

## Selections.

**HARD TIMES.**—An exchange paper says, we suppose most of our readers know something about "hard times," but they may not all understand the cause.—Those who would like a little light upon this subject, will please read the following from the Albany Journal:—

Is it any marvel that we have "hard times," when the following articles and their value appear in the list of imports during the last year?

Lead, to the amount of	\$5,181,516
Steel and iron,	24,978,600
Railroad iron,	12,293,248
Hardware and cutlery,	2,618,501
Dry goods,	77,052,788

At least two-thirds of these hundred and thirty millions of imports could have been manufactured in this country. If they had been, not only would employment have been furnished to many thousands of men and women at home, but the money sent abroad to pay for them would have remained in the country, to ward off the "pressure" under which the country is now suffering.

What would we think of the "hard times" complaints of a family, living on a fifty acre farm, and composed of half a dozen full grown boys and girls, whose account of purchases, expenses, &c., should own thus:—

52 weeks' washing,	\$25
Making 3 dozen shirts,	12
25 pairs of hose,	12
25 bushels of potatoes,	20
Hire 1 help in house and on farm,	200
Apples, corn, vegetables, &c.,	100
Pork, poultry, beef, &c.,	200

Would any one find it difficult to account for the hard times experienced in that household? The prompt verdict of the whole neighborhood would be, they deserved all they were suffering; because, if they had worked themselves, and produced, as they could have done, all that they purchased, they would not only have been free from embarrassment, but possessed of a handsome surplus.

If, as a nation, we would avert "hard times" in the future, we must produce more and buy less—keep at home the millions we now send abroad for articles which we can produce ourselves.

There are, in this country, at this moment, at least one hundred thousand workers of cotton, wool, iron, and steel, idle. All of them are suffering, and many of them are obliged to beg—because the party in power are opposed to a Protective Tariff.

**CHEMICAL MYSTERIES.**—Popular phraseology, which contains frequently the germ of a truth, has long borne witness to the analogy between sounds and scents by the expression "smells aloud." An odoriferous piano may be so constructed as that by striking one chord, you shall perceive eau de Cologne, and by striking a second create the idea of lavender water, while by running up or down the scale you shall have every sort of odor in succession, from the homeliest fragrance of farm-yard and hay-field to the most exquisite *esprit* of Delerix or Houbigant. As the romance of smell has thus on the one side an interest for Collar, on the other hand it has also its interest for the cook, the wine-merchant, the hair-dresser, and the Master of the Ordnance. There are balsams suggested by nature and improved by art which will serve to make a delicious marmalade from any vegetable pulp. Almond soap is indebted occasionally to coal tar for its agreeable qualities, and occasionally to less delightful and less mentionable substances. Hippuric acid and British clare are allies of a very old date. Ham and pyroligneous acid have long since passed into equivalent notions. Vinegar and potato-ether are the godfathers of all the taste which lives in jargonelle pears; valerian and potato-ether are the sponsors of the Ribston pippin; a similar compound stands for the representative of guinea, another for pine-apple, another for melon, a similar compound transmutes British brandy into the choicest Cognac; another will turn any alcoholic base into whiskey. No would-be clever cook who would construct an *aperitif* party without an oyster—but the chemist will do it for you at five minutes' notice. The tricks of trade are numerous, but the tricks of philosophy mount higher, and descend deeper. The modern Thales is not content with buying up the wine presses. He can turn any Bordeaux into Chateau Lafite, and any gooseberry into Champagne.

There is yet another aspect of smells; the reverse of this favorable picture, under which they appear not as sources of pleasure, but as weapons of aggression. A single grain of a compound of the metal "tellurium,"

administered to a healthy man will make his neighborhood perfectly intolerable for weeks, and sometimes even for months, after he has swallowed it; and there are compounds of arsenic, not one or two alone, which can be used as the material of the "fume asphyxiator," and which have the double property of taking fire as soon as they are exposed to the air, and of destroying all the animal life within the range of their influence. Nor are these the only considerations which argue the sometime extension of chemistry to the purpose of war. It promises, as we have seen, to make a man competent to any fatigue, but it promises also to fortify him against all misadventure, whether exhalations from soil or vicious conditions of atmosphere. Let all the air which enters the lungs pass through a medium of carbon, and you may go to sleep safely under the shadow of the upas tree. The charcoal respirator of Dr. Stenhouse will procure immunity to him who sojourns in a rice swamp or shoots in a jungle. The betel nut and the pepper leaf chewed together keep half starved races alive in the deltas of the Irrawaddy and the forests of Sumatra. A French traveller "preserved his health during a long and difficult voyage by the habitual use of betel, while his companions who did not use it, died most all by dysentery." The nitrogenous compounds to which all nations resort in intermittent fevers have a conservative as well as a curative power; the pepperworts contain "a solid white crystallizable substance, known by the name of 'Piperin,' which is said to equal quinine." The Indian, by instinct, chews the betel and the pepper together;—the rationale is this, "While in betel chewing the astringent principle of the nut checks the tendency to internal relaxation, the fever-chasing principles of the pepper leaf preserve the health amid the steaming vapors which the hot sun draws forth from swamps and jungles and irrigated paddy fields."

It stands upon record, that a certain military officer at a certain period critical to health, paraded all his regiment for blue-pill at night, and paraded them again for black draught the next morning. See what an additional force is concentrated in a very little knowledge! The time may come when an army shall plunge boldly into the most malarious districts, parading only in the first place for betel nut and pepper quid; shall make forced marches of fabulous distance with an "acullico" of cocoa leaf in their mouths; with a similar preparation, or a fraction of a grain of arsenic, shall climb heights like those which the Zouaves scaled on the day of the Alma, and arrive at the summit with ample wind for a charge; shall manoeuvre to get the weather gauge of their enemies, and discharge into their ranks a few rockets charged with cyanides of kakodyle; and, having done this, shall sit down and feast like Britons upon their glory, and, like the Ottomans of the Orinoco, upon a roasted ball of potter's earth.—*Times*.

**"COASTING" IN ST. PETERSBURG.**—At that time too, the skating grounds on the Neva were opened, and the ice hills swarmed. On this latter amusement I had philosophized most unjustly. The force of such a sport had always argued to me a kind of childishness in the Muscovite character, for I had looked upon the whole thing as but an imitation of the boyish sliding customs so well known with us, but, to my astonishment, I find it an amusement which requires much skill and some nerve.

The sliding apparatus is generally a frame of iron or steel, with runners like skate irons. Its build and ornamentation depend upon the rank of its owner. The serf, who snatches a few moments for his sport upon the public hills, has, of course, a more rude sort of conveyance than the nobleman or merchant of the first guild, who takes his slides on the hill raised by a private subscription. The sledges of these latter are often decked with great wealth of silvering, gilding, and embroidered cushioning. The ice-hill itself is a wooden construction of from thirty to fifty feet in height, with a wide track leading from its base to a distance sometimes of a thousand feet. Slide and roadway are covered with thick blocks of ice sawn from the Neva, which are at first fitted most carefully, and then cemented and enamelled by water thrown upon them. There is no clambering up a long hill, as at the end of one side there is always another hill, with track leading back to the starting point. The sliding gentleman walks up a stairway, a sort of pulley, his sledge by means of a pulley, and the operation is repeated constantly. Ladies generally kneel behind the cavalier, who guides the sled with his hands fortified with leather mittens. A set of hills covered with people lying in all directions at a velocity not much less to all appearance than that of a Lancaster cannon ball, is a sight not soon forgotten, but it is a game

which foreigners are rather slow to begin, as terrible accidents sometimes happen. Gilman and Irving, of our party, came near dashing their brains out last winter. Both were thrown to a great distance, but luckily bounced off the track out of the way of the other sliders. E., who boasts of his perseverance, started to launch himself forth again, but just at that moment a benevolent-looking old gentleman came up and mentioned in the most casual way possible, that it was always best to be a little cautious, "For," said he, "on this very day there is a funeral of a man who broke his neck here day before yesterday." After that E. took his slides under the guidance of a pilot.—*St. Petersburg Cor. of the Syracuse Journal*.

**KNEELING IN PRAYER.**—"An Old Presbyterian" thus writes to the N. Y. Independent:—

Why should we, in our intense fear of being thought Popish, or at least High Church, reject these forms, if forms they may be called, which would add so materially alike to the strength and beauty of our Church service? Why is it on entering a Presbyterian church during prayer, we find the minister standing (he has to stand, though why or wherefore, more than the congregation, it would be hard to say,) some of the men standing, a few zealous, strong-minded women standing likewise, but the majority of the congregation sitting, and a good many lounging in their pews. This is an outrageous want of reverence, which it is high time the fathers and brethren of the churches should take in hand. The General Assembly may recommend as much as they like that the congregation should stand during prayer. Recommending won't do; those who are too lazy to stand or kneel, should be made to do one or the other. Kneeling is the proper, the scripture posture, and should be universally adopted in all our churches. Who ever dreams of sitting down to pray at home, and how is the case altered when we come to the sanctuary? A modern writer has well remarked, "Presbyterians, and they alone, in heaven or earth, sit down to pray, sit down to praise." What a comfort and encouragement it would be to a minister, if he could feel that when he says "Let us pray," his whole congregation to a man and to a woman, united with him, at least in the outward act of religious worship. Dr. Alexander truly says, "Upon your looking up into the compassionate face of your Heavenly Father, you are in the posture of all others, most suited to the exercise of faith, hope, love, and every Christian grace."

"Satan trembles when he sees  
The weakest saint upon his knees;"

but he feels good when he sees saints and sinners alike lolling back in their pews. Let us have some uniformity in our church service—let us all stand, or let us all kneel. It does not follow that because we are reverential, we must needs be formal. There is a tradition extant as to the origin of the posture of standing in prayer, which I would fain believe.—That at the Reformation the Presbyterians occupied so entirely every square inch with their serried hosts, that there was in fact, not room to kneel, and hence arose the custom of standing at prayer." Be this as it may, however, it cannot be denied that the same excuse no longer holds good. There is, alas! room to spare in all our churches, with the exception, perhaps, of Henry Ward Beecher's or Mr. Wadsworth's, for the congregations to "worship and bow down, to kneel before the Lord their Maker."

**THE PRAYER BOOK AND THE VULGATE.**—Lieut. Maury having quoted the phrase, "the round world from the Psalms, a correspondent of the *Presbyterian* takes occasion to say that he quotes it from the Prayer Book, instead of the Bible, and the editor, censuring the translation, tells us that "the learned lieutenant would be wiser with the Bible than the Prayer Book." The text may as well have been quoted from the Bible as the Prayer Book. The old Latin Vulgate has the same form of the text: "Et in orbem firmavit orbem terra quae non commovebitur." For he established the round world (orb of the earth) that it may not be moved."

In Victor Hugo's speech, on the anniversary of the French Revolution, in November last, occurs the following passage:—"Justice is a theorem, punishment is as exact as Euclid, crime has its angles of incidence and its angles of reflection, and we men resemble when we perceive in the obscurity of human destiny the lines and figures of that enormous geometry which the crowd tall chance and the thinking man call Providence."