

## TOPICS OF THE DAY.

The idea that lightning is not so destructive as it used to be in the United States, because the network of railroads and telegraph wires lessens the number of accidents, is met by the record of the summer. Fatal thunderbolts have never been more common.

Some of the reasons for distress in Ireland last year are shown in the statistics of crops gathered in 1881 and 1882. There was a decrease in all of the more important agricultural products, amounting in potatoes to nearly a million and a half tons. This decrease alone would account for a great deal of suffering.

A well-posted treasury official gives it as his opinion that there are at least fifteen million trade dollars in the New York banks and depositories, and that before Congress meets the amount will be increased to twenty millions. He says that the syndicate of speculators who have taken hold of the trade dollar will move on Congress with a powerful lobby next winter, and that there is \$2,000,000 or \$2,500,000 in the job if they can induce the government to legitimize the coin.

The *Medical News* says: "We have previously stated that it is improbable that cholera will reach the United States this year, but that it is an even chance that we shall have it next year. Since that opinion was published the danger has diminished very little, if any, and while there is not the slightest occasion for panic, there is very urgent need of enforcing cleanliness, of looking to the purity of the water supply, and of great care in the administration of our quarantine stations."

The geographical limits of some of the world's great cities seem to bear but little relation to the number of their inhabitants. New York now includes 111 square miles, or 26,500 acres; Paris, within the fortifications, consists of 283 square miles, or 18,315 acres; London has 122 square miles, or about 77,000 acres; Philadelphia, with a population of 800,000, has the surprising geographical area of 129 square miles—which is considerably more than is covered by London, even with all its modern additions of what were not long ago outlying and separate communities.

The *Christian at Work* thinks it is a perfect marvel how some of the letters which fall into the puzzled hands of post-office officials ever reach their destination. The "blind readers," as those are called who decipher hieroglyphics, seem to be able to follow any clew, however slight it may be, and to find a person to whom a letter is addressed, even when the writer gives no intimation. When a man who sees the words "Signific's Hotel" can guess correctly that it means St. Nicholas Hotel, he has, indeed, a faculty for reading a superscription which consists of "nine hieroglyphics, five scratches, three dots, and a blot," and should hold his office for life.

The business of condensing milk is likely to be a growing one, as it enables farmers at a distance from cities to get as good prices for milk as those who live near enough to supply them with fresh milk. Condensing milk is simply evaporating a portion of the water, which is its chief constituent, the milk being then sweetened with sugar for its better preservation. If it be used within a few days, the sugar is not necessary. In both cases, the condensed milk, when to be used is diluted with water to the natural condition of good, rich milk. For ships' use or exportation, this is the only way that milk can be safely or economically provided.

### Sunlit Rooms.

No article of furniture should be put in a room that will not stand sunlight, for every room in a dwelling should have the windows so arranged that sometime during the day a flood of sunlight will force itself into the apartment. The importance of admitting the light freely to all parts of our dwelling cannot be too highly estimated. Indeed, perfect health is nearly as dependent on pure sunlight as it is on pure air. Sunlight should never be uncomfortable to the eyes, and walks should be in bright sunlight, so that the eyes are protected by veil or parasol when inconveniently intense. A sun-bath is of more importance in preserving a healthful condition of the body than is generally understood. It costs nothing, and that is a misfortune, for people are deluded with the idea that those things can only be good and useful which cost money. But remember that pure water, fresh air and sunlit homes kept free from dampness will secure you from many heavy bills of the doctors, and give you health and vigor, which no money could procure. It is an established fact that people who live much in the sun are usually stronger and more healthy than those whose occupations deprive them of sunlight. And certainly there is nothing strange in the result, since the same law applies with equal force to nearly every animate thing in nature. It is quite easy to arrange an isolated dwelling so that every room in it may be flooded with sunlight some time in the day, and it is possible that many town houses could be so built as to admit more light than they now receive.

## THE FAMILY DOCTOR.

**SIMPLE ELIXIR.**—A very pleasant vehicle for the administration of medicines which are to be given in solution is prepared by mixing together two fluid ounces each of orange-flower water and simple syrup, adding half a fluid ounce of alcohol to preserve, and coloring with two drachms of compound tincture of cardamoms. This will be found of service to the country physician who is obliged to dispense his own medicine.

**A NATIONAL LACK.**—Dr. Selden H. Talcott, superintendent of the New York state homeopathic asylum for the insane, says that our national lack is that of recuperating sleep. Against the use of the so-called hypnotics in massive doses he protests, because the temporary benefits are heavily discounted by the evil effects which almost always follow. Two conditions oppose the requirements of sleep. These are hyperemia of the brain—stimulating it to undue activity, and playing the part of a whip and spur to a tired horse—and the opposite of hyperemia, excessive cerebral anemia. To relieve the former by rational methods, the blood forces must be enticed away from their persistent assaults upon the cranial fortress. This can best be accomplished by filling the stomach with solid food, thus "furnishing temporary engagement for the pugilistic globules on other fields." The food should be of the coarsest and plainest, else the remedy might produce an aggravation. Should excessive anemia exist, and a state of nerve irritability and trepidation be thus produced, take liquid food, such as hot milk, beef tea, and broths, about an hour before sleep is intended. This is of peculiar value to persons of sedentary habits, to those who take too little exercise, and to those who suffer from imperfect circulation. Sleep may usually be obtained, after a hard and irritating day's work, by a warm bath, a cold douche, and a brisk rubbing following that, just previous to retiring for the night. Fresh air should be freely supplied in every sleeping room; yet the sleeper should be protected from even moderate draughts; for these, though apparently slight at first, will produce chilliness of one portion of the body, while another may be overheated, and thus a disturbing inequality of circulation ensues. Beds should be firm in texture, level, and well elevated from the floor, thus complete circulation around the bed is secured.

### Tarring a Rat.

Rats are wonderfully clean animals, and they dislike tar more, perhaps, than anything else, for if it once gets on their jackets, they find it most difficult to remove it. Now, I had heard it mentioned that pouring tar down at the entrance of their holes was a good remedy, also placing broken pieces of glass by their holes was another remedy. But these remedies are not effective. The rats may leave their old holes and make fresh ones in other parts of the house; they don't, however, leave the premises for good. I thought I would try another experiment—one I had not heard of before. One evening I set a large wire-cage rat-trap, attaching inside a most seductive piece of strongly smelling cheese, and next morning I found, to my satisfaction, that I had succeeded in trapping a very large rat, one of the largest I had ever seen, which, after I had besieged him with tar, I let loose into his favorite run. The next night I tried again, and succeeded in trapping another equally big fellow, and served him in the same manner. I could not follow these two tar-besmeared rats into their numerous runs, to see what would happen; but it is reasonable to assume that they either summoned together all the members of their community, and by their crest-fallen appearance gave their comrades silent indications of the misfortune which had so suddenly befallen them; or that they frightened their brethren away, for they one and all forsook the place and fled. The experiment was eminently successful. From that day in 1875 till now, 1883, my house, ancient though it is, has been entirely free from rats; and I believe that there is no remedy equal to this one, if you can catch your rat alive. They never come back to the house again.—*Chamber's Journal*.

### Naming a Lake.

Years ago, it was discovered that a certain lake which had long been considered the head of the Mississippi, had no claim to that honor. The explorers found a new and smaller lake from which the great river took its rise. A discussion arose as to what name would be appropriate for it. The story is that it was decided in this way:

"Let's make a new name by coining a word," said an old voyager. "Some of you larned ones tell me what is the Latin for true."

"Veritas," answered a scholar.

"Well, now, what is Latin for head?"

"Caput."

"Now write the two words together by syllables."

The scholar wrote on a strip of birch-bark, "veritas caput."

"Read it."

The five syllables were read.

"Now drop the first and last syllables and you'll have a good name for us lake." And "Itasca" it was.

## LATEST NEWS.

**LONDON.** Sept. 7.—Both France and China are reported to be equally desirous of securing a peaceful solution of the Tongkin question. It is also said France has consented to negotiate with China for a treaty.

The cattle plague continues with fury its travages in Russia.

**HENRY ROCHFORT.** has attacked King Humbert of Italy in an article in a Paris newspaper, and then has refused to grant a hostile meeting to an Italian officer who demanded a retraction.

The Hungarian escutcheon, with bi-lingual inscription, was replaced in Agram, Austria, yesterday, with great ceremony. Enlistment in the ranks of the rebels there is progressing rapidly. The situation is serious.

Eighteen new cases of yellow fever have been reported at the Pensacola navy-yard.

The President has returned to Washington from his trip to Yellowstone Park, much reinvigorated.

**SENATOR VOORHEES.** It is reported that Senator Voorhees has been retained as the leading counsel for young Nutt, at Uniontown, Pa., charged with killing N. L. Dukes, his father's slayer.

Everything, including the mails, on board the steamer Canima, wrecked September 6 on Gall Island, St. Mary's Bay, N. S., was lost. The passengers were dragged ashore by ropes.

Commodore English has telegraphed to Lieut.-Commander Welch, at Pensacola, Fla., that it would be impossible for the marines encamped near Pensacola to be moved north at present, but instructing him to move the camp to a point further from the infected district.

Carrie Waldmayer and Amelia Weaver, of Philadelphia, aged 19 and 21 years, were drowned in the Raritan river at New Brunswick, N. J. They were strolling along the beach, when Miss Waldmayer slipped into the water. Miss Weaver endeavored to rescue her, and both were drowned.

At the naval court-mart on the Santee, at Annapolis, ex-Judge Magruder argued in defense of Cadet Campbell. Cadet Ramsey, of the third class, has been sentenced to seven days' solitary confinement for hazing.

Fire broke out in a lot of cotton in the hold of the steamship William Crane while at sea, on her way from Savannah to Baltimore, and it was only with great difficulty that the vessel was saved from destruction.

### GENERAL NEWS.

**LONDON.** Sep., 6.—The London Times despatch from Hongkong, which announces that the French admiral will blockade the ports of Canton and Pekoe unless the Chinese troops are withdrawn from the Tongkin frontier. The Times believes that France is in earnest.

**CHARLES BROWN.** died at Dover, Del., aged 86 years. He was a member of the Pennsylvania State Senate, and subsequently of Congress. Under President Pierce he was collector of the port of Philadelphia. He was noted for the interest he manifested in the buckshot war of the Porter-Kittner brigadiers.

**SEPT. 4.**—It is reported that troops from China have crossed the line into Tonquin territory, and the London Standard says that that war is inevitable between France and China. The French cabinet has decided to send large reinforcements to Tonquin. It is expected in Paris that the Marquis Tseng will resume negotiations with the French minister of foreign affairs.

**MARWOOD.** the celebrated executioner of England, is dead.

The village of Battencourt, Belgium, has been destroyed by fire.

The Mobile quarantine against Pensacola, which was raised by the board of health, has been renewed by the city authorities until the 15th inst. Several new cases of fever have appeared in adjoining villages on the naval reservation. One death has occurred in the Naval Hospital.

A special from Springfield, Ill., says While Company A, Ninth Regiment of Infantry, State militia, were returning from the encampment of the Second Brigade, they met with a dreadful accident on the St. Louis and Evansville Railroad, between Carmel and Grayville. The train, in passing through a small herd of cattle, ran over some of them, and the car which the members of the company occupied was overturned, killing nine and wounding fifteen persons.

The new two-cent postage stamps will be of a metallic red color.

The experiment of sending a boat remodeled after the old Maid of Mist through the whirlpool rapids at Niagara has been carried out successfully.

Policeman J. C. Parks, of Danville, Va., has been shot and dangerously wounded by John A. Ferguson. Parks had a warrant for the arrest of Ferguson on a charge of beating and threatening the life of his wife.

The house of John Everts, at Riverton, Ills., has been burned. Mrs. Phoebe Hoyland, mother of Mrs. Everts, 68 years old, and two children of Mrs. Everts, a boy aged 4 and a babe, were burned to death.

Frosts during the past ten days, it is stated, have killed buckwheat crops in all that section of country near Erie, Pa., not protected by the lake winds. Corn in the valleys has also been killed, and farmers are cutting it up to save for feed.

Three prisoners escaped from the McDowell county (N. C.) jail Sunday night, injuring Mrs. Finley, the jailer's wife, slightly, by pushing her aside. They were captured. Shortly after pistol shots were heard, and the jailer, who was drunk, was found shooting at one of the prisoners, who was chained in a cage.

**London, September 5.**—The French cabinet has decided to ask the Marquis Tseng, the Chinese ambassador, to explain why Chinese troops are moving to the Tongkin frontier. If the present negotiations between France and China fail, it is said China will accept England's good offices with a view to a peaceful solution of the issues. Troops are leaving France for Tongkin.

**King Alfonso.** is en route for Paris. Quarantine has been abolished on the Suez canal.

A revival of the Fenian activity is reported in London.

Anti-Magyar riots have occurred at Beduia, Austria.

An earthquake prophet has threatened Ischia with another earthquake on October 15.

It is now reported that destruction by volcanic eruption in Sumatra was not absolute.

Five new cases of yellow fever and one death were reported at the Pensacola navy-yard Sept. 5.

Huntington is now spoken of as "the life of West Virginia." More than three hundred houses are now in course of erection there.

Reports from Santa Barbara, Wilmington and Los Angeles, California, announce that sharp shocks of earthquake were felt there. The vibrations were from northeast to southwest.

At the lunch given the Villard Northern Pacific excursion party at Minneapolis, Minn., Monday, speeches were made by President Arthur, Mr. Villard, Herr von Braun and others. Jay Cooke was toasted as the founder of the Northern Pacific.

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**PHILADELPHIA.**—Philadelphia, Sept. 5.—The five new cases of yellow fever reported at the Pensacola navy-yard were all fatal.

**NEW YORK.**—The Lyceum, Oct. 1, 1883.

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