

The ghastly prominence which has been given to the paying of the death penalty recently may have a good effect in frightening would be murderers, if any such there be. A man who was guillotined at Epinal, France, a few days ago for murder and robbery was the subject of scientific investigation immediately after death, when it was ascertained that his heart continued to beat for six minutes after his head was removed. Such cases as this, not to mention hanging and electrocution, ought to frighten all ideas of murder out of the heads of wicked men.

The Calais correspondent of the *St. Croix Courier* writes to that paper as follows.—“Most of the muzzles are being removed from the dogs. Compassion on the part of the owners has compelled them to do this, and take the chances of their being shot by our officers, which are slight, unless under provoking circumstances. Many of the animals have worn the skin off their nose by the constant chafing of the muzzles. Dogs which would not become cross under this kind of torture must have a much better disposition than the majority of mankind.” All lovers of “the friend of man” will agree with this. How any one who cares enough about a dog to own one can bear to keep the poor creature muzzled is a mystery. Proper care of our dumb pets, with attention to their feeding, and seeing that they are not tormented, ought to insure their good temper and health. A fierce dog of course ought not to be tolerated in a community, but to worry the majority of good tempered beasts by muzzling them is nothing short of cruelty.

It having come to the knowledge of the Regent of Bavaria that the passion play lately performed at Ober-Ammergan was farmed by Jews, he has signified his intention never to again permit its performance. It appears that the wily Hebrews persuaded the Ammerganers that there were “risks” which risks they offered to take on condition that they should have the profits, beyond a certain lump sum which they guaranteed to the actors and sellers of theatre tickets. Formerly every family having among its members one of the actors had a right to as many theatre tickets (to sell) as there were beds for stayers in the family dwelling. This year the householders compounded for a lump sum and gave over this right. The Jews of course found it to their interest to multiply the number of the performances; consequently there were four or more performances in a week. It seems that those of the actors who had land, and used to work at that as well as at the local industry, the carving, let their fields this year, so as to be quite free for their theatrical duties. Can anything be more incongruous than the representation of the central act of christianity for the benefit of a Jewish syndicate.

The recent fatal poisoning case at Digby, whereby Mrs. Crozier, proprietress of the Crozier House, lost her life, once more makes prominent the necessity for greater care in dispensing drugs. The case was thus. Mrs. Crozier had been an invalid for some time and was under treatment from Dr. Fritz, who on this occasion gave a prescription which was taken to Stark's drug store to be made up. The medicine was taken to the patient and administered. After taking the medicine, which proved to be about fifteen grains of strychnine, the deceased attempted to get up, and fell dead in three minutes. The coroner's jury who held an inquest into the case exonerated the druggist from all blame. Two bottles, one containing strychnine, stood side by side on the shelf, and by the changing of these one for the other the fatal mistake was made. Much sympathy is felt for Mr. Stark, whose business has always heretofore been carefully conducted, but this circumstance points most decidedly to the necessity for a strict law as to the way in which deadly poisons should be kept. It would be well, in order to avoid future mistakes, for all poisonous drugs to be kept in bottles of a different shape, color and size from those in which harmless drugs are kept, and that there should be a shelf in the drug store sacred to them. These precautions, reinforced by cautious dispensing, ought to insure safety from accidents of the nature of the recent one at Digby.

Train-wrecking is a species of villainy which should be visited with the severest punishment when the perpetrator can be caught and brought to trial. The dastardly attempt to wreck the Montreal sleeper from New York on the night of the 4th inst., near Albany, was successful in throwing three of the eight cars of which the train was composed down an embankment. There were thirty-one passengers in these cars, but fortunately none of them were fatally injured. There were sixty-three passengers in all on the train. An investigation into the cause of the wreck showed that a very carefully planned obstruction had been placed on the track where the accident occurred, and another similar one was found on the south bound track a short distance away. Vice-President Webb, of the New York Central, has offered a reward of \$5,000 for the detection and conviction of the person or persons who placed the obstruction on the track. Whatever the motive of a deed like this, the perpetrator deserves no mercy. To imperil the lives of over three score people can only be the action of men who are insane or else too bad to live. Can the unpleasant state of affairs between the management of the New York Central and the Knights of Labor have had anything to do with this outrage? If so, the discharged workmen are taking a very wrong course, and one that must eventually damage their own cause, not to speak of the retribution which awaits the actual perpetrator of the deed. Whatever the grievances of any man or men, they will not be lessened or removed by wholesale murder. Strikes are inconvenient enough to the travelling public, but when it comes to train-wrecking the case is more serious. While such deeds are done it will be quite useless for the advocates of the abolition of the death penalty to advance their views. Nothing but death fits the case, and we should say that hanging is too good for the wretch who would have no compunction about pushing a train load of passengers into eternity.

It is not generally known how very much married the Sultan is. He has five first-class wives, twenty-four second-class—morganatic—wives, and some two hundred and fifty third-class partners in his joys and sorrows, variously described as “favorites” and “slaves.”

Sir Walter Scott's “*Journal*” is to appear soon, reproduced from the original, which is preserved at Abbotsford. Mr. David Douglas will edit it, and add, besides elaborate explanatory notes, illustrative extracts from unpublished sources, chief among them being the reminiscences in manuscript of James Skene, one of Scott's oldest and most intimate friends. There are also letters from Carlyle and Lockhart. The whole work will form two octavo volumes, and they are said to contain nearly double the amount of matter given by Lockhart, while the sentences and paragraphs will appear as they were written by Scott. Many passages were truncated by Lockhart, many entries were omitted, and for five months not a line was reproduced.

*Hygiene* expresses its belief that the majority of persons who die of so-called hydrophobia really die of shock to the nervous system, produced by constant dread of the consequences of the disease, and also that the same thing may be said of many other diseases, or of poisoning, where the feeling of fear works powerfully upon the nervous system. A singular instance is given in connection with this. A young woman having had a quarrel with her lover, determined upon poisoning herself. With this view she cut off the ends of a number of matches which she steeped in water and then drank off the supposed poisonous draught. In the course of a short time the poison commenced to pervade her frame; she was seized with frightful spasmodic pains, cramps, and other “unmistakable” symptoms, to the great horror of her relatives. Medical aid was at once procured, and the doctor who had been summoned, having administered some general remedies, inquired for the box whence the matches had been taken, in order that he might form an idea of the quantity of poison swallowed. Upon examination he found that the matches were of Swedish manufacture and contained no phosphorus. This gratifying information was promptly imparted to the patient, who made a rapid recovery. A somewhat similar train of events occurred at Macclesfield (England) some years ago during a hydrophobia scare, when several persons were bitten by a strange dog, and, as the people of Macclesfield were in a state of great excitement, conveyed to the Infirmary, where they began to rapidly exhibit all the symptoms of hydrophobia, and some of them would probably have died of nervous prostration had not the medical officer made a post-mortem examination of the dog, in the stomach of which was found a large pin which naturally would cause great pain and accounted for the irritable snapping and biting of the dog. This fact, and various conclusive proofs that the dog had not been affected with hydrophobia, were communicated to the sufferers, and within a very brief period their symptoms had all gone. Hydrophobia is one of the rarest diseases of the canine race. The returns prove nothing, as the police put down almost every dog they baton as suffering from hydrophobia.

Eye-strain is a frequent cause of trouble to school children, and as the greater part of school work demands the assistance of the eyes, this is not surprising. It is, however, a thing that ought to be carefully looked after. The influence of the eyesight upon intellectual work is becoming more recognized by educators both in America and Europe, and some of the most important discussions among both teachers and physicians bear upon this subject. One of the most lucid articles treating of the varied kinds of eye imperfections is “Eye-strain in connection with headaches, neuralgia and nervous disturbances,” contributed to *Babyhood* by Dr. J. M. Mills, in the *New York Ophthalmic and Aural Institute*. The most common causes of annoyance and suffering are far-sightedness, having its origin in the position of the principal focus of parallel rays of light behind the retina; near-sightedness, in which the parallel rays of light are brought to a focus in front of the retina; astigmatism, due to the irregular curvature of the cornea and insufficiency or weakness of muscles of the eye ball. It is useful for both parents and teachers to recognize the seriousness of the symptoms of strain due to any of these forms of eye imperfections. From far-sightedness come easy fatigue of the eye, aching sensation in the eye-balls, finally persistent and obstinate muscular irritation and burning pain. The eye-strain is felt more particularly at the end of the week. Near-sighted people suffer equal discomfort from working any length of time. Dr. Mills adds that near-sighted persons squint or blink in order to see at a distance, and that those “dreamy eyes ‘that haunt me ever,’ about which amorous swains become poetic, are usually near-sighted, the dreamy or staring appearance being due to the fact that they see imperfectly at a distance.” Patients with astigmatism suffer very often and severely with headaches, dizziness, “flickering,” and other nervous complaints. Those whose eyes are impaired by muscular weakness have headache, pain over the eyes, neuralgia, dizziness, nausea, and vague nervous disturbances. So serious is the effect of any imperfection in the eye that the examination of the eyes of children of school age would seem to be imperative. Many children have been rebuked for stupid neglect of and disinclination for study, when they are simply unable to endure the eye-strain. Many have been forced from intellectual labor to less congenial occupation through the neglect of eye imperfections. The reasonable remedy of the oculist is so practicable that its benefit should not be denied the poorest school child. The cause should be looked for and removed if possible. Sometimes a very little thing may cause eye trouble. A tight collar will make the eyes ache in a very short time, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that if worn persistently for a long time that disease would ensue. Too much or too little light will also do injury to the eyes. The school children of to day are to be the men and women of a few years hence, and they deserve to have every chance to become such with good eyes in their heads.