

## Topics of the Times

No man ever had a cold that a thousand other men couldn't cure in thirty minutes.

The present Czar of Russia has reached the ripe old age—for a Czar—of 40 years.

Wizard Burlbank might render a valuable service by developing a sensationless Gould family.

Why is it that "strange tongue prophecies" never foretell anything that is grand and glorious?

As the years roll by everybody will be anxious to hear how that girl who married the first man she met is getting along.

Those old timers who accumulated big fortunes couldn't afford to bother with divorce courts. It was much more convenient to live happily.

If Prince Helle de Sagan says many more unpleasant things about the newspapers they will retaliate by omitting all mention of him in their columns.

London, it appears, does not understand George Ade's "College Widow," but then there are a good many Americans who cannot solve the mystery of the "rah-rah boy."

Andrew Carnegie says the United States has the worst monetary system in the world. Yet some men have accumulated quite satisfactory wads of money under that system.

The latest news from Breathitt County, Ky., is to the effect that the undertakers still get an occasional job or two with the assistance of men with a grudge against each other.

If an American countess will go boating on the Laborca River near Oeromezoe, Pusza and Ferecnys she must expect to have the boat tip over or some other disaster happen.

A Baltimore doctor who operated on a man for appendicitis discovered that the victim's appendix had previously been removed. We are assured that the operation was entirely successful.

"Why be downcast?" asks the Indianapolis News. "At least you don't have any tire troubles with your lawn mower." Oh, don't we? Perhaps you don't know how the machine tires us every few days.

Young Vanderbilt, in his character of "whip," drives a coach and collects fares from his passengers. He is merely reverting to first principles. His illustrious ancestor, the commodore, made many a dime in his early days as a ferryman.

It is inherently misleading to say that our general business prosperity "came with the prosperity of the railroads"—as if the railroads had created their own prosperity first and had then invited the country at large to share in it, or had set a pace in prosperity-making that the general business of the United States was quick to catch up with and follow.

One of the largest cantilever bridges in the world will be opened to the public in the early autumn, when the bridge connecting Manhattan Island with Long Island, by way of Blackwell's Island, is completed. The bridge will be in three spans, the longest of which is nearly twelve hundred feet. The spans of the Firth of Forth cantilever bridge are each seventeen hundred feet long. The new bridge carries two floors. On the lower one there will be four tracks for surface cars and a driveway for carriages. There will be four tracks for elevated cars on the upper floor, besides two foot paths. This is the third bridge across the East River between Manhattan and Long Island, but it will not be the last. Work is progressing rapidly on a fourth one, between the old Brooklyn Bridge and the new Williamsburg Bridge.

We start out in life with a definite amount of possible energy. We can spend it as we please; but even with the best intentions many people use up a large part of their capital in worry, anxiety or by fretting over nonessentials—trifles which have nothing whatever to do with their success. Many people go through life without ever getting full possession of themselves. They do not seem able to grasp their possibilities; they never develop the faculty of flinging their lives out with force and effectiveness along the line of their bent. They can use some of their faculties to advantage, and can do some things fairly well, but never come to a full knowledge of their possible strength. If we could only learn to control our thought-force and to spend it where it is needed, instead of allowing it to ooze out or leak away in dribbles on unimportant matters, what marvels we might accomplish! Some people spend half the power they generate in vain worry, bickering, spitting hairs over irrelevancies. Much of our possible success-energy is wasted through fear, which in all its phases is the greatest curse to the human race—fear of failure, fear of imaginary conditions and happenings that never come about, dread of criticism and forebodings

about the future. Countless promising lives have been wrecked by this gloomy phantom, fear. Could we all put away all of these illusions and trivialities, which drain our life forces, and devote all of our energy to the essential things that lie ever close at hand, the progress of humanity would be amazing.

The failure of Harry Thaw to obtain his release from custody is a highly desirable outcome of the habeas corpus proceedings instituted in his behalf. There is no doubt the effect upon a public opinion already sufficiently cynical as to the efficiency and rectitude of our laws would have been of the worst if Thaw had proceeded so promptly from the dock to absolute freedom. Only one interpretation would have been put upon this sequence by the average American—namely: that evasion of law is the secure privilege of the rich. The rough reasoning of the public at large would have brushed aside the possibility of recovery and would have struck straight at the fact that by a liberal expenditure from the Thaw millions "experts" and shrewd counsel had first saved Thaw from the consequences of his act by establishing one hypothesis and then saved him from the consequences following upon this hypothesis by repudiating it. Insane delusion sometimes is cured. But the judge who committed Thaw to Matteawan gave it as his opinion, based upon the opinion of authorities in alibi, that Thaw's type of aberration was incurable. This declaration would have given to the popular opinion a final certainty that Thaw had evaded the law. Happily the public has escaped this disturbing conclusion and the administration of justice has been saved from another blow in the popular estimation. It is devoutly to be hoped that, not only for the safety of those upon whom a recurrence of Thaw's mania might be wreaked but for the welfare of the public at large, the courts of New York will not take chances with his case. When Thaw is proved sane and permanently cured beyond a reasonable doubt, let him be allowed to go free. But not till that proof is given.

### A BEDROOM IN A TREE.

Sleeping outdoors in a rudely constructed house erected among branches of a high walnut tree in the heart of Flatbush, N. Y., is the novel method a young man has taken of "getting near to nature." The "tree house," as the people in the neighborhood call it, is located on the lawn surrounding the



THE BEDROOM IN THE TREE.

home. A wooden stairway winds around the tree's trunk leading to the single chamber above, allowing an easy ascent to be made. The entire structure is made of wood.

At first the intention was simply to build a "crow's nest," where the "tree sleeper" and his companions could seclude themselves on rainy afternoons and days when it was too hot for active exercise. The "crow's nest" did not prove to be large enough, so the boys added a large platform, which forms what they call their piazza. This piazza is roomy enough for an ordinary sized dining room table and comfortably accommodates six or eight diners.

Then the boys decided that they would like to see how it would feel to sleep out in the open. They covered the top of the house with panes of glass, and this gave them all the light, day or night, they needed. The trial worked so well that they declared that thereafter they would, while the weather was warm, sleep in the tree.

### In the Spring, Etc.

"Perhaps it's oversensitiveness on my part," remarked the old bachelor, "but from this time on until autumn sets in again in earnest I am going to be continually embarrassed by public love-making. Last Sunday afternoon I went for my usual stroll in the park, and I suffered any number of minor shocks from coming on couples spooning on the benches along the paths. Later on I had to ride down town in the subway, and I saw two more couples talking into each other's faces as if there wasn't a human being within a mile of them. Of course they don't mind me. But I hate to be put in the attitude of an intruder on love's young dream."

### So Thoughtful.

Nell—Yes, the count is attentive to her. She admired some roses she saw in a florist's window they were passing yesterday, so he had some sent up to her—

Belle—How thoughtful!

Nell—Yes; C. O. D.—The Catholic Standard and Times.

### A Good Man.

"Your dead husband was a good man," declared the sympathetic Mrs. Casey to the bereaved widow. "He was!" exclaimed Mrs. Murphy, dashing the tears from her eyes. "No two policemen could handle him."—Judge.

# EDITORIALS

Opinions of Great Papers on Important Subjects.

### THE INFAMY OF BLACKMAIL.



AM an old fool," and so were David, the hero, and Solomon, the sage; but Thomas C. Platt, as a sequel to his folly, has conferred on society a material benefit in that he challenged the blackmailer and that whole tribe of moral lepers, compared with whom the assassin and the thief are exemplary characters. How many millions are extorted from men in high places as the price of secrecy the world will never know. It is the basest of all multifarious expedients of crime and the most cowardly. The "Black Hand" carries terror to those against whom it is aimed; but compared with the secret and noiseless work of the social blackmailer the "Black Hand" is a rather respectable method of diabolism. It carries a knife with which to relieve its victim of his wretchedness, and takes its own life in hand when it makes the venture.

We are persuaded that the act of Platt in refusing the demands of Mae Catherine Wood and the act of Justice O'Gorman in sending the woman to prison will work wonders for the peace of society. It was a brave thing to do when Platt appealed to the court of justice, and would that every other man so beleaguered would do as much. Though his sin were scarlet, the public would applaud his service to society. The murderer may be a daring man, and so the thief; but your blackmailer is ever a coward, and it only needs to defy him to be rid of him. All other infamy shrinks to venial sin compared to the moral iniquity of the man or woman who demands a price for silence.—Washington Post.

### KEEP THE SCHOOLHOUSE OPEN.



WHY should our schools be closed during the summer?

Is it to give the teachers a vacation? They certainly need it, but could not substitute be found? Is it for the sake of economy? What worse economy is there than that which provides conditions which not only lead to the tremendous expense of courts and reformatories, but to the infinitely greater cost of lives that have been ruined through that mischief which Satan finds for idle hands?

Boys and girls might be injured by a twelve-months' application to books? There are other things than books in our education. The vacation school should teach something else than winter school.

Why not teach a trade? Or play? At any rate, boys and girls ought to be kept off the street. And it makes no difference whether the street is in the city or in the small town. A great many of us think that the small town street is as demoralizing as the city street.

Notwithstanding all our talk about the new education, our schools still can be improved. But the reform that is needed is not so much in the curriculum as in the conception of the very purpose of school. It is all very well to discuss "Frits" and the "Three R's," but let us open

our eyes to something more fundamental. The welfare of the community demands training in self-restraint and plain decency.

When that happy day for which we look dawns and we all come to our senses, we shall see that the duty of the State is not to teach boys and girls for nine months in the year and then turn them loose for three months; we shall see to it that if fathers and mothers forsake their children, then the State shall take them up—into school, not jail. If it is the duty of the school to keep growing children from bad influences in the winter, it is even more its duty to keep children from evil in the summer.—The World To-Day.

### DO WE WANT LOWER CALIFORNIA?



CALIFORNIA Congressman wants this country to buy Lower California. The immediate prompting of such a purpose is the advantage of Magdalena Bay as a naval station. Although Lower California is, generally speaking, a desolate and deserted stretch of territory, Magdalena Bay is a superb harbor; its wide and deep waters are protected by a natural breakwater, the Island of St. Margarita. Here the battleship fleet engaged in target practice, by permission of the Mexican government, which, however, refused its consent to small arms practice on shore. The United States might have taken Lower California at the close of the war with Mexico, but there was no reason to believe that it would have been in the least useful. Mexico does not now find its possession of any material benefit; but such is national sentiment in the matter of territory that it is improbable that she would consider favorably an offer to buy it. As an available half-way anchorage between the west coast and the Panama canal, the harbor could probably be made serviceable to the fleets of the United States, especially in event of war.—Providence Journal.

### WE ARE DYING YOUNGER.



IN view of all that has been said about the fall in the death rate, it seems strange to realize that we are not living so long as our grandfathers and grandmothers did.

More babies live to grow up nowadays than formerly, but people in later life die younger. Once arrived at adult age, the average man or woman has few years of survival to expect. This seems on the face of it so surprising a statement that in order to be accepted it should be backed up by data authentic and indisputable. Such data are furnished by the figures of the insurance companies (which all agree on the point), but it is easier to refer to the government census reports, which tell the tale in simple and convincing fashion. Even during the last fifteen years the death rate among all persons over 55 years of age of both sexes has risen very considerably.—Health Culture.

### A PLEA FOR A VERMIN-EXTERMINATOR—THE BARN OWL.



A BARN OWL ON A MOONLIGHT RAT-HUNTING EXPEDITION.

The barn owl is not popular with the country people, and it is a much-persecuted bird. If the farmers only realized how very useful the owl is in exterminating rats and mice they would protect it. The bird would be a very valuable ally to the Society for the Extermination of Rats, which has now begun active work in this country.—London News.

### Wonderful Machines.

The sensitiveness of the human organism is gross indeed when one compares it with certain marvelous machines. A photographic plate, coupled with a telescope, discovers millions of stars whose light the retina of the eye does not appreciate; the microphone makes the inaudible tread of a fly sound like the tramp of cavalrymen. The human heat sense cannot realize a difference of temperature beyond one-fifth of a degree. But the barometer, an instrument 200,000 times as sensitive as the skin, notes a difference of a millionth of a degree. A galvanometer flexes its finger at a current generated by the "coherers" of Branley of Paris, so as to press it out of a spherical shape into that of an egg. The amount of work done by the wink of an eye equals 100,000,000,000 of the winks

marked on the scale of a delicate instrument; but even this performance is surpassed by the "coherers" of Branley of Paris, by which the Hertz waves of wireless telegraphy are caught in their pulsings through space. The range of impressions which we get from lifting an object is exceedingly small. An ordinary chemist's balance is some million times as sensitive and weighs down the two-hundredth part of a milligram. Without such instruments at these we should know far less about the world than they place within our reach.

### Knew the Role By Heart.

"Do you think you could learn to love me?" the young man inquired.

"Learn to love you?" exclaimed the rapturous maid. "Harold, I could give lessons at it."—Louisville Courier Journal.

## MAJ. GEN. WILSON.

One of the Nine Surviving Generals of the Civil War.

Of the 253 major generals and those of superior rank, upon whom fell the military responsibilities of the field during the course of the Civil War, there are only nine survivors. Of these Major General James Harrison Wilson, famous cavalry leader and engineer officer, is president of the Cavalry Society of the Armies of the United States.

General Wilson was born in Shawneetown, Ill., in 1837. His grandfather was one of the founders of Illinois and his father was an ensign in the war of 1812 and a captain in the Black Hawk War. General Wilson was educated at McKendree College and at the United States Military Academy, from which he graduated in 1860. He was assigned to the corps of topographical engineers and was the chief engineer of the Port Royal expedition. He then served in the Department of the South, and acted as aide-de-camp to General George B. McClellan, being present at the battles of South Mountain and Antietam. Appointed lieutenant colonel in the volunteer staff of the army, in November, 1862, he served as chief engineer and inspector general of the Army of the Tennessee, and was active in the operations around Vicksburg. He became captain of engineers in May, 1863, and brigadier general of volunteers in October of that year and was engaged in the operations near Chattanooga, the battle of Missionary Ridge



MAJOR GENERAL WILSON.

and the relief of Knoxville. Placed in command of the third division of the Cavalry Corps in the Army of the Potomac, he bore a conspicuous part in the operations under General Philip H. Sheridan, including the Richmond raid and the combats near Petersburg. He led his division through the Shenandoah campaign, including the battle of Opequan, until October, 1864, when he was assigned to the command of the Cavalry Corps of the military division of the Mississippi. Organizing a mounted body of 15,000 men, he contributed largely to the success won in the west by the armies of General Thomas and General Sherman, particularly by his capture of Selma and Montgomery, Ala., and Columbus and Macon, Ga. In 28 days he captured five fortified cities, 23 stands of colors, 288 guns and 6,820 prisoners, among them Jefferson Davis. April, 1865, he was promoted major general of volunteers.

In January, 1866, he was mustered out of the volunteer service and in July was commissioned lieutenant colonel of the Thirty-fifth Infantry and brevetted major general in the U. S. A. for gallant and meritorious services during the war.

In 1870 he was honorably discharged and engaged in large railroad and engineering operations at home and abroad. In May, 1898, he was commissioned major general in the volunteer service for the Spanish war and commanded the First and Sixth Army Corps in Georgia and Cuba and took part in the Porto Rico campaign. He was with the China Relief Expedition and commanded the co-operating force of American and British troops in the capture of eight Chinese temples. He also commanded the American forces in Peking. When King Edward of England was crowned General Wilson represented the United States Army. He was placed on the retired list in 1901 by special act of Congress as brigadier general of the U. S. A.

### Too Hard to Pronounce.

A well-dressed man entered a florist's shop in a certain city recently, threw down a dollar and said he wanted some flowers to take home. He was quite unsteady, evidently tapering off a spree, and the flowers were apparently intended as a domestic peace offering. The florist picked out a collection of hyacinths, and the caller started to leave, but at the door hesitated. "I say," he said, thickly, "what's these flowers called?" "Hyacinths," said the florist. The customer shook his head, and, as he walked back to the counter, said: "Götter have something easier. Gimme a dozen roses."

### Art and Tears.

"I suppose you sometimes shed real tears at the theater?" said the admirer.

"I am tempted to," answered Mr. Stormington Barnes, "when I look over the box office statement."—Washington Star.

When a woman invites another to be her guest, and finds that she has a previous engagement, she feels that so far as she is concerned the slate has been washed off.

The man who has a motto is also apt to take up some of your time by quoting poetry you aren't anxious to hear