

Topics of the Times

Enthusiasm is to a man what steam is to a locomotive.

Immunity by confession is less trouble and lots more certain that acquittal by jury.

A man who is unable to hear money talk is always watching to see if it will not make signs.

A man's head is like his pocketbook; it's not the outside appearance but what it contains that counts.

Faith is all well enough in its way, but don't put too much of it in canned goods and cold storage eggs.

Our missionaries are unpopular in China, but are they more unpopular than Chinese missionaries would be in this country?

The newest idea as to hazing seems to be that Annapolis cadets may disobey the rule a little without jeopardy to themselves.

The burglar who weakened before the threat of a Fourth of July pistol evidently knows a really deadly weapon when he sees one.

From a neighboring State comes the story of a boarder who killed his landlady. One's natural curiosity as to whether it was prunes or hash is not gratified.

Undoubtedly there is great unrest in the country now. It is a time when every steady process should be applied to public opinion—to the end that reform shall be accomplished and made permanent.

John Farson, the Chicago banker, is credited with having said: "A millionaire is a slave." This is true. What is a mere million in these days? A man must have at least twenty million before he can even be considered "well off."

While other European nations have been fighting each other or in various ways have filled up their time at home the people of the British Isles have been exploring the globe and have been seizing on the territories of savage and barbarous peoples wherever it could be done. The result is that Great Britain owns a large area of the western hemisphere than the United States and it has extensive possessions in Asia, Africa and the islands of the ocean.

"The idea that the wearing of wings, breasts and other feather ornaments on women's millinery necessitates the wholesale slaughter of birds is all bosh," said a manufacturer of feather goods. "Once in a while a fashion comes in that calls for a particular feather or quill that only one bird produces, but wings, breasts and even the whole birds are made from the feathers plucked from poultry dressed for table use. We take hules of feathers, sort them, dye them, brush them, curl them and work them up into whatever is wanted, and not a bird's life is sacrificed."

The development of any new illuminating process appears not to affect the demand for light in other forms. The electric light, both arc and incandescent, has been added to gas rather than substituted for it. More gas has been burned, in proportion to the population of American cities, since Brush and Edison made their discoveries than formerly. The use of oil for lamps increases, notwithstanding gas, electricity, acetylene gas and devices such as the incandescent burner, which produce far more light with a given quantity of illuminating fluid.

We now know why the scepter is slowly passing from the hands of the masculine. It is because of his clothes. Miss Agnes Reppier, a Philadelphia essayist and club woman, says so. She says so long as men wore costumes that "interpreted their strength, enhanced their persuasiveness and concealed their shortcomings," so long women accepted them as masters. When men rashly abandoned the bright costumes that charmed the other sex they saw their finish. The situation seems hopeless. Either men must go back to velvet knee breeches and gold buckles, slashed doublet, lace trimmings, feathered hat and Inegrie or let woman go on dominating. It is up to man.

Racial wrongs are corrected not by exposing their results but by searching for and removing their causes. We have preached against lynch law for a decade, but it increases. The wisest of American statesmen and public men are to-day recognizing the fact that this preaching law and order will not make it, that there is no stopping this fever in our blood until respect and love for law has taken the place of apathy. Law to be respected must be made respectable. To get for it the active support of moral men and women, to make them willing to fight to protect its dignity from outrage it must have vitality—must, as the old deputy marshal said, have "blood and bones."

A movement is spreading through the West which has for its object the permanent marking of the old trail, along which the country was penetrated and crossed by adventurers and emigrants in the period before the construction of railroads. This is a highly praiseworthy undertaking and to the degree

that the object is faithfully accomplished will be a more noteworthy contribution to history than many of the books that are so classed. Out in Kansas they have a "trail day," which is observed in the Kansas public schools. The purpose of it is to instruct the children in the history of the old Santa Fe trail, with its significance in the growth of the West and through the interest thus aroused in the community to raise money for marking the course of the trail which stretched for 400 miles across what is now the State of Kansas when it was a wilderness.

It is beginning to look as if the projected tunnel under Behring strait to unite the railroad systems of the two continents might become a reality, although it has been more or less scoffed at as the impracticable idea of a dreamer. The Russian government is said to be taking a serious view of the scheme. Behring strait is only about thirty-six miles wide at its narrowest point, between Cape Prince of Wales on the Alaskan shore and the East cape in Asia. In the middle of the strait are the Diomed islands, whose presence will facilitate the enterprise from an engineering standpoint, as they will serve as a midway station for the excavation and ventilation of the tunnel. The distance between the Diomedes and either shore is less than that between Dover and Calais, and no engineer of repute doubts the possibility of successfully tunneling under the English channel.

Last year 9,967 individuals, firms and corporations engaged in legitimate mercantile occupations in this country suspended business and failed to pay their debts. The number seems large, considering that 1905 was a year of general prosperity, but it is small when one considers that there were 1,352,947 concerns in business in the United States. Fraud is one of the constant causes of commercial failures, but it is far from being the principal one. Fraud never can be got rid of, but it does not appear to be making any headway. In 1902 the percentage of failures ascribed to that cause was 10.1. In 1904 it was 8.6, and in 1905 it was 9.2. If any reliance can be placed on percentages the commercial world is not permeated with dishonesty. The public, which has read so much about grafting in high places, in politics and grand finance, may take comfort in the thought that dishonesty is not rife among the average business men of the country. Only four of last year's failures were due to speculation. That does not prove that speculation is rare among men engaged in commercial occupations. Probably there are many of them who are more or less speculative, but only four got caught. If there had been a panic or a sharp depression in value the number of failures due to speculation would have been much larger. Incompetence and lack of capital are the chief causes of bankruptcy to-day, as they have been from the beginning. To them 57.8 per cent of last year's failures are ascribed. The man who has exceptional business ability can make a start with practically no capital and score a success. Men of only average ability who are handicapped by the lack of adequate capital are likely to go to the wall, even when general commercial conditions are favorable. Of the failures of 1905, 2,428 were due to incompetence. Those failures cost creditors \$10,000,000, that being the difference between assets and liabilities. The failures due to fraud were less expensive, the loss to creditors being a little over \$6,000,000. It is business incapacity rather than dishonesty against which creditors should be on their guard.

The Indian as a Citizen.
Of all aboriginal races our Indians are the finest, except, perhaps, the Maoris of New Zealand. They are more enduring than the South Sea Islanders, more intelligent than native Africans, more resolute than the Indians of South and Central America. They have furnished strategists in plenty, orators, a creative scholar in Sequoyah. In the Atlantic Charles M. Harvey argues that the Indians were the inventors of modern war methods—the open order and the individual initiative. Buller met in South Africa the same tactics that Braddock met in Pennsylvania, and the British had learned little in the meantime. As it has been some years since there was any outbreak to revive the old belief that "there is no good Indian but a dead one," it is quite time that the Indian became simply a citizen. He will be less picturesque but more comfortable.

The Ideal Clothing.
In Montana, along the line of the Great Northern Railroad, a pelting rain was falling one November day. Inside the section house, the rusty soft coal stove, setting in its box of sawdust, was red with heat. Two section hands came in, dripping like the proverbial rats, and proceeded to stand as close to the stove as they well could without being scorched. Shortly clouds of steam ascended from their soaked clothing, and the small room soon resembled a vapor bath. "I tell you, Mike," said one as he squeezed the water from the hem of his trousers, "overalls is the things to wear, for no matter how wet they are, they are soon dry." "Naw, Jawn, mackinaws is the byes," replied the other, as he looked down with satisfaction at his plain suit of thick woolen. "Mackinaws is the only clothes, fer when ye are wet and cold, they kape ye so warrum and dry." A savage dog has caused many a man to lead a chased life.

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