

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

Russell Sage says he does not regard it as a disgrace to die rich. We suspected that he held some such view.

A woman got so stirred up while reading one of Marie Corell's novels that she killed her husband. It doesn't take much to throw some people off their balance.

Nicola Tesla declares that there is no limit to the distance messages may be sent by wireless telegraph. Why doesn't he stop declaring long enough to send a few?

And now a scientist has discovered that the earth is pear-shaped. It is singular that none of the people who are perpetually scrambling over it ever noticed that fact before.

Two men died from eating an oyster stew which contained oysters. This goes to show that persons who want to eat absolutely safe oyster stews should patronize "church socials."

A woman in a neighboring State has advertised herself as a candidate for the attentions of the fool-killer, and in the time-worn way of shooting a man with a revolver that she did not know was loaded.

No less an authority than Justice Brewer tells the Yale students that the jury system as conducted in the United States is little better than a relic of barbarism. It is not hard to believe him.

A Western woman pleads in defense of murdering her husband that she had been reading Marie Corell's novel, "Thelma." It may come to a point where husbands whose wives read Marie's eccentric spouting will have to wear armor day and night.

Events in China seem to prove that the civilized soldier when fighting against barbarians rapidly sinks to the level of his opponents. "Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tartar" is the old saying. Amended it might read: "Scratch a civilized white man and you will find a primitive troglodyte, a cave dweller of the stone age."

Much attention is being attracted by a decision of Judge Fursman, of the New York Supreme Court, excluding expert testimony as to handwriting. There has been a great deal of dissatisfaction throughout the country with so-called expert testimony of all sorts. Important cases have shown such extraordinary conflicts of testimony by physicians, handwriting experts and others that the value of such testimony is gravely doubted, and it is more than probable that the lead made by Judge Fursman may be followed by other courts until expert testimony will be largely restricted, if not entirely abolished.

As defenders of property against the attacks of would-be burglars woman is making a record for herself in these days that is not to be despised. Formerly the impression prevailed that the thief who was shrewd enough to select a house for his operations from which the male members of the family were absent was pretty well assured of an easy job. A number of recent events go to disprove this theory. The other day in Chicago the young cashier of a restaurant pointed an old rusty revolver at the head of a highwayman who sought to snatch the money drawer, and the thief incontinently fled. In New York Mrs. Louise Fryor was robbed of her diamonds and money after being knocked down with a bludgeon. But the plucky woman neither fainted nor remained helpless from fright. At an opportune moment she kicked the burglar on the shins, throwing him to the ground. Seizing his fallen weapon, she promptly chased him into the arms of a policeman. The moral of this new courage on the part of women is one that should be taken to heart by the adventurous highwayman, to the end that defenseless women shall no longer be considered an easy mark for his operations.

It is said on good authority that magazines for children are disappearing. There is not the demand for them there was a generation ago. This does not mean that children are reading less, but their reading is of a different kind. They prefer books to magazines. They like the coherent story rather than the scrappy matter in the periodical. They do not like to wait a month for the continued story. Public libraries have had much to do in bringing about the change. Almost every public library has its children's department of well-selected books, and children from the humblest, as well as from the richest homes may be seen any day in the public library enjoying the choice books before them. The influence of public schools has been an important factor of late in developing in children a taste for good literature. Not only the reading book proper, with its best selections from the best authors, is placed in the hands of the child, but the reading matter supplementary to this, which has been chosen with wise care, is also a part of the child's education. Entire stories from Scott, Hawthorne, Louisa Alcott, Dickens, Washington Irving, and a host of other writers are given to children as supplementary reading matter. This has undoubtedly influenced their taste for classics and for standard works whose value is unquestioned. In

the higher grades entire plays of Shakespeare are read, and the child who leaves the grammar school has had the privilege of a glimpse at least into the world's best literature. Further than this, children in our public schools are encouraged to take an interest not only in the history of the past, but in current history—the important news of the day. To form the habit of reading a good daily paper, to know how to read it—since the process of selection is different with different individuals—to be able to distinguish a passing fact which may have little value from the significant event which will change history—these are a part of the education of the child in our public schools to-day. With all the defects in our school system it is one of the most hopeful signs of the times that a taste for better reading is noticeable in the children of to-day.

In a recent address Senator Hoar said the most distinctive single characteristic of our time is the rapid and easy accumulation of great wealth in individual hands. He discussed the phenomenon with his customary calmness and good judgment. He said it was in some respects a public danger. As a whole his view is optimistic, for he believes the dangers to be of a temporary and curable nature. Senator Hoar is not one of those who fear the unsettling of our republican institutions through the agency of a permanent aristocracy of wealth. In one or two generations, he says, most of these great family fortunes go back into the general mass of smaller holdings or are set apart for public purposes. As a rule the rich men of this country have been stirred with a generous ambition to use a large part of their wealth for public purposes. Voluntary contributions for education alone in the last quarter of a century, exclusive of gifts to libraries, have amounted to nearly \$300,000,000. The absence of a law of entail insures the dividing of fortunes among the children, and many of these show a genius for spending equal to the father's genius for acquiring. Our laws forbid the tying up of wealth for a period longer than twenty-one years beyond the life of a living heir. This prevents any large mass of capital from growing by accumulation for more than a generation. It insures the ultimate distribution of large fortunes among the people in the form of wages or public donations. One of the bad effects of vast fortunes is their tendency to substitute luxury and extravagance in place of the plain living and high thinking of our fathers. The sight of such lavish display tempts many foolish people to live beyond their means. Still worse is the tendency in some quarters to use money for corrupt political ends. "The millionaire who would corrupt a great state to get a great office," Mr. Hoar says, "must be made to feel that his success will bring with it neither joy nor honor. Let public contempt and scorn blast him. Let him be avoided as one with leprosy." If the whipping post and the branding iron are ever brought back into use, he adds, their first victims should be the rich men who deliberately debauch politics and buy their way into high offices. He draws comfort from the fact that England has gone through an era of worse political corruption than the United States has ever known and has come out regenerated. What England has done America can do, for the great mass of the American people is honest, patriotic and incorruptible.

Stead on Yellow Journals. "W. T. Stead, last summer, gave me a rather original description of the American yellow journal from his viewpoint. "It is," said he, "like a magnificent cruiser, that has been built without regard to expense, that is provided with the latest and most effective armament manned by the choicest of crew and marine experts, provisioned carefully for a year's cruise, and in every way lacking nothing excepting that when the captain gets to sea he suddenly discovers that the compass has been left behind!" "Mr. Stead also added that the trouble with the yellow journal proprietor was that he had no soul. But this opens up a question that Messrs. Bennett, Pulitzer and Hearst would probably object to have discussed. Their papers are undoubtedly responsible for many actions that are harmful and uncalculated. On the other hand, I have known all of them to display feeling at times that would seem to disprove Mr. Stead's assertion—for example, the retaining of a valueless employee just as beneficiary, or the sending away on a long trip for recuperation of a reporter or editor whose health has been wrecked."—Allen Sangree in Ainslee's.

Interesting Though Growsome. One of the most interesting features of the national capital is generally overlooked by visitors. It is the crypt in the basement, directly under the dome, which was prepared for the reception of Washington's body. Virginia declined to relinquish the remains and they rest at Mount Vernon. An effort was made to have the body of General Grant deposited here and New York arose in protest. The only occupant of the crypt now is the historic bier upon which have rested the remains of John Q. Adams, Abraham Lincoln, James A. Garfield, Chief Justice Waite and General John A. Logan.

Climbed Mont Blanc. One hundred and forty-one tourists, composing seventy-seven parties, are said to have climbed Mont Blanc between June 6 and Oct. 1 of the year 1900. Of these climbers thirty-nine were Swiss, thirty-eight French, fifteen German and thirteen American. No other country was represented by more than five climbers.

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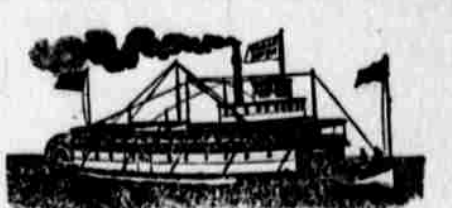
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