The Houma Courier.

Devoted to Politics, Agriculture, Home Interests and the Material Development of Louisiana.

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GENERAL ITEMS.

The Utah Legislature has killed the Australian ballot box bill.

Lindeke, Ladd & Brust, retailers of dry goods at St. Paul have failed for $30,000

The Illinois editorial excursionists arrived at the City of Mexico Thursday night.

It is reported that Archbishop Heiss, of Milwaukee, who is now at La Crosse, is dangerously ill.

The business failures throughout the country reported up to Friday numbered 301, against 271 last week.

The Chicago Children's Hospital and Mission for the Destitute secured a corporation license at Springfield.

President Harrison sent to the Senate the name of Robert N. Pearson to be Appraiser of Merchandise at Chicago.

The State anti-whisky party met at Providence, R. I., and nominated a ticket, headed by Gould B. Chace for governor.

A 3-year-old child stepped off a rapidly moving train near Elkshart, Ind., and, excepting a slight scratch, was uninjured.

Elmer A. Stanton, a well-known lawyer of Eau Claire, Wis., sustained severe injuries by slipping and falling on the ice.

The Chinese government is massing troops on the Siberian frontier, as an early attack by the Russian forces is feared.

A shoe factory at Weissenfels, Saxony, destroyed by fire. Seven of the employes lost their lives in the burning building.

There are between 2150 and 2160 students at Ann Arbor University, exceeding the number at Harvard College by nearly 100.

A State ticket was nominated at Providence by the Rhode Island Prohibitionists. The Rev. John Larry, for Governor heads the list.

The United States steamer Enterprise arrived at New York, having on board the remains of George H. Pendleton, late Minister at Berlin.

Veterinary Surgeon Asby, of Columbus, Ind., is suffering from hydrophobia, caused by a bite of a horse afflicted with the disease.

The North American Aid Society of Chicago, whose object is to furnish medical aid to needy persons, secured a corporation license at Springfield.

Fire Tuesday morning at Warren, N. H., destroyed the Merrimac glove factory, causing a loss of $40,000. The insurance aggregates $25,000.

The Rev. Moses D. Hoge will soon complete the forty eighth year of his pastorate of the Second Presbyterian Church of Richmond, Va.

It is said that the marriage of another daughter of the Prince of Wales has been arranged, and that it will be publicly announced in April.

It is reported at Topeka, Kan., that the Santa Fe Road is daily 300 cars short of the number necessary to accommodate the shippers of corn.

A New York syndicate is negotiating for the purchase of three Indianapolis (Ind.) gas companies, one furnishing natural and the other two artificial gas.

All the through mail for San Francisco, Cal., on the mail storage car of the westbound fast mail train, was destroyed by fire at Blue Creek, Utah.

Lord Hopetown, the new Governor of Australia, is described as a small, delicate-looking man, but not in the ill health that his appearance might imply.

At a meeting of the colonial congress a resolution was adopted favoring the immediate declaration of a French protectorate over the kingdom of Dahomey.

Dr. Karolina Wilderstorm is the first feminine physician to practice in Sweden She has settled in Stockholm and charges the poor nothing for her services.

Farmers in the vicinity of Champaign, Ill., say that winter wheat is looking well for this season of the year, and that pastures are in an average condition.

Bismarck's retirement from public life is generally about as effective in its peculiar way as Jay Gould's abandonment of business or Patti's farewell tours.

Representative Reyburn, of Philadelphia, the successor of William D. Kelley, has invested, it is said, about $1,000,000 in real estate at Leavenworth, Kan.

Petitions to the Legislature are being largely circulated throughout northern Iowa asking for the re-election of William B. Allison to to the National Senate.

Gen. F. E. Spinner, ex-United States Treasurer, writes that the cancer on his face is spreading so rapidly that he fears that his life cannot be spared much longer.

In the circuit court at Salem, Ill., a decree of foreclosure in the sum of $1,100,000 was granted to the mortgagees of the Jacksonville and Southeastern Railway Company.

Petitions are being circulated among Kansas farmers asking the Railroad Commissioners to make a reduction of 5 per cent in the local rates on grain and stock to the Missouri river.

The State encampment of Wisconsin Odd Fellows closed at Beloit. Officers were elected for the ensuing year, B. I. Dugdale, of Platteville, being chosen Grand Patriarch.

The affairs of the Midland Accident Insurance Company have been placed in the hands of the Missouri commissioner of insurance, who will proceed to settle up the affairs of the company.

John Jacob Astor's will was filed for probate at New York. With the exception of $750,000 in charitable and other bequests, the entire estate goes to his son, William Waldorf Astor.

It is reported that a break has been discovered in the Rocky Mountains near Mary's Fork, and the Great Northern intends to construct a line from Anaconda, Mont., direct to San Francisco.

By a rear end collision on the Milwaukee Road near Elgin, Ill., Fireman T. A. Ogden, of Chicago, and Charles Alexander and Henry Eggers, of Beloit, Wis., were probably fatally injured.

Rubber manufacturers met secretly at New York and organized a trust, which, as stated, will result in an advance in prices all round. It was reported that Para rubber is becoming scarce.

It is alleged that W. J. Minnick, of Braddock, Pa., who was recently sent to the Dixmont Insane Asylum, is perfectly sane, and that his incarceration is the result of a plot by members of his family.

A new and clever smuggling scheme has been discovered in New York by the inspector. A number of supposed packages of macaroni from Mediterranean ports were found to contain fine shawls instead There were 140 boxes and ten bags seized. The goods were consigned to Chicago. The matter will be sifted thoroughly.

The Blair Educational Bill.

On the 24th of February, the Blair educational bill came up in Congress as unfinished business.

Senator Faulkner said that in his judgment the bill was freighted with the greatest of evils to the whole country and more especially to those States which it is said would be the most benefitted by the enactment of the law. He believed its passage would commit Congress to such an unrestrained construction of constitutional power, and would establish such an unprecedented free interpretation of "the general welfare" lause that he should not hesitate to appeal to the courtesy of the Senate to bear with him while he presented reasons which influenced his action. Mr. Faulkner said three questions presented themselves:

1. Is the bill sanctioned by the provisions of the Federal Constitution?

2. Are its provisions which affect the distribution of the fund between the States and between the two races in the States just and beneficial?

3. Is it the part of wisdom and the part of practical statesmanship for the National government to embark on this boundless sea of unrestrained and unlimited legislation?

He argued that the establishment of a common school system was necessarily committed to the care and control of the States. He cites, in reference to the constitutionality to the principles laid down by Chief Justice Marshall in the case of Gibbons against Ogden restrained any attempt at encroachments reserved to the respective States.

Mr. Faulkner found what he believed to be inconsistency in the bill, that is of first distributing the fund to the States on the basis of illiteracy, and then distributing the fund within the States between the two races on the basis of the school population of each, so that on the basis of illiteracy the colored schools of the South ought to receive $36,000,000 and the white schools $13,000,000; but it would be reversed and the white schools would receive $16,000,000 more than the colored schools We presume this will cause some change in the bill again.

Figs.

Figs are a genus of trees belonging to the natural order Moraceæ, and number about one hundred species. Almost all the varieties belong to tropical and subtropical countries. They abound in India, and are cultivated in every village, even to the most northern Himalaya. The common fig is a native of the East, but is now cultivated throughout the whole of the south of Europe. Its cultivation has also extended to many warm countries. In this country we find it grows well in most of the Southern States, and near the Gulf coast attains great perfection both in growth of trees and in fruit. The fig is a low tree with large lobed leaves, which are rough on top, and have a downy appearance underneath. The fruit appears in the axils of the leaves and is pear-shaped. There has been a difference of opinion among writers as to whether the tree produces flowers as other fruit trees. It is now pretty generally believed the fig does bloom but the flower is imbedded in the fruit. It is [illegible] this respect.

In climates such as our coast here, some varieties yield two crops a year, while others commence to ripen fruit about June and continue until frost appears, sometimes as late as December. The first crop of fruit formed is from the older wood of the previous year's growth, later on another crop forms on the limbs of the present year's growth. They are propagated here by cuttings of limbs stuck in the ground a few inches.

Dried figs form an important article of food. In some sections they are preserved or canned. They are dried in the sun almost entirely in some sections, while other sections employ an oven built for the purpose. It has been ascertained here by some of our practical citizens that they can be dried on the latest improved evaporators in about four hours' time, and after cooling they may be pressed tightly in boxes and will keep perfectly for years. This fact makes it possible for enormous profit for the fig grower as he can handle his own fruit, and after drying ship when and where he pleases, thus obtaining the highest market prices.—*Exchange.*

Shooting a Decoy.

I am reminded of a rather good yarn I have been promising for some time to spin, says a writer in *Forest and Stream.* The joke is on a first class all around sportsman, and a jolly good fellow he is, too, ready for anything, from an early morning start and frosty wait on the bay for a chance at the ducks to an all day tramp in the backwoods after the wily fox. He is a practical joker as well as a sportsman, and is always ready to work off a "rig" on the boys, so we were all unusually hilarious when at last he had to succumb and own himself outwitted. He had gotten the best of me on several occasions, and many a minute had I given to concocting plans for getting even.

At last my chance came, and in this way: Out on a gunning trip I had the good fortune to shoot a superb fresh water shelldrake, and when I went home I said nothing to Lucien, but began to perfect a scheme that took shape in my mind almost as soon as my bird dropped. Lucien lived on the banks of a pond in which ducks would now and then light, and he always had his gun ready. I carefully skinned my bird, stretched the skin over a wooden decoy in as lifelike a manner as possible, and then began to think how best to make it seem alive. My device was merely to fasten one end of a line to the decoy under the breast and lead it through a ring in a stone sunk to the bottom of the pond, and from there to some bushes up on a high bank.

All being arranged, I took my position, and one of the men went to the shop, just below the dam, and told Lu to hurry up and get his gun to shoot the queer looking bird that had just lit there. Lu was at first suspicious, but finally went to take a look. The bird was moving around, ducking, etc., in such evident life and spirits that Lucien was for once at least completely taken in. He dodged down behind the dam, crept carefully to his cabin, got his gun and as steadily crept back. Reaching the right spot, up he came, looked over to reconnoiter, and being entirely convinced, banged away. How the feathers did fly! And how we all shouted, and how disgusted Lu looked, I will leave to your imagination.

Fix up your premises; beautify your home; have a nice lawn mower and use it; plant flowers and ornamental trees as well as fruits. There is nothing that adds more to the beauty of a home than flowers in the front yard.

At Hatton, S. D. eight women whose husbands were loafing around the saloons took their axes and demolished the liquors and bar-room fixtures. They were cheered by a large crowd.

IOWA AND THE GULF.

AN INTERESTING LETTER FROM A VETERAN KANSAS EDITOR, ON THE NEW ROUTE FROM THIS SECTION TO THE GULF.

SIOUX CITY, Feb. 15.

The great question of to-day in the fruitful, fertile regions far from the sea, between the Mississippi and the Rocky mountains, is not how to produce crops, but how to dispose of them. The intelligent, energetic agriculturists of Iowa need little instruction on the production part of their business. But how to get them to market so as to make them remunerative is what puzzles alike the brains of the producer and the purchaser. Nor are the markets wanting. The question of how to annihilate distance or reduce freight expenses is the vital one. The corn palaces of Sioux City are the pride of the farmer and the admiration of all classes, and enterprising people from all portions of the Union have visited your exhibitions to compliment you on the fertility of a soil capable of such productions, and the intelligence and industry of the producers. As you look at the golden corn ingeniously transformed into palaces of architectural beauty, you realize that the farmer cannot subsist on his pride or his admiration.

With corn, at times, as low as 10 cents at some points, and wheat down to 35 cents, as it has been in Western Kansas, it become a desperate question how to make ends meet. I have seen in a Kansas paper a pert statement that "a farmer with a crib full of corn and a 15 cent market beats a farmer with an empty crib and a 50 cent market by a large majority." But if it costs 20 cents to produce the corn, how much is the man with a full crib ahead? A dispatch from Wichita says that a court has decided that a farmer with 1000 bushels of corn which he proved he was saving for fuel was exempt from execution under the law exempting one year's fuel from sale in payment of debts. What every farmer in the West wants to see is the price of this necessary of human and animal subsistence so raised as to reverse the decision that corn is a fuel at all.

The way to accomplish that is to find nearer markets and thereby cheaper freights. Every intelligent farmer and business man is now looking alike to competition of routes and nearness of the seaboard for success in the business of producing and of handling the productions of the great West. Now these productions go to the Eastern seaboards. During the past year a great convention was held, the object being to appeal to Congress to open up the Gulf of Mexico by creating deep harbors. The gulf is 600 miles nearer to these States than the Eastern ports. The route to it is through an almost level plain, with an average descent of but about a foot to the mile—a descent, it is true, impracticable even there—but as true is it that nature has made that accomplishment nearer practicable than in any similar distance on the continent. The present route East has all the disadvantages added to that of distance in the resistance of transportation across the divides of the continent and the curvatures and heavy grades over high mountains.

In looking to these questions, we want to look also to the best and nearest port being exerted to open an exclusive port at Galveston; that is, to expend all efforts and all appropriations to make deep water at that one point, and that point a place where experiments have been made for forty-five years with an admitted failure of success. He would be illiberal who would deny reasonable appropriations to a city like Galveston; but he would be a narrow-minded statesman who would say that all the contributions for the opening of this great thoroughfare, one-third greater in distance than the Atlantic coast from Baltimore to Boston, including New York, Philadelphia and intermediate points, should be given to one solitary harbor.

What I desire to do is to call attention to the nearest point on the gulf. The nearest point is at the mouth of the Calcasieu river in Louisiana, directly south of Iowa, where the gulf projects the furthest north of any single place between Mexico and New Orleans. I invite the reader to take down his map and demonstrate the truth of this proposition. The next nearest place is the mouth of the Sabine river, twenty miles west, on the line of Texas and Louisiana. This point is 217 miles west of New Orleans.

The next question arises, is it a good harbor? I let official reports say, as given by Engineer Thomas L. Raymond in 1886:

"Calcasieu pass, the outlet of Lake Calcasieu, is something over seven miles in length, with an average width of 600 feet, and a good channel sixteen feet for the greater part of this distance, interrupted by oyster reefs about four miles from the gulf. Neither time nor opportunity was had for current observation during the examinations, but in all similarly situated waters currents of from two and one half to three miles per hour are produced by the head of water remaining in the lake when the gulf level is suddenly lowered by the action of the wind and tidal causes. These currents, when confined sufficiently in the pass, have produced depths as great as twenty-five feet. The slope in the gulf beyond the twelve feet depth is about one foot in 250, giving a depth of eighteen feet at one and a half miles from shore."

I have the coast survey, which shows that at two miles from shore a depth of more than twenty-five feet is attained, and thence out the fall is abrupt. No other part examined can show any such advantages. The Calcasieu river is a large stream. From Lake Charles to the sea is about fifty-five miles. Thirty miles of that distance it is very deep, much of it sixty feet, where it enters Lake Calcasieu, about eighteen miles long and eight miles wide, and thence flows to the gulf seven miles as described by Engineer Raymond.

This river is exempt from the objection to all other ports of being low and subject to overflow, the banks of the Calcasieu along the pass being high, orange groves prospering to the very verge of the sea. The Sabine is the next nearest point, but the recent report of the government engineers has condemned it as "marshy and subject to frequent overflow, the only suitable places for habitation being upon small mounds or ridges." I believe, however, that it is the next best point to that of the Calcasieu.

Two railroads are now in process of construction from this point to Kansas City. The Kansas City, Watkins and Gulf Railway is constructed for fifty miles north of Lake Charles.

The route of this railroad is along and through for 250 miles the best body of timber in the United States, almost a primeval forest. It consists of the various oaks, ash in great quantities, hickory, pecan, white gum, used for furniture, magnolia, cypress, and the long-leaf Southern pine. This latter is immense in its extent and is unsurpassed by any pine timber for ornamental work, such as wainscotting and car-finishings. It was exhibited at the Sioux City Corn Palace exhibition in various shapes, such as doors, etc., and was the admiration of all who saw it.—*John Speer, in Sioux City Daily Tribune.*

The Indian and the Conductor.

HOW THE NOBLE RED MAN ESSAYS TO BEAT THE RAILROAD COMPANY.

"Pap" Richards, an old time conductor on the Western New York and Pennsylvania railroad, which runs through Cornplanter Indian reservation, on the Allegheney river, near Salamanca, has had some experiences in carrying Indians on his train that are worth relating.

"Talking about dead beating on railroads," said Mr. Richards, "there is no living, thinking being who gives up money with so much heartfelt reluctance as an Indian. I have been carrying some of them on my train every day or two for the past fifteen years, and I long ago made up my mind that whenever an Indian boards my train I have a scheme of some sort to contend with. I think it is Pope who makes the statement that proud science has never taught the Indian's soul to stray beyond the [illegible] milky way, but I am willing to grumble that proud science never had anything down finer than a Cornplanter Indian has the business of bilking his way on a railroad train. Of course I speak of the ragtag and bobtail of the Cornplanters, for there are many of these Indians who are good citizens and pay their way accordingly.

"An Indian's method of beating a conductor is strikingly original Suppose him to be going up the river to Salamanca, a ride of a few hours from the reservation. He buys a ticket to the next station only, perhaps at an expenditure of ten cents. But if you expect your Indian to get off at that station, that is where you are weak on the Indian strategy. The train stops, but the Indian does not budge from his seat. The hope that wells up in his heart is that the conductor will think the Indian who had the ticket for that station got off, while the Indian who did not get off has a through ticket. Nearly all these Indians answer to the name of John, so I stop on my way through the car and say:

"'John, you didn't get off at your station.'

"'Injun go on to next station,' he will say, and going down into his beaded purse, he will fish out enough nickels and pennies to pay to that station. Arrived there, he will not get off, but sit quiet and thoughtful; or perhaps when the train stops, he will make an ostentatious dash through the car to the platform, making a feint to get off, but will dodge into the next car and take a seat. You come around and find him sitting there as serenely as if he had been in that particular seat for a day or two.

"'Well, John, you didn't get off at your station,' I will say.

"'Injun go to next station,' he will repeat again, and out will come the purse, and the reluctant pennies will be counted out. The same thing is repeated at the next station, and the next, and still again at the next, and so on during the run up to Salamanca.

"The Indian never seems to think you fathom his game. He regards it as a most subtle piece of strategy, entirely too deep for the beclouded mind of the white man. All the conductors understand John perfectly well, and he has about one chance in a million of [illegible] a present to take that one chance and pay considerable more from station to station rather than buy a ticket clear through. This refers to the trip up the river. Unless the Allegheny is frozen over, we rarely have the privilege of carrying John down stream. He will spend all his money in Salamanca, and a couple of slabs and the broad bosom of the Allegheny will furnise him a very congenial means of transportation home.

"It is a common sight to see John aboard a slab or two, complacently floating home after one of these pleasure trips to Salamanca."—*N. Y. World.*

A Candymaker's Good Word for Candy.

Candy is not unwholesome if it is made of pure sugar and harmless coloring and flavoring, said a Fulton street sugar baker. Sugar, you know, is very nourishing, and if people with sweet teeth would only eat candy as it should be eaten the dentists in New York would have less work to do Candy should be absorbed, not masticated, and you can always detect impurities in candy by sucking it. If it is pure sugar it will all melt slowly in your mouth, but if any sediment remains you may be satisfied that you have eaten impure candy. However, as a rule, even adulterated candy is not injurious, because flour or corn starch are usually the ingredients used to increase the quantity, and, beyond destroying the flavor, they do not materially injure the quality.

Always choose brown candy if you can. It is much more likely to be pure than the green, or the pink or red, or even the white. Never crunch it between your teeth. Allow the natural heat of the mouth to dissolve it and don't attempt to chew it as though it were a tough beefsteak.

The life of a working candy maker is decidedly unhealthy. He never eats any of the sweetmeats that he manufactures, but the hot saccharine particles that impregnate the air in which he works are almost certain to affect his lungs. Sugar bakers are not a long lived race. I make many tons of sugar in the course of a year but I can't say that I ever eat any of it."—*New York Sun.*

A Western pastor relates the following suggestive incident: When the late Dr. Hodge was drawing near the close of his life he spent two or three days at my house. He discovered in my study a piece of furniture he greatly admired and asked me to buy for him, if I could, a duplicate. Upon receiving it from my hand he pulled out of his pocket a purse in order to reimburse me, but there was nothing in it. I playfully remarked that his treasures were all laid up in heaven. He bade me pause to see if he did not still have all he needed for earth. He soon found the change he was in search of and handed it to me to pay for the furniture, saying: "I have from boyhood taken the precaution to have some treasures at both ends of the journey." This simple expression contains the sum and substance of his masterly epitomes on didactic theology.

Delicate Fruit and Tobacco Smoke.

Tobacco smoke quickly contaminates delicate fruits of all kinds. A few puffs blown upon a box of raspberries will entirely destroy the delicate flavor of the fruit and render it uneatable. The same may in a degree be said of strawberries. This is something which but few growers and shippers have ever considered, and too much care cannot be taken to prevent the use of tobacco where these fruits are being handled.—*California Fruit Grower.*

Worse Than the Cats.

Hubby—"Did those cats keep you awake last night?"

Wife—"No; but you did, sitting up in bed and shouting at them."—*Harpers Bazar.*

Married by Proxy.

THE WEDDING CELEBRATED WHILE THE BRIDEGROOM WAS THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY.

Senor Ulpiano Obando was until recently consul of the United States of Columbia at San Francisco.

We, the senor and myself, lived at the same hotel, and by mutual agreement we each instructed the other in the language, customs and manners of our respective countries.

I grew to be quite fond of the senor, he was so generous and simple and eager to learn our ways. His consular duties consisted mainly in drawing his salary, which he did with clocklike regularity.

The senor was married, I learned, and the picture of his wife, which he always carried about him, was that of a charming senora of the regulation Spanish type of beauty.

Bogota was the home of this loving pair, Mme. Obando being the niece of the president of the republic.

One day the senor said to me, in his broken English: "I must go home to my wife. I can no longer bear this separation. Besides, my father has been married to her about long enough."

His father, I thought.

"What on earth do you mean?" I asked.

"When were you married, senor?"

"About six months ago," he replied.

I knew he had been in San Francisco a year, so I said:

"Oh, I see; your wife did not like San Francisco, so she returned home."

"She has never been here."

"And yet you say you were married to her six months since?"

"Certainly; I gave a power of attorney to my father, who married Inez in my stead."

"Now, see here, Obando," I remarked, "I am afraid you're making fun of me This idea of your wife being your stepmother at the same time, and your father's wife being his daughter-in-law—oh, no, it won't do."

The senor, however, was in earnest, and then I learned one of the peculiar customs in vogue in the South American republic.

As a matter of policy or convenience it had been necessary that Senor Obando should marry his affianced, and therefore the necessary instructions were wired to Panama, conveyed thence down the Magdalena river to the port, and thence by muleback to the capital. In the same manner the news of the ceremony was conveyed back to San Francisco, and Senor Obanda was a duly married man.

Marriages of this sort are by no means infrequent among the Spanish-American people. The "proxies" are generally male relatives of either prospective bride or groom. An intimate friend, in fact, may perform the office, though in the latter case it sometimes happens that the friend betrays his trust, and the fond, absent husband returns home to find himself divorced.

These marriages are perfectly legal, and are recognized by the church. They are somewhat like "binding slips" in insurance, the "policies" being delivered afterward.

Upon the return of the husband, though, of course seeing his "proxy" wife, then his "vicarious" widow inherits his property the same as if she had been married in the regular fashion.

Senor Obando returned to Bogota, and the last time I heard from him he was occupying a high official position and living happily with his wife, to whom he had been "regularly" married.—*N. Y. Herald.*

One Thing at a Time.

"Early in life," relates a gentleman who has now spent many decades in the service of God and his fellow-man, "I learned from a very simple incident a wholesale lesson, and one which has since been of incalculable benefit to me.

"When I was between twelve and fourteen years old my father broke up a new field on his farm, and planted it with potatoes, and when the plants were two or three inches high, he sent me to hoe it. The ground of that piece was hard to till, it was matted with grass roots and sprinkled with stones. I hoed the first row and then stopped to take a general look at the task before me. Grass as high as the potatoes was everywhere, and looking at the whole from any point, it appeared to be a solid mass. I had the work to do all alone, and as I stood staring at the broad reach of weedy soil, I felt a good mind not to try to do anything further then with it.

"Just that minute I happened to look down at the hill nearest my feet. The grass didn't seem just quite as thick there, and I said to myself, 'I can hoe this one well enough.'

"When it was done another thought came to help me: I shan't have to hoe but one hill at a time, at any rate.

"And so I went to the next, and next. But there I stopped again and looked over the field. That gave me another thought, too. I could hoe every hill as I came to it; it was only looking away off to all the hills that made the whole seem impossible.

"'I won't look at it!' I said; and I pulled my hat over my eyes so I could see nothing but the spot where my hoe had to dig.

"In course of time, I had gone over the whole field, looking only at the hill in hand, and my work was done.

"I learned a lesson tugging away at those grass roots which I never forgot. It was to look right down at the one thing to be done now, and not hinder or discourage myself by looking off at the things I haven't come to. I've been working ever since that summer at the hill nearest my feet, and I have always found it the easiest way to get a bad task accomplished, as it is the true way to prepare a field for the harvest."—*Canada Presbyterian.*

Does the Fig Tree Blossom?

So far as I can learn, there seems to be a general impression that the fig tree does not blossom, and I have often looked most carefully to find an indication of a bloom; yet for many years I looked in vain. Even Dr. Clark, the commentator, on Hab. iii, 17, declares "the fig tree does not bloom," and, as usual, flies to a new rendering of the word, saying, to save the prophet, that the original means "to flourish." For many years I took him as authority; but still I often thought how strange the best of fruit should come, exceptionally, without a bloom, till finally I began to think it must be some outgrowth—a tubercle—rather than a fruit, for fruit required blossoms and had seeds. A tubercle contains no seeds, yet figs did; and it seemed to me the prophet thought it bloomed.

Nor have infidels been silent on the contingent assertion of the prophet, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom;" sneering at a prophet claiming to be inspires, who was deficient in the simplest fact connected with the subject; for all men know, they said, the fig tree does not blossom. But the prophet lived in a land of figs, and ought to have known all about them, and doubtless did; and if the fig tree does not bloom, it is an exception to every known fruit tree on the earth; and this, with the prophet's assertion, should go further with us than Dr. Clark's criticism, which was based on slim experience. 'Tis true, the few early figs before the regular crop are called by some "the bloom fig," but they drop off and perish; nor can I comprehend how they can fertilize a fuller, later crop succeeding. They seem untimely, and are doomed to perish.

But years ago, in opening a half-grown fig, I found inside a number of stamens, or pistils, of a slight pink or purplish color, which composed the pulp or body of the fig, and I wondered (they looked so much like blossoms) if a fig could bloom inside. But there were the flowers, and every little tendril forms a little seed, which we find inside when ripe. I knew a melon forms entire before it blossoms, and why should not a fig form and bloom within it?

This view, I think, is the correct one, and harmonizes with the prophet; and also, from all I can learn from warmer countries, with their view. Dr. Clarke, whenever he got in difficulty, flew to Hebrew; and if in great trouble, sheltered behind the Chaldee, where few could follow him; and all our ancestors were from Northern climes, and knew not much of figs. We have too blindly followed our commentator, and either said with him, "The fig tree does not bloom," or thought a few early figs, just like the others, were the flowering figs.

To tell the truth, figs do bloom, but bloom inside, and absolutely have more blooms than any other fruit on earth; and every fig we eat, we only crush some scores of fully matured blossoms.—*G. T. V., in N. O. Christian Advocate.*

Old Men With Young Wives.

"What can a young lassie do wi'an auld man?" asks the poet. The problem is no doubt difficult, but, according to the official statistics of Scotch marriages just issued, it is one that a good many "lassies" are not unwilling to face. In the year embraced in the latest return 49 bridegrooms were older than their brides by 30 years and upwards. No instance in which the figures are reversed is recorded by the registrar general, and though there were two wives between 20 and 30 years older than their spouse, there were no fewer than 186 instances in which the disparity was the other way. When we come to a difference of 15 to 20 years, the elderly brides are just 10 to 389 elderly bridegrooms. When the difference is from 10 to 15 years, the elderly wives are only 71, while the elderly bridegrooms numbered 1054.

How the objection on the part of the men to seniority in their partners gathers strength, however, will be best shown by going to the other end of the scale. Thus in 2961 marriages the contracting parties were of the same age; in 3070 the husbands were one year older than their wives; in 1774 the wives were one year older than their spouse; in 2780 the husbands were two years older than their wives, and in 1079 the wives were the same as regards their husbands. In 2387 the husbands were three years older; in 668 the wives were so; in 2001 the husbands were four years older; in 466 the wives were the same; in 1507 the bridegrooms had the advantage by five years the same; in 602 the husbands were between five and ten years older than their wives, while in only 456 cases were the conditions of the case of Burns' ballad reversed.—*Hebrew Journal.*

The Colonel and the Private

Gov. Beaver is known by every Pittsburg boy in the national guard to be a very strict disciplinarian in military etiquette and the drill. Austin Curtin, of the governor's native town, told this war reminiscence about him last night to some of the delegates at the G. A. R. encampment: While lieutenant-colonel of the Forty-fifth regiment, Beaver was one day sitting in front of his tent, when a slouchy looking soldier, with ill fitting uniform came along, stopped, and inquired:

"Ver ish der doctor?"

"Is that the way to address your superior officer, sir?" roared Col. Beaver.

The German stared at his superior officer in blank amazement, but said never a word.

"Here, sir; take this chair. You be the colonel, and I will teach you how to address a superior officer."

"Vas me der boss of der regiment?"

"Yes, take this chair, and I'll teach you you how to act."

The soldier sat down in front of the tent. Col. Beaver walked off a few paces, turned, about, returned to a position in front of the officer pro tempore, squared himself around, made a military salute, and inquired:

"Colonel, can you inform me where I can find the surgeon of the regiment?"

The soldier arose, and, looking seriously and straight at Beaver, replied:

"D—d if I know where he is!"—*Pittsburg Dispatch.*

A Story of Stonewall Jackson.

An old soldier tells this story of Stonewall Jackson:

It was during his valley campaign, and a battle was expected within a day or two, though Jackson's plans were so carefully guarded that not even his adjutant could guess them intelligently. This self-reliance was characteristic of Jackson, and his aversion to telling his plans was well known among his officers and men. In fact, it was his policy to surprise his own men no less than to surprise the enemy.

Gen. Jackson was one of a group of officers, and another of the group was a Georgia colonel who is still living. Conversation was dragging. Jackson was thoughtful and had had little to say, and the effect was dampening. Finally, just to revive the conversation, the Georgia colonel asked abruptly:

"General, will we have a fight to-morrow?"

Everybody knew in an instant that the blunder was irreparable, and nobody realized this more that the colonel.

Jackson turned quickly and stared full in the speaker's face. Then he slowly surveyed the colonel from head to foot and back again.

The silence was painful.

"Colonel," said the general slowly, but not in an unkind tone, "can you keep a secret?"

"Yes, general," was the warm, if embarrassed assurance. "I know I can, general. Yes, sir——"

"Are you quite certain, colonel?"

"I am quite certain, general."

"Well, colonel," in the same quiet, even tone, "so can I, sir."

The colonel's face flushed crimson, and there was a deathly silence for a half minute or more.

"Now, colonel," said Jackson, with some feeling, "that rudeness of mine hurt me as much as it did you, but I trust that it has taught you a valuable lesson. If we do have a fight to morrow, colonel, your regiment shall have a chance."—*Atlanta Constitution.*

Tuscaloosa, Ala., has put up the license to $1000 but every saloonist came up and paid it.

Agricultural Notes.

What Daniel Dennett says of Louisiana, through the agricultural department of the *Picayune:*

These are but a few texts and hints touching the vast and varied resources of Louisiana. We feel that we are acquainted with this subject and that we are neither booming lands for our own benefit, nor blowing a horn to call immigrants in this direction.

The 2,493,000 acres of prairie comprise much very rich land. All of these lands are suitable for pasturage.

At present, oysters, shrimp and fish bring an income annually of over $2,000,000 to those engaged in these industries.

Louisiana has more than 6,000,000 acres of pine land; the other 20,000,000 acres are most of them very rich, the rest very good.

In 1879 cane was cultivated on only 181,000 acres in 23 parishes. Sugar cane grows very well in all of the parishes in the pine lands.

On the good uplands and bluff lands, the prairies and other lands, the State may make 2,000,000 bales of cotton, and largely more than that.

Louisiana has 3,615,000 acres of arable alluvial land well adapted to the sugar crop, and millions of acres of other lands well adapted to this crop.

When jute and ramie machines come to the front as an actual success, Louisiana has lands that may produce these two crops and bear grass and other fiber crops in almost limitless quantitiis.

The 6,000,000 acres of pine land, considered the poorest lands in the State may be made to rank with the best of lands in the production of fruits, vegetables and grasses, and most all farm crops.

Louisiana, on her arable alluvial lands alone, may make more than 1,000,000 tons or 2,000,000 hogsheads of sugar yearly, and molasses in proportion, more than enough to supply the United States.

The 1,587,000 acres of bluff lands are among the best in the State—easy of cultivation, very productive; forests on these lands of tall and noble oaks, ash, magnolia, gum, cottonwood and other fine timber.

The 3,615,000 acres of arable alluvial lands are among the richest lands in America. Some of these lands produced six hogsheads of sugar to the acre, or more than three tons, in one season, besides the molasses.

The fruit and vegetable business may be greatly extended; canning fruits and vegetables and shrimp, oysters and fish may yet bring many million dollars to the State annually and forever if these industries are judiciously managed.

Manufacturing cotton and woolen goods from cotton and wool made in the State, and manufacturing jute and ramie, may become important branches of industry. Our damp climate is admirably adapted to spinning cotton and woolen yarns.

The timber resources of the State, cypress, pine, oak, ash, magnolia, gum, etc., will be turned to valuable account. Woodenware factories, paper factories for working bagasse into paper, [illegible]

Farmers are learning not only how to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before, but how to make 10 bushels of corn and 10 bushels of wheat grow where one grew before. And they have learned how to kill grass and weeds in their crops much faster than formerly.

These arable lands of Louisiana made nearly a fifth of the rice crop of the United States in 1879, and can devote a million acres to rice on large surfaces in the southern and sugar parishes that are too wet for sugar cane. There were but 42,000 acres in rice in 1879. The State has lands for two or three million barrels of clean rice, 230 pounds net to the barrel.

The 3 338,000 acres of coast marsh, and we may add 1 000,000 acres of shallow coast bays and lakes, which may be reclaimed like the marshes and lakes of Holland, may all become productive and valuable. A Hollander who has acted as engineer in reclaiming the wet lands of Holland, visited these marshes of Louisiana some years since and pronounced the soil better than that of Holland.

If the State were highly cultivated and fertilized and supplied with all the best tools and farm machinery of modern times and numerous factories established for manufacturing wood, iron and various metals, and cotton, wool, silk, ramie, jute, etc., that the State might sell from farm and factory and all other labor sources a billion dollars' worth of products annually. ($1,000,000,000.)

Louisiana may excel any other State in her hay and grass crops, and in breeding cattle, mules and horses, and hogs. The sea marshes are the hogs' empire. Dairying may in time become exceedingly profitable in this State, where 4 tons of Bermuda hay may be made from an acre, and a single acre of white clover and Bermuda grass may keep a cow seal fat from March to December. We have seen this done in southern Louisiana.

If Louisiana soil were as well cultivated as it will be in the next century, or as well and generally cultivated as some of the other Western States, its productions would simply be astounding. Notice these facts: Louisiana has 40,000 square miles of land besides water surface, shallow lakes and bays that may be reclaimed and cultivated, or 26,000,000 acres; cultivated in 1873, 1,700,000; not cultivated in 1873, 24,900,000; reckoning 15 acres cultivated to the hand, 113,333 hands; population of Louisiana in 1870, 726,915; not engaged in agriculture, 613,582. Possibly 2,000,000 acres of land out of over 26,000,000 acres in the State will be cultivated in 1890. Considerable of this surface is in pine land farms. Many of them cultivated with light teams, poor plows and poor supply of farming utensils generally, and usually the land not fertilized.

The Brookhaven (Miss.) *Leader* says: Probably the oldest man living in Lincoln county is Mr. James Stewart, who is 101 years of age. He is an interesting personage. He lives with an unmarried daughter on Stewart's creek, eight miles southwest of Brookhaven. Mr. Stewart was one of the earliest settlers of Mississippi, having come when young with his father, John Stewart, to the territory eighty-five years ago and taking up his residence in what was afterwards Lawrence county, in the same neighborhood where he now lives. He is a well preserved man, in good health, and last year worked in the field and made a tolerably good crop. He has lived under all the presidents, from Washington to Harrison, and voted at every presidential election since the State was admitted to the Union in 1817. He has always been a hard working farmer, and never made use of tobacco in any form. Long may he live and prosper.

The Nashville *Issue* calls Miss Willard "the Gladstone among American women." Miss Willard is incomparably superior to any statesman who pets and courts and sustains the grogshop.