

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

If you would be a man of mark, let the tattoo artist get his work in on you.

A dealer in old iron may know nothing of prize fights, yet he's familiar with scraps.

Sir William Hingston says there is danger in the surgeon's knife. We have for some time suspected as much.

It's wonderful how easy it is for a small man to swallow his anger when the other fellow happens to be a heavyweight.

Just as the Pacific cable is being laid Marconi has fixed things so that cables are not needed. Why couldn't he have made his plans public a little earlier?

Sitting Bull's son now stands on a western railroad embankment as the motive power of a shovel. In the long run the spade is mightier than the tomahawk.

Although the paragraphs are aware that the name of the new French minister to Venezuela is Weiner, none of them has yet suggested that he is probably the Wurster.

The cake walk has been exported to Paris, and, like many California wines, will doubtless be imported after a little as the genuine French article. They call it the danse du gateau.

An Ann Arbor professor has discovered seven new poisons. The old favorites, however, will still continue in demand, and answer all legitimate and illegitimate purposes of destruction.

Dr. Lorenz says he is going to work only half the time after he is 50 years old. Dr. Lorenz isn't working on a railroad. If he were he might be glad to have a chance to work even a quarter of the time after he has had his fiftieth birthday.

A man who had lived by begging, who had slept in ash barrels, and whose clothes were the cast-off garments of other people, died in Toronto the other day, leaving \$100,000 in cash. This proves conclusively that it can't be taken along.

Advertisements signed by a Shanghai Chinaman which have recently appeared in some of our American periodicals have a quaint, delightful flavor of that wisdom which is world-wide. "I want smart youth sell my Chinese curios," announces the Shanghai man. "If he catch much business, he earn many cash." This is worthy of Ben Franklin himself. To be sure, Franklin would have used different words, but he could not have stated the fact more concisely.

Ibrahim Khan Dovlet, who has recently been appointed Persian ambassador at Athens, is said to be the first ambassador sent from Persia to Greece since Darius sent heralds in 491 B. C., to demand earth and water from the Greeks as symbols of submission to him. The Athenians made arrangements to welcome the Persian this time with imposing ceremonies, as they do not intend to kill him, as their ancestors did the messenger of Darius. Although Persia has had no minister in Greece for more than twenty centuries, it has been represented in Athens by a consul in recent years.

The "affair of honor," as the duel is called in France, is, fortunately, disappearing in the United States. Nevertheless, this country has its own affairs of trust honor. A New York banker, who eight years ago was overwhelmed in a financial crash, recently paid the \$700,000 from which the bankruptcy courts had relieved him. In 1894 he was so poor that he had to borrow money for a railway fare. Today, by honorable business methods, he is again a millionaire. Some years ago another New York banker, who had once failed for a large amount, gave a dinner to all his former creditors. Under each plate, attached to the name card, was a check covering the debt and interest which, in honor, although not bound by law, he owed to each guest.

The child born in the United States a hundred years hence will live longer than the child born in 1900. That is to say, his chances of greater longevity will be assured under normal conditions of birth and living. This does not interest the youngsters born in 1900 or those born in 1890, but it is the most important fact disclosed by the vital statistics of the twelfth census. It shows that the average length of life in the United States is slowly but steadily increasing. Ten years ago the average length of life was thirty-one years, while the last census shows it to be thirty-two. This means—if the same rate of increase is maintained—that the average length of life in the year 2000 will be forty-two years, and, incidentally of course, the number of centenarians, as well as those who pass the scriptural milestone of threescore and ten, will be greatly increased. While this advance of one year in length of life in a decade may strike the ordinary individual as very slow progress, if he will only keep in mind the littleness of a century when it comes to measuring the age of the human race he will find himself growing very skeptical as to whether such a rapid increase can be maintained.

Much less significance attaches to the figures giving the number of centenarians in this country in 1900, for an occasional centenarian may be found in localities that appear to present few conditions favorable to longevity. The important conclusion to be drawn from the vital statistics is that the conditions of life, including a wider observance of hygienic and sanitary laws, are growing more favorable to longevity of the American people.

After China and India the order of the more populous countries of the world is: European Russia, 106,000,000; United States, 76,000,000; Germany, 56,000,000; Austria, 47,000,000; Japan, 43,000,000; United Kingdom, 41,000,000. In all these countries except the United States the increase from decade to decade is for the most part from the native stock. Of the United States it is said that its population would decline if it were not for immigration, and this fact or assumption is treated in quite an alarming style by J. Weston, a writer for the Nineteenth Century, whose article is entitled "The Weak Spot in the American Republic." Mr. Weston appeals to statistics to show that in Massachusetts there are 1,743,710 persons of foreign birth and foreign parentage in a total population of 2,806,346. "The population of Illinois," he adds, "is 4,821,550. Of these 966,747 are foreign born and 1,498,473 of foreign parentage, so that the proportion of genuine Americans in this typical Western State is no greater than it is in Pennsylvania. In California it is less. The native element is stronger in the South, but it is not due to the productivity of the American, but to the productivity of the Negro." Taking the country as a whole, the foreign birth rate has gained on the American birth rate until it is four to one. It is the rule for families to decline as they are more and more removed from their foreign origin. "Nowhere, not even in France, is the problem so serious as it is in the United States. History may be searched in vain to find a parallel for a country dependent on foreigners for its vital strength." Mr. Weston does not go into the causes of the decline, but he quotes approvingly from a writer in the Popular Science Monthly as follows: "We have not so many people as we should have had if immigration had never come to us and the native stock had continued their old rate of increase." It is a question, however, if this old rate would have been continued, and it is doubtful if there is much force in Mr. Weston's warning that "only homogeneous peoples ever become great." Homogeneous at most is only a relative term, and the French, whom he does not rank among the great, are perhaps nearer homogeneous than the British.

WHAT SAILORS LIKE TO READ.

Sea Yarns Not in Demand—Detective and Love Stories Preferred.

Down on the East river side a pushcart vendor of cheap books has recently taken his stand. His specialty is books for the seafaring men who abound in his immediate neighborhood, but with considerable shrewdness the enterprising purveyor of "something to read for everybody" has chosen for his location a spot whence he can trap ferrymen as well as the mariners and wayfarers.

Brisk is the business being done by the street book merchant, and by far the greatest proportion of it is with sailors. For the present he is confining himself to soiled novels (with here and there a few religious books) at "bar-gain" prices, a humble nickel purchasing any volume on the cart.

Among the wares are a remnant lot of "Vaniti Fair" (complete), novels by Daudet, Scott, Cooper, etc., all published at prices ranging from a quarter upward.

"No, sir," replied the vendor to an inquirer, says the New York Times, "there is no demand for sea yarns, except among youngsters. The sailors can tell better stories than many in books. Anyhow, the ship folk get quite enough of the sea, and the reading matter they want on a voyage is a rattling good love story or a detective yarn with plenty of excitement in it."

"Some sailors, before going off on a long voyage, buy as many as twenty books at a time, and others club together and take quite a small library on board to while away their idle hours."

"Almost any sort of story sells well. All that the sailors ask is something to interest them, and they don't bother about style or the author's name. So I can sell here heaps of books that would be dead stock around Broadway, even if I were allowed to peddle there."

Last Chance.
The keeper in attendance on a guest at a Norfolk shooting party recently looked on with disgust at the gentleman's erratic marksmanship. He was banging away here, there and everywhere, but no birds fell.

"Aim 'igher, sir," advised the keeper. Still the birds flew untouched. "It ain't the gun, sir, and it ain't the cartridges," remarked the Norfolk man. "Try shuttin' your right eye instead of the left, sir."

But not a pheasant fell. The keeper scratched his head. "The birds is very strong on the wing this year," he remarked, "but there's one more chance. If I was you, sir, I should 'ave a pop with both eyes shut."

—London Answers.

Nearly every wife says to her husband: "I've taken a good deal from you, and I suppose I'll take a good deal more, but there's one thing I won't stand, and you might as well know it."

When a man is in love he doesn't know axle grease from butter.



EDITORIALS

OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

The Migration to Town.

THE increase of urban population at the expense of the rural population is commonly deplored, but a closer study of the character of the depletion of country districts is desirable. Statistics in the gross tell us very little about the real nature of the migration from country to town. There are as many farmers in the country as ever, the London Times contends, the persons that have gone from the rural districts to the cities being, in fact, not farmers or farm laborers, but mechanics who formerly produced locally what is now manufactured more cheaply at a few centers of industry. "Seventy years ago," says the Times, "country districts had to be self-sufficing to a far greater extent than at present. Communications were imperfect and many things had to be produced on the spot which are now more economically produced in urban centers and more cheaply delivered to the consumers. Therefore a large rural population which was never engaged in rural labor, but only in supplying those who were so engaged, is transferred to the towns. The transfer does not really argue any such general withdrawal of agricultural laborers from agricultural labor as is sometimes assumed and bewailed. To a considerable extent it argues only wholesale instead of retail production, and easy instead of difficult distribution. Machinery has invaded even agriculture, and by increasing the efficiency of the individual has enabled agricultural work to be done by a smaller number of hands."

There is another fact which militates against the common view that agriculture is restricted by the desertion of agriculturists. Where agriculture is a prosperous business and offers large rewards there seems to be no lack of men to carry it on. The rush for Oklahoma a few years ago, like the present influx of farmers and laborers into Canada, shows that agriculture still attracts. In the South the towns have grown rapidly, but not, it appears, at the expense of the real farming population. The mechanics that served the local population may have left the country districts, but not a large proportion of the tillers of the soil. No doubt the high wages offered by municipalities and by some manufacturers, together with the attraction of easier city life, bring many to town, but this movement has, perhaps, been exaggerated.—Baltimore Sun.

Winning the Fight with Consumption.

THE decline in the death rate by consumption from 2.54 per 1,000 in 1890 to 1.87 in 1900 proves the surprising advance in the success with which the "white death" is now fought and conquered. Most of this change has been wrought by common sense methods of treating the disease. Yet the figures in detail seem to demolish the theory of some extremists that climate has little to do with cure. Damp Rhode Island is, so far as white population is concerned, the State where consumption most rages; "acclimated" natives suffer less than immigrants, and of the foreign born those are least susceptible who come from Eastern Europe, and who were there habituated to a "Continental climate" like our own in its variations of heat and cold.

The three hygienic specifics, rest, good food and outdoor air with a favorable climate is possible, and safeguards against infection, will yet rob consumption of most of its remaining terrors.—New York World.

Good Roads Movement.

PENNSYLVANIA is waking up to the importance of good roads also and is discussing a proposition to spend \$2,000,000 in highway improvement. The Pennsylvania farmers, like their brethren elsewhere, are realizing that they have a special interest in this matter, as it concerns them more directly than it does any one else. The Philadelphia Record puts the case concisely when it says: "Good roads facilitate intercourse among

the people, make access to the markets easier, increase business and enhance the value of farm lands." That this is the view which many if not most of the Pennsylvania farmers take is shown by the fact that the State Grange is urging the Legislature to pass a measure providing for the \$2,000,000 expenditure. There is some difference of opinion as to how the money is to be raised, and there are formidable obstacles in the way of creating an effective good roads system for the State. But with united sentiment as to the main question there should be no very serious difficulties to prevent inaugurating satisfactory action. Pennsylvania is well situated to carry out such a scheme. It is a wealthy State, it has ample sources from which the necessary money can be drawn without inflicting hardship or injustice on any one and it has a large surplus in its treasury which can be utilized for the public good. It is well placed to join the good roads procession.—Troy Times.

Stop the Handshaking.

ON New Year's Day, President Roosevelt was made to stand before a surging mass of men and women for three hours and a half and to shake the hands of 6,800 of his fellow-creatures. There are many ridiculous things in this world of ours, but is there anything more ridiculous than that? In its origin the custom of handshaking was reasonable and even necessary. Men were almost savage in those distant days, and when two of them wished to hold converse each gave the other his weapon-wielding hand as a pledge of a truce in their normal relations, which were hostile. But nowadays not even the timidest soul that ever shuddered over the thought of sudden death would suspect President Roosevelt of an intention to murder him, and if the President should find an assassin in the throng at a reception the avoided handshake, as was proved in the case of President McKinley, would not prepare him for his danger. Such an experience as the President was compelled to submit to on New Year's Day does nobody any good, and it is an imposition upon his good nature and a menace to his health.

Mark Twain says somewhere that the only reason people go up Pike's Peak is to say that they have been there, but as for himself, he could say that just as well without taking the trouble to make the ascent. Let the sentimental people who want to tell their neighbors that they have shaken the hand of the President of the United States go ahead and say so, but in the name of common sense let them spare the President the ordeal of gratifying their vanity.—Chicago Journal.

Money the Blood of Civilization.

MONEY is to civilization what blood is to the animal body, the carrier. Money is in portable and permanent form the equivalent of labor and usefulness. Where there is no money the farmer raises what he can, and that has to do him. If there is a shortage he suffers. If there is a surplus he saves it for the next year. But he can never get very far ahead, for he can never accumulate more than enough to keep him a few years. His crops will rot in his granaries after a short while, and having no wealth he has no leisure. Consequently he does not improve in either social or intellectual condition.

But if there is money in circulation the whole world becomes his neighbor. His surplus crop can be turned into coin which will bring him various commodities from other climes. His life becomes more varied, more elegant. He can travel, for he may carry with him what will pay his way. He can accumulate enough to educate his children and to give himself and them power. Money creates commerce and commerce goes into strange lands, develops new regions, carries ideas back and forth, enlarges the scope of every human being.—San Francisco Bulletin.

HOME DISTILLING PLANT.

There is no question but that a large proportion of the sickness with which mankind is afflicted is due to impure water, taken when the system is weakened from some cause and unable to exert its strength to fight the disease microbes with which the water abounds. It is common practice for the physician to recommend the use of distilled water for a patient ill with one disease in order to guard against the liability of other disease germs being taken into the stomach, and it is likely that distilled water would be prescribed for constant use were it not for the difficulty of securing it. It is to provide a constant supply of this pure water, with as little trouble as possible, that the household still shown in the illustration has been invented.



GIVES A CONSTANT SUPPLY OF PURE WATER.

by Edward Warren and George W. Healy of Fort Thomas, Ariz. The intention is to utilize the waste steam from the teakettle, and the invention, therefore, comprises a double reservoir, having a receiver for the steam and a cold water chamber surrounding the condenser. A curved tube is slipped over the spout of the kettle to conduct the steam into the condensing chamber, and as fast as the distilled water collects in this chamber it is drawn off for use or bottling. The cold water reservoir is filled from time to time, and has a faucet to feed the kettle through an opening in the tube which covers the spout. Thus the steam from the boiling water is constantly producing the distilled product, instead of wasting itself in the air.

CALIFORNIA PARTRIDGES.

Raised Under a Bantam Hen and Look Like Bumblebees.

The little hen partridge was far too timid to be trusted with her own eggs, for whenever in the least disturbed she would go booming off the nest, the eggs in imminent danger of being crushed.

So they were placed under a clucking bantam hen, who proved to be a most excellent mother. Thinner birds could hardly be imagined than the little partridges, which hatched in three weeks. They were no larger than a good-sized bumblebee and just about the same color. Yet three hours after hatching they ran so fast that it was difficult to catch them, and when cornered they would crouch flat, with head and body pressed close to the sand, resembling a little dried leaf or a tiny clod of earth. Their wings grew with astonishing rapidity, while for a week or two their bodies remained as small as ever. The bantam hen was a particularly small one, yet she looked gigantic when compared with these tiny bundles of down. One of them died when about two weeks old, and its body slipped easily into a half-ounce vial. When about fifteen days old one escaped from its runway and went straight up into the air almost twenty feet. It was found necessary, in order to recapture the little bird, to let the hen loose and wait until the mites of a partridge crept under her.

One very amusing thing happened daily. The partridges would snuggle under the bantam and gradually work up under her wings until close to her shoulders. When she stood up to feed she would naturally hold her wings more closely to her body than when brooding, and as a result the little birds would be held prisoners in the hollow under her wing. Their little feet would dangle down and kick vigorously at their owners tried to get out. The hen could hear their peeping and would look all around the runway for them, ignorant of their whereabouts. As she walked about or scratched she looked exactly as a person does who carries a bundle under each arm. Before long something would cause her to flap or stretch her wings, when the little fellows would drop out. They were comfortable enough in their unusual position, but the movements and clucks of the hen made them eager to get out.—Country Life in America.

STRANGLED A LEOPARD.

A Fierce Fight in Which the Man Finally Emerges Victorious.

An inhabitant of the British East Africa protectorate tells the following interesting story in the London Field of an adventure with a leopard. "I had a most extraordinary adventure with a leopard the other day at

Vol. I have long wished to shoot one, but not quite in the way I got this. One morning about 6 o'clock I heard a horrible noise, but thinking it was only some Indians fighting I took no notice. Shortly afterward the head of the Indian cook appeared at the sunlight over the door and he informed me there was a leopard.

"I got out of bed and put on some pumps, collared my rifle and some cartridges and was going out of the door, when the Indian told me the brute was on the other side, so I went out of another door, expecting to see the beast running off down the road. Like a fool, I had not loaded my rifle, and no sooner had I stepped out on the veranda than I saw the leopard about three yards away, behind a chair. She gave a snarl and came straight for me.

"Luckily, I took the first rush on my rifle, and swept her off, and we then set to on the floor with the weapons nature had provided us with. She got hold of one of my fingers, and I thought it was gone for good, but I got it free and kneeling on the top of her, proceeded to strangle her, shouting lustily for the cook to bring me a knife. He arrived, after what seemed ages, but was probably about half a minute, with a huge knife, but I then remembered that there was a revolver just behind me on a chair by my bed, and I told him to get it.

"I then put a bullet from below its jaw out of the top of its head. My hand was rather painful for about two days, but is all right now, except for a stray scab or two. I was a good deal scratched, and my pajamas badly torn. My leopard is not very big, but it is a full grown old female. Some one had hit it with a stone, which probably made it so fierce. Directly I got it by the throat it hardly moved again, but looked very nasty with all its front feet sticking out about six inches off my nose."

An Equal Safety.

An Irish clergyman during his first curacy found the ladies of the parish too helpful. He soon left the place. One day thereafter he met his successor.

"How are you getting on with the ladies?" asked the escaped curate.

"Oh, very well," was the answer.

"There's safety in numbers."

"I found it in Exodus," was the quick reply.

THE WORLD OVER.

No fewer than 30,000 English women live on canalsboats.

The population of the earth doubles in about 200 years.

A message travels over an ocean cable at about 700 miles a second.

The mines of South Africa give work to between 60,000 and 70,000 men.

Two hundred and seventeen lions have been born at the Dublin zoo during the last seventy years.

The United States manufactures 65,000 hats every day, while England manufactures about 40,000.

The largest stage in the world is that of the Grand Opera House, Paris, which is 100 feet in width, 200 feet in depth and 80 feet in height.

The biggest building stones ever used are found, not in Egypt, but at Baalbec, in Syria. They measure sixty feet long and twenty feet square.

Women prompters have been tried at the Berlin theaters with success, as it has been found that their voices carry better across the stage and are less audible in the auditorium.

There is a special class of farm laborers in Sweden who are given so many acres of land for their own use, in consideration of so many days' labor during the year for the owner of the farm. They are a sort of fixture to an estate, and their life exists in no other country.

In London recently two ancient Ashanti Coronation thrones, upholstered in human skin, were offered for sale. These are said to have been brought from West Africa by a military officer. The thrones are emblems of Ashanti royalty, and without them the successors of N'kwanta and O'finsu cannot be crowned. The purchaser incurs a certain responsibility in their safe custody, and might well become the victim of one of those amazing intrigues which novelists have woven round the stolen sacred stones of the East.

EARLY MULTI-MILLIONAIRES.

Esopus paid for a single dish \$400,000.

Calligula spent for one supper \$400,000.

Lucullus usually paid \$100,000 for a repast.

Apicius expended in gluttony \$2,500,000.

Hellogabalus spent for one meal \$100,000.

Lentulus, the soothsayer, had a fortune of \$16,500,000.

The philosopher Seneca had a fortune of \$12,500,000.

The sum of \$2,000,000 was paid for the house of Antony.

Caesar, before he entered upon any office, owed nearly \$11,000,000.

Tiberius at his death left \$118,125,000, which Calligula spent in less than ten months.

Cleopatra, at an entertainment, gave Antony, who swallowed it, dissolved in vinegar, a pearl worth \$400,000.

Croesus possessed in landed property a fortune equal to \$8,000,000, besides a large sum of money, slaves and furniture.

Antony owed \$1,500,000 at the Ides of March, paid it before the kalends of April, and squandered \$73,500,000 of the public money.

FACTS AND FIGURES.

Railroads in this country employ over a million people at an annual cost for wages and salaries of over \$600,000,000.

In considering boats the dory, a flat-bottomed, lap-streak boat, though but twelve or thirteen feet long, is the safest that floats.

One thousand six hundred and fifty-six stray dogs were captured in London and taken to the Battersea Dogs' Home in one month.

A research steamer belonging to the Norwegian government recently carried on in the North Sea some experimental fishings which yielded important results. In three days 117 halibut and 300 large cod were caught at a depth of 200 fathoms, thus proving the existence of large quantities of these fishes at a time of year when they are not to be found on the coast of Norway.

WIT FROM NEW BOOKS.

The only safe investments are education and health.—Daniel Everett.

Independence is not synonymous with liberty. They are often confounded, but they are quite distinct.—The Rights of Man.

I'd like to be an editor. They're nawthin' so hard as mindin' ye'er own business, an' an' editor never has to do that.—Mr. Dooley's opinion.

When the Lord made inventors he figured out that if he devoted half of their head to business capacity the other half wouldn't be worth much for inventions, so he left the business arrangement out.—By Read Alone.

There is a tale of a man who spent his life in wishing he had lived differently, and when he died he was surrounded by a throng of spectral shapes, each one exactly like the other, who, on his asking what they were, replied: "We are all the different lives you have led."—Edith Wharton, "The Valley of Decision."

We heard an Atchison mother say lately: "Country girls are the only girls that amount to anything these days." Plenty of good girls in town, but also plenty of mothers that bring their daughters up in idleness. Every mother of an idle daughter knows better, but lacks backbone.