

## FOR THE FARMER.

### More Healthy.

We must raise more poultry on our farms. The policy of exporting grain to be fed to fowls in foreign countries, and having it sent back to us again in the form of eggs and flesh, is certainly anything but an economical one. We must learn to avail ourselves of all possible means for feeding our grain at home, and thus realize the profits of feeding as well as those of producing.

Our farmers seem to appreciate the necessity of stocking up with cattle, hogs, sheep and horses; but the poultry business is apparently altogether too small for consideration. If a few stray chickens are found about the place, the farmers carelessly or sorrowfully allude to the "wimble's doin's," and in nine cases out of ten, proceeds to declare that "he would not bother with them." "Destroy more than they are worth," "eat their heads off every winter," etc.

There is not a particle of reason or common sense in such talk. Men who talk in that way want their top-sided ideas (?) shaken up and pumped about a little, and in the words of the Arkansas Traveller, "I'd like to be the one to do it."

The farmer who failed to provide a fence for his pasture and then killed off his cows because they fed through his fields, and "did more damage than they were worth," would be called an idiotic brute; yet that is precisely what the majority of our farmers are doing with their poultry.

You cannot expect fowls to roam about the garden and fields, at all seasons, without doing some damage. If you have a patch of wheat near the barn, they will scratch the seed out in the spring and trample down the stalks in the summer. They will strip the currants off the bushes, eat the ripening peas and nip off the young cabbages. They will do all this, and more, especially where they are not fed—a weakness that few farmers are guilty of in the summer season.

Nor can you realize full and regular returns from them if they are allowed to run at large. They will steal their nests in all manner of out-of-the-way places, where hens, eggs and chicks will be exposed to vermin of all kinds. If by chance you find a nest full of eggs they are as likely to turn out half-bloom chicks as anything else. They degenerate from well-bred, hard-working hens, into scamping, scratching scavengers, that are of but little more use to their owners than so many wild fowls.

Like other farm stock, they must be kept where they belong; they must have a good, generous pasture in summer, and be confined therein. It takes a very high fence to confine fowls if the space given them is small; but if given a large pasture a fence of moderate height will do. A five-foot picket or lath fence will stop any ordinary lot of hens. If they are particularly unruly clip their wings.

They must have plenty of feed and water; good roosts and secluded nests for laying and setting. With such care, fowls are profitable, and it is a pleasure to keep them.

### Early Planting.

To the wide awake farmer who is observant of passing events, each revolving year brings its lessons of instruction. The wise profit therefrom, but the careless and indigent continue to founder along in the old ruts. When visited by drought, or when crops are injured by early frosts, lessons of instruction are brought home to the husbandman if he will but heed them. Some of the past seasons have been replete with warnings and suggestions for the future guidance of the farmer. Early frosts have drawn the dividing line very distinctly between early and late planted crops, while the long summer droughts that are so common of late years point out the necessity of getting crops matured as early in the season as possible.

Early planting, followed by thorough tillage, is the best means to avoid trouble from early frosts or summer drought. In the minds of some there is an undue fear of getting seeds into the ground too early, lest it be caught by late frosts. The rule of the pioneer farmer was to plant corn when the dogwood blossomed. The soil was then new and fresh and pushed crops forward to maturity faster than it does now, and it is hardly safe to delay planting as late as was formerly the practice. Some who plant late put in the plea that the land is wet and heavy, and unfit to receive seed early. This is hardly tenable, because such a state of things is never necessary in good farming, for all such land should be thoroughly drained so that it can be worked in due season. It is time for farmers to become aware of the fact that the old routine way of raising crops, which was followed with success fifty years ago, cannot longer be depended upon. The changed conditions of the times and variable seasons demand more intelligent thought and action. The wise farmer is not slow to adapt himself to the situation.

Corn may be safely planted as soon as the ground will vegetate it. This it will do as soon as the temperature of the soil is 48° Fahrenheit, or above. While it makes but little growth above the ground it is rooting and preparing for future growth. And if frosts come and cut down the blades they start again vigorously after a few warm days and come out all right. We have planted as early as the first week in April, and never had a crop of corn that made a short yield on account of being nipped by late frosts in the spring. It is highly important that corn designed for fodder should be planted on well-drained land, as early as the land can be made fit to receive seed. The yield will far exceed the crop that is de-

ayed after the regular planting and seeding of spring crops.

Oats is another crop that should go into the ground just as soon as it can possibly be sown. Some of the most successful growers of this crop that we know of seldom wait for the ground to get in condition to work well. They seed it in almost as soon as the frost is out of the ground. We cannot recommend this premature method of getting in crops, as it exhausts the fertility of the soil too rapidly to cultivate it when not in proper tilth. In breaking ground too early in spring the bottom of the plow compacts the clay subsoil, pressing it in a smooth surface, which hardens during the summer and becomes almost impervious to water.

The potato should also be planted just as early as the ground is in proper condition, so as to secure a good yield before the summer drought sets in. With crops thus covering the ground early in the season the sun's rays will not parch it up, as is frequently the case with late sown crops. Again, such crops will be driven forward to early maturity, thus clearing early frosts in the fall. Proper cultivation is another important point to secure early maturity and the development of maximum crops. If farmers would only make a note of the lessons which the passing seasons teach, and govern themselves accordingly, they would find it much to their advantage.

### How to Buy a Farm.

I have known the most experienced men to be deceived in buying farms, and to be much dissatisfied with their purchase. I have in mind a man of the largest experience, who had been brought up on a farm and was a careful observer, now an editor of a prominent journal, who searched a long time for a farm. He appreciated the risk he was liable to in buying. He searched far and wide, and engaged the best counsel, and at last selected a farm which proved to be entirely different from what he supposed. He found it unproductive and undesirable, and disposed of it at the earliest possible moment in disgust.

The best information in regard to a farm can be gotten from the neighbors surrounding it. Every farm has a reputation as marked as that of an individual. People know the past records of farms, what they have produced, how the occupants in the past year have succeeded on them, and how the crops have succeeded. The danger lies in the neighbors fearing to tell a stranger the truth in regard to land that their neighbor, and very likely their friend, is desirous of selling, therefore I have known of poor farms being sold to parties, to those who sought advice concerning them of neighbors who preferred not to tell their honest opinion for fear of giving offence to the party desiring to sell.

The best time to look at a farm with a view to buying is in July or August, when the crops are growing upon it. This is the season when few are buying farms. Generally if a man is possessed with the idea he wants to buy a farm, he goes out to explore them in winter when everything is covered with snow, or in spring when vegetation is not yet started. This is a very hazardous time to select a farm. It is best to proceed with careful deliberation, and if necessary to spend a whole year in looking around. It is far better to lie idle one year than to be loaded down with a poor farm, than which there is nothing worse, unless it be a poor wife.

The condition of the buildings on a farm should be closely scrutinized. I should hesitate to buy a farm on which the buildings were run down and in poor condition. It would cost more to repair them than can be estimated. In looking at such buildings it might be thought that \$500 or \$1,000 would put them in good shape, according to your best judgment, yet very likely it would take three times that amount. Then if the buildings are dilapidated everything else is liable to be in the same condition—no fences, and no conveniences whatever in any department. If conveniences are desired such as cisterns, wells, granaries, stables, cellars, and a thousand other things that cannot be thought of, they must be built. Good buildings with convenient arrangements are greatly to be desired.

The question of the condition of the farm fences is an important one, but not nearly so important as that of the buildings. In fact, I oppose extensive fencing of farms, and in buying a farm would not be shocked were I to find no fences at all, excepting those on the boundaries and along the sides of the road. The time is coming when it will not require an investment of \$1,000 to fence in 150 acres of land. When the country spends more money for fences to confine its stock than the sum total of the entire value of stock it is time some new method were adopted. I should hesitate to buy a farm that had been rented for a long term of years. Such a farm has been exhausted largely of its fertility, and cannot be enriched again without great outlay. I would not buy a large farm; I believe in little farms well tilled.

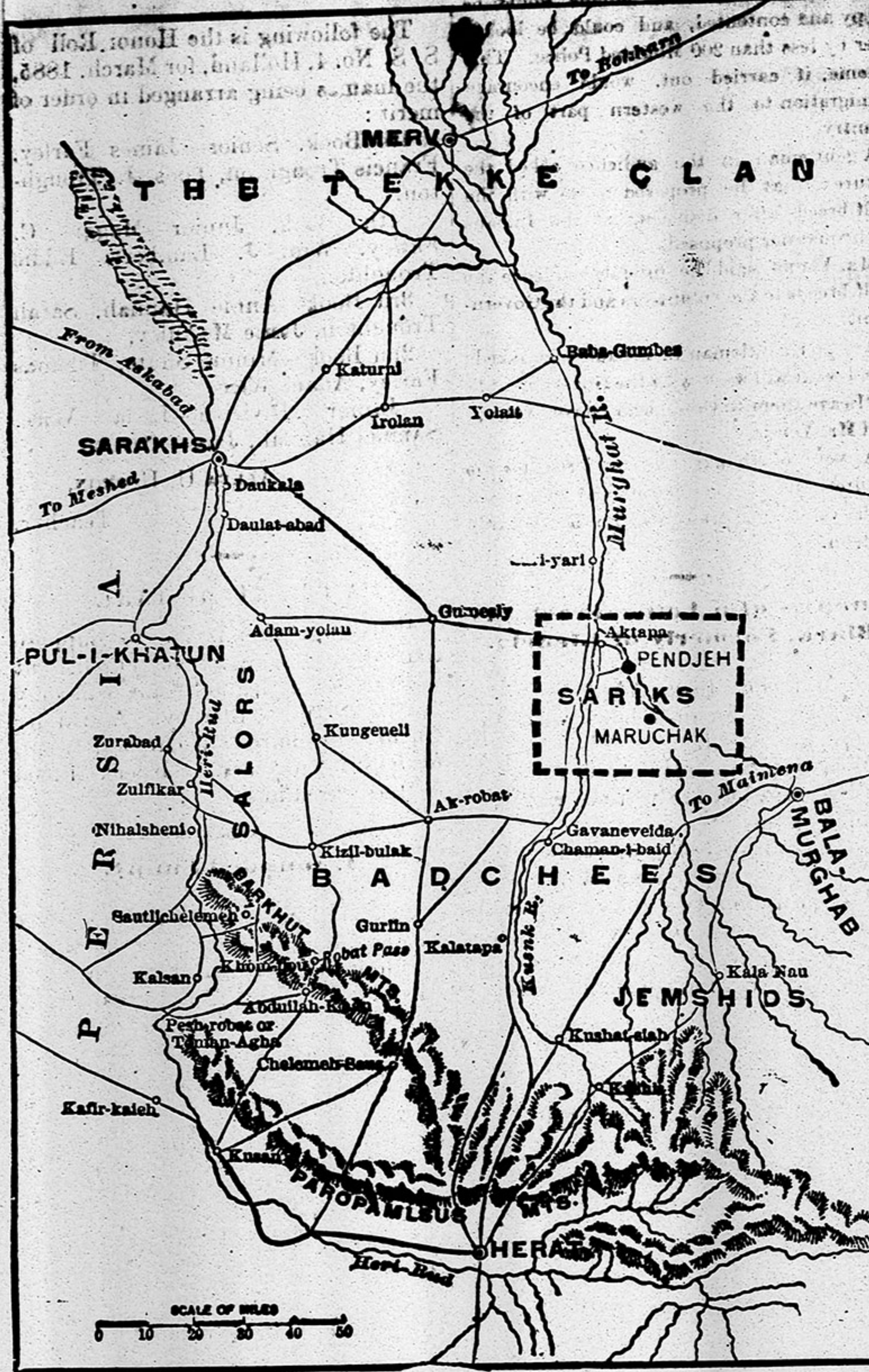
When is a poem like a newspaper oath? When it is just dashed off.

"What is it that makes a spring," queries a poet. We always supposed the cake-taker in this line was the flea.

What is the difference between Tom Ochiltree's birth and the circumference of the earth? This is the girth of ball and that was the birth of gall.

There doesn't seem to be much difference between a butcher's license and the implement with which he cuts up his wares. One is a meat tax, and the other is a meat ax, too.

## THE RUSSO-AFGHAN DIFFICULTY.



Map of the probable seat of war.

A glance at the district outlined around Pendjeh will show the relative positions of Russians and Afghans before the late engagement. Komaroff's attack on Pendjeh may possibly have been provoked by the Afghan garrison. But it is in suspicious consonance with the spirit that has animated the eastern movement of the Czar's armies. When Russia began her eastward march from the Caspian Sea it was known that she would not stop until she reached the gate of India. Khiva, Bokhara, Balkh, Merv fell into her hands, and her troops went southward from Merv toward Herat. Herat was admittedly Afghan, and therefore under British protection. But just to the north of Herat, in the valley of the Evers Murghab and Heri-Rud, there were many places which, as some said, belonged to Afghanistan, and as others said, belonged to Turkestan. If they belonged to Afghanistan, then England claimed their protectorate. If they belonged to Turkestan, then Russia claimed their possession. A commission was appointed to determine the ownership of these places, and Sir Peter Lumsden, an Anglo-Indian official, represented English interests in this body. While it was preparing to survey the ground the Afghans seized and occupied Pendjeh, one of the disputed posts, and the Russians seized and occupied Pul-i-Khatun.

another of the disputed posts indicated on the map. A loud cry was raised in England concerning the actions of the Russians, and just when it reached its loudest pitch General Komaroff, the Russian commander, fought an engagement with the Afghans. Whereupon England demanded that General Komaroff should make an explanation and that his troops should withdraw from the disputed region. The objective point of both English and Russians will be Herat, the "Key to India." The topographical features of the district surrounding this city show that the appellation "Hill Throned Herat" is not unmerited. The Robat Pass between the Barikhet mountains to the south-east of Pendjeh, is a narrow defile through which the Russian armies must reach Herat. The latest cables announce that Sir Peter Lumsden is actively engaged fortifying this point. If this be true there is little danger of a Russian coup de main, as this defile would be held against an army by a handful of men. If the Afghans are as friendly to England as Abdurrahman, their Ameer, asserts, then Sir Peter Lumsden, the British Commissioner, will have no difficulty in occupying this strong position and preparing to stand a siege within its walls. He will then wait for reinforcements from India.

### Wild Game in Afghanistan.

In the valley of the Kushk Rud we saw deer of various kinds, wild boar, and the gorkal, or wild ass. A large drove of them passed our line of march one morning, but we saw little of them except the great cloud of dust they turned up as they hurried off to higher ground. I understand that there is little difference between the gorkal and the kyang, or wild horse of Tibet. Marmots are also very plentiful, they have burrowed their holes into the ground everywhere, and it is dangerous to horses, as their feet sink into the honeycombed earth. These marmots may be said to be now the real possessors of the land, for there is scarce a yard of it which is not occupied by them.

Partridges are also in considerable numbers, and in the Kushk Valley some of our party found pheasants plentiful, and wild pigs are still more numerous there than on the higher ground. There are large spaces on the side of the stream covered with tall reeds, and the pigs find cover in them. One morning on the march I saw a drove of about thirty pigs, led by a large boar, walking up the side of the hill. They had been disturbed by the baggage animals passing. They went up the hill side, and about half a mile to the north they descended again into another bed of reeds. They came down in Indian file.

### German "Bulls."

Irish bulls are much more famous than German blunders of the same sort, but some of the latter are very amusing. A German newspaper has collected a few of them.

"After the door was closed a soft female foot slipped into the room, and with her own hand extinguished the taper."  
"The chariot of revolution is rolling onward and gnashing its teeth as it rolls, is what a Berlin revolutionist told the students, in 1848, in a speech."  
"The Ladies' Benefit Association has distributed twenty pairs of shoes among the poor, which will dry up many a tear."  
I was sitting at the table enjoying a cup of coffee, when a gentle voice tapped me on the shoulder. I looked around and saw my old friend once more.

### The Latest Electricity Story.

An unusual and very interesting phenomenon occurred near Frankfort, Dak., recently, in the form of an atmospheric electric current of considerable power. As observed here, the current did not reach the ground, but varied in distance from four to six feet from it. It was first noticed by the peculiar effect it had on horses and cattle. A buzzing sound was heard from around the ears of the animals—similar to that made by the swarming of bees—distinctly audible at a distance of several feet. Horses and mules threw their heads around in a very excited manner, acting as though their ears were full of flies. The snapping of electric sparks was also heard. Horses which kept their heads close to the ground were not troubled, as the current did not seem to reach down to them. Many teams became frantic and uncontrollable. One horse was so frightened that it fell and tried to creep under its mate for protection. Oxen also behaved in a very unreasonable and sprightly manner. Farmers were frightened, and hurried to the barn with all possible speed. One man thought his horse had the blind staggers. He accordingly bled the animal, and resolved "to keep dark about it" until he could make a trade. The amount of tricky stock in the market about that time was alarming, but there never was so much innocence among Spink County farmers before. Finally a brief thunder shower came up, and the first flash of lightning afforded immediate relief. The current flowed from west to east and was six or seven miles in width.

To incarnate a man as a lunatic in Denmark nothing is required but a certificate from a competent medical practitioner stating that the individual in question is insane. Any one in Denmark is entitled to keep a private asylum without license, and the patients in such an asylum are not under State control. Denmark has an excess of lunatics, due chiefly to the Scandinavian habit of constant drinking. They are well cared for in spite of the defect of the lunacy law.

## PROOF ON A DARK NIGHT.

The Dead Body of an Unknown Man Found in a Trunk.

On March 31 there arrived at the hotel in St. Louis a young man who registered as "Walter H. Maxwell, of London, England." On the same day, and before his arrival, a telegram was received at the hotel from C. Arthur Preller, Rochester, N. Y., inquiring if Maxwell had arrived there. The answer was that he had arrived there. Maxwell was well come and registered a reply that he was at the hotel was sent Preller. Maxwell was given room 144, and had his baggage, two trunks and two valises, taken on there. Preller arrived April 3, and was given room 385, where his five trunks were placed. The men occupied Preller's room in common a considerable portion of time, seeming to be good friends and old acquaintances. Both were much marked for their dandified appearance, Maxwell carrying his effeminate behavior so far as to walk with short mincing steps like a woman. A week ago Maxwell left the hotel suddenly, leaving his baggage in the room he had occupied, but he had paid his bill it was supposed he would return shortly.

Yesterday the chambermaid, in visiting the room of Maxwell, was greeted by a horribly offensive odor, which came from one of the trunks, and reported the fact at the office. This morning both trunks were brought down into the rotunda of the hotel by the porters, blood dripping from one of them, and an almost insupportable smell issuing from it. It was taken out in front of the 4th street entrance of the hotel and opened. Within lay the bloated body of a man apparently about 30 years of age, dressed in shirt and drawers only. On the side of the trunk just over the head of the corpse, were printed in large letters the words "So perish traitors to the great cause." The trunk and its ghastly contents were at once taken to the morgue.

It is thought by many that the body found is that of Preller, and that he was murdered by Maxwell, although a photograph found and identified as that of Preller shows little if any resemblance to the bloated corpse. The head of the dead man was bent to one side and crushed to the flesh of the shoulders, the feet being bent under and sunk into the thigh. The coroner made an autopsy of the remains this afternoon, and it was found that the stomach contained poison, but what particular kind was not determined.

The baggage of Preller remains in the room lately occupied by him. His trunk are of much better quality than those of Maxwell, being of fine leather, and the personal effects in them indicate that the owner is a man of means and culture. They have the labels of the Cunard steamship company, of the Rossin hotel, Toronto, and of the Continental hotel, Philadelphia. Neither money nor letters of credit were found. A telegram from Maxwell, dated at Boston, indicated that the two men meant to go to New Zealand together. Preller apparently left England Jan. 21 for a commercial tour of the country, and seems from home letters to have invited Maxwell to accompany him. Among the letters found in Preller's trunk was the following:

No. 9 Clinton Place, New York City, March 27, 1885.—I have great pleasure in introducing to you by this note our dear brother, Mr. C. A. Preller, of London, England, known to us by several visits he has paid to New York. Hoping you may be mutually benefited by this friendship during his stay in your city, I am yours,

RICHARD N. OWEN.

This friendship was awakened by bringing him to a tea meeting for young men at which dear H. G. Grunners spoke from "Where withal shall a young man cleanse his way." Dora Olson, 842 Valencia street, San Francisco, well known to Brother Moyses.

It has been learned that Maxwell, after leaving the barber-shop had heard shaven off, thus totally changing his appearance. He was about 5 feet 10 inches in height, weighing about 150 pounds, well proportioned, and of a sandy color, was worn without any part being "banged" like a girl's. A drug store at the corner of 5th and Market streets says Maxwell came to his store on Easter Sunday and got six ounces of chloroform. A bottle with some of this drug was found in one of the missing man's trunks. Detectives are of the opinion that the words printed on the inside of the trunk were put there to make it appear that the murder was a political assassination, while in reality it was for money. An envelope found in Maxwell's trunk, given address as 14 Paper Buildings, Temple London.

### He Wouldn't Give In.

A good story is told of an old farmer in New Hampshire, who would always come out ahead of his antagonist, in one way or in another, no matter what the character of the competition might be. One day, he and his wife were engaged in getting much fault from the mow with the abundance with which his assistants were piling the hay up to him, the boys concluding they would satisfy him. "They began rapidly forking it up, and continued the mow was so dusty as to be fairly suffocating, and the old man was almost buried in the mass. After a little, he heard not a word of complaint and in a few minutes down to the floor, covered with hay and almost choked, came Uncle Silas. As he dropped, the boys came out, "What are you down here for?" "Which the irrepressible Uncle Silas answered, "Come on yer boy piers! I down here for more hay."

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