

The murderer Birchall is as clever as he is wicked. His latest idea, which he has just carried out, was to write a sketch of his life. The manuscript covers about a hundred pages of foolscap. It contains an account of some of the most interesting incidents of his early life, youthful escapades, etc., but the part which will naturally excite more interest will be that dealing with the last few years of his life. His object in writing it is a worthy one, namely, to sell it to the highest bidder and leave the money to his wife. The manuscript was put up at auction at the jail on Friday last and sold to C. W. Bunting, of the *Toronto Mail*, for himself and James Gordon Bennett, of the *Herald*, for \$1,700.

It is rather amusing to read the comments upon the United States Congress, which adjourned on the 1st inst. The following as a specimen of democratic opinion is decidedly good—the language is so emphatic:—“The first session of the Fifty-first Congress ended yesterday, and if it had a soul may the Lord have mercy upon that soul. In its bold disregard of every thing constitutional, parliamentary and fair, this Congress has broken all records and written itself down beside no other Congress in history. It has been a hating, malignant, partisan Congress, with venom and virulence in its every action. It has been a corrupt body, condoning political and private crimes, at the same time that it enacted legislation for the general corruption of many classes of citizens. It has been, in addition, a discriminating Congress. It has been the tool of a plutocracy and of the moneyed interests, to build up all around them barriers through which the people could not break. It has legislated for the East against the other sections, and has increased the burdens of taxation until they are almost unbearable. Too much cannot be written in condemnation of this Congress, and the righting of its iniquities will be the sacred heritage it will bequeath to its successors.”

The dehorning of cattle is a subject on which opinions are widely divergent. By some people it is regarded as an act of cruelty to deprive cattle of their horns, and in Nova Scotia the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty undertakes to prevent its being done. We have always taken the part of the other side, and believe that the practice would be of great benefit, both in avoiding the risk of cattle injuring each other and removing danger to human life. “A New England Farmer,” writing in the *American Dairyman*, tells of his experience in the matter. “Two years ago,” he says, “I had six calves which I put loose in a barn cellar. I wanted to give them a little meat when they came in from pasture. One older and larger than the others would beat them away. I took her horns off; then the next in rank asserted her powers. I then dehorned all of them. After this all felt kindly toward each other. No one pretended to be boss, and they would huddle together like a flock of sheep. Ever since they have been the quietest lot of cattle I ever saw together. A lot of younger ones ran with them, but I never saw any hooking. At the same time I had a bull who seemed a little vicious. I took his horns off, and ever since he has been lamb like. The hurt is but momentary, while the injury they may do with their horns to man or beast may be for a lifetime. Dehorning takes the ugliness out of a bull. In caring for cattle there would not be half as many accidents as there are now, if all were dehorned. The time is not far distant when every calf will be dehorned, and after a time they will be born without horns. One who never saw a flock of dehorned cattle together would be surprised to see how quiet they are, and how closely you can yard them. Dehorning is the sure cure for cruelty to horned cattle.” His testimony from experience is of more importance than pages of theorizing. It would be interesting to know how others have found the method work.

The haters of England in the United States, aided by the unscrupulous politicians who bid for their votes, will find it a hard task to effect a rupture between the two countries while the bulk of educated Americans retain a strong feeling of brotherhood with their kin across the sea. This feeling, which is so touchingly expressed in Maurice Thompson's beautiful poem, “In Exile,” is even more forcibly voiced in Miss Bisland's “Flying Trip Around the World,” concluded in the *Cosmopolitan* for October:—“Starting two months ago from a vast continent which the English race have made their own, where the English tongue, English laws, customs and manners reign from sea to sea, in my whole course around the globe I have heard the same tongue, seen the same laws and manners, found the same race; I have had proof with mine own eyes of the splendor of their empire, of their power, their wealth, of their dominance and orgulousness, of their superb armies, their undreamable commerce, their magnificent possessions, their own unrivalled physical beauty and force—and lo! now at last I find from a tiny island, ringed with grey seas, has sprung this race of kings. It fills my soul with a passion of pride that I too am an Anglo-Saxon. In my veins, too, runs that virile tide that pulses through the heart of this lord of the earth—the blood of this clean, fair, noble race! It is worth a journey round the world to see:

This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise;  
This fortress built by nature for herself  
Against infection and the hand of war,  
This happy breed of men, this little world;  
This precious stone set in a silver sea;  
This blessed spot of earth, this realm, this England,  
This sure, this seeming womb of royal kings,  
Feared by their breed and famous by their birth,  
Renowned for their deeds so far from home,  
For Christian service and true chivalry,  
This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land—  
England, bound in with the triumphant sea!

And I understand now the full meaning of this trumpet cry of love and pride from the greatest of earth's poets—an Englishman.”

The example of the Rev. Charles M. Sheldon, of Topeka, in taking a vacation from regular parish work and putting himself, as far as possible, in the place of the people to whom he preached, is one that might be followed by many clergymen with advantage to themselves and their congregations. Mr. Sheldon tells his experience in the *Andover Review* for October. He divided the population of the city of Topeka into eight groups—the horse-car and electric car men, the Washburn College students, the negroes, the railroad men, the lawyers, the doctors, the business and the newspaper men. With these different classes he spent a week each, except with the negroes, and with them he stayed three weeks, doing the work and living in the same way as each particular class did. As a result of his study of human life in these aspects, Mr. Sheldon says:—“I feel that it is worth much to know a little more closely how men live. It has broadened my thought of men's needs. I am less inclined to judge men harshly or hastily. I find myself, from the discipline of those twelve weeks, constantly putting myself in the other man's place, and the effect of that is to quicken my sensitiveness to the man's actual needs. Another result to me was the increased knowledge of other people's business, which enables me to preach to them better. As regards the result to the persons with whom I lived and talked, I can say nothing definite. I cannot help believing that a great many persons with whom I talked and lived were helped into more thoughtful, prayerful living. The result to my own church as an organization is yet to be seen. This much is already true as expressed by the most thoughtful. The look at the world away from the local centre, about which as a new organization we might too selfishly revolve, has been a broadening look. The advantage of seeing just how a pastor does his work has been an educating process with many who never thought anything about it before. For myself, it has made me feel that to preach Christ it is necessary to acquaint oneself with the life of the world, with its poverty, its selfishness, its indifference, its monotony, its suffering, its joy, its heroism and its commonplaces. To know mankind is not enough for the preacher. He must know men.” How true this is. It is the sympathy, the sense of having a true good friend in the clergyman of one's church that marks his true worth, and unless a clergyman knows his people thoroughly this sympathy will be lacking. Going to the fountain head, do we not find that the humanity of Christ, more than His divinity, is what draws men to Him. No man ever knew and understood men with their sins and sorrows as He did. What the toiling masses require to day is not merely a preacher; they need the wide sympathy and Christian helpfulness of men who know what life is with its trials and temptations, and who are not afraid of brushing some of the down off their incipient angelic wings by mixing with the common throng.

The reception of the Woman's Congress, held in Toronto a fortnight ago, and the respect with which the Association is treated, is matter for congratulation for all lovers of progress, and for those who believe that the widening of woman's sphere will be a blessing to the race. The spirit of the age is and has long been becoming broader and juster, and such associations as this have done much to advance the woman's cause, by securing for her reasonable rights to property and fairer treatment in the matter of wage earning, as well as opening for her the doors of the highest educational institutions, and by giving those to whom it has not fallen to fulfil woman's highest destiny as wife and mother an opportunity to live useful, happy lives. The women are far from regarding the battle as wholly won, but they are bright with hope for the future. Among the papers read before the Association was one on “Association and its Bearing upon the Work of Women,” prepared by Mrs. Helen Campbell, of New Jersey, and read by Mrs. Sales, of Connecticut. It held that working girls' clubs are simply a token of the better day which women are to know. They mean the growth of justice to the individual, the dominion of a principle toward which the sexes have struggled, and in which every circumstance of life has made women deficient. How can we doubt that the future, whose dawn even now flushes in the east, holds a life known as yet chiefly to the dreamers. The century near its opening holds the promise for which the past has waited. Thus they are not only waiting, but working for the betterment of their sex. One of the accusations brought against women is that they cannot organize, but this will have to be dropped. Those who make it do not know whereof they speak. Women can organize, and have done so to good purpose, and are continuing to do so. It must be remembered that as yet women are new at taking a prominent part in the work of the world—they have not been educated up to it through many generations as men have, but doubtless the years as they roll on will see greater changes for the benefit of women. Every concession so far given has proved beneficial, not only to them, but to men, and it will assuredly prove the same in the future. No one need fear that women will forsake their natural place in the economy of nature because they ask for the rights of citizens and sensible beings. Nature is too strong for that, and a woman, even a woman capable of earning a comfortable living for herself, so apt to regard a good husband and love and home, as the best of earthly blessings, but she must have her rights in that home as well as elsewhere—rights, not favors—or else she will not be really happy. No, the granting of women's rights will not weaken the ties of love and family, but rather strengthen them. The Association for the advancement of women is one which commands respect. It has the highest aims, and does not devote itself merely to business questions. The scientific training of mothers, and industrial training, were subjects which received a large share of attention at the recent gathering, and matters of import to the home are freely discussed. Mrs. Julia Ward Howe was re-elected President of the Association. In another column we print her Battle Hymn of the Republic, which is one of the most stirring and beautiful poems ever written in America.