CURRENT NOTES

The present French constitution, dated from 1875, but actually designed in 1871, reflects, to some extent, the frantic history of the period of its conception. The national assembly which authorized and forecast it was thoroughly republican; but there lingered about its members and throughout the conservative elements of the people apprehension that an elective chamber might, from time to time, give potency to mere popular emotion. The senate, traditionally the legislative check in all countries, was, therefore, invested with the power to advise the executive, when it deemed fit, to dissolve the popular branch of the legislature. Another feature of the senate indicated the purpose of the nation to use it for repression of democratic ebullitions. Of the 300 members of which it is constituted, it was prescribed that seventy-five should hold their seats for life, and the senate itself was authorized to fill vacancies arising in this class. After less than ten years' trial the common sense of the republic realized that this was a contradictory and needless safeguard. In 1884 the life-senatorship was abolished. In another feature, as originally drawn, the exclusive right of the elective chamber to originate money bills was established. The present majority in the chamber, composed of fragments of all parties, is availing itself of a logical sequence of this privilege. The ministry, at best a temporizing and shifty body, has lost the confidence of the senate by what appears to be an unwarranted intrusion by the executive branch into the judicial department of the nation. The ministerial majority in the chamber, not because it is particularly devoted to Bourgeois and his cabinet, but because it delights in a dramatic attitude, sustains the ministers in defiance of the senate, the ground being that who holds the purse-strings has the power.

The situation, while tense, is by no means critical. It will have the effect of making the people realize that the constitution needs further adjustment. It may be true that an elective chamber is liable to be mercurial and explosive, but, on the other hand, it ought to be apparent that no body, indirectly chosen, its members largely, out of touch with popular thought by reason of a nine years' tenure of seat, should of itself have the prerogative of overturning a cabinet except upon accusations that would put ministers on trial for treason. Many other causes, however, are contributory to the present crisis. There is still a strong sentiment in France against jingoism. The Madagascar treaty, as it was euphemistically called, has been more precisely described in the senate as "a mere declaration." The return of General Duchesne from the island serves to revive the pitiful story of wasted lives sacrificed by ministerial incompetency and contractor's corruption. The flag of victory the conqueror brings is obscured with plumes of mourning. Another proposition which has come to the fore is also obnoxious for like reasons, namely, that because French soldiery cannot withstand foreign climatic dangers a colonial army should be organized, which means not only possible menace under the manipulation of a political adventurer, but also a large increase in taxation. Another cause of disaffection with the ministry and its supporters in the chamber is a bill for a scaled income tax, under which citizens will have to pay taxes under as many different heads as they happen to have kinds of property. There are, in addition to these contentions, radical labor bills, which promise what no government can perform. There is also always to be found in France what to the rest of the world appears the comic element in serious politics. The ministers have exasperated the scholasticism of the nation by appointing a commission for the purpose of supplanting the Erasmian pronunciation of Greek with modern Greek pronunciation.

HOW IT FEELS TO BE HUNGRY.

Experience of Two Explorers in the Wilds of British Columbia.

While Mr. Somerset and Mr. Pollen were exploring "the Land of the Muskeg," in British Columbia, they ran short of provisions. Again and again they were forced to cut down their allowance of bread, and eke out their meals as best they could on the flesh—but half-dried, and quite unfit for eating—of some marmots which their Indian guides and porters had laid in during the expedition.

Mr. Somerset had brought a few books with him, and now, in camp, with little to do, he beguiled the time by reading. One of the books was Hardy's "Far From the Madding Crowd." It was very interesting, Mr. Somerset says, but by and by he was compelled to lay it aside for a singular but all-sufficient reason.

The chapters contain frequent references to English food. "Men sit upon gates," says Mr. Somerset, "and eat ham and bread, or feast in barns upon cheese and cider. I had to put the book back into the pack, and try to forget its existence."

The contrast was too tantalizing, and he did not finish the story till he was once more surrounded with some of the comforts of life.

If a man is at work on short commons he proceeds to say, he does not suffer quite so much as when he is idle. But even the Indians talked continually about things to eat, especially the things they would have when they got to McLeod.

"Yes," one of them would be heard saying, "all kinds of muck-a-muck at McLeod; jam, cake, biscuits—yes, everything by 'n' by. Plenty, plenty muck-a-muck."

Little by little cookery became the one topic of conversation. "It appeared that no one could speak without some hint of the dinner-table. Round the camp-fire in the evening we discussed our favorite dishes in a way that was hardly human, and certainly was far from decent.

"One hankered for steak, another for potatoes. For my own part, I had but one vision of happiness in this world—raspberry jam and bread and butter. I longed to be in a civilized country again, that I might go by stealth and purchase pots of preserves, and then locking myself in a room, attack them with a spoon."

The explorers survived it all, though they came to the verge of actual starvation; but henceforth they know what it means to be hungry.

A MODERN MIRACLE.

He dropped a match from the bridge and it lit on the water.

THE BRITISH IN AFRICA.

HOW THE CONQUEST OF THAT COUNTRY WAS EFFECTED.

The British Are the Greatest Colonizers in the World—The Own a erritory in the Dark Continent Larger Than the Whole Area of the United States.

The astonishing success realized by Great Britain in the occupation of colonization of various parts of Africa is exciting the admiration and envy of all the other States of Europe, several of which, in spite of their most earnest efforts, have barely been able to maintain a foothold on the darkest of all the continents. Nominally, the area of the British possessions in Africa, even including Egypt, does not greatly exceed that of the territory claimed by France, while the German colonies, on paper, follow pretty closely behind these two, and the Portuguese dominions are far more contemptible, but in every country in Europe, it is perfectly well understood that the French, German and Portuguese colonies are such more in name than anything else, Algeria being the only part of Africa that really deserves the name of a French colony, while the German and Portuguese holdings consist, for the most part, of extensive districts, occupied by independent tribes, which are not even kept in nominal subjection by the few scattered forts and garrisons in their territory. The Congo Free State, under the protection of Belgium, does not seem to be more prosperous as a colony than the German possessions, while, after several years' of earnest effort, the Italians appear to have completely failed in their attempts to subdue the Abyssinians.

In striking contrast with the feeble condition of the colonies founded by other countries is the aggressive attitude of the English, who have not only occupied, but have peopled

VAST DISTRICTS

of rich country with men of their own race and language, and thus have made in every sense of the word, their own an extent of territory larger than the whole area of the United States. On the west coast, Great Britain holds Gambia, Sierra, Leone, the Gold Coast, Lagos and Yoruba, the Niger territories, and has just now acquired Ashantee. In South Africa, the British flag floats over Cape Colony, Basuto Land, Natal, Zululand, Bechuanaland, Zambesi and Nyasaland. On the east coast, Zanzibar and Pemba, Ibea, the Somal Coast and Sokotra, acknowledge British authority while in the northeast, Egypt is, to all intents and purposes, a British province, the whole of the British possessions covering a grand total of 3,406,000 square miles, or nearly the combined area of the United States and Mexico. The means by which so magnificent a domain were acquired naturally excite the curiosity of every one who feels an interest in the progress of national movements, particularly when of such mighty import.

In the first place, it should be understood that the English-speaking peoples are natural colonists. No other nation of ancient or modern times has shown so marvelous a power among its individuals of adapting themselves to the conditions of a new country or to the circumstances of frontier and colonial life. In North America, Asia, and Africa it has been the same story; the English were the only colonists who could succeed in establishing a permanent settlement. The traditional versatility of the French is so great that it would seem as though it should insure brilliant success in colonization; the home farming instinct of the Germans is so marked that this would appear to be enough to establish German colonies around the globe; but in neither case has the result justified the expectation. In both there was something lacking; just what may be a matter of opinion, but something that brought failure.

Then again, the English, as a nation, are the

MOST AGGRESSIVE

people on the face of the earth, and as enterprising in discovering something worth having as ingenious in securing possession after it has been discovered. The perseverance of the English explorer in penetrating remote corners of the earth is proverbial, and the British Government is not slow to take advantage of intelligence that may be brought back from little-known regions by English hunters and explorers. It has, indeed, in many instances forwarded their work, for not a few of the travelers who traversed the Dark Continent from end to end were secretly aided by the British Government, with the express understanding that any information of value they might be able to gather should first be communicated to the Government. In this way the British authorities have kept themselves thoroughly informed as to the progress of exploration and discovery, and have been always in readiness to utilize for their own benefit information that seemed likely to be valuable. There is reason to believe that in the private maps of the colonial offices in London every known African mine of precious metal, every coal mine in Africa, every mineral deposit, is carefully noted down, and all available information concerning it is filed away for future reference. Nor is this information limited to the possessions now held by Great Britain, for data concerning the holdings of France, Germany and Portugal are equally abundant, and equally ready for use, as, at any time complications may arise or war may break out, in which case such information would be priceless.

The annexations have occasionally been peaceably made, by treaty or otherwise, but as a rule the annexed tribe had to be subjugated by force before the process was complete, and several severe wars with the natives have been waged by the British troops. The Africans were far from being lovers of peace, and their warlike habits render them formidable opponents, when, as is generally the case, they greatly outnumber the civilized force brought into the field against them. Some of the hardest fighting ever done by British soldiers was seen in

THE ZULU WAR,

while the prowess of the naked Arabs of the Soudan, when pitted even against the deadly rifles of the British regiments, has been well attested on more than one field. The fighting done by both Zulus and Arabs, however, was in the usual style of savage battle, an attempt, by sheer force of numbers, to bear down and crush the array of the enemy. On several occasions the troops of the English have suffered severe reverses, and the defense of the Soudan and Upper Egypt was so effective that the English, sorely against their will, were compelled to relinquish Khartoum and the surrounding region to the fierce dervishes, whose desperate charges proved too much even for the sturdy British infantry.

In general, however, the battles between the English and the native tribes of Africa better deserve the name of massacres, for the machine guns and the repeating rifles have in almost every case caused deadly havoc among the dense masses of naked blacks, who were urged by their leaders to the charge, only to be butchered by the superior weapons of the English. The last campaign in Ashantee was one in which the English displayed more than usual mercy. Knowing the nervousness of the Ashantees at their coming, they resolved to turn it to their own advantage. Roman candles, sky rockets, aerial bombs and cannon crackers. When the two forces came face to face the British made a night attack on the Ashantee army, exploded a vast quantity of crackers, fired off several hundredweight of Roman candles and rockets, and these terrible missiles, supplemented with a liberal supply of red and green lights, struck such terror into the hearts of the Ashantee warriors that they fled in dismay, firmly believing that the English were trying to burn them alive. Not a life was lost, and the only wounds on the English side were from powder burns on the hands, while numbers of the Ashantees had their shiny black skins torn almost into strips by the thorns when running through the bushes, pursued by the fearful Roman candles and awe-inspiring rockets. It was the only campaign since the invention of gunpowder in which

NOT A SHOT WAS FIRED,

and yet vast quantities of powder were burned.

That the conquest of Africa by Great Britain is in the general interest of civilization can not be doubted. The native populations, after their subjugation, by the English, are treated with scant ceremony and little consideration, but on the whole their condition is vastly improved over what it was under their native rulers. Their English masters kick and cuff them on little or no provocation, but kicks and cuffs are mere trifles in comparison with the torture and execution to which they were liable under the African kings. In Coomassie, for instance, the King's slaughter ground was found to contain the skulls and bones of thousands of hapless creatures who had been put to death, many from a mere caprice of the bloodthirsty tyrant, who imagined that the more blood he shed the greater was his dignity. The abolition of such barbarities is in the interest of civilization, and wherever the English have made conquests in Africa they have done away with the cruelties of the native kings. There is little doubt that the sphere of British influence on the Dark Continent is widening, and that in the course of years, by one means or another, most of the continent will come under English rule, and when this happens the enterprise of American products on the markets of the world may be as far reaching and important as the influence of the Anglo-African States on the world's politics and history.

FABULOUS WEALTH.

A Dutchman's Strange Will—A Canadian One of the Heirs.

In the year 1750, as already announced in a New York despatch, a Hollander named Jasper Cronkhite, in company with his two brothers, Jacob and James, left his native city of Amsterdam and went to another Amsterdam situated in the State of New York. Jacob and James liked the new Amsterdam, but Jasper preferred the old, so he returned to the land of his fathers. He started a gin manufacturing establishment, and money flowed into his coffers in a golden stream, until at length he had amassed a fortune amounting to $12,000,000. He was unmarried and lived alone, but finally longing for the society of his brothers, he wrote, asking them to come back and share his wealth. They liked their new home, however, and would not return. Jasper was so incensed by their refusal that he made a will leaving his immense wealth to fourth and fifth generations, and providing that the will is to be read on April 6th, of this year. When he died his money was left to the Government in trust for the heirs. The Government in turn deposited the money in the Bank of Holland, where it has been ever since. The $12,000,000, however, has now, by the addition of the interest, been increased to $42,000,000.

Mrs. Gilbert Post, nee Cronkhite, who resides on Fernwood road, Victoria, B.C., is one of the beneficiaries by this strange will. Her father, who is at present living at Amsterdam, N.Y., is one of the fifth generation of the Cronkhites. He is 70 years of age. Mrs. Post has within the last few days received a letter from her brother, which states that a meeting of the several descendants was held at Utica recently. Thirty-one persons have clearly proved heirship, and there are six whose claims are doubtful. The majority of the heirs are residents in the State of New York. One of them, Mr. Rivenberg, has spent about $6,000 in investigating the matter. He despatched an attorney to Holland to look after his interests, and this attorney brought back with him a copy of the will.

Mr. Rivenberg states that there is every reason to believe that the several heirs will receive their shares of the estate. He has been offered $10,000 for his claim, which offer he has of course refused. Mrs. Post says that she fully believes all the heirs will receive their shares. "But then it isn't any good putting too much faith in those things. If it comes to any good, and if it doesn't—well, it will not matter anyway. I am simply waiting for more news about it. In the meantime I am not building any castles in the air."

HOW TO MOUNT PICTURES.

Many beautiful pictures that it is a pity to throw away may be mounted exactly like photographs. Practice these directions with pictures which are of no consequence, and you will soon acquire sufficient skill to enable you to handle the most expensive prints.

First of all prepare your paste. It must not be mucilage or glue. You can buy various kinds, but that used by photographers is made of corn starch, mixed smoothly in cold water, then turned into boiling water, and allowed to boil until it thickens. A flat wide brush is needed.

Place your picture face downward on a piece of glass; If you haven't the glass the back of a meat platter will answer the purpose. Moisten the print thoroughly. Photographers float their pictures, face downwards, in clean, cold, water, and then drain them upon the glass. Pass the brush over them smoothly, and be sure that the edges are not left dry.

Have your mount ready, also a piece of smooth brown paper. Lift your picture by taking hold of the upper right hand corner with the thumb and forefinger of the right hand and the lower left hand corner with the thumb and forefinger of the left hand. Look carefully at the mount, and hold the upper right hand corner in a direct line with the upper right hand corner of the mount, the lower left hand corner in direct line with the lower left hand corner of the mount, balance for a second, bringing it close to the paste board, then let it drop quickly. Seize your sheet of brown paper, put it over the picture, hold it firmly in the centre by placing the left fist upon it, then smooth quickly, from the centre to the sides, by rubbing the right fist over it, always pressing the hand from the centre to each side.

Should you find a corner curled, lift it up carefully with a pin, dip your little finger into the paste and dab the mixture on the place required, press it down at once. The picture must be rubbed as described until not a single bubble remains. Then it will never break loose from the mount. Should you be so unfortunate to drop paste upon the face of the picture lick it off with the tongue. That is the professional method. Like the fashions that sculptors have of spraying their clay models by using the mouth as an atomizer. It may not be elegant, but it is effective.

RECOGNIZED AT ONCE.

A musician was stranded in a city and applied for help to a rich man who attended his concert the night before.

I should like a small raise, sir, he remarked.

What's the matter?

What, sir, you see I want to leave town and I have no funds. I am only a poor musician, sir, and—

Oh, ah—yes, yes; I understand. I heard you play last night.

PRACTICAL FARMING.

TROUBLE WITH CREAM.

We hear many complaints in cold weather of butter not "coming," that the cream froths and acts so they can do nothing with it, writes Jennie M. Wilson. For the benefit of any of the readers of this paper who are troubled this way let me say that several years ago I saw published a short article concerning the Devonshire system of cream raising and butter-making which interested me so much that I determined to give it a trial. The "modus operandi" was simply scalding the milk, and immediately reducing the temperature. In the system referred to the milk is set in shallow pans for twelve hours. The pan is then set in a hot water or steam bath for twenty minutes, until the milk is hot and the cream "crinkles," but is not suffered to boil. The temperature should not exceed 190 degrees. The pan is then returned to the dairy and remains twenty-four hours for the cream to rise completely.

I change the programme somewhat, as it suits me better. In extreme cold weather I give two heatings; one when the milk is first strained, and one after it has stood twelve hours. After both heatings I place it where the temperature is as low as possible without freezing, and I have had no difficulty with churnings since adopting this method. The time saved in churning is not the only benefit derived. It makes butter with much better keeping qualities, gives more of it and less buttermilk. Another thing greatly in its favor is the low temperature in which it is kept keeps the milk sweet so that when skimmed one takes nothing but the clear cream and thus avoids having a quantity of sour milk to cause the white specks or flakes which are so annoying to the butter maker. A writer in one of our farm papers, in an article on "Best use for skim-milk" said, "In feeding it to calves have it slightly warm, but be careful not to scald it." Now I wish the writer of that advice could take a peep into Lake View stables and see our little "Lady Milton" who has had scalded milk every day since she was two weeks old, and she is now three months old. About a pint of middlings is added now, though commencing with less; the milk being fed sweet, the result is we have one of the nicest little Jersey pets in the country.

This is another thing greatly in favor or of the heating process. We certainly have raised much nicer calves since adopting the method.

I was reading a little article a few days since, in which the writer claimed that if on straining the milk the vessel was filled only half full and then filled the remaining half with ice cold water to immediately reduce the temperature, the cream would rise in two hours' time, so that milk strained in the morning could be skimmed and the pans be ready to strain the night's milk in. I got to studying on it through the day and resolved to experiment a little with the milk that night; so when the milk came in I took two crocks and strained each one half full so as to have a fair trial. One, I scalded as usual immediately reducing the temperature, the other I filled with ice cold water, and awaited results. At nine o'clock I went to examine as to what the outcome was. The milk had then been set three hours instead of two, but I failed to find any milk waiting to be skimmed, so resolved to let it stand until morning and see what it would be then. Of course the first thing thought of on rising was my experiment. Examination proved that the scalded milk had a nice thick cream, while the other had only a slight show of cream on the watery mass, and disgusted with the operation I emptied it into a pail and sent it to "Lady Milton," meantime resolving not to try raising cream with ice-water in future. But it made me more than ever an advocate of the Devonshire system.

MIXTURES FOR CLAY SOILS.

In sowing grass mixtures two or three points are to be considered. What the grasses are to be used for and the kind of soil on which they are to be sown. Orchard, bluegrass and redtop are the most reliable and successful. While with these, as best for pasture and meadow Timothy comes in for the highest place. It is seldom that a farmer has a field that he wishes to sow for pasture in which the soil is the same over the entire field. This makes it advisable to sow a mixture. While each kind may grow on all parts of the field, there will be places where some kind will do better than the others. Bluegrass thrives best on clay limestone soils. Orchard grass adapts itself to rich clay soils, and both of these thrive well in the shade. Redtop does well on clay soils but does best in wet places. Timothy makes its best growth in clay soils that are of a damp nature. We have grown Timothy most successfully on clay soils and black soils with clay subsoil which were so wet naturally that clovers were a failure. For short rotations it will hardly pay the farmer to sow either bluegrass, orchard grass or redtop as it takes them too long to occupy the land.

Orchard grass comes on quickly, but the seeding costs too much for the farmer to sow it for a set of two or three years. Bluegrass, orchard grass and Timothy may be sown together. The Timothy and orchard grass will come on first. The Timothy will fail first, and eventually the bluegrass will crowd out the orchard grass. Orchard grass sown alone to secure a thick sward should be sown at the rate of two bushels per acre. The same is true of bluegrass and redtop. The bluegrass seed sold on the market is usually of such poor quality that it makes it necessary to sow this large quantity. If sown with Timothy a less quantity of seed may be used, but it is safest to use the maximum amount. To these mixtures, probably excepting the bluegrass may be added a light seeding of Alsike clover. If it will not smother the bluegrass, then it can be sown when the bluegrass is a part of the mixture. The Alsike will hold for a number of years, and act as a nitrogenous feeder for the grasses. Where bluegrass is not indigenous an effort should be made to establish it. Orchard grass should also find greater favor with farmers, but the cost of seeding is against both of these.

SORE FEET IN A COW.

The soreness between the claws of the hoof is to be treated in this way: Wash well with hot water and carbolic soap, and if there are scabs in the sores, break these by rubbing with something rough when they are softened by hot water. Then apply this mixture: Take of pure vaseline, four ounces, acetate of copper half an ounce, Venice turpentine one ounce, and common turpentine one ounce. Melt together all but the copper, then make an intimate mixture of all by rubbing them on a board with a dinner knife. After the washing apply this ointment to the sores and bind the foot, between the claws, and all around it, with a bandage.

DESIRE VS. CAPACITY.

Mr. Callipers—What kind of a boy is Willie Wiggles?

Little Clarence—He is a liar, pa.

Mr. Callipers—You should not talk so about one of your playmates, Clarence.

Little Clarence—Well, pa, Why, at the church supper the other night, when one of the ladies asked him if he had eaten all he wanted to, he told her "Yes, ma'am," instead of saying that he'd had all he could hold

GOOD ROADS IN FRANCE.

The System That Has Made the French Highways Famous.

Modern Gaul has learned from its ancient conqueror, the Roman, the great lesson of the importance of good roads, learned it so thoroughly that there is no other nation now on earth which might not well take lessons of her. The German roads have, indeed, many admirable points, but there is no more ductility or adaptableness in them than in the German character. The German road builder shows a haughty disdain for natural obstacles. If a hill gets in his way, so much the worse for the hill; it must expect to be trampled on. He follows science so rigorously that he sometimes forgets that it is not true in practical affairs as in mathematics that the straight line is the shortest. It is to France, then, that we may most confidently look for practical suggestions for the great road building movement, and all who are interested in the subject will find much to stimulate and to guide their thought in the small manual of "Roads and Pavements in France," by Alfred Perkins Rockwell, just published. Mr. Rockwell was formerly professor of mining at the Sheffield Scientific School and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and his professional equipment is well known, so that his comments will be read with quite as much interest as his careful notes of facts.

Like all scientific students of the subject, Mr. Rockwell believes in permanency as opposed to cheap makeshifts which are the dearest as well as the worst. He shows how far Europe is ahead of us in this matter, and that the counterpart of our wretched "dirt" roads, which are deserts in summer and

IMPASSABLE MORASSES

in the spring and autumn, can be found only in the more backward provinces of Russia. In France highly educated engineers have been working out the problem of the best road for practical use for over 100 years, and we may well study what they have to teach us.

It is commonly held by people who consider themselves "practical" that the road systems of Europe are well enough for small and thickly populated countries, but that the initial expense of a "fancy" roadbed is too heavy for our sparsely settled districts to undertake. It is interesting, therefore, to notice that according to Prof. Rockwell's report the tendency in France in recent years has been toward less expensive roadbeds, the development of road-making science making it possible to reduce the quantity of material without impairing the efficiency of the road. The amount saved is put into annual repairs, and so skilfully and so thoroughly are these repairs made that the road, instead of deteriorating, as is almost universally the case with us, grows better and better year after year. No suspicion of a rut is allowed, and when one begins to form, instead of filling it, with the result of more ruts, the organization and method of this system of paving, and there is also a suggestive chapter on the sidewalks of Paris, which are generally admitted to be the best in the world.

A REMARKABLE DOG.

A remarkable case of canine sagacity has just been revealed. An Irish setter dog was drawing its master, Donald Eddy, an eleven-year-old boy, on a hand-sleigh over Red River, three miles below Winnipeg when he ran into an air hole. The dog crawled out and started away, but noticing the boy was not on the sleigh returned to the air hole and dived for the lad and dragged him unconscious to the surface. Seeing the boy was helpless the dog started to drag him home, when he was discovered by neighbors, who carried the lad to the house, where he was restored to life. In the excitement the dog was overlooked. He took a bad cold and died a few days after.

For Light and Power.

Acetylene gas is produced by adding water to calcic carbon. Calcic carbon is made by fusing together, in an electric furnace, carbon and lime. Acetylene has now become a commercial product. For illuminating purposes it gives a light at least ten times as bright as that derived from coal gas, and brilliantly white. Recently it has been suggested that acetylene may be used to advantage in place of coal for driving steam-engines. Thus, long before the coal-fields have been exhausted man is discovering ways of economizing the "black diamonds" that have so effectively fed his furnaces, and furnished light for his homes and shops.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON, MAR. 22.

Faithful and Unfaithful Servants." Luke 12, 37-48. Golden Text. Eph. 5.18.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

It is best to date this lesson from the latter part of the year 29, shortly after the last lesson. The words of both were spoken in Perea, while our Lord was on his last journey to Jerusalem. Pharisees had been sent down from the capital to entrap him. At a dinner given by a Perean Pharisee their malicious intent became apparent. The exposure, indictment, and denunciation addressed by our Lord to this Pharisaic order constitute the most remarkable after-dinner speech on record. Meantime the crowd, aware of the contest, and expecting a great discourse had multiplied until it seemed to reach myriads, that is, tens of thousands. The discourse which followed is one of the three most important chronicled by the evangelists. Part of it was addressed to the inner circle of the disciples. Such warnings as are here given were uttered by our Lord many times. The very words were some of them repeated on the afternoon of the Tuesday before the passover, after Jesus turned from the temple for the last time. The keynote of the warning on both occasions is the word "Watch." He bids his disciples remember that his kingdom was to be like a household whose master is absent, and whose servants are left with their several duties to be done hour by hour until at some moment, unknown and unexpected, their lord returns. So stands Christ's Church in expectant attitude, busy with present duties, but with face uplifted toward the heavens, and ever responding: "Even so; come, Lord Jesus." Faithful servants, says our Lord, shall be so honored by their delighted master that he will do menial service for them as for revered and beloved guests. Every steward should watch for the time when his accounts shall be called for; every householder should watch for the hour when the thief may come; every Christian should watch for the coming of the Son of Man. Mystical language was all this, and Peter wondered whether it contained a general truth or some peculiar revelation to the little knot of disciples. As an answer to this question Christ tells another story, the kernel of which is contained in that startling text, "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." In proportion to our endowment and opportunities are our responsibilities.

PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 37. Blessed. "Happy." The Lord. The absent master, referred to in verse 36. Shall find watching. With all duties done or doing. There is, however, an idle, merely inquisitive watching which is not blessed, but cursed. No "master' i' pleased by lack of work. Alertness, diligence, and readiness are the qualities here praised. Shall gird himself. One of the most extraordinary of our Lord's promises is this; and none the less forcible because given in a parable and by implication. The returning Master will treat his servants as distinguished guests, for in the East, when a host would do his visitors special honor, he "girds himself" and performs duties ordinarily done by the servant.

38. If he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch. In the heart of the night. Roman guardsmen were on duty from about six in the evening till nine, from nine till midnight, from midnight till three, and from three till about six in the morning. These were the four "watches." The banquet would hardly be over before the end of the first watch. All watching implies uncertainty as to what the next hour may bring—a truth emphasized in the next verse. Often the Eastern peasant has to go to his plow with the sword hanging on his thigh and a gun slung on his back—"watching" because of enemies who scour the land. But he is not in more imminent danger than are most Christians from their spiritual enemy. And though, in this passage, the coming of the Son of Man is given as the prime cause for watching, the warning looks to the other reason also. We are to watch over ourselves, to keep our spiritual nature alert; against temptation, that our adversary may not obtain advantage over us; in the duty which our Master has intrusted to us; and for the coming of the Lord. Our duty is not constantly to talk of Christ's second coming, certainly not to refrain from ordinary business, but every moment to do his will.

39. This know. "You cannot know the hour; but you may know this." The goodman. The householder. The thief would come. Christ repeatedly compares the unexpectedness of his second coming to the approach of a thief, and the apostles use the same comparison (1 Thess.5. 2; 2 Peter 3. 10). His house to be broken through. Literally, "to be digged through," for in the Orient houses are often built of mud cement, through which a burglar could dig his way more easily than he could force the door.

40. The Son of Man cometh. There are three senses in which this expression is used: (1) Christ came in the end of the Jewish state, when the new dispensation finally took the place of the old; (2) He will come in the final success of the Gospel, when all the earth shall be evangelized; (3) he will come finally, to be seen by all mankind. If we are ever tempted to regard certain utterances of some who emphasize this precious doctrine as extravagances and follies, how much more extravagant and foolish are we if we ignore it! Just how Christ will come, in body or in spirit, we do not presume to say, but that he will come is certain. When ye think not. Is it not hazardous then, for any man to compute either the day, the year, or even the century when Christ will come? But it is more foolish, in the light of Scripture, to declare that he will not come.

41. Then Peter said. The questions of the twelve were often voiced by Peter. Our Lord frequently specially addressed his disciples in the presence of the multitude.

42. Faithful and wise steward. Every Christian is a steward of God. The most unfaithful and foolish thing any steward can do is recklessly to disregard the authority of his master. A faithful and wise servant of God will be much more concerned about the will of God than about popular opinion, business expediency, or social recognition. His lord shall make ruler over his household. The "lord" does this when he makes him steward. "Whoever by reason of genius, position, or wealth has influence or control over others is in so far placed over them, and is accountable to his Lord for the administration of his trust."—Abbott. Their portion of meat. It is the duty of each of us to give of what we have to all about us—of our wealth, of our wisdom, of our love, of our experience.

43. Blessed is that servant. He shall be blessed in his own exquisite happiness in having done his Master's will. When he cometh. "A workman who is doing well a fine work is pleased to hear the footsteps of his employer. His appearing may be quite unexpected, but the competent workman is not frightened or embarrassed. He has nothing to conceal. He rather enjoys the close scrutiny of his work by his master. The co-worker with God must do thorough work. He cannot dally in secret with what he condemns in public. His Employer sees all."—Gobin.

44. He will make him ruler. Revised Version, "will set him over all that he hath." Thus in the parable of the talents the faithful servant has his reward. But how can each of the faithful ones be ruler over all? Simply in the fact that in the kingdom of God each recipient enjoys the benefit of all the others' blessings.

45. Say in his heart. Evil thinking is simply evil speaking in the heart. My lord delayeth his coming. Thinking that his absent master cannot or will not call him to account, he begins to transgress his commands, to neglect duty, to use his position for his own advantage, and to wrong his fellow-servants. Such is the professed disciple of Christ who lives unworthily, or uses office in the Church for his own advantage. Shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens. Primarily, the application may be to church officials, or some popes and bishops, who "lord it over Christ's heritage" and wrong those under them. But there is a wider reference to all men, for all men are equally responsible to God, and our fellow-men are our fellow-servants. To be drunken. Not only doing wrong to God's cause, but also wasting the opportunities given by God in pleasure, and leading an animal existence. Thus three sins are laid at the door of this evil servant; unbelief, pride and pleasure seeking. There have been periods in the history of the Church on earth when this was but a faint picture of its condition.

46. The lord of that servant. The wicked servant has a lord, even though he does not know it. Will come. Men may disbelieve in Christ's coming, but their disbelief will not prevent it. Will cut him in sunder. The customs of the ancient world, by which men were sometimes sawn asunder, are used to represent the spiritual penalties which cannot be understood on our bodily state. His portion with the unbelievers. Men who pretended to a godliness which they did not possess.

47. Knew his lord's will. Either actually from received information, or virtually, because the information was within his reach. Prepared not himself. For his lord's return to judgment. Beaten with many stripes. On the principle that responsibility is according to the knowledge of the criminal. There are, therefore, degrees of punishment as well as grades of glory.

48. But he that knew not. That is, knew but partially, for some knowledge is implied in the phrase "servant" (of Christ), and his being liable to punishment at all. The case supposed is that of one who did what he knew, without special revelation, by the light of common sense and duty, to be equivalent to his duty as a servant. Shall be beaten. He is beaten because he sinned against light; he is less beaten because he had less light. Much . . . given . . . much required. The universal law lying at the foundation of the principles just laid down.

THE SOURCE OF MALARIA.

An Investigation That Shows It is Offener in the Water than in the Air.

The investigation on the source of malaria has had the writer's attention for over two years, and in that time a large amount of clinical testimony has been collected from all known malaria districts in North America; the final report, however, will hardly be ready for publication for some months, but from the work already completed certain facts have been obtained which will be embodied in this short notice.

The introduction of artesian wells, first by the railroad companies who desire a larger supply of water than had hitherto been available, and the accidental use of that water by the people in the immediate vicinity, soon produced a marked diminution of malarial trouble in those localities. The artesian supplies were, on the whole, so satisfactory to the railroads that their introduction became very rapid, and in a few years most of the South Atlantic lines depended upon this source of water supply. The evidence that in the exclusive use of the deep-seated waters there was

ENTIRE IMMUNITY

from malarial trouble was apparently so incontestible that I determined upon a critical examination of all waters known to produce malaria and those that in malarial districts were proof against it; this examination is not only chemical, but biological and pathological.

In the present state of our knowledge we do not expect to be able to draw a sharp line between waters that produce malaria and those proof against it by purely chemical analysis, nor, on the other hand, can we hope to identify by biological examination the protozoa producing that trouble; but we may by the former succeed in isolating certain toxic products peculiar to those waters only, and by the latter a certain line of testimony that, in conjunction with the chemical investigation, will yield very valuable results. The work thus far has proved satisfactory beyond expectation, and, from the work already done, and the character and amount of evidence before me, I am justified in stating that the long current belief that the source of malaria is in the air is in error.

The germ, which is of soil origin, is strictly a protozoa, and reaches its highest development in low, moist ground, with a favorable temperature. Surrounded by the proper soil conditions, this protozoa passes from one stage of life into another with considerable rapidity, so that in the present state of our experimental knowledge it is impossible to identify it, nor is it probable that by culture we shall be able to produce the accepted Laveran germ outside of the human system.

As a rule the potable water from the malarial districts is derived from driven wells not over twenty-two feet deep, in soil with clay or some other impervious substrata, which water is generally cool and palatable often sparkling clear, but more frequently

A LITTLE TURBID.

This water is filled with an incalculable number of these germs in all stages of development, and if used as a potable water they naturally find their way into the system through the alimentary channel. This protozoa passes through so many forms or stages of life that in some stages it is light enough to float and be transported by the moist air of low grounds, but in this state it is comparatively harmless except under most extraordinary conditions; it is not until the surface water is used that the mischief begins, when, by reason of higher development, it has become much more virulent than that floating in the air. A very short period of incubation is sufficient to develop a severe case of malarial fever in the newcomer who uses the surface water.

From personal observations I know that the exclusive use of pure, deep-seated water affords entire immunity against malaria in sections of country where no white man dared live using the surface water. Nor must it be understood that the exclusive use of pure water simply fortifies and strengthens the system against the attack of the germ. The water is the primary cause of infection, which acts as the direct carrier of the germ into the system through the intestinal tract.

The impression that malaria is caused by purely atmospheric influences has become so fixed in our minds that, unless we come in actual contact in the evidence produced in the use of pure water as against that heretofore used, the physician will, in all probability, be very slow to allow himself to be convinced that the word malaria (mal, bad; aria, air) is a misnomer, and that malaqua (mal, bad; aqua, water) is the word that should be used to convey the pernicious effects known under the name of malarial fever.

GENEROUS SHOPKEEPER.

The author of "Forty Years at the Post Office" cites what he terms a bit of true Irish politeness, which he once experienced at Schull.

A long drive was in prospect, and the clouds hinted rain. So I bade the driver pull up at a shop where I could buy an umbrella. He did so, and I made known my want.

Do I understand that you wish to buy an umbrella because the day may turn out wet? asked the shopkeeper. If so, here is a good one.

How much is it? I inquired.

Oh, you can settle on your way back, he answered.

Give me my umbrella, said the shopkeeper. There's nothing to pay. You haven't even used it."