

The Humane Society of Toronto has circulated a timely and well-thought-of request to the drivers and owners of horses, reminding them of their duties to the dumb animals in their charge in the matter of blanketing during the cold weather. Any horse obliged to stand uncovered in the street in frosty weather is the worse physically for such treatment, and provision should be made for the blanketing of those horses that of necessity are obliged to stand out of doors. We trust that our Provincialists will keep up the kindly and sanitary custom of protecting their horses against the subtle attacks of Jack Frost.

A peculiar suit for damages has been brought by Miss Frear, of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., against the Central Hudson Railway. It appears that about a year ago Miss Frear was injured in a collision on the road, and that the young man to whom she was engaged to be married was so injured that he shortly after died. Miss Frear therefore contends that as the accident was admittedly due to the carelessness of the road officials, the Company should become responsible for the injury which it inflicted upon her in depriving her of a husband and therefore of a support and maintenance during her life. She estimates her damages at from \$30,000 to \$40,000, but is willing to compromise for the sum of \$20,000 cash.

Oddly enough, the first experiment in the use of aluminium horse-shoes seems to have been made in the non-progressive Russian army. Some horses in the Finland Dragoons were recently shod with one aluminium and three iron shoes each. After a test of six weeks the aluminium shoe was found to be in complete repair, while many of the iron shoes were broken or otherwise destroyed. The chief advantage of the new horse-shoe is the difference in weight, which is about one-third that of the ordinary shoe. The cost is somewhat greater, but the wearing qualities of the new shoe are undoubtedly better, and the value of the old aluminium is the same as that of the unworked metal. Since not only the comfort of the horse, but the pockets of the horse-owners have been considered in the invention, the aluminium horse-shoe bids fair to be in popular demand.

That lately formed and aristocratic Society, the Sons and Daughters of the Revolution, has recently been celebrating "Evacuation Day" at Washington. The Society proposes to keep alive the memory of past glories by frequent celebrations on popular anniversary days, and has secured the co-operation of the Department of War in the matter of the erection of commemorative tablets at various historic points. So long as the Society is content with celebrating the squabbles of their ancestors over British rule no harm will be done, but already a side contingent are eager to commemorate the battles of the Rebellion, and by so doing to arouse a social but none the less civil strife. However, as the Society is eminently an aristocratic one, no harm may be done, for its energies will probably be speedily diffused in balls, historic masquerades, and other such innocent amusements.

The reason for the marked superiority of the inventive genius of the American workman has been recently explained in the pages of the U. S. A. *Engineering Magazine*. The American mechanic has advantages which are denied to his European brothers—he is in competition or in friendly relation with skilled mechanics of all nations. He can borrow or adopt the methods of the Frenchman, and so greatly improve his former rough handwork, or he may profit by the technical skill of the German immigrants. The British and the Scandinavian workmen are superior to him in training, but with versatile ability he seizes on their ideas, and often improves upon them. A half-developed invention of a French workman, and another half-developed idea of a German settler, are put together by the apt mechanic, who, although deficient in training and skill, is yet able to distance his competitors in the field of invention.

The National Society of Great Britain for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children has completed the eighth year of its existence. During the past year the Society has been especially energetic in its investigation of reported cases. No less than 8,325 cases of cruelty to children have been brought before the Society, and 1,115 cases have been brought before the public courts. Not only have brutal parents and guardians been restrained from injuring their charges, but a vigorous protest has been made against a custom much in vogue among young mothers of the poorer class—that of drugging their fretful infants with laudanum and dangerous soothing syrups. The lives of nearly 4,000 children of poor parents, or children put out to nurse, were found to be insured for the benefit of relations, and a vigorous crusade was carried on against this most hurtful practice with very favorable results. The Society has gained the confidence of all classes of society, and is carrying on a most excellent and necessary work for the children of the nation.

Some curious facts have recently been published regarding education in China. The chief attention is given to the dead language of the Empire, which is studied in the primary, the district and the provincial school. The forms of the hieroglyphics are taught and long lessons are learned by rote and recited in a dreary chorus by the entire class. It is the aspiration of many Chinamen to be addressed as Mandarin, and in order to attain that title they must be proficient in the ancient language, otherwise it has no bearing upon their common life. Stringent examinations are held in which three generations of one family may sometimes be found striving for the same title. The present Emperor of China has endeavored to popularise

the study of foreign languages and practical subjects by endowing a college in which a liberal education is given, but prejudice has been so strong against it that he has found it necessary to pay not only the professors, but the pupils as well for their attendance. Some of the students receive two hundred dollars a year for their compliance with the views of the Emperor.

We trust that many of our readers, who have always a kindly word of approval for any lines of ours on the subject of the care of animals, will not overlook a kindness which they may often do to one who generally has the interests of horses greatly at heart. We refer to the cab man. The long tedious wait which he too often has while farewells are being said indoors by the departing guest might surely be curtailed. The driver is not specially blanketed for the occasion, as is often his more fortunate horse, and he endures the pouring rain or the chilly wind as best he may. A prompt response to his summons from the traveller is certainly the best way of solving this difficulty. Last winter a pleasing custom obtained in Halifax of serving a cup of hot coffee and sandwiches, or some similar refreshment, to the drivers who were assembled to carry participants home at a late hour from some social gathering. The custom was a kindly one, was popular with the cab men, and probably warded off many an attack of chills, which so often herald a dangerous lung trouble. By all means, we say, let the excellent custom be kept up, and let it be more and more widely followed.

For many years past the question of the dehorning of cattle has been vigorously discussed in Great Britain, in the United States, and in Canada. In Ireland and in Scotland dehorning is a legalized process, while in England it has received the condemnation of no less an authority than Lord Chief Justice Coleridge. Two suits have been brought by the S. P. C. A. against farmers in Canada who were known to have submitted their cattle to the operation, and heavy fines were imposed upon them. So much discontent was shown by brother farmers at this decision that the Ontario Government appointed a commission of practical men to inquire into the matter, and their decision, it is thought, will hold good throughout Canada. They have unanimously decided that the operation, when properly conducted, is simple and almost painless, and that its after effect on the animal in changing its disposition greatly increases its value. They also enjoin that the farmer shall be held accountable if he does not have the operation performed at the proper season and with the proper instruments. We trust that this decision will settle the vexed question, and that the other rights of the dumb creatures, since their partial mutilation is to be allowed, will be more scrupulously respected.

The many people who have been planning a trip to the World's Fair have been utterly discouraged by the announcement of the trunk line railroads, that the fares would be reduced only 20 per cent, and that excursionists buying at such rates would be compelled to travel by the slower trains. This concession on the part of the railroads is ridiculously inadequate to the demand, and if persisted in would keep the world's travelling public at home. A 40 or 50 per cent reduction on common rates is demanded by the public. During the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia the policy of the roads was at first to keep up the rates. In about five weeks it was found that the stay-at-home public could not be induced to attend, and a frantic amount of advertising of cheap fares was resorted to, with the result of inducing many thousands of people to attend the Centennial. The doctrine which the railroad companies have based the present decision on is that a traveller who wishes to go anywhere will pay the necessary fare. While this is true to a limited extent, there is the sub-doctrine also to be considered—the man who does not wish to travel may often be induced to change his mind when low rates are held before him, and the man who wishes to take a holiday trip at a small cost will be caught at once by excursion rates. In all probability the rates will come down, and intending visitors to the great Fair need not be disheartened by the present decision of the great monopolists.

The British public have been noisy in their complaints against the number of German princes who have made alliances with the Royal family of Great Britain, and have been supported by the taxpayers. The matrimonial affairs of Protestant princes and princesses are very complex. There are few desirable matches to be made among them—there is the taint of new relationship to be avoided in the sacred bond, and both Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches agree in disapproving of mixed or unequal marriage. The Princess Louise, now Marchioness of Lorne, was the first Royal Princess to marry a subject; the eldest daughter of the Prince of Wales followed her example by wedding the Duke of Fife; and a third match of the same nature is now proposed between the second daughter of His Royal Highness and the Earl of Rosebery. Should it ever take place, the last match will be a strange one, for the Earl of Rosebery is a pronounced and popular radical, and is the hereditary enemy, although the personal friend, of the Duke of Fife. The princesses are not far removed from the throne, and it may be that an admixture of Scottish into German blood would be beneficial to the Royal family. The Scottish chieftains may yet fight in the diplomatic field for supremacy in the kingdom. So far the Duke of Fife has certainly the better position, for not only has he allied himself with a popular princess, but the presence of the little Princess Alexandra in his family insures a recognition of the claim of the infant as a possible heir to the throne.

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