

TIMELY TOPICS.

According to the Los Angeles (Cal.) Herald, the farmers in that section are going to experience a novel embarrassment. It says that so great is the quantity of land under crop, that there are not enough threshing machines to handle more than two-thirds of the yield. Meanwhile there is a great paucity of machines in the market.

Potato flour, or the dried pulp of the potato, is attaining great importance in the arts. It is stated that in Lancashire, England, 20,000 tons of it are sold annually, and it brings at present in Liverpool about double as much in the market as wheat flour. It is used for sizing and other manufacturing purposes, and when precipitated with acid is turned into starch. When calcined it is employed as a dressing for silk.

The son of Sitting Bull was recently induced to sit for his photograph at Fort Buford. This young warrior was very suspicious that the camera was some kind of an infernal machine, but finally consented on condition that he might sit with his revolver in his hand, and at the first sign of danger shoot the artist. The artist decided to take the chances, and a fine cabinet picture was the result.

The greatest length of Greece is about 250 miles, its greatest width about 165 miles. It includes 19,353 square miles, and has a population of about a million and a half. By the recent decision of the conference of European powers at Berlin there was added a slice of Turkey (Thessaly) to the territory of Greece, containing 400,000 inhabitants. Turkey is not disposed to give her consent, but probably will have to.

At the fishery exhibition at Berlin, America's share of the spoils were as follows: Address of thanks and a gold medal; one honorary prize; a gold medal, with special honorary diploma; nine gold medals, exclusive of the special ones before mentioned; fourteen silver medals; twelve bronze medals and seventeen honorable mentions—in all sixty-nine awards to the United States. This is good fishing.

The census shows that several Massachusetts cities beside Boston have made rapid progress in population. During the past ten years Lowell, which in 1870 had 41,000, now has about 60,000. Lawrence has advanced in ten years from 28,921 to 38,500, and Lynn from 28,233 to nearly 40,000. Boston shows an increase of 130,000. The increase in the cities and manufacturing towns has not been made at the expense of the country towns and villages, which seem to hold their own.

A retired Paris tradesman, advanced in years, recently took it into his head to buy a coffin. Once in his lodgings he ought to would try how one felt in it. He got in and lay down, but being old and stiff he could not get out again. There he lay for several days, when the hall porter, weary at not having seen him, knocked at his door. Hearing groans, the porter broke the door and found the state of things described. He broke the sides of the coffin and released the old man. With the aid of beef tea he was restored to health.

A British official, reporting on the trade of the east coast of Madagascar, says that British trade has suffered seriously from a large importation of American gray cotton sheetings. Manchester manufacturers have been so completely supplanted that British firms who formerly imported largely Manchester gray cottons, deal almost exclusively in American cloths, and one British merchant at Tamatave has become agent to a Boston firm, and received from them their cotton goods on consignment.

Governor Murray, the recently appointed executive of Utah, delivered an oration, in which he took occasion to outline his policy toward the Mormons. He said that the tree of liberty had grown broad enough to shelter all patriots, native and naturalized, and was rich enough in timber to furnish scaffolds and coffins for all who conspire against the Constitution or violate the written laws. He then went on to say that until Utah had abjured Mormonism there was no possibility that it could become a State.

The Railway Reporter says that on the leading roads where connections must be made, if possible, only engineers known to be brave are given engines on express trains, and as soon as the engineer shows the least timidity about running fast, he is taken from his engine and given one on a freight train to run. The first sign that an engineer is becoming timid is that he will be five or ten minutes late, possibly half an hour, for some days or nights in succession. He is then called to account, and unless his reasons are convincing, another engineer is given his train to run.

The driver of a San Buenaventura stage, in California, lately had an adventure which he will not soon forget. While making a trip up a passenger who was on the roof seat above and behind the driver, suddenly became insane, and declared that he was pursued by two men. Drawing a small, new hatchet, he held it over the driver's head, threatening to bury it in his brain if he did not drive faster. The driver, utterly helpless, ran his team at full speed for some seven miles, and finally drew up at the Newhall house, where the lunatic sprang down and took to the hills.

Sacrilege was singularly punished in London the other day, where a thief broke into a vestry, and trying what he supposed to be the communion wine, found it poisonous. It was a singular thing, also, that he should write to a paper, stating the facts and complaining of the danger likely to be run by the congregation in tasting the noxious fluid. It turned out, however, that he had swallowed several ounces of a disinfecting fluid, supposing it to be wine, and he has also had the hard luck to be caught and put on trial for sacrilege.

Statistics relating to emigration from Germany have been recently submitted to the German parliament. The number of emigrants during the past eight years are given as follows: 1879, 135,650; 1873, 103,638; 1874, 45,112; 1875, 30,773; 1876, 28,368; 1877, 21,964; 1878, 24,217; 1879, 33,327. Important as was the increase marked by last year, as compared with the years immediately preceding, the numbers given for the two years following the Franco-German war have never since been anything like reached. The 33,327 registered for 1879 consisted of 20,106 males and 13,221 females. No less than 21,150 were from Prussia, North America was the goal of 30,808, Brazil of 1,630, and Australia of 274.

A Chinese wash-house in San Francisco being burned to the ground, and eleven of its occupants burned to death, the newspapers describe them as exhibiting, by the positions in which the bodies were found, the agony they suffered from the fire. The Pacific Medical and Surgical Journal rightly regards this as a prevalent popular error, that being burned to death is necessarily painful. In almost every case of this kind the gases developed by the flames put the sleepers into an unconscious condition long before the flames reach their beds. In other words, they are practically anesthetized before being burned. So that, in spite of the fact that the bodies may exhibit contortions, it is none the less true that the unfortunate victims die a painless death.

One of the bills which Congress did not pass at the late session, though it was favorably reported by the committee, was Mr. Ballou's spelling reform bill, appointing a committee of seven persons to examine the "orthography used in the public documents and in the public schools of the District of Columbia, and to inquire how much its defects increase the cost of the public printing, and how far they are an impediment to the acquisition and use of the English language and to education." The committee on education and labor, to whom the matter was referred, reported that irregular spelling in the English language "causes a loss of two years of each child's school-time," is a "main cause of the alarming illiteracy of our people," and costs "many millions of dollars yearly for teachers and for writing and printing superfluous letters."

An intelligent correspondent of the Dublin Freeman's Journal prophesies the garnering of abundant harvests in Ireland this year from July to November, and if the prophecy shall be justified by the great event there should be no need of Irish relief funds next year, and no such demand as Mr. Parnell has just made—that a gift of \$1,000,000 be taken from the Irish church fund for the relief of the suffering. The late heavy rains, following the long drought, have caused potatoes to grow with rapidity, the cereals which have appeared above ground are of a rich and heavy green hue, the artificial grasses are making satisfactory progress, and the pastures look beautiful; indeed, the "whole face of the country smiles upon the husbandman." Should the weather be normally warm next month, a hoavy cereal produce may be looked for in the districts. What is most needed in Ireland now, according to this correspondent, is the development of dairy industries, and a greater amount of land given over to the cultivation of culinary vegetables.

"There is no new thing under the sun." Even the elevated railroads, which certainly seemed to be entitled to claim at least the credit of originality were anticipated half a century ago in the wilds of Ohio, where a lot of speculators proposed to build one on piles of wood. Why they adopted that plan does not appear, unless it was supposed that it would be cheaper to get an even surface on piles than to grade a road bed on the solid ground. Indeed, when New Yorkers read the estimated cost of this road they will wish that the projectors had lived long enough to install some of their ideas into the constructors of the metropolitan roads. They calculated that they could complete 1,050 miles of double-track road for just \$906,950, or for less than \$1,000 per mile. The scheme, according to the Cleveland Leader, which has drawn the records from their obscurity, so captivated the people of Ohio that the company not only got the right of way but also a guarantee of one-half of the money it would cost. The piles were to be driven ten feet apart—two rows for each track, of four rows in all. On the piles, or posts, were to be placed longitudinal trips of chestnut planking, on these the cross ties and then the rails, which were to be of wood with a strip or band of iron on top. The first pile was driven June 16, 1839, and one-third of the distance between Cleveland and Toledo was built before the company failed, owing to the refusal of the State to grant further aid. Some of the posts are said to be still standing in good condition.

PAINTING BLACK EYES.

The Queer Occupation of an Artist in New York.

A New York correspondent came across an advertisement which informed readers that blackened or bruised eyes could be made natural instantly by calling at the "artist's" residence on the west side. Calling at the studio, the correspondent found a large room filled with paintings and other evidences of culture.

However, I was not in search of high art, the correspondent continues. Far more interesting was the live tableau in the center of the room that met my gaze. Imagine seated in a steamer chair, in an easy, reclining position, a very fashionably-attired youth (on the day after the Fourth), whose pattern-leather boots, white tie, and dress coat indicated that a lark of the night before had just been finished—the results of the said lark being visible in a large and exceedingly dusky horseshoe somebody's fist had imprinted under one orb.

The artist, a pleasant-faced, stalwart young man, busily engaged in mixing some preparation. Hardly looking up he waved me to a seat, saying: "I will attend to your eye in a moment, madam!" Glad for this opportunity for observation, I picked up a newspaper and watched his operations on the young swell with interest. First, the artist poured into a bowl a liberal amount of a liquid, which, with a soft sponge and the air of a mother administering soothing syrup to her babe, he applied to the injured cheek. During this process he remarked: "I'm afraid you have been trying to cure it with something cold."

"By Jove, how it hurts!" ejaculated the patient. "Yes, she put some ice on it afterward, but it did not seem to do any good."

"Of course not," said the oracle, severely; "I don't know why people will persist in making such a mistake. Ice, or oysters, or cold water they will apply in spite of the fact that anything cold makes the blood concentrate beneath the skin and turns it black. What they should do is to bathe the bruise in water as hot as they can stand it; that scatters the blood and keeps the skin from discoloring."

"Well," said the exhausted hero of a fracas, with a feeble attempt to be witty, "when a fellow gets into hot water he don't think of pouring it on." By this time the live canvas was ready for coloring, and, with a tiny brush and delicate strokes, the artist proceeded to lay on the flesh tints. For nearly half an hour he worked steadily, pausing frequently to add another shade, then toning the edges down, then allowing the paint to dry, and then softly rubbing on a fine powder that removed the gloss. Then he stepped back and viewed his handiwork with the air of a stern critic, finally holding a small mirror before the youth, who expressed my thoughts when he exclaimed in admiring accents: "By George, judging from the looks, I couldn't tell which eye was blacked!" Then, with as much of a smile as he had energy for, he added: "How much is it, old boy?"

"Five dollars," was the answer. "It's worth that to keep me out of a row with the governor, but deuce take it, I haven't a fiver left; but take this until I call for it," and he thrust upon the artist a handsome pearl scarfpin. "Now, what can I do for you, ma'am?" queried he of the brush, after a disappointed look upon my unblackened countenance. Whereupon I explained my mission, and the artist, not averse to the idea of being written up, assented to my staying awhile to take notes. Scarcely had he spoken when a little lady entered. She was modestly dressed in black, and had a rather pretty face, though terribly disfigured by a deep semicircle of black and blue under one of her eyes. She seemed a little embarrassed, and was profuse in her explanations of how she came by it.

"Indeed," she said, "I never had such a thing happen to me before in my life, but you see I was going down stairs with a tray full of dishes, and my foot caught in the matting and tripped, and I fell all the way down. Such a thing never happened to me before, and I wonder I did not break every bone in my body. Such a shame it should have come on my eye. I never had a black one before, and it is so mortifying."

Again the artist plied his art, taking great pains to match the color of her complexion, and persevering until the ugly-looking mark was rendered invisible, adding as he concluded: "You can wash your face in cold water, but don't use hot or soap, because it will bring the paint off. With a little care it will last until the eye is cured." The lady, after careful examination, expressed herself satisfied, and inquired the cost. "Two dollars," said the artist, considerately, after a glance at her modest toilet. "Two dollars!" fairly screamed the lady. "Two dollars for such a pesky little job as that. I never heard of such an imposition. Why, young man, in all my life I never paid more than fifty cents before."

This assertion, coming after her profuse explanations, had a very comical effect, which she was quick to perceive and, without further parley she put down the money and departed. When the door closed on her, the correspondent inquired if the artist had many lady callers.

"They are not uncommon, and they come as this one did, with profuse apologies and explanations, thinking, poor things, that their stories about tumbling downstairs and running up against doors will be swallowed by me, as if I didn't know that the brutes who beat

their wives are not confined to the wearers of fustian and cowhide boots. You would be surprised to see some of the ladies who come here in carriages. Ladies living in fine houses and dressed in silks and diamonds, that would die of shame to have the truth suspected come here to have the blows of the cowards who pass for fine gentlemen hidden.

They would sooner be torn to pieces than own up. I never knew of but one lady that did own up. She was a bride, only been married three weeks, and lived on Madison avenue. One day her husband got into a rage and threw his boot at her. It struck her on the forehead, leaving a terrible mark; but after the shock was over all the poor thing thought of was to keep it from her parents, for she had married against their wishes."

"What other disfigurements are you called on to conceal?"

"Moles and birthmarks. You see a lady may have a very beautiful, white neck, or snowy, well-molded arms, but be unable to wear a party dress on account of one or more of these blemishes. I have regular customers, who, whenever they go to a ball, send for me to paint over these marks. And it is singular the shapes they are in. There is one belle in this city who has on her right arm a regular cross and crown, bright red in color, and large enough to be seen across the room. Another young lady, who has the shoulders of a model, has upon one the initials C. L. in red spots about the size of currants. Still another lady has on her forehead a perfect miniature ladder, though, of course, the majority of these marks assume no distinct form."

"You must sometimes have ladies who have really suffered from an accident?"

"Oh, yes. There was one young lady here last week whose face was covered with crimson spots big as silver quarters. She was engaged to be married and to please her betrothed had taken a course of lessons in cooking from Miss Corson. The day before the wedding she invited him to a little supper of her own preparing, intending to give him a pleasant premonition of bliss to come, in the shape of good housekeeping. Her chef d'oeuvre was a dish of soft-shell crabs, and, alas, as she was in the act of frying them, the hot grease spluttered up and burnt her face badly in half a dozen places. It was too late to defer the wedding, and accordingly she had to have her face done entirely over for the ceremony, but it turned out such an improvement on her natural complexion that I do not think she minded it much."

Before leaving I asked from what class of men he drew the largest number of blackened-eye customers.

"From sporting men and the wealthy business men. The latter class, of course, would be injured by being seen with such disfigurements. There is one gentleman on Wall street who has hardly missed a visit to me this year. Every Saturday night he starts off on a tate that lasts him until Monday morning, when, bright and early, he comes here to get fixed up before going to business. One funny case I had last winter was when two gentlemen, conspicuous in the management of the Madison Square garden, got into a quarrel, in the course of which one had both eyes blacked; the other only one. He of the two black eyes came here to be painted over, and told me if I would refuse to fix the other man's eye he would pay me three times what it was worth. This I promised not to do, and in consequence the worst punished of the two men went round boasting how he had come out ahead, as no one could detect his bruises. The ridicule fell on he of a single and apparently blackened orb."

How the Araucanos Live.

The dwelling of the Araucano is round in shape, with a conical roof, the center of which has an opening for the escape of smoke. The size is in proportion to the family occupants. It is made of upright posts planted in the ground, and horizontal poles are fastened all around, leaving a narrow space for the hide doorway. Over the poles are tied, one hanging down over the other, bunches of dried grass or straw to keep out the rain and wind. Some of the cañiques are said to possess as many as nine wives, who sleep upon dried hides spread upon the floor, the rest of the family occupying the spare space, the feet toward the middle of the room, where a fire is kept up during wet or cold weather. Men and women bathe very morning at daybreak in the rivers or creeks, and at the trading posts it is said that the women are very cleanly in their cooking, using wooden spoons in place of their hands. When not engaged in war or hunting expeditions they delight in stretching out at full length on the ground in the hot rays of the sun. The women do the outdoor work, the planting and gathering of crops, and attend to indoor work as well. Their cows supply the principal wants of the family, and are taken great care of. The husbands are kind to their wives, to all appearances, and the traders say that very seldom does a quarrel take place among the women.

Crowds of excursionists go up nightly by the railway to see Vesuvius illuminated by electric light. The traffic at night is greater than in the day time, and there are not enough cars to meet the demand.

An old lady with several marriageable daughters feeds them on fish diet because it is rich in phosphorus, which is the essential thing in making matches

A Chinese Romance.

People complain a good deal of the sensational character of modern English novels. But the wildest plots in these do not equal the every-day occurrences of Chinese domestic life. We know, for instance, that young ladies who are crossed in love do sometimes die of a broken heart. But we don't exactly find in the London Gazette—which is the same sort of a paper as the Pekin Gazette—the sort of notice which follows: "January 31st. His majesty the emperor directs the proper board to bestow the usual mark of imperial favor on the daughter of a man in Pekin named Ho En Tsao, who, hearing of the death of her betrothed, vowed eternal celibacy, took poison and died." I do not know if that sort of loyalty to one's love is quite commendable; but the Chinese think differently.

By the way, certain writers on China deny that the Chinese ever feel the sentiment of love as we define it. However that may be, there are Chinese examples of faithfulness which are not often paralleled amongst ourselves. I avail myself of Mr. Balfour's authority. Some years ago, at Putung, a girl of good family was betrothed to a youth of the name of Chao, who unfortunately died shortly before the day appointed for the espousals. The bereaved bride was inconsolable, and entreated her parents to allow her to visit the coffin of her lost love. This request was refused on grounds of propriety; but the girl, breaking all bonds, ran away to the house of mourning, and throwing herself on the floor beside the corpse, howled in the most determined manner. All attempts to pacify her were useless; and she insisted, moreover, on taking up her abode with that of the dead lad's parents from that time forward, and devoting herself to them until their death. This was very heroic, of course, but it seems that the old people would rather have been without her. However, she would take no denial, and absolutely did stay and earn enough to pay for her own keep, and to contribute toward the other expenses, for about five years. Then the old couple died; and this virtuous maiden, having honored them then with burial, prepared for her own doom.

About this time political matters were in a very unsettled state, and it was rumored in the neighborhood that the Tai-ping rebels were approaching fast. The excesses of the insurgents were of course well known and dreaded, and the girl was fully aware that if they reached the place while she was alive, her unprotected situation would expose her to the loss of liberty and everything else that she possessed. She accordingly dressed herself in all her richest clothes, as though for a festivity; and then—so goes the story—took a needle, threaded it with silk, and sewed her garments securely on to her own flesh. This done, she drank poison and died. The very next day the rebels came; discovering this lovely corpse, and seeing at a glance the proof of the girl's purity and honor, they treated her with the profoundest reverence. So far, indeed, from robbing her of a single jewel, they gave her honorable interment.—Temple Bar.

In a period of ten years, from 1868 to 1878, the exports of all cereals from the United States increased from 39,000,000 bushels to 189,000,000 bushels. In addition to this it is said that the exportation of live stock into which corn enters more or less, has increased tenfold within the past two years.

Faintness before eating, pain and distress afterward, prevented by Malt Bitters.

One of the census enumerators of McLennan county, Texas, found a widow thirty-five years old with a son twenty-seven years old. The generally accepted explanation of the circumstances is that the boy lived and claimed to be older than he was.

Teachers, authors and others of sedentary habits highly prize Malt Bitters.

Providence seems to watch over the sleeping man. Mr. Darral, while walking in his sleep, stepped from a fourth-story window of a Harrisburg (Pa.) hotel. He only hurt his wrist.

The most troublesome and dangerous effects sometimes arise from the slightest cause, and often the Baby's serious sickness could be prevented by promptly using Dr. Bull's Baby Syrup at the beginning. Price only 25 cents a bottle.

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"OH HOW MY BACK ACHES!"—How often we hear it said. Well may the victim complain, for the kidneys are suffering; and when that is the case there is always danger—great danger. Kidney diseases, if let run, too often end fatally. There is, however, a sure cure for them. Hunt's Remedy is a medicine that does not fail to cure kidney, bladder, liver and urinary complaints. Even Bright's disease, the terror of physicians, is cured by Hunt's Remedy, the great kidney and liver medicine. Try it, and cure your backache before it terminates in something worse. Sold by all druggists. Trial size, 75 cents.

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Are You Not in Good Health? If the liver is the source of your trouble, you can find a wholesale remedy in Dr. Stanger's Liver Syrup, the only vegetable cathartic which acts directly on the liver. Cures all Bilious Disorders. For Book address Dr. SANFORD, 162 Broadway, New York.

The Voltic Belt Co., Marshall, Mich., will send their Electro-Voltaic Belts to the afflicted upon 30 days' trial. See their advertisement in this paper headed, "On 30 Days' Trial."

TEXAS LAND and Tax Agency, Foster & Harrell (oldest Agents in), Houston, Texas. One pair of boots or shoes can be saved every year by using Lyon's Patent Heel Stiffeners.

At a recent meeting of the Liverpool Engineering society, a paper was read touching the probable exhaustion of the coal supply, and in which the author advocated the substitution of the tides as a producer of motion which would outrival all other sources of mechanical power. A compressed air chamber filled by the tide at Brighton, for instance, would, it is claimed, run an atmospheric railway, such as Brunel invented, from that place to London. If, therefore, the tides can be thus utilized, it is argued that both railways and factories—in fact, all the work now performed by the steam engine—could be accomplished by them; and this, too, with no jerk, no steam, no smoke, no noise.

An Ohio girl was struck by lightning while splitting wood in a thunderstorm, but her father, who sat reading a novel, scarcely felt the shock.

Arkansas society is agitated over the question of whether or not the groom at a wedding should wear his revolver belt inside or outside of his dress coat.

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