

## Topics of the Times

To avoid petticoat rule in the schools, pay trouser salaries.

Sometimes a woman's alleged fright at the sight of a mouse is simply an advertising scheme.

Any boy who would rather go to school than to a circus will never break into the strenuous class.

Suppose the American Cabinet should follow the example of the Santo Domingans and decide to "fire" the President.

The London Literary World says the novel-reading habit is spreading. Evidently London is beginning to feel the influence of Indiana.

The Russian revolutionists who are being beaten to death by the peasants in the interest of the Little Father, wonder "where they are at."

A New York actress has left the income from \$15,000 for the care of a dog, a parrot and a cage of love-birds. It ought to be worth more than that.

Set a thousand rules for the "final good-night hug" of lovers, if you wish; but they will be shattered straightway by a last final and several more finals.

The Albany mother's record of two babies in four months ought to convince President Roosevelt that race suicide is not a live issue in New York State.

President Roosevelt says he is going to make few addresses between now and his retirement from office. Great Scott! Is he going to devote himself exclusively to sermons?

It appears that President Morales was afraid of his cabinet. We can think of one president who will find it hard to understand why anybody should ever be afraid of his cabinet or be in the least delicate about telling it "what's what."

Honestly speaking, there is no Christian nation—no Christian people. The real followers of Christ are everywhere in such a hopeless minority that they are unable to engrain in public sentiment the humanitarianism that their Leader taught.

In the Paris Figaro Plaisantin says: "Trees are sacred. I consider them as ancestors; for we have come down from monkeys, and the monkeys come down from trees." Jokeologists have found fragments of this hoary bit of humor in the ruins of Nineveh.

The Martians are declared by astronomers to be several million years ahead of us. How, we wonder, have they solved the question of municipal ownership, the jury problem, the rebate problem and several other problems that are burning with us?

The most notable feature of the latest census bulletin relating to illiteracy among our population is the statement that there are fewer illiterates among the children of foreign-born parents than among those of the natives. This is variously accounted for, but the chief reason for it appears to be based on the fact that the greater portion of the foreign-born children live in cities, where the educational opportunities are better than in the country. In the country the illiteracy among children is eighty-nine per thousand; in cities of over 25,000 inhabitants it is only ten per thousand. This is a rather remarkable showing.

The greatest canal ever dug was successfully put through the Isthmus of Panama, or Darien, a hundred and twenty years ago by the prince of literary liars, Baron Munchausen. In a volume of his travels published in England, the noble baron says that he drove his chariot rapidly from shore to shore of the isthmus, tearing up the rocks and forming a tolerable bed for the water. Then a million people from North and South America cleared away the dirt. "The sea came in with tremendous magnificence, and enlarged the bounds of the canal so as to make a passage some miles broad from ocean to ocean." And yet our engineers are still lingering over their plans.

There are in the West 200,000,000 acres of ordinarily barren land, much of which can be made productive by means of irrigation. For a number of years the government has been engaged in the work of reclamation. The results are marvelous, but it remained for President Roosevelt, who knows the West and loves it, to systematize the plans and prosecute them on a larger scale. At present eleven projects are under way. At a cost of \$37,000,000 they will transform 1,300,000 acres of desert into fruitful land worth

from \$175 to \$200 per acre. Twenty years ago Salt River valley in Arizona was a barren waste. Now it contains three cities and has a population of 25,000. That is what water will do.

It is the same old story. A happy young husband and a devoted wife struggle through hardship to success and then on toward wealth and—misery. Is Mrs. Laura Corey, wife of the millionaire, W. Ellis Corey, wishing for the good old days of poverty? The father of the millionaire says: "If my son thinks that Laura does not love him, he is wrong, dead wrong. When a woman slaves and starves through a \$40 per month period with a man, when she mends his clothes and divides the last crust with him, when she bears him children and rears or buries them, as Laura did for Ellis, it is safe to say that she loves him." And still we are told the same old story, the story of a pretty face, a man's mad infatuation; the story of a man's millions and of a wife's broken heart. "The last crust!" In the good old days for the trusting wife, the last crust was sweetened by the love of the only man in the world. Empty is the success that bows in shame the gray head of a devoted father. Cursed is the gold that only feeds the evil desires that break the heart of a faithful wife! And sometimes we of poverty complain of our hard lot. Is there no glitter of glass upon your table? Maybe the shine of glass and silver is not for you. Look for the shine in the eyes of the husband, still your lover. Though his hands are grimy with toil and though your own are hardened with homely duties, if the shine of love is there, be glad. Think of the broken-hearted woman of wealth and count your mercies. Look and think, then break your crust, and though it be the last, be grateful for the love that keeps it sweet.

Yes, you can pay \$500 for a toy automobile, and there are walking, talking dolls, full of clockwork and equipped with real hair and silk lingerie, that come at \$700. The rich can spend money like drunken sailors to temporarily please their pampered little ones. But here is a trade note that counts: "The demand for rocking horses and Noah's arks grows with the years. It is bigger now than ever before." It wasn't so long ago when you sucked the paint off the blue elephants and green tigers. Odd about that paint! You grew fat on it. You slept soundly and smiled while you slumbered. And you guarded the broken, faded, worn animals in the little menagerie that came to you on a Christmas morning, and there was joy in your heart. And then came a day when romance departed from the ark and a woman laid the animals away to be loved and fondled and remembered years later when her boy had grown up and all but forgotten the golden days of his childhood. For into life came the first rocking horse, spotted and prancing, builded on the same lines as they are builded to-day. No steed of warrior ever possessed more fire than did Dobbin as he reared and tossed on the sitting room floor, gripped by hands that were so pink and soft that mother often kissed them. Ah, there have been horses since then, pedigreed and costly. There have been automobiles, perhaps, and palatial cars. But not one to compare with the horse that made the trip from the old settee to the rocking chair, and that was a part of your life. And then Dobbin went to the attic and life stopped being all sunshine and the sky was not all blue and you entered on that period of existence when duty often takes the place of pleasure, and the days mean more and the smiles are often mixed with tears. That is life as it is lived. It is good to know that the demand for Noah's arks and rocking horses is growing. We will try to start our children right, along the simple way, please God. We try to do our duty by them as long as we can keep them children. And after that, hope. It is the only way.

### Unmistakable Proof.

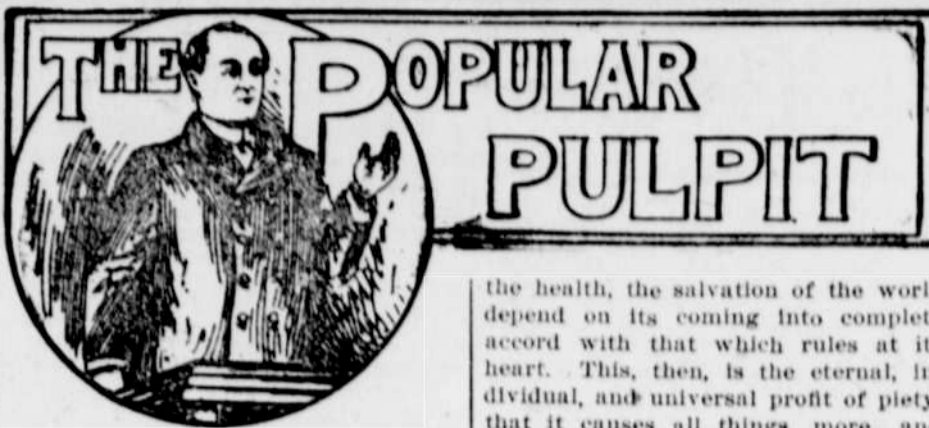
The estate owned by the late Col. Crowninshield in a New England seaport town adjoins the pasture of a sturdy farmer. A valuable dog owned by the colonel used to get into the pasture and chase and worry the farmer's cows. Finally, the Boston Herald says, he went to Col. Crowninshield and requested that the annoyance be stopped.

"How do you know it is my dog?" asked Col. Crowninshield, rather unsatisfactorily.

"How do I know?" exclaimed the farmer, with rising indignation, "Why, I've seen him, time and again!" "You must bring me better proof," replied the colonel, coldly.

"All right, sir," said the farmer, in no uncertain tone. "The next time the dog bothers my cows I'll bring you all the proof you want—in a wheelbarrow."

There are some people who would carry cheerfulness so far that they would demand philosophy from the rat in a trap.



### THE PROFIT OF PIETY.

By Rev. Henry F. Cope.

Doth Job fear God for naught?—Job, I, 9.

That was the question which, in this striking drama, was asked by man's great adversary. It is a most natural one from the satanic point of view, where selfish gain is the only admissible explanation of any action, where the sole question is, will it pay? and where personal advantage is the only known standard of ethics. It is not strange that the ledger view of life looks on religion as a possibly profitable business venture, a side line to be carried for what there is in it.

The accusation in the question is trite enough to-day; but it only persists because of the truth in it. The Christian soldier who lives for the loot keeps alive this sneer at religion. A man's testimony in prayer meeting is often only an economical method of advertising his sugar or his dry goods. Many a man is serving God with an eye single to the good of his trade, while to others piety is but a professional pull. To yet others religion is a performance to be regarded as one of the penalties paid to social convention.

More dangerous because more subtle is the error of those who look on pious practices as means of placating the wrath of the deity, who hope to buy passports to heaven by prayer meeting pretenses on earth. Acts of worship are to them things devoid of delight which they dare not forego for fear of future pains. If heaven could be earned this way they would certainly deserve it.

But the hypocrites deceive no one. Their pretenses are too palatable. They alone are satisfied with themselves. Pity for profit alone is almost its own sufficient punishment. Who can help pitying the masqueraders who toll so hard to produce no impression. Neither heaven nor earth takes any stock in them. Their mummery has no more to do with religion than charity balls have to do with beneficence. It neither pays as business nor as religion.

In spite of all pretenders, who are after all relatively few in number, religion is a reality in the life of man and the question, does religion pay? deserves a fair answer. Life has no place for that which does not pay. Neither superstition nor sentiment can sanction the waste of life on useless ends. Taking the soul's infinite standard of values all things must come to the test of their service, the profit to mankind.

The profit of piety can never be expressed in cash; it is personal, a matter of the soul. A man serves God for the satisfaction secured; not for self-satisfaction, but because deep within him he feels his need of the divine, of one who can satisfy his thirst for good, who can surpass his highest aspirations, who can constantly tone up his life and lead him to things better than himself.

Friendship is not without its fruits; yet the true friend does not figure on them. He who unselfishly seeks another soul, who delights in his service, and counts all sacrifice as joy, finds rewards such as the cunning of selfishness could never extract. So is it with the service of the Most High. The soul of man seeks after the soul of all; religion is service for this supreme friend; worship the communion with him, work the doing of things that please him; who shall measure the profit of such love, or what shall a man give in exchange for its joy and peace?

The soul's need of God, the need of the sources of our lives for the source of all life, the need of the inner spirit of man for touch with the great spirit of all is as real, as definite, and as steadily assertive as the need of the body for food. There are men so busy making money that they think they have no time even to eat; but their folly is as wisdom compared to that of those who think it does not pay to take time to feed the inner life, the eternal man.

Nor can a man estimate the profit of religion by his own soul possessions alone. Wherever even two or three lift up their eyes and hearts to nobler things the whole race is raised. The worship of the things that are worthy makes the whole world more worthy. The profit of one man's faith becomes a common possession, and the most godless share the benefits of the godly life.

The daily search for God is the tuning of the whole life closer to the music of the infinite; the harmony,

the health, the salvation of the world depend on its coming into complete accord with that which rules at its heart. This, then, is the eternal, individual, and universal profit of piety, that it causes all things more and more perfectly to work together for the good of all.

### MAN'S BEST WELFARE.

By Rev. John Milton Scott.

The mouth of the righteous man is a well of life.—Prov. x, 2.

Without water life cannot be. Take water from the earth and the fevers of death burn their fires.

Where deserts blight, a well of water is a possession beyond price. To the Hebrew of the Psalms and Proverbs, therefore, who knew the heat and the distress of scorching sands, who knew water as the synonym of life, no more powerful language could be used to set forth the value of righteousness than the brief sentence which says, "The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life."

He speaks the truth always and his word is like water from cool wells. It refreshes. It vitalizes.

Man builds nothing that is not builded on truth. The hands of his daily toil move in truth. This is the reality from ore to engine, from quarry to house, from forest to furniture. In dealing with things he is dealing with truth. If he deals truthfully, the universe conspires to bless him with achievement. If untruthfully, gravitation, iron, wood, water, fire, the truth of things, presses the bitter cup of failure to his lips. In man's relation with his fellow man, great civilizations, as great worlds, can be built only upon righteousness, upon every man's speaking truth with his neighbor.

Every great state is builded in truth and goes to ruin in falsehood, through disloyalty to its moral ideals. Notwithstanding appearances to the contrary, this is the fact which the universe in its every atom sanctifies.

Through the mists of the apparent look with clear eyes into the reality. Build your career on the integrity of the universe, mastered in friendly wise by the integrity of yourself. Then you are building so wisely that every atom of the universe works with you, willing your success. "Beauty is its own excuse for being." Righteousness is its own justification. Truth is its own bliss.

Whether the eyes of men see or not, the joy in which God loves and lives enters into the heart of the righteous. Within the soul of the righteous is life. To that life is the abundant good fortune with which righteousness rewards its own. When he expresses that righteousness it is like the hills expressing themselves in streams which run among the valleys, giving life to bird and beast, to grass and tree, making farms possible and the human life free of the fevers of death.

There is nothing so fine as a righteous man. No beauty can equal the beauty of holiness. It has a loveliness more gracious than flowers. It has a charm beyond the enchantment of birds. It has a grandeur outdoing mountain and sea. No sunsets are so splendid, not suns nor stars nor dawns, not music nor Shakspeare; not canvases, nor cathedrals; not anything built by man.

The chief passion of the soul should be the passion for holiness; for in its beauty all other beauty is hallowed; in its spirit all other achievement has worth and in the soul of the achiever the eternity of God is awake.

Things pass. A brief while and the places of earth we know are no more forever. Even while here things cannot satisfy. They disappoint. They enslave. The greatest good fortune any one can achieve is integrity of heart. The divinest welfare is that conscious rectitude, the peace of which never forsakes a man through all years and all worlds. The imperishable riches of God are this good fortune whose youth is a well-spring of life.

### Short Meter Sermons.

Fear is a poor kind of foresight.

Every word of profanity is a prayer. Love lasts long after pity is worn out.

Little duties are a school for larger ones.

A little modesty often hides a lot of vanity.

He rejects all rewards who refuses moral responsibility.

The logic of love convinces more than the love of logic.

A golden heart is not gained by setting the heart on gold.

Many a man is breaking his back under a bag of shadows.

Getting on to the ropes of trickery ends in getting into them.

### JAMES WENT BROKE.

Striking Measure Adopted to Inform Father of Fact.

Ralph Gowan, a wealthy merchant, smiled contentedly in the realization that a duty, performed regularly for four years, was now ended. His son James had graduated from college, and monthly checks need no longer be forwarded.

James, however, did not care to assume business responsibilities immediately, and in a most persuasive manner induced his father to let him tour the world with a college chum. The old man was pleased with his son's persuasive powers—it indicated business ability. He permitted the boy to go.

James was given a goodly wad of money and a positive warning that the sum must suffice. He was further given to understand that he'd have to communicate with his father by postal card only, and that all letters would remain open.

"He has too much pride to beg on a public postal card," cunningly chuckled the father, "and, consequently, will make his money last."

Postal cards from Europe came regularly to Ralph Gowan. He became interested in his sons' travels. The cards were pinned to the library wall, with a sort of geographical relationship.

Many of the postals were works of art, and in a few weeks the exacting business man had contracted an acute mania for souvenir postal cards. A beautiful card was delivered to the merchant one morning, and in a moment the air was split with sharp expletives. The card was mutilated. A crack across the glazed surface indicated gross carelessness on the part of the authorities. More cards arrived, the beauty of each marred by a crease, made, unquestionably, with malicious deliberation.

"Look here," said Gowan, angrily, as he approached the postmaster and handed him one of the cards, "all my postals are cracked like this one. Some one is to blame. Here are a dozen more like it."

The postmaster calmly gazed at the mutilated cards, noticed a similarity of wording and of creasing, and promised to investigate.

That same day the postmaster called on Mr. Gowan and, chuckling immoderately, said: "Read those cards, and for every crease substitute the word 'broke.'"

The merchant pondered for a moment, and then took up a card and read: "I remain as ever—broke—your loving son, James."

Gowan meekly mailed a check. Then his arm swept viciously over his library wall, and in a few moments the atmosphere was permeated with the odor of burning paper.

### LIFE IN ICELAND.

Simplicity of Living Is Conducive to High Morals.

There are no manufacturing in the country. Each home is a factory and every member of the family a hand, says the Pilgrim.

Shoes are made from goatskins. The long stockings worn over there in wading through the snow are knitted by the women and children, and even the beautiful broadcloth comes smooth and perfect from the hand loom found in every house.

The sweet simplicity of their national costume does away with the necessity of fashion books. Young girls who are about to be married need take no thought as to "wherewithal shall they be clothed." When they array themselves in the wedding garments of their ancestor, two or three generations remote, they are perfectly up-to-date in the matter of attire.

This simple life is conducive to a state of high morals, higher probably than in any other part of the world. There is not a drop of liquor manufactured in the island, and for the 78,000 population there is but one policeman. There is neither a jail nor any place of incarceration for criminals, nor yet is there a court in which a high crime could be tried.

The percentage of crime is so small that it does not warrant the expense of keeping up a court. When a criminal trial becomes necessary the offender is taken to Denmark to answer to the law for his misdeeds.

The women are among the most advanced in the world. Their Woman's Political League has a membership of 7,000, and they enjoy more civil rights than the women of almost any other country, having a choice in all elections save that for members of the legislative body.

### Narrow Escape.

"How's business?" "Fine! It's a mighty poor day when I can't make \$10 or \$15 now."

"That's good. Can't you pay me that \$5 you owe me?"

"No. There's been a lot of mighty poor days lately."—Cleveland Leader.

It's enough to make the average bridle blush to recall her strenuous efforts to become one.

It's easier to teach a baby to talk than it is to teach a woman not to.