

Topics of the Times

If the Osler theory wants to get a knock-out blow, let it tackle Uncle Henry D. Davis.

ey, but it doesn't stay long enough in the hands of the average man for him to acquire any of them.

Miss Mabel Wood Tuttle advises women to use their tongues constantly. Well, the day is only twenty-four hours long.

A New York man proposes to sue a drug clerk for taking away his "jag." The victim has not decided whether to charge petit or grand larceny.

Where, oh, where, is Alexieff, the man who persuaded the Czar to fight on the assurance that the Japs could never effect a landing in Manchuria?

Jewel robberies are so frequent that we wonder why people wear so much temptation, but if you have to wear your jewels in a safe-deposit vault what is the use of owning them, also?

Probably there never was a military movement that achieved a more astounding success than that of General Kurapatkin when he started northward for the purpose of luring on those Japanese generals.

In a Chicago court a witness testified that his brother was crazy and had tried to kill himself by swallowing coat buttons. This was a hard thing to say about a brother. How did the witness know that the crazy man hadn't merely mistaken his mouth for a buttonhole?

J. Pierpont Morgan has purchased the manuscript of "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" for \$4,000. Mr. Morgan may have the time and the eyesight to read it over in manuscript, but the rest of us have been wondering when we would get time to read it again in ordinary plain print.

The total savings deposits in all the savings banks in the world are computed to be \$10,500,000,000, contributed by \$2,640,000 depositors. The depositors in the United States number \$7,305,000, with deposits of more than \$3,000,000,000. The Americans, who number less than 1 per cent of the people considered in the computation, have nearly one-third of the savings.

The only way to redeem college athletics from the evils which now beset them is to abolish the professionalism associated with them and throw open the grounds free to the public in all exhibition games between the students of State institutions or those deriving special privileges from the State when the games are played on their respective grounds. Whenever that is done college athletics will be placed on rational grounds and emancipated from all those objectionable features which now degrade them.

Ordinarily a great fortune is built up like a stone wall—a stone at a time. The young man who declines to lay the first stone, because it comes so far short of a wall, will never make progress in financial masonry. An immense proportion of the people of this country live up to their incomes, laying aside nothing for the traditional rainy day. Because they cannot save \$1,000 in a bunch they save nothing. The greatest financial kluges have not been above taking care of the pennies even. The great financial institutions look after even the fractions of pennies.

Manuel Garcia, one of the most remarkable men in the world to-day, has recently sat for his portrait to John S. Sargent. Garcia is a Spanish singer who visited the United States in 1825 with an opera company, and sang in various parts of the country. The famous singer, Madame Mallbrun, was his sister. He returned to Europe and taught Jenny Lind in Paris, and for the past fifty years or thereabouts has been a music teacher in London. He is a hundred years old, and is still teaching. He was a professor of music in the British Royal Academy of Music until he was 90, when he retired to receive pupils privately. It is believed that the portrait which Sargent has painted is the only one of a centenarian in existence, and Garcia himself is probably the only person who ever taught singing in his hundredth year.

Few realize the enormous extent to which the country depends for its necessities and luxuries upon tropical and subtropical lands. The fact will be brought home with force by the statement—based on the official import statistics—that in the calendar year 1904 tropical products formed 43 per cent of the total importations of the United States. This includes products from Hawaii and Porto Rico, but the aggregate of \$465,000,000 but of the total imports of \$1,072,000,000 takes no account of the subtropical products of the South, and cotton, sugar, tobacco, etc. Hence the import figures give only a partial view of the importance of these things in the daily life of the people. Sugar and molasses form the largest single group in the long list, followed close by coffee, silk, fibers of various sorts, rubber, fruits and nuts, tobacco, tea, vegetable oils and gums, cocoa and spices and the like.

At a recent meeting of shoe dealers in New York City the statement was

made by a leading shoe manufacturer that the women of the next generation would have larger feet than the women of this generation. He said there was a growing tendency among women to buy shoes plenty large for their feet. And that women are also asking for thicker soles and lower and broader heels. The casual observer must have noted this tendency. Here and there women cling to tight shoes, wafer soles and perch themselves upon the stilt of a high and narrow heel. They do so because some one sets the style. And style, while it is the end of all controversy, is itself being modified by the canons of good sense and comfort. The short-skirted street gown and the natural waist are evidences. Men long ago rebelled against skin-tight footwear. They no longer squeeze all the blood out of their feet. Some of us will remember a time when men's fashions decreed the high-heeled, tight-fitting boot that could only be removed by an instrument known as the "boot jack." This antique taste still survives with the western cowboy. The causes for the new tendency in women's footwear are to be found in girls' gymnasiums and in the modern physical training of women. The girl of to-day who takes long tramps to fill her lungs and color her cheeks, or does her exercises for physical development, does not want her feet pinched and does not care for the dignity of high heels. She wants something substantial and comfortable.

It begins to look as if the passion for novel reading had begun to die of its own excess. Certainly the desire for this form of reading is on the wane. The sales of 1904 are reported to have been far below those of the years immediately preceding. The decrease affects all sorts of novels, from the profound psychological work to the highest flight of fancy in the daintiest romance. Of course, novels will continue to be read, for the story in some form has lived through all time and will continue to do so, but evidently the all-absorbing interest in works of fiction is about to give place to something else or perhaps to many things. Real life has its fascinations. People enjoy society rather than the novel of high life. The historical romance has led to a greater interest in history proper. The sociological novel has developed a desire for participation in civic matters, a devotion to slum work and the kinds of activity that may benefit the masses. Naturally, then, newspapers and magazines are read far more than formerly, since they deal chiefly with current events and with those things which are of importance at the present moment. They offer a glance of the entire world and emphasize those points where present activity is greatest. They deal with the real world and people of to-day want facts rather than fancies; live issues rather than the possible quarrels of hypersensitive lovers. The stage, too, is somewhat responsible for the decay of the novel. Tired people want entertainment and often prefer to take it passively. They can get the contents of a novel in the three or five acts of a play and the accessories often give a more vivid presentation of plot and denouement than the lengthy novel is apt to do. This does not mean that drama will take the place of novel-reading to any great extent, for there are evidences that the drama is itself to give place to something not yet determined. If the novel has seen its best day it can certainly claim that its day was a great and brilliant one, that it accomplished a genuine purpose and that humanity is broader in its intelligence, its sympathies and its activities than it would have been but for the great popularity of the novel during the past four decades.

CAUGHT A SCHOOL OF FISH. Entire Village Turned Out and Made \$25,000 in One Catch. One day in November several years ago the good people living on the Massachusetts Bay shore at the end of Cape Cod were wrought to the highest pitch of excitement by the arrival of an immense school of blackfish which were on the flats chasing bait, as the small fish they feed on are called, and gradually working inshore. The news spread like wildfire; village stores were hastily closed, schoolboys deserted schoolrooms, and even women flocked to the shore. The flats along the coast make out from half to a mile and a half practically level and almost dry at low tide, where at high tide is four to eight feet of water. No school of blackfish so large as this had ever been heard of. And by good luck the tide was ebbing. Hastily the boats were launched, each taking a half dozen men and boys, those not rowing being armed with stick and pieces of board. In a quarter of an hour they were in position, in half circle and to leeward of the fish.

"Close in now," came from the "commandere," "and make all the noise you can!" And they did, fairly churning the water with boards and sticks. The thousands of squid and herring on which the blackfish were feeding assisted in this movement by getting into shoal water as far as possible so that the blackfish could not follow them. The result was inevitable, the fast ebbing tide soon began to leave the big fish in such shoal water that it was difficult for the larger ones to swim. Gradually the circle of boats drew nearer and nearer, and in two hours 90 per cent of the entire school were stranded on the flats. For weeks after the villages were engaged in cutting up and trying out the oil. The total catch netted some \$25,000, many of the fish weighing two tons apiece. —Outing.

A man's name isn't "mud" as long as he has the "dust."

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