

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

A WRITER in the Clay Worker well writes: "The capable man in any walk of life is rare. The capable boy is rarer. It is a very difficult matter to get a good office boy or a steady, capable fellow to run an elevator in an office building. Really good laborers are scarce. We sometimes think about over-crowded professions, or an over-supply of help in many directions. The supply of really capable help of any kind is limited. A first-class superintendent of a works of any kind is very difficult to get hold of. He is rarely out of a job. A man who is out of a job is open to suspicion. The best and most capable help comes out of the workshop—the steady, quiet fellows. There are not many of them in any establishment. Generally one of good judgment can pick a leader from a gang of men. He will need a little coaching, some help and some patience. But he is nearly always to be found. When such a one is discovered, the great work has been done. A man has been lifted up from a lower plane to a higher one; his horizon has been enlarged; the world has grown bigger for him. Nevertheless, the really capable man is rare, and in this prosperous period he is seldom if ever out of a job." But suppose we were all capable?

QUEENSLAND is dreading the invasion of rabbits, which have worked so much havoc in other Australian colonies, and have recently become a scourge in some of the chief wool-producing centres of New South Wales. Border fences are being erected, and Queensland newspapers contain minute instructions for the destruction of the dreaded animals. In the dry season tanks of poisoned water are laid for the rabbits, and when they are not likely to want water poisoned grain and sticks are freely distributed. A Brisbane paper says that in New South Wales millions of rabbits have been killed with poisoned sticks, which are laid along the banks of rivers, creeks, lagoons and waterholes. The twigs which rabbits most prefer are sandal wood, emu bush and turpentine bush, and are cut in lengths of about twelve inches. Smoking out is sometimes accomplished by means of bisulphide of carbon. A piece of wool or cloth saturated with the carbon is inserted into the mouth of one burrow, all the other burrows being blocked. The piece of wool is then set on fire, the remaining burrow filled in, and the fumes penetrate throughout their workings and suffocate all the rabbits that are in them.

THE Department of the Interior of the United States has just issued for the calendar years 1889 and 1890, a report of the mineral resources of the United States. The work was compiled by David T. Day, and is valuable from the fact that it presents a comprehensive review of the mineral industries of the country during the years above mentioned. It is moreover a continuation of the previous volume which covered the year 1888. The statistical tables of former years have been carried forward, but previous volumes should be consulted for all other information concerning the mineral industries prior to 1889. The product indicated for 1890 is \$656,604,898, an increase far beyond any previous year. The year was one of unexampled activity in mining, particularly so in iron, silver, copper, coal and petroleum. This total is extraordinary, but the activity continued in 1891 until it was checked by the feeling of insecurity following the English depression. The year 1891 shows no marked contrast to 1890.

HISTORIC YORK.

Its Massive Walls, Old Tower and Magnificent Cathedral. Some historians consider York the most ancient city in Britain. It was a "flourishing place 2,000 years ago." It has now about 60,000 inhabitants and is the capital of the largest county in England. It is situated about midway between London and Edinburgh. The site was probably selected by Agricola 80 years after Christ. It has been thought, from the remains of outbuildings, baths, pavements, etc., found that it was the place of residence of a very wealthy colony of Roman citizens. "After the evacuation by the Romans it was soon overrun by the Picts and Scots, then by the Saxons and ultimately by the Danes. Here Augustine was sent, by Pope Gregory the Great, to turn the benighted heathen to the Christian faith. In 1068 William the Conqueror took the city with little difficulty. After nearly another century, in the reign of Henry II., the first English Parliament was held at York. There in Richard I.'s time nearly 1,000 Jews, men, women and children, lost their lives at the hands of a mob who wished to exterminate all the "enemies of Christ."

It was at York that the first Christmas was kept in Britain (521) by King Arthur. In 1277, Daniel Defoe visited York and made it the birthplace of "Robinson Crusoe." Ten years later it is spoken of by Drake as "one of the pleasantest cities of England." I did not think of York being still surrounded by strong, high walls (or perhaps I ought to say that part that was originally the city, for at present, I was told, there are as many people living outside as inside the city walls). The first thing I did was to walk around the town on top of the wall, making the whole circuit, about three miles, and thus getting a good view of the city. The date of the erection of the first walls cannot be determined. Some parts may have been built in ancient British time before the Roman invasion. Portions of the Roman walls may still be seen. The most of the present walls were built in the 14th century. In some places the wall is ten or fifteen high and must be over seven feet thick as near as I could judge by measuring with my umbrella. No wonder that when the Parliamentary army laid siege to the city, the troops and citizens within the city were able to hold out until Prince Rupert came with 20,000 men to their relief.

There are six gate-ways in the wall with high arches and towers built over the arches. The outside of the wall is built up about six feet higher than the inside so that you can walk along on the inside part without being seen from the outside. Through this outside part are loopholes so the citizens could hurl their missiles at the besiegers, being themselves protected by the outer part of the wall. Thus walking about the city I found some idea of the extent of the city and the principal buildings. There are a great many churches of all denominations. I counted as many as 35 or 40. There are also, I should judge, an unusually large number of asylums, halls, museums, institutions, libraries, etc. After leaving the walls I visited many of these places more carefully. The first place I went to was the old "Clifford Tower," built in the 13th Century, which occupies the site of William the Conqueror's original keep, or rather the keep of the original castle. This was the scene of the Jewish massacre in Richard First's time. There is not much left now of the old tower. It has been repaired enough to preserve it and that is all. You cannot enter it except by special permission, and there is nothing to see when you gain admittance. The buildings about it are used for a prison and court rooms. It speaks well of York that the number of prisoners is decreasing. I went to the prison yards and also into court rooms where there is kept a roll of the sheriffs from the reign of William the Conqueror to the present time. Criminals condemned to death were to be hanged on the wall outside (the spot was pointed out to me) in sight of the people, but now the execution takes place within the prison walls. The next thing of special interest is, of course, York Minster, or Cathedral. The first building on this spot was a little wooden oratory, where Edwin, King

of Northumbria, being converted to the "new faith," was publicly baptized, Easter Sunday, April 12, 627. He began to build a large church, but did not live to see it completed, and it was destroyed. Twice it was restored and twice burned, once in 741, and again during the Norman conquest. The present cathedral dates from 1215. It is built in the form of a Latin cross, and is 519 feet long and its extreme breadth is 249 feet. A lantern tower rises from the centre of the cathedral 213 feet from the ground. It is the largest in England. Some of the stained glass windows are magnificent. The chapter-house is most beautiful. I have seen the cathedrals at Ely, Peterborough and Lincoln, but for good proportions, grandeur and fine effect I like York. However, I believe good judges of architectural work would not agree with me. Some parts, as the carvings in the choir, the ceilings, etc., of other cathedrals may be more beautiful, but none as a whole impressed me so favorably as a cathedral, a place of solemn worship, as York Minster.—[Edward Foley, in Southington (Conn.) Phoenix.

A Mosquito Remedy. The position of this section of the country is such writes, a correspondent from Bangkok, Siam, that we cannot procure conveniently, pure drinking water unless we collect the rain water in vessels during the rainy season, and that of sufficient quantity to last over to the next year. Ordinarily the rain water is kept in unglazed earthen jars of about twenty-five or thirty gallons each. To prevent the mosquitoes from depositing eggs in the water, an iron nail is placed in each jar. For the first few days this will not prevent them, but after that time there will be no more mosquitoes or larvae in the jars. To remedy this evil from the start, I heated the nails red hot, so as to produce oxide scales on the nails at once. A year ago I placed in every jar of rain water a couple of five inch wrought iron nails heated red hot. Several jars are now left over from them, and the water in them is as pure and free from mosquito larvae as any one can wish.

The process described as above is not universally practiced now, but many years ago the ancient people did so during cholera time and cases of prevalent sickness, believing in the mysterious virtue of the iron nails to prevent harm and the mosquito larvae from being in the drinking water.—[Scientific American.

Electricity and Vegetables. A contemporary tells us: "That Electricity has a stimulating action on seeds has long been known. This knowledge Gospodin Speckhoff, a Russian agriculturist, has been utilizing by subjecting peas, beans, and rye to an electric current for two minutes, with the result that the plants grown from them are much more vigorous than those from unelectricified seeds. He has also electrified the soil by burying plates of zinc and copper in it to form an 'earth battery,' connected above ground by an iron wire, the electricity circulating from plate to plate through the intervening soil. The crops grown on this stimulated ground were the amazement of the country side—the yield being four times that produced from the land in the immediate vicinity which had not been subjected to this treatment. A carrot weighed 6 1/2 pounds, and a radish was 5 1/4 inches thick and seventeen inches long. But this, though interesting, is not quite new. Among others Andrew Cross found the same results many years since, and some forty years ago a scientific Berkshire farmer experimented with electricity on a large scale, much to the contempt of his illiterate neighbors, who described the new departure as 'muckin' the lan' w' thun'."—[Freeman.

English Meadows. How and when man first learned to make hay will probably never be known. For haymaking is a "process" and the product is not simply "sun-dried" grass, but grass which has been partly fermented, and is as much the work of men's hands as flour or cider. Probably its discovery was due to accident, but possibly man learned it from the pizax, the "calling hares" of the steppes, which cut and stack hay for the winter. That idea would fit exactly with the theory that Central Asia was the "home of the Arya race," if we were still allowed to believe it, and haymaking is certainly an art mainly practiced in cold countries for winter forage.

Probably there are no meadows in the world so good as those in England, or so old. Yet from the early Anglo-Saxon times old meadow has been distinguished from "pastures," and has always been scarce. Two-thirds of what is now established meadow land still shows the marks of ridge and furrow; and from the great time required to make a meadow—ten years at least on the best land, a hundred on the worst—men have always been reluctant to break up old pasture. Their ancient meadows, with their great trees and close, rich turf, are the sole portion of the earth's surface which modern agriculture respects and leaves in peace. Hence the excellence of the meadows of England and the envy of the American.—[The Spectator.

The Upper Vest Pocket. "There is just one person in this world I would feel justified in assassinating, and that is the inventor of the upper vest pocket," said Major John Wampler at the Southern. "The upper vest pocket is a delusion and a snare; it has caused more misery than unrequited love, more exasperation than tight boots. A man cannot resist the temptation to put all manner of articles into it—comb, toothbrush, cigars, pencils, etc.—well knowing that the first time he has occasion to stoop down he will spill the entire cargo all over the floor. The upper vest pocket was my bête noir for twenty years; then I ordered my tailor to omit those receptacles, and now I have hopes of living a gentleman and dying a consistent Christian."—[St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

THE BODY AND ITS HEALTH.

DEFORMED CHESTS IN YOUNG PEOPLE. It is claimed that we are degenerating, and that our good figures of former days are gradually disappearing. At any rate this is what the tailors tell us, having noticed it by comparing the measures and patterns used for the clothing of fifty persons between eighteen and twenty-two years of age thirty years ago and a similar number of the present day.

In the old measures, that is to say in those used thirty years ago, the anterior thoracic line corresponding to the opening of the coat was at a greater distance from the seam under the arm than in the models of to-day, which show a disposition at present toward a less convex anterior thoracic wall and a decrease in the capacity of the chest. On either side of the front middle line, and practically in the perpendicular of the breast, a man's garment has a seam enabling the maker to outline the form and to decrease the lower diameter of the body of the coat. In our days this has to be replaced by the removal of a piece in the form of an ellipse, because the chest of the young man of the present day is gradually acquiring the same diameter above and below.

The posterior line of the chest, corresponding to the back middle line of the garment, and instead of being straight, as on the old models, has an anterior concavity in its upper half, in order that the garment should not bag but should fit the back, which has a tendency to become round. On the measures of their different clients we find in eighty per cent. of the cases this mention:—"Round shoulders."

These transformations can be resumed as follows:—The chest is flattened—that is to say the anterior thoracic wall has no longer its normal convexity; the back is round, its line is convex, whereas it ought to be straight; finally, the upper and lower diameters of the chest have a tendency to become equal—in other words, while the lower diameter has remained normal, or practically so, the upper diameter has decreased and the thoracic capacity has, of course, diminished by so much. These modifications are found in eighty cases out of a hundred. The normal type, with straight and slightly concave back, full chest, and good figure, is now the exception.

Other remarks can be made in this connection, though they cannot be graphically represented on the model or pattern. Normal shoulders—that is to say, high shoulders, in the technical language of the tailor—are only seen three times in a hundred; the neck reaches forward, the chest is flat and the back curved. The appearance of a young man from eighteen to twenty-two years of age can be readily observed at any time. The hips are prominent and the upper part of the body short. The semi-circumference of the chest at the breast and the same measure of the abdomen have a tendency to become equal, whereas thirty years ago the former was from eight to twelve centimetres greater than the latter.

Are we to think that a sedentary life, work at desks that are often too low, a want of physical exercise with the arms are the cause of these deformities? The author of the foregoing researches which were published recently in *La Normandie Médicale*, claims that this is so, but I think that in order to be so affirmative these deformities would have to be compared with those that have been reported in other countries, and this has not yet been done.

ABOUT WRINKLES.—Wrinkles are the index of nervous condition. Upright lines between the eyes, indicate mental trouble, thought, care or temper, more than physical illness. Fine netted lines about the eyes denote nervous exhaustion and the depression which follows over-indulgence. Women are likely to get them from living and sleeping in close, hot rooms. The latest scientific writer on the subject says the air in our rooms should be changed at least twice every hour. The skin owes its beauty to the nerves which control the fine invisible blood vessels of the surface, whose work lends glow and transparency to the face. The nerves in turn owe their sensitiveness to the air, which, noxious or pure, is our chief nutriment, inhaled by gillsions hourly. When the nerves are debilitated by close air, the fine muscles lose their tone, the tissue of the face shrinks, and these shrinkages become wrinkles. As first they are fugitive; a week's watching may write the face over with cross-hatching of fine lines, and another week of rest will restore lost tissue, fat and fluids to fill the spaces and smooth the face again. To avert wrinkles, the nervous and over-taxed must rest, and eat nourishing food. The neuralgic should eat roast fat and make food tempting with condiments, adding to their fare the sound, coarse bread which contains phosphate to feed their starved nerves, and it is the great regulator of nutritive function. Too often the trouble is not so much what people eat, but what they don't eat, and do not get provided for them at the table. Leaness and wrinkles go together. We seldom see a florid, plethoric woman with them, as the supply of blood keeps the skin in repair. Steaming the face is the fashionable treatment to remove wrinkles, but it is an idea of American adoption, if not original. French specialists deprecate steaming. They say it makes wrinkles worse when the practice is suspended, and assert that it causes falling of eyelashes and eyebrows. The intensely hot steaming may have that effect in certain states of the blood, and it must cause determination of blood to the face, which is far from healthy. The remedy is to use vapor at milder heat, keeping up the process longer at a time. Half an hour over the vapor, however, is more than most women can spend. The most convenient application is a firm waxen paste, which takes time for rubbing out and gives just the right amount of massage for the face in the process. The soft oily salves and creams in request are not such good wrinkle erasers as a firm, protective cosmetic which will not rub off as easily, but allow the moisture of the skin to remain and freshen the tissues. It is easier to disperse wrinkles than to eradicate any other defect of the face. Sleep, much more than people suppose necessary, rather hearty food, and moister air in houses are indispensable to keeping a smooth face, whatever cosmetic is used.

AROUND THE HOUSE. Put a teaspoonful of salt into a kerosene lamp once in a while. If green blinds are dingy and faded, wash, and rub on a little sweet oil. A large, soft sponge, either dry or slightly dampened, makes a good duster.

Sweet oil and putty powder, followed by soap and water, makes one of the best mediums for brightening brass or copper. A writer in *Harper's Bazar* tells how those who cannot buy a filter can make one. Take a common five-cent flower pot of earthen ware, putting in the hole a piece of thoroughly cleansed sponge, over that a couple of inches pulverized charcoal, and over that a couple of inches of sand; over that again about half as much clean coarse gravel, and then the water, slowly filtering through, must needs have been very bad at the start not to be very pure at the end.

PENNSYLVANIA ITEMS.

Epitome of News Gleaned from Various Parts of the State.

THREE men were killed in a peculiar manner on a railroad near Erie while returning home from a political meeting. Two men were killed by an explosion in a quarry near Howellville, Chester county.

CHARLES SWENDEL was placed on trial at Middleburg, accused of having murdered his wife by poison. Friends of General Superintendent Fritz, of the Bethlehem Iron Works, tendered him a dinner as an observance of his recently passed 70th birthday.

ANOTHER of the cases growing out of the Mt. Zion disaster was begun in the Court of Common Pleas at Scranton. James Jennings claims that he sustained six broken ribs and also that he sustained permanent injuries for which he wants \$50,000 damages. The defendants have summoned several physicians to give testimony.

JOHN DATSMAN, postmaster at West Milton, has received a notice from the authorities at Washington, that he is the oldest postmaster in the United States, having been first appointed in 1831, and served continually for sixty-one years. Mr. Datsman is now past eighty-two years of age and still hale and hearty.

William T. Wiley, clerk of the Common Council, dropped dead upon the street of apoplexy.

AN UNKNOWN man, who, with seven others was on a hand truck, was killed by being run into by a passenger train near Port Clinton.

No trace has yet been found of little Alice Czaja, of Hartleigh, who disappeared several days ago. It is now believed she has either been kidnapped or fallen into a mine branch.

The central and western cities of the State were visited by a disastrous thunder storm.

A FREIGHT wreck on the Erie, near Lovell's caused the death of a fireman and the demolition of two locomotives.

LITTLE ALICE Czaja, the 4-year-old child of a Hazleton miner, wandered into the woods and has not yet been found.

A SPECIAL election was held in Weatherly to decide whether the borough's debt should be increased for the purpose of providing water plugs and fire apparatus. A spirited opposition to the motion was manifested, but the Volunteer Firemen's Association hunted for votes with public meetings, brass bands, and torch light parades and carried the day by a vote of 287 to 134. The election was conducted under the new ballot law.

JACOB SCHULTZ, aged 15 years, fell from a chestnut tree in the Round woods and suffered injuries from which he died in an hour. The boy ventured too far out upon a limb that he might be able to reach the coveted nuts. The limb gave way and he fell to the ground, a distance of about thirty feet.

As the result of a wager that he could not board a Lehigh Valley passenger train while in rapid motion, at Shoemaker's, a mining village near Mahanoy City, Thomas Ogden, aged 29 years, had both legs cut off, was frightfully mangled and died shortly afterwards.

At the session of the East Pennsylvania Synod of the Lutheran Church at Lancaster, the annual reports of the Pennsylvania College and the Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, showed both institutions to be in a flourishing condition. A motion to remove the seminary from Gettysburg was defeated. The body of Michael Ulrich was found on the Lehigh Valley tracks near Hazleton. It had been run over, but Ulrich's friends claim that he was murdered and the body then placed where it was found.

The National Camp, P. O. S. of A., in session at Lebanon, struck out the word "white" in the qualification clause of the constitution. LARGE numbers of veterans returning from Washington viewed the Gettysburg battlefield. The Twenty-second Massachusetts and the Sixteenth Vermont regiments dedicated their monuments. A large number of New York veterans, mainly from Sing Sing, held a reunion.

The Cooley gang made a descent upon the house of West Virginia in Fayette County, near the West Virginia line. Seven men were in the party and Prinkley's son shot one of them. The robbers ransacked the house, but got little booty.

Two thousand L-high County people signed a protest to the Board of Pardons against the commutation of Murderer Keck's death sentence.

In the Delamater trial at Meadville objection was made to evidence as to the confessions of G. W. Delamater and the Court reserved its decision.

A COUNTY game and fish protective association was formed at Pottsville.

A PETITION was presented to Judge Clayton at Media, requesting that the leper Armstrong, at the Delaware County Almshouse, be kept under closer surveillance.

ISAAC WERKHEISER and Edward Martin were drowned in the Delaware near Easton by the high winds upsetting their flat boat.

PRESIDENT BAKER, of the Reading Iron Works, replying to a request of the employees for a restoration of the recent 10 per cent. reduction, said he would make the advance as soon as the condition of trade warranted it.

Hair Oil Gone Out of Fashion.

A dozen years ago there were consumed ten bottles of hair oil where one is used now. The prevailing fashion then was to wear the hair thick and long. Dust and dirt got into the locks, and shampooing had to be resorted to frequently to keep the head clean. This made the hair dry and "porcupine." Oil was used to smooth and gloss it. A great "fak" with the barbers was to use "pure bear's oil" on the hair. To tell the truth this was nothing but lard with a little bergamot, or other essence, to give it a pleasant odor. Had all the barber shops in the country used what they pretended to, an army of bear hunters would have had to be employed constantly, and a bottle of bear's oil would have cost as much if not more, than champagne. Now very little hair oil is used. It is a rare thing for a customer to ask for it. The fashion is to wear the hair short and look poetic. Money that the barber formerly got for shampooing and cleaning the hair they now get for the extra hair cuts, and the one about o'clocks the other.