

Topics of the Times

Consider, if you please, the absurdity of trying to take an immunity bath in an oil tank.

The New York Mail wants to know what has become of James Hazen Hyde. We can't imagine why.

And, as these trusts step aside, the others will please come forward and take their dose of brimstone and molasses.

Most likely about A. D. 3763, some indefatigable exhumers will locate the coffin of John Paul Jones on the site of Annapolis and reclaim it for a grateful nation to buy with great ecstacy.

Congressman Dawson declares that the American hen in sixty days can equal the total production of all the gold mines in the United States. Hurrah for the hen! Still, we'd rather have a gold mine.

An official of the Bureau of Agriculture tells that it will take \$350,000,000 a year to furnish meal tickets to the potato bug, the grasshopper and other crawling things. The potato bug, according to the authority cited, takes \$10,000,000 a year, the chinch bug \$15,000,000 and the grasshopper \$85,000,000. Other insects bring the total up to more than a third of a billion dollars.

Increasing use is made of the knowledge that the finger prints of no two persons are alike. The Indian Bureau has resorted to the use of the thumb print for the signatures of unlettered Indians. It places the Indians because of its primitive individuality, and removes all doubt of the authenticity of signatures. Already a great many Indian thumb prints are on file in the Interior Department.

Instead of handcuffs and strait jackets for the violently insane, the Kansas board of lady visitors has urged the governor to use his influence to secure a trial of music as a pacifier. Was it not Tennyson who wrote of "Music that gentler on the spirit lies than th' d' eyesids upon th' d' eyes?" And has not music charms that soothe the savage breast? If the poets tell the truth, why should it not be useful for soothing a distraught mind?

One can hardly believe that depravity can reach such a depth as was described lately in New York, at a legislative hearing concerning the labeling of mixtures containing dangerous drugs. The statement was this: that of all the cocaine manufactured in the United States, more than one-fifth is used for illicit purposes, and that there are druggists who try to establish and foster the cocaine habit by giving away small quantities of cocaine as samples.

The chemical blonde has very nearly disappeared from the enlightened gaze of men. Once upon a time the yellow and strawberry beauty was taken at her own coloring, but now it is useless to practice any such deception. Sophistication rules the hour. No masculine, much less feminine, eye can be deceived. Her lustrous hair is woman's glory and to arrive at it she must cling to the color in which nature turned her out, be she blonde, brunette or nondescript. No beauty doctor or dyer's art can change the leopard's spots without hazard of betrayal.

Making faces as an aid to beauty is the latest wrinkle, or rather, the latest device for taking out wrinkles. One who professes to be an authority says that if a person makes faces at himself with intelligent discrimination as to the kind of faces made, hollow eyes, sunken cheeks and thin noses can be caused to disappear, and in their places will come plumpness and good color. This may be why angel-faced children are so charming—small boys and girls make faces enough, either when they cry or out of pure mischief, to supply beauty for a whole ladies' seminary.

Two hundred college professors have applied for retirement on pension under the provisions of the Carnegie foundation of ten million dollars for their relief. The trustees of the fund have lately decided that the minimum pension shall be eight hundred dollars, but not to exceed four-fifths of the salary paid at time of retirement, and that the maximum shall be three thousand dollars. As the annual income from the fund will be about half a million dollars, there will be enough to take care of all the old professors in the colleges eligible to its benefits. This includes all non-sectarian institutions of college rank. The old age of many a worthy man will be made easy and pleasant by this great benefaction.

Quick recognition of his heroic qualities has come to Prof. Matteucci, the director of the royal observatory on Mount Vesuvius, who remained at his post during the recent terrific eruption, and made a record of the progress of the event. Within less than a week of the height of the volcanic activity, and before all danger had passed, King Victor Emmanuel conferred on the professor the rank of commander of the Order of the Crown of Italy, the most highly prized decoration for courage within the gift of the king. None but a man of great hardihood could have had the bravery to remain at his post on the slope of the mountain while streams of lava flowed down its

sides and red-hot ashes fell from the sky.

After Russia Germany is the richest country in children. For every 10,000 inhabitants there are 363 living births a year, as against only 228 in France. Hence the increase of population in Germany is correspondingly great. In the course of the nineteenth century the population within the present territory of the empire has much more than doubled in spite of the considerable numbers of Germans who have emigrated during this time. In 1816 there were 24,400,000 souls in the territory of the present empire, while in 1900 there were 56,300,000, which corresponds to a yearly average increase of 1 per cent, while more than 5,000,000 Germans have emigrated from their homes during the nineteenth century. In order to measure the meaning of these figures we must compare them with those of a country like France, which is practically stationary in its population. In the middle of the century there were as many people in France as in Germany. In 1845 there were in Germany 34,400,000, in France 34,500,000, while in 1820 France had nearly 4,000,000 more than Germany. To-day the French population has risen only to 35,500,000 and is therefore more than 20,000,000 behind Germany.

Speaking of national anthems, Sir Edward Elgar, the foremost of English composers, says "Rubbish!" The rhyme, the sentiment and in most instances the music, he says, are "vile." His point is that the people have never called a fine anthem into being as a direct response to their national feelings and aspirations. Even if they have a good tune for their anthem, he says, it is likely to be borrowed from somebody else. All this may be true from the musician's standpoint. But it is well to bear in mind that patriotic songs are not written for musicians. And it is worth while to note that few patriotic songs of any consequence were ever written by musicians. It may be true that the national anthems fall short of being real music. But it must be taken into consideration that they are also far more than mere music. If their music formed the sole appeal to popularity they would not be national songs at all. A skilled musical composer is the last man fit to criticize the songs of the heart. As well might a cultured critic seek to analyze and condemn a people's love-words and lullabies. Highly refined language and music strictly according to nice rules do very well in transmitting the little, elusive emotions and in gilding the commonplace; but a great passion impetuously fluds its own direct way of expression. The man who has heard the soldier bands play "The Star Spangled Banner" at sunset after the last day of a battle, while the beaten enemy was lurking in his trenches only a little distance away, will need no musician to interpret to him the message or to tell him if it is melody. Musicians, and especially musical composers, are the last to bring themselves to understand the popular sentiment about music.

How shrunken and pitiful a thing, how hollow a delusion, is the so-called success of self-absorbed men and women! Like that soldier who, when Galerius sacked the camp of the Persians, found a bag of shining leather filled with pearls and carefully preserved the bag but threw away the contents, they will find that they have spurned true riches, real success, to hug to their hearts things that are false and worthless. Achievement is not always success, while reputed failure often is. Many a poor cripple who struggled under his handicap, doing his best to make himself useful, trying to reflect a little sunshine in the darkness and to make a home a little brighter, but never expecting special recognition here or hereafter, will be surprised to find his name written in letters of unfading light high above that of a nation's conqueror. When the genius of true history unrolls the scroll of earth's real benefactors it will be found that many who stand highest on the list were hardly recognized during their lives. The name of many a servant will be above that of his master. Many a humble employe will be found to have been in reality more successful than the proprietor of the establishment in which he worked. True human history will be enriched with the story, not of the useless prince, but of the unknown boy who remained on the farm, helped to pay the mortgage and stilled his own ambition. In order that the favorite brother might be sent to college, and thus scored a higher success than the renowned one for whom the sacrifice was made. The girl who smothered her longings for a higher education, or sacrificed the prospects for marriage and a home of her own, in order to take care of her aged parents, and was never known outside the little circle of a few friends, will loom larger and brighter in the true record of human forces than the sister who went to college and became a great author, musician, artist or actress. Who can estimate what the world owes to those who, according to the ordinary standards of success, have failed? Who can compute the debt of civilization to the men and women who, in their efforts to make the world a little brighter, a little better place in which to love, have been too busy to make money or to achieve fame?

Put him to a Real Test. "That man is so honest he wouldn't steal a pin," said the admiring friend. "I never thought much of the pin test," answered Miss Cayenne. "Try him with an umbrella."—Washington Star.

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