

TOPICS OF THE TIMES. A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

Comments and Criticisms Based Upon the Happenings of the Day—Historical and News Notes.

A green grocer is one who trusts deadbeat customers.

The demagogue crop is never a failure in this country.

Man's mission in life is to pay for the things woman wants.

Silk-made goods interest a woman more than silver-lined clouds.

The man who goes to law may be sure that his lawyer will get justice.

It is better to take a reef in the sails than to sail the boat on a reef.

Marriage, which should make one out of two, often results in sixes and sevens.

Mr. Rockefeller's troubles can be classified as nervousness and Miss Ida Tarbell.

You never know what you can't do until you try to undo something you have done.

Occasionally a man meets a woman and marries her, but more often she overtakes him.

Did it ever occur to you that summer girls and penches disappear simultaneously?

Down deep in his heart the average man is anxious to see some other man get it in the neck.

A woman's idea of happiness is her ability to purchase something the woman next door can't afford.

Will the genius that produced the coreless apple please see if he cannot evolve a seedless blackberry?

After a young man has blown in all his money on a girl she often shows her gratitude by marrying some other fellow.

The inventor of the "radium clock" which is guaranteed to run 2,000 years, might send it to us on trial for a couple of hundred years or so.

There are surface indications that the Texas oil field is emptying itself into the Gulf of Mexico, where even Mr. Rockefeller cannot get at it.

If a woman's heart is in the right place it doesn't make such a slight of difference to the men whether her hat is on straight or not, but it does to her woman friends.

Mrs. Patti has been having trouble with her cook, and the London papers are printing columns about it. Over here such affairs are so common that they are not even talked about in society any more.

What does it matter if the Mormons do permit the dead to be married, remarried and divorced again and again? If the Mormons will draw the line here and observe the laws in regard to the living, they ought to be granted every freedom in all that concerns the dead.

An English court has handed down a decision to the effect that one who makes his living by working at a trade or following a profession is not a gentleman. We must, therefore, conclude that in England gentlemen are fellows that don't do anything. Over here such chaps are kicked from freight trains and chased by bull dogs.

In considering what group of the laboring classes has fared best during the year 1904, the farmers of the United States must probably be ranked first. Not only have the farmers been as industrious as usual but, what is of supreme importance, their labor has been fruitful of grand results. Indeed, in the west they have been so prosperous that there the saying this year is that "the farmer is king."

In a recent effort of a certain lady novelist, whose books are to be found in the possession of factory girls on their way to work or in the kitchen regions, but seldom above stairs, were discovered the following extraordinary similes: "The hands of the heroine, in an emotional moment 'burned like those of a volcano,' the villain's, on the contrary, were 'cold and clammy as those of a serpent.'" Fortunately the class of readers to whom these novels appeal are not critical and do not stop to question the phenomena of volcanoes and serpents endowed with hands.

There has existed, and still exists to some extent, a false sentiment that labor is degrading or belittling. The contrary is true. An ideal condition of society can come only when every member of it recognizes that he is bound to exercise whatever skill or strength or faculty he possesses to its full capacity, not selfishly or for the sake of gain merely, but for his own happiness and development and for the benefit of all. And there should be no restriction on anyone, either legal or social or through association, in regard to his labor or its fruits. If by patient application or natural endowment a man possesses more skill than his fellow, or if he chooses to be more industrious, he is entitled to the full benefit of it.

The coreless apple has at last arrived. It is called the world's greatest discovery in horticulture and the wonder of the age. In color it is red, dotted with yellow. It is without seeds and resembles the seedless orange in that a "slightly hardened substance makes its appearance at the navel end." But this can be obliterated by culture. Coreless apples have been known before but the present specimen is the first that can be propagated in any soil and climate where the ordinary apple will grow. There are now 2,000 coreless apple trees in existence. They have been obtained

from five trees which bore the seedless fruit. It is estimated that by 1906 there will be 2,500,000 of these trees bearing fruit in the orchards of the world. The coreless apple is a stern rebuke to those blind partisans of nature who maintain that there can be no improvement upon her policy of administering affairs in this world. It is a triumph of radicalism over conservatism. For untold centuries nature has clung to the primitive way of producing apples with cores inside of them. The core has always been looked upon as an essential accompaniment of the apple. It has been a source of annoyance and often of cruel disappointment. But it was "nature's way" and was accepted along with original sin as a necessary barrier between mankind and perfection. Poets might have dreamed of coreless apples, but nobody ever expected to meet them in the world of reality. The coreless apple will be a gastronomic delight, but it should serve a higher purpose. It bids the dreamers dream again and encourages the persevering to persevere.

Again the country has been treated to an exhibition of Mormon church customs and precepts and again the disclosures are shocking. The investigations now in progress are decidedly illuminating as to social conditions in Utah. The testimony presented is full of hints of polygamous practices. It reeks with the suggestion of social uncleanness. During the preceding session of Congress President Smith admitted that while the "revealed" principle of plural marriages had been "suspended" he and some of his brethren had continued to live in polygamous relations despite the manifesto of 1890. The testimony now adduced would indicate that their example has been widely imitated. The other day a wife of one of the twelve apostles testified that her husband had three wives, one of whom he married as recently as 1896. Two members of the faculty of Brigham Young University admitted that they had been living with plural wives in recent years. Nor is this all. It appears from the evidence that in Utah custom or church precept sanctions a number of practices which inevitably tend toward social disintegration. The church, it seems, grants divorces as well as marriage permits. There are marriages with the dead as well as with the living, marriages with proxies, legal marriages and church marriages, to say nothing of still more indefinite and confusing distinctions. Incidentally, the suggestive fact was brought out that part of the "religious reading" required in Utah public schools includes the biographies of prominent Mormons who are known polygamists.

KILLING RAILWAY WEEDS.

Process Made Necessary Under Tropical Sun in Ecuador.

One of the most difficult and expensive problems that railway companies in tropical countries have to contend with is keeping down the rank growth of tropical foliage, weeds, etc., along the roadbed.

In the tropical belt of Ecuador, which extends from the foothills of the western cordillera of the Andes mountains to the Pacific coast, the humidity averages 87 per cent in winter and until the end of spring. The extreme humidity and the intense equatorial sun make tropical belt one vast hothouse.

The Guayaquil and Quito railway, which crosses this dense jungle belt, some sixty-odd miles in width, connecting Guayaquil on the west coast with Quito, the capital, 300 miles distant, and at 10,500 feet elevation, has solved the weed problem in a satisfactory manner by spraying the right of way with a solution composed largely of arsenic and niter.

At Barraganeta, midway of the tropical belt, the company has erected a plant for preparing and distributing the poison. By means of large vats and steam pipes the ingredients are boiled and dissolved into a strong solution, which, when brought to the proper stage, is drawn off into a large tank, constructed like a regular railway water tank. From this tank the spraying car is filled, and by pipes arranged at the end of the car the solution is sprayed to any degree desired in the same manner that a city street is sprinkled. The pressure to maintain an even force is obtained from the air brake system on the engine.

When the rainy season starts in the weed killer plant begins operations. The first spraying is done thoroughly, and on this trip a tank car full will properly spray from three to four miles. In about ten days another spraying is given, and this time a tankful will properly spray from six to eight miles. After this trip spraying at intervals of thirty days proves sufficient to keep down the growth, which would otherwise clog the rails so badly in a few weeks that all traffic would be stopped.—New York Tribune.

Presence of Mind.

On one occasion a great public dinner was given to Isaac Hull by the town of Boston and he was asked to sit for his picture to Gilbert Stuart, the celebrated artist, who was a great braggart. When Hull visited the studio Stuart took great delight in entertaining him with anecdotes of his English success, stories of the marquis of this and the baroness of that, which showed how elegant was the society to which he had been accustomed. Unfortunately, in the midst of this grandeur, Mrs. Stuart, who did not know that there was a sitter, came in with apron on and her head tied up with some handkerchiefs, from the kitchen, and cried out: "Do you mean to have that lot of mutton boiled or roasted?" To which Stuart replied, with great presence of mind, "Ask your mistress."

Not Much to Say.

Bragg—Yes, sir, I've decided to have a long talk with the boss and tell him just what I think.

Nagg—Is it possible?

Bragg—Why, don't you believe I've got the nerve to tell him what I think?

Nagg—Oh, yes, but if you tell him just what you think, how are you going to have a long talk?—Philadelphia Press.

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