

TOPICS OF THE TIMES

Some men are born diplomats; others talk too much.

The D. F. S. (Daughters of Football Survivors) will be meeting in 1925.

It is also a wise hypnotist who knows whether his subject is dead or not.

Railroads seem to be learning how to divide and subtract, as well as add and multiply.

Kansas reports 2,000 babies short this year. All other crops were up to the average, however.

Next to fighting for his life a normal man will make his hardest struggle to keep out of jail.

Having unquestioned supremacy on land, sea and in the air, Uncle Sam is perplexed to know what next to tackle.

Scientists say the male hair turns gray eight years sooner than the female. Possibly forgotten birthdays vitiate the figures.

It would be unfair to blame the hookworm for all the laziness in the world. Much of it is shiftlessness for which there is no cure.

A Texas man has named his twins Cook and Peary. When they get older they can have interesting arguments as to which one discovered the world first.

The day will soon come when the aeroplane and the dirigible balloon will have a commercial value in time of peace as well as a strategic value in time of war.

Americans find themselves irresistibly drawn toward games of chance whether it be a land drawing, a turkey raffle or a bridge whist tournament where the prize is a nut cracker or a souvenir spoon.

Astronomers are quarreling about the craters on the moon, and two of the poets are threatening to fight a duel because one of them said a certain unnamed woman had a serpent's tongue. Isn't it awful, Mabel?

It is a popular impression—among men and boys—that a woman cannot throw a stone, but in a recent contest held under the patronage of a Western Newspaper, the winner, a girl of 18, threw a base ball more than 200 feet.

A Texas town under the local option law voted for license, but the wide-awake prohibitionists applied for and obtained all the licenses allowed by law—and then refused to open any saloons. The Scripture which commends the wisdom of the serpent has evidently been read to some purpose in Texas.

A new consultant dressmaker advises that a woman have a dress for every mood. When she is feeling depressed, she should wear her gayest gown. The difficulty seems to be that when she got into her glad rag she would be so ungovernably exultant that it would be necessary immediately to change to something quiet, and thus the victim of moods would be forever changing. The male idea of trimming the coat-cuffs with the shears and letting it go at that, has its advantages.

Boston has just raised, by popular subscription, a half million dollars for a new Young Men's Christian Association building. Among all the contributions none is more interesting than that of a woman too poor to give anything in money. She supports herself by making little twine boxes, which she sells from door to door. To help the fund she sent seven of the boxes, with a letter apologizing for the smallness of the gift, but expressing the hope that it might bring in a dollar or two. The story of the humble gift was told at a public meeting, and the boxes were put up at auction. They sold for one hundred and thirty-two dollars—a sum greater than that contributed by many well-to-do givers.

For the fiscal year on which the adjutant general of the army has recently made report the number of desertions is placed at the astonishing figure of 4,998, or 4.97 per cent of the entire enlisted force. This is an increase of 38 per cent over the desertions of the year before. As to the causes of this remarkable defection from the ranks, Adjutant General Almsworth assigns the abolition of the canteen, the monotony of garrison life, the increased amount of work and study demanded of the soldier, and the ease with which remunerative employment can be obtained in civil life at

the present time. All of these causes have been attributed before to army desertions, and undoubtedly each contributes to the dissatisfaction of the enlisted private. The restoration of the canteen would meet with strong opposition, and it is doubtful if efforts in that direction would succeed at the present time. One would think that the additional work and study complained of would destroy the monotony of garrison life. With the rewards which certainly await efficiency and intelligence even in the ranks, garrison monotony should be appreciably diminished. Dull times in trade and business increase enlistments, and when prosperous seasons return to the country the enlisted men naturally long for the freedom and opportunities of civil life. Monotony, we should say, is the worst enemy of the soldier in times of peace, but it would seem as though the War Department might easily devise means to overcome this and make the enlisted man more contented with his condition.

It is now a banker who takes his fling at the colleges, charging them with inefficiency in preparing young men for business life. In an address before the Massachusetts Teachers' Association, J. G. Cannon deplored the "surprising lack" of business training available for college students to enable them to meet the conditions of "what is essentially a business nation," and declared that in this particular "American colleges are one hundred years behind the times." Is there any side on which the colleges have been left unassailed? Their morals, the encouragement they give to extravagance; football, fraternity life, the endeavor of institutions with old-fashioned ideals to cling to a classical curriculum, have been attacked. College presidents themselves have denounced the failure of colleges to conform to "modern demands." But the muck-raking of the higher education takes a curious form in the indictment of its shortcomings in preparing young men for banks and brokers' offices. Is this the function of colleges? If it is, the sooner campuses are established in Wall street and in the great industrial centers the better for the quality of instruction. The necessity will then be indicated of including corporation presidents and chairmen of boards in the faculty. But in a larger sense the opinion that American colleges do not prepare for business careers is controverted by the testimony of competent foreign observers who have noted that business life in America, on account of the large element of college men represented in it, is now on a higher plane than in any other country. The colleges may not equip students for positions in offices or mills, but they do provide that broader foundation for future prominence in commercial affairs the evidences of which are on every hand. It is not without significance that industry in America has attained its highest development at the very time when the participation of college-educated men in business is greatest.

EMBARRASSING POPULARITY

An amusing result of the popularity of Father Mathew, the great temperance advocate, is recorded in a recent book by Edward Gilliat, M. A., entitled "Heroes of Modern Crusades." Father Mathew had arrived in the dusk of the evening at the house of a parish priest in a remote part of Galway. His host conducted him to a room on the ground floor, in which was a large bay window without blind or curtain.

No sooner was Father Mathew in bed than he turned his face to the wall and fell into a deep slumber. Awakening, as usual, at an early hour in the morning, he opened his eyes, repeated a prayer, and turned toward the window. What was his dismay to see a crowd of people of both sexes and all ages standing tiptoe in front of the big bay window, some even flattening their noses against the glass, all eager to get a peep at his reverence.

A more modest man than he did not exist, and great was his embarrassment. He looked round furtively for a bell rope, but such a luxury was not to be thought of in a priest's house in Galway! He dare not even put a leg out to stamp on the floor; he was fairly in prison between the blankets.

The crowd was growing larger and the talk louder. He could hear bits, such as:

"Do ye see him, Mary, asthore?"
"Danny, agra, lave me take a look, an' God bless ye, child!"
"Oh, wisha, there's the blessed priest abed!"

"Mammy, there he lies, a-snoozin! I can see his poll!"

Three mortal hours did the prisoner wish for deliverance. Then his host came tapping, afraid to disturb his guest too early, saw the boys at gaze, and sent Pat to clear them off the house front.

Pray for a sound liver; you can be comfortable without money or fame.

JOYCE.

It was really most annoying. I searched through my pockets again, but was still unsuccessful in finding any money. To make matters worse, the only other passenger in the 'bus was that pretty girl I had often seen coming out of The Lindens.

How absurd I should look when the conductor came in and demanded the fare. Suddenly a bright idea occurred to me. I leaned forward.

"Er—pardon me—er—addressing you, but you see—er—your face is familiar to me, and—er—" I paused lamely.

My fair companion stared at me.

"You live at The Lindens. I have seen you going in and coming out several times," I said, "and I thought I would risk speaking to you, for you can help me out of a great difficulty. Will you lend me twopence?"

My companion stared at me uneasily for a moment or two, and then she burst into a peal of delicious laughter.

"It must be a great difficulty if twopence is necessary to remove it," she said presently in grave tones.

Then, of course, I explained my absurd position, renewing my apologies for speaking to her as I had done.

"Of course, I shall be glad to be of assistance to you," she said, "although it is only in a very small way."

"It is awfully kind of you," I said; "I will repay the debt this evening."

"Oh, please no," she entreated. "It's only twopence; please don't trouble about it. But I get out here—good morning to you."

It was a long time since I had taken so much trouble with my toilet as I did that evening, but at length I was satisfied, and I sallied forth to call at The Lindens. I had previously taken the opportunity to look up the directory, and found the name against The Lindens was Denison.

"I want to see Miss Denison, please," I said to the pleasant-faced housekeeper who answered my ring.

"Yes, sir; will you come inside?" she replied. "What name shall I give?"

"Gilbert Braithwaite," I said, and then I added, "you had better tell her I have called to pay a debt."

"Yes, sir." Shortly afterward the door opened and an elderly lady with very decided features entered the room.

"You wish to see me?" she said.

"Er—no!" I stammered. "I wanted to see Miss Denison."

"I am Miss Denison," the prim lady replied. "What debt is it you talk



"WHAT NAME SHALL I GIVE?"

about? I owe no man anything, neither does any man owe me."

"There is some slight error," I said quickly. Then a bright idea struck me. "You have a younger sister, perchance?" I suggested.

"Dinner is served, miss," suddenly came a familiar voice from the doorway.

I dropped my umbrella and hat and jumped to my feet. There, framed in the doorway, stood my benefactress, attired in the black and white costume of a maid.

"Um—ah!" I remarked, blinking like an owl.

"Oh!" she replied, blushing furiously.

Miss Denison stared from me to the other.

"Joyce," she said, "you may retire."

"But I wish to speak to that—er—young lady," I cried. "I owe her twopence."

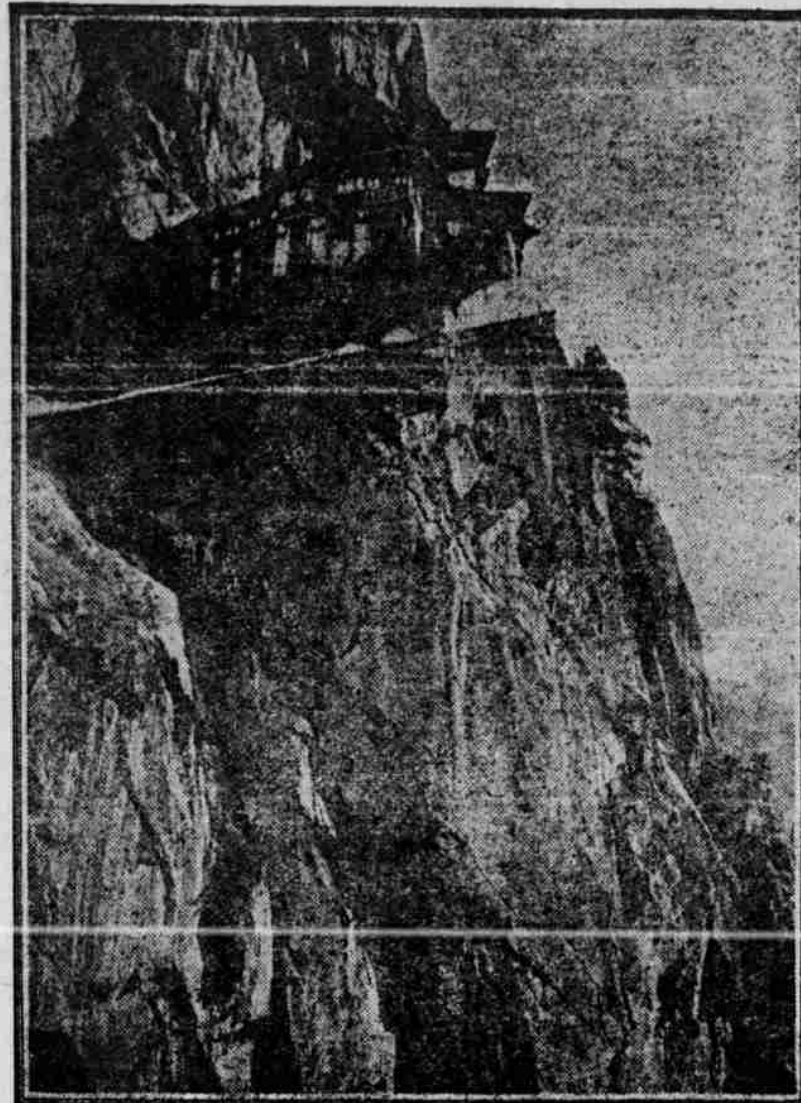
I was conscious that my remark sounded ridiculous, but it was the truth. However, Miss Denison cut me short.

"I do not allow my maid to have any followers," she said in dignified tones.

I dined alone at my favorite Soho restaurant, and then made my way back to my chambers to enjoy a solitary pipe. All the while I was thinking of Joyce.

"Serving maid or queen!" I cried joyously. "I will woo her!"

DIZZY HOME OF BUDDHIST MONKS.



THE ROCK-PERCHED MONASTERY OF PARO-TAK-TSANG.

Mr. Claude White in his recently-published book, "Sikkim and Bhutan," and in his lecture at the opening session of the Royal Geographical Society, has brought to notice the fact that Bhutan is a country full of picturesque forts and quaint monasteries. The forts were built for defense during the many years in which the country was plunged in a constant state of internecine warfare and are placed in the most commanding positions, whilst the monasteries are hidden away in inaccessible and secluded spots. These monasteries were founded by holy men, disciples of Buddha, who in order to practice one of their principal tenets, that of contemplation, have chosen some lonely place in which to carry on their devotions undisturbed by the outer world. It was in this way the famous and sacred monastery of Paro-tak-tsang was founded by Guru Padma Sambawah, who lived in a small cave, which is still pointed out, under the main temple (the central building in the picture). The shrine is all but inaccessible, and the only approach to it crosses a gorge of some 1,000 feet deep, with nearly perpendicular sides, down which steps have been cut in cracks in the rocks and where a false step would precipitate the traveler many hundreds of feet into the torrent below. A string of prayer flags is seen stretched across the gorge.—London Sphere.

After some thought, I decided to commence my campaign with a letter. I posted the letter on the following morning. But the days went by and no answer came to my letter. I took to haunting the neighborhood of The Lindens every evening, but never once did I set eyes on Joyce again. I received my letter back from the post-office marked, "Gone, no address."

I will not go into the details of the following weeks. I put the matter into the hands of a private inquiry agent. He said he had personally interviewed the keeper of every registry office in London, but with no result.

That summer we were particularly busy, and toward the autumn I decided to spend a month by the sea and combine business with pleasure. I chose Littlebourne and took with me a large pile of manuscripts to read. I discovered a retired nook in the midst of some rocks half a mile beyond the end of the front, and here I spent most afternoons, wading through the MSS. One afternoon, when I was exceedingly bored, I suddenly became conscious that a girl was seated on some rocks about five yards away from me.

"Surely," I said to myself, "I know that figure." In another moment the blisful revelation came to me. It was Joyce.

"Miss Joyce," I cried.

"You?" she murmured, blushing visibly.

"At last I have found you," I said. "Do you know, I have been searching everywhere I could think of for you."

For a few seconds we stared at each other, and in another moment we were both laughing heartily.

"It is queer that we should meet down here like this. Are you holiday-making?"

"Yes," I replied; "and you?"

"Oh, I am in a situation down here now."

"Whereabouts?" I asked.

"I'm afraid I can't tell you," she answered.

"No, I suppose not," I muttered, "it was through me you lost your last situation."

"Oh, that didn't matter," she said. "I was going to leave shortly."

"Now look here, we'll make a bargain," I cried. "I won't try to find out where you are now employed if you will promise to meet me occasionally."

"Oh, but you are a gentleman and I am only a parlor maid. We are too far apart to be friends."

"Not at all," I cried. "What petty distinctions like that matter?"

I am not going to recite the details of our excursion on the following day. This was but the first of several and in this manner a fortnight passed rapidly away. I must confess that my work suffered, but I did not trouble about that. I tried to make up for it by slamming into my reading when I did not see Joyce. She manifested interest in my work and I often told her of the stuff I was reading.

One afternoon we rambled away along the cliffs.

"I ran through 80,000 words this morning," I said. "It was a novel, and its title was Vanity."

"Yes," she replied. "Was it any good?"

"Not the slightest," I replied.

"What was the author's name?" she asked.

"Arthur Lester," I replied.

There was silence for a few minutes. Suddenly looking up, I saw my companion's eyes were filled with tears.

"Joyce!" I cried, anxiously. "Joyce, what is the matter?"

"Oh, nothing much," she murmured brokenly.

"There is a great deal the matter," I said. "Tell me—what is it?"

For a moment she hesitated, then her head dropped.

"I—I am Arthur Lester," she murmured.

"Joyce," I whispered. "Joyce, dear, I am so sorry. I had no idea."

"I ought to have told you," she murmured, though she did not draw herself away from me. "I thought it would be such a surprise for you, for I thought it would be accepted. That was why I was a parlor maid. As you will remember, I described some old maids in my book, and in order to get an intimate knowledge of them I obtained a position at The Lindens. I am staying now with my aunt, who is an invalid. That is the service I referred to that I am in down here."

"How splendid of you!" I cried. "What you must have gone through for the sake of your book."

"But it wasn't any good," she replied.

"But it was some good," I insisted, for otherwise we should never have come together."

Once more her head drooped, but this time it rested on my shoulder. Joyce was mine at last.—E. Newton-Bungey in M. A. P.

People who think twice before they speak seldom acquire reputations as boy orators.