

Topics of the Times

Above all, don't treat the grip as a joke.

The wife beaters think the whipping post is an outcropping of "that coarse and brutal strain."

Emperor William knows how to preserve strict neutrality. He has decorated both Stoessel and Nogai.

King Leopold of Belgium has been acting recently as if he considered himself old enough to begin to be good.

Premier Balfour says that England is too great. Doubtless he intended to say too big, for no country can be too great.

John D. Rockefeller says he weighs 200 pounds. It may be that the Ida Tarbell treatment was exactly what he needed.

The Paris doctor who has discovered that kissing promotes digestion needn't expect any rake-off from the pill-makers after this.

Spanking is now prohibited in the New York public schools. This decision meets with the hearty indorsement of the small boy.

Crocker has decided to quit being an English squire and move over to Ireland. Poor old Ireland! Will its troubles never cease?

A Frenchman who had fought 70 duels died the other day from natural causes. Is it necessary to add that they were French duels?

The census shows that there are 18,187,915 students at school in the United States. Yet there are people who don't know enough to come in when it rains.

In the woman suffrage states the habit of kissing the babies is spreading. The fact is cited in proof that the ballot doesn't separate the women from the love of home.

That orator who advises women not to marry until they can support a husband, is evidently a rude, mean man, who thinks Cupid carries a typewriter in one hand and a frying-pan in the other.

Secretary Hay says there is no way to guard against the malady of old age except to associate with young people. Yet women find fault when their husbands are "out with the boys" a few nights in the week.

Russia threatens to do awful things to China if the latter country doesn't begin right away to be more careful about preserving neutrality. Perhaps Russia expects, in case China doesn't heed, that the Japs will sit still and wait while she runs over to administer the slapping.

It is said that the stroke of a lion's paw is the third strongest force in the animal world. The first is the blow of a whale's tail and the second the kick of a giraffe. People who can speak from experience will be likely, however, to cling to the old belief concerning the power appertaining to the hind legs of a mule.

The Cleveland board of public service has been called upon to decide whether a woman may be arrested for washing dishes so early in the morning that the rattling of them disturbs the neighbors. The question need cause no general alarm. The matter seems to be in competent hands, and doubtless stern measures of repression or warning will be taken in time to check the spread of the evil.

One acre in five of a wonderfully rich agricultural valley was sold under foreclosure of mortgage during a year of stringency and low prices. To-day the occupants of the same land are prosperous and happy, and all because of the larger reward which now follows their husbandry. The impetus which recent prices of cotton have given the South can hardly be overestimated. The factory operative of the cities should remember, as he pays a little more for his barrel of flour or for his cotton shirt, what this additional price means to those who raise the great staples of life. Live and let live!

A boy went up to the desk in a public library not long ago with the request, "I want a story in rime called 'Sohrab and Rustum.' Can you tell me where I'll find it?" After the boy had secured the book the librarian remarked, "There is a compliment to Matthew Arnold. That boy's desire for the book is proof more positive than all the criticisms, that 'Sohrab and Rustum' has life in it, has blood and tears in it." This same librarian said, also, that the children of the poor read the classics much more eagerly

than the children of the well-to-do. It is from the children who are devouring the classics with the eagerness of hungry souls that the producers of the classics of the future will come.

Lord Curzon's return to India as viceroy for an additional term beyond that for which he was originally appointed, calls attention to the success of the British in finding the right men for administering the affairs of government in their colonies, and their wisdom in keeping the successful public servant in office. The case of Lord Cromer, as the British representative in Egypt, is another illustration of the point, and Lord Milner is regarded, even by those who disapprove his policy in South Africa, as a brilliant administrator. The Americans did not fall much, if at all, behind the British when they were called upon to solve similar problems. Judge Taft proved, in the Philippines, that he was an administrator of the first rank, and Gov. Wright, his successor, belongs in the same class.

The practice of educating boys for the professions, which are already overstocked, or for the mercantile business, in which ninety-five in a hundred fail of success, is fearfully on the increase in this country. Americans are annually becoming more and more averse to manual labor, and to get a living by one's wit's, even at the cost of independence and self-respect, and a fearful wear and tear of conscience, is the ambition of a portion of our young men. The result is the mechanical professions are becoming a monopoly for foreigners, and the ownership of some of the finest farms, even in New England, is passing from Americans to Irishmen and Germans. Fifty years ago a father was not ashamed to put his children to the plow or to a mechanical trade; but now they are "too feeble" for bodily labor; one has a pain in his side, another a slight cough, another "a very delicate constitution," another is nervous; and so poor Bobby or Billy or Tommy is sent off to the city to measure tape, weigh coffee or draw molasses. It seems never occur to their foolish parents that moderate manual labor in the pure and bracing air of the country is just what these puny, wasp-waisted lads need, and that to send them to the crowded, unhappy city is to send them to their graves. Let them follow the plow, swing the sledge, or shove the foreplane, and their pinched cheeks will be expanded, their sunken cheeks plumped out, and their lungs now "cabineted, cribbed and confined," will have room to play. Their nerves will be invigorated with their muscles; and when they shall have cast off their jackets, instead of being thin, pale, rapid comb-combs, they shall have spread out to the size and configuration of men. A lawyer's office, a counting room, or grocery store is about the last place to which a sickly youth should be sent. The ruin of health is as sure there as in the mines of England. Even of those men in the city who have constitutions of iron only five per cent succeed, and they only by "living like hermits and working like horses;" the rest, after years of toil and anxiety, become bankrupt or retire; and having meanwhile acquired a thorough disgust and unfitness for manual labor, bitterly bemoan the day when they forsook the peaceful pursuits of the country for the excitement, care and sharp competition of city life.

No Trust in Horses.

I have spent much of a long life in the observation of horses. I have reared them, broken them, trained them, ridden them, driven them in every form from the plow to four-in-hand. The result of these years of study is summed up in one sentence: I believe the horse to be part maniac and part idiot. Every horse at some time in his life develops into a homicidal maniac. I believe any man who trusts himself or his family to the power of a horse stronger than himself to be lacking in common sense and wholly devoid of ordinary prudence, writes a Kentuckian to Harper's Weekly. I have driven one commonplace horse every other day for six years over the same road, and then had him go crazy and try to kill himself and me because a leaf fluttered down in front of him. I have known scores of horses, apparently trustworthy, apparently creatures of routine, go wild and insane over equally regular and recurring phenomena. No amount of observation can tell when the brute will break out. One mare took two generations of children to school over the same quiet road, and then in her nineteenth year went crazy because a rooster crowed alongside the road. She killed two of the children. If anyone can tell me of one good reason why man should trust a horse I should be glad to know.

In Brilliant Society.

"Abe Mrs. West's entertainments very exclusive?"
"Well, I should say so; she intends to make application to have the conversation of her guests copyrighted."

When a man makes one mistake, he usually follows it up with three or four before he recovers his balance.

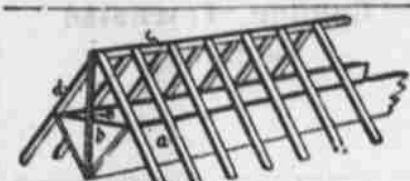
FARMS AND FARMERS



An Effective Trough Guard.

One of the greatest troubles with the hog is that he is so irrepressibly hoggish. When you feed him, he apparently feels it his inherent duty to crowd every other hog as far and forcefully away from the feed as possible. When fed grain on the open floor, he takes it upon himself to cover as much as he can, to keep nosing and pushing his fellows, often to his own loss of food, since more or less is wasted by his rude "table manners." When fed slop in the trough, the biggest hog will invariably work his way through or over the jam, and get his carcass into the trough, where he complacently stands lengthwise, and is not satisfied with that, lays himself down, gulping in his own and the smaller ones' share until too full even to grunt, when he will stretch out for a snooze if the trough is big enough.

To avoid the waste of feed, and to give all an equal chance to secure



A GOOD TROUGH GUARD.

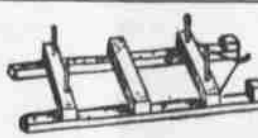
their share, I have a number of schemes and devices, but I consider the one shown in the illustration to be as good as, if not better than, any. Then, too, it is so simple that any farmer with a hammer and saw, and such loose pieces as may be found in almost any scrap pile, can build a substantial affair that will suit.

The first requisite is a good-sized, well-constructed trough, built preferably in V-shape, as shown by "a." The width of the side boards will depend upon the size of the hogs to be fed. A small trough, with six-inch side boards, may be used for the wean pigs, and twelve or sixteen-inch stuff for the large sows and breeding sows. The size of pieces "c" and "d" should depend upon the weight of the animals and the strain likely to come on the frame. For hogs of ordinary weight a piece two by four inches should be used for the ridge-pole, "c," and pieces one by three or two by two inches for the guard bars, "d." These should be securely nailed to the side of the trough, and if a permanent trough in the hog house, spiked to the floor to prevent breaking off. The upright, "e," firmly spiked to "b," should be amply stout to secure endwise rigidity.

For delivering slop to the trough, a spout or small trough should be arranged to enter at the end of the feed trough. With this arrangement, when the distance between the bars has been properly adjusted to the size of the animal, only one can get to the trough, between each space, and all sidewise crowding is effectually prevented.—Exchange.

A Cheap Wood Sled.

My wood sled gave out early in the winter and I made a good substitute of some 2-inch plank. The runners are 8 feet long and 2x6 inches square. They are held with four braces of the same material, 4 feet long and fastened with spikes and bolts. Stakes are set in the front and rear cross pieces and a draw chain hitched to the front cross piece. The runners go flat side down and the ends are rounded to prevent catching on the ice. The sled can be used with the body or box of a wagon. It is a good sled for heavy



WOOD SLED.

work and short hauls. For long hauls, the runners should be shod.—I. A. Fiske, in Farm and Home.

Notes About Farm Work.

Tennessee farmers want the State to appropriate \$5,000 to develop the live stock investigations now in progress, and to extend experiments in breeding and feeding.

There are 644,000 farmers in Texas, the largest number of all the States in the Union. Georgia comes next with 522,000.

Give house plants as much light as possible during the day, and darkness with a low temperature at night.

Some Western men claim to have obtained good results from feeding the common desert cactus to cattle. They say when chopped up and boiled, or soaked in water, the sharp and dangerous points become soft. The department of agriculture is investigating the matter.

An Illinois woman sold 52 capons recently at \$1.32 each. It cost but very little more to raise them than ordinary chickens.

The animal heat must be provided by feeding the stock liberally, but the greater the exposure, the greater the loss of animal heat.

In the new farm mechanics department of the Iowa college, 125 young men are learning how to build, manage and take care of farm machinery.

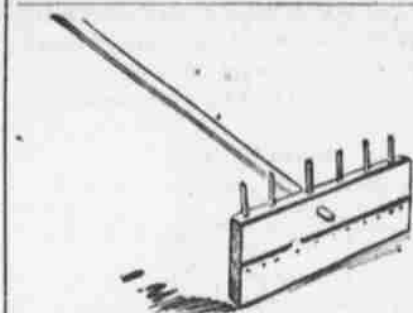
Deep or Light Plowing.

The whole matter resolves itself into a question of soil and climate. If a soil is thin, then it is manifest that it would be very foolish to dip the plow into the raw subsoil and bring it to the top, though perhaps subsoiling would improve matters by helping the draining and allowing the roots to penetrate downward more easily. Again, in the matter of climate; in a dry district shallow plowing nearly always gives the best results—with a grain crop, at least. Often the best wheat has been grown where the surface was disked to clean off the rubbish, and the seed drilled in down to the hard, unmoved soil. The reason of this is that in a dry district the plant has to depend largely on the ground moisture, which rises by capillary action much better through firm soil than through loose plowed land. Where bare fallowing is practiced on stiff clays, then the shallow system is the best, for it means ever so much less soil to move per acre where there are repeated plowings, cultivations, etc., to be done. On the whole, probably shallow plowing, combined with an occasional stirring of the subsoil with a subsoiler attached to the plow, is the best.

Stable Scraper and Fork.

Most of the labor-saving tools about farm buildings could be readily fashioned at home if one is handy with tools and has the inclination to put ideas into effect. One of the best of the simple tools for the barn is the combination fork and scraper made in the following manner: Select an inch board five inches wide and seven or eight inches longer than the width of the fork used in the stable.

Bevel the lower edge of the board for the scraper, then bore holes near the lower edge, one for each tine of the fork, so that after using the fork to handle the coarse stuff it may be



COMBINED SCRAPER AND FORK.

Inserted into the holes in the board and the combination used as a scraper. The artist has added another to the combination, a rake, which is made by driving wire spikes into the top edge of the board and filing off the heads. This can be done or not as one wishes, but combined fork and scraper is certainly a most useful tool.—Indianapolis News.

Barley as Feed for Horses.

Except on the Pacific coast barley is not extensively used as a feed in the United States, doubtless owing to the fact that it is in such demand for brewing purposes that it is high in price. Wherever it is grown, however, it is frequently possible to secure at a low cost grain which is off color owing to rain or fog during harvest and which for this or some other reason is unfit for brewing, but valuable as feed. The barley grown on the Pacific coast is extensively used in the feeding of horses. Its use for this purpose is old in other countries. The Arabs fed their horses unground barley, and it is used successfully by the Berbers of North Africa. In Europe its value is generally recognized. Barley may be fed whole to horses having good teeth and not required to do severe work. Since ground barley, like wheat, forms a pasty mass when mixed with saliva, it is regarded as more satisfactory to crush than to grind it if for any reason it is considered undesirable to feed the grain whole.

About the Horse.

Draft horses are in demand far exceeding the supply.

Onion juice is recommended as a cure for warts on horses.

When horses are to be fattened something depends upon the breed. A changed bill of fare will help to hasten the matter.

It is wonderful what fancy prices rich men are willing to pay for horses that please their fancy. The highest prices are paid for race stock, with the hope that it will be won back either by the horse itself or by its offspring.—Texas Farmer.

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for

Short Hair

The first vessel launched under the Cuban flag took the water at Belfast not long ago. She was christened Regina and is about 250 feet in length, with a gross tonnage of 1,300. She has been especially designed to carry molasses in bulk between ports on the Cuban coast.

Mothers will find Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup the best remedy to use for their children during the teething period.

LORD AVEBURY, the London banker, was the first person in England to have his photograph taken. He was a little boy. Daguerre himself took the picture while explaining his invention to Avebury's father.

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