

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

The Belgian hare is the paramount issue with some persons.

The empty after-dinner speech is another thing which cannot be suppressed by the voters.

That barber who has gone into the pulpit will naturally have more or less to say to his people about the "next" world.

Is there no way that the football players can be equipped with fenders for the preservation of the American youth?

The anxiety of European powers to be "chummy" with this country generally seems strongest when they have a fight on hand.

By being excommunicated from it Tolstol has succeeded in letting the world know that there is such a thing as a Greek church.

Ragtime music is already under the ban. It is a national characteristic to run popular things into the ground and then break them short off.

Alfred Vanderbilt knows that no man need be out of work. He had no trouble in securing his pick of jobs in the offices of the New York Central Railroad.

About the neatest thing King Oscar of Sweden ever said was that greeting to Americans the other day: "I welcome you as Americans and therefore as fellow monarchs."

Many men who have no regard for the sacredness of property will doubtless be greatly interested in a report read before the national prison congress on how to keep out of prison. The plan is very simple—don't do anything wrong.

The Sultan says that it costs him a trifle over \$7,000,000 a year to satisfy the dress appetite of his harem. This is perhaps thrown out as a sort of explanation of why he does not pay us that little bill. He thinks perhaps that this country is not so cruel as to press a man who can hardly clothe his family.

"Come back to me," said the Kansas City man who found his runaway wife in Chicago, "and you shall have the privilege of going on an extensive shopping tour." There's a man who knows something of feminine nature and has the wit to put his knowledge to practical use. He deals, not in abstract theories, but in concrete facts. Of course she went.

Chicago police records show that the broom handle is woman's favorite weapon. In a table compiled by the Tribune of that city the broom handle comes first with a record of 186 affrays, against 102 for table knives, 79 for stove lid lifters and 76 for the traditional rolling pin. The hatpin has a score of 55, yet it is a more dangerous weapon than a table knife or a rolling pin. The explanation is that women do most of their fighting at home and seize the weapon nearest at hand.

What would Commodore Vanderbilt have thought of all this chatter about his great-grandson going to work? The old man put his son "Bill" to work at an early age; not in an office at \$3,000 a year, either, but hauling manure on the Staten Island farm "on shares," and thought he was treating him handsomely at that. The access of snobbery since those days is by no means confined to the Vanderbilt family; it extends throughout the large and growing class of Americans who sneeze every time a young millionaire takes snuff.

There may be much scientific and literary sympathy between nations which are politically uncongenial. There is a current medical proverb in Europe that when a thing is verified on the banks of the Spree, as well as on the banks of the Seine, that is, when Berlin and Paris agree, there must be something in it. So much has been added to our knowledge of the physical history of the race by study and experiments in France and Germany, that the proverb is worthy to be remembered when the political relations of the two countries are in question. Moreover, it is not best for the world to emphasize the fratricidings rather than the estrangements of the nations?

There is now a great deal of talk to the effect that a man who works for a salary is more dependent than a man who has his own business. If there is one fact that is clearly established in this world, that fact is the beneficent complete interdependence of all men. Timidity or some other similar defect of character may make any man, whatever his source of income, feel like a dependent in the unpleasant sense of that word. Idleness or incapacity or some such defect may make a man actually a dependent, a recipient of bounty which he has good cause to fear may be withdrawn. But the man of courage, the man of energy, capacity and application, is every where his own master. Whether he keeps a shop or works for a shopkeeper, whether he directs or is directed by a corporation, he is necessarily a free man. He gives a valuable service in exchange for its worth.

The important thing to be considered in all such submarine-boat tests as those which have been made recently by American and English navies, as

well as by the navy of France, is the proof they afford of the moral effect which this new factor in warfare may come to have. Whatever the submarine boat might be able to do in warfare, let its presence in an enemy's fleet be suspected and it becomes an unknown factor and a factor to be dreaded. Its actual capacity to destroy becomes relatively of far less importance than the power which it will exert by its moral effect. Whatever be its practical utility, there is as yet no known means of defense against its attacks. In a familiar harbor it would menace any blockading squadron with a peril that it would be impossible to foresee or guard against. It is for this reason that the British admiralty has found itself obliged to undertake experiments with submarine boats. Until a defense can be found against these vessels, the only way to meet the moral effect of the submarines of another power will be the construction of submarines to offset them.

In reading the current notices of the birthday celebrations of our centenarians one is struck by the fact that these healthy livers are almost invariably people in modest circumstances. Even the very poor are permitted to live out their hundred years, while such a thing as a wealthy centenarian is almost unknown. This relation between longevity and moderate conditions of life is illustrated by the carefully kept statistics of the incumbents of church livings in England. The 103 clergymen who have occupied the same living for fifty years and upward have done so on an average income of \$250, or \$1,250. In sixteen cases the income after fifty years of continuous service was between \$380 and \$710 a year. The moral of this would seem to be that the best assurance of reaching a good old age would be found in the possession of an income that makes plain living compulsory, but we doubt whether this reflection will have any influence in checking the desire for wealth. It is even possible that a great many people would prefer a shorter life and a larger income to the prospect of longevity and limited means.

We are obliged now to chronicle the fact that a club has been formed in a near-by city by divorced men who call themselves "The Concatenated Order of Has-Beens." This organization, it is said, will build a club house and endeavor to attract attention in various ways, probably having base-ball matches between fat and lean nines selected from its membership and getting up benefits at theaters and other places for itself. It is difficult to be patient with such people. Possibly some of the divorced husbands in the town were wronged. They may have been justified in seeking freedom. But there can be no justification for a desire upon the part of any one who is a divorced man to parade himself as such. Gad-zooks! What if the divorced husbands of every city were to form clubs? Where could building sites for business houses be found? And if the divorced men are going to form clubs the divorced women will be wanting to do something of the kind next. That would be too much! This club business is being carried too far anyway. It has come to pass that a person who doesn't belong to one or more clubs is almost a curiosity, and as for society, it is nothing but a conglomeration of clubs. There are men's clubs, there are women's clubs, there are country clubs, there are driving clubs, wheel clubs, auto clubs, golf clubs, tennis clubs and card clubs of many kinds. In fact, it seems to have become customary whenever or wherever two or three are gathered together, by chance or otherwise, to form a club of some kind. All this must, in the natural order of things, come to a stop sooner or later. The line must be drawn somewhere, and we guess the proper place to draw it is at the divorced people's club. The members of the divorced men's club should be ashamed of themselves.

Husbandry Is Very Old. The origin of agriculture is lost in the mists of antiquity. We know that in Neolithic times in Europe eight kinds of cereals were cultivated, besides flax, peas, poppies, apples, pears, bullace, plums, etc., at the same time various animals were domesticated. Among these were horses, short-horned oxen, horned sheep, goats, two breeds of pigs and dogs. Prof. W. Boyd Dawkins says that evidence goes to show that these animals were not domesticated in Europe, but probably in the central plateau of Asia. He also thinks that agriculture arose in the south and east of Europe, and spread gradually to the center, north and west. A hunting population is often very averse to even the slight amount of work that agriculture requires in a tropical country. The same holds good, as a rule, for pastoral communities. In all cases a powerful constraint is necessary to force these peoples into uncongenial employment. Fate is stronger than will, and at various periods in different climates hunters and herders have been forced to till the soil.

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It is well to study law and physics, but it is better to need neither.

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