

brick structure containing two swimming tanks, one of which is 80 feet long by 26 feet wide.—B. O. Flower, in The Arena.

#### MAKING THE FULLEST USE OF A PUBLIC LIBRARY.

After several experiments the managers of the public library in San Francisco believe that the book-reading public can be trusted, and they have widely extended library privileges. Ten thousand volumes of the most popular works of all classes, intended for general circulation, have been opened to the unrestricted access of the public. The books may be taken from the shelves to the reading tables or may be taken home, the patrons being trusted to get their books charged at the desk. The preceding experiments were interesting. Two and a half years ago 5,000 juvenile books were segregated and the children were allowed to make selections direct from the shelves. In 21 months, with a circulation of 118,000 juveniles, only 36 volumes were lost. Then the 12,000 volumes in the five branches were opened to shelf access, and there were no books reported missing. The shelves in the reference and periodical rooms were opened to library readers, and then as an experiment 500 books for general circulation were placed in the reference-room, where they could be looked over, and none disappeared. Last year 571,500 volumes were circulated and only 31 were lost from all causes.—New York Evening Post.

#### WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN NEW ZEALAND.

At a recent public meeting in New York city, Mr. Hugh H. Lusk, a former member of the New Zealand parliament, said in reference to woman suffrage, as reported in the National Single Taxer, that it had not been regarded as conferring a great favor or privilege upon women when his government enfranchised her.

We considered it her duty to vote, just as the men had been doing, for the welfare of the country. We did not make the transition suddenly, but gradually during 16 years of progressive adjustment. At the last general elections 210,000 votes were cast, 93,000 of them by women. In the United States many are afraid to give women the suffrage lest they become victims of designing men, lest many of them be dragged to the polls by drunken husbands, be hustled about the polling places and have their finer feelings outraged. All this is erroneous.

In New Zealand the woman's vote has tended to purify politics, and to

keep out of public life bad men and those of unsavory records. It has done more. We have learned that women are not emotional and politically fickle, but, on the contrary, conservative and willing to give things a fair trial. It is true, the experiment has been a disappointment to the prohibitionists. But it was clear that to attempt to put down entirely this traffic was likely to lead to greater evils. I have visited the state of Maine, and I think our women in New Zealand are quite right.

#### THE CANTEEN AND THE W. C. T. U.

The W. C. T. U. is petitioning the president to prohibit the establishment of "canteens" in army camps. No possible doubt can exist as to the honesty of motive at all times controlling the actions of the W. C. T. U., nor that its motive is the commendable one to further the cause of reasonable temperance. Therefore the canteen should be encouraged.

The canteen, as authorized by army regulations, is in the nature of a club for the entertainment of enlisted men, and is intended to and does encourage temperance, contentment and orderly behavior. There the men in camp may buy tobacco, sweets, sandwiches, and beer; may read the papers and magazines and indulge in any orderly fun or entertainment their dispositions or facilities afford.

Everything sold at the canteen is bought by a commissioned officer, who sharply attends to two important things—that the supplies are of the best of their kind and that they are not overcharged for.

The sales cover the expense of the canteen and leave a slight profit, which is divided among company messes and applied to the purchase of table delicacies which the commissary does not supply.

But here is the point which should be well heeded by the W. C. T. U.: Where there is no canteen the soldier is induced to buy poisonous stimulants in villainous groggeries out of camp—where he is usually robbed.—N. Y. World.

#### RUSSIAN AMBITIONS.

Russia's risk is that in extending boundaries which already include a seventh part of the land of this globe and one-twenty-sixth of the earth's surface she will present more and more points to attract war. Hers is a warlike people, however, and no one does them injustice who says that, as a unit, the intelligent people—all who are above the masses—cherish the belief that sooner or later they are to absorb all Asia down to and including India. The

very steps that stand for mere progress in civilization in other new countries are, in Russia, all taken with a view to war. The railways, in building which she has put forth the most energy of late, are all military instruments first, and agencies of land development secondarily. By means of her Black Sea naval reserve and her railways to the Caucasus, across Caucasia and beyond the Caspian, she has put herself in readiness to hurl an army against India much more directly and quickly than England can mass reinforcements there. And throughout Russia the idea is become a household word that when the Siberian railway is finished it will be time to move upon India. I do not say that is the aim or policy of the government; only that it is the popular idea. And just as this is true, so is it certain that the ideas that master the minds of the masses are the fruit of the old, steady, relentless policy of the czars, pursued with Asiatic calm and patience during generation after generation—retarded sometimes, sometimes halted, but never altered or diverted.

On a war footing Russia can mobilize 2,500,000 officers and men—2,300,000 from European Russia, and 40,000, 30,000, 50,000 and 20,000 men, respectively, from East Siberia, West Siberia, Turkistan and Finland. Her peace footing is 868,000 men.—Julian Ralph, in Harper's Magazine.

#### THE FORM OF TAKING THE OATH.

The recent agitation both in this country and in Europe against the time-honored practice in courts of law of compelling witnesses, before giving their testimony, to go through the formula of "kissing the book," in which agitation the Albany Law Journal has taken some part, has already borne fruit. Maryland has just placed upon its statute book a law abolishing the practice, and substituting therefor the more solemn and decorous form of swearing by uplifted hand. By the act of April 3, 1895, Pennsylvania enacted the same reform, and movements in other states have either produced the desired results or promise to do so in the near future. As yet, however, New York is a laggard in the reform. The fact that "kissing the book" has been shown by thoroughly reputable and competent authorities to be responsible for the dissemination of much disease has had considerable to do with the action of legislatures in abolishing the practice. That it is uncleanly and unsanitary no one has ever pretended to dispute, but rather than abolish the ancient practice, some states and countries have provided Bibles covered with