# Agriculture.

### Characteristics of American Sheep Husbandry.

Dr. Hayes, in his recent address before the National Agricultural Congress, remarking that a very inadequate idea is given of a nation's resources by the number of sheep raised—the character of the animals being of the first consideration—proceeds to show some of the characteristics of American sheep husbandry. He states that the sheep of the United States consists, first, of what are called native sheep; second, descendants from improved English races; third, the Mexican sheep found in Texas, New Mexico, Colorado and California; fourth, the merino sheep and crosses of that breed with the preceding races. The merinos constitute the principle and characteristic race of the United States; and this is the most important fact in the enumeration of our resources for sheep husbandry and the wool manufacture. England has no merinos, except in her colonies; Russia has but 12,000,000 merinos; France but 9,000,000. The merinos and grades in the United States exceed 25,000,000. Merino wool is for clothing what wheat is for food; it is the chief material for cloth at the present day, the coarsest as well as the finest. While the softest, it is the strongest of all fibers. From its fulling and spinning qualities, it is the best adhesive for the cheap fabrics—coarser wool, cotton or shoddy; the mixture of merino wool increasing indefinitely the material for cheap clothing. An abundance of merino wool is the greatest boon the world has received from the animal kingdom in the last century. It is, in fact, in its extended culture the product of the last century. A century ago all the merinos in the world, confined exclusively to Spain, did not number 1,000,000. 1765 marks the epoch of the first exportation of the merinos to Saxony; 1786, to France; 1833, to Australia; 1802, the introduction of the first merino sheep to this country; and to Gen. Humphreys, of Connecticut, and to the introduction to his farm of twenty-one rams and seventy ewes, may be directly traced the most celebrated breeds of the American merino; producing individuals actually sold for $5,000 each, others for $2,000 to $3,000 and one for which $10,000 was refused. The fiber of the merino sheep is not the only excellence of the animal; when properly bred, this race has a hardiness surpassing all other high-bred races. The "yolk," provided by nature to assist in the growth of the wool, abounding in this race, more than in any other, causes the tips of the fleece to be cemented, and to become inpenetrable to rains and snows. A lighter pasture suffices for their maintenance than would support the mutton races. This race is fitted, above all others, for the remote pastoral lands, and for culture on a large scale.

Our breeders, in aiming to increase the weight of their fleece, have developed the length of the staple, and have unconsciously created a merino combing wool—a wool in special demand through modern improvements in machinery and changes in the fashion of goods. M. Ferneau, an eminent Belgian wool manufacturer, who has thoroughly studied our wool resources and manufactures, says that three-quarters of the American wool is "combing wool," and will be ultimately employed for this purpose. The bulk of American merino wools is of strong, sound and healthy staple, having few weak spots in them. Those from the other States of the West are free from burrs. Those from California have this defect in a high degree. They are admirably fitted for blankets, flannels, and fancy cassimeres, and the great bulk of our card wool manufactures. They are so excellent, as a whole, that M. Ferneau says they are too valuable to be used for clothing purposes. They supply nine-tenths of all the card or clothing wool consumed in American mills.

### Look Behind and Before.

Many of the hints for the last month are equally applicable for this. Now is the time to make plans for the campaign of 1879. Take an inventory of the farm stock and everything on hand. If this has never been done before, the proprietor will doubtless be surprised to find how much he owns. Straighten up the books, and the little debts, and collect those due from neighbors. Small accounts should not run long. Trust not to memory. Arrange the books for the business of the year. Study over the plans considerably in detail, and do not wait till the ground is ready to plow before deciding what to do. Look over the past and study the good hints and the failures—whether all was done to the best advantage; whether there was too little or too much help. This should lead to better plans for the future. Nothing can bring larger returns for the time, than a few weeks spent in accordance with the above suggestions.

### Engage Help.

Look about early in the season, and get your pick of hands in the market. Make a written bargain in detail, no matter if you are well acquainted. This will prevent misunderstanding. The man agrees to remain a certain number of months; to perform certain chores Sundays or holidays; to start about such an hour in the morning and close at such an hour in the evening. If, in case of an emergency, he works longer, he may have certain privileges to compensate for it. In case he quits before his time is out, he only receives a certain stipulated sum.

# Domestic.

A Chat in the Kitchen.—It is not often one spends a happier week in the golden autumn than I did at the snug little farm house of Cousin Jennie Gordon. This same fair cousin is a really practical house-wife, never seeming to be in the least hurried or troubled about anything. Her work moves along like clock-work. It is said that there are born poets; then why may there not be born housewives as well? I believe there is one now and then, and that this fair relative of mine is such a one. If their comforting mantles could only spread far and wide over the sisterhood of farmers' wives, there would be less complaining and fewer drudges.

One morning I followed her into the kitchen, for we could not afford to "stop our chatter" while she performed her usual morning duties; for she only kept a hired girl during the summer months. Her own daughters, aged twelve and ten, usually assisted her in the labors of love about the household; but they were visiting in a distant town.

"Now, Cousin May," said Jennie, at the close of an animated discussion of a favorite author, "if you'll excuse, I'll go on with a piece of work that I put down in the programme for one of the odd jobs to be done to-day. You see I have certain parts of my work for certain days. Monday morning, before I leave the breakfast table, I write out in a little book kept for the purpose, my plans for each day of the week. And although my rule is not as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians, yet it helps me wonderfully towards the accomplishment of various tasks that might be otherwise neglected for a time, and then cause my work to be done in haste. To-day the tin-ware is to be cleaned. I'll be very quiet about it and we can go on with our reviews and criticisms of fictions, poems and authors just as well as though we were sitting in the parlor making cats and dogs on Java canvas."

I found that by cleaning the tin she did not mean *scouring* it, but giving it a thorough washing with plenty of soap and water, using a brush instead of a cloth. She said that during the hurrying season the girls were not always as particular as they ought to be about washing the seams and hems of the pans, bread and pie tins, dish-pans and tea-kettle. In putting the pans about the stove to dry, they frequently became so heated as to melt the resin, and this caused the seams to be dark and gummy, an appearance not at all pleasant to the eye of a tidy housekeeper. She used a brush for this work, because a brush would do it more thoroughly than a cloth; and in very obstinate cases a small, sharp stick would do good service in removing impurities!

After the dishes were all nicely cleaned and put away in poetical order, that is, in long lines and short ones, in clusters and groups, Jennie took a large basket and went to the cellar, soon returning with the basket heaped full of Irish potatoes.

"Now don't think I am going to cook all these for dinner," said she. "I am only going to wash their faces and have them ready to use when I want them, for several days to come. You shall see how quickly I wash them; the basket holds half a bushel."

She put them all into a tub that stood near the pump. Then after pouring plenty of water upon them, she took an old broom and scrubbed them till they were as bright and shining as apples. When rinsed, they were put into a basket to drain, and the labor had occupied scarcely five minutes. "There!" said Jennie, as she wiped her hands as fair as in her girlhood, "if it be necessary to get a meal quickly, the potatoes can be boiled with their jackets on; otherwise, I can take a few in a dish, and sit with you in the parlor to pare them, if I choose, and there will be no danger of soiling hands or clothes. I'll tell you, Mary, if you ever go to housekeeping, hang a brush in every corner of your kitchen and pantry, and you will find it a labor-saving machine in a hundred ways."—*Rural New Yorker.*

### Household Receipts.

Steaming is preferable to boiling for tough fowls.

Remove the *threads* before sending roast fowls to the table.

In Winter kill poultry three days to a week before cooking.

Poultry and Game are less nutritious, but more digestible than other meats.

Broiled Chicken.—Split down the back, put into a steamer and steam one-half hour; wipe off the moisture, rub well with butter, dip into bread crumbs and broil over a clean fire until of a delicate brown on both sides. Season with pepper and salt.

To Boil Eggs Properly, place them in a dish having a close cover; pour over *boiling* water; cover and set away from the fire for ten to fifteen minutes. Eggs cooked in this way are more delicate and digestible than when allowed to boil in the old way. The heat of the water cooks them slowly to a jelly-like consistency, leaving the yelk harder than the white.

Chicken Cutlets.—Take the meat of cold roast chickens chopped very fine, a cup of gravy, four beaten eggs, two-thirds of a cup of bread crumbs, pepper and salt to the taste. Put the gravy into a pan to heat, and when hot add the meat and bread crumbs, then the eggs and seasoning; let thicken for two or three minutes, stirring constantly, pour out into a flat dish to cool. When stiff cut into little cakes and fry in lard to a delicate brown.

Poultry Requires Skillful Carving. The requisites are grace of manner, ease in the performance, a sharp knife of medium size, a perfect knowledge of the position of joints and the most complete mode of dissecting. Etiquette teaches us that the carver retains his seat while carving, managing his hands and elbows artistically, etc. etc. Common sense teaches that the carver has far better control over the platter while standing, is more at ease, the knife is less liable to slip, and with the majority of carvers the table-cloth is likely to escape with fewer soiled spots.

To Bone a Turkey or Fowl.—Cut through the skin down the centre of the back; raise the flesh carefully on either side until the sockets of the wings and thighs are reached; next disjoint and bone, after which the whole of the body may be easily separated from the flesh and taken out entire, only the neck bones and merrythought remaining. The fowl may be restored to its original form with a dressing of bread or forcemeat, or the legs and wings may be drawn inside of the body and the fowl, first flattened on a table, covered with forcemeat, rolled tight and bound with a tape. If necessary steam before roasting. To be served cold.

—A Dublin confectioner recently produced the largest wedding-cake ever made in the Emerald Isle. It was for breakfast on the occasion of the marriage of M'ss Roe with Lord Granville Gordon. The cake stood eight feet high, weighed three hundred pounds, and was ornamented with the arms of the Roe and Gordon families. Six Bannerets with arms and monograms added to the imposing character of the structure, which was strewn with orange-blossoms and myrtle.

—Only the religious man is good. And what is religion? It is the perfect agreement of the will with the conscience.

# Humorous.

—"We old maids," remarked Miss Stibbins, "love cats because we have no husbands, and cats are almost as treacherous as men."

—When Johnny was questioned as to why his engagement with Miss H. had been broken off, he rolled his eyes, looked very much pained, and groaned: "Oh! she turned out a deceiver." But he forgot to mention that he was the deceiver whom she had turned out.

—"What would you do if a girl kissed you?" said one ten-year-old urchin to another, as they discussed the latest society news. "What would I do? I'd kiss her back. What would you do?" "Kiss her mouth."

—A minister approached a mischievous urchin about twelve years old, and laying his hand upon his shoulder, thus addressed him: "My son, I believe the devil has got hold of you." "I believe he has, too," was the significant reply of the urchin.

—A child asked, "Mother, what is an angel?" "An angel? Well, an angel is a child that flies." "But, mother, why does papa always call my governess an angel?" "Well," explained the mother, after a moment's pause, "she is going to fly immediately."

—Not long since (says Peck's *Sun*) the following utterance of Col. Ingersoll went the rounds of the papers: Col. Ingersoll says he keeps "a pocket-book in an open drawer, and my children go and help themselves to money whenever they want it. They eat when they want to. They may sleep all day if they choose, and sit up all night if they desire. I don't try to coerce them. I never punish; never scold. They buy their own clothes, and are masters of themselves." A gentleman living on Marshall street who has a boy that is full as kitteny as his father read the article, and pondered deeply. He knew that Col. Ingersoll was a success at raising children in the way they should go, and he thought he would try it. The boy had caused him considerable annoyance, and he made up his mind that he had not treated the boy right; so he called the boy in from the street, where he was putting soft soap on the lamppost in order to see the lamplighter climb it, and said to him: "My son! I have decided to adopt a different course with you. Heretofore I have been careful about giving you money. I have wanted to know where every cent went to; and my supervision has no doubt been annoying to you. Now, I am going to leave my pocketbook in the bureau-drawer, with plenty of money in it, and you are at liberty to use all you want without asking me. I want you to buy anything you desire—to buy your own clothes- to feel as though the money was yours, and that you had not got to account for it. Just make yourself at home now, and try and have a good time." The boy looked at the old gentleman, put his hand on his head as though he had "got 'em, sure!" and went out to see the lamplighter climb that soft soap. The next day the stern parent went out into the country shooting, and returned on the midnight train three days later. He opened the door with a night-key. A strange yellow dog grabbed him by the elbow of his pants, and shook him, he said, "like the ager." The dog barked and chewed until the son came down in his night-shirt and called him off. He told his father he had bought that dog of a fireman for eleven dollars, and that it was probably the best dog-bargain that had been made this season. He said the fireman told him he could sell the dog for a hundred dollars, if he could find a man who wanted that kind of a dog. The parent took off what pants the dog had not removed. In the hall he stumbled over a birch canoe the boy had bought of an Indian for nine dollars; and an army musket with an iron ramrod fell down from the corner. The boy had paid six dollars for that. He had also bought himself an overcoat with a sealskin collar and cuffs, and a complete outfit of calico shirts and silk stockings. In this room the parent found the marble top of a soda-fountain, a wheelbarrow, a shelf filled with all kinds of canned meats, preserves, and crackers, and a barrel of apples. A wall-tent and six pairs of blankets were rolled up ready for camping out, and a buckskin shirt and a pair of corduroy pants lay on the bed ready for putting on. Six fish-poles and a basketful of fish-lines were ready for business, and an oyster-can full of grub-worms for bait were squirming on the washstand. The old gentleman looked the lay-out over, looked at his pocketbook in the bureau-drawer, as empty as a contribution-box, and said: "Young man! the times have been too flush. We will now return to a specie basis. When you want money come to me and I will give you a nickel, and you will tell me what you intend to buy with it, or I'l. warm you! You hear me!" And now that man stands around from the effects of the encounter with the yellow dog, and asks every man where a letter will reach Col. Ingersoll. He says he will kill Ingersoll, if it is the last noble act he ever accomplishes.

### A GENTLEMAN.

That man only is truly courteous who is a gentleman from principle. To be obliging and deferential toward those who have it in their power to show us favor, or occasion us discomfort, while we are surly and gruff toward dependent, helpless or poor ones, is essentially mean. To be bland and accommodating to those we meet from home, that so we might be regarded well-bred and clever, and to be crabbed and exacting at home, is to be worse than a cur, for dogs never condescended to be so mean, being always most friendly to the folks at home.

No one can be a true gentleman or gentlewoman who does not regard the building up of character of more account than the building up of a fortune, or a reputation. A man may subject himself to the practice of self-denial and kindness to others, and if it be for the sake of position, place or material gain merely, he will be the loser by the exercise; whereas if he indulge the same practice for unselfish ends and the benefit of others, and needy ones, he must be the gainer by it. It is thus that he who would gain his life shall lose it, and he who will lose it shall gain it.

A gentleman is more than a mere observer of the conventional proprieties of social life. His gentleness must be spontaneous. And if the reader would like to know exactly how to be a gentleman, let him read Paul's 13th Chapter of his First Letter to the Corinthians.

### THE SWISS ALPS.

INTERESTING EXPLANATION OF THEIR FORMATION.

Professor Judd, of the Royal School of Mines, London, gave recently an interesting explanation of the formation of the Swiss Alps. The results of geological observations he said show that four stages can be recognized in the history of these Alps. First, the existence of a line of weakness in the earth's crust nearly coincident with the line of the present mountains. This is evidenced by the fact that along this line of weakness there were volcanic outbursts, the results of which can still be traced Secondly, there followed along this line of weakness a depression, and in this huge "trough" of miles in extent there were accumulated sands, limestones and clays by various forms of water agencies, and by animals living in the waters. Thirdly, there followed the consolidation of these soft and loose materials. There is evidence that the accumulation was of from six to seven miles in thickness, and the mere weight of the superincumbent material on the lower strata would have a share in effecting consolidation. But that was not all. Under this vast covering heat had led to crystallization from fusion. There was, too, the crushing in from the sides of the trough. This was illustrated by a model of the late Sir H. de la Beche, where lateral pressure was employed on layers of different colored cloth, showing how crumpling resulted, with uplifting of parts of the accumulated mass. Fourthly, there had been the sculpturing of all this into its present from, which was the work of rains and frosts. Some of the existing peaks, even 3,000 feet high, were composed entirely of the disintegrated material resulting from the action of the water, either as ice in glaciers or as rain and streams. The amount of material removed in this way was so stupendous it was almost staggering to try to grasp the facts. The sculpturing of the contours is still going on. This fourth stage was of quite recent date, speaking geologically; but the whole history involved a lapse of time which at the beginning of this century philosophers would not have been prepared to grant, even if this since-acquired knowledge of facts had been presented to them.

### "GIVE ROOM ONLY TO GOOD."

We clip the following excellent advice from the "Household"—a supplement of the Detroit *Free Press.*

"Infinite toil would not enable you to sweep away a mist, but by ascending a little you may look over it altogether." So it is with our moral improvement, if instead of living on a level with our temptations we were to rise above them on to the higher plane of purer living and purer thinking, they would be powerless to assail us. As I listen there is borne to me on every breeze a sad, low murmur, which arises from the countless overburdened hearts of humanity. Weary hearts, that turn away even from the bright radiance of God's sunshine. Weary hearts! over the chords of whose life sorrow's hand has swept with blighting fingers. Weary hearts! that are overborne by temptations, have yielded to the allurring voice of sin, and have found too surely "that the way of the transgressor is hard." One of the saddening effects of wrong doing are the ineffaceable stains made on the soul, for like a blot on the margin of a pure white leaf, or the bloom brushed from fruit, it can never be restored to its original purity. But despair not, erring ones, because of this. Winnow carefully from your life all that tends to degrade it, give room only to influences that fill heart and mind with a desire for all that is good and true in this world of ours. So surely as you do this the sooner will you reach that moral height on whose summit lies repose. "Do the duty that lies nearest thee." How pregnant with meaning is this sentence, and how truly its practice would save us from many a pitfall. Duty! it is a stern word, but the discharge of it is growing strength; it is self-knowledge. The mind becomes by its continuous performance conscious of the power to see and to feel the beauty and the worth of right living.

Yet so weak are we that it is very hard at times to look duty in the face and walk with unfaltering feet the path pointed out to us. It is hard, when one has the cup of a forbidden joy almost pressed to his lips, to turn away from it untasted; to struggle with it, to strive to banish the sweet memory of it, to know that he must make a grave to bury its persistent life and that he must not write "Resurgam" on the headstone. If the victory is won, then one knows "how sublime a thing it is to suffer and be strong."

It is with silent footfall, bated breath and pitying eyes that I approach you, who are sitting under the shadow of a great grief; whose aching hearts long unutterably "for the touch of a vanished hand, for the sound of a voice that is still." Take heart! Look out into God's beautiful world and be comforted. Know that in the economy of Nature nothing is lost. Surely a human soul will be precious to Him:

> On every mountain peak,
> See what rest,
> Over the pine tops,
> Scarcely one, far off,
> Breathing content;
> Silent all birds in the forest lie,
> Wait, thou only, by and bye,
> Thou too, shall rest:

### HYDROPHOBIA.

Mr. V. F. Benett Stamford, writing to the London *Times* on the extraordinary prevalence of hydrophobia in England during the past and present cold weather, says: "It is a popular delusion to suppose that either warm weather or hot climates are the cause of hydrophobia. The disease is uncommon in India, and in some parts of South America—notably British Guiana—is entirely unknown. My object in writing is to give a simple piece of advice to the public, and that is to avoid all strange or wandering ownerless dogs travelling along the pavement either meeting or immediately following one. The reason is obvious. The dog is very like a human being in his feelings and sympathies, and when the first symptoms of this disease are upon him he wanders for miles in a sullen and dejected state of mind, not seeking whom he may devour, but seeking distraction, for his irritated and demented brain. Step out of his path quietly and he will not attempt to annoy or bite any one; but if any person or thing knocks up against him, like a drunken man, he immediately resents it. It is thus so many children who innocently pat a strange dog get bitten. I would add that in places where there are no lost dogs' homes all ownerless curs should be destroyed by the police.

### ANECDOTE OF BALZAC.

In a recent number of the *Temple Bar* there is a story about Balzac, which is probably new to many readers. He was, like Dumas, always in debt, and dreadfully worried by duns. Once, when he had gone to bed, one of these unpleasant personages presented himself, and insisted on seeing his debtor. In vain was he told that M. de Balzac was ill, that he was out, that he was in bed—he refused to budge. At last the servant, in despair, told Balzac, who was down stairs, and, to his great amazement, received orders to show the importunate visitor up. The tradesman, already a little mollified, is ushered into the sleeping apartment. M. de Balzac sits up courteously in bed, makes his creditor a charming bow, and inquires to what circumstance he may attribute the pleasure of his early visit. Flattered by the warmth of his reception, the *fournisseur* murmurs something in which the word "money" is alone audible. "Money, my dear fellow," cries the man of letters, with his broad smile full of *bonhommie*, "money do you want? Look in the right-hand drawer of the dressing table!" Becoming instantly supple as a glove, the other runs to the drawer, opens it, examines it, puts his hand to the back—there is nothing. "Ah," says monsieur from the bed, "perhaps the left-hand drawer." Same scrutiny, same result. "Or the middle one." Still nothing. "I must trouble you to look under the dressing table." (M. de Balzac is so polite it is a pleasure to listen to him.) The creditor puts his head down—no! In this way the whole furniture of the room is examined, and even the chimney. "Now," says the author, looking sternly upon the crest-fallen tradesman, in all the majesty of a tasselled night-cap, "if there is no money in the left-hand drawer of the dressing table, nor the right-hand drawer, nor the middle drawer, nor under it, nor under the bed, nor on the wardro e, nor up the chimney, how do you suppose I am to give you any?" With that he lies down flat upon his back, and the creditor departs, anathematizing the poet.

### HYACINTHS.

There is no single class of plants so universally prized as the hardy, spring-flowering bulbs. They bloom at a season when the garden would otherwise be destitute of beauty. The greenhouse may be brilliant all the winter with bright hued tropical plants, but to the majority of flower lovers green-houses are luxuries beyond their means, and to them these hardy, early-bloomers are floral treasures, the first bright jewels in the New Year's crown. The soil for bulbs must be very rich, deep and well drained, and should contain a good proportion—about one-third—of sand. In planting always measure the depth from the top of the bulb. The small bulbs and tubers, such as the crocus, snow-drop and Spanish iris, ranunculus and anemone, should be planted about two inches deep; tulips, jonquils and narcissus, three inches; hyacinths, four, and crown imperial five.

The hardy varieties may all be planted outdoors in the North or in the South, at any time from October 1 to January. In the Northern States the beds should be covered with leaves or hay before the weather becomes very cold. This covering may be removed when the first green leaves begin peeping above the ground in the spring. But in the South no protection is needed, and my best success has been when the bulbs were left in the ground all the time. An occasional weeding and digging among the roots when they first come up, and an annual rich top-dressing from the compost heap, given in October or November, will be all the attention required by a bed of hardy bulbs. After two or three years the roots will become too much crowded and need thinning out.

First in the ranks of hardy bulbs comes the hyacinth, and fully does it deserve the place of honor, not only on account of its combined beauty and fragrance, and its great variety of colors, but from its readiness to be forced into early bloom. No bulb requires so rich soil as the hyacinth; if planted in poor ground the flowers will do very well for the first year, but be trifling afterwards; and if planted more shallow than four inches the heat of the sun will cause the bulbs to split and divide into innumerable small roots that will not bloom well for two or three years. The single variety of the hyacinth is as beautiful as the double, and is more brilliant in color. In both classes are five distinct colors—red, blue, purple, white and yellow. These, with their different shades, stripe sand afford an almost endless variety.

It is hardly worth while to give the names of the best hyacinth, as every seedsman has his own names for them; but I will mention a few exquisite ones with well established names, bought from different reliable dealers. Of the double varieties we find the following are superb: Duchess of Bedford, white; Ne Plus Ultra, white with violet eye; Mathilde, blush; Perruque Royale, pink; Bouquet Tendre, crimsou, very fine; Blocksberg, blue; Pourpre Superbe, purple; Bouquet d'Orange, yellow. Of the single varieties: Mrs. Beecher Stowe, snow white, large; Grand Vainqueur, snow white, large; Cleopatra, blush; Gigantea, pink with large bells; Appelius, deep red, dense spike; Mad Hodson, brilliant pink, with crimson stripe; Porcelain Sceptre, blue; Amicus, blue and violet striped; La Nuit, purple, almost black; King of Holland, yellow.

The unnamed varieties are almost as desirable, and may be obtained at much lower rates. Hyacinths should be set eight inches apart in rows, and so arranged that their colors harmonize well. Blue and purple do not form a pretty contrast, nor red with either of those colors. Nothing can be more lovely than a combination of yellow and blue; white and crimson, or yellow and white. Purple may come with good effect between white and yellow, and white between red and blue. No collection is complete without a few single Roman hyacinths, as they are the earliest of all varieties. Another kind, known as the "miniature hyacinth," don't seem to find much favor with flower dealers, but to me there is a peculiar charm in their fragrance and in the delicate grace of their airy little spikes.—*Detroit Free Press.*

—The steam-heating project is causing considerable agitation in Troy, N. Y., the latest suggestion being that the city shall receive a direct benefit from the franchise in the form of a fixed percentage of the yearly earnings of the company or companies to which the privilege of heating the city by steam is extended.

### A CALL UPON AN EDITOR.

"From the sample trunks in the halls of the hotels, we should judge the drummers from New York houses have arrived in town," was the innocent paragraph a Western editor wrote for his paper.

When we returned from dinner the grinning office boy announced to him that four gentlemen were waiting to see him.

"Where are they?" asked the quill-driver.

"Well," said the imp, "they've been smoking in the composing room till the compositors have sneezed all the type out of their sticks, 'n they've sent me out six times for beer, 'n now they're playin' draw poker with the foreman on the imposing stone."

"Very well," said the editor, bringing a large club in the corner more into view, replacing the paper cutter with a bowie knife, and half opening a drawer in which reposed a revolver, "show 'em in."

Four gentlemen, in very plain suits, with very large diamond pins and very large watch chains, with lockets at the ends as big as dollars, entered, the foremost laying a card on the desk, inscribed—

Sharp, Chisel & Co.,
1001 Beekman Street, New York,
Hardware and Cutlery.

in small letters, and

Presented by Geo. Gouge.

in very large ones, asked:

"Are you the editor?"

The journalist looked at the party quietly, as if calculating the cost of their grave clothes, and answered, "I am."

"Here is a little paragraph about commercial travelers," said Mr. Gouge, pulling a paper from his pocket, "which me and my friends, who are members of the Temple of Honor, and belong to the Young Men's Christian Association of New York, would like explained."

The miserable man took the paper mechanically, and gazed at his paragraph, which the printers had set as follows:

"From the simple drunks in the hallways of hotels, we should judge the drunkards from New York houses have arrived in town."

Quietly taking up his revolver, the editor strode up stairs. Two sharp reports and heavy falls were heard, and the journalist returned and pleasantly remarked to his visitors:

"Gentlemen, there are not many entertainments in this town now, but a proof-reader and a compositor are to be buried to-morrow, and if you care for that sort of thing, should be pleased to see you at the funeral."

And he went down to write an obituary notice, while that night, through the cold and heavy mist, four gentlemen bought railway tickets for Chicago. —*Boston Bulletin.*

### FINGER NAILS.

Hardly any personal peculiarity is more noticeable or more indicative of character than the finger nails. There are some who believe that palmistry, the reading of character from the hand, can be reduced to a science, just as much as phrenology. If so it would necessarily be an obscure science to the majority of people, but the signs of character indicated by the finger nails may be read by all with a little study. In the first place, the shape of the nails is very significant. The slender, tapering nail of a rose-pink hue, with a shell like, transparent edge, is always the accompaniment of a refined nature. Broad, stubby nails, of a yellowish-white color, and with opaque, muddy-looking edges, indicate natural coarseness, though they often accompany great good nature, while the other variety as frequently goes with a sharp, shrewish temper.

The care of the nails is one of the most revealing marks of personal habits, and one of the most important of the minor operations of the toilets. Nails may be greatly improved, both in shape and color, by proper attention. The best appliance is a nail-brush used in water, softened by the addition of a little borax and really fine toilet soap. In well-brushed and well-cared-for nails the little curtain-like rim which surrounds them is well pushed or rolled back, displaying generally a delicate little crescent at the root. The skin of the finger should never be allowed to grow up on the nail. In paring and trimming the shape should always be as long and oval as possible. To cut a nail square off gives a finger end a stubby look. The corners should be carefully and closely cut, and the center left rather long, so as to give the long oval shape. In cleaning the nails the knife should never scrape off the inner substance of the nail, as this renders the edge opaque and muddy in appearance, whereas it should be transparent. The nail is susceptible of a high degree of polish by rubbing with the towel when drying the hands.

The habit of biting the nails is one against which children should be carefully guarded. It is ruinous to the very structure of the nail, and once acquired is one of the most difficult habits to break. This is evidenced by the fact that some men and women, but more especially men, have a habit of biting their nails when reading or studying, of which they are perfectly unconscious. Not a few lawyers and clergymen occur to mind whose nails are almost a deformity as a result of this habit.—*St. Louis Post.*

—What is the use of spoiling the little comfort one has by remembering the comfort one has not?

### A CITY IN TWO STATES.

Bristol is perhaps the only city in the world that has two mayors, two city governments, police, &c., and that is taxed in two States. The line between Tennessee and Virginia is in the centre of Main street, and it gives rise to many funny scenes; as, for example, the run-away couple need no coach-and-four, but, arm-in-arm, step across Main street and are wedded. The fugitive commits a crime in Virginia, goes to the pavement on the other side of the street, and talks defiantly to the officer on the opposite side, who has a warrant for his arrest. A stumble or a too bold disposition will sometimes, however, bring him to grief. Several instances have occurred of fugitives being hustled across the line by a party prepared while in the act of holding such a conversation, and they tell of a man who defiantly perched himself on a pile of store boxes within six feet of the line, jeering the officers on the other side, but, unfortunately for him, some more law-abiding citizens tilted the boxes, and when he reached the ground, to his extreme mortification, he found that he was in the other State.

—Two revenue officers on board the steamship Oceanic were carried off to Hong Kong, on the last trip to the vessel from San Francisco, the cutter that was to take them up outside the Heads failing to appear.

—Upward of 150 failures in Glasgow and the west of Scotland are directly or indirectly traceable to the stoppage of the City of Glasgow Bank. The total liabilities of the Scotch firms who have been dragged down are $125,000,000.

An Erie (Pa.) paper says: "Judging from the elegantly dressed dolls to be seen in the toy store windows, the American infantile mind is being early trained to the expensive and frivolous love of dress and personal adornment.'

—A substance under the name of "crepin," composed of water, alcohol and salicine acid, is earnestly recommended for the destruction of noxious insects. It has no injurious effects whatever on plants.


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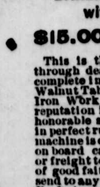

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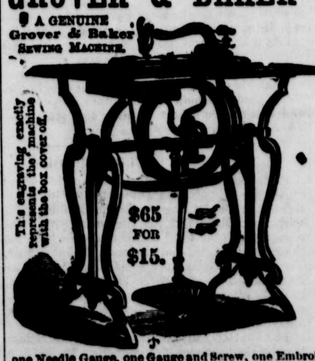


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