

Topics of the Times

The rhinoceros trust is the latest and the toughest.

History, having run as far back as 4241 B. C., has become weary and stopped there.

A woman who takes a good photograph has always one consolation in times of stress.

Lots of people think they have been cheated unless they get more than their money's worth.

Let us hope that earthquake may wear itself out before it gets started up the Atlantic coast.

The crop of college graduates this year is not at all commensurate with the Kansas wheat crop.

A fool and his money are parted none too soon, in view of the mischief a fool can do with his money.

In Chicago Prof. C. H. Frye neglected to go home for thirty-one years. Some men are very neglectful.

At last we have it figured out to our own satisfaction. The men who design circus posters never saw a show.

King Edward, though conspicuously a man of peace, is believed to have made a big killing in American railway stocks.

One of the ocean steamship lines has named a new vessel the Samsland. Hereupon Uncle Sam will please look gratified.

It is promised that this year's apple crop will beat the record harvest of 1896. After this let the election news do its worst—or best.

Near Hays City, Kan., they have discovered a chalk bed that is nearly 99 per cent pure. That ought to insure an almost pure milk supply.

There are nearly 16,000 uninhabited islands in the Indian Ocean. We might add that the world still has a large supply of Sancho Panzas.

A bank cashier has been arrested for being \$30,000 short in his accounts. It is not explained how the examiner happened to catch him at it so early.

Maxim Gorky still continues to rail at the American people, and the American people still continue to keep Gorky at arm's length with a pair of tongs.

The chief of police of Seattle has ordered all prize fighters to leave that town or go to work. Cruel man! Perhaps the poor fighters are too strong to work.

An actor was arrested in New York because he looked like Banker Stensland. Well, anyone who looks like Stensland ought to be punished in some way.

And now they have gone and organized a rhinoceros trust and cornered the market. What chance has a poor man to own a menagerie while such goings on are permitted to the rich and powerful?

E. H. Harriman is said to have made profits amounting to \$10,000,000 in a recent railroad deal. We hope he didn't get any of it from poor scrub-women or hard-working men who have been saving a little at a time in order to have something for the rainy day.

Judge Ben B. Lindsey, of Denver, who has had notable success in dealing with juvenile delinquents and who has mastered the art of getting in close touch with boy life, declares that "One million children in this country are annually drifting into crime." This certainly is an important statement, if true. But is it true? Anybody who has eyes to see and ears to hear knows that there are a great many juveniles who have developing tendencies in that direction. But to say that a million boys and girls are drifting into crime every year in the United States strikes us as absurd. We think that the judge is too prodigal in the use of figures in his statistical utterances.

We have reform schools for wayward children, which doubtless do the best they can. But if there could be reform schools for parents there would be little or no need of reform schools for children. Delinquent parents are to blame for delinquent children—in nine cases out of ten. If parents would do their duty, if they could be forced by state, church, society, press, public opinion or the whips and scorns of the time, to realize their responsibility for the children they have brought into the world—then there would be no need of the State reform school. The parents would keep that school. Its course of instruction would be admonitory and preventive. It is seldom that a child brought up in the right way by the parents will afterward take the wrong way.

Farming is virtually the only great series of occupations that is unorganized, unregulated, unmonopolized, uncontrolled, except as it is dominated by natural laws of commerce and the arbitrary limitations imposed by organization in other business. In a time of

extreme organization and subordination of the individual the farmer still retains his traditional individualism and economic separateness. His entire scheme of life rests on intrinsic earning by means of his own efforts. If the farmer steps outside his own realm he is met on the one side by organized capital and on the other by organized labor. He is confronted by fixed earnings. What he himself secures is a remainder left at the end of a year's business.

Few men in America have had more newspaper space devoted to them during the last forty years than the late Russell Sage, and yet there are probably few men about whose real character the public knew less. His great wealth naturally made him prominent in the business world, but the things that were written about him had to do mostly with his idiosyncrasies—or rather with the one idiosyncrasy which made him an unusual and picturesque character among American millionaires, namely, his excessive personal economy. Anecdotes of his extraordinarily cheap luncheons, or of his anxiety to save a penny whenever it was possible, never failed to excite amusement, not to say ridicule. It may readily be granted that Mr. Sage's outward life had in it little to appeal to popular sympathy or affection; yet there was much in it to appeal to common sense. His independence of public opinion, the simplicity of a life led amid much senseless and disgusting ostentation, his business probity and foresight, his religious constancy and the purity of his domestic life, are all facts upon which young men may ponder with profit. Moreover, no man can be judged with absolute justice by his fellows, least of all, one who lived so reserved and self-contained a life as Mr. Sage.

The railroads in China now in operation, under construction or projected have an approximate length of 9,000 miles, according to a report made to the government by our consul at Nankin. That is a smaller mileage than Illinois possesses, but it is larger than the railroad mileage of Spain, and within a thousand miles of the mileage of Italy. And of course it is only the beginning, for China seems to have started fairly on a policy of internal development, with prospects for rapid growth in the future. A few years ago in discussing Chinese railroads little or no attention would have been paid to concessions to Chinese companies. Such concessions would have been regarded as jokes, and all attention would have been centered on the lines of political or strategic importance denominated by European companies. Now the list of concessions shows almost as many in Chinese hands as in the hands of all other countries together. Sixteen Chinese concessions are listed, some of them of minor importance, but others commanding main lines of railroad development in the empire. Such, for instance, is the Canton-Hankow line, recently taken over from American capitalists, which will form one-half of the great trunk line from north to south. Another line, the Hang-chow-Soochow road, will form the basis for a great east and west trunk line. It is true the Chinese capitalists and government officials are in many cases quarreling over the control of these lines and delaying their construction, and much will depend on their ability to smooth out their jealousies. The fact remains that in the majority of cases Chinese engineers are busily engaged in construction work and Chinese railroad men are personally operating lines for Chinese owners. The other concessions are divided between the British, Germans, French, Belgians and Portuguese. American capital, after its one unpleasant experience, is not apt to enter the field in the immediate future, nor, indeed, to have any opportunity to enter, should it wish it.

Dangerous Warships.
The army and navy of Turkey are not regarded with much respect by the officials of other countries. Their mighty forts are believed to be useless; it is said that the gunners are never drilled, and that the big guns, like the battle ships, are not in working order. The author of "The Balkans from Within" gives the history of a comparatively recent occurrence in the Turkish navy.
At Salonika a guard-ship, a fairly modern-looking small cruiser, lies year in and year out peacefully at anchor in the bay. One day an order came to the commander to put to sea, and the consternation of that gallant officer was great, because no screw steamer can move without a shaft, and the shaft of this cruiser had been sold some time before.

But he was a man of resource, and had a shaft made of wood, which he hoped would break as soon as it was put to use. The shaft held, unexpectedly, and as the cruiser slowly steamed out of the gulf the captain's heart sank, for he did not care to go to sea with a shaft that must break sooner or later. So he sent below, and had the shaft sawn half-way through. A little extra steam, the shaft broke, and the guard-ship was towed back "disabled."

Means It.
Greene—I don't believe in forcing children to study music.
White—But you gave your daughter a thorough musical education.
Greene—That's just it. She has the education all right, but she can neither play nor sing.—Detroit Free Press.

Half the world's troubles are due to an overestimation of the other fellow's money, and a belief that it can be had by "work" instead of labor.

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