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Carleton Place Herald.

VOL. XI. CARLETON PLACE, C. W., JANUARY 9, 1861. No. 18.

The Carleton Place Herald,

IS PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING AT *CARLETON PLACE*, BY

JAMES POOLE,

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

To whom all communications, remittances, &c., should be addressed.

Only One Dollar a Year.

ADVERTISEMENTS will be inserted at the following rates:—

Six lines and under first insertion, 75 cents and 20 cents each subsequent insertion; six to ten lines, first insertion, $1,00, and 30 cents each subsequent insertion; above ten lines, 10 cents per line for the first insertion; and 3 cents a line for each subsequent insertion. The number of lines in an advertisement to be ascertained by the space which it occupies in a column. Advertisements without specific directions inserted until forbid and charged accordingly.

SIX LITTLE FEET ON THE FENDER.

In my heart there lives a picture
Of a kitchen rude and old.
Where the firelight tripped o'er the rafters,
And reddened the roof's brown mould;
Gliding the steam from the kettle
That hummed on the foot-worn hearth,
Throughout all the livelong evening
Its measures of drowsy mirth.

Because of the three light shadows
That frescoed that rude old room—
Because of the voices echoed
Up mid the rafters' gloom—
Because of the feet on the fender,
Six restless, white little feet—
The thoughts of that dear old kitchen
Are to me so fresh and sweet.

When then the first dash on the window
Told of the coming rain,
Oh! where are the fair young faces
That crowded against the pane?
What bits of firelight stealing
Their dimpled cheeks between,
Went struggling out in the darkness
In shreds of silver sheen.

Two of the feet grew weary,
One dreary, dismal day,
And we tied them with snow-white ribbons,
Leaving him there by the way.
There was fresh clay on the fender,
That weary, wintry night,
For the four little feet had tracked it
From his grave on the gay hill's height.

Oh! why, on this darksome evening,
This evening of rain and sleet,
Rest my feet all alone on the hearthstone?
Oh! where are those other feet?
Are they treading the pathway of virtue
That will bring us together above?
Or have they made steps that will dampen
A sister's tireless love?

WHAT WE NEED TO EAT.

Eating is one of the necessities of life; but when, what, and how much we should eat, every man must settle for himself, since the savans have failed to agree upon any system. If we are governed by appetite, and the sense of taste, stimulated by all the refinements and inventions of gastronomy, we are very likely to err on the side of gluttony, and bring upon ourselves serious diseases.—If, on the other hand, we are too abstemious—but there is so little danger of that, we need not take time to enlarge upon it.

Even the experienced trainers of the prize-ring cannot decide what is the best food for training men up to their greatest powers of endurance. In England they have a prejudice in favor of mutton chops and underdone beefsteaks; but it is by no means sure that this is the best. The Roman soldiers, who conquered the world, and built roads from Lisbon to Constantinople, and who were all trained athletes, marching under a weight of armor and baggage that few men in our day could carry, lived on coarse brown wheat or barley bread, which they dipped in sour wine.

In our own day, the Spanish peasants are among the strongest and most agile men in the world. One of them will not hesitate to take a mad bull by the horns. He will work all day in a copper mine, or at the olive-press or the wine-press, under a hot sun, and then dance half the night to the music of a guitar. What does he live on? A piece of black bread, an onion, perhaps half a water melon. You may see him dipping his piece of bread into a horn of olive-oil, and then into some vinegar made hot with pepper and garlic, and he is happy. Sometimes he gets a draught of harsh, sour wine, but not strong. All the strong wine is sent to England.

The Smyrna porter walks off with a load of 800 weight. His only food, day after day, is a little fruit—a handful of dates, a few figs, a bunch of grapes, some olives. He eats no beef, pork, or mutton. His whole food does not cost him a penny a day. And the climate of the south of Spain, or of Smyrna, where the plague is almost endemic, can not be considered better than ours.

The Coolie, living on his rice, can outwork the negro fed on bacon. The Arab, living on rice and dates, conquered half the world.

Not only may the most tremendous muscular force and great powers of endurance be nourished upon a very light vegetable diet, but great mental energies as well. For example, St. Gregory Nazienzen lived on bread, herbs, and salt. The great St. Ambrose, of Milan, lived in rigorous abstinence, and seldom broke his fast before noon. St. Chrysostom, called on account of his eloquence, the Golden-mouthed, ate one meal a day of bread and herbs. St. Augustine lived on pulse and herbs. St. Bernard, the ablest and most influential man in Europe in the twelfth century, lived on coarse bread softened in warm water; and great numbers of the ablest and most eminent men, in all times, have lived in great abstinence.

We eat too much. Many people eat breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea, supper—five meals a day, and four of them hearty ones, with various kinds of flesh meat and prepared dishes. A majority of Americans eat flesh three times a day. Irish laborers, who never eat flesh a dozen times in their lives, come here rosy with health and strong as oxen. They fall into the habits of the country—eating pork, and drinking tea, coffee, and whiskey—and in two or three years they lose their rosy cheeks, their clear, bright eyes, their strength and endurance. They have sallow skins, bad teeth, and rheumatism. They lay it to the climate. It is to be attributed far more to the change in their habits of eating and drinking. If Irishmen who came would live here just as they did at home, they would not complain of the climate. The smartest Irishwomen we know of—a little woman who can roll a barrel of flour up to a room in the third story, and walk ten miles, without prejudice to a hard day's work—has not tasted meat for twenty years, and lives every day on a little bread, and a pennyworth of milk boiled up with a very weak cup of coffee.

Our sanitary reformers have not looked to the diet question; will they allow us to call their attention in that direction? The stomach is the centre and citadel of organic life. It is worth a little consideration, as well as the lungs and skin, which depend upon it.—*N. Y. Weekly.*

AN ENGLISH DOG SHOW.

The famous Birmingham Cattle and Poultry Show is now open, and the collection is declared to equal in most respects the exhibitions of previous years. There is, however, one notable novelty—an exhibition of sporting and other dogs. This feature of the show is thus described by the *Times*:—

"Under the presidency of Lord Curzon and the management of an influential committee, prizes of large amount are competed for by some 300 dogs, in the Horse Repository of Messrs. Bretherton and Harrison.—No such complete classification has ever been attempted before. Viewing the strange diversities in form, capability, and disposition of the dogs in this whining, growling, and barking menagerie, we can scarcely admit the doctrine that the animals are merely varieties of one species, and that all have been developed by differences of food, circumstances, and training from a single original pair; or, as some say, are collectively a tamed derivation from the lean and savage wolf. In this gathering of all description of hounds, for instance, what extraordinary differences are observable in the nature and uses of the several breeds. Whatever of swiftness in pursuit of nimble game, of miraculous keenness of scent for a hidden or flying enemy, of untiring patience of search, of lithe agility or enduring speed, may be required for hunting over the open field, across the deep flood, in the burrowed intrenchment or the recesses of the rock—in short, whatever excellencies and peculiar instincts are valuable in the mighty hounds that chase the antlered deer; in the keen, swift and sturdy hound that seeks the wily fox; in the slender, facile greyhound, all elegance and ease in rapid flight and leap; in the shaggy, half amphibious otter hound; in the terrible bloodhound, with his pendent lip; in the clever pointer and careful retriever—all are illustrated by perfect and unusually fine examples among numbers of the highest superiority of breed. The bloodhounds from a very grand class, to which the Earl of Bagot contributes the most magnificent specimens, remarkable for their character of head and expression. The fox hounds would have been a larger class at any other season of the year. Viscount Curzon and Earl Grosvenor are the prize winners.—Harriers and beagles are but few. The large rough-coated deerhounds make a fine show, each a seeming original of a Landseer picture. There are some specially fine greyhounds. The large pointers are the principal class, most of them of great merit; and the small pointers, especially the bitch class, still more extraordinary—the Hon. H. W. Powys, Mr J. S. Soresby, Mr H. Gilbert, the earl of Derby, and the Earl of Lichfield carrying off prizes. The English setters are highly thought of. The prize dogs are very fine. Some setters and spaniels, shown by Mr Burdett, are considered unequaled.—The retrievers are exceedingly good, Mr Brailsford and Lord A. Paget winning the prizes. There is a good class of Clumber spaniels, used for cover shooting. Mr Boales and Earl Spencer exhibit the most meritorious. The two German boarhounds were much admired for their strength and handsome appearance. Turning to the other division of the show, we have the majesty of the massively framed mastiff, ferocious as a tiger to strangers, sagacious "as a Christian" in detecting thievery and chicane-gentle as a lamb to the hand that feeds and loves him; and we have the weedy, slim Italian grayhound, in form suffering from internal and external stricture, yet all grace and tenderness; shivering at the end of a riband or a watch-chain, and incapable of stronger field exercise than the hunting of a guinea-pig.—There is the nobility of the powerful Newfoundland, with his colossal paw—humane savior of wrecked mariners from the swallowing wave; and there is the antic loving toy terrier, ridiculous for its littleness, delighted to be caressed upon his lady's knee. There is the iron jawed bulldog, with his stealthy spring and unrelenting grip, fierce, unflinching to death; and there is the tiny spaniel, which loves to be nursed and dandled, or peeps timidly out of the shelter of his mistress's muff. There is the active black and tan terrier, sworn enemy of all four-footed vermin; and there is the lazy, curly King Charles, in an ungainly state of plethora of good living, able to waddle after a comely dame or repose upon her handsome hearthrug. There is the home spun, plain, intelligent sheep-dog; and there are the grotesque, negro-featured pug, and the Skye-terrier, little like a ferret, and shaggy beyond recognition of head or tail. The mastiffs are a superb class; the black Newfoundland equally good; the bull-dogs repulsive, yet interesting from the very extravagance of sullen savageness and latent brutality in their expression, and for their well known pluck prize-ring qualities. Sheep dogs are fairly represented; the terriers attractive and maintaining the credit of their order. One 'rough customer' of a Scotch terrier is indeed a marvel; he is said to weigh less than three pounds, yet he is over two years old, and a day or two ago killed a fierce big rat, and his selling price is fifty guineas. One inimitably ugly pug, that as a lapdog would by contrast give charms to a gorgon, is priced at a thousand guineas. The Italian grayhounds and diminutive toy terries of course attract most attention from the fair visitors. The Alpine mastiffs, St Bernard dogs, an awful rough Russian terrier, the rare Maltese lion dogs, and the Esquimaux fox dogs, are also a source of great interest."

Very recently some interesting and very perfect antiquarian remains were discovered at Island Bridge close to the Great Southern and Western Railway, Ireland. Some workmen employed in excavating for building purposes, came suddenly on a human skeleton with a broad and commanding forehead. The bones were perfect till the admission of the atmosphere, when they partly crumbled away. By the side of the figure lay a sword—pronounced by some scientific men, who quickly visited the spot, to be of Danish workmanship, also some arrow and spearheads of ancient form. The most remarkable object found, however, consisted of a pair of scales, which lay across the breast of the figure, the weighing plates of fine bronze, and the beam ingeniously formed so as to receive into itself as the blade goes into the handle of a penknife, that portion by which the scales are held aloft. Precautions are being taken to preserve the remains for further investigation.

The work of God among the Jews is greatly progressing. Ten adult Jews and Jewesses were recently baptized in London (England) by the Rev. Dr Ewald, in his church, Palestine Place. A large number of the descendants of Abraham were present, and listened with the greatest attention to the Dr's solemn and appropriate discourse.

A SHORT SERMON.

The following short but interesting sermon we clip from the Berkshire County *Eagle*, published in Pittsfield, Mass. The author of the discourse is the venerable Dr. Humphrey, late President of Amherst College, one of the best men we have ever known, who is spending his evening of life in usefulness and activity, in doing good. For length and directness it is a sample, and it treats upon a subject of every day importance to all classes in the community.

ROMANS, 13, 8—"Owe no man anything."

How are we to understand this? How can poor folks help running in debt sometimes? And indeed, who in active business is so rich, that he can carry it on, on a large scale, and always pay down? Debt and credit are often for the mutual advantage of both the borrower and the lender. If any neighbor has a hundred dollars to lend, and I want it, and can give him my note on interest for it, and my responsibility for that sum is undoubted, it is an accommodation to us both, and violates no moral rule. The exhortation, owe no man anyting, then, is not to be taken in the absolute sense, as forbidding all indebtedness to anybody. We are to look for some other meaning, and we need not look far, or look long, to find a great deal of meaning, as in the following cases:—

1. You may not contract any debt, which you have no reason to expect you shall ever be able to pay. This would be dishonest. It would be taking another man's property, and appropriating it to your own use dishonestly, whether he be able to lose it or not. You gave him your note or your promise, but that does not alter the case. You knew or ought to have known, that payment would be out of your power. Though you did not take the money or the goods without his consent; though you did not deliberately intend to cheat him, it amounts to the same thing, he never gets his pay. It was morally certain when you took the property, that you never could pay him. This is more than a supposable case. It is done often.—But it is not right. In this sense, we may not owe anything to anybody.

2. It is a violation of the scripture precept, when the creditor is put off, beyond the time promised, and you have the means of meeting the engagement punctually. This is often done; sometimes from mere slackness, sometimes by appropriating the money to other uses which might have been postponed, thus putting the creditor to great inconvenience, at least, if not subjecting him to absolute loss. This is not right. It is not doing as he wants to be done by. Nor is it right to omit any reasonable effort to have the money ready by the time. There may be some providential disappointment, for which all reasonable allowance ought to be made. But punctuality in the payment of debts, is a bounden duty too plain to need further remarks.

3. The moral rule forbids needless expenditures upon one's own family, to the neglect of honest debt. Without mooting the question how much it is right to lay out on dress, furniture and the like, it is plain, that when I owe money, which I have promised to pay by a given time, I have no right to take it and lay it on myself, or my wife, or my daughter, in purchases that we could very well do without, when my creditors may need it for necessary current expenditures, or to meet some ripening engagements to their creditors. Such are the extravagences of the times, in dress and parlor furniture, &c., that I am afraid there is a great deal of wrong here, between which, and *dishonesty*, it would require a nice casuist to draw the line. Our duty is to meet all maturing engagements first and then consider, how much, out of what is left, we may lay out to meet the clamors of emulation, demanding what we shall eat and what we shall drink and wherewith we shall be clothed, so as to equal or eclipse our wealthier neighbors.

4. The rule forbids keeping merchants, mechanics and day laborers out of their just dues, although the time of payment may not be specificed. There is a sort of common moral law in all these cases, which everybody ought to understand and be governed by. It is not enough to pay the merchants some time or other. He wants the money to pay for goods which he sold you and to purchase more. To put him off a year when by the common rule his money was due in half that time, or less, is not right.

So with mechanics in a small way.—Ordinarily, they are not able to trust their customers very long. When they have done their work faithfully, they want their pay promptly, to support their families, to purchase more stock, and to meet their obligations as they become due; and they ought to have it. I am sorry to say, that with some who are abundantly ably to pay, when the work is done, "there is utterly a fault" in this matter. They compel mechanics to wait a great while, by mere forgetfulness, or something worse, for what they need to pay rentes and purchase bread for their families. They are so dependent that they hardly dare to present their bills for fear of losing their rich customers, who understand it very well and consult their own convenience as to the time of payment. This is not right, it is cruel. Owe no man anything, in this way.

5. The rule lays an injunction upon men of business and venturesome enterprise, not to take other people's money to speculate with, in hopes of making their fortunes by it. This has been, and is too often, done in making haste to be rich, A great many have ruined themselves and cheated their honest creditors, just in this way. They take money which will sooner or later become due on outstanding obligations, and venture it upon hazardous speculations, not doubting that it will return them fourfold, but often lose the whole. Or they borrow all the money they can of their friends, at the highest interest, form companies, talk large, show great prospective dividends, in figures and maps on clean white paper, and in a year or two, more or less, wind up in hopeless bankruptcy. Now I do not charge them with absolute cheating those of whom they borrow the money, because it was done in the common way of borrowing and lending; but it is not right. It is venturing what does not belong to the speculator, upon a throw of the dice, and can't be excused upon the plea, that no wrong to the creditor was intended. It is bad enough for a man when he will wrong nobody but himself and family by the failure—When it is done with other people's money, it is inexcusable.

6. This rule forbids poor men from contracting debts, even for necessary food and clothing, when they have nothing to pay and no prospect that they shall have. I do not say that no case of extremity can justify this; but if there are such cases amongst us, they are extremely rare. It is right for a poor man who wants absolute necessities for his family, and has nothing to pay down, to go where they are to be had, state the case just as it is, and ask to be trusted with a promise to pay if he ever gets able. If the grocer, shoemaker, farmer or whoever it may be, consents to trust him under these circumstances it is all fair and honest.

But it would not be honest to go from one shop to another and run in debt, promising to pay when there is little or no prospect of his ever being able to do it, even where the necessaries of life must be had from some quarter. When the suffering condition of the poor family is made known more or less will be contributed by neighbors and friends, and if these resources shall fail, the laws come to their aid to keep them from suffering, The whole town is taxed to equalize the burden. This is as it should be and is in all Christian states.

Such are some of the most important cases which fall under the rule, owe no man anything. But the same verse furnishes one great exception. Owe no man anything, but to love one another. This last is a debt which we all may and do owe, and which ought never to be protested by any of us. This done there would be an equal indebtedness on all sides, so the accounts would always stand balaneed.

"AM I NOT THINE ASS?"—Once, two American ministers were conversing on extemporaneous preaching. "Well," said the old divine (waxing warm), "you are ruining yourself by writing your sermons and reading them off. Your congregation cannot become interested in your preaching, and if you were called upon to preach unexpectedly, unless you could get hold of an old sermon, you would be completely confused." The young divine used all his eloquence, but in vain, to convince the old gentleman that the written sermon expressed his own thoughts and feelings, and if called upon, he could preach extemporaneously. "As we are of the same faith," said the young minister, "suppose you try me, next Sabbath morning. On ascending the pulpit, you can hand me a text from any part of the Bible, and I will convince you that I can preach without having looked at the text before I stood up.—Likewise, I must be allowed the same privilege with you, and see who will make the best of it." The idea seemed to delight the old gentleman, and it was immediately agreed upon.

The following Sabbath, on mounting the pulpit, his senior brother handed him a slip of paper, on which was written: "*And the ass opened his mouth, and spake,*" from which he preached a glorious sermon, charming his old friend with his eloquence. In the afternoon, the young brother, who was sitting below the pulpit, handed him his slip. After rising and opening the Bible, the old man looked anxiously around—"*Am I not thine ass?*" Pausing a few minutes, he ran his fingers through his hair, straightened his collar, blew his nose like the last trumpet, and he read aloud—"*Am I not thine ass?*—Another pause, in which a deadly silence reigned. After reading a third time—"*Am I not thine ass?*" he looked over the pulpit at his friend, and in a doleful voice said—"*I think I am rother!*"

A few years ago I was travelling in South America. As I approached the base of a mountain which lay in my route, I found it covered with what I supposed to be an undergrowth of weeds. But I pressed my way onward, and climed up its sides till I reached the summit. When I had gained the top I gazed around me with delight, and happened to look back upon the winding path in which I had ascended, and lo! my whole path was clearly marked out, to the very foot of the mountain. I found it was caused by my having walked through a growth of the sensitive plant, as it is familiarly known to us, which grows indigenous there. It had left all my way plain before me, so that I could trace my footsteps in all their curves and deviations, as I had struggled up the sides of that beautiful mountain.

A few months after that, as I was reposing in my tent in California, at 12 o'clock at night, a man came to the door of an adjoining tent and called out:

"Are there any Christians here, gentlemen?"

One man sprang from his bed.

"I love my Saviour," said he.

"Come with me, then," said the stranger.

"There's a man dying out here just beyond the walls of Captain——s fort, and he says he wants to talk with a Christian."

They run out together, although the rain poured down in torrents, until they came to where the dying man lay. He was stretched on a couch, I was going to say, but I hardly know what to call it, for it was made up of broken branches. On these he lay while a few bed-spreads were thrown over him.—He was dying. Let us hear his testimony:

He said to my Christian friends who gathered around him:

"I have now reached a point at which the whole scene of my life seems to lie visible before me. Every action that I have committed, every sin, every crime that I have perpetrated before God, seems to stare me right in the face. I can see my way clear back to my youth; and, as I look, the scenes of iniquity and guilt in which I have engaged pass one another before me in terrible review."

They sang with him and prayed with him, and endeavored to console him, and point him to Jesus; but, said he:

"It's all over now—all over! I have rejected Christ, and there is no salvation for me."

He ceased speaking. They sang and prayed with him again; and, whilst thus engaged, he closed his eyes in death. His immortal spirit passed into the presence of the God whom he acknowledged to have sinned against and rejected all his life.

Unconverted friend, you will reach that point by-and-by when every scene of your life, like the life of this dying man, or like my path up the mountain, will pass in terrible review before you. Then your anguish and your agony will be terrible to witness, when you reflect that you have rejected Jesus Christ, and that he is about to leave you to perish in your sins!

The *Times'* correspondent, writing from Paris, says, "it is proposed to erect in Paris, a magnificent Turkish mosque, and a Turkish hotel or caravanserai. It is also proposed to erect a school close to the mosque, for the education of the children of the various followers of Mahommed." This is quite a new effort in favour of the False Prophet for a *professedly* Christian nation to make. It is, however, urging forward the endeavours of the propagators of the true religion. A large Methodist Church is proposed to be erected there at the earliest opportunity.

SEASONABLE HINTS ABOUT PERSONAL COMFORTS.

(*From the Century.*)

A thin shawl may be made warm by folding a newspaper inside of it. The paper is impervious to the wind and cold air from outside, and prevents the rapid escape of the warm air beneath it. Every one knows that the heat of the body is carried off much more rapidly in a high wind than in a calm. The wind blows away the heat evolved from the body; but in a perfectly still air the heat remains, and constitutes, an atmospheric envelope so nearly of the same temperature with the body itself, that the latter is not so quickly robbed of its natural heat.

There are some very interesting facts about the body's power to make and contain heat, which are familiar to all, when told, but which are seldom thought of in daily experience. For example, the body will hold a great deal more heat than it gets from its own furnaces. The stomach is a furnace, and our food is the fuel. It keeps up a uniform temperature in the blood equal to about 98° of Fahrenheit's thermometer. If the stomach could consume food fast enough to maintain that heat the body could not be frozen by any extreme of cold. But in proportion to the severity of cold to which the body is exposed, is the rapidity with which it loses. Some substances taken into the stomach make a hot blaze much sooner than others, as brandy. To put brandy into the stomach is like putting pitch under a steam boiler. It soon burns out, and the greater heat injures the furnace.

We say that the body will hold more heat than it gets from its own furnace. Heat is measured by degrees. On going out of a warm room, the body will immediately begin to lose its heat, and it must part with a certain number of degrees before it can begin to feel cold. The directions have sometimes been given—"Don't hug the stove if you are going to set out on a cold journey." But experience says—do hug it. Get in as many degrees of heat as you can carry, if it is 500. Then wrap yourself up well, and you can economise these 500° through a long ride. But if you had only taken 100° at the start, they would have been exhausted midway of the journey and then you would begin to feel cold. Nevertheless, it is an unhealthy habit to accustom one's self on ordinary occasions to more heat than is actually needed. This is a very common fault, and bears on the pocket as well as on the health. One may easily get the habit of requiring two or three more blankets on a bed than are necessary. Some families will burn twice the fuel that others do, and enjoy less comfort.

The extremities of the body get cold first, often to a painful degree, while the trunk is warm. But so long as the trunk keeps warm, in a person of common vigorous health, there is little fear of "catching cold" by aching toes or fingers. In rail car riding it is much safer to let the toes ache than to allow the lungs to feed on the foul air around the stove.

When you set out on a winter journey, if you are liable to suffer from cold toes, which you may do in spite of 'rubbers,' fold a piece of newspaper over your stocking, which you can readily do, if your boots or shoes are not irrationally tight. This is better than "rubbers," which are, in fact, very cold comforters in extreme, while they make the feet sweat in moderate weather. The main use of India rubber over shoes is to keep out water, and for that they are second to a stout, water proof, first-rate calf skin boot.—There is not a more villainously unwholesome article of wear made than the high topped rubber boot. It makes the foot tender, especially in children, gives an ugly gait, and when left off in any weather, the wearer is liable to "catch cold." Saint Crispin is the best friend of the human foot, when his leather and stitches are honest.

Although the body can take in a greater number of degrees of heat than it gets from its own furnace, the stomach, yet its capacity is limited in this respect. For example, when the hand is warm, you cannot hold it in the air of a hot oven for a second; but when it is cold, and especially when damp also, you may hold it there for some time without being obliged to withdraw it. And so of the whole body. It appears that the body may carry less, as well as more heat, than the quantity supples by its own furnace. Its extremities and surface are often become painfully cold.

In winter, a traveller occasionally finds in a hotel a deficiency of bed covering; or in the sensitiveness of disease, he may require more than he would in health. The newspaper for which he paid two cents on the cars, spread under the upper cover, will be equal to an additional blanket.

A piece of silk oilcloth, stitched in the folds of a shawl is more flexible than the paper, and will last a whole winter.

The constitution vivacity and temper of a person has much to do with his endurance of cold. For his vivacity is a sort of nervous fire that lessens the sensibility to outward impressions. An indifferent, milk and water person, without energy and force, is at the mercy of every cold blast that sweeps round the corner. He, and especially she, has no defence but to wear a dozen shawls during the day, and sleep under a bale of blankets at night. One without any mental purpose, (unfortunately there are such,) though in vigorously health, is much more liable to catch cold than a spirited delicate body bent on some positive pursuit.

In this world of changeable climate, there are not a few people who get in the habit of being annoyed by any weather that is in the slightest degree adverse to their present caprice. In winter they don't like winter; in summer they prefer autumn; and in autumn spring is the most delightful season of the year. A snow storm in August would be charming, but in its proper season it is a perfect nuisance. For such people we are incapable of writing any useful hints. We hope they will succeed in doing what they set out to do, until they are punished into acquiescence with all the seasons of the year—that is, in making themselves uncomfortable, no matter what wind blows, or what sun shines.

The last Paris *Moniteur* publishes the report of M. Guerin Meneville, on the result of the introduction into France and Algeria of the China silk-worm, which produces a very strong silky thread, and so cheap that it may be used for the clothing even of the laboring classes. The experiment is said to have been very successful, and the enthusiastic reporter says, that the new silk-worm will produce, "in the course of a few years, sufficient silk to furnish the clothing of the working classes of France, to the exclusion of cotton fabrics.

The new Armstrong guns cost the English Government $10,000 each.

THE FINAL DESTINY OF THE EARTH.

Encke's comet, which revolves about the sun in 3½ years, has been observed to complete its revolutions in a constantly shortening period, snowing that it is being drawn inward towards the sun. This fact has led to the general conclusion by astronomers that the planets are moving in a resisting medium; far more attenuated than our atmosphere, but still sufficient to affect their motions. If this is so, it follows by strict necessity that our earth and its sister orbs are all winding spirally towards the sun, and that they must eventually strike against it and become incorporated with its mass. The time required for this purpose belongs to those inconceivable periods with which geology and astronomy have to deal. The resisting medium is so exceedingly attenuated that it exerts but a slight influence on the comets, which are themselves masses of the very thinnest vapor, and its influence would of course be very much less on the dense matter of the planets. Astronomical observations, with all their wonderful delicacy, have yet failed to detect the slightest progressive shortening in the periods of revolution of any of the planets. It is curious however, to note the multiplied obstacles which prevent the perception of this fact, if it does exist. All the measures of these revolutions are shortening with the revolutions themselves. If we begin, for instance, with the earth, the problem is to ascertain whether the time occupied by the earth in its journey around the sun is gradually becoming shorter. The first plan that suggests itself is to compare this with the rotation of the earth upon its axis, to see whether the year occupies the same number of days and hours and seconds that it did in former times. But if the earth is gradually cooling, it is contracting in size, and its rotations on its axis are becoming more rapid; in other words, the day is shortening with the year; and if the measure shrinks just in proportion to the thing measured, we cannot tell whether the latter is becoming shorter or not. If we take the time of the revolutions of the moon around the earth as a standard, the same resisting medium would draw the moon towards the earth and shorten the month also with the year. If we resort even to the less satisfactory measure of the sun's rotation on its axis, his bulk is also diminishing by the adiation of his heart, and the period of his rotation is consequently becoming shorter. In brief, from the two causes of radiation and the resisting medium, all the times and instances which could be used to measure the earth's distance from the sun [or the period of its annual revolution] are shortening together. So that the differences in the extent of these several contractions are the only means left for detecting by observation the approach of the earth to the sun, if such approach is really taking place. These differences would doubtless reveal themselves in the course of generations to reuned astronomical observations.

If the earth and the sun are gradually becoming cold, this winding of the earth towards the sun would tend to keep up its warmth, and it may be a wise provision for prolonging, by some millions of years, the continuance of animal life upon the globe. But this period must come to a close, for if there is a resisting medium pervading the space between us and the sun, the final destiny of the earth is to curve gradually inward till, with a velocity hundreds of times greater than that of a cannon ball, it dashes itself with an awfully sublime crash into the mass of the sun.—*Sci. Am.*

THE REAL CAUSE OF BLASTED WHEAT.

Messrs. Editors:—In answer to your correspondent, S. S. C., on page 163, present volume of Scientific American, asking the cause of wheat being "blasted," I would state that, being raised a regular farmer, and having considerable experience, I am well satisfied that the preceding crop has little to do in causing the blast; bad seed is in general the cause. An old farmer in Tennessee had good wheat seed, known as "barrel seed," which had been proved to yield better crops than any other in the neighborhood; the result was, that everybody came to him for seed wheat. The old man getting tired of exchanging in this way, at last told his neighbors that they could produce "barrel wheat" themselves The secret was, to take and strike the sheaves over the edge of the barrel, and what scattered off was "barrel wheat." The largest, best-matured grain coming off first.

That smut is produced by the use of seed not fully matured can be easily proved. Take a few bundles of No. 1 wheat in the early dough state, sow it, and it will produce a glorious crop of smut; but take from the same wheat when fully ripened, and sow it either after oats, corn, or clover, and the wheat will be good. Defective grain is only able to produce a stalk and start the grains, but not finish it. Put such grain into a solution of blue stone and in a few hours the germ is dead; good grain will resist the power of the acid for a day or two. The only benefit to be derived from soaking wheat in blue-stone is, it destroys the germ of such grains as were not fully ripened.

In these fast times every one is in a hurry; and hence, in order to meet the market, it becomes necessary to take up the hoe-cake before it is done, so as not to be *left* by the cars.

Those who believe me to be mistaken can prove for themselves, it is an easy experiment. N. A. P.

Kingston, Tenn., Sept. 25, 1860.

The Xenia [Ohio] News is publishing a series of reminiscences by an engineer. In No. 24 of his series, the writer gives the following rather startling incident: I was running a night train, and had ten cars—eight passenger and two baggage cars, and all were well loaded. I was behind time, and was very anxious to make a certain point; therefore I was using every exertion, and putting the engine to the utmost speed of which she was capable. I was on a section of the road usually considered the best running ground on the line, and was endeavoring to make the most of it, when a conviction struck me that I must stop. As something seemed to tell me that to go ahead was dangerous, and that I must stop if I would save life. I looked at my train, and it was all right. I strained my eyes and could see no signal of danger nor anything betokening of danger, and there I could see five miles in the daytime. I listened to the working of my engine, tried the water, looked at my scales, and all was right. I tried to laugh myself out of what I then considered to be childish fear; but, like a Bonaparte's ghost, it would not down on my bidding, but grew stronger in its hold upon me. I thought of the ridicule I would have heaped upon me, if I did stop; but it was all of no avail.

The conviction—for by this time it had ripened into a conviction—that I must stop, grew stronger, and I resolved to stop; and I shut off, and blew the whistle for brakes accordingly. I came to a dead halt got off, and went ahead a little way, without saying anything to any body what was the matter. I had my lamp in my hand, and had gone about sixty feet, when I saw what convicted me that premonitions are sometimes possible. I dropped the lantern from my nerveless grasp, and sat down on the track, utterly unable to stand; for there was a switch, the thought of which had never entered my mind, as it had never been used since I had been on the road, and was known to be spiked, but which was now open to lead me off the track. This switch led me into a stone quarry, from whence stone for bridge purposes had been quarried, and the switch was left there, in case stone should be needed at any time; but it was always kept locked, and the switch rail spiked. Yet here it was wide open, and had I not obeyed my premonition—warning—call it what you will—I should have run into it, and, at the end of the track, only about ten rods long, my heavy engine and train, moving at the rate of forty-five miles per hour, would have come into collision with a solid wall of rock eighteen feet high. The consequences, had I done so, can neither be imagined nor described; but they could, by no possibility, have been otherwise than fatally horrid. This is my experience in getting warnings from a source that I know not and cannot divine. It is a mystery to me—a mystery for which I am very thankful, however, although I dare not attempt to explain it, nor say whence it came.

GOLD IN WALES.—At the recent meeting of the Manchester Geological Society, Mr. T. A. Readwin read a paper on the gold discoveries of Merionethshire. His remarks applied to an area of 20 square miles, situate north of the Mawdnach, between Dolgelly and Barmouth. After referring to the various mines in the Dolgelly districts in which gold has been discovered, he observed that there are many mineralised quartzose veins in the Clogan Mines, but in that called the 'North Crant' is the most remarkable, called the St David's or Gold Lode. This load has a direction nearly east and west, and is almost perpendicular. It is from two to three feet wide, and impregnated with sulphides of copper, lead, iron and zinc, and also with native gold. The St. David's lode has had a shallow adit driven on the course of it for about 15 fathoms, and several rich bunches or strings of gold have been taken there from. From this lode, then called 'poor' copper ore, was raised at a slight advance upon the current price. In 1854 one stone was raised and crushed which sold for £24, and on another occasion 100 lbs. weight of quartz yielded 7½ oz. of fine gold. Whether this discovery of gold will eventually prove of commercial value or not, remains to be proved. There is a singularly interesting array of facts in favor of such a probability. Arrangements have been recently made with the Crown to work this 'Royal mine'. Operations were recommenced on August 28th on St. David's lead, and about 15 cwt. of stuff broken down. Upon examination many of the stones were found to be very rich in gold, associated with galena, sulphides of copper and iron, and a doubtful mineral, called at present 'white metal.' Several mineralogists have had samples of it to examine and name; and it is not a little remarkable that there is no unanimity amongst them as to its name. An interesting discussion followed the reading of the paper in which Messrs. Pease, Atkinson, and Readwin took part.

THE LIVINGSTONE AFRICAN EXPEDITION.

The following letter from Dr. Livingstone is published:—

Mazars, Zambezi, Sunday, March 25, '60.

Sir: We came down again to the sea in the hope of meeting a cruiser, but, none appearing, we returned hither and find a passage down to Quilimaine for Mr. Rae, our engineer, who is sent home on duty connected with the expedition.

We now proceed without any stoppage up to the Makolodo country, and will, on the way, examine every inch of the river up to Victoria Falls. We shall be able to say definitely whether a good steamer may steam the rapids of Kebra-Basa. Our opinion, founded on what we already know, is that in all ordinary floods the passage would be easy for a powerful boat. The present flood is the highest we have witnessed, and our poor frail steamer, made of material which quickly undergoes chemical decomposition, and ought never to have been employed in an experiment of this nature, shows a decided leaning toward settling and being borne away to the Indian Ocean. If we get her up to Tete she will never go more.

We spent 22 days down in the Mangwol swamps (which we believe to be the hot-beds of fever) in the most unhealty period of the year. We had touches of the complaint, but the mode of treatment we adopt renders the fever not more formidable than a common cold. This is one of the benefits our expedition has to show, and to Dr. Kirk and myself not a small one.

I am, &c.,
DAVID LIVINGSTONE.

PAY YOUR SMALL BILLS.—We do not mean to intimate that it is not well to pay large bills at this time. But it is more important than some suppose that small bills be promptly met at this season. From negligence and procrastination, men who have money enough in their pocket to pay the little bills of one dollar, five dollars or ten dollars, often delay paying them. They do not consider that the receipts of many tradesmen are largely in sums of that amount, and their ability to take up their notes and pay the large merchants with whom they deal, is dependent upon the punctuality of customers who make small purchases. An accumulation of drops makes the river which turns many wheels. It is especially important that we should all be prompt in our payments, now that there is not a very great activity in business. A little care and effort in this respect will be of great service to the community. Let every man who can pay his small bills, pay them at once.—*Providence Journal.*

A New York correspondent of the Richmond *Examiner* states that a barrel of rotten eggs has been purchased for Mr. Beecher's exclusive benefit, and that the next time he discusses political topics in the pulpit he may expect to receive some of these unsavory missiles. Probably they will not have to "keep long."