

Topics of the Times

Abdul Hamid, the deposed sultan, insists that he is still alive. But does this make it so?

The world is being flooded with gold, says a Yale professor. Perfectly dry out here, prof.

George Bernard Shaw wants to abolish property and marriage—for advertising purposes, as usual.

Platinum has gone up to \$710 a pound. This makes a pound of steak look pretty cheap after all.

Gertrude Atherton says American men have no subtlety. It appears to be absolutely impossible to please Gertrude.

A whole village in Italy is sliding down the hill on which it was built. The coasting must be unusually fine in that locality.

When President John H. Finley made his plea for the English language, George Ade and the baseball reporters just laughed.

If we are to believe all we read in the newspapers, the advantages of a pure food law have not yet been impressed upon the oysters.

An opera singer has sued a man named Kraut for \$100,000 because he is no longer sweet on her. That'll be likely to sour Kraut still more.

The latest cure for tuberculosis is rattlesnake venom. There does not seem to be the average individual much choice between the remedy and the disease.

A Long Island man is the father of twenty-eight children, but he isn't going about complaining of the high cost of living. To be a hero is often a simple matter.

Unprecedented things are happening the world over. But do not get alarmed. Some things are just as before. For instance, a revolution is going on in Santo Domingo.

Jeffries is an actor; John L. Sullivan calls himself a literary man; Jack Johnson travels with his own show; Mike Donlin poses as a comedian. Verily, the cause of Art moves forward with giant strides.

Parisians of the present day are like the compatriots of Noah. When the French hydrographic bureau prophesied floods they ridiculed the idea, and as they crossed the bridges of the Seine would remark flippantly to one another, "Look out or you will get your feet wet." But the flood came.

The value of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research has been demonstrated by the discovery that infantile paralysis is an infectious disease of the spinal cord, and not a blood disease. The germ has not yet been isolated, but physicians are working for the discovery or development of an antitoxin which shall rob this dread disease of its terrors as diphtheria has been robbed.

For nearly fifty years Theodor Mommsen was professor of ancient history in the University of Berlin. During this time he achieved a worldwide reputation for scholarship. The Germans have lately done honor to his memory by erecting on the grounds of the university a memorial statue, representing the great man, seated with a book on his knee, as if he were still teaching his generation the lessons they should learn from the past.

A physician of Currie, near Edinburgh, who has long been known as "the starving doctor," has died at the age of 91. The peculiarities of his treatment were that he gave little medicine, no alcoholic stimulants, and encouraged rest and fasting during illness. "Open the windows, go to bed, eat nothing at all and drink plenty of good water," he was accustomed to tell his patients. His success was attested both by his large practice and by his own retention of health to extreme old age.

Nearly all civilization is the product of the city, where mind meets mind and each becomes brighter from contact. Masses of population may engender great vices, but they also engender great virtues, and if they do not produce they certainly develop the finest and keenest intelligences that we have. The little town states of Greece created most of the ancient civilization that is worth having, and after they fell and the dark ages came in it was the little city republics of Italy that brought light, learning and mercy back to the world. Some of the blackest crimes are committed in the country. Conan Doyle has Sherlock Holmes in one of his best stories, point out this fact. It was a clever touch

and it is true. The country man is not more honest than the city man, although he may lack the opportunities. Flaubert and Balzac have drawn grim pictures of sordid meanness in the rural life of France; Tolstoy has done as much for Russia, and Sudermann, Ibsen and Hardy have told similar black stories of their own countries. The recent report of the commission on country life showed conditions which left very much to be desired in the way of improvement.

James A. Patten, having made much money in the wheat pit and on the cotton exchange, feels that he can afford the time to address his countrymen on the subject of their national extravagance. "We throw away," says he, "more food than would supply the tables of almost any other country. The high prices are due chiefly to our wastefulness of living, and until we curtail our living expenses there is no remedy for the present situation." These are to-day familiar observations. They have fallen from the lips of many well-to-do Americans. Being able to afford to be extravagant, they sternly rebuke that fault or crime in those who are not able. But there does not seem to be one among them who practices what he preaches. It is not enough to "point to brighter worlds." One should also "lead the way." Here is Mr. Patten, for instance, who tells us we must "curtail our living expenses," and stamps the value of the advice on the popular mind by starting off on a pleasure trip to Europe. He is giving countenance to a form of American extravagance which costs about \$150,000,000 a year. American annual expenditures in foreign travel come to something like that. These preachments of the gospel of economy by missionaries clothed in purple and fine linen have no effect upon a wasteful generation. Yet there would be a wonderful change for the better if every man in this country were to make thrift his handmaiden. There would be more comfort and contentment, smaller housekeeping bills and more money in the savings banks. If we were thrifty as the French are we could soon rival them as bankers for the world. We could lay up a store of wealth that would gladden us with golden interest. And incidentally American women would be better housekeepers and cooks. Unhappily not all the lecturing and advice that may be lavished on them will make Americans thrifty. Nothing short of urgent need in a hard case will drive them to it. New Englanders long had the reputation of being close fisted, pinching each dollar till the eagle screamed. They had to be thrifty. It was the condition of existence. It is otherwise with their descendants. If anything can curtail Americans of that crying sin of extravagance so ably denounced by Jas. J. Hill, Jas. A. Patten and other preachers of economy for others, it will be the iron pressure of high prices. When men find that the swelling tide of high prices does not carry their incomes up correspondingly they will have to cut down expenses. They will have to study closely the details of domestic management and pare a little here and there in order to live as decently as they have been living.

Your Most Important Reserve.

We Americans seem to think that it is comparatively easy to bribe nature, that we can break all health laws, doing two or three days' work in one; eating as much at a single dinner or banquet as nature would require for two or three days; that we can abuse our system in all sorts of ways, and then make amends by drugging ourselves and patronizing the springs and other health resorts, says Orison Sweet Marden in Success Magazine.

Many Americans spend their lives oscillating between two extremes, abusing their bodies, and doctoring them. The result is dyspepsia, exhausted vitality, nervous diseases of all kinds, insomnia, mental depression, insanity.

The efforts of great surgeons to save lives are often ineffective because the resisting power of the body has been ruined by some form of vicious living, or by overeating, underfeeding, lack of sleep, or other transgressions of the laws of health. Many people die from minor surgical operations or amputations after accident because of lack of physical reserve to assist nature in carrying them over the crisis.

The person who lives a perfectly normal life has a vast physical reserve power, which would carry him through any ordinary kind of disease, or tide him over any ordinary accident, a necessary amputation, or other needed operation. But when one uses up all his force, all his vitality, as he goes along, of course he has little or nothing to fall back upon in case of a severe accident or other emergency which calls for a great expenditure of physical force or vitality.

All Her Own Way.

Naggs—I wouldn't live with a wife who weighed more than 200 pounds. Mrs. Naggs—A wife who weighed 200 pounds could compel you to live with anything.—Boston Herald.

Every thief believes everybody steals.

BETTER TO WEAR OUT

Man Who Retires With Ample Fortune and Allows Himself to Rust Out.

ENTERS A LIFE OF MISERY.

Loses His Hold Upon the Social and Business World and Rapidly Goes Down Hill.

The average young man makes up his mind that at 50 or 60 years of age he will retire and take things easy for the rest of his days, says a writer in the Dundee Courier. The average young man makes a great mistake. It is far better to wear out than to rust out. To the young man work is a drudge, a necessity to keep him alive. In middle age work is an accepted thing, and we are used to it, and feel rather the better for having occupation. In old age work is a necessity to keep the mind and body young. There is scarcely a more miserable spectacle than the man of 50 or 60 who has retired with ample fortune. He loaf around the house. Goes from one club to another. Gets lonely. Feels blue. He tries to kill time in the day looking forward to the meeting of his cronies in the evening. The cronies are busy in the daytime and they have engagements and pleasures in the evening, so that our retired friend seems to be in the way. He finds that the anticipation of retirement was a pleasure, and that the realization is a keen disappointment.

"There is nothing," says Carnegie, "absolutely nothing in money beyond a competence." When one has enough money to buy things for the home, for his family comfort and enjoyment, when he has sufficient income to take care of himself and family, surplus dollars do not mean much.

The business man should prepare for his future so that if ill health overtakes him he may have the wherewith to surround himself with comforts, travel and the best of care. The man who enjoys pleasures of the home and friends, who trains up young blood to take hold of the business, who travels and enjoys himself as he goes along has the right idea. We must learn to enjoy life now instead of waiting for to-morrow, for to-morrow may never come. The man who cashes in, puts his money in bonds and retires from all work goes down hill quickly and feels he is of no use in the world.

The farmer who moves in town to live on his income is a sorry individual unless he has a garden and chickens, or buys and sells farms, or occupies his time with work of some kind. The retired, non-working farmer who has moved to town gets up in the morning, goes to see the train come in, whittles a stick, loafs at the hotel or store, goes to the next train, talks of his rheumatism, goes to bed at 8 o'clock, and the next day goes through the same rigmorole. Occupation is the plan of nature to keep man happy, so when you have all the money you need have some occupation or hobby to occupy your time. The man who retires from any active work is merely counting the days until he dies.

When old age comes, and your body or brain won't let you do or care for as much as you could in your younger days, then get lighter work or lighter cares.

Keep busy, if it is only raising chickens or gardening, or studying astronomy or botany. Keep at it as long as you can. Die in the harness instead of fading slowly away. Cultivate the reading habit in your younger days that it may be a pleasant occupation when your legs and hands grow feeble with age. When you quit work or occupation of some sort then life has no beauty for you.

WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

There Are Four Reasons for Opposition to Parcels Post.

What is the answer? There isn't any one answer; but the parcels post is one of several answers, Collier's says. Everybody knows now the old story. When John Wanamaker was postmaster-general, some one asked him why he didn't have a parcels post like every other civilized country? He said there are four reasons: The first is the Wells-Fargo Express Company, the second is the American Express Company, the third is the Adams Express Company, the fourth is the United States Express Company. Every once in a while our consuls in Europe write to our government telling how the parcels post works in Europe. In Senator Platt's day (Senator Platt was once the president of the United States Express Company) he used to have such reports withdrawn from the public. Here is a recent one from H. S. Culver, United States consul at Cork, Ireland. This report was printed in the "Rural New Yorker":

"Farmers, merchants and manufac-

turers patronize extensively these means of communication between the markets and the isolated individual customer. The rates by parcels-post are 6 cents for one pound or less, 8 cents from one to two pounds, and 2 cents additional for each pound up to eleven—the weight limit of parcels. The length of parcel allowed is three feet six inches, and the greatest length and girth combined is six feet. For example, a parcel measuring three feet six inches in its longest dimension may measure two feet six inches in girth. Eggs, fish, meat, fruit, vegetables, glass, crockery, liquids, butter, cheese, etc., may be transported by parcels-post."

If we had the parcels-post in this country the farmer could ship one or five or ten pounds of butter, or a few dozen eggs, or a peck of potatoes, or a basket of apples, to his individual customer in the city, and avoid the middleman. Fishermen in the north of Scotland send fresh fish to the London market this way. Also, if we had the parcels-post system in this country, the express companies would quickly reduce their rates and stop paying 800 per cent dividends.



The third municipal census of Buenos Ayres, now being compiled, is expected to give that city a population of at least 1,285,000.

Brass may be given a color resembling pewter by boiling it in a cream of tartar solution containing a small amount of chloride of tin.

New York is experimenting with street cars driven by electric motors which get their power from gas engines mounted below the floors of the cars.

Though blessed with the most fertile soil and most favorable climate in the world, the United States produces less wheat per acre planted than England, Germany, or Holland.

A model electric engine, built by Thomas Davenport, a poor blacksmith of Brandon, Vt., and operated on a small circular track in 1834, probably was the first electric railway in the world.

A bit of primeval yew forest about half a mile square is carefully preserved in the Bavarian highlands of Germany, the tree, once widely distributed, having become almost extinct in Europe.

The amount of fertilizing matter brought down by the River Nile from its source every year is estimated at 100,000,000 tons—enough to cover a road from the earth to the moon sixteen feet wide by two and one-half inches deep.

The Bell Telephone Company is to adopt in New York the plan developed by independent companies in Buffalo of attaching pay-station telephone-boxes to street poles, after the model of police call-boxes. It is said that little inconvenience is caused by the roar of traffic in the street, because the head of the operator can be introduced into the box so as practically to shut out the extraneous noises.

During 1908 Peru and Panama officially adopted the world system of standard time based on the meridian of Greenwich, and it is expected that in consonance with a resolution of the Pan-American Scientific Congress the Latin-American countries generally will adopt this system. It was the expressed wish of the congress that the new system should become effective from Jan. 1, 1910. Time signals upon this system are now sent out without cost by cable and wireless telegraphy throughout the American continent. The whole globe is divided into hourly belts, starting from the meridian of Greenwich.

The chairman of the chemistry section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Professor Louis Kahlenberg, dwelt, at the recent Boston meeting, on the importance of recognizing that solutions are really chemical in character, and that there is no wide gulf separating the act of solution from other chemical phenomena. Benjamin Silliman Sr., in 1837, regarded solutions as chemical compounds, and the chemical view predominated until 1887. Professor Kahlenberg thinks that the renewed study of solutions from the chemical point of view will greatly aid in getting a broader and more correct conception of the nature of chemical action itself. It will be of particular service in unraveling questions in physiology.

Funeral Baked Meats.

The Customer—Hi, waiter! What do you mean on the menu by "Brown Soup," "Jonesed Eggs" and "Harried Mutton?"

The Waiter—Well, sir, you see, sir, we often give dishes names of our clients who die after being reg'lar customers here.—The Sketch.

A French writer predicts that in the course of one hundred years very few persons will live in the cities. Cities will be used only for business purposes.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY

Chicory used to mix with coffee, is the oldest known adulterant of food. In some cheap restaurants the coffee is often half chicory.

The trees which are used in the government work of reforesting are grown at eight government nurseries in the western forest reserves.

Since 1883 the sea has washed away 419 acres of the British isles, but it has also added 30,752. The land gained, however, is at present useless.

In Switzerland education is both free and compulsory, and such ample facilities are provided for all classes that illiteracy is almost unknown.

An Austrian fire department is trying out a fire engine that, though drawn by horses, is operated by electricity taken from any convenient source through a cable carried by the engine.

In the English Church Times the clerical obituary for 1909 contains 461 names. The ages of 370 of the deceased clergymen are mentioned and these show the attainment of an average age of 71½ years.

So many counterfeit nickels are dropped in the fareboxes of a New York street railway company that the lead realized when they are melted-down makes an appreciable item in the revenue of the road.

For the years 1808 to 1907 Great Britain has produced 32.6 bushels of wheat an acre, as against 13.9 in this country and 9.3 in Russia, which makes the poorest showing of the large wheat-growing countries.

Two Tennessee draftsmen have patented a magnetic T-square, which is held against the iron bound edge of a drawing board by an electro magnet in its head. A switch cuts off the current and allows it to be moved.

Mrs. Lulu Rice of Longmont, Colo., recently received a certificate enabling her to practice embalming. She was the only woman among the seven candidates who took the required examination and the only person who got a certificate.

The London employer, in hiring a shop clerk, insists on an agreement that the latter shall not go into business for himself or enter the employ of another within a certain distance radius and within a certain time limit after leaving his employer.

London seems to have possessed a roller skating rink over three-quarters of a century ago, for in 1823 mention can be found of the invention of a skate "for rendering the amusement independent of frost," which was being "practically exhibited at the old tennis court in Windmill street."

Benjamin Franklin observed the Londoner's habit of wasting daylight more than a century and a half ago. In walking through the Strand and Fleet street at 7 o'clock one summer morning he noticed "there was not one shop open, though it had been daylight and the sun up above three hours, the inhabitants of London choosing voluntarily to live much by candle light and sleep by sunshine, and yet often complain, a little absurdly, of the duty on candles and the high price of tallow."

Salmon require little or no food in fresh water, and while they will take most of the things swimming against the current and swallow or nibble at them, still they always spit or drop them out of their mouths, seemingly only making play at eating. One thing more. Any differences in sea trout come not from being of different breeds—for all sea trout are of the same class, only look different because of the water they frequent or the food they eat. And the same thing applies to brown trout. So there are only two breeds of trout.—New York Press.

"Nobody is going to poke out a good eye just for the sake of getting a glass eye," says the city salesman, "but I know a man who makes money on his glass eye. He goes to Europe three times a year on business. While there he does a little trading in jewels as a side line. It is on the homeward trip that he turns his glass eye to good account. In the cavity back of it he carried two or three small but valuable diamonds. Half the duty saved is his commission on those stones alone. The customs inspectors have never got onto him. Naturally they can't go around jabbing their fingers into people's eyes."—New York Sun.

One of the most popular spots in Central Park is Dr. Tanner's well, near the West 81st street entrance. A few years ago the newspapers were full of the exploits of Dr. Tanner, who said he could do without food for forty days. While he took no nourishment for that length of time it was said that he allowed himself all the water he wanted and that he got it each day from the spring that comes out of a rock near 81st street and 8th avenue. The park authorities afterward scooped out a basin to collect the water and provided cups. Lots of persons who remember Dr. Tanner ascribe wonderful properties to this water and they go there every morning to drink.—New York Sun.