

TIMELY TOPICS.

The ammonia of the commercial fertilizers manufactured in the suburbs of Augusta, Ga., has completely driven out the chills and fever and other malaria that used to infect the locality.

Minnesota is engaging in frog-culture, which consists chiefly in protecting the eggs and young from their enemies by wire screens. The product so far has been about 3,000 dozen legs quoted in St. Louis at twenty cents a dozen.

A farm sixty miles long and ten wide in one tract, mostly fenced, is that of Miller & Lux, cattle monopolists of California. They have 80,000 head of stock, own 700,000 acres of choice land, and are rated as worth \$15,000,000.

An artesian well 3,250 feet deep has been bored in Posth, Hungary. It is the deepest in the world, being nearly twice the depth of that in Paris. It sends by a jet of nearly boiling water forty-two feet high.

Joseph Brower, an American, who emigrated to Chili some years ago, was recently murdered in cold blood, together with his wife and children, by a gang of discontented laborers. In the struggle he, alone and unaided, killed thirteen of the villains, but was obliged to succumb at last.

While Beecher was at the depot in Freeborn, Minn., awaiting a train, the other day, a gentleman presented him with pen, ink and paper, and asked him for his autograph. Taking the pen, he wrote the following: "Too many eggs in one basket; farmers should raise something besides wheat."

Christian Brienbach came out of prison at the age of twenty, went to the residence of his aged grand-parents, near Detroit, Mich., and coolly told them that he intended to live with them. They kept him out of fear, for he was a bully; but he was not satisfied with bare support. He killed them in the night with an ax, and ran away with their money.

A blazing meteor which fell during a recent storm near Beaufort, S. C., was picked up and found to be an irregularly shaped rock, weighing about twenty-five pounds, and having a thin coating as if of lava. More remarkable was the finding of a fallen spherule on the California desert, near San Bernardino, which weighed 250 pounds and contained gold, silver and copper.

Stanley, the African explorer, is claimed by his mother. A Mrs. Eastaway, of Liverpool, England, writes to *Every Saturday*, a Baltimore literary journal, that she is Stanley's mother, and that she can identify him by peculiar India-ink marks upon his arms and a mole on his neck. He was born, she says, in New York, on October 26, 1843. His father was a sea captain, and died fifteen years later.

In 1820 the best trotting time was a mile in three minutes. In 1830 the time was reduced to 2.40; in 1840, to 2.28; in 1850, to 2.26; in 1860, to 2.19; in 1870, 2.17; in 1876, the best record was made by Goldsmith Maid, who made a mile in 2.14. Practically, the limit of trotting speed may be said to have been reached, though it is by no means improbable that phenomenal animals may decrease the time of Goldsmith Maid.

Victor Hugo has a habit of working upon four or five subjects at once, rarely knowing which he shall finish first. In the morning he begins with which ever subject first takes his fancy, and after devoting himself for a few hours to verse, turns to his novel after luncheon, and finishes the day by writing on some theme utterly unlike that which he took up in the morning. He has now in preparation six prose works and four poems.

An open winter is not followed by a cool summer, as many suppose; on the contrary, a cool summer usually follows a severely cold winter, and a very warm summer succeeds a mild winter, as we now see. A severe winter leaves the mountains heavily capped with ice and snow to cool the breezes during the succeeding summer months, while an open winter leaves the mountain tops bare and the winds are therefore much less cooling.

At Bombay a lady and gentleman who were taking a stroll sauntered into a church, and finding the marriage register on a table the gentleman for fun wrote in it the names of four people (two couples) well known in their circle of friends. The names may not now be erased, because any one tampering with the signatures in the registry is liable to seven years' penal servitude. The offender has absconded, the gentlemen are in pursuit and the ladies in dismay. The governor has been appealed to, but no decision has been arrived at as to what can be done.

There are 4,000,000 dead letters received annually at the Dead Letter Office. 300,000 without stamps; 50,000 partially addressed; 6,000 no address; \$1,600,000 of money orders and drafts of money value; 45,000 packages containing property; \$40,000 in money—nine-tenths of which is returned, the balance remaining in the treasury—subject to application for four years; 25,000 photographs; 250,000 European letters are returned unopened; one-tenth of all letters received contain property; 10,000 applications for letters reported lost; the great proportion found and delivered.

There is an association in Germany founded for the pursuit of scientific investigation about Africa, which has been led by the recent discoveries of rich natural resources in the interior of

the "dark continent" to go outside of its own proper field, and call the attention of the German commercial and manufacturing classes to the importance of establishing trade connections with that undeveloped territory. So important does the imperial government consider this suggestion that it has made a preliminary appropriation of \$25,000 in aid of enterprises of the kind advised, with intimations that all necessary further aid will be forthcoming. A geographic-commercial association for establishing trade with inner Africa has also been formed in Switzerland.

A Tragedy Among Alaska Indians.

A letter dated Klawock Cannery, Prince of Wales Island, Alaska, gives the following details of a terrible tragedy: An Indian was sitting alone in his wigwam when a young married woman entered from a neighboring lodge, and thinking the brave was asleep at an unreasonable hour, she gave him a smart push, which threw him over against something or other which cut his face, causing a flow of blood. The brave muttered a curse, and the woman quickly retreated, thinking but little of the accident, for an accident it was, so far as the trifling injury went. Nothing further transpired that evening, the damaged warrior remaining indoors nursing his anger. The following morning, when the woman and her husband were quietly eating their breakfast of dried salmon and anticipating no harm, the wounded man walked into their hut, raised his rifle and sent a bullet crashing through the skull of the man. He then rushed upon the woman, whipped a huge knife from his belt, ripped her open and, leaving husband and wife dead upon the floor, quietly walked back to his own cabin and closed and barred the door. The murder created a violent commotion in the Indian village as well as in the cannery. An Indian council was held and a death sentence passed upon the murderer. Luckily for the cause of justice in such cases, there are no courts of appeal in this region to retard the prompt and merited execution of a red-handed murderer, but in this case there was the barrier of a strongly-barred door, with a desperate and well-armed man on its inner side. Urgent appeals were made to the criminal to open the door and come out and be shot; all of which he respectfully declined. Fearing that he would escape in the night a close watch and guard were kept upon the hut, the whole settlement being on the *qui vive* all night, expecting the shooting to come off every moment. At ten the next morning the criminal announced that he was ready. He unbarred his door and stalked out, gorgeously robed in a flaming red blanket, his head resplendent with pitch and feathers and his rifle upon his shoulder. Giving a few directions to his executioners, he stepped forward a few paces, whirled through a war-dance, fired his rifle into the air, and fell dead pierced by twenty bullets. The remains of the murderer and his victims were cremated, and Indian life resumed its usual monotonous routine.

London Houses.

The houses of London, says a correspondent, are mostly built of yellow brick; but those of a more pretentious character are of a yellowish sandstone, which soon becomes blackened with the smoke that enshrouds the city. Iron buildings are not known here—at least, we have not met with any in our wanderings over the city, they being an entirely American institution. A stranger in London is astonished at the appearance of most of its public buildings and churches. They are built mostly of white marble; but the smoke has blackened them to such an extent that were it not that their bases and sometimes a portion of their cornices are white, they might be supposed to be of black marble. The columns in front of St. Paul's Cathedral are densely black; and so is most of the vast structure. If a pot of black paint was poured over the magnificent statues of Queen Elizabeth and her four maids of honor, which stand in front of the cathedral, it would scarcely be noticed, so black have they become. The National Gallery, on Trafalgar square, is decidedly black, and the grand old church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, on Trafalgar square, is, if possible, blacker. The walls under the portico and most of the columns in front would never be supposed to be of pure white marble. As there is scaffolding being erected around it, the purpose is possibly to clean it of the accumulated smoke of ages. They probably think with the gamin, who, when asked why he did not wash his face, replied, "What's the use? It will only get dirty again."

Patents at Auction.

At a recent sale of patents in New York the following prices were obtained: An improvement in game tables for \$375; patent attachment to coasting, \$325; a clothes line patent, \$75; improvement in scroll sawing, \$50; blowing toy patent, \$75; a bag holder, the object of which is to enable the bag to be readily fixed on a support which shall hold the mouth of the bag open, and firmly sustain the weight of its contents as it is filled, \$1,100; improvement in combination locks, \$2,000; a process for hardening iron while being forged, \$375; a can opening patent, \$1,050; one on curtain tassels, \$1,000; a machine for making spikes, \$600; cloth cutting machine, \$500; shutterworkers' patent, \$500; folding wardrobe and bedstead patent, \$3,100; sea-sounding and alarm apparatus, \$350; an improvement for the meeting rail of sashes, \$350; a combination of a cane and rifle, or a shotgun, \$425; a tree sawing machine, \$450; a patent on oscillating chairs, \$1,000; an apparatus for drying fruit and smoking meat, \$1,020; a patent for mechanism for self-closing and self-opening hatch doors, \$1,900, and a gas regulator, \$300.

FARM, GARDEN AND HOUSEHOLD.

Inarching.

This method of increasing plants or trees that are difficult of propagation we seldom see mentioned in the books or papers, and it is to be presumed that it is because of the difficulties in the way of using it, that so little attention is given it, and yet for some kinds of trees this method is the most available way to secure additional trees, especially with such as have a very hard or dry bark, and cannot easily be budded or grafted. The beech and oak are of this class, but the pear and apple can be worked very easily by this process, where it is desirable to increase a choice variety, and a gain of one season's growth can be secured (when it is too late to graft) over the simple budding process.

Inarching is nothing more than the simple bringing of two growing twigs of the same size together, shaving each one half through on one side, and then fitting the cut parts together with the barks of both to join, and then securing them in position by ligatures until the parts are firmly united. The limb is then detached from the parent tree, and forms the top of the other, the rest of its branches having been removed. The principal care required is in removing this tying material in time and not allowing it to cut too deeply into the growing limb. Twigs of the same season's growth, while growing rapidly, can be made to form a perfect union in a few weeks, and the ligature may have to be loosened in one week.

To be successful it requires that both trees be in vigorous growth, and the stock on which it is proposed to form a new head will have to be planted carefully, within reach of the limb, by which it may be worked at the proper season, and then it can be cut loose and removed the following fall, after growth has ceased. This may be practised on trees already growing near together, or when a new top is to be put on a small tree by grafting. If a few fail to take, and other limbs are desired, the sprouts can be worked from the growing grafts by bending them together, and thus a symmetrical head can be at once formed instead of waiting for another year. This is work for the amateur or gardener, and, as has been remarked, requires attention at several times and cannot be well done where the work is out of reach from the ground, or where limbs far apart will be severely shaken by the wind, and liable to break off where tied.

It is not desirable to do this work much before midsummer, and no union takes place until the new layer of wood is deposited, in the case of shoots of previous season's growth. A little observation will show that last season's twigs do not increase in diameter until after or about midsummer, even though several feet of new growth have been added to their length. The new growth or annual layer, is then all deposited in a short time, when growth for the season ceases. Whether this new wood is deposited from the bark or thrown out from the wood below, has been a point in controversy, but observation seems to have established the latter as the correct theory. The bark may be removed from the trunk of an apple or pear tree at any time during the longest days of the year without apparent injury to the tree. I have seen pear trees that were apparently on the decline and had rough, scaly bark, started into new growth and health by simply removing all the bark carefully (without scraping the wood) from the trunk the latter part of June. The new bark is left undisturbed, adhering to the trunk, and it thickens up in a short time and takes the place of that removed. Some trees continue this growth much later in the season than others, and a knowledge of their peculiarities is of great importance to every one who attempts to propagate them.—*Cor. Country Gentleman.*

Preparing Stock for Exhibition.

1. Begin to feed animals for show as young as it will eat. A calf should be pushed from four weeks old with plenty of milk and such solid food as it will eat. That is the time to begin—never quit.

2. Feed anything that they will eat, the best that is ordinarily given to such stock, and in such quantities as they want, being careful always that they clean up their troughs.

3. I never found it advisable to feed oftener than three times a day—have tried suckling calves three times, and feeding the grown cattle five or even six times, but they will do no better than three times; and I have had good success sometimes in feeding twice, but that requires experience.

In general, I will say that an adept will soon learn the thousand details that make up the whole, if he has his eyes and ears about him and wants to learn. When he goes off to the fairs let him notice particularly how everybody else does their work, especially those who take of the prizes. An occasional question, without being too inquisitive, will bring out one piece of information, and adapting it to his own use, he may see something better. This is an art that must be studied, practiced and picked up. An industrious man with a taste for such things will learn more to do all, or a great part of the work, himself, than in any other way.—*Exchange.*

The other day a visitor surprised Richard Grant White saying to his baby: "Oh-ny, no-ny, e musy tick hick he little footy wotsies out fum undy zis banky wanky oz e catch coly woly an' have zo snuffys." Just then he caught sight of the visitor, and said to the infant: "No, no, you must not expose your pedal extremities by extending them beyond the protecting cover of the blanket, or you will lay your system open to attacks of catarrhal affections." And the astonished child shrieked as though some one had winged it with a defective safety pin.—*Burlington Hawk-eye.*

Bijah as a Phrenologist.

It was a mother with a two-year-old boy this time. She dragged him into the room in a rickety old cart, bounced him out as if he had been a package of hardware, placed him on the center table with a force of twenty-eight pounds to the square foot, and called out:

"Mr. Joy, we have agreed to leave it to you!"

"Well, madam, it's my opinion that she's a boy, and he's not over four years old."

"Four, sir! why he's only two; and we want you to feel of his bumbs and decide if he'll make a smart man. I say he has the head of a preacher, and my husband says he'll make a lawyer, and my sister says he'll invent some great things. Put your hand on his head, Mr. Joy."

Bijah carefully placed his paw on the young chap's head, slid it around for a while, and remarked: "Madam, his bump of anxiety is very great. He will be a great hand to git up and tear things when a street car gits off the track."

"Will he? Oh! I'm so glad, Mr. Joy!"

"His bump of inventive genius is monstrous, madam—perfectly monstrous. I think he will invent a new sort of hair-brush before he is ten years old—one with a corkscrew in one end and a jack-knife in the other. I speak for the first one turned out, madam."

"And you shall have it."

"Right here, behind the left ear, is the bump of oratory, madam. See how it stands out! Before he is twelve years of age he will be able to deliver as good a speech as you ever heard—and get his pay for it. Here, between the eyes, is what is called humility. Just see how humble he is even now! Why, if he had forty opinions on finance he wouldn't advance a single one of them if it was to disturb anyone's feelings. Here, under his eyes, is what is called cheek. Behold the broad expanse! There isn't a man in Chicago who can hold a candle to him when he's fifteen years old. Take him away. He's built right up from the ground, has a hide stuffed full of bones and muscle, and all you need do is to keep on feeding him milk, giving him plenty of room to roll over in, and don't be too particular about his swallowing a few hairpins, shingle nails and thimbles."

"Mr. Joy, you have made us happy," said the woman, tears coming into her eyes. "The first time we can get some oysters cheap, we will make a supper and invite you over."

When she had bonned the boy into his cart and backed him out, Bijah swept up her tracks and tenderly whispered:

"How easy it is to make people happy! If some one had encouraged me when I was two years old, I might now be president of Mexico, and have feet as big again as these."—*Detroit Free Press.*

Morocco at the Paris Exposition.

The court of Morocco has an indescribable air of romance about it, writes an American correspondent in Paris. It is hung with mats and scrags of gay, warm colors, and displays an endless variety of attractive knickknacks, delicately embroidered silk kerchiefs, cigar and cigarette cases and holders, brilliantly illuminated bracelets and necklaces made of an aromatic composition, fantastically embroidered slippers, delicate pastilles, and an astonishing variety of gilt and tinsel ornaments. Everything seems to send forth the most delicious odor. The air is heavy with eastern perfumes and spices. Olive wood, souvenirs in the shape of canes, paper cutters, paper weights and sleeve buttons, are spread temptingly before you.—Strange looking musical instruments, war trumpets, balafans (a very primitive sort of piano), spears, guns and queer looking dirks and battle-axes appear. Then the tall, handsome Moors, with "liquid eyes" and languishing manners, looking like the stage Othellos, in their picturesque red tarboches and flowing many-colored robes; standing in the tent and around the courts, add greatly to the romantic scene.

One of these dark-eyed attendants brought for our inspection a box full of pretty rings. And while he was telling Mistress Jack about his country and enlisting her sympathies for his king, who, he said, was very ill, he managed to persuade her that the rings were the prettiest and the cheapest in the Exposition. These apparently sleepy Orientals are in reality quick-witted tradesmen, and keep up a very lively traffic with their small wares. They never cease to praise the beauty and taste of the American women, and the generosity of the men. Next to the Americans, they say the English buy most; the French and Germans "look a long while but don't buy anything."

Edison's Ink for the Blind.

Mr. Edison has shown his latest invention to a New York *Herald* reporter who recently visited his laboratory. "Have you seen the blind writing ink? Hold on; I'll get some," said the professor, as he reached to a high shelf and took from among a score of vials one labelled "Poison." Into this he poured water, and in a moment he was writing with the fluid on a sheet of paper. The marks were grayish white. In about a minute after he had finished, the writing, strange to say, began to swell and harden until it became elevated quite perceptibly above the paper. "Now run your finger over it and feel if you can trace the letters," said the inventor. The reporter did so, and, sure enough, the letters could be distinguished by the touch. "The blind," continued Mr. Edison, "are very sensitive to touch. By writing with this preparation they can communicate with each other, and a great field of happiness and mental improvement is opened to them. I am not yet, however, quite satisfied with the preparation. I wish to make the elevation more marked."

A REMARKABLE HOTTENTOT.

The Career and Last Flight of Smith Pommer, the Famous Griqua Chief.

The London *World* says: We copied recently from a South African paper a little paragraph relating to the killing of Smith Pommer. Some of our readers may wonder who Smith Pommer is or rather was. He was a remarkable man. Although a naturalized Griqua, he was a pure Hottentot in blood and inherited the craft of his race. His father, who was one of the Kat River people, was an industrious man, who did his best to improve his condition and educate his son. But the boy, when only fourteen, joined the Kat River rebellion, and after its defeat escaped into Basutoland, and afterward found himself in Nomansland, where he and many of his rebel companions established themselves, surrounded by hostile neighbors. Smith Pommer grew into a fighter and then into a leader. His diminutive figure, his droll behavior, his native wit and his inventive faculties made him a distinctive character, and a great superior to the ignorant people around him. He became recognized as a speech maker and diplomat. His dash, above all, dazzled the Griquas and Caffres both, and those who distrusted him for his tricks admired him for his boldness. White people who became acquainted with him called it impudence and bluster; but he was genuinely feared by the Caffres, and regarded by others with something like superstition.

The Caffres in time believed that he bore a charmed life, for while a notoriously miserable shot, and seldom using a weapon himself in a fight, he could show legs and arms scarred with wounds. With a lofty idea of effect, he always let those wounds show themselves, and cultivated the impression that with all these scars no bullet had ever entered his skin, which was not true. After some years of a wandering, vagabond, warring life, Smith Pommer married the pretty Griqua girl, Wilhelmina Buruman, and made a compromise of "settling down" by turning a transport rider. While on one of these trading journeys, the Amaboa swooped down upon his place at Bies river, surrounded those who could offer resistance, and in the fight Smith Pommer's young wife was shot dead. Smith's career then took a predatory turn again, and for some time he was an intriguing freebooter.

In Adam Kok's time he again married, this time into one of the most respectable and well-to-do of the settled Griqua families—the Ulbrechts. It is spoken of as a remarkable wedding. Having gone through the ceremony at Kokstad, he took his bride to his home at Bies river, from which he had sent out invitations to every one in the region, of all colors and occupations. The bride, a good-looking young woman, with but little dark blood in her veins—was mounted on a rude throne in the open air, and before her every guest, white and black, passed separately, bowed his homage, and laid a gift at her feet. This, to them, unique ceremony was gone through with by hundreds of people from far and wide, and the wedding was kept up for two days. The shrewd and original bridegroom acquired, it is said, a considerable amount of property in the shape of wedding gifts. Smith now returned more steadily to his transport riding, but still manifested his prestige among the people and became a sort of commandant in Capt. Kok's army. His ingenuity in laying a snare in order to obtain influence or gain a point was well known, and many of the Griquas at last had learned to hold aloof from him.

The part he took in the outbreak which brought his reckless life to a close has been told in the colonial papers since the Kokstad disturbance. His excuse for being among the rebels—which may or may not have had a foundation—was that his name had been falsely mixed up with the discontent, and he was on his way to bring in Adam Muir to prove himself innocent. It is said, however, that he entrapped numbers into rebellion by telling them to come to a certain meeting armed, and when they got there made them believe their act had already committed them to rebellion. It is also said that he led on other men of influence who he knew, would draw many after them, by writing fictitious letters to Capt. Blyth and reading out imaginary replies. The fight in which he and Adam Kok's son were routed from the old laager near Kokstad ended in the death of the latter, and Smith himself, with a few attached followers, fled at dusk to the mountains toward Pondoland.

It was a weird place that Smith Pommer and his band had chosen to die in. High up in the thunder beaten peaks of the Ingeli, where the last bluff in that rugged range stands out like a terrible battlement, where the beacon waves on the crag that looks down over three countries—through the deep valleys of Natal on one side the bushy hills of Pondoland in front, and still over the upland slopes of Griqualand on the other side—here in a steep ravine Smith and his followers hid through the day. Toward night the sound of guns was heard in the krantzes and some of his men fell at the hands of his Caffre pursuers. A Caffre shot at Pommer, but missing was shot in return, and fell down a rock out of sight as if wounded. Watching his chance this Caffre again shot where he saw a bush stirred, and the next morning the body of Smith Pommer was brought out with a bullet through the hip. Smith Pommer met his death by the hand of one of a race against whom his omity had been nurtured from infancy.

A Wisconsin dentist recently received the following from a patient writing for advice: "My mouth is three inches across, five-eighths through the jaw. Sum humoky on the edge. Shaped like a horse-shoe, toe forward. If you want me to be more particular, I shall have to come thar."