

CURRENT TOPICS.

While we are gaining steadily on Great Britain in the iron and steel industries, and, thus looking at the matter comparatively, have a right to feel encouraged, it is also true, as appears from the report of the American Iron and Steel Association, that in no other year of the panic has this trade suffered so greatly as in 1877, the average price of pig-iron for one month in the year being less than was ever before known, except in colonial times.

The eclipse of the sun to take place on the 29th inst. will possess the usual interest investing total obscurations of that body. The line of total eclipse will extend from Northeastern Asia through Bering's straits, Alaska, Idaho, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas to the Gulf of Mexico at Galveston. The fine mountain elevations in Colorado offer unusual advantages for observing and studying the phenomenon, and arrangements are being made by scientific parties to avail themselves of them.

The oil producing union, which is believed in some quarters to hold the balance of power in the coming Pennsylvania elections, seems to be looking to the advancement of its interests by other means than those which combination will give it in politics. It is proposed that all the oil produced shall be turned over to the central agency, and only so much put upon the market as the consumption of the world will demand, and for which a fair price can be obtained. The unused surplus will constitute a reserve, to be held until the market can stand it without depression. A check on overproduction and an assurance of a paying price for their product will thus be assured, by a scheme somewhat similar to that attempted by the coal companies, who were dubbed "conspirators" for their pains.

The stringency in business circles in this country and the hardest of the times among our laboring population, however severe, are nevertheless in wide contrast with what is witnessed in other parts of the world. There has been comparatively little absolute suffering for want of common necessities. The intelligence from China of the ravages of the famine is fearful. From a statement in the Liverpool Post, based on official reports, it appears that the number in China requiring gratuitous relief does not fall short of three or four million souls, equal to the entire population of the United States when its Government was formed. The roads are lined with corpses in such numbers as to render their interment impossible; while women and children, starving and in rags, know not where to look for the means of keeping body and soul together.

Can the north pole be found? Dr. Petterman, the distinguished German scientist, believes that it can. He believes that the energy devoted to the task of building a railroad over the Rocky Mountains would strip the ice mountains of the polar sea of half their terrors. He doesn't believe there is an open polar sea as Dr. Hayes describes it, but thinks the sea is more or less covered with ice mountains, which escape from it and float into warmer waters. If they do not, he argues that the new formation of ice each year would cause North America and North Europe to retrograde back to the ice ages. He believes that there is land near the pole crusted over or coated in ice, with ice mountains on its coasts, and crushing against each other in the seas about it. This land, he believes, is inhabited, and the people love their ice mountains as well as the negroes love their country.

Some interesting information about the German postal system has been received at Washington from N. K. Griggs, our consul at one of the cities of that country. There were 191 employes in the general post-office department at Berlin, in 1875, the post-master-general receiving \$5,735 salary a year, and a house to live in; the director of the post and the director of the telegraph \$3,570, and the clerks salaries which average \$923. Only twenty-five received over \$1,000 a year. In the forty-one chief cities the postmasters receive \$1,904 per annum, except Berlin, where the salary is \$2,500. Telegraph operators receive \$285 to 392; women \$214; and letter-carriers \$128 to \$275. In the railway service the superintendent's salary is \$581, and few employes receive over \$1,000. Section hands are paid \$144 to \$174 a small sum in addition being allowed for clothing, and in a few cases employes being furnished houses and servants. Engineers are paid \$535; fire men \$300; conductors \$444; ticket agents \$609 to \$723; and freight masters \$571.

THE WORLD'S DOINGS.

CRIMES AND CRIMINALS.

Joseph Mason of Peoria has been arrested in Pittsburgh for forging a postal order.

James Daly, of Stamford, Vt., killed a scissor grinder in a quarrel, about the payment for grinding a couple of razors.

A colored ex-sheriff, of New Orleans, recently committed suicide by shooting himself through the head. Cause, drink and loss of money.

There was a row in East St. Louis on the 23rd inst. Some fifty shots were fired. Two were wounded, and a girl standing in a doorway was shot in the head. Whisky is charged with being the cause of the trouble.

The defalcation of John G. Tappan, of Boston, treasurer of the Belting company, aggregates over eight hundred thousand dollars. The company is ruined, and takes down several other large firms in Boston and New York.

E. J. Oakley, who defaulted as cashier of the New York Merchant's Exchange National bank for \$30,000 in 1870, who fled to Canada, was arrested on the 18th inst., and put in Ludlow street jail. He has been a wanderer since 1870.

James Toliner, book-keeper of C. H. Markley & Son, Pittsburgh, has been arrested at Buffalo, N. Y., charged with embezzling \$10,000 from his employers. He absconded on 18th of May, with Annie Berry, of Steubenville, Ohio; \$8,000 of the money was recovered.

On the 23d inst., near Flemina Court House, Va., Wilson Howehins murdered his wife, mother-in-law and one child and then killed himself. A son seven years old saw his brother attack his mother, and snatched the baby out of the cradle and ran to a place of safety.

Peter Bresnihan, now confined in Canton, N. Y., jail for the murder of Daniel Their last spring, and who is to be hanged on the 26th inst., confessed the crime July 9th. He has since made a supplemental confession stating that he committed three murders previous to that of Daniel Theirs.

John G. Tappan, of Boston, Mass., a hitherto honored, and supposed honorable business man, Treasurer of the Belting company, has misappropriated to his own use over \$600,000 of the company's money. He has held the position as treasurer since the organization of the company, thirty years ago.

Mrs. Sarah Sist, a wealthy young widow living in Nelson county, near Perry's Nutt, Richmond, Va., on the 21st inst., cut the throat of a servant woman on her plantation with a razor, almost severing the head from the body. Her victim died almost instantly.

After completing this fiendish work the infuriated woman directed her attention to the child of her victim, a girl of seven or eight years, who was close by. Seizing her she made quick work of her, cutting her throat and throwing her body in a mill pond. The reason for these fiendish and brutal murders can only be explained by the fact that it is believed that Mrs. Sist was at the time laboring under temporary insanity.

CASUALTIES.

There was a destructive fire at Defina Ohio, July 20th.

There was a heavy fire at Grand Rapids, Mich., July 21st.

A destructive fire occurred at Kittanning, Pa., July 17.

3 The loss in the recent Catlettsburg Ky. fire was \$150,000.

Fanny McGroth, aged ten, was drowned in the river at Memphis, while bathing.

Gen. Sheridan has gone to the Black Hills. He will select a prominent location for a military post there.

During a heavy thunder gust, July 21st, at Gloucester, Mass., Miss Julia McPhee and Mrs. Byers were killed by lightning.

Two boys were drowned at Albany, July 17th. They were in a boat, and fearing they would be run down by a steamboat jumped into the river.

On the 17th inst., a scaffold at the new State asylum at North Warner, Pa., fell with eight men on it. All were severely, and two at least fatally injured.

Near Monticello, Indiana, a freight train of 28 cars went through a bridge, and fell into the stream a distance of 90 feet. The engineer and bridge tender were instantly killed.

The testimony on the part of Fitz John Porter, before the court martial at West Point has been all submitted. It is thought that the testimony produced bears favorably on his case.

Saturday night, July 20th, the yachts Coquette and Ina, containing a party of young men left Milwaukee, for Racine, when off South Point a squall capsized the Ina. One of the young men was lost.

On July 10th, lightning struck the new church, 57th street, New York, killing Edward White and Bernard Gray, who were at work laying brick. White fell to the street distance of sixty feet, and was terribly mangled.

A cyclone struck North Albany Sunday, July 21st sweeping through West Albany, unroofing houses, scattering the contents of the lumber yards, and destroying cattle pens. The gas works were so badly damaged that North Albany was in total darkness.

Reports of the fatal effects of the great heat of the last few days continue to come in from numerous points all over the country. But the number of casualties reported are decreasing in number, as greater caution is observed, and the heat diminishes.

Elmwood, Ill., July 20th, as L. D. Atchinson was making a balloon ascension, and when about 200 feet from the ground he lost hold of the trapeze bar and fell, killing him instantly. Deceased was an experienced aeronaut and aerobat. His home was at Burlington.

An Indianapolis telegram of July 18th says: As an east bound freight train on the P. C. & St. L. railway was passing over a bridge gave way, precipitating the engine and twenty cars into the Tipacanoe river, eighty-five feet, killing the engineer, Louis

Bland, and the bridge watchman, Jerry O'Keefe.

PERSONAL AND POLITICAL.

Hon. Charles Foster has declined a nomination in the Seventh Ohio district.

The Emperor William is able to ride out. He has recovered from the wounds inflicted by the murderous gun of the assassin, but is very weak.

A Virginia congressman, Hunton by name, has challenged Columbus Alexander, of Washington, to mortal combat.

President Hayes will leave Washington July 19th, for Newark, Ohio, to attend the soldiers reunion to be held on July 22.

Archbishop Henni, of Milwaukee was prostrated by the heat, and his life was despaired of but later reports say he is likely to recover.

Queen Victoria has conferred on Lord Beaconsfield, the Order of the Garter. The investiture took place at Osborne, Monday morning, July 22d.

The Nationals met in State convention at Syracuse, N. Y., on the 23d inst. There was great confusion and acrimony developed, resulting in a bolt.

It is rumored that the Hon. I. Donnelly may enter the field as an independent candidate for Congress in the third Minnesota district, against Mr Washburn.

1 A telegram from the city of Madrid, of July 21st, says Mrs. Foster, wife of the Minister of the United States, is very ill, but her physicians are confident she will recover.

July 19th the President appointed Gen. Bodger, postmaster at New Orleans, in place of J. M. G. Parker, suspended. Parker is a brother-in-law of Gen. B. F. Butler.

The Potter sub-committee at New Orleans have consented to summons 73 witnesses moved by Secretary Sherman, and will summons any others, on either side that may be desired.

MISCELLANEOUS.

President McMahon of France has signed and notified the treaty of Berlin.

The amount of bullion in the Bank of England decreased the past week £354,000.

Several cases of yellow fever in the Brooklyn, N. Y. navy yard have been reported.

In the Dudley Motte case Secretary Schurz has decided that Pacific railroad land maybe re-empted.

A dispatch of July 23d announces the subscriptions for that day to be for the four per cent fund \$1,077,700.

A Madrid dispatch of July 22 says Cuba is to be represented in the Cortes by 40 deputies and 10 senators.

The municipal affairs of East St. Louis are still in a disturbed state, and further riots and bloodshed are feared.

A Paris dispatch of the 18th inst., says, specie in the bank of France increased 676,000 francs during the past week.

A Constantinople telegram states that there is reason to believe that a peaceful settlement will be effected with Greece.

A Washington telegram of the 18th says, subscriptions that day to the new four per cent loan, amounted to \$1,191,900.

The trustees of the Jay Cook estate has realized nearly \$2,000,000 from claims due the estate. A dividend is to be made on money in hand.

The Paris and Vienna newspapers generally comment favorably upon Lord Beaconsfield statement in explanation of the treaty of Berlin in the House of Lords.

The superintendent of the mint at San Francisco states that since the first of July 555,000 silver dollars have been exchanged at hat mint at par for gold coins.

The Bear Paw mountain gold excitement is taking many restless gold seekers from Deadwood. A band of twenty men left the other day for the new El Dorado.

On Saturday the 20th inst., Hon. C. H. Kimball, general superintendent of the life saving service, established stations at Muskegon, Ludington and Kenosha. He is now in Chicago enlisting crews.

An Auburn, N. Y., telegram of the 17th inst., gives a detailed account of the Cornell Harvard oared, fashman race. Cornell was victorious, and the classic youth were, of course, put a great ways ahead in their studious pursuits.

On Monday, July 22, there were 20,000 persons present at the soldiers and sailors reunion at Newark, Ohio. The President of the United States, the General of the Army, and a great many other gentlemen of distinction were present.

It is reported from London that Mr. Gladstone, the leader of the Liberal party in England, in a late speech violently assailed the Berlin treaty, and called in question the wisdom and the statesmanship of Lord Beaconsfield, in assenting to it. Nevertheless the populace were with Beaconsfield.

The English steamer J. B. Walker was to sail from the port of New Haven, Conn., on the 18th inst., for Constantinople with arms and ammunition for the Turkish government. She has on board 20,000,000 cartridges, 47,000 rifles, 600 sabre bayonets, and 10,000 scabbards. The total value of the cargo is \$1,035,000.

The great heat of the week ending Saturday, July 20th, greatly abated, the day and night, and the deaths from heat prostration had nearly ceased. Several hundreds in the cities and country fell victims to sunstroke. Nearly two hundred died in St. Louis alone. But this was by far the most severely sun-struck city in the land.

The flouring mill in Florence township, Goodhue county, Minnesota, was destroyed by fire Thursday night, July 18. The mill had four run of stone, and was valued at \$25,000. Insured for \$20,000. It was rumored that \$11,000 in money was in the mill. The fire was the work of an incendiary. Perhaps burglars secured the money, and then burned the mill to cover up their crime.

Lord Braconsfield's appearance before the British Parliament, July 18th, caused great enthusiasm. He gave an account of

his diplomatic action at the Berlin congress. The object was to save Turkey from partition as that would involve bloody wars. A division of territory, a loss of provinces, was not partition. A government might saye provinces and should be powerful. Britain had lost colonies. Austria had lost provinces, and France was still a powerful Government, though she had lost territory.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

Investigating the Election of 1876 Under the Potter Resolution--James E. Anderson and Secretary Sherman on the Stand.

TUESDAY, July 16--Minor witnesses on minor points continue to be examined by the Potter sub-committee. Many contradictions of previous witnesses and denials of their statements are developed, but nothing of general interest produced.

FRIDAY, July 19--The sub-committee in New Orleans examined, July 19th, Judge Morris Marks. He was a Republican elector; testified as to requiring certificates, and as to Anderson's going to Washington and having an interview with Secretary Sherman. He testified as to the Sherman letter; that the widow of D. A. Weber could find no such letter among her husband's papers; that Mrs. Weber contradicted Mrs. Jenks statements and denounced her as an impostor.

SATURDAY, July 20--The Potter sub-committee are continuing their labors in New Orleans. Strange developments are made as to the veracity of witnesses, as persons testify that their own former affidavits were false, and made for political effect. The value and weight of such evidence will be duly considered.

MONDAY, July 22--The sub-committee was in session at New Orleans, Monday, July 22d. Several colored men were examined who made affidavits before the returning board. They now deny the truth of the affidavits made by them, and say the affidavits were not read to them. Upon cross-examination by Gov. Cox, Green admitted the correctness of several important statements contained in the affidavits.

TUESDAY, July 23--The Potter sub-committee, consisting of Representatives Potter, Butler, Hiscock and Springer met at Atlantic City, N. J., on the 23d. There were present ex-Senator Trumbull, Representatives Danford, Kelly, and of counsel Shellabarger and Sipher, together with a large number of guests of the hotel, of both sexes, and representatives of the press. Representative Danford was the first witness called, at the instance of Representative Hiscock, who conducted the direct examination. Witness testified to a long conversation with James E. Anderson. The testimony of Danford contradicted Anderson in material points. He said that Anderson told him that during the period of the registration he went to New Orleans and informed the Republican committee, including Gov. Kellogg, that his parish was going Democratic, the colored vote being largely on that side, and that he had been advised by Kellogg and the Republican committee that he should either not return to the parish at all or come away and make such a protest as would throw the parish out of the hope that the Democratic committee would make him an offer of money, and when by the offer of money he had them good and fast, he would expose the authors and blow them sky high. The witness did not hear Anderson question the truth of the protest. At New Orleans, before the sub-committee, Ex-Gov. R. C. Wyklike, Col. C. J. Powell and Capt. W. W. Leake, of West Feliciana parish, testified regarding their efforts to induce colored men to vote the Democratic ticket at the last election. Each assisted in organizing colored Democratic clubs and addressing meetings of colored people. The most potent argument was in relation to public schools, which had been badly managed by the Republicans, the funds being, in many cases, misapplied. The last election was peaceable and quiet. Dawber told Col. Powell, Nov. 15th, he had not filed any protest and did not intend to do so. Several other witnesses testified touching affidavits and the manner of obtaining them. Some difficulty in obtaining witnesses was developed. Gov. Cox made a statement of efforts to secure the attendance, as witnesses, of D. A. Weber and J. Soudran, Weber's brother-in-law. Mr. Dunbar, an officer of the committee, was afterwards sent to Donaldsonville with subpoenas. Mrs. Weber replied that her children had scarlet fever, and she could not leave them. Soudran told Dunbar he couldn't leave his business, that he had no one to leave in charge, and furthermore, if he came, he would have to tell the truth, and if he told all he knew he could not afterwards live there.

Little Danny and His Dead Mother.

I've just been down in the parlor to see mamma. She's in a long box, with flowers on her. I wish she'd come and bathe my head--it aches so. Nobody ever makes it feel good but mamma. She knew how it hurt me, and she used to read to me out of the little book how my head would get well and not ache any more some day. I wish it was "some day" now. Nobody likes me but mamma. That's cause I've got a sick head. Mamma used to take me in her arms and cry. When I asked her what's the matter she would say, "I am only tired darling." I guess Aunt Angles made her tired, for when she came and stayed all day mamma would take me up in the evening and cry awful hard. I ain't had any dinner to-day. Mamma always gave me my dinner and a little pudding with "D," for "Danny," on the top. I like to sit in my little chair and eat 'em. I wish mamma wouldn't stay in the long box. I guess Aunt Agnes put her there, 'cause she put all the flower trimmings on and shows her to everybody. There ain't any fire in the grate, but I guess I'll sit by it and make believe there is. I'll get my little dish and spoon and play I've got a pudding with D for Danny on it. But anyway I want mamma so bad.--New Orleans Picayune.

He thought to head off the voluble barber. Sitting down in a chair, he said "I want a shave, a shampoo, a bath, a bottle of hair tonic, one of Florida water, a private cup and brush, and a stick of cosmetic." The tonsorial artist was staggered for an instant, but quickly recovering, he suggested that he was the agent for "The new patent flexible steel-wire hair brush, warranted to keep in any climate, only \$1 and six bits." The shaver was catching his breath for a fresh start, but the customer slid from his chair and escaped.

In 1877 there were 2,999,677 electors in Great Britain and Ireland, or more than one in twelve of the population. There are about nine million qualified

voters in the United States, or one in every five of the population.

HOUSE AND FARM.

Poor and Happy.

Up in the morning early, Before the break of day, A slice of bread and coffee, And then to work away.

You never hear a murmur, Nor discontented word, He's whistling and he's singing, He's happy as a bird.

He envies not his neighbor Who owns a house and lands, So long as he can labor With his two honest hands.

His capital Dame Nature Bestowed on him at birth-- A happy constitution-- And that's all he is worth.

No medicines are needed To r&sp his appetite, No opiates are taken To make him sleep at night.

He suffers not congestion Of blood in heart or brain, No pangs of indigestion, Or any other pain.

And while crowned "heads uneasy" Turn on soft beds of down, On straw he sweetly slumbers-- A king without a crown.

His cottage is his palace, Contentment is his throne, And self control his sceptre, His master, God alone.

Tan Mulching for Strawberries.

Strawberries are, to many, the fruit crop of the season, and to all they are a crop much appreciated. Few things mark the pleasure of eating and gathering them more than slugs, snails and worms. These nestle beneath the leaves or under the mulchings, and just when the fruit begins to ripen and to give forth its luscious odor, out crawl these pests and fasten upon, disfigure, or devour them. It is thus impossible to gather and eat the fruit of the plant--by far the best mode of enjoying it--with pleasure. In any case the disfigurement and destruction of many of the finest fruits become a serious matter, and it may be almost wholly prevented by the following simple expedient:

Give the plants at once several overhead dressings of equal parts of soot and lime, covering the entire ground between the rows and the plants, and sprinkling freely on and around the crowns. The best time for these dustings and sprinklings is early in the morning or late in the evening. At either season the slugs and snails will be on the move, and caught with the hot, bitter dressing in the most defenceless condition. The first dressing warns off, the second disables, and the third kills them. This is a fair mode of attack; it gives the pests a chance of life. If they have not sufficient sense to take a first warning, they must take the consequences.

Twelve or twenty-four hours' grace may be given between the dressings and the strength of the latter should be cumulative--a slight warning dust at first, then a heavier dose, succeeded by a final killing application. For the last dressing, double or treble the proportion of soot to lime should be given. Soot is one of the best possible manures for strawberries, giving that size, substance, and color to the leaves, which is the surest sign of vigor. In about a week after the last dressing, unless rain has fallen in the interval, the plants should receive a heavy overhead drenching. This clears the crowns and leaves and renders the soil uncomfortable for worms, woodlice, earwigs, or other strawberry-loving creeping insects that may be present. No living thing likes soot or lime, and the mixture is still more nauseous and disagreeable to them. In a few more days, and when the surface gets a little dry, a cleansing dressing of rather thick fresh tanner's bark may be put on about 1-2 inches thick. This is also very distasteful to insects, no snail, slug, or worm remaining in or near it, if they can help it.

After a few washings, it gets so clear of tannin as not to taint the fruit that lies on it to ripen. The strawberry plants also seem to thrive under the tan exceedingly, as it keeps the moisture and strength in the soil, though it probably adds but little to the latter. It has another great merit. If it be needful, as it often is during dry weather, to water the plants during their swelling stage, the tan immediately presents a dry surface again for the fruit. This quality of a rapid drying and of a rough, hard surface, is equally useful during a rainy time through the ripening period. In a word, tanner's bark is one of the cleanest and safest mulchings for strawberries. Softer materials, such as short grass litter, waste hay, half rotten straw, &c., yield to the wet and allow the fruit to sink into them, to its sudden and complete destruction, while tan is almost equal to tiles or pebbles in providing a hard, clean bed for the fruit. It is, in short, one of the cleanest and best dressings for strawberries, having powerful anti-insect, and also anti-rotting qualities.

Recipes.

To Clean Soapstone, Etc.--Soapstone hearths are first washed in pure water and then rubbed with powdered marble, or soapstone, put on with a piece of the stone. Gray marble hearths can be rubbed with linsed oil and no spots will show.

Water Cake.--One teacup sugar, two eggs, half cup butter, one teacup water, two teaspoonfuls cream of tartar, one of soda; beat the butter and eggs to a cream, then add the other ingredients; stir well, and bake quickly.

Cooked Icing.--One cup of coffee sugar, water enough to melt the sugar; put on the stove and let it boil; beat the whites of two eggs to a stiff froth and stir in the boiling syrup; continue the beating until nerly cold, add flavoring and you have it ready for a cake.