The Snow Plough.

Oh, the snow plough, the beautiful snow plough;
Butting the drifts that you get through no how;
Nobody thanks you for what you don't do,
Every one thinks that you ought to go through;
Raving,
Craving,
Raising a row,
Nobody loves you, sturdy snow plough.

Oh, the snow shoes, the beautiful snow shoes,
Things that no fellow knows just how to use,
Flat as a shingle, and broad as they're long;
Awkward to fit in the lines of a song;
Crawling,
Sprawling,
One little cruise
On you is sufficient, unlovely snow shoes.

Oh, the snow shovel, the useful snow shovel,
Welcome alike to the palace and hovel;
Scraping out paths at the first dawn of light;
Rattling across the bleak sidewalks at night;
Raking,
Scraping,
What in the duve!
Would we do without thee, on homely snow shovel?

Song.

BY ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

The fire-light listens on the floor
To hear the wild winds blow.
Within, the burning roses burn;
Without, there sliles the snow.

Across the flower I see the flake
Pass, mirrored, mystic, slow.
Oh, blooms and storms must blush and freeze,
While seasons come and go!

I lift the sash—and live, the gale
Comes leaping to my call.
The rose is but a painted one
That hangs upon the wall.

SONNET

(TRANSLATED FROM HEINE.)

In foolish error I from thee did stray,
Thinking the wide world I would wander o'er
In quest of love—love that should have the power
To fill my heart with all-embracing sway.
In every street I sought love day by day;
Beseeching hands I held at every door,
Asking for but one sign of love—no more;
But all with scoffing hatred turned away.
And still I wandered o'er the weary ground,
In search of love—but love I never found.
Hopeless and sad, at last I homeward turned,
And thou didst meet me—and thine eye's soft glance
My longing heart with rapture did entrance,
For there I saw the love for which I yearn.

AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

Plant Food.

It is now but little more than a generation since chemistry came to the farmer's aid, and offered her services to those who would employ them. Not with halting step, but with the vigour of a god-like birth, agricultural chemistry was born, and soon the English-speaking world was aglow with the interest which came from the new discovery. Plants fed, so Liebig stated, not on dirt, but on certain chemical substances which were part of the earth. Earth contained but a limited amount of these substances; and hence the continuous growth and removal of crops soon left the land unfit for further plant growth. Analysis showed the elements which plants removed. *Ergo*, supply these elements and prevent your land from getting exhausted. This was the discovery which it took ages to develop into expression; this discovery is at the basis of modern farming.

The chief aim of the husbandman is to supply plant food. For this purpose he applies his manure, he exercises his skill in culture, he adopts his fallows or rotations. Plant food, how to obtain it for his plant, and how to compel the plant to get the most of it—this is true farming.

We propose to offer a few ideas on the subject of plant food, premising that our statements all seem to have been experimentally proven, and to have been practically adopted, here and there, by the most intelligent of cultivators.

The elements of plant food which are most apt to be deficient in our soils are nitrogen, phosphoric acid, and potash. To obtain a full crop these have to be present, *diffused* throughout our land, and must be in that chemical condition which will allow of their being appropriated by the roots of our plant, wherever they are to pass into the plant circulation, become incorporated into its life, and through the most wonderful metamorphoses of growth become part and parcel of the plant structure.

Now, one pound of soluble phosphoric acid, or one pound of a given condition of nitrogen, or one pound of a potash salt, properly *diffused* through our land, is as efficient as another pound of a like substance, without regard to its source of supply. Thus it makes no difference in the amount of the crop whether the pound be supplied in one hundred pounds of dung or ten pounds of a manufactured article. All the plant requires is the presence and the accessibility of its food.

Let us not be understood as saying that one hundred pounds of dung containing one pound of soluble phosphoric acid is not better than ten pounds of superphosphate containing one pound of soluble phosphoric acid. Nor must we be understood as saying even that the same quantity of chemical substances contained in one hundred pounds of manure is necessarily equal to the raw manure in value for application. We are not treating of manures comparatively, but of plant food; and hence, ignoring the differences caused by the method of application, and the physical action or chemical action of either alter their disposition in the land, we repeat that one pound of plant food absorbed by the plant is just one pound, and is of equal value, without reference to its source of supply.

These are facts: now for the application. Plant food must be furnished by the farmer in order that he may be able continuously to crop his land. It makes no difference in what form he applies them, provided the plant secures them. Equal quantities of plant food from one source of supply are equal in effect to the equal quantity of a similar substance in another source of supply, *if only the plant gets them.* We repeat the idea, in order to be understood.

Consequently, the farmer must study values, and provide for his crop the plant food from the source whence it can be obtained for the least money.

Dung or Chemicals?

Is dung better than chemicals? Not necessarily. Are chemicals better than dung? It does not follow. If dung and chemicals will raise the same quantity of crop year after year, then which the farmer wants to apply is the cheaper of the two. It seems ridiculous to claim that if five dollars' worth of chemicals will give as good results as eight dollars' worth of dung, that dung is better; or that if five dollars' worth of dung will produce equal results with eight dollars' worth of chemicals, that chemicals are the better. A chance for difference of opinion can only come in those cases where the decision lies between a dollar's worth of dung, and a dollar's worth of chemical equivalent.

We have here the whole question of purchased manures in a nutshell, provided our supposition be tenable. Let us show that it is, by the quoting of an actual experiment, which must tend to convince even the most sceptical. We will quote results from Mr. Lawes' experiments at Rothamstead:

Hay

Unmanured plot	1.32 tons,	
Applied chemicals for 1 ton	1.80 "	10 yrs. average
14 tons dung	2.39 "	8 " "

Barley.

Unmanured plot	20¾ bush.	
Chemicals	48¼ "	24 yrs. average
Dung	48¾ "	" " "

Wheat.

Unmanured	13¾ bush.	
Chemicals	37¼ "	24 yrs. average
Dung	35¾ "	" " "

We thus see that chemicals can produce the same results as are produced by dung. In the experiments quoted we have the average of many years' trials, so that the effect cannot be ascribed to a favourable season or otherwise. We must consider it proven that chemicals can take the place of dung. It only remains to show whether we can afford to use one in preference to the other. Unfortunately, we have not in these experiments quoted the necessary data for the solving of the question of values. It is evident that under such large doses of dung as were used—fourteen tons yearly—the land must have in course of time attained a maximum of fertility; and the crops yielded indicate this. The amount of chemicals used was also in excess of the requirements of the plant in most instances.

Reason tells us that chemical farming must be successful, provided we apply to the land yearly what the crop removes, provided the elements which are applied are kept during the season of growth in a condition fit for appropriation by the plant, and provided they are thoroughly diffused throughout the land.

Reason also tells us that manure farming is successful under like conditions of application.

Experience tells us that with abundant manure we can raise on the average maximum crops for our land. Experience also tells us that with an abundant supply of chemicals we can do likewise.

Thus reason and experience coincide.

Practically, however, we have other questions to consider, and the subject is not as simple as at first sight appears. Practically, *it is found, it has been found*, that we need apply barn-yard manure containing chemical elements far in excess of the chemical elements removed by the crop to produce the crop. Practically, it has been found that in many cases where chemicals were applied the amount of the crop was proportionate to the amount of chemicals applied. Practically, the application of a fertilizer may fail to produce the anticipated crop. Practically, a large manuring will not always produce the anticipated crop.

The condition of the soil and the facts of cultivation have also to be considered while we are considering plant food; for in all farm questions like this we have two sides to our subject. The plant food must be present; the plant must also be able to appropriate it,—and this latter fact is an important one. Consider why we can raise larger crops on sterile New England soil, by the aid of manure, than they do on the prairies of the southwest just fat with fertility! Consider the large yield, on the acreage of England, and the small yield, on the acreage of that golden state which fronts on the Pacific!

When We Apply Manure

to our land it is in a large bulk; the plant food is diluted with much inert matter. The plough turns under the mass in lumps, and there it remains, patches of fertility surrounded by earth. The plant has to obtain its supplies by advancing its roots through comparatively sterile soil to reach the rich deposit. The roots, ever passing onward, alternate between abundance and dearth. Moreover, the manure retains water well, and hangs on to its fertility, and the fertile elements are not readily diffused throughout the neighbouring soil. Manuring is a mechanical mixing. To obviate these objections we have to apply manure in excess of the needs of the plant, in order to supply an abundance to the plant. We all know how expensive it is to reclaim a worn-out field. We need apply dung year after year; and many years of cultivation are required to secure the desired "heart." This is but an illustration of the difficulty in practice of thoroughly mixing our manure with the soil—of mixing so that each particle of soil shall have clinging to it a fertile element.

Our Chemicals,

on the contrary, are spread on the field in a concentrated state. They have no mould of mixture which disturbs their chemical affinities, or which holds them in absorption. The rains come, or the waters of the earth dissolve, and they immediately *diffuse* themselves to the extent allowed by the laws governing this action, and each particle of earth holds on to its own allowance, and passes the surplus on to its neighbour. Hence, after applying chemicals, instead of a mechanical mixture we have a *diffusion*; and so far as our chemicals penetrate, under certain limitations, we have an evenness of supply which allows the roots of our plants to keep up a continuous feeding. In this process each element has its own limitation. For instance, phosphoric acid is held by the earth with a strong grasp, potash less so, while the nitrogen salts pass downward with considerable ease. Now, we can readily saturate our land with nitrogen or potash; with more difficulty can we fill it with phosphoric acid; yet with a superabundance of supply, it is possible to prepare our land for our plant roots so that whichever way the roots may turn they may always find food at their mouths.

Action of Soil on Plant Food.

Now, soil changes the condition of the plant food as applied. For instance, a potash or nitrogen salt is decomposed; the base is retained with more or less persistency.* Phosphoric acid, after prolonged contact with the soil, becomes insoluble—or at least a portion does. Let it be remembered that these elements are the same chemically, whether in manure or in fertilizer, and are thus acted on by the earth. We apply our manure one season, and the next season we have in our soil the same elements we have applied, less those removed by the crops, and by drainage, etc. When we apply chemicals we have similar results; but *mark this*: when the salts are decomposed by the first rain, the *acids pass downward through the soil, come into contact with the inert phosphoric acid therein stored*, and by combining with a portion of the lime, *renders them soluble.* Hence we have a favourable action of chemicals on the land which cannot be expected from the manures.†

We are now prepared to claim that on the plant food side of the question between manures and chemicals, the latter have the advantage. Yet, as farming is not entirely a question of plant food, and as we must take into consideration the physical properties of what we apply and mix with the soil, we must not fail into the error of under-rating the value of dung, or ignoring it. The farmer will, and he should, hold on to all the manure he can obtain; this both experience and theory indicate as the correct way. If he has sufficient manure to dress heavily all he desires to cultivate, then let him place his whole dependence upon manure, and use it patiently for a continuous time; and then, like some farms we know of, his fields will teem with crops, and additional fertilizing will be but a waste. If, however, our farmer desires to cultivate more than he can manure well, then let him resort to chemicals judiciously selected, and not mix them with his manure heap, as some recommend, but apply separately in this wise: first plough under a small dressing of dung, and then spread your chemicals on the surface, and harrow in.

Conclusion.

Every farmer can afford to mortgage his crops and buy fertilizer, rather than not manure sufficiently for the maximum crop of his land. No farmer can afford to buy, if he has manurial resources enough at home to thoroughly fertilize his land. Yet most farmers would do well to use a small quantity of chemicals each year, in order to feel their way towards greater success and larger profits. The secret of successful mercantile enterprise is capital and the use of it. The secret of profitable farming is to utilize the capital of the farm by making *every acre* in some way productive. Experience shows that a half manuring is not profitable where competition is keen, and land and labour at high cost. The good farmer manures heavily. This question of manuring has in the past limited the area which could be most successfully cultivated, and a few acres have had to support the farmer's family, and furnish the profits to the enterprise. Science and modern thought have, however, now opened the way towards manuring, and manuring well, a larger area; and he is the modern farmer, and the more successful one, who has done so. How to manure is but a question of cost. Fallow, green crops, manure, chemicals—all are good; but all are not equally costly. Which is the best for you? This is the question for each one to decide for himself; and according to the wisdom of the decision is the profit-result.

The new era of agriculture has opened in America; it opened some time ago in England. Through the extension of our manurial resources, through the purchase of their chemical equivalents, our farmers can add at least five times the present area under cultivation in Massachusetts, and can force an enhanced prosperity from her soil. The path is open to all who will enter. It is time for prejudices to cease. The wise man cares not so much for names as for results. Whether we love the name of "dung," or any other name, should not matter; but the question should be, How can I get more fertility on my land? How can I get larger crops? How can I get enhanced profits? If chemistry aids, so much the better. If plant food—all that is desired—can be obtained in the old way, better still. If your plant food is produced or procured at the lowest rate, and you apply enough, and you force your plant to appropriate it all, you are the most successful farmer who lives. He who approximates this need feel no fear of failure, and is one who will uphold by his success the dignity of a productive pursuit.

Plant food,—how to get it and how to use it. This is the problem which we are all striving to solve. We have offered this slight contribution, which we believe will well repay a careful reading and careful thought. What our Canadian agriculture requires is the thinking farmer,—he who will accept facts and accept his own reasoning thereon; who is never satisfied with his present knowledge, but is ever reaching after more; who holds on to success, and learns from failure. Experience is a good commodity to buy, if it is not too costly. The best farmer is likely to be he who buys plenty of it, but at a low cost.

*In chemistry a salt is the union of an acid and a base. For instance, sulphate of potash is a salt composed of sulphuric acid—an acid—and potassa—a base.

†This reasoning we have used for some time, but never could find an experimental verification until lately, when we found the mention by Hold-fleiss, of Halle, Germany, of an experiment in composing which seems to render this view certain.

Our leading merchants employ night-watchmen to patrol their premises. The owner of the premises does not sleep more comfortably in his feather bed at home than the watcher does in the arm chair of the hotel—where he feels at home.

GENERAL.

WHILE the Queen is in the Isle of Wight, an iron-clad is now sent to ride off Cowes.

THE expression of a boy's face at the end of a straw that lacks two inches of reaching the cider in a barrel is supposed to be the model that the artist selected in the delineation of Adam leaving paradise.

THE Rev. Dr. Vincent has received an application from a country Sunday school for dialogues for a missionary anniversary. The applicant says, "Do not send dialogues which are too religious, but somewhat inclined to the ludicrous nature."

It is an excellent thing, doubtless, to find stones for the poor to break; but how is it that wherever civilization comes there is a class, unknown before, for which such provision is needed? Paupers are civilization's camp followers it would seem.

A DANCING idiot, ten years of age, is a resident of Indianapolis. Ever since his birth he has been going through the motions of a waltz to silent music. He is never still in his waking hours. His mother had danced to excess at a ball just before he was born.

A little five-year old, who was hungry one night recently just at bed-time, but didn't wish to ask directly for something more to eat, put it in this way: "Mother, are little children who starve to death happy after they die?" A good big slice of bread and butter was the answer.

THE new opera house at Paris has succeeded tolerably well. The manager has no rent to pay. He receives a salary from the State, and a subsidy of $180,000 a year, and all the costumes and decorations destroyed when the old opera was burned, have been replaced by a paternal Government.

HERR C. RECLAM has lately made a detailed report of the first cremation which occurred at Gotha a short time ago. He calculates the cost of each cremation at about $20, which, in case the furnace is in continual use, so that between two processes it has not time to cool, would be reduced to $15.

If we do not hear of an epidemic in Montreal, and dolorous appeals for such garments as we have to spare we shall be pleasantly surprised. The Corporation has, in its wisdom, cut off the water from 3,500 tenements, the occupants of which were in arrears. Minus water, plus dirt, equals disease—we don't care to pursue the reckoning any farther.

A CLOCK made entirely of bread has lately been received in Milan, Italy, from Peru. It was constructed by an Indian, who, having no means of purchasing material, saved a portion of the soft part of his daily bread for the purpose. He solidified it with a certain salt, which rendered it very hard and insoluble in water. The clock keeps good time, and the case, also of hardened bread, displays artistic talent.

THE English are developing a strong gastronomic prejudice in favour of the American oyster. They are now very extensive purchasers, the average shipment from New York amounting to 1,200 barrels daily. Boston also is an exporter to a considerable extent, and other ports on the coast send respectable supplies. The imported article threatens to drive the native from the British table.

Rugby School, England, which in these latter days has come to be regarded as a model, was quite the reverse in the last century. The boys were hardly treated and half imprisoned, and their only playground was the churchyard. A grim tower is still pointed out as the torture chamber of a former master, Dr. Wool, whose diminutive stature but severe stripes probably suggested the saying: "Much cry and little Wool."

Worse, far worse, than the hotel sharks, the hack-drivers, the museum-marauders, the curiosity-nuisances, and all the local frauds, are the "own correspondents" who drivel out their impressions of Niagara's marvels. They have not skill enough to describe a lady's attire or bearing, to say nothing of interpreting the language of the ceaselessly rushing flood. Why do not the daily papers, when such work is in contemplation, import a man with a soul in him, or failing that—a decent Jenkins?

Owing to the fashion of using ruches as trimmings, tarlatan is used again for the dresses of very young ladies; it is always used with silk slips. A dress of blue silk can be freshened by having a finely plaited apron draped at the sides under full ruches made in the chicoree style, very thickly plaited; these are mixed with puffings of tarlatan. The train is trimmed up for some distance with finely plaited double ruffles set on in groups headed by chicoree ruches; above this is the drapery of tarlatan, held in place by bands of marguerites.

COAL-ARMOUR is the newest idea among English naval constructors. A coal-bunker eight or ten feet wide, filled with coal, has been found to resist the projectiles of the 4½-ton gun (nearly seven inches bore), even when fired under conditions most favourable for penetration, and experiments have been tried by exploding shells with increased bursting charges in the coal without setting it on fire. For converted merchant steamers and vessels, where the greater part of the machinery is placed above the water line, these bunkers are likely to be employed.

THE heliograph was used for the first time in war by the British troops that operated against the Afridis, on the Peshawur frontier, India. This instrument consists of a circular mirror, moving upon a universal joint and supported on a tripod. Wishing to send messages, the operator, by a quick elevation or depression of the glass, so as to catch the full glare of the sun, is able to throw flashes a distance of twenty-five miles. The length of the flashes corresponds with that of the dashes in the Morse alphabet by which the messages are translated. This method of field telegraph does away entirely with the dangers of wire tapping and cutting by the enemy, and, after a thorough test, has just been adopted by the Spanish military authorities.

As an illustration of the meteorological effect of ocean currents, Mr. J. K. Laughton lately called attention in a lecture to some estimates made by Mr. Croll of the heating influence of the Gulf Stream. He calculated that the surface water of the North Atlantic, if deprived of the Gulf Stream, would be reduced to a temperature very far below the freezing-point, and that the heat which this great current disperses into the air above it, if converted into power, would be equal to the horse-power of 400,000,000 of the largest ironclad men of war. It is this heat which, carried over the north-west of Europe, makes there green fields and open harbours during the winter, while in Labrador and Newfoundland the earth is buried with snow and the harbours blocked with ice.

Country Negro versus Town Negro.

An eternal warfare seems to rage between the country negro and the town darkey. This was illustrated at the passenger depot the other day. A coloured youth from Pike County approached a town negro, and the following conversation ensued:

"Wuar bouts is de ticket offic?"

"Right dar 'fo' yo' eyes."

"Fo' whose eyes."

"Yene."

"Is you de ticket office?"

"Look yer, nigger, don't you gimme none yo' slack."

"I'm a mighty slack man, ole man, w'en I gets stirred up."

"An' you'll git stirred up of you stan' roun' yer foolin' longer me."

"Dat's de kinder ex'cise w'at I'm a pinin' fer."

And with that they clinched and had a right lively tussle. They were separated, however, before a policeman came along, and the Pike County darkey found the ticket office. The town negro, it may be well to mention, was badly used up.

Manure the Basis of Success.

The business of the farmer is to feed and clothe the human family—"to make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before." If the farmer wishes to make a good crop of hay he must manure his land thoroughly. Two or three tons of timothy hay per acre is a good crop. If the farmer wishes to make a good crop of corn, he must manure his land well. Good land, well cultivated, in good seasons, ought to make from forty to one hundred and thirty bushels of corn to the acre. If the farmer wishes to make twenty, thirty, or forty bushels of wheat to the acre, he must have his land in good condition. Large crops of wheat are not grown on poor, badly-cultivated land. If the farmer wishes to make large crops of potatoes, sweet or Irish, or fine cabbage or turnips, he must make his land rich. The first, most pressing, most indispensable want of the farmer is manure. If the farmer can make or buy plenty of good manure, he can have fine crops. Farming without manure is a discouraging, profitless avocation.

THE YOUNG FOLKS.

The Shining Little House.

It hung in the sun, the little house,
It hung in the sun, and shone;
And through the walls I could hear his voice
Who had it all for his own.

The walls were of wire, as bright as gold,
Wrought in a pretty design;
The spaces between for windows served,
And the floor was clean and fine.

There was plenty, too, to eat and drink,
In this little house that shone;
A lucky thing to be sure, you'd say,
A house like this for one's own!

But the door was shut, and locked all tight
The key was on the outside;
The one who was in could not get out,
No matter how much he tried.

'Twas only a prison after all,
This bright little house that shone;
Ah, we would not want a house like that,
No matter if 'twere our own.

And yet, through the walls I heard the voice
Of the one who lived inside;
To warble a sweeter song each day
It did seem as if he tried,

To open the door he never sought,
Nor fluttered in idle strife;
He ate, and he drank, and slept, and sang,
And made the best of his life.

And I, to myself, said every day,
As his cheery song I heard,
There's a lesson for us in every note
Of that little prisoned bird.

We all of us live a life like his,
We are walled on every side:
We all long to do a hundred things
Which we could not if we tried.

We can spend our strength all foolishly
In a discontented strife;
Or we can be wise, and laugh, and sing,
And make the best of our life.

Polly Hersey's Pet.

It was Polly's—whatever anybody may say,—for she baited the trap and set it, and caught the little fellow, and fed him afterward, and named him John Henry.

He was a young rat, not much bigger than—well, not much bigger than a goose's egg, which everybody knows the size of, of course. He was soft and silky, delicate shades of slate color losing themselves in the tenderest shades of grey, and a tail about the size of a bran, span, new slate-pencil,—and such ears! They looked like little brown shells, in which was the daintiest shade of pink, and they were so thin that Polly could see the light shining through them. As for John Henry's eyes, they were no better looking than two jet black—no, black jet beads, and they twinkled, and twinkled, and twinkled. Such hands as John Henry had! Delicate little fingers, about as big around as fine zephyr needles, and about as long as Polly's eye-lashes.

I have drawn John Henry's portrait carefully, because he was for some time quite an important member of our family, and Polly's chief pet. He was a baby rat when she caught him in the cage-like trap, but he grew wonderfully, and became very tame. He must have been in the trap for some time when Polly discovered him, for he was nearly starved; his hunger made him lose all fear and take food directly from Polly's hand, and Polly fed him with all sorts of nice things,—bits of cake, pieces of meat, scraps of cheese, and finally topped off the fine meal with a thimble-full of milk, which he drank so greedily that we could see him "swelling visibly before our wery eyes."

And from that day—when sitting up on his hind legs and washing his dainty little hands with his pink little tongue, he looked into Polly's face and saw the goodness there—he and she became fast friends. Polly wasn't afraid of him,—not a bit. She would put her hands into the trap and stroke his ratship's back, and even tickle his ears with his tail, without remonstrance. John Henry grew tamer and tamer. He would run and find Polly in any part of the house if she called him, and he would search Polly's pockets for sweetmeats, and sometimes he would crawl into the depths of her cloak pockets, nestle down there among the gloves and in the handkerchief, and take a nap. You see Polly's cloak hung just over the hall register, and was always warm and comfortable.

One Sunday morning, just as Polly was starting for Sunday-school in all the glory of her new seal-skin cloak, it began to rain, and as a wetting is rather bad for fur, Aunt Elinor was forced to insist on Polly's changing her new cloak for her old one.

It was late when Polly reached the Sunday-school, and the services had begun. They were just singing. Polly took her place in her class as quickly as she could, and got settled just in time for the Superintendent's prayer. The school was very quiet; it was a very good school, and you might have heard a pin drop while Mr.—— was praying. Polly had bowed her head with the rest, and was trying to understand every word of the prayer, when the little girl next to her shrieked, and then all the little girls of Polly's class jumped up on the benches, and then the teacher screamed, and then the boys in the next class began to say: "There ne goes. Here he is—under the bench. No, he aint; he's out in the aisle."

Polly was bewildered,—she didn't know what they were after, and what it all was about; and she opened her eyes very wide at such a confusion in Sunday-school. She had just made up her mind that it must be a rat, when he jumped right out from behind the book-case. Polly saw him, and gave a little cry.

"My, my," she said, "it is John Henry!"

And sure enough it was, and Polly caught him easily enough, poor little fellow, all bruised and bleeding, and frightened almost to death. And Polly rolled him up in her pocket handkerchief, and walked out of school, with a sense of personal injury on her face such as I never saw before.

And poor John Henry was sick for a long time afterward.

He is now a very dignified and gray old rat, and Polly says he winks knowingly, as much as to say, "Rather not," whenever he hears Sunday school mentioned.

The Senorita.

(All the Year Round.)

Even if a Spanish woman is not pretty, which, when young, is seldom the case, she carries a charm with her which never fails to assert itself. Her figure is rounded and graceful—she has, unfortunately, a tendency in after-years to grow stout—and her bearing such that no other race of women I know of can pretend to. The little arched foot treads the ground lightly but proudly, and her step and carriage are the very poetry of motion. The robe, which has generally a sweeping train, is worn somewhat clingingly, showing the contour of the form, but not impeding free action in every movement. A gauzy mantilla, falling artistically from the admirably arranged, luxuriant tresses, is the simple head-dress, with perhaps the addition of a rose or camelia, planted just where one would have it. And she carries a dangerous, and often killing, weapon, which in other hands but hers loses its power—the fan. How it opens and shuts with a dexterous yet careless turn of the ivory wrist; how it taps the pink tips of the dimpled fingers, to give emphasis to some arch expression; how in the sun-glare it is spread, and poised gracefully as a shield against the rays; how, when desirous of addressing, unnoticed, a gallant, and stabbing him with a glance of the lustrous eyes, it is made to act as a screen; now, by an almost imperceptible movement, it beckons an expectant but irresolute admirer; how it imposes silence on some too presuming caballero, by being passed lightly over the speaker's lips; how it indicates impatience in its quick fluttering; and how it is sometimes so manipulated that its softly-cadenced breath fans both the wielder and the supremely happy lover. Yes, the Spanish woman is by no means deficient of the elementary powers of fascination, and if one can only induce her to descend from the realms of artificial complimentary speech, and to speak naturally, she is perfectly charming. She has a fashion of saying what she thinks—in this she differs from the lords of her race—and of calling a spade a spade. She is bright, and even sparkling in her badinage, which, however, seldom rises above triviality; and if one would not break the momentary attractive spell, one should never attempt to change the superficial character of the conversation.

IT is related that in a gambling trial in one of the Western States it was thought best that the jury should be instructed in the practical working of a faro table, and the judge ordered the necessary apparatus to be brought in, and directed the defendants to give an exhibition. All hands became so interested in the game that the sheriff, seeing how things were going, went outside, summoned a posse, and arrested the whole roomful, including the Court itself.

"SEE how I ride o'er the raging mane!" exclaimed a man who was thrown over his horse's head into a ditch on the other side of the fence.

PERSONAL.

THE Paris *Univers* says that the Catholic Bishop Reinkens is about to marry in Boppard.

ONE bookbinder alone in New York has bound 40,000 copies of Tennyson's works since the beginning of last autumn.

PRINCE BORIS GALITZIN, aide-de-camp to the Emperor of Russia, died in Paris on the 24th of December, at the age of 59.

THE *Electrician* says that Dr. Wall, about the year 1670, first discovered the existence of the electric light, and suggested the resemblance between electricity and lightning.

THE personality of Mr. Samuel Phelps, the celebrated actor, has been sworn under $45,000, and that of Mr. G. H. Lewes under $10,000. Not very encouraging to histrionic and literary art.

"As a memorial of the voyage," Mr. W. H. Smith, First Lord of the Admiralty, has presented each of the marines that acted as guard when he visited Cyprus with a prayer-book and a hymn-book.

M. CARRE, of Paris, finds it necessary to extend his establishment for the manufacture of carbons for the electric light. There are more than 6,500 feet of carbons per day turned out at his works at present.

LORD BEACONSFIELD has declined to become an honorary president of a memorial scheme, on the ground that he "makes it a rule not to lend his name to any undertaking in the management of which he is unable to take part."

THE Rev. Dr. Tucker says that the natives of Africa prefer rum to cannibalism. Considering the very inefficient character of some of the missionaries sent to Africa, it is no wonder that the savages prefer their rum to their company.

IT is said that on Jan. 28 last Prince Joachim Murat and M. Rouher went to the Palais de l'Industrie, where Prince Murat drew the number 307 in the name of the Prince Imperial, who is therefore liable to be called upon to serve in the army.

THE German Emperor is wonderfully well and vigorous, though still obliged to carry his right arm in a sling, and drives out daily, accompanied only by the Crown Prince or an equerry. All the forenoon he devotes to receiving reports and giving audiences.

THE Emperor of Austria, when at Ischl, may be often seen at the little theatre there, the director of the small provincial company receiving the royal party at the door with a pair of lighted candles, which shake rather visibly in his hands, and an apology for an evening dress.

ROBERT MAZELE died in Cohoes, N. Y., while saying "thank you." He was very ill, and his family had been without food or fire for twenty-four hours. The neighbours brought in some provisions, and his joy was so great that, in trying to express his thanks, he brought on a fatal attack of his malady.

MIDHAT PASHA, when appointed Grand Vizier, was so low in money after years of office-holding, that he employed a confidential agent to sell a very valuable watch and chain he possessed. The person to whom it was offered recognized it, purchased it, and on Midhat's departure sent it to him, begging him to accept it as a mark of esteem.

BAYARD TAYLOR, when he died, had only begun his "Life of Goethe." His plan was that it should comprise three volumes, and besides a biography of Goethe he intended to make it a kind of literary history of Germany during the eighteenth century. He had made copious notes for the work, but they will not prove intelligible, perhaps, to anyone else.

IT is reported that the new pamphlet which Count Arnim is soon to publish on the conflict between the Vatican and the German Empire was written at the instigation of a Catholic bishop, who, having just returned from Rome, took the opportunity to communicate to Count Arnim the basis of an understanding which would be accepted by the Roman Church.

THE Emperor William's reader, Privy Councillor Louis Schneider, has just died. For the last thirty years he had preserved all the hair clipped from his head by the barber, and with it was stuffed the cushion on which his head repose in the coffin. The inscription for his tombstone was also prepared in advance, with a blank left for the date of his death.

Miss Smith's Visitors.

The victim of one of the boldest robberies recently committed in England had the generic name of Miss Smith; but her identity is clearly established when it is borne in mind that she lived in a village bearing the specific title of Pill. She was a vigorous old lady of 70 years, who managed her own farm, looked after the payment of a neighbour's workpeople, and was in the habit of keeping considerable sums of gold in her cash-box. Her only companion was a housekeeper, also an elderly woman. The servants engaged about the farm slept at a distance. On Friday night three weeks ago the old lady and her old companion, after the fatigues of the day, sat down to take a glass of "something hot" before going to bed, as their custom was, and as the ruffians who were watching outside probably knew it to be. The old housekeeper was bustling about getting it ready, and sharing her mistress' cheerfulness, when a knock came to the door. The visitor was challenged, and described himself as "a policeman," who had come to tell her that there was "something the matter with one of her pigs." Miss Smith called out that she "thanked him kindly for calling," and told her servant to open the door. The burglars had an easy task before them when the door was opened. The housekeeper, when she found herself roughly taken by the throat by one of the ruffians, begged for her life, readily consenting to hold her tongue and to show them where the money was kept. Miss Smith showed more resolution and tried to give the alarm. The robbers struck the poor old woman on the head with their bludgeons before she could utter a cry, and bound her hands behind her back. Then, leaving her senseless and bleeding, they proceeded, under the guidance of the terrified housekeeper, to the bedroom where the cash-box lay, and quietly took possession of their booty. One of the gang stood outside and said good-night civilly to a butcher's boy who happened to pass. The gang marched off in high spirits, lingering a moment to enjoy the terror of the housekeeper, and declaring to her that they must have victuals and drink before they went.

The Towers of Silence.

The great outward distinction of the Parsee religion in India, however, is the method which it prescribes for disposing of the bodies of the dead. Zoroaster directed his followers ever to maintain the purity of the elements which were symbolical of God. This obligation forbids them to lay dead bodies in the earth. To keep these from the soil, the Parsees build the wonderful stone structures which are undoubtedly the most remarkable of all modern depositories of the dead.

There are six of these Towers of Silence, or Dakhmas, as they are otherwise called, at Bombay. With the exception of a square one, used solely for criminals, they are all cylindrical, and stand in a beautifully tropical garden on the summit of Malabar Hill. "The view from this spot can scarcely be surpassed by any in the world. No English man's garden could be better kept, and no pen could do justice to the glories of its flowering shrubs, cypresses, and palms. It seems too very ideal, not only of a place of sacred silence, but of peaceful rest." The towers of solid masonry and black granite within the enclosure are so low in proportion to their breadth that they have been compared to gigantic millstones. The chief structure, in the centre of the garden, is about fourteen feet high, and ninety feet in diameter. It is built of solid granite, except in the centre, where a well, ten feet deep and about fifteen across, leads down to an excavation under the masonry, containing four drains at right angles to each other, terminated by holes filled with either charcoal or sand. Round the upper and outer edge of this circular structure, and completely hiding its upper surface from view, is a high stone parapet. This rises straight from the solid stone work below, and its exterior is similarly whitened. But "the parapet of each tower possesses an extraordinary coping which instantly attracts and fascinates the gaze. It is a coping formed, not of dead stone, but of living vultures. These birds, on the occasion of my visit," says Prof. Williams, "had settled themselves side by side in perfect order and in a complete circle around the parapets of the towers, with their heads pointed inward, and so lasily did they sit there, and so motionless was there whole men, that, except for their color, they might have been carved out of the stone work." But they had an office to fulfil, as the sequel proved.

The upper surface of the solid portion of each tower hidden from view by the parapet rising some ten or twelve feet above its level, is divided into seventy-two spaces for the reception of dead bodies. These receptables are arranged in three rings, one within the other. The innermost circle, of which "Good Thoughts" are said to be symbolic, receives the bodies of children; the middle row, represented by the precept "Good Deeds" belong, is reserved for men. After the consecration of the Dakhmas, they are never visited by any living persons except the professional corpse bearers of the Parsees. Even the priests may not approach the walls nearer than thirty feet. The corpse bearers—called Nasa-Salar—form a class by themselves, with whom the other disciples of Zoroaster do not associate, as their employment is regarded as impure. But nevertheless these people are respected by the community, and amply remunerated for their services. And well may this be so, for every Parsee, rich or poor, humble or proud, who dies at Bombay, is borne to his tomb by these white-clad servitors. At a funeral, the relatives and friends of the deceased follow the remains to one of the three houses of prayer (*Sagri*), which stand in the same garden with the towers. Here the mourners, all dressed in spotless white, celebrate the final rites in the presence of the sacred fires kept burning within each sanctuary, while the corpse bearers convey the body to the open stone grave on the top of one of the Dakhmas. What happens then we will let Prof. Monier Williams relate in his own words:

"A sudden stir among the vultures made us raise our heads. At least a hundred birds, collected around one of the towers, began to show symptoms of excitement, while others swooped down from neighbouring trees. The cause of this sudden abandonment of their previous apathy soon revealed itself. A funeral was seen to be approaching. The tower selected for the present funeral was one in which other members of the same family had before been laid. The two bearers speedily unlocked the door, speedily conveyed the body into the interior, and, unseen by any one, laid it uncovered in one of the open stone receptacles near the open well. In two minutes they reappeared with the empty bier and the white cloth. But scarcely had they closed the door when a dozen vultures swooped down upon the body, and were rapidly followed by flights of others. In five minutes more we saw the birds fly back and lazily settle down again upon the parapet. They had left nothing behind but a skeleton.

Monstrosities.

BY ERNST EMORY.

Among the evidences of social disease, not the least is the taste for human deformities, and the newspapers seem to vie with each other in relating the most extravagant accounts of whatever is strange or improbable. This appetite for novelty is but the perversion of the principle in man which impels him to the grasping of all knowledge, and its legitimate gratification lies in the pursuit of the sciences—revealing wonders in every fact of nature and law of mind.

The lowest form of this travesty on human life, is that utter physical distortion of which the double-headed woman "Nightingale," and the Siamese twins are illustrations. The curiosity of sight-seers robs these enormities of all individuality, and crushes out what little nobleness may have been planted in them by nature. Utterly incapable of fulfilling any of the proper ends of life, all they accomplish by their groveling existence is to fill the purse of avaricious showmen.

Scarcely less pitiable are those poor unfortunates who have had all their mental forces absorbed by the fungous growth of some one faculty. Such an one is Blind Tom with his passion for music. A still better type was the young Frenchman with so marvelous a mathematical faculty that he could calculate the number of sands in a heap. On one occasion, after he had arrived at note, he was taken to a Paris theatre to witness an exhibition of Terpsichorean perfection. The only impression made on him by the gracefulness of the dancer's attitudes, or the agility of her movements, was the exact number of steps she would take in a quarter of an hour. It is a very high verdict we render a man, when we say he has a "well-balanced mind. For, while defects of any kind—whether of memory, imagination, or reason—are badges of universal frailty, when all the vitality is absorbed by one intellectual branch the result is but one remove from absolute idiocy. Indeed, what are sins but moral overgrowths? Prodigality is excessive generosity, and parsimony is economy in the extreme.

Then there is the prodigy of the "Molly Francher" stamp. The genuineness of the revelations of mediums and clairvoyants is not here questioned. The position is, however, avowed that communication with absent minds, or departed spirits, is in violation of orderly development. The law engraved in the human constitution, and asserted by the greatest of early Christian philosophers, is, "First that which is *natural*, then that which is spiritual." If converse with the spirit world unfits a man for social enjoyments or civil uses, it is abnormal. As a vigorous intellect must have a sound body to sustain it, so the superstructure of a developed spirit requires a doubly secure foundation—a healthy body and a healthy mind. A perversion of this highest possibility ex