business; a summons which he made haste to obey, as how could he do otherwise where a lady was concerned?

Miss Letitia sat at her window sewing up a seam, but she dropped her work and took off her spectacles when Mr. Babcock made his appearance.

"So you got my message; thank you for coming, I'm sure. Sit down, do. I suppose my man Isaac told you I wanted to consult you on a matter of business—a matter of equity, I may say. It can't be expected that we women folks should be the best judges about such things, you know; there's Isaac, to be sure, but then he lives on the place, and maybe he wouldn't be exactly impartial in his judgment about our affairs."

"Jes' so," said Mr. Babcock.

"Well, the state of the case is this: When Isaac came up from the long meadow to dinner—they're mowing the meadow to-day, and an uncommonly good yield there is—when he came up to dinner, he found that certain stray cows had broken into the vegetable garden."

"He did, hey?"

"You can fancy the riot they made. I declare, Isaac was almost ready to use profane language. I'm not sure that he didn't say 'deuce,' and I'm certain he did say 'darn;' and, after all, I couldn't feel to reproach him very severely, for the pains he has taken with that garden is something amazing; working in it, Mr. Babcock, early and late, weeding and digging and watering; and now to see it all torn and trampled so that you wouldn't know which was beets and which was cucumbers, it's enough to rouse *anybody's* temper."

"It is so," said Mr. Babcock.

"And that isn't all, for by the looks of things they must have been rampaging a full hour in the orchard and clover-field before they got into the garden. Just you come and see;" and putting on her sun-bonnet Miss Letitia showed Mr. Babcock over the damaged precinct.

"You don't happen to know whose animals did the mischief?" said Mr. Babcock.

"Well, I didn't observe them in particular myself, but Isaac said there was one with a peculiar white mark, something like a cross, on her haunch."

"Why, that's Small's old Brindle," cried Mr. Babcock. "I know the mark as well as I know the nose on my face. She had balls on her horns, didn't she?"

"Yes, so Isaac said."

"And a kind of hump on her back?"

"A perfect dromedary," said Miss Letitia. "I noticed that myself."

"They were Small's cows—no doubt about it at all," said Mr. Babcock, rubbing his hands. "No sheep with them, hey?"

"Well, now I think of it, there *were* sheep—they ran away as soon as they saw Isaac. Yes, certainly there were sheep," said Miss Letitia.

"I knew it—they always go with the cows; and what you wish of me"——

"Is to fix the damages," said Miss Letitia. "As I said before, women folks are no judges about such matters."

Mr. Babcock meditated a moment, and then said:

"Well, I wouldn't take a cent less than seventy-five dollars, if I were you—not a cent."

"Seventy-five dollars! Isn't that a good deal, Mr. Babcock? You know I don't wish to be hard on the poor man; all I want is a fair compensation for the mischief done."

"Seventy-five dollars is fair, ma'am—in fact, I may say it's low; I wouldn't have a herd of cattle and sheep tramping through my premises in that way for a hundred."

"There's one thing I forgot to state—the orchard gate was open or they couldn't have got in; that may make a difference."

"Not a bit—not a bit. You'd a right to have your gate open, but Small's cows had no right to run loose. I hope Isaac drove 'em all to pound, didn't he?"

"I heard him say he'd shut 'em up somewhere, and didn't mean to let 'em out till the owner calls for 'em. But, Mr. Babcock, what if he should refuse to pay the damages? I should hate to go to law about it."

"He won't refuse; if he does, keep the critters till he *will* pay. As to law, I guess he's had about enough of that."

"I'm sure I thank you for your advice," said Miss Letitia, "and I mean to act upon it to the very letter."

And Mr. Babcock took his leave with a very happy expression of countenance.

Scarcely was he out of sight when Miss Letitia sent a summons for Mr. Small, which he obeyed as promptly as his neighbor had done.

She made to him precisely the same statement she had made to Mr. Babcock, showed him the injured property, and asked him to fix damages.

It was remarkable that before he did this he should ask the same question Mr. Babcock had asked, namely, whether she had any suspicion to whom the animals belonged.

"Well, one of them I observed had a terribly crooked horn."

"Precisely—it's Babcock's heifer. I should know her among a thousand. She was black and white, wasn't she?"

"Well, now I think of it, she was; one seldom sees so clear a black and white on a cow."

"To be sure; they're Babcock's animals fast enough. Well, let me see—what you want is just about a fair estimate, I suppose?"

"Certainly."

"Well, I should say ninety dollars was as low as he ought to be allowed to get off with."

"Oh, but I fear that will seem as if I meant to take advantage. Suppose we call it—say seventy-five?"

"Just as you please, of course; but hanged if *I'd* let him off for less than a hundred, if 'twas *my* case."

"And if he refuses to pay?"

"Why, keep his animals till he comes round, that's all."

"But there's one thing I neglected to mention—our gate was standing open; that may alter the case."

"Not at all—there's no law against your keeping your gate open; there *is* against stray animals."

"Very well—thank you for your advice," said Miss Letitia; and Mr. Small departed with as smiling a countenance as Mr. Babcock had worn.

But at milking time that night he made a strange discovery; old Brindle was missing!

At about the same hour Mr. Babcock made a similar discovery; the black and white heifer was nowhere to be found!

A horrible suspicion seized them both—a suspicion which they would not have made known to each other for the world.

They waited till it was dark, and then Mr. Babcock stole round to Miss Letitia's, and meekly asked leave to look at the animals which had committed the trespass. He would have done it without asking leave only that thrifty Miss Letitia always locked her barn doors at night.

While he stood looking over into the pen where the cows were confined, and trying to negotiate with Miss Letitia for the release of the heifer, along came Mr. Small, in quest of Brindle. The two men stared at each other for an instant in blank dismay, then hung their heads in confusion.

It was useless to assert that the damages were too high, for had they not fixed them themselves? It was useless to plead that Miss Letitia was in a manner responsible for what had happened, on account of the open gate, for had they not assured her that circumstance did not affect the case? It was useless to say that she had no right to keep the cows in custody, for had they not counseled her to do so? As to going to law about it, would they not thus become the sport of the whole town?

"'He that diggeth a pit, he himself shall fall into it,'" said Miss Letitia, who read what was passing in their minds as well as if they had spoken, for the light of Isaac's lantern fell full on their faces. "However, I don't wish to be hard upon you, and on one condition I will free the cows and forgive you the debt."

"What is that?" Both looked the question, but did not ask it.

"The condition is that you promise to put a good new fence in place of the old one that separates your estates, dividing the cost between you, and that henceforth you will live peaceably together as far as in you lies. Do you promise?"

"Yes," muttered both, in a voice scarcely audible.

"Shake hands upon it, then," said Miss Letitia.

They did so.

"Now let the cows out, Isaac; it's time they were milked," said she. And the two men went away driving their animals before them, with a shame-faced air greatly in contrast to the look of triumph with which they had last quitted her presence.

The fence was built, and the strife ceased when the cause was removed, but it was long before Miss Letitia's part in the affair came to the public ear; for she herself maintained a strict silence concerning it, and enjoined the same upon her man-servant Isaac.—*Youth's Companion.*

—For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1873, there were brewed and sold in the States and Territories 8,009,969 gallons of fermented liquors, and during the following year 8,910,823 gallons. In 1873 there were 3,554 breweries in the United States, against 3,421 the previous year. Of these Pennsylvania had 500, New York 4,811, Ohio 296, Wisconsin 290, and Massachusetts 49.

—This year's maple-sugar yield in Vermont is estimated at 15,000,000 pounds, worth $1,500,000.

Patent Medicines.

PATENT MEDICINES belong to a remote antiquity, and are made in various ways. Dr. Sangrado insisted that hot water was the universal resolvent, in which he made a great mistake, as all empirics do. But his patent medicine possessed the merit of perfect harmlessness, which few of the nostrums of to-day share. As a rule, in this enlightened day, the more vulgar ingredients are dispensed with.

The "Elixir of Life," for which we pay $2.50 a bottle, is not composed of the startling elements found in the caldron of the witches of "Macbeth."

This is par excellence a scientific age. At any rate we tell one another it is, and that answers the purpose as well as if it were true. We must have our drugs served up in dog-Latin, in abbreviated forms and with undecipherable hieroglyphics. And the more trying the name, the more potent the pill. A nostrum for "hepatic stimulation" would meet with a readier sale than a mere liver pill, although the one was composed of sepia, aloes and gum-arabic, and the other of bread, brick dust and sugar, flavored with a little gentian root. It is all in the name.

The faith of mankind in patent medicines has been carefully educated. As a matter of fact, faith is one of those delicate plants which flourish in the shade. Like ivy it cannot abide the glare of day. To produce a healthy specimen of faith, the penetrating rays of curious reason must be banished. And to do this requires persistence, shrewdness and money, especially money. The marvelous power of any particular nostrum must be brought out by a wood-cut, or, better, by a brace of wood-cuts, giving a glimpse of what mankind would be, and too often is, without this heaven-sent remedy; the companion picture showing the change which has come over the patient by the use of four or five bottles. In addition to these cuts there must be a collection of letters from grateful patients pouring out thanks for their restoration to life and health, and giving in detail the amount and cost of the medicines they have taken. Then the newspapers must be brought in. Standing notices are ordered at so much a line, from a cent in Calumet to a dollar in Chicago, and ten cents in religious publications. A man takes up the paper Monday, and the first thing he sees is "Bottlefiller's Invigorator" followed by a notice of from ten to fifty lines. He pays no attention to it for a month or so. The first remark is, "The papers are getting more stupid every day. There's that beastly Bottlefiller again." A month later he is a convert to Bottlefiller, buys a bottle of the "Invigorator," and feels that he is—because he ought to be—invigorated. And so on.

To keep notices standing in all the principal newspapers in the United States, including the country paper and the religious weekly, requires money. Indeed, it needs a fortune. The majority of men are gullible in the matter of patent medicines, but one cannot assail them at once. Every man has his tune, and the advertisement must be in long before the advertiser is sure of success. Hence, while it is the easiest thing in life to compound a few drugs, call the mixture by a long name, and fill, label and pack a thousand gallons of it, it is not so easy a matter to dispose of it. Kindly nature has provided credulous humanity with a safeguard against the quacks. Of 1,000 who sail out on a sea of invigorants, alteratives, purgatives and pain-killers, all but one founder in mid-ocean. The survivor is rewarded. Thus our "delicate constitutions, which at certain seasons of the year are prone to the ravages of a fickle climate and extremes of temperature unknown in any other habitable quarters of the world," etc., as the circulars say, are saved the infliction of a vast inundation of medicines. This shows the difficulty of popularizing a compound.

Helmbold remarked to Mr. Rayner, a leading druggist in this city, that no man could hope to succeed who could not make a profit of at least 400 per cent. on his nostrum. The expense of advertising would gobble 350 per cent., leaving the balance for legitimate expenses and a fair margin of profits. Let those who think they can delude the American people remember this, and hesitate before perpetrating the enormity of a patent medicine.

The very name should excite suspicion. Originally the prefix explained that the discoverer of a remedy had applied to the Government for protection against imitators. Later, the profits made by the early explorers of this new region stimulated thousands of others, and the patent medicines became so numerous that protection was protection no longer, and the word patent became merely a descriptive word, implying that nobody knew what they were made of.

A well-stocked drug-store contains between 800 and 1,000 varieties of these special remedies. They run from corn-plasters to fever and ague medicines, touch lightly on ointments, wallow deep in rheumatic antidotes, pick their way through pills of all kinds, and dash madly among cosmetics and cough-mixtures.

There are three nationalities represented in this profitable business: English, French and American. The English medicines are noted for their age, the French for the neatness and precision with which medicines are put up, and the American for their daring inefficiency, except through the ever-ready medium of imagination, or more easy, if higher, one of faith. Some of these are old "stand-bys."

The vender of patent medicines has an enemy. In the economy of nature evils are not unlimited. One so-called evil kindly holds another in check. The greatly propagating salmon is widely eaten; the spider and school-boy combine to keep the house-fly's family within bounds; big fleas, the old proverb goes, have little fleas upon their backs to bite 'em, and little fleas have lesser fleas, and so on *ad infinitum*. And so it is with the patent-medicine man. The vast expense of advertising and close competition all aid in restricting him. But his spider is not to be found here. The web is spread by the doctors. A physician in good standing will not prescribe anything like an American or English patent medicine. He feels his professional gorge rise whenever he hears its name mentioned. But with the French remedies it is different. He does not mind ordering for a patient LaVille's "Liqueur curative de la Goutte et des Rhumatises," probably because nobody would ever suppose it to be a patent affair. But while, professedly and ostentatiously, the practicing physician snubs the Ayers, and Jaynes, and Crams, he sometimes secretly calls upon them to help him out with a prescription. Cases have occurred in which he has purchased "Osgood's Cholagogue," poured it into another bottle, and prescribed the "mixture to be taken three times a day" with unblushing assurance. As a rule, however, he is wary as to his dealings with patent medicines, and condemns them without stint.

All large druggists keep a full assortment of curatives of this description for two reasons: there is a great popular demand for them, and a retail profit of from 10 to 50 per cent. on them. They never pass an opinion upon the medicine to purchasers. A man who wants a bottle of any of the thousand specifics in the store obtains no word of condemnation or commendation of its contents from the seller. He pays his money and takes his choice. He is supposed to know what he wants, and the source of his information and his line of argument are eminently ridiculous.

A well-dressed, intellectual gentleman strolled in a hesitating way into Buck & Rayner's store a day or two ago, and asked for a bottle of Plantation Bitters. Mr. Rayner handed him a bottle. "What do you think of it?" asked the customer. "We never express an opinion, sir, upon these medicines. We do not know what they are made of, and will not be made responsible for their effects."

"Well," returned the customer, "that's perfectly right. I'm opposed to these quack-remedies myself. I told my wife I never would buy a bottle of them. But these Plantation Bitters have been so extensively advertised that there must be something in them." This species of reasoning is very prevalent among even intelligent men. Because some vandal hand has posted a glaring wood-cut on Lookout Mountain, Plantation Bitters will regulate the stomach, expel the poisonous humors from the body and transform a wasted life of misery and sickness into an earthly paradise of health and happiness. Precious faith and sublime reason.

In speaking of the patent medicines it must not be inferred that all are worthless. Some of them are undoubtedly valuable; some are harmless and some positively injurious. It stands to reason that a drug which must yield 400 per cent. profit to remunerate the compounder, and at the same time sell at a reasonable price, can contain no costly ingredients; or if it should their efficacy must be merely nominal, not active. Take the trifling matter of buchu, for instance. The druggist can extract a more valuable quality for the same price than is contained in a bottle of the Helmbold preparation, the actual value of which is mainly in its association with gorgeous posters representing Africans carrying huge bundles aimlessly about in different directions, and wearing an expression of the utmost benignity. Some of the "invigorants" (and their name is legion) contain an alterative of acknowledged efficacy—corrosive sublimate. Now, as everybody knows, this is, in excess, an exceedingly deadly poison, and should be dispensed with the utmost care and with a heavy personal responsibility. Under existing laws there is no such thing as responsibility.—*Chicago Tribune.*

Health Items.

THOSE who would have perfect digestion should not drink anything at meals. Drinking should always be done before, after or between meals.

Milk is especially pernicious in all of those complicated and obscure cases of indigestion to which the phrase "nervous debility" is usually applied.

One of the great and increasing evils of imperfect mastication is decaying teeth. It is a law of all vital organisms that every structure or post must do its own work or die.

Corsets are the degenerators of one sex as much as tobacco and liquor are the enemies of the other.

Ladies suffering from nervous debility in summer should beware of over-exercising. The fault with too many invalids is that they overdo when trying to recruit, and thus seriously retard their improvement.

Domestic animals that are permitted to live normally never have decaying teeth.

Women healthfully and happily employed are not usually in ill health. Hannah More wrote eleven books after the age of sixty. Sarah J. Hale is now eighty-five, and still editing.

The influence of imagination on the vital functions has always been recognized, and it was this recognition that enabled the ancient physicians to be so successful with charms, amulets and incantations.

Parasols, except in the middle of the day during the "heated term," are pernicious things, as are the veils with which so many fashionable ladies shade their faces.

The most prevalent error in private houses is insufficient ventilation of bedrooms. Young children and infants, though born with fair organizations, are often rendered puny and scrofulous by sleeping in unventilated rooms.

The sugar insect (which is the cause of that tormenting skin affection known as "grocer's itch") is found in nearly all the brown sugars of commerce. More than 100,000 have been found in a single pound of "merchantable" sugar.

The error of regarding dyspepsia as a local disease instead of a constitutional infirmity leads to the mischievous practice of local medication. Dyspepsia is but a name for universal physical deterioration.

Water drinking between meals should be according to thirst. It is a mistake to load a weak stomach with cold water on the theory that it is a tonic. As a habit it is well to take a tumbler, or part of one, of pure, soft water after dressing in the morning.

The temperature of baths should always be regulated by the temperature of the patient.

It is said by those who have taken pains to inform themselves on the subject that there is no country in the world, civilized or savage, where bad teeth are so generally the rule, and good ones so rare an exception, as the United States.

If seats were properly constructed persons would sit upright, for the reason that it would be the most comfortable position. It would be painful to sit otherwise. The chairs, benches, sofas, pews or other seats should fit the small of the back, the curves of the hips and the whole length of the thighs as accurately as a well-made shoe is shaped to the foot, or harness to the body of a horse.

The prevalent custom on the part of most women of wearing the hair twisted into a mass on the top or back of the head, and the more modern and still more pernicious custom of loading the head with false hair, or substances resembling it, is a frightful source of headache, and indirectly a cause of dyspepsia.

We have in the United States 30,000 drug-shops and 75,000 physicians furnishing the supplies and prescribing the doses; hence, in view of this fact, it may be a fair question for a debating society whether there is more dyspepsia procured by drug medication than by all other causes combined.

Old cheese is well known to be one of the most indigestible articles that was ever swallowed in the name of food. Says the old distich:

Cheese is a surly elf,
Digesting all things but itself.

It is impossible for any child whose mother has diminished her breathing capacity by lacing to have a sound and vigorous organization. If girls will persist in ruining their vital organs as they grow up to womanhood, and if women will continue this destructive habit, the race must inevitably deteriorate.

Erectness is one of the most obvious laws of the vital machinery. Yet almost every one is crooked. "Blessed are the upright," physically as well as morally.

The only method which has ever proved effectual for preventing or curing consumption is to keep the lungs expanded as much as possible. For this purpose breathing tubes, spirometers, blow-guns, lifting machines and other gymnastic contrivances have been found useful.

All kinds of food which are only semi-solid, or composed of solid particles diffused in water, as puddings, stews, mushes, gruels, soups, etc., should always be taken with dry bread, hard crackers, green apples, or something similar, and eaten very slowly.

A deleterious practice, common in our large cities especially, is the excessive use of ice-cream and soda water.

Everybody has fine teeth in the East. Women there at ninety have perfect teeth, and seldom one under fifty loses a single incisor or cuspid, or even a molar.

Tobacco using directly and fearfully lessens the breathing capacity. This is one reason why tobacco-users require more sleep than others, other circumstances being equal.

Tobacco using, in young persons, has the same effect in diminishing the breathing capacity that tight-lacing (which is alarmingly on the increase again) has. Examples are, indeed, sadly frequent on the thoroughfares of our great cities of young ladies who have destroyed more than one-half of their breathing capacity by this disgraceful habit of tight-lacing. Their wan, expressionless faces, harsh, contracted features, with bilious discolorations of the skin, proclaim, in language that cannot be mistaken, deficient respiration. And the counterpart of these appearances and indications may be seen in numerous young men who promenade the streets behind lighted cigars.

For bathing purposes, as for drinking and cooking, there is a great difference between pure and hard water.

A prominent cause of the prevalence of indigestion in this country is the excessive use of cathartic medicine in the form of pills. One establishment in New York turns out by the aid of steam no less than ten barrels per day, and others greater quantities, so it may be imagined how many are bought up. It is estimated that one hundred barrels each day are made by all the establishments collectively.

If men should dress as the majority of women in fashionable life do, there would be ten cases of consumption among them where there is only one now.

Not one growing child in ten can be confined in a school more than three hours a day without suffering more or less debility and endangering life.

Most of the school-houses in our cities, and not a few in the country, are pest-houses, very much in the sense that tenement houses are.

Perhaps no country furnishes such multitudes of peevish, fretful, nervous women as the United States.

The most prevalent complaint among ladies at the present day is headache; and careful investigation will prove that this trouble has rather increased than diminished since the present style of wearing hair came in vogue—involving, as it does, the loading of the head with such a quantity of foreign material.

The dyspeptic person should avoid hard water as he would hard drugs, for all the hard waters on earth are only drugs in solution.—*Brooklyn (N. Y.) Union.*

Presence of Mind.

ON Tuesday, a woman, who resides at Ferry village, and who comes to the city frequently to assist families in their house-cleaning, started to return to the Cape in the evening, but was too late to catch the last ferry-boat. Although a young woman of considerable personal attraction, she is not devoid of pluck, and she determined to walk home by way of Portland bridge. The hour was late, between ten and eleven, but the woman trudged along, carrying a large bundle that had been given her by the family with whom she had been working. As she passed the little clump of woods on the cross-road that connects the Cape Elizabeth road with Ferry village, a man suddenly stepped forth with the remark: "Good evening, miss; allow me to escort you home." "Thank you, sir," said the woman—bold as a lion, where most women would have been scared to death—"but unless you have had the small-pox I would advise you not to approach me. I am only allowed to go out in the evening and am now taking some soiled linen from a patient, to be washed." It may be unnecessary to remark that the individual in question gasped out an "O, Lord!" and the last seen of him was a pair of coat-tails making good time toward Portland bridge.—*Portland (Me.) Press.*

—It wasn't at Chesaning, a but little further up the country, that J. E. Warner, the Michigan showman, picked up an item one day two or three years ago. The affair shows that partnerships are not always pleasant, even if they are profitable. Joe was advertising agent for Van Amburgh then, and he reached a town and mounted the stairs of a printing office to make a contract for advertising. He heard a great rumpus as he ascended the stairs, and upon opening the door found two men struggling on the floor as if they meant to destroy each other. "Here! what's all this row about?" he inquired as he stood over them. The men paused, breathing like "heavy" horses, and one of them said: "We're partners, and we're trying to decide who is boss." "Well, who *is* boss?" asked Joe. "I want to get some advertising done." "I can't tell you just yet, stranger," replied the man, commencing to claw again; "take a cheer until this little wrastle is decided!"—*Detroit Free Press.*

CURRENT ITEMS.

OREGON never had a breach of promise suit.

FEATHER fans are in vogue. They look well, but give little air.

MEXICANS appear to like Texas, for they take considerable stock in it.

CAPE MAY has a roadster in the shape of a Shanghai rooster that draws a baby around in a baby-coach.

SQUIRRELS are unusually plentiful in Warren County, Ky., one man having counted sixty within a mile.

NORTH CAROLINIANS tempt immigration by the assurance that a home in the pine woods is a sure cure for consumption.

A REVOLVING fragment of the paleozic age collects no cryptogamous vegetation, is a new translation of a popular proverb.

THE latest sensation is a balloon race that will soon occur at Reading, Pa., between the aeronauts Phillippi, Donaldson and Shearer.

IT seems that female suffrage has not entirely banished matrimonial infelicity in Wyoming. Six divorce suits are pending at Cheyenne.

FIFTEEN years ago a Washington gentleman scratched his name on a gold dollar and sent it on its travels. He has never seen it since.

THE First Congregational Church of Lexington, Mass., is still using a Bible which was presented to the parish by John Hancock in 1793.

THE flower charity, one of the most beautiful and graceful charities of the season, is meeting with wide-spread support and encouragement.

THE Georgetown (Ky.) *Times* is quacking over a breed of ducks, in Scott County, that lay eggs with double yolks—not occasionally, but all the time.

A CONNECTICUT Coroner's jury naturally decided that a suicide must, to all intents and purposes, have lost his head when he neatly severed it from his body.

MONTREAL merchants are kicking against the duty on tea. Another revolution? If so, we can lend several thousand Indians to throw the tea overboard.

A VERMONT man, whose name is Bugg, has been confined to his bed nine years. Should think his wife would try some of the patent exterminators on such a bed-Bugg.

CAPE MAY has an ancient lady who has worn the same bonnet since 1812. If any watering-place can lay claim to superior attractions it should "ante up" at once.—*Boston Post.*

A POETICAL New Hampshire editor, speaking of trees, says: "Every tree is a feather in the earth's cap, a plume in her bonnet, a tress upon her forehead; wherefore, plant trees!"

IN Maine, recently, by the advice of a clairvoyant, a body was exhumed and reburied with the face downward, as a means of staying the ravages of consumption in the corpse's family.

NUMERICALLY the male sex is the stronger in Japan by about 500,000, and it is to be hoped by every one who takes stock in civilization that the much-squelched and altogether-ignored father-in-law receives proper recognition by the Japanese ladies.

AN old negro woman was arrested and brought before the Mayor of Montgomery, Ala., for picking up some driftwood at the edge of the river. Her defense was that God sent the rain that raised the river that brought the wood. The Mayor thought it a good defense and discharged her.

SEVERAL persons were recently made ill in Cleveland, Ohio, by ice-cream which they had eaten, and one of the "theories" is that the milk was exposed to a dense poisonous fog, when set for the cream to rise, and absorbed the foul vapors of the fog.

THE bridge painter who fell overboard at Niagara, and succeeded in getting a front seat directly over the edge of the falls, says he never in his life saw such a grand and imposing spectacle; also, that he never knew the true beauty of a rope's end till he got hold of it on that occasion.

BLISS GODDARD, of Londonderry, Vt., whose $4,000 of United States bonds were burned in the tea-kettle in which he had placed them for safety, during the recent burning of his house, has had the whole amount restored to him by the Treasury Department.

THE St. Louis Bridge Company, in a few days, will put in place a mechanical arrangement for counting each pedestrian that passes over the bridge. This machine will be a stile that allows only one person to pass it at a time, and on turning registers in successive numbers upon a series of dial wheels, like a gas meter.

THE prevalent custom on the part of most women of wearing the hair twisted into a mass on the top or back of the head, and the more modern and still more pernicious custom of loading the head with false hair or substances resembling it, is a frightful source of headache, and indirectly a cause of dyspepsia.—*Exchange.*

A CORRESPONDENT of *Hardwick's Science-Gossip* states that a hollow tree was cut down in Kent last February, when out tumbled upward of thirty squirrels, most of which were dormant or in a state of semi-sleep. On being roused they dispersed to various parts of the copse. They had stored a large stock of nuts in the hollow. It is common to find squirrels thus stowed away for the winter, but not often in such numbers together.

THE Louisville *Courier-Journal* says: "The transfer of the Louisville & Portland Canal to the Government, and the consequent reduction in the rate of toll, has lifted from the commerce of our rivers a burden which it could ill afford to bear. The fall from fifty cents to ten cents on every ton of freight passing through the canal is very certain to stimulate the river trade and to benefit all the river interests. To large vessels heavily loaded hundreds of dollars will be saved on every trip, and the smaller boats will be benefited in proportion. Louisville will be as much a gainer by the change as any of the river cities, and she rejoices with them that this thing has come to pass."

A NEW York young lady has returned from Omaha a sadder and a wiser young lady than she went thither. It appears that she read a "Personal" advertisement and corresponded with the advertiser. The result was a promise of marriage from both parties, so the young lady hied to Omaha to fulfill her portion of the vow. But when she had reached that famous city of railroad dispute she was disappointed with his personal appearance, and refused point blank to permit the tying of the nuptial knot. It was fortunate. The next day the gentleman was arrested as a mail robber, and the young lady returns to the city of her abode a spinster. The "Personal" advertisement is about on a par with the clairvoyant in its power to work mischief, and should be looked after accordingly.—*New York Express.*

A BOATMAN on the Mississippi River tells the following: A poor chap was going down the river in a dug-out, and had been informed of a certain locality called Rick's Bend, which was eighteen miles around, and in one place about a hundred yards across. He was advised to land at the narrow point and drag his craft over, but passed the spot going down without observing it, and paddling on eighteen miles around he struck the other side. Landing at once, he dragged his boat across, and went gliding along down with a light heart till he came along within a few paces of the spot where he dragged across before. Thinking it was a new cut-off, he went ashore and dragged his boat over again. When he got back to the river a second time he sauntered around a little to stretch himself, and soon discovered an old newspaper out of which he had taken his breakfast in the morning. It was now about sundown, and as he had paddled thirty-six miles without flattering progress he scuttled his dug-out with a hatchet, built a camp, and waited till next day for a steamboat.

The Sad Fate of a Genius.

A WEALTHY gentleman of Berlin some ten months ago offered a number of valuable prizes for the best essays that should be written on several subjects of importance to the learned world; a prize of 200 thalers for the best metaphysical essay, and an equal sum each for essays on mediæval history, astronomy, celestial mechanics, sociology, geology, poetry, and—apparently to show his world-wideliness—500 thalers each for the best romantic tale and the best poem, the prizes to be awarded by a committee selected from the various universities and various designated *littérateurs* of eminence who were supposed to be and, as the sequel showed, really were disinterested in the matter, and willing to do only what justice might require. The essays and poems were to be of no particular length and were to be judged simply by their real merits, but the authors must all be Germans. The wealth and reputation of the man who offered the prizes were such a sufficient guarantee of certainty of payment and of consequent reputation as to set half, if not all, of the younger men of Germany at work to achieve the guerdon of success. On last Thursday, at the Gewandt-Haus at Leipsic, the prizes were awarded, a large company of ladies and gentlemen being present. The ceremonies were begun by most exquisite music by the old orchestra—among whom are numbered men who knew and loved Mendelssohn—at the conclusion of which the venerable Dr. Schmidt, so long known for his kindliness and learning at Heidelberg, announced the names of those who had been so fortunate as to carry off the very valuable prizes offered. The names of the authors of the various works had been sent in sealed envelopes, on which were inscribed the fictitious names signed to their productions. The author of the metaphysical essay had chosen as his theme Kant's "Antinomein der reinen Veruunft" (Antinomies of Pure Reason), and taken as his name for the occasion "Hans Wildenstein." After passing an eulogium on the essay, Dr. Schmidt broke the seal and found in the envelope the name of Max Markmann, who thereupon was called upon the stage to receive the reward of his work. A pale, poorly-clad, and most wretched-looking young man stepped forward and was received with hearty applause. His hair was thin and gray, although he was plainly yet young, and his whole appearance was such as to at once awaken the sympathies of the audience. Having received his reward he stepped quietly aside, and Dr. Schmidt continued his announcements, Markmann sitting near him, pale and still, in a large arm-chair. The astronomical essay was on the "Evolution of Nebulæ, with particular reference to the large nebula in Orion," and here, too, the successful author was found to be Max Markmann. When this announcement was made great enthusiasm was manifested, and, after receiving the prize, poor Markmann took his seat, apparently more weary and dejected than at first. The next essay was a review of Ranke, and here, too, this young man was successful, and so on through the whole list of prizes. Max Markmann stepped forward amid thunders of applause and received his reward. No one who knows the enthusiasm of the Germans will fail to know that all the students were ready to carry the young man off on their shoulders to have a good "kneip." The poem was an exceedingly fine one—somewhat in the vein of that exquisite poet of Nature, Otto Roquette, yet breathing the air of a loftier and mightier soul which had dwelt alike with Shakespeare and Gœthe and Homer. It was a wonderful composition. Herr Auerbach, the author of "Village Tales," "On the Heights," and other works, and who was the head of the Committee on the Tales, had said of the one named "The Village Rector" that it was one of the finest he had ever read. And the successful competitor for all the prizes was Herr Max Markmann. The prize for the tale was the last one announced, and as Markmann stepped forward to receive it, amid thunders of applause, his face suddenly became ashy in its whiteness, and he fell fainting on the stage. A death-like silence succeeded, during which he was removed to an ante-room, and but partially restored to consciousness. He lingered but for four hours, and when he died the physicians who had attended him announced that his death was caused by privation—in other words, by starvation. All that the highest medical skill could do had been of no avail. It was found that for years he had occupied a little chamber in an obscure Gasse, where he had worked, gaining a most precarious living in teaching languages and nearly everything which anybody required to know. In his room were found incomplete models of remarkable mechanical contrivances, a broken chair and mounds of manuscript, among which were letters from some of the most distinguished men in Europe. He had, apparently, lived on almost nothing for months, and poor, dejected, weary, yet glowing with the fire of genius, had worked for the prizes offered—amounting in all to 2,400 thalers—and then, hungry and weary, had dragged himself to the Gewandt-Haus to win them and die. If the history of labor, genius and its rewards has a sadder tale to tell than this, I know not of it.—*Leipsic (Germany) Cor. N. Y. Graphic.*