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THE COMMONWEALTH.

E. E. HILLIARD, Editor and Proprietor. "EXCELSIOR" IS OUR MOTTO. SUBSCRIPTION PRICE \$1.00.
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THE EDITOR'S LEISURE HOURS.

Points and Paragraphs of Things Present, Past and Future.

The frequent business failures throughout the country do not speak well for the prosperity wave that was to strike the land soon after McKinley's election.

Press and Printer states a clear truth in the following:
"The size of a newspaper, like the voice of a fakir, may attract attention, but if size is its only merit the sheet will carry as little weight as an inflated bladder."

The failure of that well-known Raleigh firm, W. H. & R. S. Tucker, last week, was quite a surprise to the whole State. The firm was established in 1818, and has thus been doing business continuously for nearly eighty years. It was the best known business establishment of any kind in the State, and was widely known outside of the State. Its failure is a source of regret to friends of the firm throughout the country.

Leprosy practically has been unknown in this country. But a few days ago it developed that there was a genuine case of the dread and loathsome disease in Johns Hopkins hospital in Baltimore. The lady who is so afflicted was carried there for treatment before it was known that she had leprosy. Arrangements were at once made to isolate her and for special treatment of the case. It is supposed that she contracted the disease while abroad recently.

The Charlotte Observer evidently thinks that institutions are on the *qui vive* for something new and original. Here is what it thinks, for instance, of the commencement invitations it has received this year:

The engraved invitations to commencement exercises have a peculiar style every year. This year they are highly stylish. Nearly all that the Observer has received have the appearance of having been steeped in a solution of nutmeg suet, and there lingers about them a smell of tallow candles. Perhaps this is to give them a sort of flavor of the student's mid-night oil.

The South has done much toward public school education since the war, however much some may urge it has done, and is still doing, practically nothing. It has been given out through the press that a prominent Southern minister has recently declared that "the sixteen Southern States are to-day paying as much for public schools as the British Parliament votes every year for the public school system of the British Islands—between \$20,000,000 and \$30,000,000. And he adds that since the war the South has expended "\$250,000,000 of its own money for education—\$75,000,000 of it for the children of the colored people."

The times may be out of joint with many people, and we rather think it so; but if all the world were like that woman in Washington whom we tell about below, there would be more sunshine on the earth and more glad hearts in the earth.

A Washington special to the New York World recently said:

Commissioner of Pensions Butterworth promoted a woman in his office Saturday who surprised him. She said: "Mr. Commissioner, there is a woman who sits beside me who merits this more than I do. She is a splendid clerk and supports her sick sister and child. Her necessities are greater than mine. I want to ask a favor of you." The commissioner thought another promotion was being requested and got ready to gently refuse it, when his petitioner continued: "I want to ask you if you will let this other woman have my promotion and the increased salary until she is in better circumstances. Then we may exchange again." The request was granted.

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Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup has been used for over fifty years by millions of mothers for their children while teething, with perfect success. It soothes the child, softens the gums, allays all pain, cures wind colic, and is the best remedy for Diarrhoea. It will relieve the poor little sufferer immediately. Sold by Druggists in every part of the world. Twenty-five cents a bottle. Be sure and ask for "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup" and take no other kind.

MORE TO BOYS.

THERE ARE STILL HARD BATTLES.

HOW TO FIGHT THEM.

Some Rambling Thoughts.

BY "NEMO."

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In last week's letter we talked of battles,—those things you enjoy reading about,—but we only got as far as telling you that you had to struggle with your brains against others, instead of with deadly weapons, like the men of former ages. That article had to do with fighting, fair and square in the open,—just the sort of fighting a strong boy thinks to be honest. But we are not always able to choose the manner of our fighting. We may be quite willing to stand up and test our strength hand to hand with the enemy, but he may succeed in shutting us up in a city or a fortress—in other words, he may besiege us, and then instead of the beautiful motion of marching troops deploying into line of battle and the excitement of aides-de-camps scattering in various directions, there is the silent, sullen waiting for assault, and the noiseless work of the sappers as they endeavor to get where they can destroy the walls of the besieged with mines of gunpowder.

Many of you ought to be able to remember the facts concerning the siege of Yorktown,—how Washington and Lafayette carefully made their plans, threw up earth-works and with those as a means of protection commenced to harass the defenders of the town; then how by watching for the favorable moment they moved forward again and threw up a second line of earth-works notwithstanding the enemy's guns were for a little time shooting down the length of the trenches; and finally how Cornwallis is cut off on the water side by the French and surrounded by the hand forces, gave up the defence and surrendered over 7,000 men as prisoners. In your histories you can find numbers of other sieges described, some of them lasting week after week; like that of Sebastopol, in the Crimean War, which scarcely ended in a year. Sieges call for great courage, both on the part of those shut in with starvation and thirst and death coming nearer and nearer, and also on the part of the besiegers who are sometimes slaughtered in heaps as they attempt to enter the town through some breach in the walls. I don't like this idea of an enemy crawling, creeping, burrowing along until he is ready to spring up suddenly and strangle power and life out of you. I expect you do not either. But if the people shut in have plenty of food and a good supply of water, if their walls are too thick to be broken by cannon balls, if they can make a sudden rush and break up the defences of the besiegers or if they can burrow under ground and meet the timines of the enemy with countermines there is not much to fear. Yet there remains one danger with which even strong forces sometimes have to contend; the danger within from a traitor, who will tell secrets to the enemy or open the gates to them.

A Little Girl's Self-Sacrificing Deed.

San Francisco Call.

She lived in Placer county, not far from where the pretty town of Auburn now stands, for it happened many years ago, in the early '60's, and I expect that but few now residing there have any recollections of the affair. The family, consisting of father, a miner, her mother and little brother, dwelt in a small shanty erected under cover of a convenient ledge. The shanty was a miserable structure of two rooms, but it held what many a grander dwelling failed to contain, a loving household. The mother lay sick with the fever, and Carmen, then a girl of twelve, performed the drudgery of the house. Her little brother, a curly-headed romp, of five, was Carmen's great responsibility. The father was away from early morning until late at night at his work, and so the little hands of twelve found plenty to do. In common with the custom of miners, the father kept a store of giant powder in the house, which in the present case was contained in a sack placed in an old wooden box that stood at the foot of the bed where lay the sick mother. The upper part of the shanty, under the sloping board roof, was utilized as a storage place for old dunnage.

One night the father was absent in the mine. By some means the shanty took fire, probably from the cracked and defective adobe chimney. Carmen awoke to find that the roof was afire and sparks dropping down. Springing up she loudly cried to awaken her mother and Tommy, but the little boy became frightened and hid his head beneath the covers of his bed. Carmen sprang to lift him from the bed, when she saw showers of sparks falling on the powder box. Recognizing the awful danger, she attempted to leave the child for the moment and carry out the powder, but in her excitement she caught her foot in the overhanging bedclothes and fell to the floor, breaking her thigh bone. Unable to arise, the brave girl crawled to the box of powder and, drawing herself up, covered the box with her body. The mother had by this time succeeded in getting out of bed and getting outside the now furiously burning shanty, and managed to take with her little boy.

The cries of Carmen: "Oh, take Tommy out, won't you!" turned for a time the mother's thought from her daughter's danger. The fire had aroused some of the neighbors who speedily ran to the burning shanty and lent what aid they could. Carmen was discovered and removed. Her rescuers found her almost buried beneath a mass of burning cinders, her back frightfully burned. Tender hands bore her to a neighboring shanty, where all that could be done to alleviate her sufferings was eagerly bestowed. But human aid came too late. The brave little spirit lingered until the following day and then departed for a brighter land. It was not known until after she had recovered consciousness, a short time before she died, that she had broken her leg. Her last words were: "Kiss me, Tommy, dear; I've saved you, and I'm so happy."

Buckingham's Dye for the whiskers is the best, handiest, safest, surest, cleanest, most economical and satisfactory dye ever invented. It is the gentleman's favorite. For sale by E. T. Whitehead & Co., Scotland Neck, N. C.

TRADES WITH NATURE.

SO DOES THE FARMER.

And Nature is Thoroughly Honest.

David Starr Jordan, President of the Leland Stanford, Jr., University, in the National Advocate.

One of the most disquieting features of the social condition of our times is a rush of young men to the cities. Resulting from this is the weakness and insensibility of the farming population as compared with the same class half a century ago. Steadiness of national character goes with firmness of foothold on the soil. We may well look with alarm on a condition in which men of wealth and power shall be gathered in the cities, while the farms are left to the weak and inefficient or to the peasants of other nations.

As matters are, the cities are great destroyers of human life. We have not learned properly to govern them effectively, and every city is full of human failures, results of misdirected effort. A tour of the principal streets, halls and meeting places on Sunday evening in any great city will show how terribly true this is. Certainly one-fourth of the population of such a city as San Francisco for example has no real business there. These people are doing nothing effective for themselves or helpful to others, and the condition of the other three-fourths, and most likely their condition, would be distinctly improved if these misfit persons would go back to the farms.

No one can succeed in city or country unless he is able or willing to do some one thing well and stick to it.

Because the life of the country is simpler and more honest, it is easier for a man of moderate ability to fit into it. I call it more honest, because the farm life deals with nature at first hand, while the city life deals with the shifting relations of men.

The farmer trades with nature through no middle-man. Nature is as honest as eternity, and she never fails to meet the just dues of those who have claims against her.

In the city, opportunities to gratify ambition are more numerous and greater than in the country. But opportunity comes only to the man who can make use of it. For a man who can do important things and can do them well, the city will always furnish something worthy to do. Hence the success of thousands of men who have gone to the cities with their worldly goods on their backs and no capital but their brains.

But the great majority of those who leave the farms are out of this type. They have not learned to do anything well, least of all anything the people of the cities want. Hence the failure of those who go to cities without capital of any kind, or with capital of any other kind than brains.

The great obstacle in the way of the effective workingman is not organized capital; it is inefficiency. It is the great crowd of those who can do nothing well, and whose presence causes a general scramble whenever there is any work to be done. Capitalists could and would double the wages of labor if they were assured of intelligent, effective and loyal service. Brains and heart are the only servants that a man can afford to pay for. If you cannot furnish one or the other of these, there is no help for you. You cannot live by the work of your hands. Least of all can you do this in a city, where competition is severe, and where three men are struggling for the chance to do the work of one.

There is no doubt that the congestion of the cities is in part the effect of unwise legislation. We have used every effort to be something more than a nation of farmers, and in this effort we have almost ruined our farms. But legislative action is not the main cause of the congestion of cities. The other causes are bringing about the same results in all civilized nations. Even Rome has a "real estate boom," an unfortunate condition which arises as the people crowd into the capital. It is not clear what the end will be or how the evil will find its remedy. But this we may say to every farmer's son: You have your own life to make. In the country you are sure of your ground. You will get what you deserve, while your future will not be ruinous. Do not go to the city—the country needs you. If you go with nothing to give that the city cares for, you will find yourself sold as a slave. Brains the city wants and will pay for and devour. Loyalty

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of service will be recognized and valued in this world or any other.

Hand-work pure and simple, without skill or pride in it, commands no price in the market. There is no chance about this. The results are as sure as fate. If you do poor things poorly, you will always be poor. What you can do, a bucket of coal and a bucket of water, guided by a thimbleful of brains will do more effectively. When the time shall come that each workman can use his power to the best advantage, we shall have an end to the labor problem. The final answer to the labor problem is that each shall solve it for himself.

When you have solved the labor problem for yourself and are ready with the answer, then you can go to the city, and wherever you go you will find the success you deserve. It all men waited as you should wait before rushing to the cities, we should have no labor problem, no problem of municipal government; and nothing to fear from the congestion of the towns. Learn to do something well. It will make a man of you, and wherever he goes a man will find that he is needed.

"FATHER, TAKE MY HAND."

"The way is dark, my Father! Clouds are gathering thickly o'er my head and loud The thunders roar above me. See, I stand Like one bewildered! Father, take my hand, And through the gloom, lead safely home Thy child.

"The day goes fast; my Father! and the night is drawing darkly down. My faithless sight Sees ghastly visions. Fears, a spectral band, Encompass me. Oh, Father, take my hand, And from the night lead up to light, Thy child."

A Railroad Above the Clouds.

Selected.

There are several places in the world where the iron horse actually climbs up mountain sides to spots which are situated far above the clouds. In Peru they have built a railway over one of the most elevated ribs of the Andes, and in Switzerland the steam engine snorts and puffs around and up the sides of peaks where it was formerly considered hazardous for a sure-footed Alpine climber to attempt to worm his way.

The engineers of the United States have been equally as enterprising as those of Europe and the Spanish republics of South America. They have proved there is no mountain too broad to be tunneled or too high for them to send a locomotive to the summit. The plateau on top of Pike's Peak was thought to be almost as inaccessible to human beings as are the canals of Mars to mundane navigators. To-day all is changed. Since 1891 the locomotive has made its regular trips up the sides of the "Pride of the Rockies," seemingly doing it with as much ease as the "regular" makes the journey from the Union station at Kirkwood.

At one time the Pike's Peak "cog" was the most elevated railroad in the world, its upper terminus being at a spot 14,147 feet above the beach line at Galveston, Texas. Since the Peruvian railway, mentioned above, was built the Pike's Peak "elevated" takes a back seat. It is still a wonder in engineering, however, being nine miles long (high), and having several grades of 25 per cent. The engines used on this queer railroad weigh forty tons.

Be Decided.

Durham Sun.

The man who attempts to carry water on both shoulders will be sure to spill out of both buckets. There is in this world no neutrality. Neutrality is utterly meaningless, and a "neutral" man who falls has neither country, kindred or principle. Better fall fighting for a bad cause than be counted among the milk-and-water crowd of nonentities. Neutrality is nonentity. There is character in defending one's opinion, but the man who is "non-committal," or who "currys favor" with every one, never counts for much in the battle of life. It is the bold man, whose position is felt and whose work tells for good in the world. Be decided.

Stands at the Head.

Aug. J. Bogel, the leading druggist of Shreveport, La., says: "Dr. King's New Discovery is the only thing that cures my cough and is the best seller I have." J. F. Campbell, merchant of Safford, Ariz., writes: "Dr. King's New Discovery is all that is claimed for it; it never fails, and is a sure cure for consumption, coughs and colds. I can not say enough for its merits." Dr. King's New Discovery for consumption, coughs and colds is not an experiment. It has been tried for a quarter of a century, and to-day stands at the head. It never disappoints. For sale by E. T. Whitehead & Co., Scotland Neck, N. C.

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