

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

Football is a favorite game because it is a source of exercise, fun and something to boot.

While the automobile is used by lovers, it does not throw young people together so much as the bicycle did.

A girl traveled 25,000 miles to get married to the man she loved. It is not specified whether his wind gave out or his rig broke down.

The one-man hold-up is becoming quite a feature of train robbery in the West. Everything appears to be running to vaudeville these days.

A man recently committed suicide in order that his wife might get \$2,000 life insurance. Such an unselfish man was 'most good enough to keep alive.

Cheese is the mark of rank in Switzerland, and the social status of a family there is decided by the number and age of its cheeses. Some of the Swiss cheeses certainly suggest rank.

When nature exhibits the might of her destructive forces how puny the greatest efforts of human rage seem by comparison. Galveston's list of killed in a single night exceeds that of the Spanish-American and Anglo-Boer wars added together.

The father who hypnotizes his children to make them do his will, instead of scolding and whipping them, may get along easily with them, but won't he find later on that the individual's independent will power, on which self-respect depends, has been destroyed?

The thirty largest cities in the United States show an increase in population in the last ten years of about 2,200,000. The drift of population is towards the cities. There are thousands of people who prefer to live in squalor in town than have the freedom of the country. There is more land for the landless than there is urgent demand for, if land in cities of over 100,000, and readily marketable for cash, is excluded.

A New England manufacturing company, which has taken a contract to make a large number of hats for the United States government, has abandoned the old plan of fines for carelessness and consequent mistakes on the part of its employees, and henceforth will reward skillful work by advances in wages and by money prizes. There is little doubt that the plan will prove a good one, both for the firm and for its employees, and that Uncle Sam's soldiers will get better hats in consequence of it.

The Agricultural Department has issued a bulletin on mosquitoes. It gives full information concerning the various breeds of mosquitoes that have to be dealt with in this country; it explains which kinds of mosquitoes bite the hardest; it gives diagrams of their drilling contrivances; it goes into minute details concerning the number of baby mosquitoes a reasonably industrious mamma mosquito may become responsible for in the course of a week or a year, and in fact it tells us all about mosquitoes—all but one important thing. The bulletin gives us no information as to how mosquitoes can get along for a whole season without sleeping a wink.

English postoffice clerks must hereafter address all male correspondents as "Esquire," unless they "are evidently laborers, personal servants or tradesmen." So rules the Marquis of Londonderry, postmaster general. His order tends to widen the application of the title, which has been held to belong to the eldest sons of certain noblemen, officers of the courts and the Queen's household, barristers, justices, sheriffs and ex-officers of the army and navy. In the United States the title is, perhaps, most properly given to attorneys; in practice, it is used as indiscriminately as the overworked "Honorable." But if one uniformly addressed Americans as "Mr." and Englishmen as "Esq." the Englishman could not be offended, and the American would have no right to be.

The severity of Russia toward Finland is resulting in a large increase of the population of the United States, and an increase of industrious, law-abiding citizens. When Alexander I. wrested Finland from Sweden he promised his new subjects certain rights which they have enjoyed ever since. The present czar, however, has broken this pledge, and by placing Russian officers in command of the Finnish army, substituting the study of the Russian language in the schools, abolishing the Finnish flag and by other oppressive acts, he has broken the national pride of a noble and patriotic people. In their sorrow the Finns are turning to America. Last year fifteen thousand emigrated. This year one steamship line alone has made contracts to bring fifty-five thousand to this country. Unlike most immigrants, these people seek the country rather than the city, for they are nearly all farmers. If they display here the qualities which have distinguished them at home, they will bring strength, not weakness, to the land which offers them asylum.

Italy has now one of the youngest sovereigns and one of the oldest prime ministers in Europe. Victor Emmanuel III. is not yet 31, and Signor Cavallero Giuseppe Saracco, the head of

the cabinet, is 82. The young king and his venerable councillor face a situation which calls for the courage of youth and the wisdom of age. For several years the forces of discontent have been increasing in numbers and activity. Partnership in the Triple Alliance has imposed heavy burdens upon Italy. Taxation has been onerous; food has been high. Two years ago there were dangerous riots which required the use of troops to suppress. The Government has tried to restrict the rights of public assembly, at first by legislation, and then by royal decree. It has tried to prevent parliamentary obstruction by giving the President of the Deputies arbitrary powers of suspension. But, as often happens, these measures have only intensified the evils which they were meant to check. In the parliament which was in session last spring, all business was blocked by violent demonstrations similar to those which paralyzed the Austrian Reichsrath. Deputies howled, sang, played on musical instruments and beat their desks for hours to prevent motions from being put, and the Government gave up the useless struggle and ordered elections for a new parliament. The elections took place in June. They gave the government a majority in the Chamber of Deputies; but they also showed that the government was in a minority on the popular vote. The various opposition candidates polled, altogether, nearly one hundred and fifty thousand more votes than the ministerial candidates. The Republicans and Radicals gained heavily, and the Socialists gained most of all.

The cost-of-living question is one that comes up for discussion at intervals in the majority of well-regulated American families. All other expenditures are so closely related to it and so frequently regulated by it that it may be regarded as the cardinal question of domestic life. The Woman's Educational and Industrial Union of Boston has recently carried on an investigation with the view of obtaining data which would serve the purpose of establishing a basis upon which there could be a common understanding of the problems involved and eventually a reasonable solution of them. The investigation resolved itself, of course, into an inquiry into household expenses and the results, and the principal source of information was the tabulated reports of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics. The schedule of statistics of particular moment was filled out by seventy families living in the vicinity of Boston. From a condensation of the report of the inquiry the following interesting facts are obtained: One family of two members was represented, and one of seventeen, but in general they ranged from three to twelve. The time for which expenses were reported covered nine months, and the items reported upon were (1) subsistence, (2) fuel and lights, (3) rent, (4) taxes and insurance, (5) servants and service, (6) furniture, fittings, and repairs. Only two of the families kept no servant. Of the remaining twenty-two employed one servant, while twenty-nine reported two, thirteen three, and four families reported four. One-half of the seventy families owned their houses, and the rents paid by the remainder ranged from \$18 a month to \$235. The total expenses for the whole period of nine months showed a wide range—from \$558 for a family of three to \$5,412.66 for a family of ten. The average total expense for all the families of five persons was found to be \$1,477.24. For six persons it was \$2,058.94. The total weekly cost of subsistence for families of different sizes ranged from \$7.25 for a family of two to \$54.95 for a family of twelve. The average cost of subsistence per week per person is found to be from \$2.60 in families of eight persons to \$4.50 in families of twelve. The lowest rate of all was \$1.29 a week for each of the members of a household consisting of eight, including one servant. In contrast with these was a family of two, with two servants, whose food cost \$8.31 for each week in nine months. The difference in the size of the families, the difference in the means at their disposal for supplying their various wants, render these statistics worthless. They simply show that seventy families have lived in seventy different ways, according to seventy different methods, depending practically upon seventy different kinds and sizes of incomes.

A swim in the Dead Sea. Every one has heard of the buoyancy of the water of the Dead Sea. It is virtually impossible to sink in the Dead Sea, and so great is the quantity of salt in the water that if you dip your hand in and draw it out again, you will immediately see the salt crystallizing in the sun. It is needless to remark that an involuntary mouthful of Dead Sea water is a horrible experience, never likely to be forgotten by the bather. However, if you don't stay in the water too long, a swim in the Dead Sea is a very extraordinary and pleasurable experience. The shores, as is well known, are strangely desolate, and they are strewn with bits of wood and branches of trees all encrusted with brine in the most curious manner, and woe unto any one who goes into this water having open cuts or scratches on his body.

London's Population. London has a population of 4,250,000, equaling the combined populations of Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg and Rome.

A Confusion of Codes. No less than five systems of law are in use in Germany.

"I know a Scotchman who says he never played golf in his life." "Good; we can teach him the game, and he can teach us the dialect."—Chicago Record.

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