

## TOPICS OF THE DAY.

Americans are the greatest butter-eating people in the world. This is one reason why the export of butter does not increase so rapidly as its manufacture, and why the price is maintained so high as it is.

London speculators are buying up our trade dollars. It is said that these purchases are made in the expectation that Congress will some time make trade dollars a legal tender or direct their redemption at face value.

It appears that over 40,000 miles of railroad have been built in the United States since and including 1879. This is about one-third of the entire mileage of the country. Last year the amount raised to build these roads was over \$700,000,000.

Germany has a temperance revival such as was never known in that country before. It is led by Count Moltke, and many eminent men are among its foremost workers. The German reformers have not yet attained the standard of total abstinence, but are preaching moderation.

Dynamite must go the rear as the great explosive and make way for "panclastite," a free translation of which term is "smash up." It is a liquid and is said to be composed of bisulphide of carbon and hyponitric acid. It requires a greater shock than dynamite to explode it, and each of its components is non-explosive by itself. When combined the result is terrific.

The peach-growing center is gradually moving south. A few years ago there were great orchards in New Jersey. Then Delaware was the chief producer. Now Maryland and Virginia are coming to the front. The largest peach farms are in Maryland. The Round Top farm has 125,000 trees. On the estate of Colonel Watkins there are 120,000 trees. A peach tree's usefulness is over after ten or twelve years of life, and the soil in which it grows is unfit for peach culture.

Some of the Western judges draw nice distinctions. An Arkansas court has decided that it is not arson for a man to set fire to his own house, while by an Indiana tribunal it is held that to constitute the crime of arson the house itself, and not merely its contents, must be set on fire. But a late California decision is perhaps more unique than either. The Supreme Court reversed a conviction for perjury on the ground that the false testimony given by the offender was not material to the case, and therefore could not be perjury.

Chicago claims to be cosmopolitan. Little more than fifty per cent of its population was born in the United States, and according to the statistics for 1882, given as based upon the Federal census of 1880, no less than 94,000 of the present inhabitants of that city have poured from the various states of the German empire. The Bohemians number 12,000; Canadians 15,000; Danes, 3,100; French, nearly 2,000; Irish, nearly 50,000; Hollanders, 3,300; Italians, 1,400; Norwegians 5,700; Swedes, 16,000; Poles, 5,700, and Swiss 2,000, with a sprinkling of Russians, Hungarians, Spaniards, Portuguese, and men of almost every other race and nationality under the sun.

The will of John Davenport, of Portland, Oregon, was compelled to take a long journey. Mr. Davenport died in England, and his will was probated in London. As he left \$40,000 worth of property in Oregon, it was necessary that it should also be probated there. It was also requisite that the original document should be produced, and as when a will is probated in England the Probate Court keeps it in charge, an officer of the London court had to make the journey to Oregon with Mr. Davenport's will, in order that it might be probated there. This has been done, and it is said to have been the first instance of the kind that ever occurred.

A very curious thing about deaf mutes is the rapidity with which they learn the meaning and use of slang words and phrases. The ordinary street language of the day seems to be as familiar to them as it is to the people whose organs of hearing are not impaired, and they will say in their own way, "you bet your boots" or "you bet your sweet life" with as much ease and grace as if they had it at their tongue's end all their lives. One of the afflicted young men, when asked for an explanation of this remarkable fact, said the deaf mutes got their knowledge of slang from the newspapers; that they were great readers of the papers, and snipped up

the new phrase or word just the moment it made its appearance. They not only use slang in writing, but in their sign-language.

An apt illustration of Will Carleton's poem, "Over the Hill to the Poor-house," has occurred in Cleveland, Ohio. An old man named Jonathan C. Bowles died recently at the city infirmary, seventy-five years old, childless, friendless, and alone. Years ago he was wealthy, and owned a large hotel in East Cleveland, on the spot where Adelbert College now stands, and later was an affluent merchant. He is said to have been twice worth \$100,000, lost in real estate speculations, and to have always possessed a horror of going to the poor-house. Among the papers found in his mother's old satchel was discovered a well-marked copy of Will Carleton's poem, "Over the Hills to the Poor-house." Other things in his possession were \$7,000 in worthless stock certificates of a Colorado silver mine, a letter certifying that he is a good Methodist, and six cents. These are what remain of two large fortunes.

The Denver Tribune has had an interesting interview with an intelligent "cow-boy," on the business of cattle-raising. According to him there is an aristocratic and a plebeian element among the cattle men on the plains. These two classes are those who own cowherds and those who have nothing but steers. The former are the smaller investors and the latter the wealthy stockmen. The latter buy the yearlings from the cow-herders and graze them until they become heaves, when they sell them to the various buyers, topping out the finest for the eastern and foreign markets and sending the tailings in to us at the same price. This system of monopolizing the beef cattle in the hands of the heavy capitalists is what is now keeping up the price of beef, although some of the stockmen do not know it themselves and have only adopted the system to avoid being bothered with edws. The shipment of beef to England has become a large factor. In the last three years there has been such a heavy investment of Scotch and English capital that it is a fact that three-fourths of the cattle interest of Texas, Colorado and Wyoming is now owned and controlled by it. The ranges are being gradually encroached upon, as they were in Texas, and are becoming more crowded every year, while the market for the product is extending every year. Cattle that sold in 1880 for \$22 a head are now worth \$30, with the prospect that the price will go up instead of down.

### The Manufacture of Beads.

Beads are largely made in Venice, where glass-making has always been a principal industry. It is said that the invention of beads dates from the thirteenth century, and is due to two Venetians, Miotto and Imbriani, who were urged to make experiments by the celebrated Venetian traveller, Marco Polo. Under the Venetian Republic, and for some years after its fall, says our consul at Venice, the exportation of beads had not reached the importance it has now attained. This was perhaps owing to the smallness of the furnaces and to the difficulty and length of the technical processes required for the composition of the paste. The Morelli, however, who in 1670 were the principal bead manufacturers had four ships at sea carrying beads to the east on their own account, and they became so rich that in 1766 they entered the rank of the Venetian nobility on payment of a sum of 100,000 ducats to the republic. Since 1815 this industry has become so important as to give at the present time employment to about 15,000 persons. The traffic is carried on with all the world, but the principal exportation of beads is to the ports of Asia and Africa. An extraordinary stimulus was given to this industry a few years ago by the prevailing taste of beads for trimming ladies' dresses. A great extension of the manufacture took place, and the labor was paid so high that all who could do so gave up their usual trades for bead-making. But when the demand for beads declined most of the workmen who had been allured by fancy wages to the bead manufacture were thrown out of work and compelled to return to their former occupations. Whatever be the cause, bead-making has always been the special privilege of Venice, in spite of all foreign attempts to manufacture this article elsewhere. The wages in glass works are for a first master about eight francs a day, for a second master four and a half francs, and for the ordinary workmen from two francs to five francs a day. During the last five years the average annual exportation of beads has been 25,000 quintals, of the approximate value of 5,500,000 francs.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

## LADIES' DEPARTMENT.

### Popping the Question.

Half a century ago and more it was the fashion for a suitor to go down on his knees to a lady when he asked her to become his wife, which with very stout gentlemen, was an uncomfortable proceeding. The way in which Daniel Webster proposed to Miss Fletcher was more modern, being at the same time neat and poetic. Like many other lovers he was caught holding a skein of thread or wool when the lady had been unravelling. "Gracie," said he, (fancy Daniel saying "Gracie,") "we have been untying knots. Let us see if we cannot tie one which will not untie for a lifetime." With a piece of tape he fashioned half a true lover's knot. Miss Fletcher perfected it, and a kiss put the seal to the symbolical bargain. Robert Steele wrote to the lady of his heart: "Dear Mrs. Curlock (there were no misses in those days) I am tired of calling you by that name, therefore say a day when you will take that of a madam. Your devoted humble servant, Richard Steele." She fixed the day accordingly, and Steele her name instead of heart to the suitor.

### Marriage in Hindoostan.

The coolies of Hindoostan begin the marriage ceremony by the contracting parties seating themselves in a circle of friends, who sing while the bride and groom rub them both with a yellow powder called haldee or tumeric. This is supposed to beautify them and make them as valuable as gold to each other. Then they are taken out and wedded to two trees—the bride to a mukwatee; the bridegroom to a mango. Then they clasp the tree in their arms. Entering the house they are placed standing face to face, on a stone used for grinding curry powder, beneath which is a plow-yoke supported on sheaves of grass or straw. Next the bride and groom tread on each other's toes, for they are bare-footed, or butt their heads against each other. The bride then pours a jar of water over the heads of each, which is taken as an emblem of purity. This ends the first day's performances. The next morning they go down to a river or a pond, and forming two parties, the girls, under the leadership of the bride, the boys under the bridegroom, they pelt each other with clods of mud. Then the bride and groom hide in the water a water vessel which the other party must find. The girl having filled the vessel with water places it on her head, while the groom shoots an arrow between her arm and the pitcher. The bride walks to where the arrow has fallen, and picks it up with her foot, returns it to her husband. This shows that she can wait upon and serve her lord and master, while the shooting of the arrow indicates that he must protect her, but she must not venture beyond his protection.

### Fashion Notes.

Esthetic shades are out of style. Black toilets are as much worn as ever. The short, glace kid glove is a thing of the past. Suits of rifle green, tailor-made are much worn. Some of the new gloves have embroidered backs. Golden rod is especially effective when worn over rich maroon velvet or satin. Horn and metal button covered with a fine check have come into use for checked dresses. The fashion of mingling stripes and checks in one costume prevails, but it is not admirable. Ribbons, laces, and natural flowers are the ornament that have taken the place of jewelry. Gray and brown in various shades are the favorite colors for the new felt hats and bonnets. Embroideries on light wool fabrics are done in the cross-stitches of old-fashioned samplers. The Molier waistcoat and the blouse waist, worn under cutaway jackets, are favorite fall styles. For travelling and utility suits for fall wear checked and hair-lined flannels are much used. The fashion of wearing a mull fichu, tied in Puritan style across the shoulders, no longer exists. Fancy-headed pins are used in place of brooches or lace pins to fasten the collar and lace jabots at the throat. Evening dresses entirely of ceru lace, over silk or surah of the same shade or else pale pink, are fashionable. The popular colors for evening mitts and gloves are pale pink, pale blue, flesh color, mauve, cream and pure white.

Sacques or basques, made of light-colored silks and trimmed with lace, will be popular for evening wear at home during the winter.

Embossed and gilded leather painted in oils and with designs in relief is used for hand-bags, portfolios, belts, fans, albums and fanciful boxes.

Plain linen bands are worn outside the dress collar, some of them with a fall of lace three inches wide, gathered on to the turned over upper edge.

The most elegant French dresses, made of the richest India, changeable Venetia and Lyons silks, have blouse bodices and cutaway over-jackets.

The frames of fans are tortoise-shell mother of pearl, black carved or brown polished wood, sometimes varnished and ornamented with small pictures.

White and cream-colored dresses of Chinese silk trimmed with Malines, lace and brown or cherry ribbons, are favorite costumes of the Princess of Wales.

The Japanese tea-gown is a fancy of the moment, and is exceedingly stylish and graceful on some figures. It should always be made of broadened not plain stuffs.

Half-sashes, or demi-belts are fashionably worn; they are made of wide velvet ribbon or of narrower satin ribbon of two shades, sewed in the seam on the side of the corsage and tied in a point in front.

French shoes are laced in front and must match the dress in color; this has brought Russia leather into favor for red shoes, and there also many fawn-colored and blue kid shoes worn with black stockings.

### Cocoa and Chocolate.

Many drinkers of these pleasant beverages are unaware as to the method by which the cocoa seeds are obtained. Cocoa, or cacao, is extracted from the seed of small trees of the genus theodroma, which, when cultivated, grows from twelve feet to eighteen feet high, but to a higher elevation in their wild state. The flowers are small, and cluster on the branches and trunk, the matured fruit appearing as though artificially attached. Out of each cluster only one pod is allowed to mature, and this when full grown is from seven inches to ten inches long, by three inches to four and a half inches wide. The five cells contain each a row of from five to ten seeds imbedded in a pink, acid pulp, the cocoa bean. The tree is indigenous to Mexico, but it can be cultivated within the twenty-fifth parallel of latitude, and thrives at any elevation over 2000 feet, but it requires a rich soil, a warm, humid atmosphere, and protection from cold winds. The trees are propagated from seeds in a nursery until they attain a height of from fourteen inches to eighteen inches, when they are transplanted and carefully sheltered by planting other trees about them. They commence to bear about the fifth year, but do not attain maturity until the eighth, and continue yielding fruit for nearly half a century. There is no special time for harvesting the crop as the trees continue bearing all the time, flowers and fruit in all stages being curiously borne on the same tree. But in Venezuela the principal gatherings are in June and December. Chocolate is generally made from the finer varieties of cocoa seeds, and was a favorite beverage in Central America long before Columbus discovered the New World. As at present prepared chocolate is made in cakes, while cocoa is usually sold in powder, flakes, or nibs. The constituents of the average cocoa seeds are as follows: Fat, cocoa butter, 32; nitrogenous compound, 20; starch, 20; cellulose, 2; theobromine, 2; saline substances, 4; water, 10; cocoa red, essential oil, 10.—*London Times*.

### The Paradise of Druggists.

America is a nation of drug-takers. Nowhere else do we find such extensive, gorgeous and richly supplied apothecary establishments as here; they outnumber the churches and schools, and are rapidly assuming the social importance which used to be held by these institutions. Go through the villages of the country, the drug stores are the most conspicuous and brilliant points in the scene. Look over the village papers, the columns after columns of descriptions of drugs and diseases, indicate unmistakably the mental attitude of the population. And many of the papers of the great cities, the same. In patent medicines, in doctoring of all kinds by regular prescriptions and by self-dosing, America undeniably leads the world. A medical authority who is familiar with both the old world and the new, estimates that half the number of families are needed to support a physician and a drug store here that are required in Europe. The future king of the country will be a druggist.

## Some Great Volcanic Eruptions.

Java, with its sixteen active and innumerable quiescent volcanoes, is used to eruptions, some of which have been even more destructive than the Ischia earthquake. Some of the Java volcanoes rise to a height of 12,000 feet, and, as we have said, in past time their eruptions have been enormously destructive. In 1772, for example, the volcano of Papandayang, in the southwest part of the island, threw out such an immense quantity of scoria and ashes in a single night that an area having a radius of seven miles was covered with a layer fifty feet thick. Forty native villages were buried beneath it, and three thousand persons are supposed to have perished in this one night. Still more terribly destructive was the eruption of Mount Galung-gong, a few miles east of the former, on Oct. 8, 1822. At midday, under a cloudless sky, with not a breath stirring, a dark, dense mass rose from the old volcano and spread itself out with such appalling rapidity that in a few moments the whole landscape was shrouded in the darkness of night. Bright flashes occasionally pierced the darkness; a deluge of hot water and mud shot up from the crater, and poured down the mountain sides, sweeping away trees and beasts and human bodies in its seething mass. Nearly everything was destroyed for a radius of twenty miles round. A second eruption four days after completed the catastrophe. This was accompanied by an earthquake. The summit of the mountain was broken down; one side, covered with forest, became a semi-circular gulf; new hills and valleys are said to have been formed, and rivers had their courses changed, as many as 114 villages were destroyed, and 4999 people killed. The remarkable thing is that no record existed of any previous eruption of the mountain, which was situated in one of the most fertile valleys of Java. In 1843 it is estimated that Mount Guntac flung forth ashes and sand to the extent of 20,000,000 tons; in 1877 an earthquake caused the death of 1000 in the town of Jekgokarta alone; in 1872 one of the most active volcanoes, Merapi, brought death to many of the dwellers around; while the damage to be feared from the ashes thrown out by the same mountain interferes with the planting of coffee in the neighboring districts. Earthquakes destructive to life are of frequent occurrence; the most celebrated is that of January 5, 1699, when 208 shocks were felt, and many houses in Batavia destroyed. Mud volcanoes, gas fountains, and hot springs are common over the island. From Java to Kamtschatka seismic phenomena in the shape of volcanoes and earthquakes are of constant occurrence, though the accompanying tidal wave is not so common as we find it on the other side of the Pacific or the coast of South America.—*London Times*.

### Facts About Ecuador.

With regard to the climate, the rainy season generally runs from December to June, the remaining months being dry, but on the Amazon slope it rains all the year round. As to influence of the climate on man there are vast healthy districts in the river valleys of the Amazon region, while those of the Pacific shore are commonly full of disease. Special disorders are chiefly due to the lack of sanitary measures. In the west and northwestern parts the abuse of sweets as food results in a curious and frightful intestinal complaint. The country is now, and will in all probability remain, almost wholly agricultural, the Pacific coast and river valleys of both east and west yielding generous crops of cacao, cotton, sugar cane, rice, coffee, tobacco, and tropical fruits; while the inter-Andean plateau produces all the cereals and vegetables incident to a temperate and even cold climate, though they are of inferior quality. No hope of the republic ever being an exporter of cereals is held out and cattle do not thrive in the Amazon section, chiefly from the immense number of bats, which bleed or otherwise irritate them. Cinchona bark, which first came from the province of Loja, is being so rapidly cut and sent out of the country without new planting that the supply must soon cease. Church attributes this to the fact that the highest official sanctum is given to this destructive measure for private emolument. In mineral wealth Ecuador is poor. The population is estimated at 1,000,000 (exclusive of savage tribes), and is distributed as follows: White, 100,000; mixed, 300,000; pure Indian, 600,000. The evil qualities of the mixed races are condemned as the source of the degradation of the country. Internal communications are much needed in Ecuador, and although Colonel Church is personally interested in the construction of future railroads, he expresses his strong suspicion that for the next ten or twenty years a thorough system of first-class mule routes would undoubtedly be the best for Ecuador.—*London Times*.

## CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

### What She Lacked!

Miss Pussy sat on the lowest bough  
Of a waving hickory tree,  
Whispering softly, "I'll have you now,  
You gay little robin, you'll see!  
The old hen watches her chickens thirteen,  
And has such a fearful way  
Of flying at one, that I haven't seen  
A bit of fresh meat to-day."

But Master Robin twitters away,  
As she stealthily creeps along,  
Joining in as the thrush and jay  
Chirrup a morning song,  
Glancing sideways once and again  
Out of his saucy eye,  
As if to say, "You will catch me, then?  
Well, madam, suppose you try!"

"I have four legs," said Pussy Cat,  
"And you, sir, have only two;  
I have sharp claws, depend on that,  
And they'll get the better of you;  
I'm stronger, too, than a dozen birds—  
Look now!"—and she quickly springs;  
But the robin laughed as he soared away,  
"Ha! ha! but you have no wings."  
—*Youth's Companion*.

### A Belligerent Bird.

The kingfisher is not regarded as a dangerous bird, but an artist friend of mine once had a most remarkable adventure with one. While sketching on the shore of a river, he saw one of these birds flying across the water directly toward him. He watched its approach, expecting every moment to see it change its course, but, to his astonishment, the bird, swerving neither to the right nor left, came straight at his face. His hands were filled with palette and brushes. He raised his foot to shield himself. "Thud!" came the bird against it, falling to the ground stunned by the shock; but, recovering quickly, it again took wing and disappeared around a bend in the shore. Now, the snowy owl is said to alight at times upon the heads of sportsmen while they are crouching quietly among the reeds watching for wild geese and ducks, probably mistaking them for stumps or something of that sort. But to suppose that the kingfisher may have taken my friend for a stump would not be complimentary either to the bird or the artist.—*St. Nicholas*.

### Tommy Learns about Toads.

"Oh, papa, see what a great ugly toad! Do get a stick and kill him before he gets away," said little Tommy Gray, as he was walking in the garden with his father.

"Why do you wish to see him killed?" said his father.

"Oh! because he is such an ugly thing, and I am afraid he will eat up everything in the garden. You know we killed several bugs and worms which we found here last evening. I am sure this toad is much worse than they."

"We killed the bugs and worms because they were destroying our flowers and vegetables. This poor toad never destroys a plant of any kind about the place. Besides, he is one of our best friends. These insects that are doing so much harm in our garden are just what he uses for his food. I have no doubt that he kills more of them every day than we did last evening. If you can find a live bug, place it near him, and see what he will do."

Tommy looked about, and soon found three bugs, which he placed near the toad, and then stood back a short distance to see the result. Soon the bugs began to move away. The toad saw them, and made a quick forward motion of his head. He darted out his tongue, and instantly drew them, one by one, into his mouth. Tommy clapped his hands with delight.

"How can such a clumsy-looking fellow use his head and tongue so nimbly?" said Tommy; and he ran off to find more food for him.

The next evening Tommy went again into the garden, and soon found the object of his search ready for his supper. At first the toad was shy, but he soon learned to sit still while Tommy placed the food near him. Then he would dart out his tongue, and eat the bugs while Tommy was close by. Finding that the boy did not hurt him, he soon lost all fear, and became a great pet. Tommy named him Humpty, and says he would not have him killed now for anything.—*Our Little Ones*.

The nightingale's habit of singing at night, and the imaginary sadness of its song, are accounted for by a legend to the effect that in ancient days the nightingale and blindworm had only one eye apiece. The bird borrowed the reptile's eye in order to go with two to a feast, and afterwards refused to restore it. The blindworm vowed vengeance on its perfidious friend. Consequently the nightingale is afraid to go to sleep at night lest the blindworm should attack it in its slumber. And in order to keep itself awake it sings, resting its breast against a thorn, the pain caused by which renders its singing sad.