

Topics of the Times

Will Mr. Burbank kindly invent a frost-proof peach crop?

A Chicago elevated road motorman has confessed to bigamy. Another of the evils of high life.

Grave apprehensions exist that the New Yorkers intend to call their new tunnels "tubes" or "bores."

The President of the United States to the assembled governors: "It's a long time between forests."

A Minnesota woman has been awarded \$4,750 for a stolen kiss. It is never possible to tell what a jury will do.

A few "bumps," properly placed, might effect a cure also in the case of the idiot who throws the pop bottle.

If it is love altogether, why is it that none of those titled foreigners ever fall in love with American girls that do not have plenty of money?

The Emperor of Austria has been on the throne for sixty years, thus showing that a man with a rugged constitution can hardly be killed by worry.

"One way to trim a hat," says the Toledo Blade, "would be to cut off about a foot all around." Sounds like the cynical remark of a sad widower.

Some of the men who answered Mrs. Guinness' matrimonial advertisement are simply going to congratulate themselves on their escape and keep quiet about the matter.

An Indiana man recently died from the effects of a penny swallowed sixty-seven years ago. And during that time he doubtless often told his friends that he didn't have a red cent.

One curious thing in connection with the career of "Fighting Bob" Evans is that no New York life insurance company has ever offered him \$200,000 a year to become its president.

Some day, of course, the earth's supply of petroleum will be exhausted, and the historian of the future will refer glibly to the Standard Oil Company as "the glory that was grease."

Visitors who were invited to inspect a fine new hotel in Kalamazoo, Mich., carried away nearly all the portable property in the building as souvenirs. "Are we a nation of thieves?"

Harry Thaw says he will work if they will let him out of the lunatic asylum. Some of the other young men who have inherited fortunes will at once decide that he is really insane.

There is in Ohio a woman who claims to have baked 481,000 pies during the past sixty-three years. We are not so much surprised at the number of pies as at the length of time which she confesses it took her to bake them.

The Chicago woman who got a divorce on the ground that her husband had been drunk 3,000 times in ten years was well within her rights. No woman should feel in duty bound to live with a man who gets drunk oftener than every other day.

Chancellor Day can see no reason why there should be any complaint as long as rich men have foolish sons and daughters who, by indulging in idiotic extravagance, return the money to the people. There may be some good points about the scheme, but isn't it rather rough on the rich men?

Memphis has decided, through its park commissioners, to restore to the monument of Andrew Jackson the inscription, "Our Federal Union: It must be preserved." The phrase was a toast given by Jackson in 1830, on the anniversary of Jefferson's birthday. When the civil war broke out the idea was not popular in Tennessee, and the inscription was removed. The restoration of it is a sign of the passing of old feelings and the growth of the new national unity.

Concrete houses are becoming common, and concrete ships seem to be on the way. Italian engineers have been working in this direction for ten years or more. One of them recently proposed the use of concrete armor on warships, and the Italian government has agreed to tests. That government already owns and employs several concrete steamships of about one hundred tons' capacity, and has found, it is said, that they originally cost only about half as much as iron vessels, and that the maintenance cost is little or nothing. In these novel craft the frames and beams are made of concrete, reinforced with round bars of iron, and the skin consists of a single or double layer of concrete strengthened with wire netting and covered with an outside coat of clear cement. For the purpose of experiment, such vessels have been rammed by larger ships, and "no impression was produced." But a carefully planned experiment in time of peace and a rude and unmannerly shell or torpedo in war time might yield very different results.

Opportunities of To-day, a new railway magazine, publishes an interesting list of 100 important railway officials, with the present office of each and the post from which he started. More than half of the list are presidents, vice presidents, and general managers. Whom did these men start? Not one of them bears a name of any particular note in business history for wealth or high station. Over thirty of them started as just "boys"—office boys, water boys, messengers, shop apprentices, and the like. Among these were F. A. Delano, president of the Washash; George B. Harris, president of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy; and P. S. Eustis, its passenger traffic manager; George L. Peck, general manager of the Pennsylvania lines; and E. T. Jeffery, president of the Denver and Rio Grande. Nearly thirty started as brakemen, survey helpers, switchmen, section hands, and the like. Among these were Charles E. Schaff, vice president of the New York Central Lines West; W. C. Brown, senior vice president of the New York Central; James J. Turner, vice president of the Pennsylvania lines; and James McCrea, president of the Pennsylvania. About twenty-five were "clerks" of one kind or another—always at some minor post in the start. Among these were J. C. Stubbs, traffic director of the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific; John Sebastian, passenger traffic manager of the Rock Island system; William H. Truesdale, president of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western; and C. S. Melton, president of the New York, New Haven and Hartford, and the foremost figure in New England railroading. Sixteen started as telegraph operators. Among these were Marvin Hughitt, president, and M. M. Kirkman, vice president, of the Chicago and North-western; A. J. Earling, president of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, and Sir William C. Van Horne, chairman of the Canadian Pacific board of directors. He began as a telegraph operator on the Illinois Central. Only about seven began at posts of any sort of authority. These started as "agents" of one kind or another. The most conspicuous of this group is James J. Hill, who entered the service as "local agent" of a little road only legally remembered now. There is a great deal of talk about what "pull" and "influence" do to get a young man ahead in the world. There is a certain amount of truth in that theory, though not the kind which those who advance it believe. The "pull" that counts is that which the youngster makes for himself by his energy and sound judgment. We see the truth of this when we look over this list of railway officials of high place and great power, and think where they started. They took the "chance" that every boy may take who has the eyes to see it and the will to grasp it. And that "chance" exists and is just as wide open everywhere to-day as it was when they were first started.

THE PYGMY EARTH.

Vast Dimensions of the Sun as Compared with the World.

A dime held at arm's length from the eye will much more than cover the entire disk of the sun. If it were placed at the exact point of coincidence and its diameter and distance from the eye accurately measured, it might be used as a means of determining the sun's diameter, his distance being known. The foremost philosophers of long ago would have been appalled at the true statement of both the sun's distance and its size.

The sun's diameter is about 865,000 miles. It is bewildering to be assured that it would take 1,300,000 earths to equal the sun in volume. If the interior of that truly gigantic globe were hollow and the earth were placed at its center with the moon revolving about it at its usual mean distance of nearly 240,000 miles, there would still exist a vacancy between the moon and the inclosing shell of the sun of nearly 200,000 miles. This is perhaps the most graphic and impressive illustration possible of the sun's colossal bulk. We must note, however, that the density of the sun is only about one-quarter that of the earth, so that it would weigh only as much as 330,000 earths. In very round numbers the sun's weight may be stated at two octillion tons, which if expressed in figures would require almost as many eiphers as a newspaper line can accommodate.

A very comprehensive illustration of the pygmean dimensions of the earth as compared with the sun is to represent the latter by a globe two feet in diameter and the earth by a dainty pea. And yet the little pea weighs more than six quintillion tons. As to the solar surface, it is some 12,000 times that of our planet. Yet the sun when compared with its true peers, the stars, is not only not of extraordinary size, but in all probability is only to be ranked among the medium self-luminous bodies which sparkle in "heaven's ebony vault." And because of its spot-tedness it has a place, although a humble one, among the "variable" stars.

No Place to Die.

The soldier of the legion lay dying in Algiers. A committee of citizens who wanted to boom Algiers as a health resort waited upon him.

"We want you to change your headquarters," announced they. "You're hurting business here."—Pittsburg Post.

The Difference of One Word.

"He used to be in the newspaper business, but he's studying for the ministry now. He says he decided he couldn't be a reporter and save his soul."

"Huh! His old city editor says he couldn't be a reporter to save his soul."—Philadelphia Press.

Editorials

Opinions of Great Papers on Important Subjects.

AND SO MAN CAN FLY.

AT the miracles of invention the world no longer wonders greatly. All things have become credible. Has a machine been made which will fly? We no longer doubt. We reply, rather, "We thought so. It was to be expected." After the wireless telegraph, how can we do otherwise? Material limitations seem to be dissolving. Time was when wood and flesh were opaque. Then came the X-ray, and the fallacy of opaqueness was disclosed. To the X-ray eye the board has become as window glass. Time was when the unseen forces of the electric world traveled the material road of a copper or iron wire; but there came the inventions of Marconi and invisible messengers leaped through the limitless spaces of the ether. Time was when sounds traveled on the air; in our own generation the telephone has transferred sounds by new and unknown roads to distances limited only by the desires of man.

And now—after nineteen centuries of fruitless effort—is man to crown the achievements of this inventive age by a mastery of the air? Why not? We answer. Here we are told of a new device able to lift two men—a machine without balloon or gas bag attachment, weighing perhaps a thousand pounds, and yet able to mount as do the birds and sail the circumambient air! And we say: Why not? Why has the machine been so slow in coming? Of course the problem has been solved. Man will mount, and spread, and grow; and old things will pass away; and the earth will grow still smaller—for verily we live in a wonderful, a golden age!—Des Moines News.

NOT AFRAID TO DIE.

HOW many people could face certain death as bravely as did Dr. William H. Marsh, a wealthy citizen of Brooklyn, who passed away recently, a victim of hydrophobia? "You will die before Thursday noon; no human power can save you," he was told by a physician in the Pasteur Institute, where he had applied for treatment. He had gone to the institution too late to be helped. The symptoms of the dread disease were already visible to the practiced eye of the expert, and when asked for the truth the physician frankly told it.

Dr. Marsh accepted the sentence with fortitude. "I am not afraid to die," he said to his friends. "The past hides nothing that should make me ashamed to face the future," and he proceeded to put his earthly affairs in shape, that his loved ones might be protected. He instructed his physician to give him liberal doses of opiates when the paroxysms appeared in order that his family should not be terrified at the sight, and then he calmly awaited the end.

What a sermon in this sad story! Dr. Marsh was no common hero. The man who goes into battle knows that he has more than an even chance for his life. Influenced by the prospect of large rewards in the shape of money or fame, men will face tremendous perils, for there is always hope. But there was no gamble in the

IN A SICILIAN PRISON.

To reach the women's prison in Messina one must leave the Marina, the principal promenade and drive, to climb a steep hill by one of the few roads that lead to or from the town. As on turns one's back to the sea mountains and valleys open to the view, with here and there a villa half hidden among vines and orange trees. Higher a fort crowns the summit of a rocky crag, while the ruins of an old citadel stand out in bold relief against the autumn sky. Another turn of the road, and the driver brings his horse to a stand before the gates of what was once the monastery of the Capuchins. It is a white building, like a church in the center, with a long wing at either side. The site was chosen and the foundations laid by two pilgrims. It was handed over to the Capuchins in the sixteenth century, as is shown by an inscription over a low arched doorway, which bears the date of 1560. They continued in possession for nearly 300 years, until they were turned out by the Italian government in 1869.

The place has changed its character now; a sentry stands before the gate. Over a side door is written "Casa di Pena per Donne." Instead of the cowed monk who once answered the convent bell, the grating of locks is heard, and a warder in blue uniform admits visitors desirous of purchasing some of the work done by the prisoners. The way leads through the cloisters, which surround an open court. A statue of the Madonna stands in the center, encircled by a hedge of trailing vines, outside which many varieties of trees and flowers grow, such as Japanese medlars, oleanders, climbing roses, jasmine, lilies, etc. The work is shown by the well-known nun, the order of Saint Vincent de Paul, whose principal convent is at Rome, whence the "sisters" are sent to all parts of the world, sometimes for life, sometimes to change their abode again after a stay of from one to thirty years. There is embroidery of every description, church work in silver or gold mingled with silks of every shade on grounds of satin or silk, while raised flowers with delicate lace stitches adorn sheets, pillow cases, tea cloths, underlinen, etc., all in the most artistic designs. Being entrusted with this work forms a great alleviation to the sorrows of prison life. Some of the women develop a strong artistic power, and find real enjoyment in it, as it obliterates perhaps for a time the darker pages of memory. Besides this branch of labor, they make cushion lace and spin and weave linen; also cotton, silk, and wool for underclothing of every texture and warmth.

More than thirty visitors cannot see unless they have been granted a permit

by the prefect, in which case they are shown the chapel, where there are curious old memorial tablets, with busts and three-quarter figures in bas relief, representing men in quaint costumes and attitudes, not as when prepared for their last long sleep. There is some beautiful inlaid woodwork there, and the sacristy is entirely unadorned with it. Then come the refectory, the kitchen and corridors off which are the monks' cells, now fitted to contain from two to six prisoners' beds, according to their size; also workrooms, where looms are kept busy and shuttles dart backwards and forward like live things, where machines have taken the place of the more primitive knitting needles



A PRISONER IN THE CLOISTERS.

and balls of worsted. As the Mother Superior enters accompanied by visitors all the occupants rise; each seems to enjoy showing her task, and glad to answer any questions about it. These rooms are bright and sunny, and some of them command lovely views of the Peloro Mountains, and in every variety of foliage, from the prickly pear above to banks of maiden hair shaded by pepper trees at their base. They form a strong contrast to the dismal punishment cells, without light except what can enter through a small grating over the door.

"When a woman is violently opposed to all talk of marriage for her daughter, it creates a suspicion that in her own marriage she found the same side.

Some people exercise their rights so much they work them to death.

case of Dr. Marsh. A few hours before, apparently in perfect health, he was walking the streets of Brooklyn, happy and prosperous. Then his sentence fell, like a shadow across his path. And there was no escape from it. Yet his heart at this supreme crisis was light. "The past hides nothing that should make me ashamed to face the future," he said, and therein is found the key to this wonderful exhibition of courage. Remorse was a stranger to him, for he had lived right and dealt fairly with his fellow men. To be able to greet death with perfect stoicism under such circumstances is a heaven-born quality.—Toledo Blade.

OUR NEED OF WATER.

PHYSIOLOGISTS tell us that the animal body consists of almost 80 per cent water. Admitting this to be true, it would seem plausible that this quantity is necessary in order to carry on the normal physiological processes of the animal economy in proper condition. For similar reasons it would also appear plausible that should this quantity in any way be greatly reduced or diminished, either through normal processes of the body or through abnormal processes, this lost quantity must immediately be resupplied. Should such a withdrawal of water be permitted to be unduly prolonged, the disorders will assume such grave dimensions that life itself may ultimately be terminated. Elasticity and pliability of muscles, nerves, cartilage, tendons and even bones depend mainly upon the amount of water they contain. Water also serves as a distributor of bodily heat and regulates the body temperature by the physical process of absorption and elimination. Under normal conditions and in a proper degree of health this supply is ordinarily furnished partly by the food and partly by the drink we are daily consuming. An overindulgence in the use of water—provided it is not carried to excess—will seldom, if ever, be productive of any deleterious consequences.—Medical Recorder.

A CURE FOR DESPONDENCY.

ALARGE fleshy man with whiskers told me of a sovereign cure for despondency only yesterday. He had a number of girls in his employ, among them one that he knew was in struggling circumstances and supporting a sick mother on a none too healthy salary. She had come into the store and laid her purse and somber widow hat on the counter while she did something about the place.

The large fleshy man got between her and the purse, and when she was not looking he slipped a \$5 bill into it and moved unconsciously about his business.

In the afternoon he noticed that she had a red spot in each cheek and she was heard asking other girls if they believed in fairies. She never solved the mystery—it was two years ago—and never will unless she reads this. But the \$5 bill was very useful in its little way, and the large despondent man felt so good for two weeks that he hip-hopped on the sidewalk on his way home.—Minneapolis Journal.

Some Expensive Errors.

A Western paper once told the story of how an error in the price of an article in a department store advertisement, in which a lady's gown was offered for \$18.96, but which read \$8.96, cost it over a thousand dollars, as the store filled all orders and held the paper responsible for the error. The department store took the stand that to have done otherwise might have led people to believe it did not do as agreed, but offered the price merely to draw people to the store.

This incident quite often happens, but we only hear of it at times when publishers want to boast about how their papers bring results.

The most expensive error of this kind we have knowledge of was one that occurred recently down in Wall street. The banking house of J. P. Morgan & Co. recently offered a block of New York Central equipment notes of different maturities and at different prices, which price ran into fractions of per cents. A mistake was made in one of these fractions and was not noticed until the advertisement appeared in all the newspapers. Then it was too late. All these notes went like hot cakes, for discerning investors quickly saw their advantage. The net result was that J. P. Morgan & Co. lost nearly \$10,000, the difference between the error and the correct price. This is, as far as we know, the most expensive mistake in an advertisement.—Mail Order Journal.

The City Paganini.

When Paganini was asked many years ago to play at Vauxhall Gardens he inquired how many persons the place would hold.

"That is impossible to say," said the manager. "It is a large open space." After some reflection the great violinist inquired, "How many will the large, open space contain when quite full?"

"Perhaps 20,000."

"Ah, 20,000 people! And you ask how much?"

"Four shillings each! Twenty thousand at 4 shilling make 80,000; 80,000 shillings, 4,000. Well, I will play in one concert for £3,000, and you may have the other thousand."—St. Louis Republic.

Helping Her.

"You loved her very much?"

"So much that when her first husband died I married her that I might share her grief and so lessen it."

"And how'd it work?"

"Fine! I'm sadder now for his death than she is."—Boston Post.

Few men are ruined by great offenses, but most men are sufferers from the effects of petty folly.

REV. DR. QUAYLE,

Famous Lecturer and Preacher Whom Methodists Made Bishop. Among those whom the Methodists in general conference in Baltimore elected bishops perhaps none is more widely known than is Rev. Dr. William Alfred Quayle, who has charmed audiences in every part of the United States by his ability as a preacher and lecturer. He is also an author of wide



REV. DR. QUAYLE.

repute. He is a native of Parkville, Mo., and is 48 years of age. He was professor of Greek at Baker University for three years, acting as vice president of the university during the last year of his professorship. In 1890 he was made president of the institution. At present he is pastor of St. James' Church, Chicago.

Artesian Wells.

The theoretical explanation of the phenomenon is easily understood. The secondary and tertiary geological formations often present the appearance of immense basins, the boundary or rim of the basin having been formed by an upheaval of adjacent strata. In these formations it often happens that a porous stratum, consisting of sand, sandstone, chalk or other calcareous matter, is included between two impermeable layers of clay so as to form a flat porous U tube, continuous from side to side of the valley, the outcrop on the surrounding hills forming the mouth of the tube. The rain filtering down through the porous layer to the bottom of the basin forms there a subterranean pool, which, with the liquid or semiliquid column pressing upon it, constitutes a sort of huge natural hydrostatic bellows. Sometimes the pressure on the superincumbent crust is so great as to cause an upheaval or disturbance of the valley. It is obvious, then, that when a hole is bored down through the upper impermeable layer to the surface of the lake the water will be forced up by the natural law of water seeking its own level to a height above the surface of the valley, greater or less, according to the elevation of the level in the feeding column, thus forming a natural fountain on precisely the same principle as that of most artificial fountains, where the water supply comes from a considerable height above the jet.

Losing His Grip.

Field Marshal Count Von Moltke, the great Prussian strategist, had the utmost contempt for loquacity. On the rare occasions when he addressed the reichstag, his speeches were models of brevity. At banquets it was his custom to sit in silence except when he proposed "His majesty, the king," or "The health of his majesty the king." On one occasion an officer laid a heavy wager that at a coming state dinner Von Moltke would not use more than seven words in proposing King William's health. It happened that on this occasion the great general said: "The health of his majesty the king, gentlemen," upon hearing which the officer muttered: "Ah, the field marshal grows old and talkative."—Buffalo Commercial.

Another Glass.

The seventeenth century puritan preachers talked for two hours or more not "by the clock" but by the hour glass. At least one of them turned the glass to humorous account. He found himself no further than the middle of the sermon when the sands had run out. "Drunkenness" was his subject, and, reversing the horologe, "Let's have another glass," said he. Sir Roger L'Estrange tells of a parish clerk who sat patiently until the preacher was three-quarters through his second glass and the majority of his hearers had quietly left the church. Rising at a convenient pause, he asked the minister to close the church door when he had done, "and push the key under it, as he and the few that remained were about to retire."

Bright Boy.

"What is the worst thing about riches?" asked the teacher of the juvenile class.

"Their scarcity," promptly answered the bright youth at the head.—Chicago News.

One Drawback.

Oliver—What an improvement it will be if the time ever comes when everybody can get a seat in the street cars.

Violet—Oh, I don't know. A girl would never be sure that she was pretty.—Puck.

Whitewash will not hide the freckles on a man's reputation.