

**TOPICS OF THE DAY.**

The male inhabitants of New South Wales appear to be in a sad condition. A great number of them find it to be physically impossible to procure wives. According to a report recently issued on the population of that colony, no less than 79,000 women are required to equalize the sexes. The other Australian colonies require about the same number in proportion to their population.

The rather of his country is to have another monument on George's hill, Fairmount park, Philadelphia, where the great iron tower stood during the centennial exposition. It is to take the form of an equestrian statue, of finest bronze, upon a granite pedestal, the whole to be about sixty feet high. It will be erected by the Society of the Cincinnati, which has raised a fund of \$220,000 for the purpose, and made with Professor Seimering, a Berlin sculptor, a contract, by the terms of which he is to have the entire work completed by the fall of 1891.

A remarkable collection of surgical instruments has been discovered at Pompeii and removed to the Naples museum. It evidently belonged to one practitioner or establishment, and is as large an equipment as the modern surgeon is usually supplied with. One of the most interesting instruments is a long rod with a metallic plate fixed at one end at an angle of thirty-five degrees. It was at first thought to be a cautery for internal operations, but its remarkable resemblance to the modern laryngeal mirror suggests the possibility that it was employed in a similar manner.

The American vines which have been set out in France in place of those which the phylloxera has destroyed are said to be causing much disappointment by their susceptibility to mildew, a disease which they brought with them, and which has been hitherto unknown in France. It is said to have worked havoc already in the southwestern part of the country, and to be spreading everywhere among French vineyards. It is impossible to say how much truth there is in this statement. There are as many conflicting reports about the French vineyards as ever were circulated about a Delaware peach crop.

A Philadelphia beer garden has for one of its waiters a genuine prince, the son of Prince Veronna de Ferrara, who fought as a general with Garibaldi at Solferino. The young man was reared in the luxury of a Modena villa, and in his youth became the victim of indolence and luxurious extravagance. He broke his mother's heart, wasted his fortune in gaming, and then lived for several years upon the indulgence of friends of better days. He married an American who was thought to be an heiress, but who was penniless. He deserted her, joined a pirate crew, was caught, escaped, and fled to New Orleans. Then he tended bar in a wine house; went to Philadelphia during the centennial, and has remained there ever since.

One who knew General Skobelev intimately describes him as of a hasty temper but of singularly benignant disposition. What faults he had were more than redeemed by the immensity of his repentance. His acts came from heart impulse. Even in military affairs he was led rather by his spirit and feelings than by intellect and judgment. Though not luxurious, he was nice and delicate as a refined woman, and hated coarse linen and material grossness. The tall figure had so much lithic grace that one did not observe its strength. In dressing he paid minute attention to his toilet, but after that was careless about his appearance. When young he was a hard drinker, but shook off wholly the bibulous passion. His love of cold baths was excessive, and he was the best swimmer in the army. His sympathy with the poor was tender and active.

The international bureau of telegraphic statistics at Berne, Switzerland, reports that the total length of telegraphic lines at the present time is: Russia, 59,090 miles; Germany, 14,265 miles; France, 43,650 miles; Austria-Hungary, 31,015 miles; Great Britain, 26,465 miles; Italy, 16,430 miles; Sweden and Norway, 12,625 miles; Switzerland, 4,090 miles, and Belgium, 3,505. Germany, however, occupies the first place in regard to the length of the wires, having a total of 159,910 miles, while Russia comes second with 134,465 miles, followed by France (125,265 miles), Great Britain (121,720 miles), Austria-Hungary (89,960 miles), Italy (58,692 miles), Sweden and Norway (28,446 miles), Belgium (16,845 miles), and Switzerland (10,010 miles). The length of wires in Russia is, therefore, much less in proportion to the length of lines than in most other countries, notably in England, where there are on the average four and one-half miles of wire to every mile of line. The total number of mes-

sages sent during the past year is classed as follows: England, 29,820,445; France, 19,882,628; Germany, 16,312,457; Austria-Hungary, 8,729,321; Russia, 7,298,422; Italy, 6,511,497; Holland, 3,109,230, and Sweden and Norway, 2,028,905.

A late census bulletin gives some interesting facts as to the sugar-cane production of the United States in 1879. The production of sugar reached 189,000 hogsheads, and of molasses nearly 17,000,000 gallons. This is a remarkable increase over the amount reported in 1870, when 87,000 hogsheads of sugar and 6,000,000 gallons of molasses were produced; but the present yield does not compare so favorably with that returned by the census of 1860, which was 231,000 hogsheads of sugar and 15,000,000 gallons of molasses. The bulk, both of sugar and molasses, is the production of Louisiana. In the present census returns that State is credited with nearly 11,000,000 gallons of molasses and more than 181,500 hogsheads of sugar. Its production of the former article has nearly trebled since 1870, and of the latter more than doubled.

Miss Creiger snapped a corset steel at a picnic. Mr. Barnes heard it, and begged to be allowed to make her a pair that would not break. She consented. Being a skillful mechanic, he invented and constructed an improved kind, and she was for three years supplied with them, at the end of which time they married. The question has been before the United States supreme court whether the wearing of the invention by Miss Creiger was such a "public use" as to bar the inventor from a patent. The court decided against Barnes, but Justice Miller dissented. "If the little spring," he says, "inserted in a single pair of corsets, and used by only one woman covered by her outer clothing, and in a position withheld from public observation, is a public use of that piece of steel, I am at a loss to know the line between a public and a private use."

"A sensation was recently caused," says the *Troy Times*, "by the announcement that a Vermont girl had gone to California in response to a matrimonial advertisement, and had found her prospective husband a hermit living in a secluded gorge. The hermit now turns out to be Frederick Moulton Shaw, of Los Angeles, who was born in Rutland and educated at Castleton, Vt., where he is well known. He went to California and projected a sanitarium at Los Angeles on a large scale, with water-works, manufactories and steamship lines. He secured the co-operation and lost the money of the leading men of the place. Shaw then retired to a small ranch, where he lived in a semi-civilized state, often sleeping in trees. To the surprise of all, the young lady who corresponded with him married him on reaching California, and, though the couple still live a semi-nomadic life, the wife has gained an influence over her husband which is leading him back to the customs of civilization."

**Pompeii.**

One of the most interesting features of the excavations in this buried city is the discovery of many homely domestic articles of which we have counterparts. It is astonishing how many things in common use now were in use then. You will see almost every kitchen utensil, portable cooking stoves, pots, kettles, crocks, dishes, cups and saucers, spoons, knives and forks, dippers, sauce pans, frying pans, flesh hooks, braziers for charcoal. Pretty much every kitchen dining-room or chamber article found in modern use entered into Roman daily life. All the articles of a lady's toilet, including jewelry of all kinds, gold and silver ornaments, corals and precious stones, were found in the houses of Pompeii. Taken from the retail shops were steel yards, balances, weights and measures. From a doctor's office was recovered a full set of surgical instruments, including "pulkins" for extracting teeth. There is any number of shoemaker, tailor, carpenter and blacksmith tools, and, indeed, implements of almost every present mechanical operation.

**The Farmer and the Maiden.**

Beneath the apple tree just back of the house. Farmer grinding his scythe, small boy doing the circular work at the grindstone crank. Sudden flutter of starched skirts around the corner of the house. "Oh, good-morning sir!" from a bright-eyed young lady. "Would you kindly allow us to pick a few bunches of those daisies in the lot yonder? They are so lovely." "Yes'm. You can pick 'em; the hull on 'em if you like. And if you'll tear the pesky things up by the root and rid the place of 'em I'll give you board and clothes for all summer." "Why, don't you admire daisies?" And the farmer laughed a most unesthetic, ringing laugh, that made the young lady feel as though she had struck something uncongenial.

**How the Rugged Charcoal-Burners of England Live.**

Captain Mayo Reid writes: Of the three callings which form the subject of this letter, that of the charcoal-burner is the most exclusive as regards the men who follow it. They are few in numbers, but have rarely any other business, since charcoal-burning gives employment at all seasons of the year; and, though apparently a simple thing, it is not so, calling for both knowledge and skill. The material they have to deal with is the "top and top" of the trees, for cordwood, and their modus operandi is as follows: A floor or "pit" is prepared by clearing the rubbish off the ground, and then hollowing out a circular space some six or eight inches in depth, but of no fixed diameter; this being dependent upon the quantity of wood to be "charked" in that particular pit lying conveniently near for carriage to it. In the center of the floor four or five short, stoutish billets are placed with ends touching, so as themselves to inclose a circular space of a foot or eighteen inches diameter, and on three the ends of the charking sticks are rested slantingly and radiating like the spokes of a wheel. On the outer rim of this first layer a second is placed in similar manner; and so on, till the pile is complete, when it shows the form of an obtuse cone or hemisphere. Around the central axis, however, is a hollow space or chimney, which has been left open for the fire; and this, first kindled at its bottom, by dropping down some burning faggots, in due time permeates the whole mass. But before any flames show on the surface the pile is carefully covered over with a stratum of sods, and so kept, not an air-hole being left open. Were the wood allowed to blaze up, there would be no charcoal, only ashes. And just to prevent this, the "charker's" business—a thing of the night as well as the day. It needs two men at least to undertake the task, who in turn sit up all night to watch the fires of the different pits—for there will be several on the burn at the same time—going the rounds from one to another, and patching with a fresh sod or shovelful of earth any spot where flames may threaten an outbreak. In fine, when the fires burn themselves out the charcoal is a made thing, and only needs separating from the ashes and earthy matter which have got mixed with it from the superimposed sods.

The "charkers" are paid for their work by measure of the quantity of charcoal produced, the standard of measurement being a large oblong basket holding about three bushels. The exact amount of their earnings is not easily fixed, but certainly they do not make fortunes by "charking," any more than they could by bark-stripping or the fabrication of hurdles. These men stay nearly all their time in the woods, never returning home, even at night, for weeks or months together. They dwell in huts erected by themselves—quaint affairs of conical form made of poles set sloping against one another, gathered in at the top, and thatched with a coating of turf, just as are their charking fires. Many of these huts are made long enough to hold half a dozen men, though rarely occupied by more than two or three, when there will be a like number of rude beds in them, with a full paraphernalia of cooking utensils. Some of the bachelor "charkers," who have no ambition to pay house-rent, stick to these sylvan abodes throughout the year, whether they be at work or not.

**Writing a Dictionary.**

It is no "child's play" to make a dictionary. A writer in *Wide Awake*, after setting down the calculation for its young readers that at the rate of ten pages a day it would take twenty years to write the amount of matter in the whole of Webster's Dictionary, adds the following:

After I had written these words, I took up Mr. Scudder's interesting book about Noah Webster, and found that it actually took him just twenty years to write it. He was forty-eight years old when he began it, and sixty-eight when he finished it in 1826. He says of the completion of the work:

"When I had finished my copy I was sitting at my table in Cambridge, England. When I arrived at the last word I was seized with a tremor that made it difficult to proceed. I, however, summoned up strength to complete the work, and then walking about the room I soon recovered."

"Oh, Harold," said she, as she clung closer to his arm, "how very quiet and restful the sea seems to be this evening." "Just as I should like a wife to be," was the response. "And would you, as a husband, be the quiet, restful complement of such a wife?" He thought he could, and the launch into the sea of matrimonial difficulties was thus quietly made. There's sure to be a gale, however.

In five centuries France had 326 years of war and only 174 years of peace. During these years of war over 200 bloody battles were fought.

**CLIPPINGS FOR THE CURIOUS.**

Eggs will hatch at 104 degrees in the shade.

The semi-diameter of the earth is 20,922,100 feet.

Turpentine roads were established in the reign of Queen Anne.

A temperature of over 218 degrees is required to boil salt water.

The best Turkey carpets are made by women with rude utensils.

The metals which retain heat the longest are brass and copper.

Linen rags were not used in the manufacture of paper until 1200 A. C.

Some of the public baths in ancient Rome would accommodate 1,800 persons at once.

The French speak in the nose, the Germans in the throat and the English through the teeth.

Rapid speakers pronounce from 7,000 to 7,500 words per hour, or about two words per second.

It is said that 1,000,000 good impressions may be taken from an engraving on a hard steel plate.

*Dr. Foote's Health Monthly* says that in India the physician practicing midwifery gets liberally paid if he assists at the birth of a boy, but is paid nothing if it happens to be a girl.

It is estimated that the gold dollar is used by 80,000,000 of people, the British sovereign by 35,000,000, the French franc by 77,000,000, the silver dollar of all countries by about 552,000,000.

The Chinese, it is said, have long been in the habit of printing "elevator editions" of the classics to assist candidates at the competitive examinations, whose memories are not sufficiently retentive.

Machines are now made which will cut from a roll of wire pieces of the right length, head them, point them, polish them, sort them out with their points all one way and stick them into papers or rolls faster than one can count.

Upward of 13,000,000 letters and postcards are posted daily in the world; 3,418,000,000 letters are annually distributed in Europe, 1,246,000,000 in America, 76,000,000 in Asia, 36,000,000 in Australia and 11,000,000 in Africa.

**Frightened.**

The well-known safeguard against smallpox, the honor of the discovery of which is linked with the name of Dr. Edward Jenner, has proved its value by constant use through the greater part of a century. The enterprising doctor was the first to prove and establish vaccination as a "prophylactic" of such wonderful benefit, but it was a far more ignorant man who applied it, and furnished the hint on which the learned physician acted. A medical writer in the *Boston Herald* says:

"It is generally supposed that Dr. Jenner was the first person who attempted to perform the operation of vaccination, and it is true that he investigated the matter and brought it before the public. Vaccination was, however, performed by a farmer in England some fifteen years before Dr. Jenner attempted it. This man—who had the temerity to vaccinate his children with virus taken directly from the cow—is stated to have been an able and discreet person ordinarily, but this rashness of his came very near costing him his life. The popular feeling was so strong against him that he was obliged to leave the section of the country in which he lived, and his children were carefully guarded, as it was expected they would exhibit some of the characteristics of the animals from which they had been vaccinated. It was expected that horns would appear upon their heads and hair upon their bodies, but, of course, nothing happened to the children, and they received no injury from the vaccination. It was this fact which probably first called the attention of Jenner to the subject of vaccination."—*Youth's Companion*.

**Fasting in Acute Rheumatism.**  
Dr. Wood, professor of chemistry in the medical department of Bishop's college, Montreal, reports in the *Canada Medical Record* a number of cases in which acute articular rheumatism was cured by fasting, usually from four to eight days. In no case was it necessary to fast more than ten days. Less positive results were obtained in cases of chronic rheumatism. The patients were allowed to drink freely of cold water or lemonade in moderate quantities if they preferred. No medicines were given. Dr. Wood says that from the quick and almost invariably good results obtained by simple abstinence from food in more than forty cases in his own practice he is inclined to believe that rheumatism is, after all, only a phase of indigestion, to be cured by giving complete and continued rest to all the viscera.

What is called authentic Chinese history dates back 6,000 years. The legendary and fabulous history of the empire dates back 80,000 years and over.

**Lincoln's Vision.**

In the course of an article on the late Mrs. Abraham Lincoln, the *New York Herald* says: Nothing of moment occurred to interrupt the tranquillity of her married existence until the Republican convention at Chicago, in June, 1860. After an exciting battle between the two candidates, Governor Seward and Mr. Lincoln, Mrs. Lincoln had the profound gratification of seeing her prophecy of being the wife of a President on a fair way to verification. The nomination of her husband was declared unanimous, and the evening of the day was indeed an eventful one in Springfield. Crowds of excited people thronged to Mr. Lincoln's house and warmly congratulated his wife. Just after the election a singular circumstance occurred which once more brought out the gift of prophecy which Mrs. Lincoln possessed. Mr. Lincoln described it in the following language: "It was after my election, when the news had been coming in thick and fast all day, and there had been a great 'hurra, boys,' so that I was well tired out, and went home to rest, throwing myself upon a lounge in my chamber. Opposite to where I lay was a bureau with a swinging glass upon it, and, looking in that glass, I saw myself reflected nearly at full length; but my face, I noticed, had two separate and distinct images, the tip of the nose of one being about three inches from the tip of the other. I was a little bothered, perhaps startled. I got up and looked in the glass, but the illusion vanished. On lying down again I saw it a second time, plainer, if possible, than before; and then I noticed that one of the faces was paler than the other. I got up, and the thing melted away, and I went off, and in the excitement of the hour forgot all about it—nearly, but not quite; for the thing would once in a while come up and give me a little pang, as though something uncomfortable had happened. When I came home I told my wife about it, and a few days after I tried the experiment again, when, sure enough, the thing came back again; but I never succeeded in bringing the ghost back after that, though I once tried very industriously to show it to my wife, who was worried about it somewhat. She thought it was 'a sign' that I was to be elected to a second term of office, and that the paleness of one of the faces was an omen that I should not see life through the second term." Mr. Lincoln regarded the vision as an optical delusion, caused by nervousness. His wife's prophetic interpretation of the circumstances, viewed in the light of subsequent events, seems certainly most extraordinary.

**PEARLS OF THOUGHT.**

All fortune never crushed that man whom good fortune deceived not.

They enter to suppress the first desire that satisfies all that follow.

Do your business promptly, and bore not a business man with long visits.

Falsehood and fraud shoot up in every soil, the product of all climes.

Experience is a trophy composed of all the weapons we have been wounded with.

Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous.

The whole of our life depends upon the persons with whom we live familiarly.

A want of cleanliness injures not only the purity of the body, but that of the soul itself.

Happiness consists not in possessing much, but in being content with what we possess.

Systematize your business, and keep an eye on little expenses. Small leaks sink great ships.

Not the perversities of others, not their sins of commission or omission, but his own misdeeds and negligence should a sage take notice of.

By rousing himself, by earnestness, by restraint and control, the wise man may make for himself an island which no flood can overwhelm.

**Politeness.**

"I called on Mrs. Bangerhar this afternoon," said Mrs. Yeast to her husband, at supper the other evening.

"Didn't find her in, I suppose?" suggested Yeast, a little sarcastically.

"Oh, yes, I did," replied Mrs. Yeast, pleasantly; "and I enjoyed my call very much."

"She asked you to call again, didn't she?" continued the head of the house.

"Why, yes, Mr. Yeast, to be sure she did. That was no more than politeness would prompt her to do; and the Bangerhar family, you know very well, are famous for their politeness."

"Politeness?" exclaimed Yeast, swallowing the last clam with some difficulty; "well, I should say so! Why, I never yet sent my office boy to collect a bill of old Bangerhar but that he asked him to call again. Politeness! well, I should remark!"—*Statesman*.

**How to Treat Sunstroke.**

A distinction of immense practical importance exists between heat-exhaustion and heat-stroke, or coup de soleil. It is much to be feared that this difference too often passes unregarded, to the serious detriment of the patient. Heat-exhaustion, as the term implies, means a sudden anemia produced by work or muscular exercise in a high temperature. Heat-stroke, or sun-stroke, signifies the sudden access of unconsciousness with high febrile heat. In the former the body is cool, the skin moist or wet with perspiration, the pulse small, feeble and low in tension, the muscular system relaxed, the pupil dilated, and the mind feeble, but consciousness is not lost or is restored after a syncope state of brief duration. In the latter there is profound unconsciousness, contracted pupil, injected conjunctivæ, the skin is hot and usually dry, the temperature high, the pulse rapid, and the muscular system often convulsed and tending rather to rigidity. If the case be one of heat-exhaustion the patient will probably be able to swallow. Repose in the shade in the recumbent position, and a few drops of landanum in a tablespoonful of whisky or brandy will quickly bring about restoration. In the case of true heat-stroke the patient should be at once removed to as cool a spot as practicable, and should have cold water thrown on him, be rubbed with pieces of ice, and have ice applied to the head and spine. Other medical remedies, morphine, quinine and chloroform, are recommended.—*Medical News*.

**THE FAMILY DOCTOR.**

A grain or two of salt snuffed up into the nose when that useful organ is "stuffed up" will afford relief.

By using syrup or molasses for mustard plaster, it will keep soft and flexible, and not dry up and become hard as when mixed with water. A thin paper or fine cloth should come between the plaster and the skin. The strength of the plaster is varied by the addition of more or less flour.

The *New York Journal of Commerce* says of the "Sun Cholera Mixture": We have seen it in constant use for nearly two score years and found it to be the best remedy for looseness of the bowels ever yet devised. No one who has this by him and takes it in time will ever have the cholera. We commend it to all our friends. Even when no cholera is anticipated it is an excellent remedy for ordinary summer complaints—colic, diarrhea, dysentery, etc. Take equal parts of the tincture of cayenne pepper, tincture of opium, tincture of rhubarb, essence of peppermint and spirits of camphor. Mix well. Dose, fifteen to thirty drops in a little cold water, according to age and violence of symptoms, repeated every fifteen or twenty minutes until relief is obtained.

**The Color of Water.**

Two theories are advanced to explain the blue color of water when seen in large masses, one, held by Professor Tyndall, being that small solid particles suspended in the water do not reflect the lower or red rays of the spectrum. According to the other theory, the color is due to the absorbent action of the water itself on the white light before and after reflection by these particles. The results of experiments made by Mr. John Aitken, and presented to the Royal society, England, show that the latter theory is probably the more correct one. The greater the number of white reflecting particles the greener the water appears to be, and hence the gradual deepening of the green to blue as the shore is left. The waters of Lake Como owe their darkness to the absence of reflecting particles, as Mr. Aitken ingeniously proved by scattering finely-divided chalk in the center of that lake, thereby producing a very brilliant blue. The brilliancy depends on the color of the particles. Among coral reefs, which are generally strewn with white sand, the water also takes a very brilliant blue or green. The dull tinge of English waters is due to the dingy character of the suspended silt; but springs have often a bright color, owing to the whiteness of the chalk suspended in them.

**A President's Lesson.**

The following act of politeness on the part of John Quincy Adams, while he was President, is told by one who remembers the fine courtesy of the old gentleman: Mr. Adams was an early riser, and was in the habit of walking before breakfast. One morning, before sunrise, he was indulging in his customary walk, when he met one of the foreign ministers issuing from a low gambling house. Mr. Adams gave no sign of recognition, but passed him as though he were a perfect stranger, which, said the foreign minister, "was to me a great relief." When the book on etiquette at the White House is written this anecdote should be incorporated, so that the Presidents to come may know what to do under similar circumstances.—*Washington Letter*.