The Record of the Last Congress.

The Forty-seventh Congress was not remarkable for the number of great men it included, or for the pre-eminent ability of a few of its individual members. It was—if we may be permitted to continue the same candor toward it now that it is dead that we exercised during its existence—a very commonplace body of men. It started off badly and through its first session it fulfilled the promise of its unhappy beginning in several ways. No need now to particularize; that its first session was anything but a success was sufficiently shown in the results of last November's elections, for which Congress was in a large degree, though not wholly, responsible. The Republican majority has, moreover, frankly confessed judgment and done what it could to make atonement for its mistakes during the short session just ended. It was not a great Congress except in this sense that it had the true greatness and manliness to confess its mistakes, recognize its responsibility to the people, and in the end endeavor to do what the people evidently desired. It was a Republican Congress, and the Republican party not only shoulders the responsibility of it, but, with all its faults, willingly and cheerfully goes to the people on its record, without even waiting for its successor to come in and give it the advantage of a foil.

For this Congress has fairly represented the Republican party—represented it in the human frailties and weaknesses which grow inevitably out of the possession of power; represented it still more faithfully in its nearness to the people and its quick and hearty response to public sentiment. Whatever else may be said of it, this at least is true, that no other Congress ever gave such satisfactory proof that it stood as representative bodies in a popular government ought always to stand—with its hand on the public pulse. So without being remarkable for the commanding ability of a few leaders or for its general average, it may at least be credited with representing upon the whole the general spirit and purpose of the party in control. And in this particular it has exhibited in the most striking and significant manner the contrast between the two great parties: between the party of progress, the party of ideas, the party of the people, and the party of obstruction, of negations, of blind, willful Bourbonism. The contrast between its first and second sessions is the contrast between the parties. One party is susceptible to correction and discipline; the other stubbornly clings to its errors and bases its only claim for consistency upon an unreasoning defence of its blunders.

The fundamental difference between the two parties was well illustrated in the course taken by each on the tariff question. No thinking politician at the beginning of the last session doubted that, if the Republicans in Congress desired merely to gain a strategical advantage over their opponents, their best policy was, while making an apparently earnest effort to pass a tariff bill, to permit the Democrats to defeat it and to leave for the incoming Democratic Congress a legacy of dissension and discord. Nothing could be plainer than that with the tariff an open question the next Democratic Congress would fall asunder at the very outset. But the Republican leaders took a very much higher view than this. They said that the business interests of the country demanded an early settlement of this question and the people could only look to a Republican Congress for it. So instead of leaving it as a stumbling-block for their opponents, with the certainty that the latter would blunder over it to their own defeat, they took the matter up in an honest, business-like way, and over the factious opposition of the minority carried it through to a successful conclusion. The result, of course, is to remove from the path of the next Democratic Congress, one great danger. By so much the Democrats are helped. But it still remains to be seen whether the people will not after all recognize the manly and straight-forward treatment of the question by the Republicans and restore them their confidence.

The XLVIIth Congress, with all its mistakes, showed itself in the end worthy of the confidence of the people. It was a Republican Congress, and the Republican party will not shrink from going to the people on its record.—*Exchange.*

The Contrast.

The Democratic party has done nothing to inspire confidence in it. What it was it is. It has done nothing for the country, and it is so constituted that it can do nothing.

It has pandered to the lowest elements and the worst passions of the country to secure votes and power, and what it has done in this way, it is now doing and will continue to do.

Needing the purifying touch of boundless reformation, it points its finger at reforms, and flings away from itself every hand that would apply reform to it.

Greedily hungering and grasping for power, it has done more than all other agencies combined to encourage the riotousness of mobs, and direct their madness at the property and prosperity of the country.

With the Democratic party in power no form of property is safe. As it bent before fiatism, the Democratic party will bend before communism. Its motto is "anything to win," and its efforts to win are raising a storm to beat upon the gains of the industrious, which is property, that the Democratic party will be powerless to control after it reaches power, even if it had the good disposition to control it.

From a party of this character the country has nothing to hope. It is most harmless when it is out of power. In power it can do only hurt. Such is its history everywhere North and South. The South has written its own unenviable history in this direction, and under Grover Cleveland, in New York, notwithstanding the many protests of excellent intentions, the Democratic party proves its impotence in the way of good. That is Democracy. It can be no better. It is not in the party to be better. There is nothing plainer than this in the history of American politics.

There are few Republicans indeed who do not understand and believe this. Even those who think their own party might be improved in some points believe it as well as the others. And all understand that while there is hope that the highest and best aspirations of political reforms may, and possibly before long will, be engrafted in the law, and put in practice by Republicans, there is no such hope in Democratic success.

For every possible good we must look to the Republican party. For the prosperity and safety of the future we must look to the Republican party. And that party on which the people alone can depend is the only one to which the people should turn on election day. If it has done some wrong, its catalogue of excellent, patriotic and noble deeds is almost boundless, while the chapter of good Democratic works was closed thirty years ago and has never been opened since.—*Detroit Post and Tribune.*

A Great Task on Its Hands.

The Democratic party of the country is anxiously endeavoring to prepare itself for the great contest of 1884, and it is evident that it has on hand a task of considerable difficulty. In order to have a fair prospect of winning in that contest it must be united, and in order to find any strength in union it must agree upon a position with reference to questions in which the people in 1884 are to feel a vital interest. It must enter the contest with well-defined principles, and be prepared to stand by them. It is evident that the party in the several States is somewhat embarrassed by a lack of knowledge as to precisely what Democratic principles are henceforth to be. The first convention of the year has just been held in the little State of Rhode Island, and it could do no better than to nominate a discarded Republican for the principal office to be filled and adopt no platform at all. Apparently, it was at a loss what to put into a declaration of principles, and, to be on the safe side, avoided making any.

There could be no better evidence that the tariff question has not been settled, but is to play an important part in the political agitation of the next year and a half, than the contest already going on between the leaders and advisers of the Democracy in regard to the Speakership of the next House of Representatives. It is precisely on that question that there is the utmost lack of harmony in the party. It has paraded itself for some time as a revenue-reform party, but that could be done without serious peril to harmony, so long as it was not burdened with responsibility for legislation on the subject. But in the new Congress it is to have control of the "popular branch," in which revenue legislation is supposed to originate, and it will be under the necessity of agreeing upon its position. There may not be any important tariff legislation at the next session, but if the question is a "live" one—it seems likely to be at least a lively one with the Democrats—it will enter into the National contest immediately following the session, and the party must be in line or run the risk of serious demoralization. The most important preliminary of the coming contest will be the election of the Speaker of the next House.

Nobody seems to suppose that it will be possible for the Democratic party to take a position against a further reform of the tariff and in favor of maintaining a conspicuously protective policy on which the present law is based. Harmony is manifestly not to be attained by that course. But notwithstanding that obvious fact, the contest over the Speakership is waged over the relative claims of a pronounced revenue-reformer like Mr. Carlisle, of Kentucky, or Mr. Cox, of this State, and an equally positive protectionist, Mr. Randall, of Pennsylvania. The New York *Sun* has has made itself the special champion of the claims of Mr. Randall, at the same time that it is an ardent advocate of the policy of harmony in the party, to be attained by allowing differences of opinion within the party and avoiding a contest over the tariff question. Nothing is more evident than that such a contest cannot be avoided, and if an escape from it were possible, nothing would be better calculated to precipitate it than an effort to make Mr. Randall the Speaker. The enormous power of that officer in shaping the legislative policy of his party is well known. It can only be done through committees of his selection, and there is no manner of doubt as to the tariff policy which Mr. Randall would have in view in making up the committees of the House. If Mr. Carlisle's selection would mean a division on this subject, it is no less certain that the selection of Mr. Randall would mean the same thing, and the question is, which man represents the wing most likely to have a controlling power over the party?

The choice of the Pennsylvania protectionist, no less than that of the Kentucky revenue-reformer, would signify the triumph of one faction over the other, and yet the *Sun*, strangely enough, talks of an effort to proscribe the one while it sees nothing of proscription in opposing the other. It asks whether such a man as Mr. Randall is to be stricken down "because he thinks it proper and necessary in levying duties on imports to pay some regard to the situation and security of important industries in our own country," as if he did not represent to the fullest extent the demand for protection in the highest degree and for its own sake. What it means by the protection of such local interests as the manufacture of whisky, which Mr. Randall's opponents are said to be doing their utmost to maintain, may be left for it to explain. If harmony is to be maintained by what is grotesquely called the "time-honored liberty of thought and action" of the Democratic party—that is, by agreeing upon nothing because there are differences of opinion—it is evident that somebody must be found besides either Carlisle, or Cox, or Randall, to represent that lack of position on the tariff question. Certainly none of these men represents it.

But we suspect that those organs of the Democratic party are right which claim that before it can win in 1884 it must "fight out the tariff issue in its own ranks." It must find harmony by being on one side or the other of the great questions which are destined to divide political opinion in the next national contest, and not by trying to be on both sides or on neither side. It will be interesting to watch the progress of this struggle of the Democracy to get into position for 1884, and in the meantime the Republicans have leisure to wait developments.—*N. Y. Times.*

—Simplicity in household arrangements is a good thing, but there is such a thing as carrying it to extremes, as the following extract from the description of a backwoods home will show: "There seemed to be only one household appliance—a tin basin. It was first used for milking, next the biscuits were mixed in it; then it came into play as a wash-basin; afterwards the baby was washed in it; then it was used for cooking hominy; and, finally, the dishes were washed in it. It had served the divers ends of dairy, kitchen and nursery!"

—A few days ago a laborer who had been employed all winter in digging up frozen water pipes in the streets of Denver died, and then it was discovered, by examining the contents of the trunk in the room he had occupied alone, that he was a man who, twelve or fifteen years ago, was a popular preacher whose name was known as a household word throughout the land.

Concerning Specific Wants.

I am far from thinking that I am the only woman in the world who has specific wants—such things as are not *needs*, but a desire for certain things that will add much to my pleasure and convenience—which I can get along without, and for the purchase of which I never have money enough left after the *necessary* things have been supplied. So I go on year after year, hoping all the time to be able to indulge myself with the gratification of my special desires. That is, my method *was* that, but I have, after great experience, changed my plan. I do not suppose any one yet was so rich but that he was circumscribed by limitations and his designs outran his purse if given free rein; but there are thousands of people who feel that they can afford certain luxurious items—as dainty perfumes, a choice rose-tree, a cambric handkerchief, an artistic lamp, or vase, to say nothing of more costly wants. Notwithstanding that it is a general belief that more money is spent on women and by women, than is spent on men, or by men (which I do not believe), it is undeniably true that women, as a class, are far more saving than men—they economize and sacrifice in a hundred ways that men never think to do, nor could easily be persuaded to do.

Now, it may be a heresy in the camp of economy to preach the doctrine of self-indulgence, but I have come to believe in it "all the same." I find that if I very much want a thing, it is the better way to get it, and trust to "Providence" for necessities, and as yet I have failed to see that anybody has been less comfortable for my self-indulgence; so I conclude that where one has a sum of money to spend, the best course to pursue is to buy *first* the things she very much wants, and which she *could* do without, and let all the pinching and contriving fall upon the necessaries of life. If you do not believe in the wisdom of this, try it for one good, long while, and you will surely find out!

The little "foolishnesses" that women usually want, when procured are nearly always what contribute to the pleasure and happiness of the whole family, and are of an enduring character. And, really, what use or sense lies in forever denying one's self? I have heard the good old adage from childhood, "The way to *do* a thing is to *do* it." "The way to *know* a thing is to *find it out.*" And to these I would add, "The way to have a thing is to *have it.*"

Moreover, the quality of self-indulgence gives one place and power over self-sacrifice. How often do we see one member of a family especially indulged in a certain direction, because his or her preference for a thing is specially marked, although every other member may like it equally well, but says less about it? And how universal is it among wives and mothers to sacrifice themselves to the last gasp for husband and children, until "mother" becomes such a statue of self-abnegation that the family ceases altogether to think of her as a human being with natural desires for good, appetizing, fashionable and stylish things like other people. She pours out the last drop of tea or coffee and serves the final berry in the dish to the family, and pretends that she herself don't care for any, and if there is any "scrimping" in the sugar or coffee she is the first one to accept that. All in all the self-sacrificing woman is—a—a fool! The beauty of self-sacrifice has been preached since the world began, for aught we know, and woman has been its exemplar! "Self-sacrifice—that most lovely trait of woman!" And woman—geese that they are!—go on in their self-abnegation until if they should spend one round dollar on a first-class dinner at a hotel when they went to town shopping they would feel as condemned in conscience as if they had broken the third commandment. If any woman can tell what she gains by her continued self-abnegation, she can do be better than I. I think the self-asserting woman compels and maintains an amount of respect from her husband and children that the self-sacrificing woman never can and never does get. Human life is but a span—we are soon at the end of it, and if we early learn to make the most of it we are fortunate. Above all, oh, wife and mother! make yourself the most important factor in your family—the most imposing, the most requiring, as you are the most deserving one. The more you require your family to serve you, and to sacrifice themselves for your *best development*, for your best physical and mental good, the better for all concerned, for there is no influence in the family so ennobling, so admirable, so every-way desirable, as a superior mother—a mother for the children always to respect and to be *proud* of. If you make a slave of yourself for your family, you are the largest sort of a fool. At the last, for your pains, you will be flung aside like a used up house-cloth. So give yourself a chance—buy books and pictures and flowers, and pretty frocks and well-fitting boots, and collars and cuffs and perfumery, and Castile soap and hair-brush—and, if necessary, let the family go without sugar and butter and coffee.—*Mary Wagner Fisher, in Rural New Yorker.*

Beer-Drinking Ponies.

Mr. H. R. Becker, of New Brunswick, N. J., wagered Mr. S. P. Knapp, of this city, a basket of champagne that a span of white ponies belonging to Mr. Becker would drink beer yesterday afternoon at the bar of Mr. Kosmak's public-house in Chatham Street. In order to win the bet it was necessary that the ponies should drink a glass apiece. They were unhitched from a light carriage at Mr. Kosmak's door early in the afternoon and led into the bar-room. The head-stalls were removed and strap halters put on. While waiting for the arrival of Mr. Knapp, the company that had gathered to see the beer-drinking ponies grew to considerable proportions. Shortly after the arrival of Mr. Knapp, two ponies of lager were placed on the bar in front of the ponies of horseflesh. The little horses sniffed at the foam on top of the glasses, and then turned their heads around to see what the crowd of men around them meant. The glasses were held to their mouths, but they shut their jaws together and stubbornly refused to imbibe. It looked as though Mr. Knapp would win the bet.

"Bring lager-beer glasses," said Mr. Becker, and glasses of the ordinary size, filled with foaming beer, were set on the bar.

When one of the large glasses was offered to Minnie, the off pony, she put her lips to the rim and drank as though she relished it. In the meantime, with a little coaxing, Tommy, the nigh pony, had sipped a small glass of the beverage; but he positively declined to drink more. Mr. Becker was disappointed. "Tommy is the heavier drinker of the two," he said, "and I can't understand it. But it was agreed by all hands that the ponies had won the bet for their owner.—*N. Y. Sun.*

Religious Miscellany.

THE PURE INTENT.

I read a legend of a monk who painted,
In an old convent cell in days bygone,
Pictures of martyrs and of virgins sainted,
And the sweet Christ-face with the crown of thorn.

Poor daub! not fit to be a chapel's treasure!
Full many a taunting word upon them fell,
But the good abbot let him, for his pleasure,
Adorn with them his solitary cell.

One night the poor monk mused: "Could I but render
Honor to Christ as other painters do,
Were but my skill as great as is the tender
Love that inspires me when His cross I view!

"But no—'tis vain I toil and strive in sorrow;
What man so scorns still less can he admire;
My life's work is all valueless—to-morrow
I'll cast my ill-wrought pictures on the fire."

He raised his eyes, within his cell—O, wonder!
There stood a Visitor—thorn-crowned was He.
And a sweet voice the silence rent asunder—
"I scorn no work that's done for love of Me."

And round the walls the paintings shone resplendent
With lights and colors to this world unknown,
A perfect beauty, and a line transcendent,
That never yet on mortal canvas shone.

There is a meaning in the strange old story—
Let none dare judge his brother's worth or meed;
The pure intent gives to the act its glory,
The noblest purpose makes the grandest deed.

—*Home Journal.*

THE NECESSITY OF DISCIPLINE.

A colored clergyman of some education and much native wit was once discoursing to his congregation on what the apostle calls "the sinfulness of sin." "There are those, my brethren," he said, "who tell us that there is no such thing as sin; that man is created with certain appetites and propensities; that these were made to be gratified; and that, whenever we gratify them, we do that which is perfectly lawful and right." The last sentence was spoken with some emphasis; and four or five of the "leading brethren," understanding that it was the proper place to respond, punctuated the parson's falling inflection with a stalwart "Amen!"

The chorus in the colored Meeting-house, like the chorus in the Greek tragedy, may be supposed to reflect the philosophy of the period. To an acute observer, the close relation between what is sometimes called the "advanced" thought of the day and the rude notions of the lowest stratum of society is often apparent. You shall find the fine-spun theories of materialistic science reduced to their lowest term in the mouths of men in country groceries and city beer-gardens. The sentiment which the colored brethren rather infelicitously applauded—how does it differ from this dictum of Karl Vogt?—"Free will does not exist, neither does any amenability or responsibility, such as morals and penal justice, and heaven knows what, would impose upon us. At no moment are we our own masters, any more than we can decree as to the secretions of our kidneys. The organism can not govern itself; it is governed by the law of its material combination." The doctrine that the colored clergyman was endeavoring so laudably, but with such indifferent success, to controvert, how could it be more clearly stated than in these words of Moleschott? —"Sin lies in the unnatural, and not in the will to do evil. Speech and style, good and bad actions, courage, half-heartedness and treachery, are all natural phenomena, and all of them stand in a direct relation to indispensable causes as their natural consequences, just as much as the revolutions of the globe."

This kind of philosophy enters into the thought and speech of the most ignorant and depraved classes of the community to a considerable extent. Doubtless there is need of considering the disabilities that inhere in diseased organisms—the hereditary tendencies to evil by which virtuous purposes are impeded; our judgments of our fellowmen will often be modified by such facts. But the "charity," or the "science," that denies human responsibility finds its proper issue and its natural votaries in the slums.

It is not, however, with the theological consequences of this philosophy that we are now concerned, but rather with its effects upon the educating and training of the young. A doctrine that denies free will, and makes of man only a bundle of appetites and impulses and propensities whose law if in themselves, destroys not only religion and morality, it destroys also the foundations of education, and makes discipline a solecism. A logical deduction from it is the notion that pupils should study only what they like to study, and when they like to study; and that children should do only what they like to do, and when they like to do it. Modern theories of education are tinged by this notion; it finds place in the regimen of the home and the curriculum of the university. The popular lecturer who criticises the Old Testament with the fairness, erudition and wit of a stump-speaker, sneers at the old-fashioned notions of obedience and discipline; says that children ought to follow nature in the formation of their habits; and his audiences applaud the sentiment. It does not take such ideas long to filter down through all the strata of society, and thus to affect, in many ways, the conduct of old and young. Do we not note an increasing tendency to depend on moods and impulses? "I don't feel like work" is often proclaimed as the sufficient excuse for idleness. Disrelish for any particular pursuit is mentioned as ample reason for abandoning it. Even the paupers who beg at your door justify their failure to find employment by telling you that the labor offered them is not congenial.

Of course this plea has always been made, and, so long as the original sin of indolence continues to be so deeply rooted in human nature, it will be made; but it seems that now this vice of human nature is to be well-nigh elevated into the rule of life.

It is a pestilent notion. In it lurks the disorganizing force by which characters and communities are undermined and ruined. There never was a stronger character that was not made strong by discipline of the will; there never was a strong people that did not rank subordination and discipline among the signal virtues. Subjection to moods is the mark of a deteriorating morality. There is no baser servitude than that of the man whose caprices are his masters, and a nation composed of such men could not long preserve its liberties.

This is a truth that the young must lay to heart. It will be a sorry day for this world, and for all the people in it, when everybody makes his moods his masters, and does nothing but what he is inclined to do. The need of training the will to the performance of work distasteful; of making the impulses serve, instead of allowing them to rule, the higher reason; of subjugating the moods instead of being subjugated by them, lies at the very foundation of character. It is possible to learn to fix the wandering thought, to compel the reluctant mental energy, to concentrate the power upon the performance of a task to which there is no inclination. Until this victory has been gained, life holds no sure promise; the achievement of this conquest is the condition of future success. No matter how splendid may be the natural gifts, unless there is a will that can marshal and command them, the life is sure to be a failure.

Even in the fine arts the highest inspirations wait on those who have learned to work. The poets who never write except when they are in the mood, who do not learn to hold their minds firmly down to the work in hand, to justify the thought and shape the utterance, are not among the immortal bards. To the man who has wrought long and faithfully in perfecting the art of expression, in studying the subtile shades of meaning and the subtile tones of music that are found in words, and in combining them so that they will harmoniously tell some master truth of human experience, or show some phase of natural beauty, many a strain of beautiful and perfect melody comes suddenly; but it is because the molds of beauty were fashioned in the poet's mind by long and painful study. What is true of the poetic art is true of every other; the condition of artistic success is faithful work and thorough training.

The young men in the colleges know that training is indispensable to physical perfection. They know that the men who eat and drink just what their appetite crave, and take their exercise only when they feel like it, never win the boat-race or the foot-ball matches. It should not be difficult for them to see that mental and moral power, without which success and happiness in life are impossible, are equally dependent on discipline. The body will not do its best work unless, as a great authority says, it is "kept under;" and what is true of the body is equally true of the mind; its whims and caprices and moods must be brought under the subjection of a masterful will; the man must become not the servant, but the ruler of his own nature.—*Century Magazine.*

Choice Selections.

—If we attend well to our own affairs, we shall not have time to superintend our neighbor's.

—Being less annoyed at the defects of others is one of the best proofs that we are approaching freedom from defects ourselves.

—We should do everything we can for others, if only to dissipate the thought of what they omit to do for us.—*Madame Swetchine.*

—God's house is not the place to make aching heads; it is the place to heal aching hearts. The most outrageous nonsense that is current in theological seminaries is that which deludes young men into the folly of aiming at profound and philosophic treatise for the pulpit.—*T. L. Cuyler.*

—We not only know on a cloudy day that there is sunlight above us, but we expect it to break through so as to be seen and beautify the earth. A Christian life should at least give us the same assurance. If we believe it has light hidden behind its clouds, we should be able to look for its bursting forth.—*United Presbyterian.*

—Were men so enlightened and studious of their own good as to act by the dictates of their reason and reflection, and not the opinion of others, conscience would be the steady ruler of human life; and the words truth, law, reason, equity and religion would be but synonymous terms for that only guide which makes us pass our days in our own favor and approbation.—*Sir Richard Steele.*

—When Christ died His enemies thought His name and influence were at an end. The little handful of His followers were poor and insignificant. The boldest one in their company had denied his Lord, and others had sought safety in flight. But the dark hour was the harbinger of days in which these despised and scattered disciples were to lay the foundations of a spiritual kingdom that should overcome the world. Death is conquered, and Life is now victorious. From henceforth the Gospel of the Resurrection was to bring hope and salvation to men.—*Golden Rule.*

Mr. Stephens' Dogs.

Alexander H. Stephens was fond of any creature with which he came in contact. He liked animals of all kinds, and especially young animals. At home he paid much attention to his little pigs; was very careful that their mother should not injure them by rolling upon them. He always had several dogs about him. He treated them as almost human, and I think he considered them nearly so. He would talk to them and pet them. They slept at night either in his room or just outside of the door. At Liberty Hall the doors were never closed at night, and any one might have gone through the house were it not for the dogs. They slept in the library, and Alexander H. Stephens always occupied the chamber which opened into this. A step on the porch would raise a terrible howling, and it would have been indeed dangerous for any robber to have entered over such a guard.

There is one dog which deserves to be known in history, and that is Mr. Stephens' old poodle, Rio. He was for years Mr. Stephens' constant companion. He loved him as an intimate friend, and when he died he shed tears over his grave. Rio was a remarkable dog. He could reason more than any animal I have ever known. I remember at Liberty Hall we would be talking about something going wrong on the place, and Rio would rise and go to the spot spoken of by us. He seemed to understand language, and his face was very much like that of a human. He was a big, fat poodle, with wool as white as snow, as heavy as that of a sheep, and as soft as silk. He had a high forehead, and bright, black eyes. He grew blind several years before he died, and Mr. Stephens took as much care of him as he would have done had he been his own flesh and blood. When he died he put him in a wooden coffin and buried him in the garden. He had intended to have erected a marble slab over his grave, but this was put off and finally neglected. He never cast off any of his dogs in their old age, and Troup, Pluck, Frank and half a dozen others of his pets were cared for during their declining years of senility and decrepitude.—*Cleveland Leader.*

—According to the Chicago *Times* a remarkable electrical phenomenon was lately exhibited on the Union Pacific Railway between North Platte and Sidney, Neb. The rails were surcharged with a current of electricity moving from west to east to so high a degree that hand-cars standing on the track were impelled at a fair rate of speed by it. But that is not the first instance on record in which a railroad has been struck by lightning.

For Young Readers.

A NEW MOTHER HUBBARD.

Miss Polly Betsey Patterson,
In a Mother Hubbard cloak
And a Mother Hubbard bonnet,
With a most bewitching poke,

One morning met a curly dog.
He was of medium size—
His ears were drooped, his tail was limp,
And the tears stood in his eyes.

Said Polly to the curly dog:
"Why do you look so sad?"
"Because," replied he, with a sniff,
"The times are very bad."

"You see," said he, "the streets are full
Of little Mother Hubbards,
But though I've wagged my tail 'most off,
They never speak of cupboards."

Said Polly Betsey: "Come with me.
'Twould melt a heart of stone!
I'll give you lots of bread and milk,
And a juicy mutton-bone."

She took him home and fed him well;
His tears were turned to laughter;
And now, wherever Polly goes,
The curly dog trots after.

—*Eleanor A. Hunter, in St. Nicholas.*

SUSIE'S COMPOSITION.

"Where's a piece of paper?" asked Susie, a little impatiently, as she hurriedly pulled out first one drawer, and then another of her mother's desk. "Oh, dear! I never shall get my composition written!"

"It seems to me that you use a great deal of paper for your compositions, Susie," said her mother. "Only last week I gave you half a quire. I'm afraid you waste it."

"I don't exactly waste it, mamma; but sometimes I have to write one page over half-a-dozen times before it suits me. Then of course there are several sheets to be thrown away."

"Why not write your composition on your slate first, and then copy it off on paper? That would be a better plan, I think; and waste would be avoided."

"But why need I save so, mamma? Paper's so cheap, and so easily made."

"How is it made, Susie?"

Susie hesitated for a reply.

"I don't believe I know exactly," she said at last. "But I know there is a large paper-mill at Barrowstown, where a great quantity is made."

"Wouldn't you like to go to Barrowstown and find out all about it?" asked Mrs. Harvey. "I think then you would not think the process such an easy one. Come, Susie, you are always at a loss for a subject for composition day. Suppose you go with me, and find out how paper is made, and then write it up. I am sure your young companions would find food for a great deal of thought in such a composition."

"O mamma," I should be delighted!" cried Susie. "Can we go on Saturday?"

Mrs. Harvey nodded assent, and then gave her little daughter a couple of sheets of foolscap, with which Susie betook herself to the library, where she could write undisturbed.

The next morning, as she was walking to school, her composition on "The Waste of Time" in her satchel, she was overtaken by Lulu Walters, her most particular friend.

"Lulu," she said, "I'm going to have a treat to-morrow. I am going to Barrowstown to go over the paper-mill. Tell me, do you know how paper is made?"

"Don't they grind leaves and rags all up together, somehow?" asked Lulu, whose knowledge on the subject was exceedingly vague.

"I don't know exactly," answered Susie, "but I'll let you know all about it this day week."

Barrowstown was about sixty miles distant from Glencoe, where Susie lived; but by taking an early train on Saturday morning Mrs. Harvey and Susie reached their destination a little before ten o'clock.

Mrs. Harvey found the proprietor, with whom she had a slight acquaintance, in his office; and as he happened to be at leisure, he expressed himself as very glad to have the opportunity of showing them over his mill.

"We will go to the sorting-room first," he said.

The sorting-room was very large, and in it were about thirty girls and women at work; some picking over the rags, sorting the white from the colored, and others sitting each at a small table having a wire network surface and furnished with a large vertical knife blade, the back of which was toward the operator. The rags were cut by drawing them across this knife, and all hard substances, as buttons, hooks and eyes, and pieces of woolen and silk, were separated and laid aside. Much dirt and sand fell through the netting.

"What dreadfully dirty work," said Susie; and she was glad to get out of the room, for she found the dust very unpleasant.

"Now," said the proprietor, as he led the way along a passage, "if you take a piece of coarse, soft paper, and tear off a little bit, you can see, by looking closely at the torn edges, the fibers of which it is composed. In writing-paper they do not show so well, because they are very fine, and are held together by the size, or glue, which is put in to make the paper stronger, and to prevent the ink from spreading in it, as it does in blotting paper. It is these fibers which are spun together into thread and made into cloth; and it is these same fibers, broken up short and matted together, that make paper. But paper can be made of other fibers, besides linen and cotton. A vast amount of paper used for printing is made of corn-husks, and still more of wood fibers. Silk makes a very fine, thin and strong paper; and wrapping-paper is made of straw, which, though of course not so strong as that made of linen or cotton, is still strong enough to answer the purpose for which it is intended. Now this," throwing open a door, "is the wash-room."

All Susie could see at first was a thick cloud of steam; but, venturing a little further in, she saw an immense tub, six feet deep and about ten feet across, out of which two men with pitchforks were lifting wet rags. A similar tub, closely covered, with a steam-pipe passing into it, emitted a noise of boiling water. Susie found the room very warm, and was as glad to get out of it as she had been to get out of the sorting-room.

"Now for the next operation," said the proprietor, as he led the way into a room where there two long vats, about two feet deep and four or five feet wide, with a partition lengthwise through each, but not reaching to the ends. These were full of pulp, slowly passing along on one side, around the end of the partition, and back on the other side. About the middle of this side, a part of the channel was covered over, inside of which they heard a great threshing and churning going on, the work, very evidently, of a whirling shaft that passed in at one side.

"This shaft," said Mr. Cranch, "turns a cylinder covered with iron spikes, and the case in which it is enclosed is spiked in the same way. The wet rags are put into the vat with water. This machinery is put to work, and the rags, as they pass between the spiked cylinder and the stationary spikes, are of course torn to shreds, and mixed all up into a pulp with the water. It passes slowly around, in one continuous current, every part in turn passing through the mill, and being ground finer and finer, till it is reduced to a uniform pulp, looking a good deal like corn-starch pudding. Then it is drawn off into a large tub just below us, and is bleached by putting in a chemical preparation. Then the size is added; if it is to be writing-paper, the rolling done, the edges trimmed, and the mark of our firm stamped in each corner. Let me take you now into the machine-room."

The clatter of the wheels and rattling machinery almost deafened Susie and her mother, when they entered the room in question. Susie did not ask for any information while in there, for she knew she could not hear herself speak. The room was a long one, down the middle of which extended a machine with wheels and cylinder revolving this way and that, and a strip of paper passing over and under and around the moving parts till its career was cut short at one end by a pair of revolving shears that snipped it off into great sheets. At one end of the long machine was a vat or tub, into which the pulp was pumped up from below. In this tub a horizontal cylinder was revolving.

"This cylinder," said Mr. Cranch, coming close to Susie and speaking very loud, "is covered with very fine brass wire-cloth. The pump drawing off the contents of this cylinder, the pulp is sucked against its surface when the water passes in, leaving on the cylinder a sheet of the more solid part. As the cylinder turns, this keeps coming up above the liquid mass, and is immediately taken off in one continuous strip by this endless belt, you see, of soft cloth, which this roller presses against it. You see that the paper, only a soft film at this period of its composition, passes over and under successive rollers, and is pressed and dried as it goes, until it runs off from the cloth and passes around those three large cylinders, which are heated by steam inside. From these, you see, it comes off dry and complete, a strip of paper about a yard wide. Then it goes on and meets that little wheel, which splits it in the middle, and gives it to the shears to cut off. So, you see, while at one end this strip of paper is being formed from the pulp, at the other it is being cut off into sheets.

"These sheets are carried, in great piles on a barrow, into the wareroom, where we count them out, fold them, do them up in bundles, and leave them all ready for ruling, marking and trimming."

"Dear me," said Susie, with a sigh, "how much trouble about a sheet of paper!"

Her mother smiled.

"Do you want to see the vat into which the pulp falls?" asked Mr. Cranch, as they left the machine-room.

"Yes, sir," answered Susie; "I am so much interested that I want to see everything."

They went below by a flight of rather dark stairs, and found themselves again within the sound of machinery. All was pitch dark, except on one side where a tallow candle flared dismally. On the other side was a tremendous roaring fire, which supplied steam for drying and heating operations, and for boiling the pulp. The sound of machinery came from another direction, mingled with the dashing noise of the water falling from the great water-wheel slowly revolving and working the machinery of the mill.

They went next into the room where the paper was ruled. An endless band of cloth, on which the sheets of paper were drawn along, one after the other, ran under a set of pens, kept constantly filled with blue ink, and fixed as far apart as it was necessary for the lines to be. This ruled a set of parallel lines, running the whole length of the sheet. The pens were made of brass, all joined together by a piece at the top, very much like a coarse comb. In this top piece ran a little channel, into which the ink was poured, and in each pen was a little tube down which the ink flowed to its point.

"How do you manage to leave the fourth page of a sheet of note-paper blank?" asked Mrs. Harvey, who desired that Susie should learn all that was possible about this ruling process.

"That is managed very simply," answered Mr. Cranch; "we so lay the sheets on the cloth band that each one laps on to the next, covering half of it. Of course, as they pass under the pens, only the uncovered half of each sheet is ruled."

Mrs. Harvey now thanked Mr. Cranch for his kindness in explaining everything so fully; and she and Susie took the train for home, well pleased with the manner in which the day had been spent.

Susie's next composition was the best she ever wrote; for she thoroughly understood her subject—"A Piece of Paper."—*Christian Register.*

Woman as a Local Editor.

Strange that women are not more extensively employed as news-gatherers for the press. "Why," said Fogg, "Mrs. F. went out visiting t'other day, and notwithstanding she had been gone less than an hour, when she came home she was fairly overflowing with news and recondite information. Our next-door neighbor on one side had gone into bankruptcy, and his creditors were raising a terrible pother about it; our neighbor on t'other side had been treating his family in a most shameful manner, and everybody was talking about it; a wedding was on the carpet across the way, notwithstanding nobody could see what he ever could see in her to fall in love with; two persons had been carried out of the world just below us, and three more brought into it two or three doors above; Mrs. A. had got a new silk dress, Mrs. B. had made over her old one, and Mrs. C. had declared that Parson Jones' wife wasn't a bit sociable. All this, and more beside. And I," continued Fogg, "might travel all over town, from now till midsummer, and I wouldn't have found out one-hundredth part of the intelligence that woman picked up in one short hour."—*Boston Journal.*

—The Virginia City (Nev.) *Enterprise* suggests: "Now that the opera house has been destroyed by fire, it is suggested that we might go into the old upper works of the Ophir or Mexican mine and fit up one of the levels somewhere from 500 to 1,000 feet below the surface, taking possession of a whole floor. A play or series of plays suited to the subterranean locality might be written. Actors could be shot up shafts and winzes, darted down through chutes and marched in through drifts. At certain points in the play blasts might be let off or a big cave tumbled down."

—The Crow Indians of Montana number thirty-four hundred, and are chiefly engaged in agriculture and stock-raising.