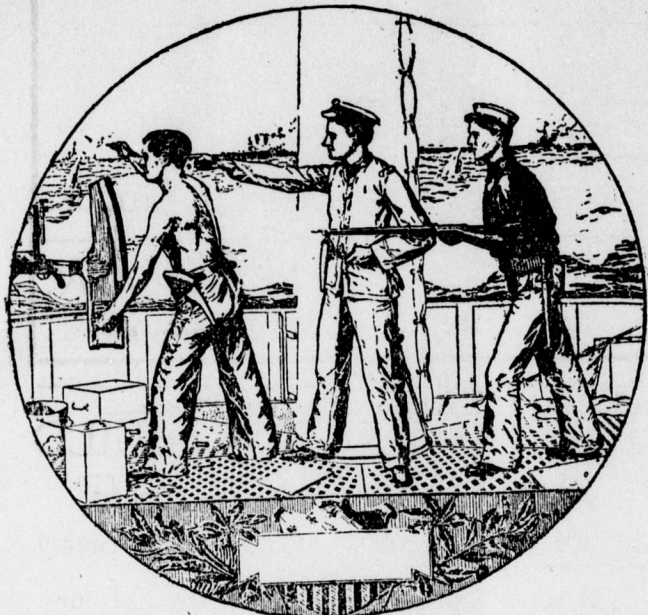


SPANISH WAR MEDALS FOR THE NAVY.

In expectation of a ceremonial presentation of a part of the medals won in the late war with Spain, the Philadelphia mint is now going right ahead with the work of fashion-

young officer, catching sight of a chance for the rifle, is pointing to an opening for the alert marine. In the distance, over the rim of the fighting-top, are seen the Brooklyn and the Texas, partly clouded in their own smoke, while against the extreme left shore line lies the blazing wreck of a Spanish craft. The sea in the middle distance is dashed with plunge of hostile shot.

The "specially meritorious service"



REVERSE OF THE MEDAL, SHOWING THE MEN BEHIND THE GUNS.

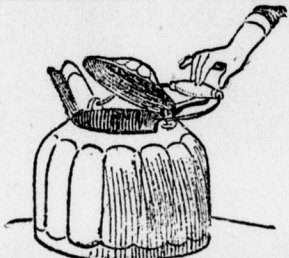
ing the several thousand medals to be given to the meritorious and the valorous of our navy during the campaign in the West Indies in 1898. These medals are to commemorate participation in certain naval engagements, principally on the coast of Cuba, and to distinguish those officers and men whose specially meritorious service other than the battle is particularly deserving of recognition. From the man behind the gun to the man before the blazing furnace in the fire-room, every one on a ship in battle will receive a battle medal, and, if in more than one engagement, an added bar, instead of another medal, for each additional action—the bar to bear the name and date of the subsequent fight.

The obverse of the battle medal will bear the head of the commander-in-chief of the whole campaign, encircled by the inscription, "U. S. Naval Cam-

will fall straight down behind the medal so that the color will show through the openings between the star points. The design has been made purposely simple.

Automatic Kettle Lid.

Among the kitchen novelties just placed on the market is a tea kettle of aluminum, provided with a very attractive feature in a method of raising the lid for filling the kettle, without



AUTOMATIC KETTLE LID.

the necessity of touching it. On one side of the lid is a projecting arm, so that a downward pressure of the handle raises the lid. When the handle is raised the lid falls back of its own weight.

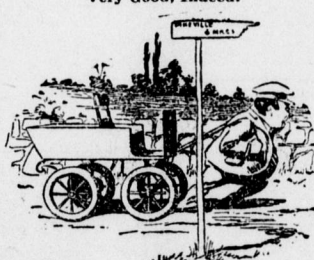
The Great Staple.

Rice forms a larger part of human food than the product of any other one plant, being the diet of India, China and the Malayan Islands, and occupying a place on the tables of ninety per cent. of the inhabitants of the civilized world. One may safely venture the assertion that 800,000,000 people eat rice every day in the year.—New York Press.

Fishing With Saws and Axes.

At the St. Mary's reservoir the recent cold snap has made the ice about nine inches thick and on account of the low water thousands of nice black bass have been frozen in the ice. People come in large numbers and saw or chop out small blocks of ice containing the fish and take them home.—Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch.

Very Good, Indeed.



"Who says automobilism is not exercise?"

Unrecorded History—The Top of a Boer Kopje, A. D. 1950
(PICTURE REPRODUCED FROM LONDON PUNCH ALMANAC.)



The Aged Rip-Van-Kitchener (aside to his venerable Tommies)—"Aha! The only survivor 'coming in' at last!"
The Last of the Boers—"Vaid a momond! Vod derms you gif me; mein gombleed Intebendence?—oddervise I bleib always on gommando."

WHERE AMERICAN SCHOOLS EXCEL.

Particulars in Which European Schools Are Deficient.

THE American schoolboy is two inches taller than the average European schoolboy of a like age. I am positive in this declaration after a tour of inspection of the various schools of Europe, and I place the usefulness of the instruction imparted, from an educational and a hygienic point of view, as follows: First, the United States; second, England; third, Germany, closely followed by France and Russia.

There is a great difference in the school systems, but in two ways is this more noticeable, viz., inspection of school work and its results. The system of inspection abroad has been developed to such an extent that it is more of a science than an ordinary routine, as in this country. The inspector spends at least a day a month in each room, making copious notes of both teachers' and pupils' work, criticizing in open class the deficient studies and commending those that are satisfactory.

One report that I saw in Kenmare, and prepared by the regular government officer, had the results carefully tabulated. One copy was handed the teacher, another was sent to the Board of Education, and another was retained by the inspector to aid him in his future visits, thus leaving something tangible for the teacher and pupils to work on. The report set forth that the department of the pupils was properly maintained, but that the reading of the class was away below par; mathematics was fair, spelling excellent, penmanship could be improved on, history was excellent, but geography of the Western Hemisphere was very poor, and grammar was all that could be expected. With such a report the teacher had some tangible basis to work on before the next appearance of the inspector, before which time it was expected the deficiency in studies would be made up.

The inspection of class work in our Chicago schools forms quite a contrast with this. Here the assistant superintendent rarely spends over a half hour, and no report is made to the teacher that would aid in remedying defects, but she is left in ignorance of how her work compares with other teachers' efforts.

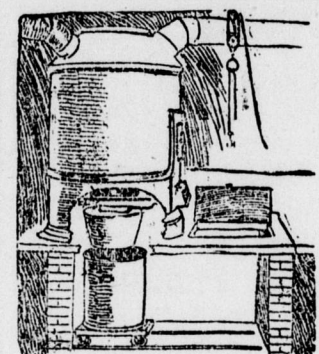
At the same time I am willing to concede that it is possible to be more definite abroad than at home, owing to more specific aims in the minds of both the educators and text-book writers. Text-books are rarely changed abroad, and a student is taught rather to grasp and retain detailed information than look for it himself. Blinders, as it were, are placed on his eyes, so that he is unable to look sidewise. Certainly these schools are more advanced in theory than ours, but we surely excel them from a practical side.

Any one of the foreign schools is better equipped, more expensive to maintain and better fitted to exert an influence in the student body than ours, but the medieval practice of re-

velop the mental and physical nature of the student at the same time. The success of this plan, I think, is evident from the number of young men at the head of the many large industrial establishments in America successfully competing with the product of the world in every line.—W. E. Watt, in the Chicago Record-Herald.

No Shaving Required.

The apparatus shown below almost speaks for itself as a time and trouble-saver, for nearly every one knows by experience the unpleasant work of cleaning out the furnace several times a week in winter. One great annoyance is the scattering of dust in the air, to settle later all around the basement, some even being carried through the flues into the living rooms above, to be deposited on furniture and carpets. George Adams and Walter Howland have conceived the idea of providing a receptacle into which the ashes may be shaken direct from the furnace, inclosing the receptacle in an airtight chamber, except for the one passage leading through the furnace into the chimney. Of course the receiving can may be of any desired shape and size, and it is possible with



ANTI-DUST ASHES REMOVING APPARATUS

its use to allow several days' shakings to accumulate without interfering with the ordinary working of the furnace. As it would be impossible to lift a full receiving can out of the well beneath the furnace, the inventors make provision for rolling it to the opening on a car, and a lifting pulley is suspended directly above the trap door to raise the can to the surface. If several cans are provided the ashes may easily be stored in the basement until the ashman comes to collect, and as the cans are emptied directly into the wagon there is no occasion for the use of a shovel or raising a dust in the house.

The End of a Capital.

A report from Paris is to the effect that General Gallieni, the Governor-General of Madagascar, is about to make the port of Tamatave, on the eastern coast of the island, the capital, instead of Antananarivo, the present capital of Madagascar. The reason for this transformation is said to lie in the fact that the country around Antananarivo is not fit for any agricultural purposes, while the coast districts are reported to be fertile and rich in mineral deposits, two facts which will no doubt induce immigrants to settle down there.

Molasses an Animal Food.

Many agriculturists in Europe have long been convinced that molasses is



AMERICA. ENGLAND. GERMANY. FRANCE.

strictions places them beyond the pale of our work. Omitting the English schools, any one of the others has a distinct advantage over our schools from the fact that reading and spelling are mastered in three years, because words are spelled as spoken. Many of our pupils are unable to read English after ten years' steady application. Arithmetic is much easier abroad, because the tables are founded on the decimal system, like our money, and require very little memorizing. It is conceded that a boy coming out of the preparatory school on the Continent is about two years ahead of our boy of the same age who is graduating from our high school. While this is true, our boy has done at least three years more work in mastering the reading, spelling and grammar of our difficult language with its barbarous spelling and numerous irregularities of grammar.

The openness of mind so noticeable in the American youth is totally lacking in the foreign student, and he is held to the facts in his books until he has no breadth of range. He spends much less time in the open air and takes less exhilarating exercise than our boys. Add to this the scientific ventilation of our school rooms, the dash of our methods, lack of desire to cram book knowledge, shorter hours of instruction, more cheerful methods, periods of relaxation more frequent, and it is no wonder our boys grow two inches taller than the foreign boys when taken age for age.

We aim as nearly as possible to de-

velop the mental and physical nature of the student at the same time. The success of this plan, I think, is evident from the number of young men at the head of the many large industrial establishments in America successfully competing with the product of the world in every line.—W. E. Watt, in the Chicago Record-Herald.

an admirable food for horses and cattle, and their conviction is now stronger than ever owing to certain experiments which have recently been tried, and which have proved eminently successful.

Obituary Cynicism.

Literary Traveler (to depressed-looking resident outside country churchyard)—"Interesting old place this, sir. Any folk-lore or fairy tales connected with it?"

Grumpy Resident (who has evidently been left out of a will)—"There isn't any folk-lore in this neighborhood, and the only fairy tales you'll find are in the churchyard—on the tombstones."—Moonshine.

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON

SUNDAY'S DISCOURSE BY THE NOTED DIVINE.

Subject: God Does the Impossible—Some Wonders of Divine Power—Superior to Every Law of Nature Which He Has Made For Mankind.

WASHINGTON, D. C.—In this discourse Dr. Talmage makes practical use of an occurrence in the Orient which has seldom attracted particular attention; text, II Kings vi, 6, "The iron did swim."

A theological seminary in the valley of palms near the River Jordan, had become so popular in the time of Elisha, the prophet, the more accommodations were needed for the students. The classrooms and the dormitories must be enlarged or an entirely new building constructed. What will they do? Will they send up to Jerusalem and solicit contributions for this undertaking? Will they send out agents to raise the money for a new theological seminary? Having raised the money, will they send for cedars of Lebanon and marble from the quarries where Ahab got the stone for the pillars and walls of his palace? No; the students propose to build it themselves. They were rugged boys, who had been brought up in the country and who had never been weakened by the luxuries of city life. All they ask is that Elisha, their professor and prophet, go along with them to the woods and boss the job. They start for the work, Elisha and his students. Plenty of lumber in those regions along the Jordan, the sycamore is a stout, strong tree and good for timber. Mr. Gladstone asked me if I had seen in Palestine any sycamore tree more beautiful than the one we stood under at Hauran. I told him I had not.

The sycamores near the Jordan are now attacked by Elisha's students, for they must have lumber for the new theological seminary. I suppose some of the students made an awkward stroke, and they were extemporized axemen. Stand from under! Crash goes one of the trees and another and another. But something now happens so wonderful that the occurrence will tax the credulity of the ages, so wonderful that many still think it never happened at all. One of the students, unable to own an axe, had borrowed one. You must remember that while the axe of olden time was much like our modern axe, it differed in the fact that instead of the helve or handle being thrust into a socket in the iron head the head of the axe was attached to a handle by a hole in the head, and so it might slip the helve. A student of the seminary was swinging his axe against one of those trees, and whether it was at the moment he made his first stroke and the chips flew or was after he had cut the tree from all sides so deep that it was ready to fall, he was told, but the axe head and the handle parted. Being near the riverside, the axe head dropped into river and sank to the muddy bottom. Great was the student's dismay. If it had been his own axe, it would have been bad enough, but the axe did not belong to him. He had no means to buy another for the kind man who had loaned it to him, but God helps through some good and sympathetic soul, and in this case it was Elisha who was in the woods and on the river bank at the time. He did not see the axe head fly off, and so he asked the student where it dropped. He was shown the place where it went down in the river. Then Elisha broke off a branch of a tree and threw it into the water, and the axe head rose from the depths of the river and floated to the bank, so that the student had just to stoop down and take up the restored property. Now you see the meaning of my text, "The iron did swim."

Suppose a hundred years ago some one had told people the time would come when hundreds of thousands of tons of iron would float on the Atlantic and Pacific-iron ships from New York to Southampton, from London to Calcutta, from San Francisco to Canton. The man making such a prophecy would have been sent to an asylum or carefully watched as incompetent to go alone. We have all in our day seen iron swim. Now, if man can make hundreds of tons of metal float, I am disposed to think that the Almighty could make an axe head float.

"What," says some one, "would be the use of such a miracle? Of what importance, of eternal importance, those students were preparing for the ministry. They had joined the theological seminary to get all its advantages. They needed to have their faith strengthened; they needed to be persuaded that God can do everything; they needed to learn that God takes notice of little things; that there is no emergency of life where He is not willing to help."

Standing on the banks of that Jordan, those students of that day of the recalled axe head had their faith re-enforced, and nothing that they found out in the classrooms of that learned institution had ever done more in the way of fitting them for their coming profession.

I hear from different sources that there is a great deal of infidelity in some of the theological seminaries of our day. They think that the Garden of Eden is an allegory, and that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, and that the book of Job is only a drama, and that the book of Jonah is an unreliable fish story, and that water was not turned into wine, although the bartender now by large dilution turns wine into water, and that most of the so-called miracles of the Old and the New Testaments were wrought by natural causes. When those infidels graduate from the theological seminary and take the pulpits of America as expounders of the Holy Scriptures, what advocates they will be of that gospel for the truth of which the martyrs died.

Hail the Polycaeps and Hugh Latimers and John Knoxes of the twentieth century, believing the Bible is true and would to God that some great revival of religion might sweep through all the theological seminaries of this land, confirming the faith of the coming expounders of an entire Bible!

Furthermore, in that scene of the text God sanctions borrowing and sets forth the importance of returning. I do not think there would have been any miracle performed if the young man had owned the axe that slipped the helve. The young man cried out in the hearing of the prophet, "Alas, master, for it was borrowed!" He had a right to borrow. There are times when we have not only a right to borrow, but it is a duty to borrow. There are times when we ought to lend, for Christ in His sermon on the mount declared, "From him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."

It is right that one borrow the means of getting an education, as the young student of my text borrowed the axe. It is right to borrow means for the forwarding of commercial ends. Most of the vast fortunes that now overshadow the land were hatched out of a borrowed dollar.

Those students in the valley of palms by the Jordan had a physical strength and hardihood that would help them in their mental and spiritual achievements. We who are toiling for the world's betterment need brawn as well as brain, strong bodies as well as illumined minds and consecrated souls. Many of those who are now doing the best work in church and state got muscle and power of endurance from the fact that in every life they were compelled to use axe or plow or fall or hammer, while many who were brought up in the luxuries of life give out before the battle is won. They are keen and sharp of mind, but have no physical endurance. They have the axe head, but no

handle. The body is the handle of the soul.

Do not feel lonely because your nearest neighbor may be miles away, because the width of the continent may separate you from the presence of your cradle and your father's grave was dug. Wakened though you may be by lion's roar or panther's scream, God will help you, whether at the time the forest around you raves in the midnight hurricane or you suffer from something quite insignificant, like the loss of an axe head. Take your Bible out under the trees if the weather will permit, and after you have listened to the solo of a bird in the tree tops or the long meter psalm of the thunder, read those words of the Bible, which must have been written out of floods: "The trees of the Lord are full of sap, the cedars of Lebanon which He hath planted, where the birds make their nests; as for the stork, the fir trees are her house. The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats and the rocks for the conies. Thou makest darkness, and it is night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey and seek their meat from God. The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together and lay them down in their dens. Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening. O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! It is impossible to number them all. The earth is full of Thy riches." How do you like that sublime pastoral?

My subject also reminds us of the importance of keeping our chief implement for work in good order. I think that young theological student on the banks of Jordan was a good deal more than examining the axe before he lifted it that day against a tree. He could in a moment have found out whether the helve and the head were firmly fastened. The simple fact was that the axe was in good order or the strongest stroke that sent the edge into the hard sycamore would have left the implement headless. So God has given every one of us an axe with which to hew.

Let us keep it in good order, having been sharpened by Bible study and strengthened by prayer. The reason we sometimes fail in our work is because we have a dull axe or we do not know how aright to swing it. The head is not aright on the handle. At the time we want the most skill for work and perfect equilibrium we lose our head. We expend in useless excitement the nervous energy that we ought to have employed in direct, straightforward work.

Your axe may be a pen or a type or a yardstick or a scales or a tongue which in legislative hall or business circles or Sabbath class or pulpit is to speak for God and righteousness, but the axe will not be worth much until it has been sharpened on the grinding stone of adversity.

Go right through the world and show me one man or woman who has done anything for the world worth speaking of whose axe was not ground on the revolving wheel of mighty trouble. It was not David, for he was dethroned and hounded by the unfaithful Ahimelech. It was not Paul, for he was shipwrecked and whipped with thirty-nine stripes from rods of elm-wood on his way to beheadment.

Surely it was not Abraham Lincoln, called by every vile name that human and satanic turpitude could invent and depicted by cartoonists with more malice than any other man ever suffered, on the way to meet a bullet crashing through his temples.

But I have come to the foot of the Alps, which we must climb before we can see the wide reach of my subject. See in all this theme how the impossibilities may be turned into possibilities. That axe head was sunken in the mudiest of mud that could be found. The student of Elisha may know where it went down and may dive for it and perhaps fetch it up, but can the sunken axe head be lifted without a hand thrust deep into the mud at the bottom of the river? No; that is impossible. I admit, so far as human power is concerned, it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. After the tree branch was thrown upon the surface of Jordan "the iron did swim."

Some one asks me, "Did you ever see iron swim?" Yes, yes; many a time. I saw a soul hardened until nothing could make it harder. All styles of sin had spoiled that soul. It was petrified as to all fine feeling. It had been hardened for thirty years. It had gone into the deepest depths. It had been given up as lost. The father had given it up. The mother, the last to do so, had given it up. But one day in answer to some prayer, a branch of the disfigured tree of Calvary was thrown into the dark and sullen stream, and the sunken soul responded to its power and rose into the light, and, to the astonishment of the church and the world, "the iron did swim." I have seen hundreds of cases like that. When the dying penitent on the cross beside Christ was being visited. When Jerry McAuley, a victim graduate of Sing Sing prison, was changed into a great evangelist, so useful in reclamation of wandering men and women that the merchant princes of New York established for him the Water street and Cremona missions and mourned at his burial, amid the lamentations of a city. When Newton, the blaspheming sailor, by the power of the truth was brought to Christ and became one of the mightiest preachers of the gospel that England ever saw.

When John Bunyan, whose curses shocked even the profane of the fish market, was so changed in heart and life that he could write that wonderful dream, "The Pilgrim's Progress" in such a way that uncounted thousands have found through it the road from the "city of destruction" to the "celestial city." In all these cases I think iron was made to swim. I worship the God who can do the impossible.

You have a wayward boy. Only God knows how you have cried after him. You have tried and failed in his reformation. Where is he now—in this city, in this country, or has he crossed the sea? "Oh," you say, "I do not know where he is. He went away in the sulks and did not say where he was going." You have about made up your mind that nothing will ever hear from him again. Pretty hard pay the gives you for all your kindness and the nights you sat up with him when he was sick. Perhaps he struck you one day when you were trying to persuade him to do better. How different was the feeling of that hard list against your face from his little hand in infancy patting your cheek! Father! Mother! That is an impossible that I would like to see God take hold of, the conversion of that boy, for he will never be anything but a boy to you, though you should live to see him fifty years of age. Did you say his heart is hard? How hard? Hard as stone? "Yes," you say, "harder than that. Hard as iron." But here is a God who can lift the soul that has been deepest down.

Here is a God who can raise a soul out of the blackest depths of sin and wretchedness. Here is a God who can make iron swim. The God of Elisha, the God of the young student that stood in a dizziness on the banks of the Jordan at the time of the lost axe head. Lay hold of the Lord in a prayer that will take no denial.

Alas, there are impossibilities before thousands of people—called to do work that it is impossible for them to do, called to bear burdens that it is impossible for them to bear, called to endure suffering that it is impossible for them to endure. Read all the gospel promises, rally all your faith, and, while you will always be called to worship the God of hope, to-day, with all the concentrated energies of my soul, I implore you to bow down and worship the God who can turn the impossibles into the possibles. It was no trivial purpose, but for grand and glorious uses I have spoken to you to-day of the borrowed, the lost and the restored axe head.