

BREVITIES.

The Boston Journal predicts that our inland letter postage will be reduced from three cents to two cents within a twelve month.

The latest proposition of railroad reform is that made by *Harper's Weekly* to introduce a special calaboos on evening trains for drunken passengers.

Commodore Vanderbilt refuses to make a will. He desires that his youthful wife shall have her full legal share of the property. He will be better, therefore, when he dies, to some \$23,000,000.

A mass meeting of working women is soon to be held in the Cooper Institute to organize female operatives into trade unions, and also to take steps toward the organization of a female labor bureau.

Nitrate of soda is a white salt, found native in South America. It is used in the manufacture of nitric acid, and to some extent as a fertilizer of the soil.

A lady being about to marry a man of very low stature, was told that he was a very bad fellow. "Well," said she, "if he is bad, there's one comfort—there is very little of him!"

"Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day," said an advising mother to a little son.

"Well then, mamma, let us eat the other raspberry pie that is in the cupboard."

A critic, speaking of Charlotte Estlin's vocalism, says, "We hang upon every word." "This is a proof of the lady's remarkable power of execution!" remarks a contemporary.

Among the apes, those which most resemble man are the Asiatic orang-outang, and the African chimpanzee. Both of these, when full grown, equal the ordinary height of man.

Air consists of four parts of nitrogen and one part of oxygen, mixed with about one-tenth of one per cent. of carbonic acid. A "handy" way of remembering this proportion is to consider the thumb as oxygen, add the four fingers as nitrogen.

A post was once walking with Talleyrand in the street, and at the same time reciting some of his own verses. Talleyrand perceived at a short distance a man yawning, and pointing him out to his friend, said, "Not so loud—he hears you."

A contemporary says that a New York man who had not been out of the city for many years, flung away in the pure air of the country. He was only resuscitated by putting a dead fish to his nose, when he slowly revived, exclaiming, "that's good, it smells like home!"

"Has that gal got fits?" asked an old farmer, who had passed to see a young lady go through with her calisthenic exercises in the garden.

"No," replied the servant girl, "that's jimmy nasties!"

"So," said the farmer, in a pitying tone, "poor thing; how long's she had 'em?"

About 300,000 bales of cotton, says the *Traveller*, are received in Boston annually, or 1,000 bales every business day in the year. About \$40,000,000 in value of cotton, and nearly one-eighth of the entire crop of this country is received at that port. It is said that Boston, after Liverpool, is the greatest consuming port for cotton in the world.

Every family should become a society for the prevention of cruelty. By causing the young to regard animals with respect as God's creatures—creatures depending on us in many respects, yet rendering us many services. Cruelty to them begun in levity and thoughtlessness, hardens the heart, and the parents who, unmoved, behold a child torture a kitten or a bird, are really educating that child for cruelty and murder—happy, indeed, if circumstances in after life neutralize the evil taught lessons of youth.

The following letter comes to the surface in a Texas paper: "GALVESTON, January the 7th, 1870: My Lovin' Wife—I'm comin' home next week an' hav' forgiv' you for jawnin' me, I'll come on the 7 o'clock train an' shall stay on hereafter & tri to be an altered man. I want peace and so do yew, why shooldn't we love each other, as we used to when we were first joined together in the wholly basins of mad-love. I've jined a temperance society but if you ever jaw me agin for cummin' home I'll wallop you like a fur we must have peace as giant ses.

Another measure has just been taken by the Russian government against the Jews in the Empire. By an imperial ukase published in the Russian papers, the Jews are to be liable to military service up to the age of thirty-five, while the maximum age of recruitment for the Christians is twenty-three. The regulations bears with especial harshness on the Jews, as they usually marry between the ages of eighteen and twenty, and thus often become the fathers of large families before they are thirty. The same ukase provides that all Jews who will become Christians shall be exempted from military service altogether.

Everybody has heard of the term "morganatic marriages," and many people suppose that marriages of this kind are a species of concubinage, in which the kings and princes of Europe are fond of indulging. This is not the case, however. A morganatic marriage is just as binding upon the parties as that of any other marriage. The term is derived from the German "morganat," which literally means a dowry. It likewise signifies a matrimonial contract in which one of the parties is greatly superior in rank to the other. If it be the bride that is of inferior rank, she agrees that she and her children shall be entitled neither to the rank nor to the estate of her husband, and that the dowry which is settled upon her at the time of the marriage shall be accepted in lieu of all other privileges. If the man be the inferior, he gives consent to similar conditions. In the bridal ceremony the party of superior rank gives the left hand instead of the right to the other—whence the marriages are sometimes called left-handed.

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