

GENERAL BREVITIES.

THE enormous mail of 56,908 letters and 65 bags of newspapers was sent to Europe by the Abyssinia recently. This amount will weigh over three tons.

SOME pumpkins. A Kentucky farmer has a pumpkin vine which, with its branches, measures 1,440 feet, and bore twenty-four pumpkins that averaged twenty-six pounds each, or a total of 626 pounds of fruit.

Mrs. Rice, of Wilbraham, Mass., was 91 years of age Friday. The venerable woman, who eats cranberries and chestnuts every day, walks a mile to church twice a week, summer and winter, lives alone, and takes care of herself.

A FULL-BLOODED English setter of Thomas W. Lane of the United States post-car service, while hunting at West Roxbury, Mass., last week, brought to his master a large pocket-book, containing \$425 in currency and some valuable papers, belonging to Mr. Langley of Cambridgeport. The dog now wears a \$30 silver collar as a reward for his sagacity.

THE Telegraph of St. John, N. B., says that a lady, who resided in a village on the river St. John, assisted recently to prepare the body of a neighbor for burial. While so engaged some virus from the dead body was absorbed into a slight cut on the lady's finger, and a few hours later she was seized with intense pain in her hand, attended by a rapid swelling. After days of severe suffering she died.

THE only remarkable thing about the subjoined stanza is the fact that all the letters of the alphabet are used in its construction except e, the one most frequently employed in ordinary composition:

A jovial swain may rack his brain
And tax his fancy's might;
To quiz in vain, for 'tis most plain
That what I say is right.

A VOLUNTEER New Orleans reporter, who wanted "just to try his hand," he said, "on the grave-yards," brought in the following: "Near the entrance of the cemetery stood the Grecian mausoleum of —, its gorgeous and brilliant decorations showing that the gallant boys do not forget that their departed comrades are still bravely battling the fiery elements in another world." The young man was not engaged.

In a Boston street-car the other afternoon—the Globe tells the story—the seats on one side were well filled; on the other seven ladies were seated, and they contrived to spread over the entire space. Presently a tired, pale, and feeble-looking woman entered, and the ladies, glancing at her, settled back and let her stand. The only gentleman in the car, one of Boston's best known authors, moved by righteous indignation, rose and said: "Ladies, how can you expect any gentleman to give you seats in a car when you treat one of your own sex with such unfeeling cruelty?" Then turning to the poor woman, he said: "Madam, my seat is at your service."

PHILADELPHIA is naturalizing a new form of dissipation, known as pigeon-flying, or the training and flying of carrier-pigeons. All the citizens of Philadelphia enroll themselves into what are called "flying associations," as the "Fairmount Flying Association," etc. The other day, a party of Quaker sports repaired to Baltimore, where they "tossed" their rival birds, at intervals of half an hour, to test their speed back to Philadelphia, an even hundred miles. The first prize of \$50 was won by a bird which made the distance in 2 hours and 31 minutes, a marvelous speed. One of the happy features of this kind of racing is that the brute is urged forward by no driver but its own instinct and strength. On the following day, the races at Pimlico, 5 miles from Baltimore, were reported in that city by bird in from 8 1/2 to 9 minutes. Baltimore is about to enter the lists of pigeon rivalry with Philadelphia, and in that section the "homing" of pigeons promises to become quite a profession and their flying quite a sport. In Belgium, the number of pigeons "homing" is said to be over a million, and their value some millions of dollars, though what in the world they are for, except for fun, when there is no Paris in a state of siege, we are not informed.

The Way it Rains in Florida.

It is hard for the Northern farmer, who watches the horizon with aching eyes, to understand the clock-like regularity of this rainy season South. Occasionally, as this year, it is delayed; but once set in goes on regularly. There is a misty or clear morning, the air transfigured with a blushing, rainbowy effulgence that melts away in the ardent kisses of the sun into an intense dazzle of sunlight up to 2 o'clock. Then the skirmishers of the rain rush in on cool, dewy winds, and by sharp 3 o'clock the whole line is platoon firing in great, heavy fusillades. Such rains! Gorgeous, glorious, rushing, a magnificent enthusiasm of plunging moisture. Then the long roll of the thunder drums; the cracking artillery, with its splendor of electric flash, toned off in low rolls; and, before you are aware, the mobile army has gathered up its splendid wings, its fire and after guard and reserves, and only in the west you see its grand victorious battle flags ribbing the sky with broad bands of color. Mix in a few rainbows some foggy mornings when the whole air is prismy, and the clear, still lake looks like an undersky, and you have some idea of Florida in the rainy season. Regular as the clock that marshaling and grand battle panorama goes on—at set 2 o'clock, to be closed positively—no change on account of the weather—by 5 o'clock p. m.—Cincinnati Commercial.

HOME INTERESTS.

SAUSAGES.—46 pounds of meat, 3 pounds of salt, 3 ounces of black pepper, 1 ounce of sage, and a tablespoonful of red pepper.

EDITOR'S CAKE.—1 teacupful of sugar, 1 egg, (beat the egg and sugar till light), 1 teacupful of sour cream, 1 teacupful of soda, nutmeg and cinnamon to suit the taste. This makes a splendid cake.

HASTY PUDDING.—Boil some water and thicken with flour, as you would for thin starch; sift some coarse meal and stir in until it is quite thick; keep it boiling all the time you are putting in the meal, which must be done gradually; salt to taste; boil it well; put it in a bowl and set out. Eat with cream and molasses.

COFFEE CAKE.—1 cup each of sugar, molasses, and butter, 4 cups of flour, 2 cups of chopped raisins, 1 cup of strong coffee poured on the butter, and when cold add sugar, etc., 3 eggs, 1 teacupful each of cloves, cinnamon, and nutmeg, 1 pound of citron, 1 teacupful of soda, and 1 teacupful of cream tartar.

OATMEAL MUSH ROLLS.—Take cold oatmeal mush, and work in lightly barely enough wheat meal to make it into rolls. Too much kneading spoils it. Roll out with the hands on the molding-board into a long roll like a wooden rolling-pin, and about one inch and a half in diameter; cut off pieces two inches long, and bake on a grate in a quick oven 20 or 25 minutes. These can be made very light, dry, and tender. They are also very sweet, and are great favorites with those whose teeth have not been brought up on Graham flour and oatmeal. Serve warm or cold.

"SARATOGA" POTATOES.—Of all the vegetables which suffer from ignorant handling, potatoes are the most ill-treated. Day after day, people are expected to eat boiled potatoes, watery and half done; baked potatoes, full of imperfections and also watery; mashed potatoes, yellow, "soggy," and tasteless; and fried potatoes, cut thick, swimming in grease, and as detestable to the eye as they are abominable to a well-trained palate. The real Saratoga potatoes are easily prepared and are delicious for breakfast or lunch. The first thing necessary for their preparation is the purchase of a small appliance of wood and steel which somewhat resembles a carpenter's plane. This article is known to hardware dealers, housekeepers and grocers as a "potato-cutter," a "dried-beef cutter," or "cabbage-cutter," as it is used to cut all these things. It costs only 60 cents, and very easily and neatly shaves off the raw potatoes in slices almost as thin as paper. A handful of these slices is thrown into boiling hard, and as soon as they are nicely browned they are to be removed with a skimmer, care being taken to drain off every particle of the hot fat. They should be salted immediately, and kept in a hot dish by the fire until the right quantity has been prepared for the meal. The dish must not be covered, as that would make them fat-soaked. Potatoes cooked in this way look as daintily as they taste, and are very quickly made ready with the aid of the excellent little "cutter."

Making Acquaintances.

Nothing has a greater influence upon the life and character of men and women than the acquaintances they make, and yet they are generally made in the most hap-hazard manner. Choice of acquaintance is a common term, which, though frequently used, is seldom justly so, for it implies a deliberation which is very rarely exercised nowadays. With the busy activity of modern life and its rapid and endless combinations, we all get shuffled together like a pack of cards, and it is a mere chance how people are sorted in companionship. The good will turn up with the bad, and the highest with the lowest, and as luck is the only guide, one is as likely to have in hand knaves as kings.

Acquaintances are not necessarily friends, and it may be said that while the influence of the latter may be great, that of the former is comparatively small. The same distinction, however, which existed in the olden time between the two is hardly apparent now. The friendship of Damon and Pythias is a forgotten romance, and we exclaim, with Montaigne, or Aristotle, whom he professes to quote, "Oh, my friends! there is no friend." There is very little of that old intimacy of relation which our forefathers knew as friendship, that receipt, as Lord Bacon terms it, which openeth the heart, and to which are imparted griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it. We are all too self-reliant and busy to care or have the time to cultivate any such sympathetic and elaborate relationship. Friends are accordingly rare, but acquaintances are many, since these are gathered, like the dust on the highway, the more and swifter we travel.

As mere acquaintanceship has to a great extent taken the place of friendship, so to some degree it has usurped its dominion, and the chance companion often assumes in a moment the authority of a bosom-friend. Much of what is called public opinion is nothing more than the common sentiment engendered during the superficial intercourse of the hasty life of modern times, and it is surprising how greatly people allow their conduct to be governed by an influence of such frivolous origin. The ordinary citizen is apt to pick up the opinions that are let drop by this or that railroad, street, shop, or boarding-house acquaintance, who, in his turn, has gathered them from no more authoritative source. Votes are

given, fortunes risked and character blasted upon no sounder information than what was learned from the talk in the cars or at the corner of the street.

So completely has mere acquaintance excluded friendship that it is no uncommon thing for a man in these days to have a host of such intimates as they may be whom he meets daily, eats and drinks with, counsels with, and takes his opinions from, not one of whom has ever crossed the threshold of his home or is known to a single member of his family. Some of the most extensively acquainted of our citizens, whose faces are familiarly recognized and hands warmly grasped at every hour of the day in the street, the exchange, the shop, and bank parlor, are perfect solitaries within their own homes, with never a friend to lighten with the aid of his genial sympathy its somber exclusiveness. The days of friendship, like those of chivalry, seem to have passed away forever, and we know no more of the one or of the other than what we read of in books. We look in vain for that alter ego, that double of ourselves, who, as Cicero tells us, can increase the happiness and lessen the misery of our lives by doubling our joys and dividing our griefs. We realize to the full the truth of the adage quoted by Lord Bacon, "Magna civitas, magna solitudo," and find this world of modern civilization, with all its quick welcomes and ready greetings, but a wilderness, for its abounding acquaintanceship gives us no true friends.

So little discrimination is used in regard to forming acquaintances that many delegate to that indefinite and irresponsible body termed society the making of them for them. Many a woman has no closer associates than those whose names are set down upon the visiting list prescribed by fashion, the mere people whom she has met, or good society may give her a chance or permission to meet. To have rustled dresses, together in some fashionable gathering, or to have passed mutual glances from each other's equally grand house, is the strongest claim to alliance recognized by such women, and no warmer sympathy is felt than can be expressed by the *frou frou* of silk or the aspect of a stone front.

With this absorption of friendship and all its charms and virtues by the cold association of mere acquaintances, social pleasure and happiness have been greatly lessened. The formality of set parties and stated visitings has taken the place of the freedom of intercourse which the hospitable familiarity and friendly intimacy of old invited. The acquaintanceship is too large, hurried and varied to ripen into friendship, and so formal and indiscriminate as not to admit of even satisfactory temporary companionship. Conversation necessarily is confined to the exchange of a few fashionable phrases or social passwords, and men and women meet and separate in the thronged saloons of fashion as in a street crowd flushed with excitement, but conscious only of having had their ears dinned with a noisy and unintelligible hum of voices.—Harper's Bazar.

Josh Billings' Says.

Wize men sumtimes bild air kastes just for the fun of the thing, it iz only the phools who bild them, and then undertake to liv in them.

I hav seen folks who was violently opposed to gambling, simply becauze they had found out that they couldn't win.

I notiss one thing, when a man stubs his toe he cussess all kreashun fust, then the toe, but never himself.

Dont change your bait, mi boy, if yu are ketching fish with angle worms—stik to the worms.

Yung man, mark yure goose up hi, two thirds of the world hav no other idea of value, only by the price that iz onto things.

Gossip that iz traveling around loose iz a lie, or will be, by the time it haz changed hands once more.

He who elevates hiz profeshun iz the best mechnick, whether he preaches the gospel, peddles phisick, or skins eels for a living.

It aint no disgrace for a man to fall, but to lay there, and grunt, iz.

Go slo, yung man, if yu tap both ends or yure cider barrel at once, and draw out of the bung hole besides, yure cider aint a going to hold out long.

I had a great deal rather be told that a man iz virtuous, and honest, than to hear that hiz father iz a member of congress, or even that hiz grandfather fit into the revolushun.

Men sumtimes hav doubt about their religion, and even honesty, but i never met one who doubted hiz shrewness.

Lazy men, and black ants, are allwiss hunting for a job.

Yu kant hire a man to be honest, if yer do, he will want his wages raised every morning.

There iz a grate deal ov religion in this world that iz like a life preserver, only put on at the moment of extreme danger, and then half the time put on hind side before.

Stik and hang yung man, it iz the last six inches in a race that allwiss wins the munny.

If yu want to find out just how mean, and dishonest, yu hav allwiss been, git a nominashun, and run for sum offiss.

Thoze who are too proud to inquire what a thing kosts when they buy it, are the fust ones to find fault when they cum to pay for it.

Kards, whiskey, and hoss racing, bring all men down to the same level.

Whiskey makes a grate menny wize men to day, and phools to-morrow.

A Model Bankrupt.

The spendthrift habits and consequent impecuniosity of the youthful cions of ancient English families are so well known in England as seldom to attract more than a passing notice. Indeed, certain of these worthless young nobles claim to have elevated the practice of buying without payment to the dignity of a fine art, and simplified its intricacies by the application of rules and regulations. The literature of the noble dead-beat is quite extensive and comprises the narrative of not a few cases in which more ingenuity and industry were employed to avoid the payment of a debt than would have been required honestly to earn the money for its liquidation. In general, the young bloods of the aristocracy are saved from the disgrace of open repudiation by the generosity of their friends and relatives, but occasionally one of these youngsters falls into the clutches of the law. If born in a lower station of life, any one of them would be arrested as a common swindler, and clapped into prison within the space of an hour, and even as it is they do not escape altogether scathless, as a recent case showed.

Sir Simeon Stuart, Baronet, came of a very ancient lineage, his ancestors being near relatives of the Pretender, and his family one of historic importance and honorable record. But the fact of his illustrious descent and royal lineage did not improve either the pecuniary situation or the spendthrift disposition of this blue-blooded youth, who contracted debts to a most wonderful amount. Among the articles of his expenditure were thousands of pounds for jewelry, which he acknowledged to have bestowed on ladies other than relatives, and more than two hundred pounds to one tailor for clothing bought and worn out. His numerous creditors beginning to be a little more urgent than was pleasant, he determined to "suspend payment," and take refuge under the bankrupt law. He, therefore, appeared in the Bath County Court as an insolvent debtor, who presented himself for final examination and discharge.

In spite of his heedlessness in contracting debts, he showed a desire to do the fair thing by his creditors, for he surrendered in their behalf the whole of his personal estate. The inventory of the latter is a document the like of which is seldom seen in a bankrupt or any other court. Omitting the rigidly assessed value of each item, the list is as follows: "One railway-rug (much worn), one pencil-case, one lantern, one set of onyx studs, one silver watch, one pair of opera-glasses (out of order), three pairs of gaiters, fifty pin cartridges, one gun-cleaner, one cartridge-extractor, one fishing-rod, and three pairs of worsted stockings." The total value of these precious assets was exactly four pounds. It is affecting to notice that he put in a plea to be allowed to retain the "one set of onyx studs," and the "one silver watch," on the ground that they were much prized family souvenirs, but all the rest he was ready to relinquish, in order that a pro rata division might be effected among his creditors. As the latter represented debts of about £9,000, the share of each one, if a pro rata division were effected, it may be readily imagined would form no source of envy to the balance, so it is not, on the whole, surprising to find that they withdrew their opposition, and the youthful Baronet walked forth from the court-room absolved from his obligations, and ready, if able, to obtain credit again, and once more to fleece the beings of coarser clay whom he had formerly honored with his custom.—St. Louis Globe.

A Genius Lost to the World.

Sylvanus Cobb, Jr., tells in the New York Ledger an amusing story of a budding genius whose aspirations led him to go upon the theatrical stage.

A youthful hero named Michael S. once worked for me at the type case. He was a good compositor, and a capital good fellow; but he got the idea into his head that he wanted to be an actor, and from that time he was not easy until he had tried his best. It was in the palmy days of the old National, under Pelby. Charley Saunders had gone upon the stage at the same theater, and was playing minor characters very acceptably. Now Charley and Mike had been playmates, though Charley was a few years the oldest, and "if Charley Saunders can play, why can't I?" asked Mike. He worked, and bothered and fretted, and intrigued, until finally the stage manager, Hamilton, told him he might come and try. For a time he made himself generally useful about the theater and on the stage, but at length he was given the part of page, in an old English comedy, where in he was to be finely dressed, and to open his mouth and speak before an audience.

Mike was in ecstasies. He came up to the office and told us of his coming "first appearance." Of course, we went down to see.

I forget the name of the play, but I shall never forget that Hamilton enacted the part of Lord Randolph, and that Mike's first entrance as page was for the purpose of delivering to Randolph the simple message—"My lord, the banquet waits."

Mike came on, and as he stepped in sight of the glaring lights, and the greater glare of the thousand faces of the audience, his knees shook beneath him, and he clutched his plumed hat in agony. It was plain to be seen he had forgotten the words. I had heard him spout whole pages from Shakespeare with real unctious; but it had not been on the boards. Ah, how different!

"Well!" hissed Hamilton, with an impatient tap of the toe.

Thus urged, poor Mike made one expiring effort. He could not remember the text, but he did the best he could. "Mr. Randolph," he gasped, "the folks are waiting for you. Supper's ready!"

The stage lost a star, but we gained back a good compositor.

Healthy Houses.

The American Health Association at Baltimore are doing good work, not so much by enunciating new truths in sanitary science, as by recalling and emphasizing the half-known and half-forgotten truths which, in the present stage of our civilization, ought to be part of the common stock of information. The questions of public health are now so universally placed in the hands of public bodies, and under the direction of sanitary experts, that we may trust to the gradual diffusion of sound views and the introduction of correct principles in the management of this department. But the conditions which secure safety and health in private houses are not only less likely to be cared for, but they are less generally known, and it is in calling attention to them that the association has deserved well of the people.

The arrangements for heating, drainage and ventilation in the ordinary house are generally left entirely to the architect, who has but a slight interest in them. The cost of the house is the first item in which he must suit the owner, and he will pay attention to the external appearance for the sake of his own reputation, but as his connection with the house ceases with its completion, he is apt to know very little about the subsequent workings of its sanitary arrangements, and to care less. In the matter of sewerage, few reputable architects would neglect the ordinary precautions of traps and goose-necks, but this is a matter which, once neglected, leads to dangerous consequences, because the evils of bad drainage are not discovered until they have led to serious sickness. The rule that the house sewer should be properly trapped between the point where it receives the last waste-pipe and the point where it enters the street sewer, is, we fear, sometimes slighted with very great risk to the dwellers in the house.

But if sewerage is now a science which is perfectly understood and easy of application we are very far from having reached any such agreement on the questions of ventilation and heating. Of ventilation we may say that we understand nothing at all but are entirely at the mercy of chance, or of Providence, as we may choose to call it. Small houses and rooms can be purified by ordinary windows, but as long as there is no such thing in the world as a well-ventilated theater, hall or other public building, a modest confession of ignorance is the fittest introduction to any treatment of the subject. It is true that there are professors who assume to know all about it, and who can draw beautiful diagrams of currents of air flowing through the proper openings, but these are principally on paper. In practice we see one expert drawing off the foul air near the ceiling and showing in the pure air near the floor, while another expert draws off the same foul air near the floor and pumps in his pure air near the ceiling.

Until we devise some instruments accurate enough to measure and record the flow of atmospheric currents, it is well to know that an open fire-place is the best ventilator, and a cast-iron furnace the worst. The danger of the furnace is that in our changeable climate the fire must now and then be allowed to run down, and even go out, sending carbonic oxide up the flues in the first instance, and in the second the malarious, moldy air of the cellar or of the exterior ground surface. In malarious districts—and all districts in this country are liable to become malarious—the introduction through furnace flues of the external air is as good a way of introducing malaria as could be devised, while, on the other hand, the best purifier of the air is the open fire in the grate.

We have not the space to dwell on the topics which suggest themselves in this connection, and which have been treated of in this most interesting session at Baltimore, but to every one who thinks of building, the important points are those which he is most likely to overlook. As they make all the difference between a healthy home and a sickly one, they deserve greater attention, and we are glad to notice any movement which promises to bring about a closer acquaintance with the principles of sanitary science, and a fuller application of them to our dwelling-houses.—St. Louis Globe.

REFERRING to the pull-backs, etc., one of the sex says: "Now, a woman in this condition is in a straight jacket. She has no power of locomotion left worth having. If she has naturally the gait of a Venus she can only move on with that painful wriggle which we see in place of the free motion, and the crumpled mass of shirred ruffles, knife-pleatings and French folds, which we call an overskirt, flaps after her like the tail of a whipped Newfoundland dog on a drizzly day. She cannot step across a wet spot on a street because her clothes are too narrow—she is tied back too tight. She stumbles into a car and out of a carriage, and an observer cannot help thinking of a Fourth of July bag race, when he sees half a dozen women in fashionable costume hurrying to catch a train or hail a passing omnibus."

GRAHAM SODA BISCUIT.—1 quart of Graham flour, 1 teacupful of soda dissolved in two-thirds of a teacupful of molasses; mix with milk and water.