

Business in the country towns of the country is reported to be at a standstill because of impassable roads. The mud is so deep that hauling of a load of any kind is out of the question. Farmers can take their produce to the post office on a packback, they buy little or nothing from the stores. The same state of affairs undoubtedly exists in some parts of the country. For a month or more every road in the country is almost useless. Traffic of all kinds must either be suspended entirely or carried on at enormous cost to vehicles and horses. It would be interesting and instructive to know the exact sum lost to the farmers and country merchants of the western states every year for want of good roads. It would be an amazing sum. The mud thus annually lost is much greater than would be the annual charge for the building of good roads over these states would call for. Yet the farmers and country dwellers generally show little interest in the good roads movement. Many of them are loath to fight it, rather than to pay it. They are annually taxed enormous sums for want of good roads—the shape of wasted time, lost opportunities to get their crops to market, and wear and tear on their animals—but it is an indirect tax, not directly computed in dollars and cents, and hence many prefer to cling to the mud roads rather than have to pay a few dollars of definite tax each year for solid highways. This is a mistaken economy. There can be no complete prosperity in rural districts where the roads are impassable for weeks every year. While such a community is idly waiting for the mud to dry, the rest of the nation is getting ahead of it. The modern commercial system must run steadily and smoothly at all times, in order to give profitable results. To stop this great machine with a sudden wrench and leave it idle for weeks at a time means heavy loss, a loss which takes the shape of bad roads. The cause of smaller profits for the farmer, for the merchant, and for everybody who works in the region so afflicted.

In these days of wonderful accomplishments we are so given to speaking of the transmission of power by electricity that we do not stop to consider its full meaning. Thus we consider the transmission of 5,000 electrical horsepower from Niagara falls to the Pan-American exposition as a matter of course, accepting it as one of the capabilities of present day progress. However, if the engineering talent of the world was called upon to deliver the power of the falls in Buffalo by other means, it would have to acknowledge its inability to do so. It is probable that a shaft two miles long would twist off before it could be turned, owing to the friction. But means of electricity the power is transmitted along the solid cables and its force so subdivided that it is tried right to the point of use for heat and power purposes. As B. Stillwell points out, "the power which is transmitted silently and invisibly along six conductors, less than one inch in diameter, would break six steel cables of equal weight, moving at the rate of ten miles an hour."

In a country graveyard, four miles west of Nashville, Brown county, says the Indianapolis Press, stands a tree that sprouted from the crude coffin that inclosed the body of George Allcorn in 1835. At a log rolling in that county Allcorn was crushed and died. As there was no coffin or undertaker within 30 miles, the neighbors cut down a large tree, split it in twain, hollowed out the halves to make a coffin, in which they buried the body. From this rude coffin, the seed of which was still green, sprang the tree, now 30 inches in diameter, 30 feet at widest point of branches and 60 feet high.

The senior law class at Ann Arbor University gave an April fool dance which had some original features. Three chaperons who sat demurely in a corner were announced as Mmes. Rui and Vacci Nation, and it was some time before the guests realized that the stern-looking fellows were only dummies. For the dance the orchestra played some, Sweet Home," turned out the lights and left the hall. The mild-mannered served to thirsty dancers was changed during the evening to cold salt and water.

A Missouri paper publishes this item: "The business man of this city is in the habit of hugging the girl he had better quit or we will publish his name." The next day 25 men called at the office, paid up their subscriptions and told the editor not to pay attention to foolish stories.

Chicago loses 6,500 umbrellas every year, 3,500 purses, 1,200 overcoats, 1,000 caps and jackets, 500 canes and 14,000 articles that belong to a miscellaneous list beginning with a pair of nutron chops and running up to a diamond brooch worth \$1,500.

Some months ago the surgeon of the Battle Creek sanitarium had occasion to remove a portion of the lip of a patient which presented a small cancerous growth. An examination of the growth was later made by the pathologist of the institution, in accordance with the usual custom. On glancing through the microscope at the specimen-slides which had been prepared, he was not a little surprised to find, in addition to the ordinary cancerous structure which he expected to see, hundreds of fine specimens of the pork parasite, trichinae spirals. It is not to be supposed, says Good Health, the organ of that institution, that the trichinae were the cause of the cancer, for they were without doubt present not only in the lip, but in all parts of the body, at least in the muscular tissues. On inquiry into the patient's history, distinct evidence was found that he had once been afflicted with trichinosis. During the attack he had suffered pains in the muscles, but had supposed the pain to be due to muscular rheumatism. More than 25 years ago Dr. Janeway, of the Bellevue hospital medical college, asserted that the post-mortem examinations made at that institution showed trichinae present in one case out of every 17, which would be approximately six per cent. Trichinosis has greatly increased since that time. The writer feels quite safe in claiming that at present in pork-eating districts fully ten per cent. of the inhabitants are carrying about with them constantly millions of the living trichinae snugly coiled up in their muscles. Government examinations made at Chicago stock yards show that at least two per cent. of all the hogs killed there are infected with trichinae. There are many more men who eat hogs than hogs that eat men, and the longer life of man and hence the greater number of opportunities for infection are circumstances which naturally lead to a greater frequency of this disease in men than in hogs—a fact which is no particular credit to human intelligence.

"Going down the road in North Carolina the other day," writes the Washington correspondent of the Chicago Record-Herald, "I accosted a bright looking little colored girl and inquired her name. 'Virginia Alabama Mississippi Benson,' she said, so hurriedly that I had to ask her to repeat it several times, and I failed to discover how so insignificant an atom in this great universe had received such a tremendous title. Learning that she lived in a little cabin near by, I inquired of her mother. 'So's to 'member th' places we've lived at,' was the reply, and further questioning drew out the interesting fact that the child had been made a family record and christened so that her parents might not forget the names of the states in which they had resided."

"Ed" Howe, of the Atchison Globe, who had been visited by a book agent, printed the following unique paragraph the other day: "Card of Thanks—I desire to express my thanks in this public manner to Col. A. H. Whipple, the well-known book agent. He called at my office this morning with sample sheets of 'Artists of the World,' in 28 volumes; \$140 for the set; one volume per month. As Col. Whipple is an extremely clever agent, he could have sold me the set had he persisted, but he very kindly let me off on my saying that I had been sick and was not feeling very well."

While a citizen of Abilene, Kan., was out giving his hounds exercise the other day the dogs started a rabbit and gave chase. Bunny ran straight for a tennis court, dodged beneath a wire screen with which the ground is surrounded and got away. The dogs did not see the screen and crashed into it, one animal worth \$350 being killed and several put out of business. Meanwhile "Br'er Rabbit, he lay low."

A Richmond (Me.) man who has been corresponding with a Providence (R. I.) woman with a view to matrimony, recently informed her by letter that if she would send him a check he would go on and talk the matter over with her. A stay of proceedings has been granted.

At least one cooperative colony—that located in Dickinson county, Kan.—seems to be thriving. It was formed three years ago and has made money from the start, clearing \$1,842 last year. The colony has a ranch, a general store, a bank and an insurance feature.

A mountain goat farm is a new business in Center and Tioga counties, Pa. A pioneer in the business opens with cleared mountain land and a consignment of 1,000 white goats, costing \$18 a head. There is a chance for a good crop of butts.

Our agriculture, which amounted to \$100,000,000 100 years ago, is now rapidly approaching \$3,000,000,000 a year, and the value of the farms of the country is almost \$25,000,000,000.

Cures of leprosy are said to have been effected by the use of small doses of arsenic, a liberal diet, and abstinence from fish.

The great American habit of promiscuous expectoration has at last come in conflict with a triumph of the public spirit. The clash ended disastrously for the blue-coated guardian of civic manners. His head was broken, two of his ribs were fractured and his body was bruised and disfigured by numerous kicks. The American spitter fell furiously upon him for attempting to interfere with the most precious prerogative of a free citizen in a free republic. All this happened in the streets of the city of St. Paul. A police patrolman attempted to enforce the ordinance prohibiting spitting on the sidewalk. Five young men were engaged in flooding the sidewalk with copious expectorations. Of course they knew nothing of the ordinance, and resented the invasion of what they deemed their personal rights with all the muscular strength at their command. All of which shows, observes the Chicago Record-Herald, the folly of attempting to improve men's manners by city ordinances. Legislation never yet made a gentleman out of a boor. When the lawmakers invade the domain of personal decorum, they are treading upon uncertain ground. The only way an anti-spitting ordinance can be justified is as a measure of public health, to prevent the dissemination of disease microbes in the sputa. Such legislation has been enforced in Boston, and the orders of the board of health of Chicago against expectorating in the street cars and places of public assemblage have had a deterrent effect. But the vile habit of expectorating in public places seems to go on unchecked.

The benefit to accused persons of having first-class lawyers was strikingly illustrated in the United States court at Wheeling, W. Va., one day lately. Three friendless and moneyless tramps were on trial charged with having robbed a country post office. They pleaded not guilty, but had no lawyers, so the court selected three leading legal lights to defend them. One of the lawyers had been attorney general of the state. Witnesses for the prosecution were skillfully questioned and most eloquent appeals were made to the jury on behalf of the accused, all of whom were acquitted.

There are few people who have not been occasionally puzzled to write "ei" or "ie" in the words that so represent the sound of the long "e." A very simple rule, however, removes all difficulty. If the diphthong immediately follows the letter "c" it is always "ei," as in ceiling, conceive, etc.; but when it follows any other letter it is always "ie," as in grief, niece, friend, etc.

"There are not," says the Eldorado (Kan.) Republican, "five gallons of whisky on this town site, outside of private houses. There is not a place in town where a man can buy, beg or steal a bottle of beer. And yet the town is so full of whisky reform talk that the election will turn on this question."

A bill which has just become a law of New York makes the funeral expenses of a deceased person payable from his estate before any other debts. Besides being a boon to undertakers, this measure may have some effect in encouraging reasonable simplicity of funeral display.

At a historic place not far from Albany, N. Y., a certain young man who is fond of having his name appear wherever it will be seen, carefully carved his initials, which happened to be "A. S." Some mean person wrote directly under it, "Two-thirds of the truth."

The writer of an obituary notice in a Kentucky paper warmed up to his work as he proceeded and closed with this gushing sentence: "She was wafted into the gloom of eternal night at six o'clock in the morning."

If you are looking for culture you can find the real thing right here in town, says the Bogard (Mo.) Dispatch. We heard a lady pronounce "blanc-mange" the other day without so much as batting an eyelid.

Under an act passed at the last session of congress the Virginia-Tennessee boundary line has been fixed in the middle of the main street of Bristol, Tenn. There is a car line in the street and passengers on opposite sides of a car now ride in different states. The marriage of minors, forbidden in Virginia, may be performed on the south side of a car. A Virginia criminal on the south side of the street is safe from arrest, should he so insist, until requisition papers can be obtained from Tennessee.

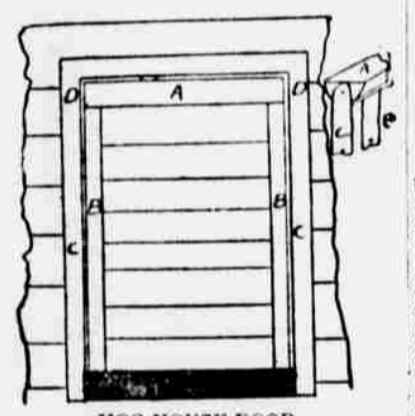
A magnificent oak tree at Athens, Ga., not only owns itself, but possesses other property. It was owned many years ago by Col. W. H. Jackson, who, in his childhood, played around its massive trunk, and in later years grew to love it almost as he would his own child. Fearing that after his death the old oak would fall into the hands of persons who would destroy it, he recorded a deed conveying to the tree "entire possession of itself and of all land within eight feet of it on all sides."

WASTE OF CORN FODDER.
Bank Extravagance of Western Farmers Surprises Thoughtful Observers from the East.

Prof. Shaw renews his plea for greater economy upon the western farm. Of that most palpable and useless extravagance witnessed in 99 out of every 100 corn fields, he says: "The waste of corn fodder in the Mississippi valley is a grievous waste. In the aggregate the uncut corn must amount to millions and millions of acres. And one acre in those states where the season is long grows so much food! In a recent ride from Omaha to Kansas City, for more than half a day the train steamed along through corn fields, nearly all of which were uncut. There was enough of uncut corn in this one part of the Missouri valley to feed hundreds of thousands of cattle through all the winter. All this valuable food will waste, and it is only a fragmentary portion of the waste that will take place all up and down the Mississippi and many of its tributaries. The day will come when all this will change. The day will come when it must change. At one time the greatest profit may thus have been obtained by large holders of land. It may be so still. But surely in these days of high-priced meat and of shredders, more money could be made by using more of this valuable food. The people in those areas where this practice prevails will be hard indeed to persuade to change their ways, the force of habit is so powerful, but it is a change that ought to be brought about."—Prairie Farmer.

DOOR FOR HOG HOUSE.
One That Will Open from Either Side by the Hog Pushing It Hard with His Snout.

A hog house door should be on every hog house in winter to keep animals warm. One can be easily made that hogs can open and shut at will. Make the doorway at least six inches higher than the pig. The door should be of matched flooring placed crosswise and nailed together with battens, b b, running up and down, placed even with edges, thus making the door edges two inches thick. Make the door four inches shorter than the doorway. Get two pieces of band iron two inches wide, one-eighth inch thick, three inches longer than the door, round



off one end and drill a hole for a 40 D spike and nail on the edges of the door at a in small figure. Make a half-round block, a, from a piece of 4x4 wood long enough to fit loosely between the projecting ends of the irons. Drive the spike through the holes into the ends of the block, as at d d. Spike this block in the top of the doorway and you have a hanging door that will open from either side by the hog pushing it with his snout. Be sure the block is put in square so the door will swing free and be a close fit. If the house is a new one to the hog, hang the door up for a time, then prop it partly open and chase the hog through it and in a few days he will soon learn how to open and shut his bedroom door. Such a door also protects the pen from wet and ice.—R. B. Taylor, in Farm and Home.

Timely Word of Caution.
In feeding skimmilk great care must be exercised. The most common mistake made in feeding separator skimmilk is to feed too much of it. A young calf from a week to two weeks old should not have over one to one and a half gallons a day, and larger calves two gallons a day. The skimmilk should be warm and sweet. We add to the skimmilk a mixture of bran and ground oats in equal parts by weight. Put it into the milk for young calves and as soon as they will take it dry, give meal to calves in a separate box in dry form. We also give them some nice clover hay and keep the calves as dry and comfortable as possible.—Prof. H. H. Dean, Ontario Agricultural College.

The Ideal Hog Defined.
The prettiest hog is the one that is the most profitable; the one that makes the most pounds of pork from a hundred pounds of dry matter; the one that makes the largest contribution to the family necessities and to the interest on the mortgage. If a breeder departs from this ideal, he makes a mistake, for sooner or later the common-sense farmer will demand a common-sense hog without preference as to curl in the tail, or drop of the ear. There are breeders who will disagree with us on this point. But—wait and see!—Midland Farmer.

Watch the Horse's Shoulders.
Don't let the horses get sore shoulders. See that the collars fit. Just because a horse's collar was all right last season is no sign it will fit this season. You owe it to your teams to work them in comfort and in no other way will you get the best out of them. It is the greatest cruelty to work a sore-shouldered animal and in nine cases out of ten it is the owner's fault—negligence or carelessness.—Ohio Farmer.

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