

Educational.

LETTER FROM CALIFORNIA.

EDITOR FARMER: I promised you in a former letter to say something more about the schools in this State. My time has been so completely occupied that it has been impossible to redeem my promise before this, and even now, I shall say but a few desultory things as they occur to me. It is very pleasant to note the deep and universal interest which is taken in the rural districts as well as in the towns, in all matters pertaining to education. In all the towns and villages of the State that I have seen, good, substantial, and in many instances elegant school houses have been erected. In most of the most of the country districts there are good school houses. There was expended in 1871, nearly as much for educational purposes as for all the other branches of the State Government. The figures are as follows: total for the schools, including the University and State Normal school, \$1,829,636; total for other purposes, \$2,168,207. The greater portion of the school money was raised by county, district, and school tax; but it is none the less a public tax. The average rate of tax on the assessed wealth of the State was nearly seven mills. But notwithstanding this great liberality, some sections of the State are poorly supplied with educational facilities. The State is cursed by monopolists. In many instances large land owners do not live upon their premises nor lease them to resident tenants. They live in San Francisco, and at the season for putting in crops, they take a band of laborers to their "ranches," seed their land and then return to the Bay. When the harvest time comes, they go upon the land again with a troop of workmen, gather their crops, and market it. They have no houses and no fences upon their farms. Except during the seeding and harvesting time the land is unoccupied. Of course this State of things results disastrously to the school facilities of the small farmers in the neighborhood. The resident farmers must either go without schools or else tax themselves enormously to support them. In this respect, Oregon is very fortunate, as her lands—except the swamp lands, at least—are as yet, pretty generally divided among the people. It is to be hoped that for the future welfare of the country, our State may be spared from the rapacity of the land grabbers. The reality is the very foundation of a State, and all history teaches us that nothing is so essential to the liberty of a people as a sturdy and intelligent yeomanry individually interested in the soil of their country. Wise maxims of legislation demand that we should restrict rather than enlarge the facilities for acquiring title to large tracts of the domain by individuals. But I must return to the subject of my letter. This is one of the great questions of the day and to me it is an all absorbing one. That is my apology for permitting my pen to run off the track.

There has been no legislation of importance as yet at this session in regard to the common schools. Two questions have been agitated considerably; one to admit colored children to the public schools with white children, and another to adopt the compulsory principle of education. The first proposition has been so amended as to provide for the colored children in separate schools except where the trustees and parents in a district agree to a mixed school. The compulsory education bill was brought forward in the Senate and received the entire Republican vote. The Democrats voting unflinchingly against it. It was defeated by four majority. It proposed to require all persons having control of healthy children—to send them to school or teach them at home for three months in each year provided they live within one mile of school houses. It was intended chiefly to reach the delinquents in the larger cities where children out of school are exposed to

all the vices of the street without counteracting influences. It was substantially a copy of the Michigan law.

AID TO AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES.

There has been a liberal appropriation in aid of the State and District Agricultural Societies—the former being allowed \$5,000 a year and each of the latter \$2,000. In addition to this \$2,000 a year is allowed the California Vine Growers and Brandy Manufacturers' Association. The total appropriation foots up about \$25,000 a year. Besides this the annual report of the transaction of the State Agricultural Society is published by the State. It is a considerable volume and its publication cost \$3,000 or \$4,000 a year. These appropriations are generally approved, including to my surprise the one to aid the brandy manufacturers. It strikes me that that "industry" does not need much legislative encouragement in California. At least this is the impression made upon my mind when I notice that every town is overrun with liquor saloons, and that the demand for spirituous liquors is so great that growers must keep it for sale or quit business. Judging from the number of red noses about the State Capitol, I should say that this fact must be apparent even to the law makers. I am glad to see that the friends of temperance in Oregon have agreed upon what appears to be a practical plan for effecting a reform in the whisky business in that State. I believe that the chief difficulty lies in the fact that so many people neglect their duty at the primaries. There is virtue enough in the people to correct this wrong if it can be called into exercise. The remedy is simple—elect the best men to office and support them in their efforts to do their duty. W.

Miscellaneous.

A CURIOUS RACE OF PEOPLE.

An English officer furnishes some interesting information about a curious race of people. He says that among those almost inaccessible hills that skirt southern Hindostan, there dwell the Todas, a race once numerous, but now consisting of less than six hundred souls.

They are the relics of some ancient nation long since stranded in India, whose appearance, language and customs separate them from Hindoos and Mohammedans. The Toda is tall, athletic, of a light bronze complexion, with large, black eyes and features of Roman cast. The hair, whether of men or women, is never cut. Their villages—mounds—consist of a few scattered huts of an oval shape, situated in some secluded spot in the woods or fastnesses of the mountains.

The buffalo is the sole possession of the Toda. He cultivates no land, engages in no merchandise, cares for no commerce. His subsistence is from the milk and meat of the buffalo alone. In the care of them he spends his simple life. At their great annual religious festival strange rites take place in connection with the slaughter of buffaloes for sacrifices.

A herd is driven into an enclosed space, and at a given signal, the animals having been infuriated with shouts and blows, two young men each throw themselves upon a buffalo, and seizing the cartilage of the nose with one hand, with the other shower upon him heavy blows with a club. This continues until the animal becomes exhausted and it is then let go. The whole herd having undergone the process, the young men taking turns at the exercise, a dance and feast wind up the proceedings.

The worst trait in the character of this singular people is that, influenced by a superstitious religious custom, they destroy in a most barbarous manner all their female children.

Sentiments of friendship which flow from the heart, cannot be frozen in adversity.

NEWS BY TELEGRAPH.

ROME, March 27.—The Pope yesterday gave a long audience to the Prince and Princess of Wales. He desired their Royal Highness to convey to the Queen of England her thanks for her constant evidences of sympathy, and he praised the people of Great Britain for their piety.

NEW YORK, March 27.—A special dispatch received here from an official quarter at Madrid states that the political affairs in Spain are in a very critical condition. Amaleus is determined to strengthen his position, and a coup d'etat has been strongly urged by his advisers, who say that lest he acts quickly there is danger of his being compelled to abdicate the throne and leave Spain.

NEW YORK.—European mail advices state the town of Riehmakher, in Caucasus was almost entirely destroyed by a recent earthquake. The number of persons killed was 137, and the destruction of property was very great. A considerable portion of the country is converted into a desert, and the inhabitants are reduced to want by the destruction of the crops.

Professor S. F. B. Morse, the inventor of the telegraph, is lying dangerously ill of paralysis of the brain. He is said to be dying.

City of Mexico advices say that disorder and anarchy prevail throughout the Republic. Persons and property are outraged wherever Government troops are not stationed. Levies continue to be made, and despotic acts are committed by the authorities in many localities. The journals are filled with complaints that the agricultural districts are ruined. The prospects are good for the Government triumphing in the struggle, but the chances for internal peace are remote.

A London dispatch says the contest for the control of the Erie Railroad at the last election narrowed to two London parties. One is Heath & Raphael, the other Bischoffsheim & Goldschmidt. In the Stock Exchange the opinion is generally entertained that if Heath & Raphael succeed a third railroad will be laid, and the Erie put in connection with Canadian, Southern and other roads of the West and Northwest, by way of Chicago; but if Bischoffsheim & Goldschmidt get control a combination will be closed with the Atlantic and Great Western.

LOUISVILLE, March 28.—General Humphrey Marshall died of pneumonia to-day at his residence in this city.

NEW YORK, March 28.—The bark Nimrod was burned at sea near Bermuda, on the 9th instant. Of seventeen persons on board but ten were saved. The vessel was loaded with naphtha and kerosene and an explosion took place in the hold behind the main hatch. It is believed that the captain and his wife and daughter were in the cabin at the time of the explosion. When the fire was seen from the harbor of Bermuda it was too late to render any assistance.

It is rumored that the ordering of the steamer Wyoming to Aspinwall has reference to the case of the steamer Virginus, and that her commander has orders to fire upon the Spanish man-of-war should she attempt to molest the Virginus.

SALT LAKE, March 29.—A memorial of great strength, protesting against the admission of Utah, was adopted at a mass meeting Wednesday night, being signed universally by Gentiles and liberal Mormons. At least 6,000 signatures are expected. Two delegates for the opponents start immediately for Washington to counteract the efforts of Tom Fitch and Elder Cannon.

SAN FRANCISCO, March 29.—Eighty-five thousand dollars was paid into the Custom House yesterday for duties on Australian wool imported on the steamer Montana.

LONDON, March 28.—An explosion occurred at a coal mine at Atherton, near Bolton, by which twenty-eight men were killed outright and eleven rescued, but they are fearfully burned. Nearly all of them will probably die. There is great excitement in the vicinity of the mine.

NEW YORK, March 30.—Twelve cases of small pox and three deaths are reported. The Board has resolved to continue free vaccination.

WASHINGTON, March 31.—There is an absolute dead lock regarding the Alabama question. The American government persists in its determination of maintaining the case hitherto proposed. England persists in refusing to refer the claims for consequential damages to arbitration.

Except for England's course our Government could have honorably suggested that the presentation of consequential damages was not necessarily important. Our argument of the whole case before the arbitration must stand. British authority says England cannot cancel the treaty without the consent of America, and if England refuses to join issue with the arbitrators on the Alabama question, the United States can rightfully treat the agreement as binding on all other points. The hazard of war involves extreme peril to England, whose commerce is her life. So grave does the Post consider the situation, it advises the British Government never to pay consequential damages under any circumstances; but to let the American case go before the tribunal of arbitrators unamended, but under protest.

The bill to pay the California and Nevada volunteers their expenses

home from points where discharged, was favorably reported in the Senate; also the bill conferring citizenship on all persons born in Oregon prior to its acquisition.

BROOKLYN, March 29.—The small pox hospital is crowded to overflowing.

THE EARTHQUAKE IN NEVADA.

GENOA, March 28.—A gentleman just arrived from Independence, Inyo county, reported the earthquake at that place on Tuesday morning as very severe, destroying the Court House, Harris & Rhine's large store, and in fact there is not a brick or adobe building or chimney left standing between Bishop Creek and Independence Camp. Independence is completely in ruins. A Mrs. West, living near the camp, had a child instantly killed, and was herself seriously injured by the falling walls of adobe house—the only fatal result as far as learned at the time the stage left. Fears are felt for the residents of Swansea, Corra Gorda and Lone Pine. The County Clerk and Deputy Sheriff, who were in the Court House, narrowly escaped, the clerk being badly cut about the head with falling brick. A great many persons were badly bruised. At Big Pine a large fissure opened, extending north and south, which was seen for miles, from 50 to 200 feet wide in places, and 20 feet deep, running close to the Sierra Nevada. In many places along the road earth to the height of 20 and 30 feet across was thrown up, and in many places water thrown out of the ground, springs failed that never known to be dry before. From Independence to Bishop's creek the earth is cracked all over. From 2:30 there must have been not less than fifty distinct shocks. The earth seemed to vibrate all the time from this time till 3 p. m. There were about 180 or 200 more shocks. Numbers of persons say they saw flashes from the mountains' sides. At points between Bishop creek and Independence the stage road is badly blocked by rock shelled into the road, and a number of large snow-slides were noticed on the mountain sides. Wells, Fargo's express was covered up in the ruins of Harris & Rhine's store. The stage had to leave without it. No damage was done at Aurora.

VISALIA, March 29.—Reports from Lone Pine, via Portersville, state that town to be in ruins. Twenty-three people were killed, and about 30 wounded. There were 500 hundred heavy shocks in three hours, and about fifty houses shaken down. Will have full particulars by mail to-morrow.

VISALIA, March 30.—From Col Whipple, who just arrived from Lone Pine, we learn the following particulars of a terrible earthquake which visited that section on the 26th inst.: About 2 o'clock a. m. the inhabitants of Lone Pine were awakened by an explosion, followed by a terrible upheaving and shaking of the earth from south to north. In an instant the whole town was in ruins, not a building left standing. Col. Whipple, who was in the second story of an adobe house, states that he had just time to jump from his bed and get away when the house appeared to crumble to pieces beneath him. He was buried among ruins, but succeeded in extricating himself from the debris, suffering from several painful but not dangerous wounds. The scene which then ensued is beyond description. Screams and groans were heard in all directions. Nearly the whole population of the town were buried beneath the ruins. Cries for help and screams of pain from the wounded filled the air, while those who escaped from the ruins were calling for help to rescue fathers, brothers, wives and children, were agonizing to hear. The first shock was followed in quick succession by three others. Over three hundred distinct shocks were felt between 2 o'clock and sunrise; in fact, the earth was in a constant shake and tremble. For over three hours a chasm was opened extending thirty-five miles down the valley, ranging from three inches to forty feet in width. Rocks were torn from their places and hurled down into the valley everywhere. Through the valley are seen evidences of the terrible convulsion of nature.

Cerro Gordo was badly damaged. Many buildings were badly cracked, and some few thrown down. No persons were badly injured. Swansea works were totally destroyed. Buildings all down to the ground, and the walls all thrown down.

All accounts agree in placing Lone Pine over the center of the commotion. Before each shock could be heard, an explosion occurred, which sounded immediately beneath the feet. Over 600 distinct shocks were felt within 58 hours after the first. There is much destitution among the inhabitants of Lone Pine and vicinity, many having lost all but life.

Several distinct shocks were felt in this city last night, and are still coming from the southeast. Persons anticipate trending of immense chasms in the mountains east of us, as soon as the snow disappears enough to admit of investigation in the vicinity of Mount Whitney. Residents described explosions as of dull, heavy sound of a cannon fired immediately beneath their feet, which run along the mountain range north and south until lost in the distance. Indians in the vicinity have all left, fearing the recurrence of a general convulsion of nature, which, according to tradition, occurred

there some hundreds of years ago, and created what is now known as Owens river valley, but what was before a chain of mountains.

We learn the following particulars of the great earthquake in Owens River Valley from private letters received this evening: At Independence, one man was killed, and many persons were more or less injured. Many buildings were badly strained and cracked, and chimneys and walls were thrown down. Among the buildings thrown down were the Exchange, Court House, Harrison's store, John Rhoder's residence. It is estimated that over two hundred buildings were thrown down in all. Not an adobe or brick building is supposed to have escaped destruction. Throughout the county of Inyo up to Wednesday morning, fully one thousand distinct shocks were felt. Tibbitts' ranch, 15 miles from Independence, about forty acres of ground have sunk seven feet below the surface of the country. Owens Lake has risen four feet since the first shock, and Owens river ran over its banks, depositing shoals of fish on the shore. Through Lone pine the earth cracked, one side remaining stationary while others sank seven or eight feet, leaving a wall of earth extending over miles in length, where formerly was a level plain. Innumerable cracks were made throughout the valley. Kizer and Owens river turned and ran up stream for several minutes, leaving their beds dry.

SICK ROOM HINTS.

A sick room should have a pleasant aspect. Light is essential. Blinds and curtains may be provided to screen the eyes too weak to bear full day, but what substitute makes up for the absence of that blessed sunshine without which life languishes? The walls should be of a cheerful tint; if possible, some sort of out door glimpse should be visible from the bed or chair where the invalid lies, if it is but the top of a tree and a bit of sky. Eyes which have been traveling for long, dull days over the pattern of the paper-hangings, till each bud and leaf and quill is familiar—and hateful,—brighten with pleasure as the blind is raised. The mind, wearied of the grinding battle with pain and self, finds unconscious refreshments in the new interest. Ah, there is a bird's shadow flitting across the pane. The tree-top sways and trembles with soft rustlings—a white cloud floats dreamily over the blue,—and now, oh delight and wonder, the bird himself comes in sight and perches visibly on the bough, dressing his feathers and quivering forth a few notes of song. All the world, then, is not lying in bed because we are, is not tired of its surroundings—has not the back-ache! what a refreshing thought! And though this glimpse of another life, the fresh natural life from which we are shut out—that life which has nothing to do with pills and potions, tip-toe movements, whispers, and doctor's boots creaking in the entry—may cause the hot tears to rush suddenly into our eyes, it does us good, and we begin to say with a certain tremulous thrill of hope: "When I go out again, I shall do"—so and so.

Ah, if nurses, if friends knew how irksome, how positively harmful, is the sameness of a sick room, surely love and skill would devise remedies. If it were only bringing in a blue flower to-day and a pink one to-morrow; hanging a fresh picture to vary the monotony of the wall, or even an old one in a new place—something, anything—it is such infinite relief. Small things and single things suffice. To see many of his surroundings changed at once confuses an invalid; to have one little novelty at a time to vary the point of observation, stimulates and cheers. Give him that, and you do more and better than if you filled the apartment with fresh objects.

It is supposed by many that flowers should be carefully kept away from sick people,—that they exhaust the air or communicate to it some harmful quality. This may, in a degree, be true of such strong, fragrant blossoms as lilacs or garden lilies, but of the more delicately scented ones no such effect need be apprehended. A well-aired room will never be made close or unwholesome by a nosegay of roses, mignonette, or violets, and the subtle cheer which they bring with them is infinitely reviving to weary eyes and depressed spirits.—From "Home and Society," Scribner's for April.

The Canada Farmer mentions \$700 as having been realized by a person near Chatham, as the proceeds of hay and clover seed, raised from fourteen acres of land.