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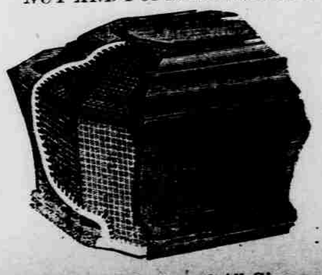

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THE EDITOR'S LEISURE HOURS.

Points and Paragraphs of Things Present, Past and Future.

People ought always economize as much as is possible; but the short crop and low prices all through this section this year make it necessary to practice a system of most rigid economy. The people are growing independent by reason of economy during the latter years, and now let them continue it awhile longer and they will be still more independent.

Of recent years there seem to be more electric storms than formerly, and some one has observed that it may possibly be due to the fact that there is more "manufactured" electricity than ever before. We do not know about that, but certainly it does seem true that we hear of more storms and electric displays than formerly. Others say that the denuding of the forests of their timbers has much to do with the greater number of windstorms; while others think that even the seasons are different from what they were a few decades ago, and the whole system of nature's operations seems to be changing.

Mr. John E. Ray, the new superintendent of the institution for the dumb and blind in Raleigh, has taken charge of his work. He returned to North Carolina after an absence of several years in the West, and is greatly delighted at the progress the State has made. He says North Carolina is making progress in mining and manufacturing which those who remain here all the time cannot realize. The many factories which dot the railroads where a few years ago there were none, he says, is a sure sign of the growth and development of the State. He says the eyes of the world are now turned towards the South.

We should be glad to be able to impress young men and boys with the fact that it is worth while to study and make themselves intelligent. Knowledge is power now—as great as ever in the history of the world—and it will ever be power, increasing power as the ages roll slowly by. We were impressed with this truth recently as we heard a man who had been a "working man," but then held a special position of trust, present certain claims for an interest with which he was concerned. Nothwithstanding he had learned to work he had not failed to learn to think. Let our boys and young men strive to attain unto the highest degree of intelligence possible.

A writer in the Sunday-school Times discusses the Sacratic question and says as a premise for his discussion that "the best stimulus to thought is that which has come down to us through the ages; and which bears the name of the greatest of teachers in ancient Athens."

The Socratic method as discussed is the drawing out of the thoughts of the pupil and leading him by artful questions to such research as will answer his own. But the writer says that in order to the successful practice of the Socratic method, there must be a Socrates behind it. The suggestion is a good one, and teachers may profit by it; for it is evidently better to stimulate a pupil to do his own thinking than to do it for him.

It is by no means all one way in the political fight that is upon the country. Talking with a friend who was on the cars a few days ago coming from Philadelphia, it was said that most people in Philadelphia favor the gold standard and they are quite sure McKinley will be elected. They seem just as certain, our friend said, that McKinley will be elected as the people here do that Bryan will be the successful candidate.

THE COMMONWEALTH warns all against disappointment after the election. We hope Mr. Bryan will be elected, and we stand ready to do our part to bring about the result which we all hope for; but even with the election of Mr. Bryan money will not grow on bushes. We must continue to strive [illegible] as usually.

Written for THE COMMONWEALTH.]

A LETTER FROM JAPAN.

GENERAL GRANTS TREE IN NAGASAKI.

Notes of Travel.

VII.

I arrived in Nagasaki one beauiiful morning and after the ship had dropped her anchor, I made a visit ashore and seeing the whole city decorated with flags, flowers and Japanese lanterns and the natives parading the streets, I asked what the meaning was and I was told by a Jap that it was the celebration of a wedding. The Japanese are a very nice people and they have a decided preference for we "Yankee" men, as they call us.

This city is nicely situated with hills around the barbor and they are all cultivated. The different color of vegetation makes the hills beautiful. The boatmen have the oldest looking boats you ever saw, with little houses built on top of them and they can glide through the water with surprising rapidity. The natives take a bath every morning of their life regardless of the weather.

Nagasaki has many places of interest to visit. General and Mrs. Grant planted two trees in the Nagasaki park, which are still growing and are well cared for by the natives.

Now we come to Yokohama, Japan. My visit here was a very sad one, for we brought with us from Nagasaki the small-pox. We lost three on board of our ship from this disease, and their bodies were cremated and interred in one grave. Yokohoma is more like a European city than any other port in the far east. Many foreign people are in business here. The harbor is beautiful and is protected by a break-water over a mile in length, that was built by the United States. The indemnity was paid to the United States in the fifties, for the murder of some of our countrymen and was refunded on the conditions that the Yokohoma breakwater should be built. There is much to be seen here—there are fine Japanese theatres and tea gardens, there is a number of hot springs that can be reached in one day's ride from the city. Many ancient temples and idols are to be seen in the near vicinity, among them being, "Diabutsu" a very large gold idol of some thirty feet in length—of course he is not solid gold.

There is a railroad running from here to Tokjo, Hahodade and other large cities in Japan. This is the only place in the east where draught animals and machinery are utilized to any extent. Many Japanese professional men are in business here, who have been well educated in the United States. The silk, paper and toy industry is carried on here to a large extent. The inhabitants are very polite and obliging and have a great respect for all Americans.

Japan is the land of flowers, but the flowers had no odor. Japan is a beautiful country. I took a steamer one morning that was leaving Nagasaki, bound for Kobe, Japan, and her route was through the Inland Sea, and it was the prettiest sight I ever saw. Nice little towns about a half a mile apart on each side, and all the land cultivated. The passage is very narrow and you could see from one side to the other and see the natives at work on their little farms.

C. T. CUKRIE.

A New Soporific.

N. Y. Tribune.

It is said that a new soporific, to which the name pellotin has been given, has been discovered in a Mexican cactus called anhalonium. The native Mexicans eat slices of the plant, which they call "pellote." Its hypnotic alkaloid has been separated by Dr. Hefter of Leipsic. One grain of pellotin is equal in its effects to 15½ grains of trional and 31 grains of hydrate of chloral. It is effective in quieting delirium tremens, only in large doses.

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Farm Hints for October.

Selected.

With two good corn years in succession prices of corn will consequently be low, but a single "off year" in corn will make a great difference, as the consumption is large and a shortage in the crop is quickly felt over every portion of the country.

When prices are low it may be due to causes which will soon pass away. At this season many farmers sell in order to realize cash to meet obligations and to avoid storage during the winter; hence the bulk of crops is now moving and prices will be better latter on, as the markets will not then be so liberally supplie.

Bare spots in the pasture are obnoxious. There is but one remedy, which is to use fertilizer liberally on such places and sow seed this fall or early in the spring, first loosening the top soil, but cattle should not be allowed on the pasture until the vacant places are well covered.

An excellent mulch for strawberry plants is stable manure. Spread it around the plants on the beds if the rows are matted. In the spring the refuse may be raked off and clean straw substituted. The rains will take out the soluble partions of the manure and carry the plant food to the roots of the plants.

Every farmer should keep a large flock of hens during the winter, as they can then be given the more attention than in summer. Poultry gives returns every day in the year, and the egg basket has done more than its share in assisting to furnish the family supplies when crops have failed. Poultry raising deserves more recognition on farms than is usually bestowed.

Windbreaks will be appreciated in winter, and to grow them set out a row or two of arbor vitae or Norway spruce, keeping the young plants trimmed the first year or two and then permit them to grow undisturbed. Placed on the north side of a barn or house the thick hedge (for that is what it will be) will add greatly to the protection of the buildings.

Small trees will root better than those that are larger, and the young trees will start off in growth sooner and make better trees than the larger ones. There is really no time saved in attempting to use large trees. They are liable to meet with some drawback, which requires a year or more for recovery, while some of them may not thrive at all.

How much an acre will produce depends up climate, fertility of soil and other circumstances. In Switzerland an acre keeps five cows, which are kept on the soiling system. In Japan a five-acre farm is considered a large one. In this country in the growing of "truck" as much as $500 has been made in a year from an acre where the land was near a large market.

Farmers who have large herds of cattle are the most successful because the cattle are consumers of much that is grown on the farm, and, therefore, assist in creating a home market. Every pound of food that can be utilized on the farm to produce something is so much saved in the cost of transportation, hauling, etc. It is the conversion of substances into articles that the market demands that enables farmers to secure profits. Corn, oats and hay are sold to advantage when used for producing beef, butter and milk.

Greek Fire.

Greek fire, which had several other names—wild fire, liquid fire, wet fire, and fire rain—descriptive of its destructiveness, is said to have been the most destructive engine of war previous to gunpowder. Discovered by Callinicus, a Syrian, it was first used in the siege of Constantinople, 73-8, and at Mecca, 690.

Your Boy Won't Live a Month.

So Mr. Gilman Brown, of 34 Mill St. South Gardner, Mass., was told by the doctors. His son had Lung trouble, follwing Typhoid Malaria, and he spent three hundred and seventy-five dollars with doctors, who finally gave him up saying: "Your boy won't live a month." He tried Dr. King's New Discovery, and a few bottles restored him to health and enabled him to go to work a perfectly well man. He says he owes his present good health to use of Dr. King's New Discovery, and knows it to be the best in the world for Lung trouble. Trial bottles Free at E. T. Whitehead & Co.'s Drug Store.

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THE BICYCLE.

ITS POSITION AS A SOCIAL FACTOR.

Among Other Things a Great Leveler.

Philadelphia Record.

It is quite common for persons who are not riders themselves to say that bicycling is but a "craze" or a "fad" which will soon die out, and that in a few years the bicycle will be a drug on the market. In this they make a grave error. The wheel has risen above being a toy; it has become to many persons one of the necessaries of life. It is another step forward in the development of mankind—a long step, for it enables a man to transport himself from place to place at five times the distance with practically no cost beyond the original purchase price, and without any necessity of expensive tracks or roadways. Comparatively small as to its cost, and with little expense for maintenance, the bicycle has been the means of starting a social revolution.

In the last three years the wheel has done more to advance the cause of temperance than all the agitation of the twenty-five years previous. Saloon-keepers claim that it has materially injured their business; that the music halls and beer gardens, which had heretofore been thronged on pleasant evenings, are now practically deserted; and that while an occasional rider may drop in for refreshments, he contents himself with a single glass of beer or a bottle of mineral water. There is certainly truth in this statement; for while wheeling may produce an active thirst, a steady head is necessary for safe riding.

Cigar dealers are also complaining that their business has been injuriously affected; and riding undoubtedly interferes with smoking, thus decreasing the consumption of tobacco. One of the prominent journals of the tobacco trade claims that the sales of cigars have decreased this present year a million a day.

As a social leveler the bicycle has been unequaled. The immense army of riders is made up of all classes, and as one watches the almost endless processions that pass along the drives of Fairmount Park he is struck by the unconventionality and democracy of it all. The bank president and the clerk, the society leader and the shop girl ride side by side, each ready to extend a helping hand to the other in case of accident or to give information regarding the direction or condition of the roads. Each feeling equal to the other for the time being, they all try to make themselves worthy of the company they are in; and consequently there is less rowdyism or boisterons conduct than in any other form of pleasure excursion.

As the wheel is ridden by both sexes and all ages, it naturally makes a common bond between the different members of the family. The husband, instead of going to the club, takes a spin with his wife. It draws mother and daughter closer together; it makes the son the companion of the father.

Ridden in moderation, the bicycle is of immense physical benefit; it is only the abuse that is dangerous. "Century runs" and "scorching" are dying out, and people are riding for pleasure and not to make records. The beauties of Fairmount Park are becoming better known, and the park concerts, which formerly were slimly attended, have this year been crowded.

Literally Correct.

Richmond Dispatch.

Lipper—How wonderfully cheap clothing is getting to be! Trousers have come down one-half.

Chipper—Yes, just about one-half. Since this bicycle craze they only come down to the knees.

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