

TIMELY TOPICS.

An attempt is to be made to introduce into this country what is known in Europe as the red trout, a fine table fish, that often attains a weight of twenty-five pounds. Fifty thousand of their eggs were given by the German government to Professor Baird, who in turn gave them to New Hampshire. When hatched they are to be placed in Lake Winnipisaukee.

German colonists on the banks of the Volga, in Russia, are in extreme destitution, and a St. Petersburg journal publishes a pitiful account of their sufferings. The number of the destitute is stated at 200,000, and there are very few well enough off to furnish even the most meager aid to their impoverished neighbors. The Russian authorities do nothing for their relief.

Dr. Wilson, said to be an authority on ear diseases, says that when the hearing is good the ticking of a watch can be heard at the distance of twenty-eight inches from the ear. This would be worth more as a test were it not that some watches tick two or three times louder than others. The test is therefore about as definite as saying that something is about as long as a piece of string.

Scientists are no longer content with the five senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. One proposes to add the sense of weight whereby we can tell that some things are heavier than others, and another urges that there is a color sense distinct from the sense of sight. If the sense of heat and cold can also be separated from the true sense of touch, then we have eight senses in all. If to these be added common sense and non-sense, which everybody has more or less of, then we have ten senses.

The editor of the *Medical and Surgical Reporter* believes that trichinosis is more prevalent than we suspect. He believes that persons die of it, and the death is recorded to be from such disease as typhoid fever, the physicians in charge really not being familiar enough with trichinosis to know a case when they see it. He instances an example occurring in Erie county, Penn., where six members of a family died within a few weeks of supposed typhoid fever. The health officer finally investigated and found that in all probability trichinae were the real cause of the deaths.

It is said that the Japanese minister, Mr. Mori, once seriously proposed to Professor Whitney, of Yale college, to construct a new language for Japan. Professor Whitney, who is the most learned scholar in linguistics in the country, is also known to be an advocate of the spelling reform. Mr. Mori proposed to him to form a compact vocabulary of a few thousand English words, divested of all absurdities of orthography and of all synonyms and superfluities of every sort. This language, if Professor Whitney would prepare it, the ambassador promised him should be adopted by his government and forced upon the Japanese people.

The Boston Fish Bureau's report contains a table giving the number of larger vessels engaged in the New England cod fishery, crews, and quantity of fish caught during the year. The Massachusetts fleet numbers 376, New Hampshire 14, and Maine 180; total for New England 579 vessels, with 6,068 men. The total catch of fish by these vessels foots up 647,426 quintals. It is estimated that the small fishing boats on the coast caught about 300,000 quintals of fish in addition to the above, so that the entire New England catch may be put down at about 1,000,000 quintals, which, at a low valuation, is estimated to be worth \$2,500,000.

A remarkable circumstance in connection with the recent cold snap was the effect on the fish along the coast, large schools being driven in shore and in shallow water. Strange as it may seem, it is asserted that the fish, particularly bass and trout, were observed to throw themselves bodily out of water on land. An old negro caught thirty-one very fine large bass in this way at Raccoon Key, near Warsaw, Ga. On St. Catherine's a net thrown in the water was almost instantly filled by fine large fish, and fishermen found some difficulty in hauling the nets in. Others were observed to kill them in the water with oars. This novel occurrence was witnessed generally all along the islands to the southward and in the rivers near the coast.

The center of population in the United States has, during the last ten years, shifted from Columbus, Ohio, to the Indiana boundary line; "in a few decades more," the *Detroit Free Press* declares, "it will reach the Mississippi river. At the rate of increase prevailing during the present century, the country will, in 1920, contain between 150,000,000 and 160,000,000. This is only forty years hence, a space easily grasped by those who can remember the Harrison presidential campaign." Ten or twelve years more, equal to a look backward as far as the days of Jackson, nullification and the United States bank, the country

will be found to contain 200,000,000—equal to the present population of Europe exclusive of Russia, Austria and Turkey."

A curious experiment has been tried in Germany for some months past with success. It is the importation of live hogs from the United States at the port of Bremerhaven, from whence they are shipped to Hanover, finding a ready market at Brunswick, Magdeburg, Cassel, and other North German cities. Last June a decree was issued forbidding the importation of American chopped pork and sausages into Germany, presumably on trichinosis grounds, and some ingenious butchers hit upon this method of evading the act, which said nothing about live hogs. It was at first thought that so many hogs would die upon the voyage as to make the experiment rather unremunerative, a loss of five per cent. being the lowest that was thought possible. Experience, however, has proved that the loss is under two and a half per cent., which gave such an impetus to the undertaking that a company has been formed for the purpose of building large lairs for the arrivals at Bremerhaven, which is to be the hog depot for Germany, the animals being killed there and dispatched into the interior by rail. The American hog has more fat substance and less meat than his German relative, and a suggestion has been made to import a number of German pigs into America for breeding purposes.

A Railway on Ice.

Winter in Holland, Denmark, the Norwegian peninsula and Northern Russia sets in early and breaks up late. It is no novelty in those countries to see frozen rivers and bays made use of for temporary railways and even boat-yards. In St. Petersburg one of the famous sights of the season is a palace built of ice on the frozen current of the Nava. In Holland enormous traffic is carried on over the ice in all sorts of heavy motors. A railroad on the ice on this continent, however, is a novelty only to be seen between Quebec and Montreal, on the frozen waters of the swift St. Lawrence. A railway on the most approved principle was laid on the ice, the bed having been smoothed and the ties laid somewhat more closely than on terra firma. This was rendered compact by filling in with soft snow and broken ice, the freezing process, of course, solidifying both the roadway and the firmament. Everything worked smoothly and heavy freight cars drawn by engines passed successfully, but a fatal defect in construction brought the enterprise to grief. That was the neglect to make the bed wide enough to resist the action of the subcurrent. The consequence was in one trip the engine careened slightly, displacing the road, and then tumbled in, sinking in sixty feet of water.

Josh Billings' Wisdom.

The man who gets bit twice by the same dog is better adapted to that kind of business than any other.

There is a great deal of religion in this world that is like a life preserver, only put on at the moment of immediate danger and then half the time put on hind side before.

Experience is a school where a man learns what a big fool he has been.

The man who doesn't believe in any hereafter has got a dreadfully mean opinion of himself and his chances.

There are two kinds of fools in this world—those who can't change their opinions and those who won't.

A good doctor is a gentleman to whom we pay three dollars a visit for advising us to eat less and exercise more.

Out in the world men show us two sides to their characters; by the fireside only one.

The world is filling up with educated fools—mankind read too much and learn too little.

Every man has his follies and oftentimes they are the most interesting things he has got.—*Cook Book.*

Kerosene.

According to Professor J. Lawrence Smith, good kerosene should have the following characteristics: 1. The color should be of white or light yellow, with a blue reflection. 2. The odor should be faint and agreeable. 3. The specific gravity, at sixty degrees Fahrenheit, ought not to be below 798 nor above 0.84. 4. When mixed with an equal volume of sulphuric acid of the density of 1.53, the color ought not to become darker, but lighter. A petroleum that satisfies all these conditions, and possesses the proper flashing-point, may be regarded as pure and safe.

"Your little birdie has been very sick," she wrote to the young man. "It was some sort of nervous trouble, and the doctors said I should have perfect rest and quiet, and that I must think of nothing. And all the time, dear George, I thought constantly of you." The young man read it over, and then read it through again very slowly, and put it in his pocket and went out under the silent stars, and kept thinking, and thinking, and thinking. But he didn't say anything. He only kept thinking.—*Rockland Courier.*

FOR THE FAIR SEX.

Making Lace by Machinery.

A New York paper's Paris correspondent says: The feminine world of Paris is greatly exercised over a new machine, invented by a Frenchman for the manufacture of real laces. Its inventor claims that it will manufacture any lace made by the bobbin. If it fulfills its promise, it will, of course, produce an enormous depression in the value of the fashionable wardrobes, and will be hailed with joy by all stingy husbands. I went yesterday to an experimental exhibition of the machine at a factory near Paris, where I saw it work. It is certainly one of the most ingenious mechanisms ever invented. It has four or five distinct movements in a single bar, and imitates bobbin weaving by the hand to perfection. Blonde, Valenciennes and thread laces were woven in the presence of the visitors. Of several lady connoisseurs present, all said the specimens shown, with one exception, were fully equal to laces made by hand.

The Miserable Society Woman.

The intoxication of society is like the intoxication of alcohol. It grows upon one. No lady likes to see another outdo her; the larger her arch, the greater her social importance. She would gladly escape half her engagements did she not know that her social rivals would be busy in her absence. To maintain her prestige she must be everywhere. Then, too, her depraved appetite refuses healthy mental food. Books, she will have none of; reflection is horrible. She is miserable out of society, she is not happy in it. The society girl is oftentimes no vain silly thing, but a woman with a capacity for something nobler. She must be educated, amiable and brilliant to shine in the social world. She will need to talk in French with members of the foreign legations, to have a little smattering of science or philosophy for the savant, and some political talk for the politician. She should be good at repartee, and it will be well for her if she can sing, play Beethoven's sonatas, and take a hand at whist. All these talents and accomplishments she will need to use in holding her place in the social world, and in capturing a rich husband.—*Washington Letter.*

Fashion Notes.

Tuscan straw bonnets will remain in fashion, it is said.

The long gloves that are worn without buttons have crowded the bracelets up above the elbow.

Ladies wear costumes of red; red velvet dresses, red fans, red bonnets, red boots and red silk mittens.

Costumes are made with lambrequin effects. Corsets and tassels loop up rich brocades over lace flounces.

An elegant toilet showed small ostrich tips lightly placed down the tablier. The shade was a delicate mauve.

Tulle is again in vogue for evening dresses. It is charming for young ladies, and is combined with white satin.

Garlands of real violets between two frills of white lace are worn, going down from the neck to the waist.

Sleeves, open to the shoulder and laced across with white silk cords to match the dress, are elegant for evening wear.

Bracelets and necklaces are composed of old silver and gold coins; each piece is joined by a small double silver chain.

Bracelets and necklaces are more worn than ever, as the former are positively necessary with elbow sleeves and long gloves.

French dressmakers substitute a shirred satin yoke, pointed at the back and in front, for the plainness of the round waist used by American dressmakers.

Silk handkerchiefs are worn this season folded corner-wise and tied behind, the point being either tucked into the bosom of the dress or held by a lace pin.

A great quantity of enameled jewelry is in vogue. Some of these articles are in designs of flowers and birds on dead gold groundings, and others are all enamel.

Plush collars are made in such colors as orange, red, blue, or pink, and are trimmed with lace. They are square, with a revers forming a long point, terminating with ribbon loops.

At a fashionable wedding the bride-maids were dressed in short costumes of very dark green velvet, trimmed with rows of silver braid, with large soft hats of the same material ornamented with silver oars, long tan-colored gloves, and a bunch of crimson chrysanthemums on the left shoulder.

Six draperies, three on each side, are placed on the skirts of ball dresses. In front these draperies are arranged in horizontal plaits, and the bottom of the skirt is always much trimmed above and below.

The large, oddly-shaped silk cloaks worn in England have come into so great favor here that it is safe to say that they will be in fashion next winter. Styles taken up at the end of a season always last into the following winter.

In a Boston Sunday-school there is a class which contains fifty Chinese pupils.

Baron Rothschild's Porcelain Service.

A correspondent in Europe writes Baron Rothschild tells the following story as he exhibits his porcelain service:

One day an old man, careworn, wrinkled, feeble and apparently tottering on the verge of the grave, presented himself before Baron James Rothschild, soliciting the honor of an interview with the famous banker. The old man was so aged, so poor and had so dejected an aspect that the baron was immediately impressed with a compassionate feeling, and this became a lively interest on learning that he was a Jew. The aged visitor took from his bag a rich and beautiful plate, so splendidly wrought that the baron admired it exceedingly.

"Sir," said the patriarch, "will you buy this of me? I have the whole set, and a service so beautiful must find its fitting place in the mansion of the prince of financiers."

"It is indeed very fine," said the baron. "How much do you wish for the service?"

"Look you, sir," said the old man. "I am bowed down with many years, and have not long to live. I am poor, and wish to end my days in comparative comfort. Will you in exchange for this valuable set of porcelain give me an income for life of 100 francs (\$20) a month? It is not much for you, and I am so old."

The baron looked at the poor old man, examined the plate again, and after a few minutes' reflection, said: "Well, be it so; here is the first payment. Send me the service, and give your name that I may have it entered in my treasurer's books."

The splendid set of porcelain was delivered the same day to the baron, and a month afterward, while he was seated in his counting-house, a man entered and asked for the second payment of the proposed income. But the man was young, scarcely thirty-four years of age, of a vigorous constitution and great muscular development, and looked as if he would live for one hundred years.

"But you are not the man!" exclaimed the astonished banker.

"Excuse me, baron," said he, "I am indeed the man."

"But you appeared at least eighty years old," said the baron.

"But, sir, I am only thirty," said the man.

"In fact," continued the baronet, "I thought your venerable appearance did not belie your assertion."

"I have wonderfully recovered," observed the man, "and thanks to your generosity."

The baron laughed heartily, and gave orders for the payment of the money, exclaiming: "Ah! you are an excellent comedian and have taken me in thoroughly."

"I am probably the first who has done so," replied the Jew, politely bowing to the millionaire.

For years Rothschild paid the monthly allowance. His porcelain service is so exquisite that he does not complain.

Keep the Life Pure.

Once upon a time an Arabian princess was presented by her teacher with an ivory casket, exquisitely wrought, with the instruction not to open it until a year had rolled round. Many were the speculations as to what it contained, and the time impatiently waited for when the jeweled key should disclose the mysterious contents. It came at last, and the maiden went away alone and with trembling haste unlocked the treasure; and lo! reposing on delicate satin linings, lay nothing but a shroud of rust; the form of something beautiful could be discerned, but the beauty had gone forever. Tearful with disappointment, she did not at first see a slip of parchment containing these words:

"Dear pupil: May you learn from this lesson for your life. This trinket, when inclosed, had upon it a single spot of rust; by neglect it has become the useless thing you now behold, only a blot on its pure surroundings. So a little stain on your character will, by inattention and neglect, mar a bright and useful life, and in time will leave only the dark record of what might have been. If you now place within a jewel of gold, and after many years seek the result, you will find it still as sparkling as ever. So with yourself; treasure up only the pure, the good, and you will ever be an ornament to society and a source of true pleasure to yourself and your friends."

A patient in one of the New York hospitals was by physical examination during life found to have a lateral misplacement of all the internal organs, the heart and spleen being upon the right side, the liver upon the left and other parts similarly changed from their usual position.

In the cabinet of "Mary the Witch," lately deceased at Davenport, Iowa, were found a cat's skull, a chicken's head, bats' wings, toads' feet, spiders' webs, various bones of various animals, dried blood, and eyes of owls and cats deposited in various places wrapped in paper.

Courtship of Birds.

A slight glance at a few of the well-authenticated cases of animal courtship serves to show that birds but too closely imitate the actions of the fond lover of the genus homo. One of the best examples is cited by Mr. Gould, the well-known authority on ornithological subjects. He says the actions of the satin-bower bird bear a close analogy to those of man in similar circumstances. In carrying on its courtship the bird, not content with plain advances, erects a structure of grass, decorating it with innumerable articles of bric-a-brac and virtu, and into this "hall of courtship" the female is invited, and she generally succumbs to the blandishments of the male and the gorgeous adornments of the boudoir. Mr. Gould says that these bowers are entirely distinct from the nests, which are built in trees, and are intended as "halls of courtship." They are outwardly built of twigs and beautifully lined with tall grasses, so disposed that their heads meet; the decorations are very profuse, and consist of bivalve shells, crania of small mammalia and other bones. Evident and beautiful instances of design are manifest throughout the bower, apparently to keep the grasses with which it is lined fixed firmly in their places; these stones diverge from the mouth of the run on each side, so as to form little paths, and the immense collection of decorative material, bones, shells, etc., are placed in a heap before the entrance of the avenue, this arrangement being the same at both ends.

"At times the male will chase the female all over the aviary," Mr. Gould says, "in describing their actions; then go to the bower, pick up a gay feather or a large leaf, utter a curious kind of a note, set all his feathers erect, run round the bower, become so excited that his eyes appear ready to start from his head; he continues opening one wing and then the other, uttering a low, whistling note, and, like the domestic cock, seems to be picking up something from the ground, until at last the female goes gently toward him. But they are sad flirts, as they often keep the poor fellows cutting up their strange antics for days, and when the expectant lover asks for some token of a return of affection, he is met with peck and cuffs."

The courtship of the house martin is conducted on the wing. The female is pursued sometimes by forty or fifty males; sometimes rising in the air in great circles, and then diving down, wheeling and curvetting and throwing themselves into numerous erratic positions to attract the attention of the fair one, and when she makes her selection the others are driven off. The ludicrous actions of the lover are unbounded—caressing her with bill and wings, and ruffling his short feathers in an amusing manner. The courtship of the woodpecker is a severe operation for the female, as she is followed constantly by eight or ten gay followers, who vie with each other in showing her attention, and at last, utterly fatigued, she alights, and makes her choice of one of the males, and the rest are soon driven off by the bride and groom.

The courtship of the great English bustard is an extremely interesting sight. The love-making is done entirely in the air. The male will sail around in curves, start up and hover over the female, then drop almost to the ground, only to rise again and continue its odd and fantastic courtship. Similar in its actions is the Otis bengalensis, an allied bustard. At such periods it rises perpendicularly into the air with a hurried flapping of his wings, raising his crest and puffing out the feathers of his neck and breast, and then drops to the ground. He repeats this maneuver several times successively, at the same time humming in a peculiar tone. Such females as happen to be near obey his salutary summons, and when they approach he trails his wings and spreads his tail like a turkey cock.

Audubon says in regard to the courtship of the Canada goose: "Those that had been previously mated renewed their courtship as early as the month of January, while others would be contending or coquetting for hours every day, until all seemed satisfied with the choice they had made, after which, although they remained together, any person could see that they were careful to keep in pairs. I have observed, also, that the older birds the shorter were the preliminaries of their courtship. The bachelors and the old maids, whether out of regard, or not wishing to be disturbed by the bustle, quietly moved aside and lay down some distance from the rest, 'wall flowers' or 'gossipers,' evidently."

In the courtship of the Arapunga, or Guiana bell bird, the male makes a curious note in the night, that can be heard at a distance of three miles. The true bell bird of New South Wales attracts the attention of the females by its powers of ventriloquism. Its notes often sound as if at a considerable distance, when in reality the bird is perched over the branch of a neighboring tree, the volume of sound gradually increasing until it appears to be just over the head of the listener. The collared goshawk, a native of the Cape of Good Hope, is also very assiduous, in

its attentions during the breeding season, which commences in the month of September. He indulges in a very loud and singular song, which he begins about an hour after sunset, and often continues all night, if the weather be fine and light. Le Vaillant says that when he happened to encamp in the vicinity of these birds, the incessant song of the male rendered it impossible for him to sleep. Strange to say, notwithstanding the little care these birds seem to take to conceal their eggs, they are very jealous of these treasures, and remove them immediately on perceiving that they have been touched, each parent taking an egg in its mouth and flying off with it.

Launching a Ship.

Not one-half the people who witness the launching of a vessel can tell how it is done. They hear a great sound of pounding and driving of wedges for half an hour or so, then a loud shout is raised, and the ship starts slowly at first, but, gradually increasing her speed, slides with a steady, stately motion from off the pile of timber and blocks where she has been standing for months; and where but a moment before the huge creature towered aloft, nothing remains but a debris of timber and planks, while out on the water floats one of the most graceful works of man.

When the ship is about ready to launch her immense weight rests principally upon blocks some eight or ten inches square on the ends, and perhaps some fifteen or eighteen inches in length. These blocks are placed directly under the keel, and in order to launch the vessel it is necessary to transfer the weight of the vessel to the way—two long lines of heavy timber reaching about two-thirds the length of the vessel on either side, and about midway the bilge or bottom. These ways are simply two lengths of timber with a thick layer of grease between them, so that as soon as the ship acquires any momentum they will slip one along the other. To transfer the weight of the vessel on to these ways, so that gravity—the stern or heaviest part of the vessel being much lower than the bow—will cause her to move, is the whole secret of launching. To do this, between the top of the ways and the vessel are driven pine wedges, which, of course, raise her somewhat, and relieve the blocks under the keel of part of the weight resting upon them. This done, workmen take their places under the vessel, and with iron wedges cut and knock away the blocks. When these are removed, the entire weight of the vessel settles at once upon the greased ways, and the result is exactly the same as would be if a person should seat himself upon a sled pointing downhill upon an icy slope—away she goes!

There seems to be a strange sort of fascination for most people in the launching of a large vessel, and in our shipbuilding ports it is not uncommon for a thousand persons to be present to enjoy the spectacle.—*Potts's American Monthly.*

How The Train Comes In.

I hadn't been in Crawfordville since my visit of three years ago, but I recognized it in a minute. The train runs in at the ugliest part of the town, as the trains usually do, sneaking along the back ways and alleys, as though it was ashamed of itself and had no clothes, and had to come into town like a tramp. The railroad holds its head high enough, and puts on the style of a diamond pin out in the country, but when it comes to the town, it usually dodges in back of the barn, and stands panting and shivering among a cluster of doggeries and hovels and shanties, as though it was in a nervous tremor lest some respectable person should come along and see it standing there and wonder what such a handsome, expensive train was doing in such a disreputable locality.

"It sneaks in, in an unobtrusive, modest way," said the tall, thin passenger, "like an anatomical famine breeder, sliding along toward the foot of the lunch counter bar, where the tongue and crackers stand."

"Or," said the sad passenger, "like a poor relation backing into a dark corner at his rich cousin's wedding."

"Or," said the passenger with the sandy goatee, "like a boy trembling in the back seat at school the day after he has played hooky."

"Or," said the man on the woodbox, "like a man going into the bank to get a note extended after it has gone to protest."

"Or," said the man with the sample cases, "like a man going up into a fifty-dollar town after he had seen \$2,000 worth of sample trunks and kiesters piled upon the platform, all from other hands in his own line."

"Or," said the brakeman, "like the man without a ticket, sliding into the worst seat in the shabbiest car."

"Or," said the woman who talks base, "like a man in a millinery store at a spring opening."

The crowning picture of abject timidity and sheepish humiliation was reached, and the committee rose.—*Burdette.*

The air is filled with materialism, dogmatism and rheumatism.—*New York Commercial.*