

TIMELY TOPICS.

There are now 42,677 postoffices in the United States, an increase of 1,338 in the past year.

Mr. Fambro, of Sandersville, Ky., has a large rattlesnake, about five feet long, which he captured last October, and which he has kept in a box with a wire net from ever since that time.

A Frenchman, who resides on a farm near Paris, and has a fancy for picking up old animals, has a mule aged seventy-seven, a goose aged thirty-seven, a cow aged thirty-six, a hog aged twenty-seven, a bullfinch aged twenty-eight, and a sparrow aged thirty-one.

The national association for the protection of the insane, which was organized at the charitable conference in Cleveland recently, has for its object the introduction of more humane and intelligent methods of dealing with insanity.

A druggist's assistant was charged before the correctional chamber in Paris, a few days ago, with causing the death of a man by misreading a prescription.

State elections will occur this year as follows: Alabama, first Monday in August; Arkansas, first Monday in September; Vermont, first Tuesday in September; Maine, second Tuesday in September; Colorado, first Tuesday in October; Indiana, Ohio and West Virginia, second Tuesday in October; California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia, November 2; Georgia, November 3.

The projected tunneling of Mount Blanc is engaging the serious attention of French engineers, and, contrary to common opinion, they characterize it as an easier undertaking than that of the Simplon route.

John Dye, the expert in counterfeiting, says that a close study of good notes is necessary for those who could readily detect bad ones.

Chung Han, late Chinese ambassador at St. Petersburg, who was condemned to death some time ago for having signed a treaty with Russia without due authorization from Peking, will not be executed for some time to come.

The honors accorded to the American exhibitors at the fishery exhibition at Berlin were quite numerous. They were as follows: Address of thanks and a gold medal; one honorary prize; a gold medal, with special honorary diploma; nine gold medals, exclusive of the special ones before mentioned; fourteen silver medals; twelve bronze medals; and seventeen honorable mentions—in all sixty-nine awards to the United States.

A mouse-eating spider has been added to the London Zoological society's collection. It can stretch itself out to

several inches, as black as a bear and as hairy, and as ugly as a nightmare. All which leads the London Telegraph to ask: "What conceivable system of defenses could avail humanity against a creature of spiders as big as sheep?"

Mr. Stoddard, second mate of the brigantine Fortunate, which arrived recently at Halifax, N. S., from the West Indies, reports that one night, while passing along the coast of Florida, a singular phenomenon appeared just after dark.

A Washington dispatch that says General Walker has placed the task of attempting to procure full census statistics of Indians not taxed to Major Powell and his assistants, who are working under the Smithsonian institution.

An Eccentric Man's Will. A correspondent writing from Vienna, Austria, says: We all know that millionaires are continually being reminded that there is no chance of their millions following them beyond the grave, but I had never before heard of an instance in which his millions should rob a poor man's bones of their justly earned repose in the tomb.

Chung Han, late Chinese ambassador at St. Petersburg, who was condemned to death some time ago for having signed a treaty with Russia without due authorization from Peking, will not be executed for some time to come. December, it appears, is considered a particularly suitable time of year for cutting off people's heads in the flowery realm, and Chung Han's decapitation has been postponed to that month in deference to the high rank of the doomed mandarin.

A bullock when slaughtered yields about fifty pounds of blood, which for fertilizing purposes is worth twenty-five cents.

WHISTLING IN THE MINES.

What the Spirits of Good Luck did to Jack Richards—A Tragedy of the Mines Retold. A Carbondale (Pa.) letter says: Most old miners believe that a "good luck spirit" lurks in every mine, and that at a sound of whistling it flies and leaves the miners at the mercy of the spirits of evil.

In 1840 there was a great mine disaster at this place. Several miners were buried in one of the Delaware and Hudson Canal company's mines by a sudden caving in of the roof. Although the cause of the caving was known to have been a lack of proper support by pillars and timbers, at least one old miner, a survivor of the disaster, still living here, has always maintained, and still maintains, that it was caused by a "dare-devil miner," named Jack Richards.

Suddenly, while they were gathering up their tools, a noise like the sound of distant thunder came to the ears of the agitated miners. They knew too well what the sound presaged. The roof was "working," and a cave-in threatened. The miners turned to Jack and charged him with bringing disaster upon them by his defiance of the good luck spirit of the mine.

The men worked for hours, many of them working the flesh from their fingers in the sharp coal. Some of them lost all heart, and threw themselves upon the damp floor of their underground prison and bewailed their fate. Suddenly a ray of light broke through a small opening in the wall. Then a lantern was pushed through, followed by a man's head. The man cried out: "Is there a man here that is alive?"

toward the mouth of the mine. He took the dead body of Jack Richards on his back and led the way, and two hours afterward the miners were in the arms of wives, parents and sweethearts on top. Richards had no relatives but a crippled sister, who was dying with consumption. She died the next day.

A Harnessed Whale. Wandering around on the wharves a day or two ago, among the remnants of what was once the scene of bustle and activity in the good old days of whaling, a Union reporter encountered an old seaman who had a good story to tell.

We were lying becalmed one day off the Cape of Good Hope. It was as smooth as a mill-pond for miles; you couldn't see a ripple on the water, for not a breath of wind stirred. There were several whalers lying off the land, close in, waiting for a wind or something to give them occupation.

The whale laid still for a minute, as if struck with amazement that any one should dare to touch him. The rope, which was coiled up in the tub in the bottom of the boat, didn't seem to be of any use for a moment. In the meantime the other boat had come up. Suddenly the whale made up his mind what to do. He started off like a locomotive, the rope whizzing around in a way to astonish a land lubber.

Metals in the Body. The human body, which seems made up of flesh and blood, really contains several metals and gases, and other substances which perform important offices in the world of science.

FOR THE FAIR SEX

Gingham and Other Wash Traveling Dresses.

It is the custom this summer to wear gingham dresses for traveling. For short journeys these are the most comfortable dresses used since buff and gray linen traveling dresses were universally worn. They are so easily cleaned after the journey by washing that they are not a source of anxiety on the way; they are of dark colors that are not conspicuous; and if greater warmth is needed, it is supplied by the traveling cloak of English homespun that has superseded the linen duster.

For other wash dresses, whether of gingham or lawn, embroidery is the trimming preferred this season to lace. The Hamburg work in open patterns, or else quite close, with dots, diamonds, almonds or stars, is best liked for gingham dresses; there is also a woven trimming called Swiss embroidery, which is effective and very inexpensive, costing only eight or ten cents a yard in widths suitable for edgings.

Easy Fishing. A correspondent at the Thousand Islands in the St. Lawrence river writes thus to the Springfield (Mass.) Republican: Fishing is here sport without labor. You seat yourself in an easy arm-chair in a fisherman's boat; your trolling poles are supported by pins and sockets in the sides of the boat, and you are free to enjoy the river, until a vicious jerk at the end of the pole tells you a bass or pickerel, or perhaps a twenty-pound muskallonge is to be pulled in and stowed away.

Kneading Bread. Here is a little incident which not only has the merit of being true, but the additional one of containing a lesson much needed by girls:

The woman reflected, then her face lighted. "I could knead bread. I always did that better than any one else on the farm." The lady's brother, an eminent physician, who happened to be present, suddenly took part in the conversation. "Let me look at your fingers," he said.

They were long, strong, of great nervous force. "I will give you work." He had charge of a hospital in which the patients were subjected to a cure called massage, a process of kneading, by which artificial exercise is given to the body. Skillful manipulators were difficult to find. After a few lessons our country girl earned her thirty dollars per week.

it thoroughly, and you will never be in danger of going without a meal for the lack of honest work.—Youth's Companion.

Ancient Female Lawyers. Not every lady and gentleman who has this season applauded Miss Terry's Portia is aware that about the date when the "Merchant of Venice" may be supposed to have exhibited his gaberline upon the Rialto there actually existed great female lawyers in the neighboring city of Bologna. Professor Calderini, who held the chair of jurisprudence in that university in 1360, and Professor Novella, who occupied it in 1366, were not only celebrated for their legal lore, but if we may trust their portraits, were exceedingly beautiful women, with noble Greek profiles, dressed in a style which Miss Terry might have copied without disadvantage. If women hereafter should again obtain entrance into the legal profession, it is not at all improbable that we may see something more of the keenness of feminine wits engaged in disentangling the knots of the law.

A Badger's Defense Against Dogs.

Mr. Charles Gonter and son were shooting ten miles west of the city when they saw upon the banks of a stream a badger. Two dogs accompanied the hunters, and upon receiving the proper encouragement began an attack upon the animal. The fight was a lively and interesting one, and though a shot could have easily settled the contest, the hunters preferred to look on and enjoy the struggle, and leave the fate of the badger to be settled by the dogs. For ten minutes the dogs howled and barked, and would occasionally jump on the enemy, inserting their teeth in its back, receive a slight wound in return and then retreat a few feet away. A false movement would then be indulged in by the dogs, as though they intended to pounce upon their victim and kill him without further parley. The badger soon understood their false attacks, and when he paid no attention to one of them the succeeding one was sure to result in a struggle, in which every time the dogs were driven away with an extra wound or two, until finally, all worn out and covered with blood, they gave up the fight. A large bulldog, owned by a neighbor, heard the noise of the other two and came bounding upon the scene, fresh and in good trim and eager for the fray. The badger was about tired out, and it was but a short time after the arrival of the third dog before he was lying dead, having fought bravely to the end, leaving gory marks upon the hide of the third antagonist. The badger is full grown, and probably weighs thirty pounds. His fur is of grayish color, and he is altogether a very pretty animal. He was looked upon as a great curiosity, from the fact that no badger was ever before discovered in this part of Missouri, and the question, where did he come from?—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

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The American Eagle and the Dogs.

Some three months ago, while hunting in the mountains east of the Twelve-mile Louse, Mr. Buffington captured a young American eagle. At the time the bird was quite small, and from appearances has a few weeks old. Mr. Buffington has his pet confined in the yard back of his shop, and the many curious monkeyshines indulged in by the mountain bird are really amusing. Measuring some eight feet from tip to tip, and weighing forty pounds, with talons three inches in length, there is but small chance for any dog residing in the neighborhood. For as eagle as one makes his appearance the eagle spreads his heavy wing, and with a loud scream he lights upon the back of the terror-stricken dog. The scene that follows is one of great interest. The dog, without further notice, darts through the side gate and out into the street, with the eagle attached to his back, and that, too, in a manner to stay. Down the street he goes at breakneck speed. At a distance of about two blocks the eagle bids the dog an affectionate adieu, and quietly returns as though nothing had happened. The same experiment is gone through with whenever the dog can be procured. It does not seem necessary to remark that dogs of any description are seldom seen in that part of the city, and the same dog never more than once. It would be a blessing to our city if we had only one such bird on each block.—San Jose (Cal.) Mercury.