

TOPICS OF THE TIMES

If a man doesn't amount to anything himself, he boasts of his ancestors.

It will certainly be Count Boni's own fault if the wolf gets any chance to scratch at his door.

Of course the Kaiser has a "thankless job," but he receives a fair salary for his services in lieu of thanks.

It may be better to be happy than to be rich, but no poor man ever derived any satisfaction from that thought.

It is really very old-fashioned for Opportunity to knock at anybody's door when there is the electric bell right handy.

If the truth were known it is probable that a sensible woman like Helen Gould never did feel like a sister-in-law to Count Boni.

Dr. Alfonso Penna has just been elected president of Brazil. Let us hope he may be worth 100 cents on the dollar to that country.

Count Boni's creditors will probably find it difficult to agree with those people who refuse to admit that there is any cause for pessimism in this world.

Having informed us how he spells "enough," Mr. Carnegie might still further satisfy our thirst for knowledge by telling us whether millionaires ever get it.

A pound of quinine now costs only as much as an ounce did twenty years ago. We must therefore admit that the cost of living has in some sections been greatly reduced.

Cradles that can be rocked by electricity are in the market. It is reported. Still, the wise baby who hopes to some day be President may insist that he be rocked by hand.

Astronomers assert that Mars is again trying to signal us. If it is a distress signal the astronomers should find some way of informing Mars that we are having troubles of our own.

Statisticians have found that if the wealth of the United States were converted into \$1 bills they would form a string to the moon and back thirty times. Isn't it wonderful and interesting to be a statistician?

Andrew Carnegie says when he writes "enough," he spells it e-n-u-f. Incidentally it may be remarked that there was a long time in Mr. Carnegie's money-making career that he seemed to have had no use for the word at all.

News comes from London to the effect that a brier pipe famine is threatened. Still, there is no immediate cause for alarm. Owing to the bumper corn crop which we have had the output of the Missouri meerschaum factories promises to be very large.

Wooden clothing is now to be made of spun pulp. Waistcoats of this material, said to be as durable as leather, are already on the market, and may be followed by whole suits of the best spruce, sold cheap, and warranted to wear for years. "Spruce up" may thus acquire a new and more exact meaning.

Consider the hen. She boasts not; neither is she lazy, and every year she contributes about 300,000,000 toward the agricultural output of the nation. She is more profitable, several times over, than all the gold mines. We have made known to the world our apples, our hops, strawberries, cherries and prunes, to say nothing of wheat, corn and flour—all the result of culture. A first-class article of food is self-advertising. Let's turn to and cultivate the hen.

The Marlborough case is an interesting one as showing the increased cost of luxuries in recent years. In the old days, when an American millionaire purchased a little toy like a foreign title for his daughter the initial expenditure, her hand and dower, closed the deal. To-day a title is like a good many other commodities—cameras, for instance—the original cost of which is a mere bagatelle to the expenditures that have to be made to keep the toy in commission. There is one good result to be expected out of these cases. They should certainly lead the fathers of wealthy daughters to take greater care in choosing their titled sons-in-law.

Rural tragedies recur with rhythmic frequency and mostly they are characterized by the peculiar atrocity and unnaturalness which betray the morbid moodiness of the perpetrator. In the loneliness and isolation of the farm the crime has been brooded upon, fancied wrongs taking abnormal shape, and introspection feeding upon a social instinct perverted by disuse. There is no forgetting self where the lives of fellow creatures are not complexly interwoven. The farm has its own psychology. The compensations are many; the vigor, the health, the poetry of nature and the inspiration that lies in association with the soil; farm life with the one factor of monotony eliminated is man's ideal. But this damning fac-

tor intermittently writes tragedies of a revolting nature across the page of rural life.

A happy woman likes a rainy day. Rain or snow seems to shut her in more securely with her happiness. What Emerson calls "the tumultuous privacy of storm" gives her sole possession of herself and what is hers. She may take time to gloat over her treasures, whether of household goods, of art, of knowledge or of love—and to persuade herself that they are really hers. From her mind, as from bureau, closet and library, she may lay out her belongings, study their value, and replace them in a new and more charming order. But the unhappy woman can hardly bear a snow-storm or the melancholy voice of rain and wind. Diversion is her narcotic for the restlessness that dogs her steps. The hope that "somebody will drop in" buoys her up when the sun shines. When she knows the hope to be vain, hungry care, which waits for her even at the gates of sleep, thrusts its lean hands and ashen face before her eyes. The rainy day which is all too short for the pleasant "odd jobs" of her happy sister drags with leaden feet for the sad heart. If sadness is the result of disappointed egotism, the sharp sting of the storm may drive its victim to dispel it by a clearer self-knowledge. But if it is a pain born of loss and the selfish sin of others, of high ambition thwarted and noble endeavor come to naught—then the woman's soul must arm itself against the storm of nature, as against that storm which has raged within her life. The rainy day which shuts the door to friends and incidents must open it for good deeds. A generous letter written to a neglected friend, a favorite dish prepared for the children's dinner, the surprise of a call on a sick neighbor, the steady uplift of a brave voice and a cheerful face—these are the aids by which the woman with dull pain in her heart may hide it through the storm, and out of darkness make for others a light, which shall irradiate her own sky before the sunset.

Attention has recently been called, by two important events, to the enormous material resources of the United States in coal and iron, and to the question as to how long those resources will continue to exist in such form as to be of the widest benefit to the general public. All the ore lands owned by the Great Northern railway in the Lake Superior region have been leased to the United States Steel Corporation. The amount of iron ore which these lands contain has been estimated at 750,000,000 tons. The purchase of this ore—for that is in reality the effect of the lease—places the steel corporation in control of considerably more than half of the known available supply of iron ore in the United States. As the price to be paid for the Great Northern ore is, by the terms of the contract, to increase annually for a long term of years, the outlook for lower-priced iron is regarded as unfavorable, even when allowance is made for future improvements in methods of manufacture. It must not be forgotten, however, that there are still in the Pittsburgh and Birmingham districts enormous supplies of ore still almost untouched; and nearly every year discloses new fields in other regions. If the iron ore contract permits, and almost invites, a rapid exhaustion of the supply, the expected action of the government will retard the exhaustion of the coal supply. Secretary Hitchcock urges the withdrawal from entry of the government coal lands, in order to forestall the possibility of monopoly in one of the prime necessities of life. Ordinary government land can be obtained for a dollar and a quarter an acre, but the price for government coal lands is now twenty dollars an acre if the land is within fifteen miles of a railroad, and ten dollars when beyond that limit. But already so many fraudulent entries have been made, and so much valuable land has passed into the hands of individuals for a small fraction of its value, that the best public opinion demands more businesslike methods.

A Dazzling Prospect.
A poor Mexican laborer who chanced upon pay ore returned after his fortunate find to the doorway of his miserable hovel, and sat down to enjoy at leisure the prospect of riches. At first, he confided afterward to his old employer, his thoughts were hardly thoughts at all; they were vague, delicious, golden vision in which details were ignored. After a time, however, it occurred to him that he might as well make up his mind definitely what he would do with his money when he got it.

He could decide upon but one thing, but with that he was quite contented. Screens in that region were unknown and insects troublesome; but he had heard of a remedy. He would apply it freely where it was most needed.

"When I get my money," he told himself proudly, "I will go to the store and spend it. I will spend generously. I shall have no need to be mean. I will buy fly-paper—good sticky fly-paper. Sheets and sheets of it will I buy. Then I will return to me house and paper the walls with it, and I shall be no more troubled with flies."

"Ah, saints! but it is indeed a noble thing to be the owner of a gold-mine!"

Sweet Forgetfulness.
Maud—You like Dick better than you do Jack.
Ethel—How do you know?
Maud—You let Jack teach you to swim in two lessons, while you didn't learn from Dick in less than ten.—Boston Transcript.

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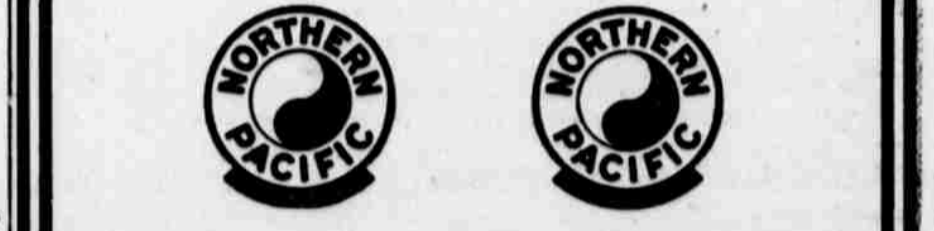


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