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HOME JOURNAL

A Department for the Family

PEOPLE AND THINGS THE WORLD OVER

In Buenos Ayres they have a new holiday—Animal Day—which was celebrated on April 29. One of the features of the celebration was the liberation of 500 pigeons.

The London Express has polled its readers on the question of woman suffrage with the following result: 60,047 men and 49,942 women voted against it, and 13,316 men and 37,962 women supported it. Twenty-five thousand eight hundred and eighty-five men and 29,594 women voted for a limited franchise for women.

A proposal to erect a monument to Charles Dickens at Rochester, England, reminds one that considering the greatness he achieved she is the least be-monumented man in Great Britain. Correspondence on the subject shows that this is the direct consequence of a clause in his will in which he expressed an objection to the erection of any memorial, resting his claim to remembrance on his published works.

Allan Bennett MacGregor, a Scotsman, who, on account of asthma, was compelled to live for years in the East, has become a convert to Buddhism, and has returned to England under the name of Bhukkhu Ananda Metteyya, to preach the faith of Buddha. He is the first Buddhist priest who ever set foot in England. His entire possessions consist of eight objects: a small filter, a rosary, a razor, a begging-bowl, and an umbrella and three parts of the yellow robe. He is bound by 272 rules, one of which compels him to be a vegetarian, and to subsist on one meal a day. He must meet no woman eye to eye, and when addressing mixed audiences must conceal his face. He must be drawn by no animal, and is compelled to travel barefoot wherever he goes.

At the Winnipeg exhibition, the depository of the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Bible society had an interesting exhibit in charge of Mr. P. McGregor. There were Bibles displayed in thirty-five languages, and the booth was decorated with the flags of the nations thus represented. Copies were purchased by people who could make use of another language than English.

In sentencing two boys at Middlesex (Eng.) Sessions for house-breaking, Sir Ralph Littler said pernicious literature had brought them to this. It was a scandal to civilization that anyone should be allowed to sell, at the gain of about a farthing per copy, books which taught burglary, and made heroes of burglars. He would like to fine the people responsible for them £1 for every copy sold.

The statue of Queen Alexandra, which was unveiled on the grounds of the London Hospital by the Earl of Crewe, is a colossal bronze, executed by Mr. George Wade. This was the first statue erected of the Queen. There are two bronze panels on the ample stone pedestal which supports the figure. One bears a design which represents in bas relief the opening of the Finsen light department at the hospital. It will be remembered that her Majesty, who is the president of the hospital, introduced the Finsen light here, and gave the first lamp to the institution. The second panel bears an inscription which pays a tribute to the great interest the queen has taken in the hospital.

MAKING PAPER FROM WASTE

The price of white paper has been gradually going up, and now the cost of the other qualities is likely to follow suit within a few years. The only thing that can save it is to find a substance that will take the place of wood pulp in the manufacture of paper. The waste in handling our wood products and the extravagance with which our forests have been treated, if continued, is bound to deplete the supply of pulp wood to be made into paper.

Forests are not only being destroyed but other products are allowed to go to waste which, if used

would make as good paper as the wood. From the *New York Tribune* these two paragraphs are taken giving some of the substitutes which they suggest:—

"The Northwest annually produces a million and a half tons of flax stalks, which are not now used for anything. That amount of waste remains after the twine makers take all they want. It makes excellent paper. The farmers in the South burn or plough under 13,000,000 tons of cotton stalks every year. That which is ploughed under is not wholly lost, for it enriches the soil to some extent, but not so with what goes up in smoke. Five hundred thousand tons of fibre have been adhering to cotton seed every year. It has been fed to farm stock along with the seed and has done the stalk no good. Cattle and sheep do not like the fibre, and the seed cake is better without it. A machine has been invented which, it is claimed, will separate the lint from the seed. Paper makers think they can use it.

"Nobody knows how many millions of corn stalks go to waste, but in quality they are far ahead of cotton stalks, and it is believed they can be made into paper, although it has not yet been done on a commercial scale. Thousands of acres of wild hemp grow in the southwestern part of the country, particularly along the Colorado River. Its only use now is to shelter jack rabbits and coyotes, but it has good fibre, and tests on a small scale show that excellent paper can be made from it. Paper making from straw is a well established industry. Bookbinders use thousands of tons of straw board. The straw which goes to waste in Western wheat fields would bring fortunes if made into paper. The time has not yet come when it is absolutely necessary that substitutes for pulp wood be found, but it is coming. The forests are still able to furnish materials for paper, but they cannot continue to do so for a great many years to come at the present rate of cutting and growth. Makers of paper anticipate a scarcity of pulp wood, and it is this which prompts the active search now going on for substitutes."

THE LEAST KNOWN OF AMERICAN WRITERS

The Americans nowadays are discussing the widening influence of Thoreau. If it was the fate of Milton to be borne an age too late, it was the misfortune of Thoreau to be born about half a century too soon. What he gave to the world, the world was then unable to assimilate. His message was for another age of men than that in which he lived. Men think now that they are appreciative of his philosophy, and are beginning to speak vaguely of the widening influence of Thoreau.

Thoreau, Henry David Thoreau, that very name has an unfamiliar sound in our ears, and the man was as strange as his name and character are unfamiliar. It is the fate of genius frequently to be misunderstood. It was the fate of Thoreau to be ridiculed and laughed at by his own generation as well as to be misunderstood. His neighbors regarded him as a sort of a harmless lunatic, the world knew him as a fanatic, his family looked upon him as a vagabond, as a sort of a tramp. He adored Nature. He was always writing in a most unintelligible way about her. He described himself in language that seemed pure nonsense to his friends, and eccentricity or affectation to his contemporaries. He lived in a hermit's hut in the woods, railing against work and the set forms of society, living out his own life in solitary opposition to the world about him. All the time he was writing books, such works as, "A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers," and "Life in the Woods." They came from the presses stillborn. Nobody would read them. They were returned by the booksellers to the author. A few men like Ralph Waldo Emerson professed to understand Thoreau, but even Emerson was far from appreciating his motive.

A little less than half a century has rolled away since Thoreau's death—he died in 1862, at the age of forty-five—and now a twenty volume edition of his "Walden," the "Life in the Woods" book is coming from the publishers. Scraps of paper bearing his handwriting are selling for their weight in gold. His manuscripts bring fabulous prices and the rejected copies of earlier editions sent back to the then unappreciated author are treasured up. His countrymen are beginning to think they understand him. The world sometimes is tardy in its recognition of genius in letters, but recognition comes ultimately if the genius is of the proper mould. Thoreau's influence is widening and his expansion is the triumph of simplicity and truth.

THE COUNTRY BOY'S ADVANTAGE

The biographies of most great American men have somewhere in their first chapter "He was a poor country boy" or words to that effect, as if the measure of humbleness and lowly position was reached in that combination of country life and poverty. But it isn't the limit in that direction, by any means; away below that is the poor city boy.

Neither of them get very much schooling as a usual thing, because there is work to be done to help keep the home going. The country boy goes out to the fields the day after he brings his books home, and though he works long hours he has the sky and the sun and Mother Earth for companions and friends. Every day he can observe some force of nature in action, and store up some new secret of the out-door life. He is developing physically too, broadening out in the shoulder, strengthening his lungs and growing into a man fit to bear a man's burdens. When winter comes there is another opportunity to use his books either at home or school, and no cheap theatres and noisy saloons to coax him away from them. He is getting fit to use a chance when it comes.

When the child of the city poor leaves school it is to help earn wages to pay high rents, and to buy the necessities of life, everyone of which has to be obtained over a counter. There is no garden patch attached to a city house to grow the family potatoes and onions, no pasture field for a cow to supply milk and butter. Everything must be bought in small parcels at high prices and of a poor quality. So at twelve or fourteen the boy turns out, not into the fields, but into the factory. From seven in the morning till six at night he is enclosed between grim walls,—no fresh air, no sunlight, nor pleasant sounds. Instead is the steady hum of machinery, stifling heat and monotonous toil that never varies. The same steps are taken and the same muscles used every hour of every day in the week. His wages are not enough to give him anything but the cheapest pleasures. A day off means a day's less pay, and so is not to be considered often. There are night schools in the city, but a young, growing boy who is caged up ten hours a day cannot be blamed for getting out on the streets for some air and company at night. He isn't often in a position to study at home for several reasons: the poor boy's home is not adapted to studying, and his public school education has not been calculated to make him capable of doing much independent study. Poor as a boy, he is usually poor as a man, because his life is not calculated to develop initiative and constructive energy. The reason the successful country boy has so often that opening quotation in his biography is that, taking everything into consideration, he has more and better chances to make good than his city brother in the same financial condition.