

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

Others are bad enough, but a coffin trust is like working the idea to death.

It is not the woman with the most gold in her teeth who has the dearest smile.

The boy who causes the most trouble doesn't always grow up to be the greatest man.

Considering what it has got various folks into, that Chinese open door has some of the qualities of a trap door.

Mosquitoes, it is said, will not bite a person who takes sulphur into his system. Making the air sulphurous in the vicinity where they work does no good.

The New York woman who began the study of the Greek testament on her 100th birthday must have read of Cato and the enterprise of his eightieth year.

These Chinese towns have perfectly ridiculous names. Why can't they call themselves something sensible, like Showhegan, for instance, or Panxutawney, or Caucomangoo, or Kalamazoo?

Inside of eighteen months every elevated railway engine in New York will have been displaced by electric motors. How long will it be before the same thing will be true of every steam locomotive in the country?

It is reported that Joel Chandler Harris has resigned his editorial position on the Atlanta Constitution because he wants more time to play with his grandchildren. If the report is true, we congratulate the grandchildren.

What little reform gets into Turkey usually slips in by the back door. Report has it that the only dynamo now in Constantinople passed the customhouse as a washing machine; and thus the feeling of the authorities were spared.

The Delaware & Raritan Canal Company is said to be mustering its mules out of service, and harnessing up the automobile to do their work on the tow-path. If this sort of thing is allowed to go on till the beasts of burden and of draft are left from their present tasks, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals will be tempted to relax its vigilance.

A short time ago Prof. Harry Thurston Peck made the statement that women had never taken part in any gigantic enterprise such as the construction of steamships, railroads, etc. Evidently he had not heard of the native women of India, who make up a large proportion of the laborers in the department of public works. Employed all over India are women and girls, said to be quite as efficient as men, digging canals, making reservoirs, working on roadways and building railroads.

Poison recently ended the life of a 25-year-old Connecticut woman who was not only remarkable in herself, but also in the peculiar quality of husband she possessed. It was while she was indulging in her eighth consecutive elopement with other men and the seventh case of forgiveness on the part of her better half that the latest and finishing phase of her fate overtook her. There is nothing in the occurrence, however, to affect Connecticut's historic claim to being the Land of Steady Habits, for anything more steady than her elopement practice and his in the way of parting is rather hard to realize.

In the six Rocky Mountain States of Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, Utah and Wyoming, agriculture is largely dependent on irrigation. The distribution of the water supply is regulated by law, and costs about one dollar per acre. Nebraska and Wyoming have water commissioners, who receive all applications and determine all controversies. In the other four States there is much litigation. But when the ranchman's water rights are once established, he thinks himself far more sure of regular crops than the farmer in "the humid States," where there is always liability of drought or excessive rainfall, while he has the exact amount of moisture he needs just when he wants it, and at no other time—and always on tap.

A couple of years ago an old gentleman who has great common sense remarked: "Don't wake up the Chinese. They can live on nothing; they can work for nothing; there are millions of them. If they once learn our system of manufacturing we cannot compete. Don't wake up the Chinese." It begins to look as if this statement were true with regard to military matters. The problem which the foreign powers have to solve is an intricate one. The Chinese have been laying in great stores of ammunition, guns, etc. If their soldiers are drilled in modern tactics it would seem an impossible task for the foreign powers to subdue them. If China remains a united empire the task will be impossible. If it is split into several kingdoms, each independent of the other, there may be some chance for foreign powers to establish governments on a modern civilized basis. The consequences of "waking up" 350,000,000 people may be serious.

Despite repeated and unquestionable proof of its poisonous nature, the sale of the cigarette is increasing. If it is

not to become a prolific cause of physical and moral degeneration, especially among the young, more efficient and more general means must be exerted against its use. It is known to produce in children disorders of the nervous system ending in hopeless imbecility. The insane asylums have had to open a new column of statistics for its victims. Its deleterious effects are not transitory, but easily and ineradicably become constitutional. Many corporations, especially those dealing with human life, tolerate among their servants no one who drinks intoxicating liquor while on duty. The effects of the cigarette upon the brain are worse than the effects of alcohol. One great Chicago corporation has announced that it will carry on its pay rolls no one who uses the cigarette. General opposition of this practical nature may check the sale of the poison. Moral and scientific protests have proven ineffectual.

That the remarkable growth of outdoor sports in the last twenty years is the salvation of those who are unfortunate enough to be handicapped by wealth and fettered by leisure is apparent to even the most casual observer. A man does not need to be an athlete or a tennis player or a wheelman to note the marked effect of these outdoor pastimes upon those whom stern necessity has not condemned to ordinary physical employments. Neither does one need a vivid imagination to picture the condition of these classes if they were denied participation in outdoor sports. "Twenty years ago," says Casper Whitney, in the Independent, "the popular set at the various clubs consisted of those young men who sat in the windows with their feet on the railings and glasses by their sides. Now the glasses have been banished and the young men of influence are active in yachting, hunting, polo, foot-ball, base-ball, rowing, golf, and so forth." This marked change for the better is not confined to the club world, however. It extends throughout the whole United States, and the result is seen in the glorious physical development of the young men and women whom we meet everywhere. The wonderful physical hardihood of our soldiers, many of whom came from offices and stores, which excited so much comment during the war with Spain, is attributed by Mr. Whitney to the growth among us of those outdoor sports which, strange as it may seem, have been fostered by the wealthy and fashionable classes. It is Mr. Whitney's belief that the rise of outdoor sports is not a craze that will presently subside and "leave us cooped up indoors again with our flannels and our grog and doctor's prescriptions." We are outdoors to stay. Our Anglo-Saxon instincts draw us toward this stimulating, muscle-building play. The apparent subsidence of interest in certain outdoor sports is really the indication of a more rational enjoyment of it. One might get the impression from looking about the streets that bicycling had declined. If you go into the country, however, you will find that this is not the case. The bicyclists have found that riding a wheel in the city is nerve-racking, hazardous and unsatisfactory, and now they ride in the country. One of the good things that golf has done, says Mr. Whitney, has been to provide outdoor amusement for people of middle age. Previous to the advent of golf there was no outdoor game for them that could be properly characterized as sport. The craze feature has now gone out of golf and it has settled down as a "systemized constitutional." Along with growth of sports among us there has also been a growth of the true sportsman feeling—sport for sport's sake, and not merely to win over a competitor. The growing tendency of Americans "to play the game for the sake of the game" is the most hopeful sign in the field of outdoor sports in this country.

Curious Facts About Children.
An interesting paper by Dr. Macdonald, of the Washington bureau of education, discloses some novel facts concerning children that will cause general surprise. Children with long heads are very as bright as those with broad ones. Very long heads indicate dullness, despite the ancient saw. Bright boys have the advantage of dull boys in height and weight. White boys of American parents show more nervousness than their colored and foreign-born associates. White boys of non-laboring parents have the poorest eyesight. Colored children have the best. Girls who attend private schools are not as strong as girls of the public schools. Girls as a general thing, however, can endure more pain than boys, but the boys are not as sensitive to petty annoyances.

Bacteria as Purifiers.
At the last meeting of the Society of American Bacteriologists Prof. Kinnicut gave an account of the change of opinion now occurring in England in favor of the purification of the sewage of cities by means of bacterial growth, disseminated through it, rather than by chemical treatment, as heretofore employed. The bacterial system, he thought, offered the cheapest and most effective method of purifying the sewage so that it may be discharged into rivers without polluting them.

Spain to Have a Better Navy.
The Queen Regent of Spain has signed a decree ordering the sale of a large number of obsolete men-of-war and providing for the reorganization and modernization of the other vessels.

When Papa Reads.
"Eh, paw."
"What?"
"Did Jack and the beans talk?"—Indianapolis Sun.

Speak but little and let that little be the truth.

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