

CURRENT NEWS.

Small-pox is raging at Paris.

The Russian expedition to Merv has been abandoned for the present.

Weston and O'Leary commenced a six days' tramp at San Francisco on the 8th.

The Ohio Republican State Convention will be held at Columbus on the 23rd of April.

The Wisconsin Democratic State Convention will be held at Madison on the 19th of May.

The Republican tickets were generally successful in the municipal elections in Maine on the 8th.

The flax mills of Lehman, Rosenthal & Co., at Frankfort, Ind., exploded on the 11th, and ten persons were killed.

The National Convention of the Prohibition Reform party will be held at Cleveland, Ohio, on the 17th of June.

Appalling accounts continue to come from Armenia and Kurdistan. The famine extends over 100,000 square miles.

Reports from the interior of Cuba state that the sugar crop is about forty per cent. smaller than that of last year.

The Alabama Republican State Convention for the selection of delegates to the National Convention, has been called for May 30th.

During the month of January petroleum and petroleum products to the value of \$3,528,070, were exported from the United States.

The Missouri Republican State Convention, for the selection of delegates to the Chicago Convention, has been called for April 14.

The Russian Revolutionary Committee has published an address thanking the French people for refusing the extradition of Hartmann.

The Democrats of New Jersey will hold their State Convention, for the selection of delegates to the National Convention, on the 19th of May.

At Moscow, on the 8th, twenty buildings were destroyed by fire. Twenty-four persons perished in the flames and twenty-nine were injured.

John B. Hawley has resigned the office of Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. He is a candidate for nomination to the office of Governor of Illinois.

The Wisconsin Senate, on the 12th, concurred in the Assembly resolution providing for female suffrage in Wisconsin by a vote of nineteen to eleven.

The Louisiana Democratic State Convention for the selection of delegates to the National Convention at Cincinnati will be held on the 18th of April.

Hangings on the 12th: John Mayfield, at Florence, Ala.; Sidney McFadden, at Washington, Ark., and Dan Brigherty at Thomasville, Georgia; all colored.

The six days' walking contest at San Francisco between O'Leary and Weston closed on the night of the 13th, with a score of 316 miles for O'Leary and 400 for Weston.

Five women were elected members of the Middletown, N. Y., Board of Education on the 9th, defeating five men. About one hundred women voted at the election.

In a letter to the Duke of Marlborough, on the 5th, Lord Beaconsfield stated that the measures for the relief of Ireland were about to be submitted for royal assent.

The express office at Sidney, Neb., was robbed of about \$100,000 in gold bullion on the 10th, but all except \$13,000 was afterward found under a pile of coal near the depot.

The House Committee on Coinage, Weights and Measures, on the 5th, agreed to report favorably a bill to provide for the exchange of trade dollars for legal tender silver dollars.

Secretary Sherman announced his intention on the 12th to invest all the surplus revenues every week in the purchase of five and six per cent. bonds on public offers in New York.

It was reported in Shanghai on the 12th that a revolt had broken out at Pekin, and that Chung How, late Ambassador to Russia, and who negotiated the Kulja treaty, had been beheaded.

The gross earnings of the Union Pacific Railroad for the year ending December 31, 1879, were \$13,301,077; operating expenses, including taxes, \$5,475,503; surplus earnings, \$7,825,574.

General Melnikoff's life was saved by a chain shirt which he wears. The bullet tore a hole in his coat, but was arrested by the protecting mail. The case, it is stated, is protected in a similar manner.

The House Committee on Appropriations, on the 11th, decided to incorporate in the special deficiency bill \$600,000 for the pay of United States Marshals and Deputies, without any proviso or restrictions.

Thirty villages on the Vistula River in Austria, were flooded by the overflow of the river on the 9th. Several of the villages were completely destroyed, and thousands of persons were without food or shelter.

Dennis Kearney was arrested by the police at his residence in San Francisco, on the 11th, on two charges of misdemeanor, based on remarks at a meeting on the 9th. He furnished bail and was released from custody.

The Cincinnati Price Current, on the 11th, published special returns from nearly three hundred points in the West in regard to the growing wheat crop, indicating almost uniformly favorable condition and flattering prospects.

The United States Sub-Treasury at

New York City, on the 12th, discovered another of the counterfeit \$100 notes on the Pittsburg National Bank of Commerce, which had passed through several banks without being detected.

The Postoffice Department, on the 11th, concluded the contracts for the Star Mail Service for four years in Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama and Mississippi.

The Turkish Government has sent troops to Salonica to pursue the brigands who captured Colonel Synges and wife. The movement is considered ill-advised as it is believed the brigands will kill the Colonel rather than surrender him without a ransom.

The Chicago Times, on the 13th, published a comprehensive report from eleven States in the Northwest concerning the winter wheat crop. Should no severe changes in the weather occur, it is estimated that the increased yield in the eleven States will be about sixty per cent.

A scarcity of fractional silver coin is reported throughout the country. The United States Treasury contained \$31,000,000 of such coin on the 12th, which will be exchanged at all sub-treasuries for United States notes as soon as an appropriation is made for that purpose by Congress.

The New York piano manufacturers closed their shops on the 15th, throwing about four thousand piano makers out of work. The piano makers demanded an increase of fifteen to twenty per cent. in wages, and the manufacturers decided to close their works rather than grant the request.

A Panama paper publishes a statement, purporting to be from official sources, declaring that a company of American capitalists and French bankers, presided over by General Grant, will be organized to construct the Isthmus Canal as soon as a concession can be obtained from the Nicaraguan Government.

Referring to the claim of the United States for preponderating influence in the Panama canal, the London Standard declares that the British Government is bound to watch this pretension, and, if necessary, resist it. The preponderating influence of another power can no more be allowed to lay hands on the trade of England at Panama than at Suez.

Mayor Kallioch, of San Francisco, issued a proclamation on the 10th, declaring in the most emphatic manner that there was not then and never had been the slightest reason to apprehend any disturbance, riot or lawlessness whatever from the working classes of that city, and that the most execrable and outrageous means were being used by designing men to goad the workingmen into riotous demonstrations, but they would fail.

Secretary Everts, in a report to Congress on the Inter-Oceanic Canal, states that the treaty between the United States and New Grenada is still in force, and that canal communication should be accomplished in accordance therewith and with the concurrence of the United States, and that in certain contingencies the Government of New Grenada would be authorized to call upon the Government of the United States for the fulfillment of the treaty obligation.

Nathan P. Pratt, Treasurer of the Reading Savings Bank at Boston, tried upon fifty-two counts on the 13th. Shortly after the conviction a paper in the possession of Pratt's counsel was made public, purporting to be the confession of Sidney P. Pratt, son of the prisoner, and up to within a few months chief clerk, book-keeper and cashier. He takes the entire responsibility of the defalcations and says his stealings aggregate over \$150,000. He fled before his father was arrested, and his whereabouts are now unknown.

At a recent municipal election at Elgin, Ill., about seventy voters employed in the milk condensing works were notified by their Superintendent to vote the no license ticket. The license nominees thereupon applied to Commissioner Hoyne to arrest the Superintendent. Mr. Hoyne being in doubt, referred the matter to Judge Blodgett, of the United States Circuit Court who, on the 12th, advised him that the United States Court in similar cases had held that the Fifteenth Amendment and Revised Statute 5507 contemplate the protection in the right of suffrage only of former slaves, and that free or white men do not come within these legal safeguards. The writ for arrest was therefore refused.

Before the Maine Legislative Investigating Committee at Augusta, on the 12th, Ex-Governor Garcelon testified that he first learned of the counting out through the papers; that if he signed any certificate that was wrong, the facts were falsely put before him; no one was counted out; had presumed that his Council were honest and honorable men, and had complied the tabulations according to law; certain rules had been laid down which were applied to the returns regardless of party, and there had not been an instance where a Democrat had been allowed to correct the returns. Individual cases were taken up, in some of which the Governor acknowledged that there had plainly been erasures and interference with the tabulation.

Recent military movements in San Francisco have caused much excitement. All city armories were being closely guarded, and General McDowell, commanding the military division of the Pacific, had received orders to move all available troops to the city. It was conjectured that the movement under the direction of General McDowell was due to representations made to the Washington authorities by Colonel Bee, Vice Consul of China, regarding the supposed danger to which the Chinese stand. The precautions will be maintained until a settlement of the existing agitation is had, at least until the question of the constitutionality of the law forbidding corporations to employ Chinese has been decided by the United States Court and the question of the condemnation of Chinatown settled.

An organization has been formed at San Francisco known as "The Citizens' Protective Union," the objects and purposes of which are, as declared in a manifesto issued on the 9th, to be the preservation of public peace, protection of life and property, restoration of confidence in the security of life and property from all violence, and the resuscitation of the legitimate commerce, industries and business of the people. After counseling all parties to obey the laws the council winds up as follows: "For the victims and reckless men, few in number but devilish in their designs, who have organized for evil and in

their secret halls are planning mischief for the people who have too generously tolerated their presence in this city, we have no word of counsel or warning; but let no man be deceived. Whoever would begin riot, violence or conflagration here, let him first count the cost."

FORTY-SIXTH CONGRESS--FIRST SESSION.

SENATE, March 8.—The Vice-President laid before the Senate a memorial of the trustees of the Peabody Educational Fund, recommending legislation to aid in the education of the colored race. Referred. Mr. Kirkwood submitted a resolution instructing the Secretary of the Treasury to communicate to the Senate a statement of the United States for all purposes necessarily growing out of the late war. Adopted. The bill for the relief of homestead settlers on public lands amending the homestead act, approved by the President, was read and passed. The morning hour having expired consideration was resumed of the bill for the relief of Fitz John Porter. Mr. Bayard introduced the bill, advocating the adoption of the Randolph substitute, authorizing Porter's reappointment as Colonel. A message was received from the President, not read and laid before the Senate relative to the Inter-Oceanic Canal. Mr. McDonald then obtained the floor, and after executive session the Senate adjourned.

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SENATE, March 9.—The President's message on the Inter-Oceanic Canal was read, and with the accompanying documents, was referred. Mr. Thurman presented a memorial of delegates of Indian tribes in the Indian Territory, remonstrating against the passage of a bill for the relief of the Indians in that Territory. Mr. Thurman wanted it referred to the Committee on Judiciary, but Mr. Garland objected, and it was laid over until the following day. It was then referred as follows: Giving to all religious denominations equal rights and privileges in an Indian reservation; for the erection of a monument in the Indian Territory; for the relief of the Indians in that Territory. Mr. Bayley the Judiciary Committee was instructed to investigate the report that a contract had been entered into by the United States and the Union Pacific Railroad Company on one part and the Pacific Mail Steamship Company on the other part, by the terms of which contract the United States was to grant to the company the right of receiving a certain sum per month in consideration of the company's agreement to charge such rates for freight and passengers as may be fixed by the railway company, and to build the marine telegraph line in the Indian Territory. The bill was taken up, and Mr. McDonald addressed the Senate, continuing his remarks until time for adjournment. Several amendments were presented and appropriately referred. Mr. Seales, Chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, reported a bill authorizing the President to grant suitable pensions for the removal of various Indian reservations and providing for punishment of the crime of murder, arson, rape and burglary on various Indian reservations. Placed on the calendar. The number of other bills were reported from the same committee and ordered placed on the calendar. Mr. Whittier, Chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, reported a bill to authorize and equip an expedition to the Arctic seas. Referred to the Committee on the Whole on the State of the Union, and Mr. Jones addressed the House in advocacy of the bill. At the conclusion of his speech the House adjourned.

SENATE, March 10.—The Vice President presented a message from the President transmitting the agreement between the Secretary of the Interior and the Ute Indians and recommending its ratification. Referred. Mr. Thurman, on the Committee on Judiciary, reported adversely the Senate bill to reimburse the several States for interest paid on war bonds and for other purposes. Placed on the calendar. Mr. Bayard, from the Committee on Judiciary, reported favorably the House bill to define the terms of office of chief justices of the several States on the calendar. The motion made on the 3rd by Mr. Thurman, to refer to the Committee on Judiciary the remonstrance of Indian chiefs against the passage of the bill to establish the United States Court in the Indian Territory, was taken up, and, pending discussion, the morning hour expired, and consideration was resumed of the bill for the relief of Fitz John Porter. Mr. McDonald continued his remarks in support of the bill. At the conclusion of his speech Mr. Jones of Florida, obtained the floor, and yielded to Mr. Garland to make a motion that as the bill involved many intricate questions as to the jurisdiction and power of the courts under the Constitution, and the bill was a measure which was purely judicial or legal questions, that the bill, with all the accompanying papers and the whole subject matter be referred to the Committee on Judiciary for examination and report by bill or otherwise. Mr. Randolph objected. Executive session and adjournment. Mr. Dibble, from the Committee on the Judiciary, reported the bill to provide for the withholding of pensions from pensioners under the act of 1878, and asked to have the bill put upon its passage. Mr. Jones desired to know if the bill was the bill of Jeff Davis to the roll. Mr. Dibble stated that Jeff Davis was not a pensioner. Mr. Conger objected to immediate consideration of the bill and moved to refer it to the Committee on Pensions. Mr. Jones asked and obtained leave to have printed a resolution, which he would offer as a substitute for the resolutions of the Committee on Pensions. The bill was adopted. The bill for the relief of the Secretary of the Interior to contract for the sale of two sections of land in the plains east of the Rocky Mountains, the wells to be the center of a reservation, was taken up. Mr. Jones moved for the relief of Fitz John Porter was then taken up. Mr. Jones (Pa.) having the floor. At the conclusion of Mr. Jones' remarks Mr. Davis (W. Va.) moved that the bill be referred to the Committee on Pensions. Mr. Logan moved to indefinitely postpone the bill, and Mr. Davis (Ill.) moved to lay it on the table. The bill was then taken up. The Fortification Appropriation bill was then taken up, and after an executive session the Senate adjourned.

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SENATE, March 11.—Petitions were presented for the reduction of the duty on paper and for the construction of a bridge over the Detroit River. Mr. Cockrell submitted a resolution calling on the Secretary of the Interior for notes of all patents for land issued to individuals or railroad corporations in the Indian Territory, and a full account of the proceedings of the department in relation to such subject. Adopted. Mr. Wallace introduced a joint resolution providing for the amendment of the laws of the law. Referred. The bill for the reclamation of acid and waste lands was passed. It authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to contract for the sale of two sections of land in the plains east of the Rocky Mountains, the wells to be the center of a reservation, was taken up. Mr. Jones moved for the relief of Fitz John Porter was then taken up. Mr. Jones (Pa.) having the floor. At the conclusion of Mr. Jones' remarks Mr. Davis (W. Va.) moved that the bill be referred to the Committee on Pensions. Mr. Logan moved to indefinitely postpone the bill, and Mr. Davis (Ill.) moved to lay it on the table. The bill was then taken up. The Fortification Appropriation bill was then taken up, and after an executive session the Senate adjourned.

persons from asking, demanding or soliciting any office or appointment of the Government any contribution for political purposes. Mr. Hoelster demanded the previous question. After considerable filibustering the House adjourned without action.

SENATE, March 12.—Mr. Williams presented a joint resolution of the Kentucky Legislature, instructing the Senators from Kentucky to urge the passage of a bill reducing the salary of the President of the United States. Mr. Bruce, from the Committee on Education and Labor reported adversely the bill to provide for the investment of certain unclaimed and bounty moneys in the Treasury and to facilitate the education of the colored race. Indefinitely postponed. A bill was introduced and referred, to provide for the ascertainment of claims of American citizens for spoils prior to July 1, 1861. The Fortification Appropriation bill was then taken up and after considerable discussion was passed. The Star Route Deficiency bill was taken up, but without action the Senate adjourned until the 15th.

HOUSE.—The bill authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to deposit certain Indian trust funds in the United States Treasury in lieu of investment was passed. The morning hour was dispensed with, and Mr. McMahon reported back the Deficiency Appropriation bill from the Appropriation Committee. The bill was referred to the Committee of the Whole, where it was discussed for some time, and the committee finally arose without taking any action. The following bills were introduced and referred: For the suppression of pleuro-pneumonia in cattle; to accept and ratify the agreement entered into by the Ute Indians for the sale of their lands in Colorado (appropriating \$280,000); to accept the title to property in Erie, Pa., and establish a home for indigent soldiers and sailors. Adjourned until the 15th.

The President's Message on the Isthmus Canal.

WASHINGTON, March 8.

The following message was received by the Senate to-day: To the Senate: I transmit herewith the report of the Secretary of State and accompanying papers in response to the resolution adopted by the Senate on the 11th of February last, requesting "copies of all correspondence between this Government and any foreign Government since February, 1870, respecting a ship canal across the Isthmus between North America and South America, together with copies of any project of treaties respecting the same which the Department of State may have proposed or submitted since that date to any foreign power or its diplomatic representatives."

In further compliance with the resolution of the Senate, I deem it proper to state briefly my opinion as to the policy of the United States with respect to the construction of an inter-oceanic canal by any route across the American Isthmus. The policy of this country is a canal under American control. The United States cannot consent to surrender this control to any European power or to any combination of European powers. The existing treaties between the United States and other nations, guaranteeing the rights of sovereignty or property of other nations stand in the way of this policy, a contingency which is not apprehended, suitable steps should be taken by just and liberal negotiations to promote and establish an American policy on this subject consistent with the rights of nations to be affected by it. The capital invested by corporations or citizens of other countries in such an enterprise must, in a great degree, look for protection to one or more of the great powers of the world. No European power can intervene for such protection without adopting measures on this continent which the United States would deem wholly inadmissible. If the protection of the United States is relied upon, the United States must exercise such control as will enable this country to protect its National interests and maintain the rights of those whose private capital is embarked in the work.

An inter-oceanic canal across the American Isthmus will change the geographical relations between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the United States, and between the United States and the rest of the world. It will cut across the great ocean thoroughfare between our Atlantic and our Pacific shores, and virtually a part of the coast line of the United States. Our merely commercial interest in it is greater than that of all other countries, while its relations to our power and prosperity as a Nation, to our means of defense, our unity, power and safety, are matters of paramount consideration to the people of the United States. No other great power would, under similar circumstances, fail to assert a rightful control over a work so closely and vitally affecting its interest and welfare.

Without urging further the grounds of my opinion, I repeat that it is in the right and duty of the United States to assert and maintain such supervision and authority over any inter-oceanic canal across the Isthmus that connects North and South America as will protect our National interests. This, I am quite sure, will be found not only consistent with the principle of paramount consideration to the people of the United States, but will prove of the most permanent advantage to commerce and civilization. (Signed) RUTHERFORD B. HAYES, Executive Mansion, March 8, 1880.

The Art of Writing.

We wonder sometimes, as we wade through a mass of correspondence, whether it is possible to teach good writing. The doubt may seem absurd, considering that the majority of civilized mankind can write, that every qualified teacher among 100,000 or 200,000 in Western Europe thinks himself or herself competent to teach the art, and that there must be some hundreds of men in England, or possibly some thousands, who make a living of some sort by practicing this specialty. Everybody, we shall be told, is taught, and some few people write well, and consequently to teach people to write well must be possible. Still, we have this little bit of evidence in favor of hesitation. Nobody ever saw any good hand who wrote a thoroughly good hand, and who had been regularly taught to do so. Good handwritings exist, undoubtedly, and are, we should say, rapidly on the increase; but the possessors of the art never admit that they acquired it through teaching, and in the majority of cases never were taught. When cross-examined they always affirm that some man or woman taught them to write, and that then a certain inclination or compulsion of circumstance, or desire to do everything well, or, in frequent instances, a caste-feeling, provoked them to teach themselves to write well. They were not taught, except in the most rudimentary sense of the word, and we don't know how they should be. Tutors and governesses have all caught up a system from the professional writing masters, and the professional writing masters are all dominated by two ideas, which are radically false. We always glance over the books they publish, and have read through a new one this week, which we do not intend to advertise in this article, as they are all alike. They all think that "copperplate writing" is the special hand of writing masters and bank clerks, is good writing, which it is not, being devoid of character, far too regular in form and, from the multiplicity of fine upstrokes, not easy to read; and they all believe that certain mechanical motions, if carefully taught, will produce clear writing. They will not and they do not. There never were two people yet in this world of ours who wrote exactly alike or who have the same control of their fingers or who ought, in order to produce good writing, to have held their pens alike, and the effort to make them do it only spoils their natural capabilities. No doubt those capabilities

are often naturally very small. The number of persons who are by nature not deft with their fingers is very large, and so is the number of those who cannot fix their attention; while the number of those who can do nothing well which they must do rapidly probably exceeds both. The difficulty of teaching a grown man to write decently is almost inconceivable—he seems never to see what is wanted—and something of that difficulty attaches to a vast proportion of children. Still, all persons not deformed or crippled in the hand, or deficient in eyesight, can be taught to write, and the reason why they are not taught properly must be some inherent defect in the system. We believe it to be the one mentioned, the effort to enforce a certain method, instead of trying to secure a certain result. The unhappy child, who is almost always, we admit necessarily, taught too early, is instructed to hold himself or herself in a particular attitude, which is sure to be the wrong one for five sights in ten, the proper attitude depending on the length of the child's vision; to hold the pen at a particular angle, which is also wrong, the fitting angle depending on the character of the pen and holder, and to grasp the pen at a certain distance from the nib, which is arbitrarily fixed, whereas the distance must be governed by the formation and strength of the child's fingers, and would be infinitely better left to his or her own instinct. Above all, there is a perpetual worry about the "resting" of the hand, though the easiest position varies with every child, and though no two men with much writing to do rest the fingers quite alike. The pupil is then taught to make lines in a certain direction, and to copy characters so large that they have no resemblance to writing at all, and to care particularly about up strokes and down strokes, and all manner of minutiae, which, if they are of any value at all, will soon come of themselves. So strong, in spite of centuries of experience, is the belief in this method, that machines for controlling the fingers while writing have repeatedly been invented; and the author of a book before us, a professional, is inclined to tie them up in some fashion with ribbon.

We believe that the whole of this method is a mistake, that there is no single system of *mechanique* for writing, and that a child belonging to the educated classes would be taught much better and more easily if, after being once able to make and recognize written letters, it were left alone, and praised or chidden, not for its method, but for the result. Let the boy hold his pen as he likes, and make his strokes as he likes, and write at the pace he likes—hurry, of course, being discouraged—but insist strenuously and persistently that his copy shall be legible, shall be clean, and shall approach the good copy set before him—namely, a well-written letter, not a rubbishy text on a single line, written as nobody but a writing-master ever did or will write till the world's end. He will make a muddle at first, but he will soon make a passable imitation of his copy, and ultimately develop a characteristic and strong hand, which may be good or bad, but will not be either meaningless, undecided or illegible. This hand will alter, of course, very greatly as he grows older. It may alter at eleven, because it is at that age that the range of the eyes is fixed, and the short-sight betrays itself; and it will alter at seventeen, because then the system of taking notes at lecture, which ruins most hands, will have cramped and temporarily spoiled the writing; but the character will form itself again, and will be never deficient in clearness or decision. The idea that it is to be clear will have stamped itself, and confidence will not have been destroyed by worrying little rules about attitude, angle and slope, which the very irritation of the pupils ought to convince the teachers are, from some personal peculiarities, inapplicable. The lad will write, as he does anything else that he cares to do, as well as he can and with a certain efficiency and speed. Almost every letter he gets will give him some assistance, and the master's remonstrance on his illegibility will be attended to, like any other caution given in the curriculum. As it is, he simply thinks that he does not write well, instead of thinking that not to write well is to fall short in a very useful accomplishment and to be *pro tanto* a failure.

We are not quite sure that another process ought not to be gone through before writing is taught at all. Suppose our boys and girls were taught to read manuscript a little? They are taught to read print, but manuscript is not print, or very like it, and they are left to pick up the power of reading that the best way they can; they never devote half an hour a day for six months to manuscript reading. If they did, it would be easier to them all their lives, and they would learn to believe in legibility as the greatest, or, at any rate, the most useful, quality that writing can display—an immense improvement, if our experience can be trusted in the usual youthful ideal on the subject. The business of life, no doubt, soon teaches children to read manuscript; but many of them never read it easily, and retain through life an unconquerable aversion to the work, from the fatigue and vexation which it causes them. We have known men so conscious of this defect that they always have important letters read aloud to them, and others who would read any work, however anxious on other grounds to accept it, if it involved the frequent perusal of long manuscripts in varied handwritings. No doubt the tendency to a broad and coarse but beautifully legible handwriting, which has conquered the upper class and is slowly filtering downwards, is diminishing this reluctance, but it would be more rapidly removed if a little trouble were taken to teach children to read handwriting. They hardly see any ill they begin to receive correspondence, and are never compelled to read any, and consequently learn to write what they cannot read, without intelligence and without pleasure.—London Spectator.

The difference between an umbrella and a woman is that you can sometimes shut up the umbrella.—New Haven Register.

The Diaphote.

Dr. H. E. Licks, of old South Bethlehem, after three years labor, claims that he has perfected an instrument by which forms and colors can be sent by wire the same as words are sent. He calls the instrument a diaphote. The word diaphote, from the Greek, *dia*, signifying through, and *photos*, signifying light, has been selected as its name, implying that the light traveled through or along a wire. He read a paper on his invention before a scientific society here.

The diaphote consists of four essential parts, the receiving mirror, the transmitting wire, a common galvanic battery and the reproducing speculum. Dr. Licks gave a detailed account of the many experiments undertaken to determine the proper composition and arrangement of the mirror and speculum. For the former he had finally selected an amalgam of selenium and iodide of silver, and for the latter a compound of selenium and chromium. The peculiar sensitiveness of iodide of silver and chromium to light has long been known, and their practical use in photography suggested their application in the diaphote. It was found, however, after many experiments that their action must be so modified that each ray of light should influence the electric current proportionally to its position in the solar spectrum, and selenium was ascertained to be best adapted to this purpose. At first a small mirror was employed with only a single wire, but the images reproduced in the speculum were indistinct and confused, so that it became necessary to make the mirror of a number of small pieces, each about one-third of a square inch in area, and having a small wire attached. In the diaphote exhibited by Dr. Licks to the Club the mirror was six inches by four and had seventy-two fine wires, which are gathered together into one about a foot back of the frame, the whole then being finely wrapped with an insulating covering, and on reaching the receiving speculum, each little wire was connected to a division similarly placed as in the mirror. From a common galvanic battery wires also ran to each diaphotic plate, and thus a circuit was formed which could be closed or not at pleasure. The theoretical action of the instrument appears now to be in the following: The waves of light from an object are conducted through an ordinary camera, so that they fall on certain of the divisions of the mirror when the electric current is closed. The light and accompanying heat produce momentary chemical changes in the amalgam of the mirror, which modify the electric current and cause similar changes in the corresponding partitions of the remote speculum, thus reproducing a similar image, which by a second camera may be readily seen by the eye or thrown on a screen. Dr. Licks explained how the proportions of selenium in the mirror and speculum should be scientifically adjusted to the size of the divisions and the resistance of the electric circuit, so as to avoid any blending of the proportions of the reproduced image. This, he said, had been the problem which had caused him the most difficulty, and which at one time had seemed almost insurmountable.

At the close of the paper an illustration was given of the powers of the instrument. The mirror of the diaphote, in charge of a committee of three, was taken to a room in the lower part of the building and the connecting wires laid through the halls and stairways to the speculum on the lecturer's platform. Before the mirror the committee held in succession various objects, illuminating each by the light of a burning magnesium wire, since the rays from gas are deficient in actinic power, and simultaneously on the speculum appeared the secondary images, which, for exhibition to the audience, were thrown on a screen considerably magnified. An apple, a pen-knife and a trade-dollar were the first objects shown; on the latter the outlines of the goddess of Liberty were recognized, and the date 1878 was plainly legible. A watch was held five minutes before the mirror, and the audience could plainly perceive the motion of the minute hand on the screen, but the movement of the second hand was not satisfactorily seen, although Professor Kammich, by looking into the camera, thought that it was there quite perceptible. An ink bottle, a flower and a part of a teaker handle were also shown, and when the head of a little kitten appeared on the screen the club testified its satisfaction by the most hearty applause. After the close of the experiments the scientists extended their congratulations to Dr. Licks, and the president made a few remarks on the probable scientific and industrial applications of the diaphote in the future. With the telephone and the diaphote it might yet be possible for friends, separated by the wide Atlantic, to hear and see each other at the same time, to talk, as it were, face to face. In connection with the interlocking switch system it might be used to enable signal-men of the central office to see hundreds of miles of railroad track at once, thus lessening the liability to accident. In connection with photolithography it might be so employed that the great English dailies could be printed in New York a few hours before their appearance in London.—Reading (Pa.) Eagle.

The most recently published figures show that suicide is on the increase in France. Before the Franco-German war the average number of suicides only slightly exceeded 5,000 a year, and now they exceed 6,000. In Paris there are three times as many suicides committed as in the country. Most of the men who destroy themselves are bachelors. The spring is the time of year when suicide is most frequent, and death by hanging is more usually resorted to than any other mode of self-destruction, being considered more expeditious.

The suggestion has been made that in some quarters, and especially in large cities, women could be advantageously and properly employed as aids to the superintendent of the census, in securing an enumeration of the inhabitants and obtaining information relating to industrial statistics.