

**TOPICS OF THE TIMES.**

This proposed raising of the Maine has a double interest. It is also at the bottom of the late American-Spanish war.

There was a duel the other day near Phoenix, Ariz. The Paris fashions do not prevail in that section. A man was killed.

Prince Henry is said to be the home-liest man in Europe, but candidates for postmasterships do not tell Queen Wilhelmina so.

The author of "The Man with the Hoe" might bring himself up to date by writing a few warm verses on "The Woman with the Ax."

If it's true that uneasy lies the head that wears a crown, about the only reminiscence of the old racing days King Edward may have is an occasional nightmare.

According to a New York newspaper, Nikola Tesla is "preparing" to telegraph across the ocean by the wireless method. Yep. Preparing. Preparing is Nik's long suit.

Some of these days a maddened woman with a hatchet will make things interesting for the grocer who covers the sidewalk in front of his store with his goods.

In Wilkesbarre, Pa., a man thrashed his wife expecting she would bring action for divorce, but she merely had him arrested for assault. The man has not been born who can figure out in advance just what a woman will do.

Twenty cadets were found deficient at the recent West Point examinations, and were discharged. Every one of them failed in mathematics. There may be consolation to the young men in the fact that in Greater West Point, otherwise known as the world at large, many reputable and useful citizens are poor mathematicians.

All classes of people nowadays recognize the value of advertising. A public institution in an Eastern city recently had a number of unclaimed babies to dispose of. Publicity soon brought over a hundred applicants for the little strangers. A minister in Ohio has increased the attendance at his church by means of large display ads. He pays the regular rates, too, and takes care to get top of column and next to reading matter. He is his own ad. writer, and gets up his ads. in a bright, attractive manner. Verily, the methods of commercialism are spreading to all walks of life.

The peanut seems to be playing the part of "civilizer" in some of the foreign possessions in tropical Africa. Traders give a negro a bushel of nuts for seed on condition that he returns four bushels from his crop, and since the yield in good years is twentyfold, the black man generally has a surplus which he can sell at the rate of a shilling a bushel. From a single station in Senegambia there were shipped, in 1898, twenty-nine thousand tons. Small boys and scientists have long been in agreement touching the value of the peanut; now statesmen also will have to do it honor, since it seems likely to lead the native African into the paths of agriculture.

One does not need to be a lawyer in order to realize the force of Gen. Manderson's address before the American Bar Association, respecting the necessity of uniform divorce laws. No two States exactly agree in statutory treatment of the subject. What is cause for divorce in one State is not cause in another. The result is that the legitimacy of children is called in question, real estate titles are clouded and many other injustices and annoyances continually arise which could be wholly avoided by uniformity of divorce laws in all the States. Nor is there any serious obstacle in the way of attaining such uniformity. A joint convention of representative lawyers from the various States would agree upon a desirable statute and the various Legislatures would undoubtedly enact the necessary legislation. Any Governor who should take the initiative in the matter might depend upon meeting with a friendly response from his fellow executives. And even if there should be a few dissenters a large majority of the States would reach an agreement which would greatly improve the situation. It is unfortunate that there should be any necessity at all for divorce. The severing of the marriage tie is perhaps the most serious act with which the civil law concerns itself. But if we are to have divorces—and there is small hope that we can abolish them—it is at least advisable that the laws governing them should be the same throughout the nation. It is the part of wisdom to minimize a bad business. The States should get together and reform the divorce laws. Perhaps if they were to do that they would see the advisability for uniform legislation in many other matters respecting which there is a great and most undesirable divergence of statutes.

Most people who are not in good health know in a general way what ails them; some of them know what kind of food they ought to eat in order to overcome their bodily infirmities and prevent a recurrence of them. But people who have good health usually con-

sider only their taste or their pocket book when they order a meal. An experiment which one of the Boston hotels is making shows that others besides invalids are beginning to understand that it is important to have the right sort of food as well as to have it properly cooked. The cafe of this hotel provides not only a bill of fare, but a diet list made out by a physician and intended as a guide to the patrons of the house. It prescribes the food best suited to various physical conditions. To the fat man it offers a variety of dishes that tickle his palate, and at the same time check his tendency to grow fatter. The thin and anemic can procure the things which make blood and tissue and build up an enfeebled system. The new way of looking at the food question puts health first and preference afterward. It considers the needs of the individual, and makes practical application of the old saying that "one man's meat is another man's poison." It tries to make the diet like a well-stocked wardrobe, offering plenty of variety, yet designed for and fitted to the person for whom it is intended. Lila is a charming color, but the red-haired girl does not need it to enhance her peculiar charms. Sirloin steak is a toothsome and desirable thing, but melons and coarse bread may be better for the full-blooded man who has a tendency to rheumatism. How one can fit his diet to his own needs is a matter which the physician can best decide. It is certainly easier to preserve health by the use of proper food than to regain it by taking medicine; and the prescription filled in a restaurant is pleasanter to take than one compounded by the druggist.

The presence of hundreds of youngsters of all ages wearing glasses in our public school should have admonished the school authorities long ago that present school methods or practices are largely responsible for the impairment of the eyesight of children. In many instances it is noted that before a child has passed through the primary grades it is found necessary to embellish its face with a pair of spectacles. While the present tendency to cover with glasses the face of childhood may be partly ascribed to the modern industry and persistence of eye specialists, it is nevertheless a fact that in the large percentage of cases there is positive impairment of vision and the glasses are indispensable to study and to good health. There is no longer any disposition to challenge the statement that visual defects have a positive and direct effect upon the nervous organization, interfering with digestion or heart action or causing headaches and mental depression. An investigation of the eyesight, or visual acuity, of children in the public schools of one city, has resulted recently in some important disclosures, among them being the fact that 32 per cent of the boys thus far examined have less than two-thirds of the normal keenness of sight, while 37 per cent of the girls fall below two-thirds of normal. It is also ascertained that the first three years of school life increase eye defects one-third. The marked increase in the visual defects in the first three years of school life is attributed to the greater concentration of the powers of vision in the effort to learn to read. In older persons, where a cursory glance at a few letters in a line of reading reveals the meaning, the effort to read is not attended with much eye strain, provided the type is of good size. In children however, the eye must take in the form of every letter in every word. Increased eye defects in the lower grades are also due to the fact that the primary rooms are invariably the poorest lighted. When it is known that eye strain has a deleterious effect upon the general health and that eye defects are uniformly accompanied by decline in mental power, amounting in many instances to dullness, it is easy to justify every movement on the part of the board, no matter what the expense, to remedy these defects and to remove as far as possible the causes of visual impairment among school children. The rooms should be better lighted and no text books should be allowed in the schools that are not printed in large type.

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Some men are unable to see through a mill-stone after they have been shown the hole.

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