

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

The Princess of Wales is 56 years old, but of course she has so much social prestige that she does not look it.

Russell Sage is said to have been cheated out of \$50 the other day by a plumber. This reads like a pipe story.

In that aristocratic collection of dogs the growler may be in evidence, but no tale is likely to ever connect them with tin cans.

Emperor William is keeping the hatchet recently hurled at him by a crazy woman, but so far as we know he has no cherry tree in his garden.

Parisian omnibuses are to be propelled by compressed air. That's nothing, though. The world has already known of many an enterprise run principally on wind.

Against the superior attainment of a rival there is no armor like generous praise. The Duke of the Abruzzi reached a point farther north than did Nansen. But Nansen achieved a notable triumph in leading the Norwegian cheerers which greeted his Italian competitor in the search for the pole.

A story from Pittsburg concerning a poultry grower who has succeeded in raising a breed of chickens with asbestos feathers and fireproof eggs tends to discredit the statement that Joe Mulhatten has retired from the field. Possibly, however, the Pittsburg story may be one of Mr. Mulhatten's efforts which have been delayed in publication.

Just why so many good men and women who have been the means of leading the modern curriculum with so many useless things never thought of or understood to inject the lost art of politeness into modern school life is strange and hard to understand. Thirty years ago children were taught to be polite in school and out of it, and when one notes a gray-haired man arising in a street car to give his seat to a woman, while a great hulking boy remains seated, he recalls the early teachings of long ago and is thankful for them.

When a man gets the spending of vast sums of money and has no object in life except to spend, he is likely to drift into what may be called a bric-a-brac existence. What this means is shown by the doings of Count Boni de Castellane, who has dropped nearly \$7,000,000, largely in bric-a-brac. At one shop in Paris he spent more than \$100,000 for bric-a-brac; at another he purchased knick-knacks costing \$385,000. A great deal of this crockery and toys he sold soon after buying it, at a sacrifice, glad to get rid of it, apparently, after having had a good look at it. The bric-a-brac fad has its uses. It helps to scatter large fortunes that have fallen into unworthy hands.

The recent automobile show in New York contained two exhibits, each of which gained in interest by the presence of the other. One was a practical automobile made in this country forty years ago, still serviceable and in use as a pleasure vehicle. It was built by Richard Dudgeon of Locust Valley, Long Island, and is really a steam locomotive for use on ordinary roads. It weighs two and three-quarters tons, yet it develops eight horse-power and has frequently attained a speed of forty miles an hour. Beside this classic automobile was shown the "electric hydrant" or "electran," designed to stand on a street corner or by country roads, from which the owner of a modern electric vehicle can draw a certain amount of electric "juice" by dropping a quarter in the slot.

Although Paris sets the fashions for women, London exerts important influence upon women's habits. A society has been organized at London whose members take a novel pledge. It is, "I promise not to serve as crossing sweeper without salary." The object is to mitigate the evils of long skirts in the thoroughfares. The pledge is being taken with more or less reluctance, but as soon as it becomes conventional to belong to the association the doom of the unpaid crossing sweeper will be sealed. Crossing-sweeping is a regularly paid vocation in European cities. Gentility has been slow in reaching the conclusion that the people who earn a pittance in this should be permitted to earn it. American women first in intelligence in the world, long ago quit the business of carrying or drape into their homes. The universal presumption in this country is now among fashionable women that a woman who appears in the streets long of skirt is short of gowns.

A St. Louis woman, Mrs. Frederick Heber, has shown how burglars may be prevented from making a success of their calling. Their method is easy. Let women follow Mrs. Heber's example and face burglars boldly instead of screaming for the men folk. Is it not a fact that most men are afraid of women? Is there not good basis for the famous Caudle lecture stories, for the adventure stories in which Mr. Pickwick came off second best in contests with the fair sex, and for the general belief that about two-thirds of the husbands of the world are "heepked"?" Many a bold burglar would fight a man who should try to thwart and arrest him. But there is an inherent dislike on the part of nearly all men to

try conclusions with a woman. Even brutal men might be deterred by the thought that if the woman got hurt in the scrimmage, the punishment would be twice as heavy. If it should become the custom for the able-bodied women of a house to tackle all burglars, it might so dishearten the knights of the Jimmy as to cause a great decrease in the number of burglaries.

Dr. Parkhurst is not wholly accurate when he asserts that newspapers in this country are run purely as a business enterprise to make money. It is true that there are many instances where newspaper owners fondly endeavor to make their newspaper properties pay, but, without invidious distinctions, we call to mind several of our most esteemed contemporaries who proudly rise above such mercenary considerations. And there was the late Marcus Daly, who never thought of money while publishing the news, and Senator Clark, who supported journalism with a lavish hand. And Senator Pettigrew, who never counted the cost of his journalistic enterprises. And we presume that at one time or another two-thirds of the members of the Senate and the House have cheerfully engaged in journalism without a thought of the burden of expense. Knowing all this, we feel that we may safely rebuke Mr. Parkhurst for his ill-considered words and for his unjust fling at our noble profession. We have already in New York and Chicago several newspapers which we might call "endowed newspapers," but we suspect that even Dr. Parkhurst himself would not point to them as models of journalistic excellence. It appears to have been proved that "endowing" a newspaper does not necessarily assure its power for good or lessen its power for evil.

Prof. L. B. Briggs, of Philadelphia, makes the broad statement that modern education fails to educate, and that the results now obtained are not as good as those achieved by pupils when the latter were forced to commit to memory Latin grammar before attempting translation. Prof. Briggs fails to take certain conditions into account. Formerly there were fewer pupils in the public schools and fewer studies. The personality of the teacher counted for more. The teacher of a former day was not turned out on a model found in normal schools. He had individuality. The pupils had more time for thinking. The conditions are vastly different nowadays. The schools are crowded and the scholars are educated in bunches along certain arbitrary lines. The teacher has no opportunity to take into account the differences in his pupils as to mind and temperament. There are too many studies. The school is a place given up largely to recitation, while the home is used for study of the lessons. Yet, despite all this, there has been progress. The great weakness of modern education, as it seems to us, is its fatal uniformity. In the colleges this has been cured by the adoption of selected studies and courses, but in the grades and in the high schools the weakness remains. Some pupils are to go through high school and others through the universities. Others still are withdrawn after passing through the grades. Kansas City has provided for those who are to take high-school courses by having two high schools—one of the classical course, for those who are to go to college; another, called the Manual Training High School, which provides a scientific course, as preparatory to practical life or to a course in polytechnics. And this latter distinction also runs through the older classes in the grades. Modern educational methods are far from perfect, but it is easy to show that the school of to-day is far in advance of the old system of learning by heart.

Little Known Tobaccos. Among the little known tobaccos of the world are those of Manchuria and Mount Lebanon. Manchuria tobacco is said to be highly prized throughout China, while the local consumption is enormous. Travelers say that the inhabitants of Manchuria, both men and women, begin to smoke from the age of 8 or 9, and continue the practice to the end of their lives. The tobacco of Mount Lebanon is that which finds most favor among devout Arabs. Travelers in that part of the world describe it as being exceedingly mild and fragrant. The dealers who follow the hajj to Mecca and Medina always supply themselves abundantly with Lebanon tobacco before starting out, and no booty is so welcome to the Bedouin robbers of the desert as a cargo of this weed.

A Turkish Lampfighter. This functionary is usually a tall and gaunt Mussulman, with a fierce mustache, an embroidered scarlet jacket and a huge turban. He plants his ladder against the wooden post, on the top of which a common tin lamp is insecurely fastened, and, taking off the glass chimney, opens his umbrella to keep off the wind. The handle of the umbrella is tucked under his arm, and then, balancing himself on the rickety ladder, he proceeds to strike a light with his lucifers, carefully protecting the sputtering flames with both his hands. Naturally this is a slow process, and by the time the dozen lamps are lighted, everybody is safe at home; for the citizens do not go out at night, but retire to rest at a very early hour.

Again the Coffin Nail. "Have you quit smoking the nasty little things?" "Yes, I found they unfitted me for business." "What business are you in now?" "Well, I'm traveling salesman for a factory that makes 'em, you know."—Chicago Tribune.

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