

We now know, on the authority of a Secretary of State, that the scope of the Royal Commission on Agricultural Depression is to be co-extensive with the importance of the subject.

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THE COAST MAIL.

An Uncut Diamond.

Presently the Western train came due, a tired looking woman came in with two children hanging to her skirts and a baby in her arms, besides a hand-bag and a sachel.

It was the only vacant seat. She sank into it with a weary sigh, and tried to hush the fretful baby and keep watch of the two other restless, fidgety brats, who were also tired and fretful, and kept teasing for this and that until the poor mother looked ready to sink.

"Pretty tired, marm," remarked Jonathan, a tall Yankee, who was in easy himself, and anxious for something to do. "Going fur?"

"To Boston, sir," replied the lady courteously.

"Got to wait long?"

"'Till 3 o'clock" (glancing at me). "Oh, dearies, do be quiet, and don't tease mother any more."

"I'm a young shaver, and see what I've got in my pocket," and he drew out a handful of peppermint drops. In a few minutes they were both upon his knees, eating their candies and listening eagerly while he told them wonderful stories about sheep and calves at home.

But the baby wouldn't go to sleep. He was quite heavy, and wanted to be tossed the whole time. Jonathan noticed this, and finding a string somewhere in the depths of his old carpet-bag, he taught the two children a game which he called "cats' cradle." Soon they were seated on the depot floor, as happy as two kittens.

"Now let me take that youngster, morn," he said, "you look clean beat out. I guess I can please him. I'm a powerful hand with babies, and he tossed the great lump of flesh up until it crowded with delight. By and by it dropped its head on his shoulder and fell fast asleep.

Two hours afterward I peered through the window as he helped her and her belongings aboard the cars, and I don't believe if he had been the Czar of Russia she could have looked more grateful, or thanked him any sweeter.

"Tain't nothin' at all, marm," I heard him say, bashfully. But I knew she thought differently, and so did I.

He came back, resumed his seat and bought a pint of peanuts from a thin-faced little girl—giving twelve cents instead of ten for them—and sat munching away in hearty enjoyment until the Northern train came due. Then he snatched his disparted carpet-bag and that of an old lady near by, who was struggling feebly towards the door.

"Lean right on me, marm, I'll see you safe through," he said cheerfully.

The conductor then shouted, "All aboard," and the train moved away.

As I looked around at the empty seats in the train, I thought, "How goodly is the out of this depot that doesn't come into it every day—an honest heart."

Be Careful What You Read.

The rule made early in life to read only the best books will be found of the greatest value.

Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson's advice is, never to read a book till it has been out a year, supposing that length of time necessary to show whether the volume has, as the French say, "a reason for being."

One should not read everything that intrudes itself upon his notice any more than one should admit to his companionship every person he meets. "Books like men," should be few and well chosen.

There is always danger of reading too much, but the best authors may be read many times with profit. If you should read Macaulay until it becomes thoroughly familiar to you, you will have a solid foundation of historical knowledge, around which you may group earlier and succeeding events. Adapt Dr. Johnson's method, and when you have read something you particularly wish to remember, be sure to tell it to some appreciative friend, and thus fix it in the mind.

The modern novel may become a "thief of time."

Reading too much fiction saps the mental powers as surely as dissipation weakens the body.

At one of our public libraries quite recently a boy was reported who had actually read one hundred and two novels, or stories, in ninety-one days. To a large class of readers our public libraries are only known as containing a supply of the most exciting tales, and it becomes a question whether it is right for them to furnish any literature but that which instructs and elevates. "Youth's Companion."

Doctor Holmes on Reading.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes' life of study, reflection, and of literary production, gives to his opinions on reading peculiar value. His answer to the question "How shall we read?" is brief. He believes in reading by subjects rather than by authors and mainly for systematic, accurate culture; there can be no better plan. While such a method gives to the mind plentiful stores of fact and argument, it also insensibly leads to arrangement, combination, reflection and discussion; and it, no doubt, excludes much trash which unsystematic reading would admit. "Somebody" says the doctor, "must be read, tasting as it were, every word."

But once become familiar with a subject so as to know what you wish to learn about it, and you can read a page as a flash of lightning reads holes in a colander, and which would have nothing to show if Niagara had been emptied into them."

At Englewood, N. J., a few days ago, the lightning struck a team composed of a mule and a horse. It struck the mule first, but true to his natural instincts, he kicked it through the horse and saved his own life.

Horace Greeley.

REMINISCENCES BY TWO OLD EDITORS OF THE TRIBUNE.

Narrating something of my conversation with Mr. Reid reminds me of an interesting talk I had the other day with Prof. V. B. Denlow, of Chicago, concerning Mr. Reid's great professorship.

Prof. Denlow was the chief editorial writer on the Chicago Tribune when I first met him, ten years ago, and wonderfully spirited, bright and attractive articles did he contribute. He had been for two years previous the financial editorial writer of the New York Tribune, but the offer of a higher salary had transferred his brilliant pen to the same paper on the lake. In 1872 he left on account of ill health, which resulted in a most distressing insomnia, and he has since done little newspaper work except to write the serials of long, exhaustive and scholarly articles on "Modern Thinkers," now running in the Chicago Times.

"I well remember when I first met Mr. Greeley," said Denlow. "He was just twenty-one, and his recently been admitted to the New York bar. I was at the residence of one of my first clients, Mr. Partridge, publisher, when Greeley called. When I went into the room he stood with his hands under his coat-tails, looking at some pictures. 'Mr. Greeley,' said Partridge, 'this is Mr. Denlow, a young attorney.' Greeley uttered a short grunt of recognition, but he did not even look around at the newcomer. He slunk away into one corner and took a chair. He went on around the room, looking at pictures and what-not, and in about five minutes, when his back was turned on me and I thought he had forgotten me, he suddenly, without looking at me, said: 'Hem! So you're an attorney, are you? I confessed that I was a lawyer; they do you more mischief than their heads are worth!'

"I suppose they are a necessary evil," I suggested, depreciatingly.

"Wholly unnecessary," he insisted.

"I suppose you will acknowledge," I said, "that they promote good order and remove impediments to good government."

"Just the contrary! just the contrary!" he squeaked, in his old falsetto; "they cause disorder, and they are the chief obstacles to good government."

"I thought the man was crazy. 'Perhaps you will tell me,' I suggested, 'how delists would be collected without lawyers?'

"Don't want 'em collected! don't want 'em collected!" he squeaked; "if A lets B have his property without payment, I don't see why C, D, E, F and all the rest of the alphabet should be called on to serve as a police to get it back! No debt should be collectible by law. It's monstrous! Let a man trust another man with his own skin. Even a gambler says his debts that he isn't legally obliged to pay, and calls them debts of honor, but men will put their property into their hands to prevent the legal collection of their grocery bills. Abolish all laws for the collection of debt, and that would abolish most of you lawyers—good riddance!"

"It seemed impossible to talk with a man with such eccentric notions."

"It was eleven years later when I saw him again to speak to him. I had been writing editorials on the Tribune about a month, when Mr. Young, managing editor, who had employed me, told me that Mr. Greeley wanted to see me. I went into his dark little den, where he was scratching away for dear life on a desk nearly level with his chin, the paper on which he was writing within an inch or two of his nose, and his feet drawn up and resting on their toes. He didn't look up. At last I spoke to him and told him I had come in response to his summons. 'Did you write that article?' he asked, putting his finger on a proof of an editorial on 'The Means of Resumption,' I said yes. 'It won't do at all,' he said. 'I'm disgusted with this talk about "means" and "means." We don't want means. We want to resume! Suppose a Methodist minister should call on sinners not to "repent," but to look up the means for repentance! They'd think him an idiot. And think right. The way to resume it is to resume!'

"I said, 'I don't see how the Government is going to pay off six hundred millions of greenbacks with sixty millions of gold, and if you can tell me how to pay ten dollars with one, I will go and write such an article.'

"'Don't want it paid!' he insisted. 'If the Treasury Department resumes, people won't want the gold. I went through the panic of '37, and it was just so then.'

"I said, 'but then both the people and the banks had assets. Now the assets are used up. This panic was caused by a long war, and by the actual exhaustion of the national resources.' I failed to convince him, of course."

And this story of Professor Denlow's remains me of the method by which Seilheimer got on the Tribune ten years ago. "I brought a letter from my uncle, Thad. Stevens," said Seilheimer, "and you to Greeley's cubby-hole. I went. There he sat with his chair tilted forward, writing away rapidly, with his paper close to his nose. The boy thrust my card between his nose and the paper, but he knocked it away and wrote on without looking up. I waited until I had been there an hour. Greeley never looked at anybody and rarely spoke. When Young wanted him to sign anything he brought it and thrust it unceremoniously between his nose and the manuscript, and held it there until Greeley signed it. At last I thought I would try that with Stevens' letter to him which lay on the desk unopened. I opened it, and slowly slid it along on the desk from the right, the signature uppermost. He took no notice. I cautiously pushed it a little further. Scratch, scratch, scratch—the pen was obvious. I timidly advanced the document till its edge overlapped his writing, but when he came across the paper the next time he pushed it away an inch or two with his pen and kept on. Emboldened now, I waited a moment; then when he reached for ink, I deliberately pushed the letter till it covered up his manuscript. He looked down, saw the signature, and gently pushed it off again, merely saying, in a high, shrill voice, 'How's Thad?' I told him, and that I had brought him the letter for him to read, but he was again absorbed, and I could not induce him to again permit his

A Couple of Clocks.

(Scientific American.)

Dr. J. L. Blair, of Abingdon, Illinois, has recently completed a clock which is locally regarded as one of the most wonderful pieces of mechanism ever made.

This clock is 8 feet 2 inches high, 3 feet 4 inches wide, and 10 inches deep—lower half. The upper half is 6 inches deep and has a circle top. The largest wheel is 13 inches in diameter. The longest shafting is 3 feet. Weight of clock, 118 pounds; of weights—two in number—8 and 22 pounds. The case and works are made mostly of walnut wood. In addition to its time-keeping capacity, this clock minutely illustrates (it is claimed) the composition and movements of the solar system. Time is indicated at the center of the sun, a ball 15 inches in diameter. Around the sun the planets circle in their respective orbits. The earth is 3 inches in diameter, turns on its axis once a day, and goes round the sun in an orbit 9 feet in circumference once a year. In its daily revolution the earth indicates the time of day everywhere, shows day and night, longitude and so on.

The moon, 1 1/2 inch in diameter, accompanies the earth with its proper motion, illustrating its phases, eclipses and the rest. The motion of Venus and of Venus is illustrated in like manner, and similarly the orbits and motions of other planets. Halley's comet, 7 inches long, traverses an orbit 14 feet in circumference, with a period of 76 years.

At the right of the clock a skeleton, 10 inches high, strikes the hours. At the left another skeleton plays a tune as often as required. A skeleton of Venus, one of Venus is illustrated in like manner, and similarly the orbits and motions of other planets. Halley's comet, 7 inches long, traverses an orbit 14 feet in circumference, with a period of 76 years.

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Notes from a Prompter's Book.

"Come," said Major Bob Strong, "let us go into De-Bar's private office." It is a room about twenty feet square, situated just over and to the right of the entrance. It was a curiosity in itself. Primitive-looking desks and cabinets were against the walls, and in the middle of the floor stood a table, the green baize upon it worn thin. Tacked on the side of one of the desks was a card marked, "The property of Ludlow & Smith, St. Charles Theater, 1845." These gentlemen managed old Drury after it had been rebuilt from the ashes of the fire of 1843.

"Here is a curious book," said Major Strong, handing out an old ledger. "