

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A fat man has more trouble than he has sympathizers.

If a man finds that marriage is a failure he puts it all in his wife's name.

Cuba is free, but it should not overlook the fact that we are its rich uncle.

The way of the transgressor may be hard; but a good deal of it seems to be asphalted.

What costs nothing is worth nothing, which is also true of much which costs much.

Some automobiles can travel 100 miles without being repaired if they are shipped by train.

The man who has seen every President since Andrew Jackson is beginning to blow around again.

When a baby girl is born she at once begins to yell for clothes, and she never gets over the habit.

The ruins of the campanile at Venice have been cleared away. Under them was found the building inspector.

The German editor who writes so wittingly of "American arrogance" is doubtless bothered somewhat by our commercial expansion.

Hall Calne has been showing King Edward the sights on the Isle of Man. Of course Hall exhibited himself as the most important of them.

Mr. Stead's saying that "the English workman fights machines, whilst the American workman improves them," explains a great deal of America's prosperity.

The young gentleman with an attenuated cash balance will indorse with enthusiasm the statement of the food commission that ice cream soda is a most dangerous and pernicious beverage, unfit for human consumption.

Schwab's riches came so quickly that he was not able to keep pace in the cultivation of a millionaire stomach and nerves. These, when not born in one, must be carefully acquired. Inability to manage course dinners has wrecked many a promising career.

It is said that the Duke of Marlborough has vowed never to set foot on American soil again. Oh, well, he can make that kind of a vow without running any serious risk. The Vanderbilts will no doubt be willing to send the money to him regularly if he seriously objects to coming after it.

How inequitable sometimes seem the decrees of fate! A poor woman who merely feared that she might become insane killed herself the other day, while dozens of people who are undoubtedly crazy not only refuse to kill themselves but insist upon publishing historical novels, lecturing on English literature or getting up political conventions.

In a recent test of accuracy in firing torpedoes the vessels of the torpedo boat flotilla in the North Atlantic made some remarkable hits of a floating target 1,000 yards away. As each hit would have meant utter destruction in time of actual war the importance of these wasps of the navy is being heralded abroad as a valuable discovery. It is well to shoot straight, of course, whether with popgun or with automatic torpedoes, but the main thing in these high explosive days is to get close enough to an enemy to lodge a shot. Long before any torpedo boat could have approached within 1,000 yards of an enemy it would have been blown out of the water.

A Kansas paper notes that, of the dozen carloads of old iron received every week at the local junk-yard, "probably nine-tenths consists of farming implements ruined by rust. Many of the implements look as if they could still be saved from the junk pile by a blacksmith; the farmers thought differently, and bought new ones." Such are signs of that carelessness which sometimes accompanies prosperity; but the same thing precedes adversity—and then, how ugly it looks! If the mortgage also could be left in the field to gather rust and ultimately wear out, the condition of the plow and mower and binder would not so much matter. Since that is impervious to moisture, even to tears, it would seem business-like to take care of the machinery that may help to pay it.

Horace Walpole complained that a caller at Strawberry Hill broke off the bill of a beautiful marble eagle, and then to cover the accident carried the piece away in his pocket. The modern sightseer is perhaps more prone to leave something behind him. The generous citizen who opens his grounds to the public is too often repaid "with ingratitude and orange peel." In public grounds empty bottles are broken into bits which are dangerous to other picnickers and to animals; pieces of paper are strewn over lawns, flower beds and ornamental ponds; names are carved on fences and inscriptions written on summer houses. To say "don't" is ever a thankless task; but if every tourist in private or public grounds would make a point of gathering up with glove or stick a few banana skins, papers and broken bottles, and hiding them under

the shrubbery, a sentiment of public tidiness might be created which would force reform upon the careless.

Prof. E. Benj. Andrews declares that parentage among the poor should be discouraged. The multiplication of this class of citizens Prof. Andrews lists among the social evils that should be eliminated. He insists that it is one of the duties of society to discourage the birth of children "under conditions which render it unlikely that they will become self-supporting citizens." This is a good enough theory to create a sensation, but beyond that end it has no merit whatever. Had this theory been in force the world would have had no Lincoln, no Franklin, no Spurgeon, no Gladstone, no Homer, no Shakspere. The best in literature, philosophy, science, theology, statesmanship, music, art would be unborn. Erase from history the named and accomplished of all born in poverty and multitudinous volumes would shrink to a lean pamphlet. The brilliant galaxy of the world's luminaries would be obliterated, their reflected light would be gone, and remaining would be only indistinct nebula of small stars. All life teaches that the child born healthy has no limit set upon its opportunities. None can foretell what strength and precision of grasp may be developed in those tiny hands, what power may grow in that eager brain, what stamp may be slowly, surely pressed upon the character. Poverty is no obstacle to character building; it is a positive help. Early toil becomes a fixed habit and deprivation teaches soul deep the divine lessons of wholesome aspiration, of self-denial. "Conditions which render it unlikely that they will become self-supporting citizens," is rot. The elder Rothschild, the elder Vanderbilt, Jay Gould, Cyrus W. Field, John W. Mackay and a host of others, most eminently capable of self-support, were born under just such conditions. If there be such. The unrestrained breeding of disease and vice is another question, and one of vital importance. But poverty is not hereditary.

A good many of the boys and girls who have taken diplomas from high schools and academies and colleges this year have been talked to by various persons, from the President of the United States to the selectmen of the town, but have had no chance to "talk back." There are still some schools that cling to the olden fashion of holding commencement day as the opportunity for youth and its dreams—not for age and its wisdom. The commencement program of one New England academy shows an extraordinary devotion to this idea. The exercises began at half-past nine in the morning. They consisted first of twenty-seven essays by members of the graduating class. Then there was an intermission, and in the afternoon there were fifteen more essays. The subjects covered a wide range—eulogies on George Washington, Hannibal Hamlin, William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt; studies of "The Ship Subsidy Bill," of "Submarine Navigation," of "The Marconi System," of "The Uses of a Library," of "The Bible in Tennyson," of "The Holy Grail" and of "Moses." Of the forty-two subjects there was not one of a trivial or sensational character, not one that would not invite to a fuller knowledge and promise reward for study. Now, surely, those forty-two boys and girls, in writing for this notable day with its rapid audience and friendly applause, must have gained much good knowledge and some power of thinking clearly and of speaking lucidly and forcibly. Meantime, a widening circle was instructed and inspired. Mary does not read and write on "The Holy Grail" without interesting father, mother and sister in the mystic story. John does not study the career of Hannibal Hamlin without reviving grandfather's memories of the stirring '90s, and setting the whole family to reading about a life of Lincoln. Altogether, it is not probable that the hundreds of parents and friends who sat patiently through those somewhat long and arduous hours of the old-fashioned commencement had gained something when the day was over that even the most polished orator in his happiest periods might have failed to impart?

A Preacher on Preaching. It is pleasant sometimes to hear a man "talk shop," especially if he is a distinguished man working in a great shop. Dean Hole in his book, "Then and Now," has some humorous and wise things to say about his own profession, preaching. We want more simplicity, he says, to speak in a tongue that is "understand- ed of the people." Mollere tried to read his comedies to an old, uneducated woman, that he might judge by the manner in which she was affected how his wit and humor would be received by the people. I could name some poor old folks whose opinion I should rather have about a sermon of mine than that of men in high estate. "Tell me the story simply, as to a little child," cries the heart that yearns for truth; but some preachers take pleasure in grandiloquence, mysteries, metaphysics. A famous classical scholar, preaching to a small congregation of rustics in the Lake District, said to them, "In this beautiful country, my brethren, you have an apotheosis of nature and an apodiktikness of theopatric omnipotence!"

Allaying the Panic. Mr. Pogrom—It's all right, pahson; go on wid de sermon. My wife J's made me carry de alabam clock so I'd recollect to tak mah pill at quarter-past seven!—Chicago Daily News.

Professional hypocrites confess the sins of others and overlook their own.

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