AN INVOCATION.

BY C. F. LESTER.

Where the ruddy sunbeams blaze
Through the drowsy morning haze;
  Where, with shifting sheen and shimmer,
  Winking whitecaps gleam and glimmer,
And the wooing south wind plays
  With the laughing summer sea;—
  Take me thither, Memory.

Where the breakers comb and crawl
Underneath their gaunt sea-wall,
  While their winnowed spray is laving
  Sedges in lone crannies waving,
And the gray gulls dip and call
  By the sleepy summer sea;—
  Take me thither, Memory.

Where the wee, hushed ripples croon
To the stars their wizard rune,
  While, from out the purple ocean,
  Venus-wise, with languorous motion
Trembles up the golden moon
  O'er the magic summer sea;—
  Take me thither, Memory.

Where, betimes, the straining ear
Phantom-like, may faintly hear
  Old-time voices melt and mingle
  With the surge upon the shingle,
And the night-wind wailing drear,
  To the sea, the sea, the sea!—
  Take me thither, Memory!

HIS "WILDCAT" TRAIN.

How Engineer Powers, in Honduras, Ran the Jaguar Special.

"STRANGE affairs happen upon the solitary railroad of Spanish Honduras. Hold-ups, collisions and runaway trains are of frequent occurrence on its fifty miles of length, but its most extraordinary incident was that in which George Powers took part.

It was in the "dry season," when the banana plants were weighted with their bunches of green fruit, ready for cutting.

"One day"—as Powers tells the story—"the fruit steamer Breakwater anchored unexpectedly in the offing of our Caribbean Sea harbor of Porto Cortez. Soon, at her agent's orders, there was hoisted at her masthead the signal indicating, "Fruit, ready for a quick cargo." And when the ship had reached the dock a fruit train was being made up.

"Then we learned that the Breakwater was expected to sail for New Orleans with a cargo of bananas early the next morning. Extraordinary efforts must be made to load her with a suitable shipment in less than a day's time. To hurry was decidedly untropical, but the bonus given by the railroad officials was as oil to lubricate the machinery of the 'transportation department,' and I was handed these orders:

"'Engineer Powers will take Engine No. 13, with eighteen platform cars, and proceed with best speed to La Pimienta, load cargo of bananas, return to San Pedro, load fruit there. Report at this office after the run, and not later than 10 p. m. to-day.

'Colville, Supt. of Trans.'

"Such an order meant 'hurry.' My fireman oiled 13, the only locomotive available, and the yardmen made up the train. By noon we were started. There was work enough ahead to keep us all out of mischief for the next ten hours. To cover a round trip of 100 miles, load eighteen cars with bananas and pull them into Porto Cortez within ten hours would be the record for speed upon the Honduras Railroad.

"So old 13, with throttle wide open, was soon puffing up the rough roadbed to La Pimienta at an unaccustomed pace. The telegraph line was equally busy, and when we ran past San Pedro the ox-cars were already unloading their nine and ten hand bunches alongside the track in readiness for our return. Between 4 and 5 o'clock we whistled for La Pimienta, the terminus.

"There the station agent had a gang of 'loaders' ready, and before the train had quite stopped the green bunches were being passed to the loaders in the cars. In an incredibly short space of time the bananas rose, tier upon tier, to a heavy load, and all the time my fireman fed the sticks of soft pine to our roaring fire-box, for we should need a good load of steam to get back to San Pedro in season. The agent sarcastically asked me, 'Is the engine good for the heavy pull without a breakdown?' and I replied, "Number 13 is about to surprise everybody by a record trip.' And so we did, both because of and in spite of an unprecedented adventure.

"At 6 o'clock we had loaded all the fruit in sight, and whistling for 'open brakes,' we started for San Pedro. The down grade helped us materially. In less than an hour we had covered the distance and were taking the fruit aboard from our last stop.

"Delay began here. There were few men to load the fruit, and the handling of it was slow; every bunch was thoroughly inspected by the loaders, lest they should grasp tarantula crawling among the bananas. But at 8 o'clock the train was loaded, the pitch-pine headlight was lighted, the throttle opened and the whistle shrieked its farewell to San Pedro.

"Two hours only were left in which to make the run in schedule time over thirty-five miles of rolling country and with a weight of eighteen heavily loaded cars. The 'passenger,' with her light freight, was allowed four hours for the same run. The darkness was intense, and the vibration of the train soon became so great that the headlight was shaken into a mere sputtering, and at a lurch went out. The front of the engine became the limit of my vision.

"The white mile-markers were passed so quickly that my fireman lost his count, and we could not tell where we were. But No. 13 was doing her best. Not a valve had blown out nor a rod broken. Our clattering over the track was varied only by the frantic squealings of a fine, fat pig, sent by the agent at La Pimienta to the captain of the Breakwater as a delicacy for his table. Piggy continually squealed from its berth in an open fruit car.

"In one place a large limb extended from a tree out over the track, just high enough to clear the stacks of the passing engines. The pig seemed to scream more loudly than before, and we heard a new sound.

"What was that?" asked my startled fireman. 'Did you hear that crash?'

"'Oh, never mind, give me more steam,' I replied, for I knew we must be nearing a steep grade. I blew the signals to release the brakes, but without avail.

"In a minute we struck the hill. It was a hard one to climb, and the engine puffed so loudly that I did not notice the cessation of the pig's squeals. Slowly but surely we were coming to a standstill. The brakes still seemed set. I again blew the signal for their release, but the train came suddenly to an irresolute stop, although making herculean efforts to keep going.

"The incline had but begun. To start the train was impossible.

"I lighted a pine torch, sprang from the cab to ascertain the situation, and had passed several cars when the most terrible yells echoed through the forest. The men from the rear of the train were shouting at me. It was impossible to distinguish what they were saying because of the yells which were rising apparently between me and them. These did not alarm me much, for the creature screamed like a wildcat, a reckless but not dangerous, night prowler. So on I walked toward the rear of the train.

"Approaching the trainmen I heard them shout, 'Look out for the jaguar, Powers!'

"Now, no wild creature is more dangerous to man by night than a jaguar. I halted and stared. I could now see the glaring eyes of the fierce brute as he pawed the lifeless pig. These eyes followed me with such hostile intent that I hastened back to the cab for the fireman and my Winchester.

"Of course one of us had to stay with the engine, so I left my fireman in charge and returned alone, with torch in hand and rifle ready. The trainmen came toward me from around the rear of the train. They told me that the jaguar must have been crouching on the overspreading limb, and having heard the squeals of the pig, must have leaped recklessly into the passing train for his prey. The trainmen had discovered him when they started to answer my signal of 'brakes off.' The brute held them at bay. They were in the rear car, the jaguar was in the next one, and they could not pass over the train to release the brakes. The eighteen loaded cars, most of them having tightened brakes, had stopped No. 13 on the incline.

"I must either give up hope of getting to the port in time for loading the Breakwater, or else kill or drive away the jaguar. The fire of his eyes was intensified by the flickering light of the torch. It was not a pleasant grimace when the brute suggestively wiped his lips and tongue with those huge paws.

"The engine gave a sudden lurch. My fireman must have been meddling. It threw the animal from its balance. His tail lashed. Handing the torch to a man I raised my Winchester. The beast glared ferociously, and measured the distance to the ground. Some of the men ran. As the animal seemed about to jump I took hasty aim and pulled the trigger. Apparently the jaguar was unharmed, but he had changed his opinion about the jump, and calmly trotted along the tops of the bananas toward the engine. I aimed at him again and pulled the trigger. Then I remembered that the only cartridge in the Winchester was the one I had fired.

"I shouted to the fireman, but before I could make him understand the cowardly fellow jumped from the cab and scampered into the forest. Luckily there was no other jaguar awaiting him.

"I went toward the cab, expecting to find the jaguar in possession, and determined to club him out with the butt of my gun, but he was not in the cab. I blew 'brakes off,' and casually looked around. On the floor of the tender, among the wood and casks of water, stretched out at full length and apparently crouching for a spring, I saw the jaguar. I jumped from the engine. The thought of the fireman's cowardice did not then amuse me. As fast as possible I ran toward the rear of the train.

"Ten o'clock was approaching. The ship could not receive her fruit unless we started immediately. In my haste I had left the rifle in the cab; now I took a crowbar which one of the brakemen handed me. But the plan from which I hoped most was his suggestion that I should climb upon the engine from the front of the cab and then reach in to open the steam valve, on the chance that the escape of the hissing steam would frighten the brute to the point of fleeing from the train.

"I opened the valve—the jaguar never moved.

"I then reached a heavy iron wrench and threw it at the beast with all my strength. It struck him upon the head, but he did not stir. I was startled. Climbing to the fancied security of the top of the cab I poked him with a long handled rod, but I could see no sign of life.

"After a close watch I descened to the floor of the cab and opened the furnace door to have more light. The jaguar was dead. There was a hole through his head caused by the lucky shot from my Winchester. He had walked to the tender in a daze and died there.

"I blew the whistle vigorously. It was a welcome sound to the trainmen. The brakes were speedily released. The fireman came scrambling back; I opened the throttle and slowly the train went up the incline toward Porto Cortez.

"At a little after 10 o'clock that night the whistling of No. 13 approaching with her load of bananas summoned the crew of the Breakwater, whose captain congratulated the officials of the Honduras Railroad on the remarkable expedition of their fruit service. But when he saw the nine feet of jaguar stretched out in my tender and heard the story of the difficulties of the run, he remarked that the railroad officials should pass a vote of thanks to me upon the success of the record trip of the road."—Youth's Companion.

The Value of Books.

Of all the needs a book has, the chief need is that it be readable.—Anthony Trollope, autobiography, chapter xix.

Society is a strong solution of books. It draws the virtue out of what is best worth reading, as hot water draws the strength out of tea leaves.—Holmes, "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table."

It is chiefly through books that we enjoy intercourse with superior minds, and these invaluable means of communication are in the reach of all. In the best books great men talk to us, give us their most precious thoughts and pour their souls into ours.—Channing, on Self-Culture.

No book is worth anything which is not worth much; nor is it serviceable until it has been read and re-read, and loved and loved again, and marked so that you can refer to the passages you want in it, as a soldier can seize the weapon he needs in an armory.—Ruskin, Of King's Treasures.

I have ever gained the most profit, and the most pleasure also, from the books which have made me think the most; and, when the difficulties have once been overcome, these are the books which have struck the deepest root, not only in my memory and understanding, but likewise in my affections.—Hare, Guesses at Truth.

When all that is worldly turns to dross around us, books only retain their steady value. When friends grow cold, and the converse of intimates languishes into vapid civility and commonplace, these only continue the unaltered countenance of happier days and cheer us wit hthat true friendship which never deceived hope nor deserted sorrow.—Washington Irving, Sketch Book.

Go Reverse Way of the Track.

To avoid danger of accidents the very sensible suggestion has been made that automobilists should race on the track with the right hand on the pole instead of the left, as is usual in other lines of sport. Louis R. Smith, of this city, who offers the plan, truly says that on almost all the racing machines the seats for the drivers are on the right-hand side, and that in driving to the left on a track, as is the custom, the operator in passing a machine on the outside has to look clear across the body of his vehicle in order to figure out his clearance room.

The same applies when an operator is traveling around a track alone. Seated on the right-hand side of the car, he must necessarily guess how close his front wheels are to the pole. The construction of the automobiles will hardly permit of a shoft in the seat or steering gear, and for that reason the suggestion is a timely one.—Philadelphia Record.

A Live Museum of Dress.

A Rue de la Paix magnate is thinking of opening a sort of live museum of dresses, says the London Telegraph. In galleries, to which a few privileged visitors would be admitted by special invitation, the couturier's latest creations would be exhibited on the persons of a numerous staff of "mannequins." The latter, of course, the young ladies who usually show off dresses before customers. The couturier explains that a specially large staff, providing a "complete assortment of figures," will be required for the purpose. That is to say, it would include a slim but well-developed "mannequin" for "costumes de sport," another with shoulders suitable for setting off ball dresses, a third familiar with the special stage walk and deportment and so on. The expert "living dummy" is the envy of ordinary shop girls, as she gets on an average $10 a week, her board—that is to say, luncheon and dinner—and four dresses a year, made in the establishment in which she is employed.

An Esquimaux Arrow.

An Esquimau arrow of walrus ivory, found imbedded in the breast of a healthy Canadian gray goose shot near Spokane, is on view in a store in that city. No arrow of that sort was ever seen in Spokane before. The bird had evidently carried it thousands upon thousands of miles from the Far North, where it was shot by some Esquimau.

HORTICULTURE

Orchard Crops.

Catch crops are good to grow in a young orchard, but they should be plowed under early in the spring, that they may decay as soon as possible; their chief purpose is for fall and winter protection, humus, etc., but not for spring growth. Thorough tillage should not be continued longer than midsummer, for about that time orchard trees stop growing; if stimulated with further cultivation their new growth will not ripen sufficiently to withstand cold weather. If hoed crops are raised in a young orchard they should not be planted too close to the trees and less so with every succeed ing year. Vigorous cropping with heavy manuring may be continued for seven or eight years, but after that it should cease altogether.—The Epitomist.

Heading Apple Trees.

We notice that in modern orchards there is a great tendency to head the apple trees low. This is certainly a great advantage over the old way, where the tree tops were put up as high as possible, necessitating long ladders in harvesting, and making it impossible to get at some of the fruit. Such trees, where still existing, offer obstacles to both the harvester and the sprayer. In the latter operation a low-headed tree is more thoroughly treated than a high-headed tree can be. The tops can be low and yet enough room can be left under the lower branches to do the ordinary work that the trees require in the way of cultivation. This means should be sought. We must do much of our work with horses, and therefore the lower branches should not be allowed to lie upon the ground, as we have seen them in some orchards.—Colman's Rural World.

Electric Grape Culture.

Experiments have successfully shown that electricity has a stimulating effect on all kinds of vegetation, and various schemes have been devised with the idea of making practical use of this discovery. The latest attempt is that of a wine producer at Elba, who has made use of the electrical current in grape culture. Some years ago he planted four fields with native grape vines, in the midst of a district infested with phylloxera, and two of these fields were treated with an electrical current passed through the air. The difference in the developments of the grapes in the fields was very apparent. The fruit in the field subjected to the electrical current was superior in quality and quantity, and was not affected with the phylloxera as the other fields were. He has made plans to carry out this experiment on a more extensive scale, and the operations will be watched with interest by scientists and others.

Pinching Young Trees.

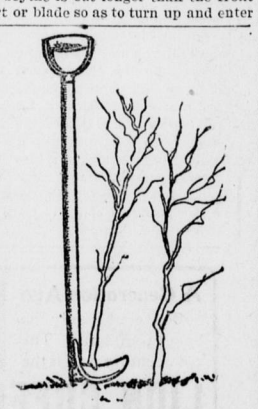
Pinching is an old practice, employed to maintain symmetrical development in young trees. When a shoot lengthens more rapidly than its fellows, the tree is liable to grow one-sided. By pinching over the top of such a shoot its progress is stopped for a time, and the other branches grow on, thus equalizing the parts of the crown.

Often the same branch will require stopping several times before the others overtake it. Every time a shoot is pinched, the first effect is to cause buds immediately below to become more mature than would have happened had the branch been uninjured.

Pinching, then, not only permits the other shoots to overtake the pinched one, but has an important influence upon the future growth of the shoot thus stopped, the operation perfecting the buds below and making them more certain to form branches than they would otherwise. It becomes important to remove or encourage these growths, according to their effect on the symmetry of the crown.

A Berry Cane Cutter.

An old shovel handle and the tip of a worn-out scythe put together in the manner shown in the cut, make one of the best of pruning hooks for cutting the old canes from rows of raspberry and blackberry bushes. The back of the scythe is cut longer than the front part or blade so as to turn up and enter



A BERRY PRUNER.

the handle above the blade to give greater stiffness. This form of handle gives one a chance to use his strength to the best advantage, and that, too, without having to reach into the thorny bushes at risk of clothing and comfort.—American Agriculturist.

The Importance of Alaska

By Harrington Emerson.

SINCE 1896 five events have occurred that wholly change conditions in Alaska for the better. 1. In that year the Klondike gold discoveries were made and in 1897 and 1898 a great rush to and through Alaska began, resulting in a doubling of the population and in an output of gold from the Yukon region to date of $75,000,000. 2. In 1898 the Philippine Islands were acquired by the United States, giving importance to the direct route along the Alaskan coast between North America and the new possessions. 3. In 1899 gold was discovered on the beach at Nome, and this carried 30,000 people to this part of Alaska and resulted in an output of $5,060,000 in gold annually, or more than twice as much as all Alaska had previously yielded. 4. The Alaska salmon fisheries, in their infancy in 1896, have grown in 1902 to great companies, capitalized for $20,000,000 and with net earnings last year of more than $2,000,000, and employing 10,000 men. 5. Two railroads have been constructed in Alaska, one of which is in the extreme southeast, costing $4,000,000, earned last year over $3,000,000 net, and the other in the extreme northeast, near Nome, a little road five miles long, which earned $80,000 net. 6. Coal fields formerly superficially known have been explored and investigated, while new ones of great value have been discovered.

America Versus England in Traveling Accommodations

By William Howard Francis.

THE English arrangement of seats is such that one-half the occupants must always ride backward, and the available space for one's feet is usually so limited as to render necessary a nice mutual adjustment of the pedal extremeties of all concerned. Most extraordinary of all are the racks for hand baggage—small arrangements with netting bottoms—surmounted by signs whereon it is written that disaster will follow an attempt to deposit anything other than "light articles" therein. The adjective "light" has so elastic a significance that the traveler hestitates about trusting so much as a shawl or a hat to the insidious meshes of the net. The weighty impedimenta, such as gripsacks and dress-suit cases, which every traveler must perforce carry, become dreadful nightmares to be huddled on the floors or carried on the knees, to the discomfort of one's neighbors or the misery of one's self.

A yet more serious deficiency is in the frequent lack of the most ordinary conveniences. Many of the carriages, especially those below first-class, have no toilet appliances, and unless one is so fortunate as to get a carriage with a side corridor (a partial adoption of the American idea), one is likely to have much needless discomfort added to the unavoidable fatigues of travel. It is true that certain English railway companies, notably the London and Northwestern, are doing much in the way of improvement through the adoption of a carriage modeled in certain particulars upon the American plan. The compartment division is partly retained, but a central aisle running the entire length renders communication possible and permits of a toilet room accessible to all. The carriage is yet among the luxuries, however, and is not general.—Lippincott's.

The Chinese Language in Commerce

By Charles Heuer, Consular Agent at Gera.

WHILE China is considered the land of promise for our manufacturers and farmers, the importance of the knowledge of the Chinese language is greatly under valued. I submit the details of a recent interview with a linguist who has given special attention to this subject. It is well understood that in order to enter into permament commercial relations with a foreign country it is indispensable to know its language. When Russian industries began to develop, the Germans recognized that in order to engage in profitable trade in that country it was necessary to learn Russian, and there is now no country where the Russian language is so much taught as in Germany.

The Chinese language is ideographic. It conveys the idea and not the word for a thing, as the figure "8" represents the idea and not the word. The Chinese have invented more than 40,000 marks for their writing. In the opinion of my informant, it will require only about 3000 marks for mercantile correspondence, and it will be easier to learn them than the words of an ordinary foreign language. Russian is more difficult for Americans than Chinese. It takes much longer to learn the spoken language, because of the variety of dialects; but any one can learn enough of the writings to answer ordinary purposes in a few months, and have his knowledge perfected by a linguist within about a year. An exact instruction in one of the Chinese languages can be given only by a Chinaman. This method has been adopted in Germany. Besides the professor for the theory of language, there are four Chinese linguists in the Oriental Seminary of Berlin, teaching the business style and the languages of Pekin, Shanghai and Canton. It is not intended to fit pupils for the diplomatic service, but for commercial work.

Thought the Foundation of Character

By Margaret Stowe.

A MOTHER, in speaking of a college course that her daughter was preparing to take, and naming over the list of studies included in the four years of work, referred to metaphysics and psychology as being "unimportant because so impracticable." She would like her daughter to dip into them merely for a general knowledge of the subjects, but as to their being of use to women after college, that, of course, was absurd.

That verdict set me thinking and I wondered upon what foundation that mother built her home, and how she developed the character of her children.

The majority of thinking, intelligent people are to-day grasping the meaning and importance of these two studies as they have never done before.

The world is beginning to realize the practical application of these vital principles in connection with manhood and womanhood.

The old idea that metaphysics and psychology were only poetry and romance is fast dying out, and the world of mind, of thought, with its subtle, far-reaching forces, is firmly and surely pushing its way to the front and its power is daily being demonstrated in character-building, in the home and in business.

We know that we are thinking beings, and that the seed-germ of all our acting is thought.

The law of thought lies at the root of your character, and it is the same law of thought that is influencing the character of your child.

It lies within the power of each one of us to build up a perfect character when we realize that a thought precedes each act of ours, and our actions form our habits, and our habits form our characters.

So let us take heed to our thoughts.

The outer world is a picture of the inner world. If we have gloom and distress in our minds, we are related to the gloomy and distressful things in the outer world.

If we have brightness and hopes within us, then we see these blessings externalized.

If our thoughts are neither strong, happy nor wholesome, we cannot expect to express health and strength in our bodies.

Every thought we think has a definite effect on our bodies. As sorrowful and distressing things enter your life, if your mind is allowed to dwell on them, your body becomes weakened.

On the other hand, dwelling mentally on the bright and beautiful things that come into your life strengthens your body.

The whole world is turning more and more towards the search after health along mental or physical lines. Intelligent physicians everywhere are doing away with the use of medicine, and are, instead, giving advice as to diet and the making of hygienic suggestions.

Scientific minds are investigating this subject to-day as never before.