

## TOPICS OF THE TIMES

Any girl with pretty dimples knows when to smile.

The mosquito lays forty eggs a day, it is said. But it never cackles.

There is a strike in the leather trade. This may seriously affect beefsteak prices.

Women must tell their ages to the census enumerator. What a lot of secrets he will have to keep.

"I will not resign under fire," is many a man's excuse for holding on to an office he doesn't want to give up.

Marriage is a problem to some people. Others live to celebrate their sixtieth anniversary of wedded happiness.

A man has been arrested for stealing two slices of bacon. He will, of course, be tried under a charge of grand larceny.

Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt says woman has just as good judgment as man. Does anybody want to argue the case with Mrs. Catt?

Professor Percival Lowell describes the comet's tail as "the strictest approach to nothing set in the midst of naught." Now who's afraid of the comet's tail?

Mr. Morgan has purchased the world's most famous collection of watches. He has already secured the watches of many of the gentlemen who work in Wall street.

The Duchess de Talleyrand, formerly Anna Gould, is forced to pay her former husband's parents \$5,000 a year. Anna seems to have made the mistake of marrying the whole family.

The University of Chicago now claims the credit from Cornell of making hens lay ready-dyed eggs. Surely, the collegiate triumphs of the century are very uplifting to the race.

A Mississippi ice driver found a wallet containing \$2,000, hunted up the owner, was docked for the lost time and got a reward of a five-cent cigar for the restoration of the money. He now cynically believes it pays to be honest.

Every now and then the news of the day contains the account of some person being burned to death while smoking in bed. The moral of such "accidents" and all like them in that disaster is generally one of the promptest things in the world to come to one when deliberately invited.

A grim argument in favor of letting well enough alone is found in a recent New York case. Not content with a verdict of murder in the second degree, the lawyer for the convicted man secured a new trial, at which the prisoner was found guilty in the first degree and sentenced to death.

Farming is getting to be not merely an occupation, but a profession. An American from the South, recommended by the Department of Agriculture, has gone to Siam as agricultural adviser to the King, and other Americans are filling similar positions in Baroda, one of the most prosperous native States of India. The King of Siam will pay his adviser six thousand dollars a year, which is more than the average hired man earns.

When a fashionable wedding or a sensational trial draws a multitude of curious people in a great city, there is no little comment on the bad manners and depraved tastes of Americans. It is worth noting—as showing a more attractive side of the picture—that the police reserves had to be called out in New York City the other day to handle a crowd of four thousand people who were trying to get into a hall built for two thousand people, in order to hear a concert. It was a fine concert, and the fact that it was free only emphasizes the general desire to enjoy an entertainment which is uplifting and inspiring.

It has been generally accepted by men of science that the last dinosaur trod the earth a great many centuries ago, in fact, something like four hundred thousand years ago. From the fossilized remains a good knowledge has been obtained of the gigantic proportions and terrifying appearance of the creature, and all have agreed in a preference to study the bones, rather than a living specimen at large. From South Africa there now comes the remarkable story that there is a living dinosaur somewhere in the northern part of Rhodesia. Natives have recently told of a mighty reptile in a lake near the river Lunga, and have identified drawings of the dinosaur as resembling this creature. Thus far the proof is hardly convincing, but the story arouses a certain interest. Unfortunately, the Roosevelt expedition did not penetrate that part of the African wilderness, but perhaps here is the opportunity for some hunter or naturalist to win immortal fame.

The results of the first ten years of government by commission in American cities are summarized in Everybody's Magazine by Charles E. Russell. The plan devised at Galveston in 1900 to meet a special emergency has now spread to include sixty cities with a population of more than 1,000,000.

why, asks the writer, in effect, go on with wards and aldermen? Why employ party ballots, with party emblems? Why call "democratic" a scheme of government which is but representative—and representative in the narrowest and most unsatisfactory sense? Already there is a long roll of cities which are doing without these familiar devices, and doing better. The Galveston idea has spread as far as South Dakota, Idaho and Washington, but its most signal successes have been in Iowa. Cedar Rapids and Des Moines are the two chief exemplars; the latter now claims that it is "the most economically and most honestly managed city of its size in the Middle West." The commission plan banishes party politics from local affairs, along with boss and machine. It views and manages the municipality as a business enterprise and gives an administration that is prompt, efficient, systematic and economical. By means of the referendum, initiative and recall it places responsibility definitely upon the people. And it appears to be working a change of attitude toward the community life by fostering a higher degree of communal consciousness. The Iowa towns are pointedly aware of improvement; they are feeling better within and are looking better without. Mr. Russell, in the momentum of his enthusiasm, calls for the extension of commission government from small cities to large ones. They, too, he contends, should be free to engage expert talent on the sole grounds of fitness, should understand just what their officials are doing and how doing it, and should be able to dismiss them if incompetent. Doubtless, as he feels, the problems of Chicago and New York are too intricate and difficult for the grade of ability that ward and precinct politics puts in to office. On the other hand, the scale of the problem is an integral part of it, and the drawbacks that probably inhere in the execution of the plan on even a small scale should be given a little more time to develop.

### FATHER HELPED PRACTICE.

A little girl sat at an old square piano. Her mother moved about in the next room, preparing supper. Near the piano sat the father, carefully tidied up after his day in the machine shop.

"All the way home," the man said to his little daughter, "I was trying to whistle that new piece of yours, Mollie, but I forgot some parts, and you must help me. So play it through, please."

Mollie began, pleasure and importance in her face. At the second page she stumbled and dropped from the tempo, but hurried on.

"That was the place I forgot," interrupted her father. "Please play it over, just the air."

Over and over she was induced to play it, first with one hand, then with the other, until the passage had become familiar, and her little fingers had fairly mastered the difficulty. "Do you know," she said, a few days later, as she played the simple melody to her teacher, "my father thinks this part is so pretty—the prettiest part in the whole piece. He likes to hear it over and over."

"Oh," thought the teacher, "with such parents what musicians I could make of even everyday material!"

To-day this girl is studying in New York under distinguished teachers, playing accompaniments for a well-known singer, invited to delightful houses as an honored guest, and leading a very interesting if an arduous life.

Her teacher insists that she was not exceptionally gifted; that the secret of her success lay very largely in the patient, intelligent oversight of her parents, and their tact in getting her to master the difficult parts of each lesson, and so the successive steps of technique.

### What He Lacked.

A Cleveland lawyer whose interests frequently take him to a certain town in Indiana, tells of a quaint character there known to the townspeople as "Necessity" Nelson. Nelson gets on pretty well despite the fact that he is a jack of all trades "and master of none." He poses mainly as an attorney.

When the Cleveland man first went to the Indiana town he was naturally enough very curious as to the odd nickname given Nelson. "Why do you call him 'Necessity'?" he asked. "Because he knows no law," was the answer.—Chicago Tribune.

### How About a Plaster?

One day an old war veteran limped into a shop and said to the druggist: "I want some medicine, some sort of vermifuge, I suppose." "Well, colonel, where's the trouble?" asked the clerk, sympathetically. "Where does the seat of your difficulty seem to be?" "In my wooden leg, mister. It's getting all worm eaten."—Ladies' Home Journal.

### One Glean of Joy.

Johnny had two presents at the same time—one a diary, which he kept very carefully, and the other a peashooting popgun, which he fired indiscriminately on all occasions.

One day his mother found the following terse record in his diary: "Mondy cold and sloopy, Toosdy cold and sloopy. Wensdy cold and sloopy shot Granma."

A man is rich in power if he is able to do without the things wealth will buy.

The past is referred to as being dead; but it is terribly alive.

## GETTING RICH IN ONIONS.

Brownsville, Tex., Made Famous by Strong Legume.

It has been several years since Brownsville, Tex., became famous because part of a negro regiment was accused of shooting up the town, but C. C. Morton, who helps to supply water for the stock and vegetables and sugar cane they raise down there, says that the place has settled down to work and get rich; and they are shipping carloads of onions to New York every day.

"We irrigate down in our part of Texas in a different way from what they do in the west," said Mr. Morton, according to the New York Sun. "We pump the water out of the river. There are twenty-five plants on the Rio Grande, all put up during the last five years, and we are getting ready to put in a big enterprise that will extend into the third county from the coast and will cost \$5,000,000 or \$7,000,000. At present about 300,000 acres are under irrigation. The present method is to pump the water up to the top of the river bank and there it flows into canals, some of them as long as eighteen or twenty miles.

"The country about Brownsville was absolutely depopulated until about five years ago. Brownsville was 160 miles from a railroad. They are now building a combination railroad and traffic bridge across the Rio Grande at that place, and on May 1 it is expected that through trains will be run through from New Orleans to Mexico City. Brownsville ten years ago had a population of about 8,000, of whom 90 or 95 per cent were Mexicans. To-day the population is about 12,000, with fully a fourth of them Americans. The Mexicans furnish good labor at 50 cents a day.

"Every two weeks from 12,000 to 15,000 home seekers come into Texas, taking advantage of the cheap tickets offered, and we are getting a good many of them in the country around Brownsville. They plant sugar cane and alfalfa and all the truck crops. One specialty they have gone in for is green onions, which net them from \$400 to \$600 an acre. Last year about 3,000 carloads were raised. Not one onion was shipped from that country five years ago, and to-day the Bermuda onion is being driven out of the market. Bermuda does not ship here 25 per cent of what it did when Texas started in the onion business. They are getting the Texas product in New York now." Mr. Morton did not bring a sample with him.

### FARMING INSIDE CITY LIMITS.

Tiny Plots in New York Are Hunted Out to Trunk Farmers.

To say that farming within the boundaries of the city of New York is a profitable occupation and that it is carried on professionally with a large degree of success might seem to some an extravagant assertion. Yet John R. Bowler of the soil division of the federal department of agriculture, a New York letter to the Christian Science Monitor says, has just issued a report on the farming possibilities of this city, showing comprehensively that the best agriculture in the country is not only possible here, but carried on to a remarkable degree.

Within the city boundaries unoccupied lots and unimproved tracts are rented out in small plots for market gardening and trucking purposes. The majority of the farms are of miniature size, some one-half or one-quarter of an acre or even only the size of a city lot. Under such cramped conditions it is necessary to do some crop moving and marketing during every month of the year. Even the midwinter season the farmer uses to market his root crops which have been stored waiting higher prices and the fruit picked during the autumn. With the dawn of spring the spinach and rhubarb start the crop and having been disposed of at the city market other crops follow in a steady stream.

The chief point in this intensive farming is to utilize every foot of ground to its best advantage. The onion and radish are good examples of how this is accomplished. As soon as the onion develops the slightest suspicion of a bulb it is pulled and bunched and those next in size are given a better opportunity for growth and development. In this way not a single crop, but a continuous supply of onions and radishes is produced.

### Baseball and Grandmas.

I remember being on a Chicago street car, says Ellis Parker Butler, in Success Magazine, sitting beside a nice old lady in mourning, a year or so ago. She was nervous and kept glancing at me, and then glancing away again. It made me uncomfortable. I thought she took me for a pickpocket or some other bad man. Finally she could contain herself no longer. She leaned over. "Excuse me," she said, "but have you heard yet how the Cubs' game came out?" "I hadn't, and her face fell, but in a moment she saw a possible opportunity for consolation. "Well," she asked, "can you tell me who they are putting in the box to-day?" How was that for a gray-haired grandma? In Chicago they all talk baseball, from the cradle to the grave. Up to three o'clock in the afternoon no one talks about anything but the game of the day before. From three o'clock on the only subject is the game that is being played. The school child who can not add two apples plus three apples and make it five apples with any certainty of correctness can figure out the standing of the Chicago nines with one hand and a pencil that will make a mark only when it is held straight up and down.

When a man prolongs his handshakes with a modest girl it is apt to make her blush.

# Editorials

Opinions of Great Papers on Important Subjects.

### DISCOURAGING TO DIVORCE.

JUDGE CHETLAIN'S ruling that a man has a right to spend his own money, and that alimony should not be large simply because the man who pays it enjoys a large income, is distinctly discouraging to divorce. Also it seems to be sound common sense. If a man and his wife have been living at the rate of \$25,000 a year, it does not necessarily follow that she must be financially able to maintain the same style after divorce.

A single woman, whether she be maid, widow or divorcee, has no fixed standard to live up to. A wife, purely for business reasons, must be maintained in that social scale appropriate to her husband's fortune. A man's business reputation is very largely determined by the style in which he lives, his wife's clothing, jewelry, entertainments and friends. The single woman is not forced to maintain the standard of living that a husband is forced to maintain for his wife.

### THE HOPELESS GULLIBLE.

WE HAVE an abiding crop of men and women of little wit who run after every harum-scarum of a preacher with a newly-impacted message about the unknowable beyond. Some of the windiers demand money and plenty of it from the duped, others are satisfied with a fair share of the property of the deceived; and some are so meek that they turn in their property with the deluded and really believe the turning of the earth upon its axis is about to cease and then comes the finish. Usually the preachers fix a day for the event to happen and, as a precautionary measure, to prolong existence ascend an eminence to await the submerging and to be the last in the battle with angry waters; and then when the feet are covered with the aqueous fluid they expect to have angels appear and carry them into Paradise.

Not long ago the end-of-the-world believers gathered in southeastern New York on a rock and awaited the extinction of the planet. They were told if they occupied a pinnacle God would come and take them into heaven and then Satan, with fire and sword, would put to death all living things. But the presiding genius of hades never showed up with brimstone and scimitar and the world kept revolving at 1,000 miles an hour. After a while the dupes realized the sorry figure they cut when the day set for the upturning of the universe came and went the same as other days and that they were the laughing stock of sane people.

One would think that more than six months would

pass before another fool would show up and indulge in a like prophecy and win a following. Another group of gullibles has been gotten together at South Norwalk, Conn., and is pursuing the usual course of giving away property and imploring the Creator to spare them from the fate of those in the hollows who are blindly courting their doom. The moving reason for this mundane finish is a meteor dropped in the outskirts of the village in a truck garden, burning a hole many feet deep through the ground and resolving itself finally into dust. The half-baked took this to be a sign of heavenly displeasure, saw in it the end of the world and spent most of their time praying.

### THE CENSUS FIGURES.

IN 1790 the total population of the United States was 3,929,214; in 1800 it was 5,308,483; in 1810 it was 7,239,881; in 1820 it was 9,638,453; in 1830 it was 12,866,020; in 1840 it was 17,069,453; in 1850 it was 23,191,876; in 1860 it was 31,443,321; in 1870 it was 38,558,271; in 1880 it was 50,185,783; in 1890 it was 62,622,250; in 1900 it was 76,303,387. The census of 1900 included Alaska and Hawaii, but not the Philippines and Porto Rico. Using past rates of increase and other known data as a basis, experts estimate the total population at the coming census at 90,000,000, more or less. It may fall as low as 82,000,000 or reach 91,000,000, but this would not be a large variation from the estimate. This, however, includes only the continental population, and will be considerably increased by that of our island possessions. In 1903 the Philippines had 7,635,426 and Porto Rico 953,243. This would make a fair estimate of the total population, continental and insular, at the coming census about ninety-seven millions.—Indianapolis News.

### ALARMS ABOUT JAPAN.

ALTHOUGH the apparently concerted efforts to stir up in this country alarms about Japan have been thus far conspicuously unsuccessful, the constant repetition of dire predictions of sanguinary conflicts in the future for the mastery of the Pacific are bound to be mischievous in their results. The estimable gentlemen who are most active in preaching this gospel of distrust and war doubtless believe all they say. They may have information on which they base their conviction of impending troubles between the United States and Japan, but whatever that information may be they have not given it to the public. And the public is left to conjecture as to the motive of a campaign that is lacking in a substantial basis in fact, and which is directly contradictory of the assurances of all the statesmen who know or are supposed to know the truth.—Philadelphia Ledger.

## QUEER STORIES

England's high roads cost \$4,000 a mile to construct.

People, as a rule, hear better with the right than with left ear.

Newspaper advertisements made their earliest appearance in 1652.

Fifty-seven unmarried people commit suicide to only forty-three married.

There are workmen with families in Germany who, with an income of \$5 a week, are able to buy an occasional book.

There are a number of interesting species of palms in Liberia, but the more important are the fan palm, the raphia or bamboo palm, the coconut palm and the oil palm.

Recent experiments have proved conclusively that coal dust which has been ground to a state so fine that it will pass a 200-mesh sieve will explode from contact with either a naked flame or with the arc of an electric current.

In the city of Canton, China, are such pleasant sounding streets as Benevolence, Peace, Bright Cloud, Longevity, Early Bestowed Blessings, Everlasting Love, One Hundred Grandsons, Refreshing Breezes, Ninefold Brightness, and so on.

In his notice of Viola Allen's latest play, the satirical dramatic critic of the Louisville Courier-Journal has this to say of Louisville playgoers: "Cries of 'speech' came lustily from that portion of the audience which always desires a little intimate conversation with a star, and would be glad to hear a white-robed nun recite 'Casey at the Bat.'"

Many schools in Germany and Switzerland offer courses of instruction in the art of waiting at table. The Lausanne high school goes still further in this direction, and undertakes to teach the complete science of hotel keeping. This includes thorough proficiency in four languages, bookkeeping, geography, training in deportment, the study of hygiene and knowledge of gymnastics, calisthenics and dancing.

In England a census is taken every seven years. In the United States the work costs some \$5,000,000; in England, with a population of 42,000,000, the work is done by the regular public officials, without extra cost. There the census is taken on a certain day at a certain hour, usually Saturday at 11 p. m., because most people are then at home. Printed circulars have been sent by the police to every family and

### COIFFURES OF THE PAST AND WHAT WE MAY EXPECT NEXT.



to the owners of all lodgings and hotels. These circulars contain blanks, which must be filled.

Andrew Dippel, the retiring administrative manager of the Metropolitan opera house, has an apparatus in his office which brings the music of the opera to him while he is sitting at his desk. In a corner of the room up near the ceiling is a horn like the transmitter of a talking machine. If Mr. Dippel wants to know how far an opera has proceeded he goes to the wall, throws on a switch as though he were lighting an electric lamp and out of the horn comes the music of the opera. At the end of an act or an aria comes the sound of the handclapping.—New York Sun.

### Pepys and the Comet.

They were watching a comet in Pepys' day, though Halley at the time was but eight years old. "My Lord Sandwich this day," says the diary, Dec. 21, 1664, "writes me word that he hath seen at Portsmouth the comet; and says it is the most extraordinary thing he ever saw." Again on the 24th: "Having sat up all night till past 2 o'clock this morning, our porter being appointed comes and tells us

that the bellman tells him that the star is seen upon Tower Hill; so I that had been all night sitting in order of my old papers in my chamber did now leave off all and my boy and I to the Tower hill, it being a fine, bright, moonshine night and a great frost, but no comet to be seen. Later the same day, however, Pepys saw the comet, which now, whether worn away or no, I know not, appeared not with a tail, but only as large and duller than any other star."

### Instructions to Wife.

"So I have got to meet you in a department store, have I?" "Yes, hubby."

"In that case would you mind washing your hat tilted back a little? means of identification?"—Louisville Courier-Journal.

### The Principal Reason.

"Why are you sore on the eminent magnate? He has done some good things."

"I was one of them."

This will jar off the good people's heads. A New York judge yesterday decided that "damn" is not a swear word. Then what is it?