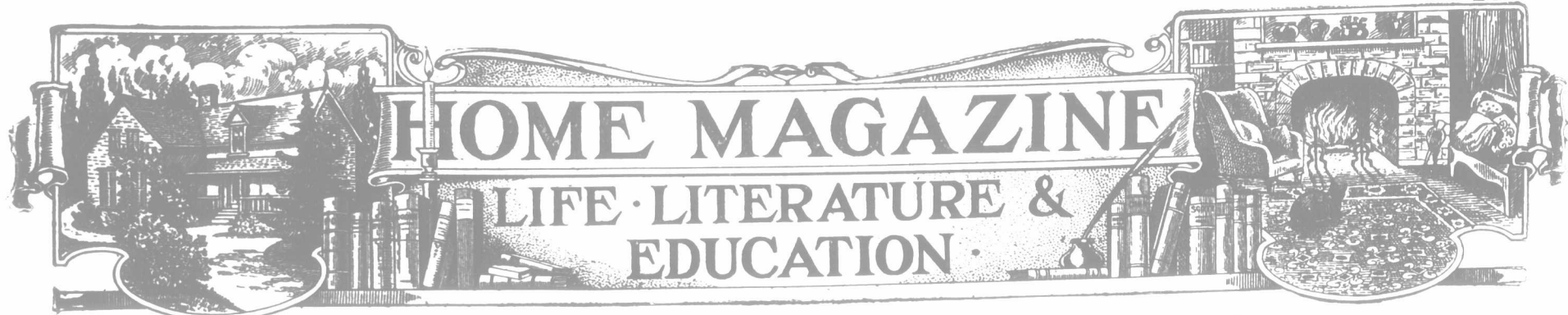




"Above all, don't imagine that a farmer is any different from any other kind of human being. Farming is a profession requiring more brains than does law, more technical training than does medicine, more uprightness than does theology. It is its own reward. God made farmers. The other professions are parasites." —[World's Work.

"Man was never beaten by anything but insects." —[Editorial, New York Independent.] To this, some farmers would add—"and weeds." Incidentally, why not spend a few hours this winter in reading up about the harmful insects and weeds, and how they may be eradicated? The time might be spent in a less profitable way.

At the General Sessions, held recently in Toronto, the Grand Jurors recommended that men who beat their wives or assault women should be punished by the lash, imprisonment having been found of but little use as a deterrent. It has long been known that certain politrons may be reached only through the skin, nor is the conclusion far to seek that he who stoops to exert his brutal strength over women or helpless children is among the coarsest of the coarse and the lowest of the low, even of politrons. A trial of the strenuous measures recommended might at least serve to prove their efficacy. [Since the above was written, three men in Toronto have been sentenced to receive thirty lashes each, in addition to imprisonment, for offences against women.]

According to statistics recently issued, the losses occasioned by forest fires in Canada totalled over \$25,000,000, with a loss of life amounting to 22, during 1908. Sparks from locomotives, and carelessness on the part of prospectors, campers, and hunters, are the causes assigned. A variable number of fires due to the first may, perhaps, be unavoidable, but there is little excuse for the negligence which permits a camp-fire, easily extinguishable by a bucket of water, to become a menace, not only to valuable timber, but to life itself.

Does it ever occur to us, as we jog placidly about our daily tasks, that we are really living in the most stimulating period that the earth has yet reached? There have been marvellous events and discoveries in the past. A point to date from was reached when Christopher Columbus set sail "with three small vessels" across the mysterious ocean in 1492; another came when Galileo first turned his crude telescope upon the Pleiades and the Milky Way; another when Harvey made his great discovery of the circulation of the blood, 1619-28; and yet another when Dr. Guthrie discovered that priceless boon to suffering humanity, chloroform, in 1831.

But these things pale, almost, be-

fore the marvellous achievements of the Twentieth Century—discoveries that have revolutionized the old theories of chemistry; that have made it possible to photograph through dense walls; to check disease by the isolation of its microbe; and so on through a long list. To reach the North Pole has required an infinite degree of patience and perseverance; to discover these less bruited things, a subtlety of insight, a working of brain-power, which, to the ordinary mortal, seems almost superhuman.

Yet, it is something to live in the age in which intrepid explorers have first been able to dance a hornpipe on the bare patches of ice at the earth's extremities; it is something to live in an age in which the air itself has been conquered, in which men can, not only figuratively, but literally, "mount as eagles."

It is not, however, present achievement, but present possibility, that staggers. It seems, indeed, as though all the knowledge of the past has, within a few short years, forged golden keys to unlock a thousand mysteries. And yet there is no miracle. Never before in the history of the earth has education been so general, or opportunity of knowing what others have done—the base upon which so many have reared the monuments of their fame. Among a million men, gifted alike with oppor-

ties, and Turkey, and Persia, and, above all, China.

Writing of the latter in New York Independent, last month, Mr. Wm. T. Ellis, who has recently made a tour of the world to investigate social, political and religious movements, says: "China's awakening is portentous. It is marvellous. It is indescribable. It is incredible. It is limitless in its influence. For the sake of the world to-day—for the sake of the next generation—for the sake of China herself, some new prophet-watchman should ascend the housetops of civilization and cry aloud, 'China is awake! CHINA IS AWAKE!!!' The biggest of all nations—the people with the greatest latent powers—the heirs of to-morrow—have started to school to learn all the ways and weapons and wisdom of the West. This is the news of the day that most deserves 'scare-heads' in the newspapers. Here is the subject upon which every wise man will inform himself and instruct his children."

The spread of the Gospel, speedily, steadily, Mr. Ellis looks upon as the crying need for these peoples, in whose restlessness he describes a reaching out for truth which Western nations can give them, and must give them, if that brotherliness which means safety is to be assured.

Russian and German papers do not consider this possibility. There is a

dirigible airships of the most recent construction"—from which the writer argues that plans for a Chinese-Japanese attack on Russia are rapidly emerging from a state of embryo.

Upon the other hand, Rev. W. C. White, Bishop-elect of Honan, who is now in this country on brief furlough, while urging the necessity of the Gospel propaganda for the sake of the peoples themselves, endorses the opinion of Sir Robert Hart, that the only sense in which China is likely to become our rivals is in trade. The enormous resources of the great empire, the industry and capability of her people, he recognizes as tremendous forces that must very soon make themselves felt in the economics of the world.

The development of the Orient is not only interesting, it is tremendous, and it truly behooves the nations of the Occident to be alert, else events transpire for which they are not prepared. At the same time, the awakening tends to world-justice. Too often in the past the Western Powers have presumed to dictate to these nations. They may henceforth be glad enough to treat.

A New Law Required.

In view of the many instances of poverty and suffering around us, one may well ask the question, "What is the world coming to?"

Every intelligent and thoughtful person cannot fail to see that much of the suffering and misery existing among the poor could be prevented were proper laws enacted and strictly enforced. But as selfishness is generally uppermost in the minds of the majority of men in high places, like the Levite of old, when they see others in trouble, instead of helping them, they pass by on the other side, and ask the question, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

WHERE THE TROUBLE LIES.

What is the matter with this topsy-turvy old world? No, it isn't the world that is astray; it is the law-makers.

In the first place, a vast amount of suffering would be prevented were a law enacted forbidding early marriages. No person should be allowed to marry until twenty-five years old. As the law is, children in their teens, suffering from hereditary disease, and poor as church mice, can marry and force innocent babes into the world to suffer from cold, hunger and sickness.

Here is an instance which came under my own observation. About two years ago, the only daughter of a poor washerwoman married a poor, shiftless, lazy man. She was only seventeen years old, and had never been used to hardships. She thought she loved the man. He had nothing saved, only about enough money to pay for the ring and license. Half of the time he was out of work, and the young wife soon found out what a mistake she had made. Before a year from the time they were married, the wail of an infant was heard



The Reapers. From a painting by Jules Breton, 1827.

tunity, it is not strange that ten, or a score, or fifty master minds should triumph.

Great as are these isolated achievements, however, there are indications that not by these, but by world-happenings whose import may as yet be but vaguely foretold, will the era in which we live be chiefly memorable. There is a movement among all nations that must work out, perhaps, through catastrophe, some radical change in world-affairs. There is a world-wide Socialist movement that already proves itself a power to be reckoned with; there is the astounding development of Japan, with her influence in the Orient; there are rumblings of discontent in India; an awakening of Korea, and the Philip-

tendency among them to look upon the recent reconciliation and treaty between China and Japan, dealing with the building of railroads and exploitation of mines, as in reality an agreement with a "bellicose background." It is recognized that these countries, following the lead of Christian nations, are making warlike preparations, Japan, in especial, working with feverish activity. "Japan is building vast food magazines, and raising many new regiments," says Novoe Vremya. "She is manufacturing firearms of the newest pattern. . . . The troops are practicing at the butts, and carrying on manoeuvres night and day, unhindered by rain, darkness, or storm. It is reckoned Japan possesses dozens of