

TOPICS OF THE TIMES

When a fuel famine meets a snow blockade it's a case of double trouble.

In order not to lose sight of your object in life, it may be well to have one that is not too far away.

"The finest clothing is a person's own skin," says Mark Twain. And we might add that it is a good fit.

If "exaggerated ego" is a symptom of insanity, maybe some of our politicians are more to be pitied than blamed.

Russia claims to be in worse condition than it was a year ago, although at that time it was holding the world's record.

The Philadelphia man who had a lump of coal removed from his brain must have been glad to get the matter off his mind.

A lot of the best people in the world never get their names in the newspapers except when friends from out of town visit them.

Valparaiso seems to have pulled through her earthquake experience without developing either a prominent grafter or a conspicuous fool.

The eternal fitness of things gets an awful jolt when one encounters a woman clerk in a hardware store or a man clerk in a millinery shop.

At any rate, the increased cost of living has put out of business the man who used to write those plausible articles on "How to Live on Thirty Cents a Day."

Andrew Carnegie has given \$40,000 for a swimming pool at Yale. But Andy's name is not merely to be written in water. It will be blown in the bricks at the side of the pool.

A Philadelphia man wants a divorce because his wife would rather go shopping than eat. The wife can defeat him if she will only set up the plea that she is an average woman.

There is living in Texas a woman who can travel for fifty miles in one direction without stepping from her own land. She ought to be able to get along without scolding her neighbors much.

A Washington man who never before believed in the "thirteen" hoodoo is mourning the loss of a \$13 overcoat, which has been stolen twice. Hereafter he will probably purchase only those marked down to \$12.99.

A London professor has been counting the germs that were picked up by a woman who dragged her skirt through the street. He found 16,500,000 of them. We are authorized, however, to say that he did not take the trouble to name them all.

An Indiana man has secured a divorce with the provision that he may not marry anyone but his former wife until after thirty years from the time of the granting of the decree. Such divorces are not likely to become very popular in New York social circles.

Maine is to have the distinction of possessing a factory owned and run by Indians. Sabatis Shay and Newel Rancho, full-blooded Indians, recently purchased the necessary land, and are erecting a building for the manufacture of canoe paddles and cant-dog handles—articles which demand absolute fidelity in manufacture, since on their trustworthiness the safety of life may depend. The stenographer and typewriter of the firm is a young Indian girl, a graduate of a high school and business college, who can write both in her native language and in English.

It must be highly interesting for a man to sit up in bed and watch a surgeon cut off his leg without feeling it, but that is what has been done in Europe for some time past by the new process of "spinal anesthesia." The lower part of the spine is anesthetized with cocaine and that paralyzes the lower part of the body, so that it may be hacked to pieces without pain. This process has just been introduced in this country by a Milwaukee physician, and it is a little astonishing that it has not been introduced sooner, seeing that it has been in use in France and Germany for almost two years.

The test made near Cleveland recently of the question whether engineers are in the habit of running past danger signals is conclusive as to the fact. It is said that the twenty-four engineers who disregarded the signals will be discharged. That discipline will probably be necessary to convince the engineers that railroad management is in earnest about having them stop when the signals call for it. But the managers should not lay the unction to their souls that this will convince the public that the bad practice has been the engineers' fault. Engineers are not so fond of courting death or so wholly controlled by the speed madness as to run past danger signals unless they have reason to believe it is expected of them. It need not be presumed that they were definitely instructed to commit this violation of the rules of safety. But there is every reason to suspect that they were required to make time and subjected to disfigure if they did not make it in such ways as to practically compel them to do so.

The ease with which the generous intentions of a testator may be frustrated and the uncertainty which attends the making of a will even by an experienced lawyer are illustrated in the case of the late Judge Edward M. Paxson of Philadelphia. Judge Paxson died in 1905 and among his bequests was a large tract of land and a sum of money, the whole amounting in value to nearly a million dollars, which he intended should be applied to the

founding and maintenance of a home for boys, where farming and gardening were to be taught them. This will was set aside the other day, the courts affirming that the judge died intestate because his will does not conform to the provisions of the law. Judge Paxson was on the Supreme bench of Pennsylvania for fifteen years. For a considerable part of that time he was chief justice. He had been judge in lower courts and his entire active life had been devoted to the practice, enforcement, and interpretation of law. During his long career he probably had drawn up many wills and pronounced upon the validity of many. He certainly should have been competent to execute a will properly and ought to have been an expert at the business, but three lawyers, whom probably he had many times instructed in points of law, have succeeded in showing that he either did not know how to make a will which would resist breaking or else that he was thoughtless in the making. His will was invalidated, and it did not have the names of two witnesses, and the large property which was to have been devoted to a most beneficent and useful charity will be divided among the heirs. Of course it is most extraordinary that a man like Judge Paxson, of unusual legal attainments and of unusually large experience in practice and upon the bench, should have made such an error in his last testament, but so have other great lawyers, like Samuel J. Tilden, for instance, all of which goes to show that a man may reach the highest station in his profession and yet in the simple performance of a duty which he has done over and over make a mistake of the most momentous kind, and show himself fallible where he should have been the contrary. It also demonstrates that a learned judge may decide wisely and in accordance with the forms of law for others and act most unwisely and unjustly in the direction of his own affairs. The moral, perhaps, is that mistakes might be avoided and legal technicalities escaped by carrying out one's wishes while living, which will also enable one not only to carry out the wish but to see that it is carried out properly.

WHALE MEAT FOR FOOD.

Newfoundlanders Have Found It Palatable and Cheap.

Whale meat is coming on the market. The flesh of the deep sea leviathans looks and tastes so much like beef that the difference is scarcely noticeable, says the Ottawa Free Press. It is so cheap that if competition makes it necessary it can be sold for a cent a pound and still leave a margin of profit. There is as much meat on a 70-ton whale as on 200 fat steers. The meat may be a little coarse in quality, but it is claimed to be as nutritious as beef. The company which is preparing whale meat for the market has already sold several lots to merchants in the West Indies, and the poor natives have bought it without hesitation. It is really better food than they have been accustomed to buying. If it were not for prejudice it is certain that the consumption of whale meat would have been universal before this, because it is both nourishing and cheap.

The whale stations in Newfoundland are the first to attempt to save all portions of the sea monster, and by so doing have doubled its value. Formerly the blubber was cut away, and then the carcass set adrift, but now the entire body is saved, including even the bones and blood. One of these modern stations will dispose of four 70-ton whales in twenty-four hours, having the oil ready for shipment in barrels, the meat incased in casks, and the blood, bones and refuse reduced to powder and packed in sacks.

This is extraordinary when the size of the prey is taken into consideration. Specimens are frequent that measure eighty feet long, and it has been found that the largest ones will always weigh a ton for every foot of their length. There are certain parts of a whale that are strangely out of proportion. Although its body and mouth are enormous, its eyes and throat are exceedingly small.

As a matter of curiosity the various organs of a large sulphur whale were weighed recently. The tongue tipped the scales at exactly 4,000 pounds, while the eye was barely half a pound in weight. The jawbone was twenty feet long, and one side of it weighed 1,000 pounds. The tongue boiled separately produced nearly four barrels of oil.

Although the mouth is almost wide enough to encompass a box car, the throat is so narrow that only the smallest particles of food can be swallowed, hence the big creatures subsist altogether on tiny shrimp and little fishes. However, there is one species—the sperm whale—which has an opening big enough to accommodate even large objects than the body of a man. It is not unusual to find portions of an octopus weighing several tons when the stomach of one of them is dissected.

Noted the Symptoms.

A little girl went for the first time to church with her mother. All went well during the service, but the child grew uneasy during the sermon, which was a long one. The mother tried in every way to keep the little girl quiet, but in vain. Finally the child observed that the preacher had a pompous way of inflating his chest and lungs at a new paragraph or head. Just as the mother was assuring the child that the preacher would soon stop, he did—for another start—and the tired child burst out on her mother's assurance, "No, he won't; he's swelling up again."—Woman's National Daily.

Counting the Cost.

"Aren't you sorry that so many people have to hang on to your old car straps?" asked the citizen of the street railroad director. "I suppose I ought to be," was the response; "they certainly do wear 'em out!"—Yonkers Statesman.

Every man thinks his love is pure and ideal, but that the love of other men is not only dangerous, but very funny.

PAPERS BY THE PEOPLE

BEWARE THE SILENT MAN.

By Ella K. Dearborn.



Instinctively one distrusts a silent person, and this is well, for there is no possibility of understanding them, and it is doubtful if they understand themselves. Their silence leads you to wrong conclusions. They know this, but are too clam-like to say a word that will set you straight, even though they are the ones to be injured by an error in your judgment. You struggle to interpret their silence aright. It may be shyness—though not likely. It may be silliness—but what about?

If you have deluded yourself with the idea that there is a warm heart under the icy exterior and a teeming brain veiled by silence, away with the delusion, for a warm heart will make itself manifest, and the active brain will not be found by silence. Thoughts find their way into words, just as surely as the river finds the ocean. No matter how great a sacrifice you may make in order to do an act of kindness to a silent man or woman, a distressful state is the token of acceptance, and you do not know whether the silent one is struggling to express thanks or is trying not to kill you for your officiousness.

These people have not stamina enough to be either very good or very bad. They are unreliable in a business way and socially they are bores and nuisances, and the wife of a silent man is always unhappy; all efforts to please him are met with that impenetrable silence that hurts worse than a blow, and yet, since he has not beaten his wife with his fists or a club, he would claim to be kind.

Speech is nature's special gift to man, all other faculties are shared in common with lower animals; to mankind alone is given the power of clothing thoughts in words. Silence but thinly veils one's lack of thought. Beware of the silent person!

CLASS DISTINCTIONS IN CHURCH.

By Bishop Potter.



BISHOP POTTER.

I deplore the formation of castes in communities, the dividing of people into little cliques who affect to be superior to those outside them. The attitude of the Christian Church should be to disregard all questions of caste, the point where our religion differs greatly from all other great systems of theology, doctrine, and philosophy is that all people are alike in the sight of God. There is no place for caste and caste distinctions in the Christian Church, yet, unfortunately, it is fast growing here in America. You will hear women and men tell you not so much who they know and with whom they associate as those whom they will not or do not care to know. It is a ridiculous condition here in democratic America. The people who are thus considered "impossible" are not so from any evil line; they are simply "not of our set." Such an idea and such a system has no place in this land. I want you to consider a minute how different this spirit is from that which actuated the character of Him whose funeral procession in the Holy Land to-day is much the same as was that one when our Lord raised the son of the widow of Nain. It meant a toss of caste, a defiance to touch a dead person; yet our Lord not only

"FIGHTING BOB" EVANS.

Report that He Must Soon Raise the White Flag in Life's Battle.

The report that Admiral Bob Evans is about to retire from the navy because of ill health has sent a throbbing sympathy and regret through the country. Scores of telegrams and even cablegrams have been received at the navy department asking as to the truth of the report, and expressing high regard for "Fighting Bob."

Robley Dunglison was the name given him at his birth, Aug. 18, 1846, over 60 years ago. But he is "Fighting Bob" to the American people.

He is a born fighter. At 6 he was handling a gun. At 13 he was on his way across the western plains to acquire a residence at Salt Lake City. He had been promised an appointment to Annapolis if he became a resident of the Utah city.

On the way the emigrant train was attacked by Indians. "Bob" was warned to stay under cover when the fight began. When the Indians had been beaten back an arrow plucked Bob's right leg to the mule he rode showed how he had obeyed the order. He had been in the thickest of the melee. The arrow had to be cut between his leg and the pony's side before he could dismount.

When the Civil War broke out young Evans, then at Annapolis, had a heart-racking problem to decide. His mother was an ardent secessionist. His brother did not hesitate but donned the



"FIGHTING BOB" EVANS.

gray. But Bob decided to cast his lot with the ones who had educated him, although his mother sent his resignation to the Federal government.

His fighting spirit was vividly illustrated in the assault on Ft. Fisher, January, 1865. Twice he was wounded and fought on. A third bullet pierced his knee and he fell helpless. A sharpshooter kept pecking away at him. A bullet tore off of his toes. The fire of the wounded man was aroused, and grabbing his own rifle, he shot his enemy dead.

It was well for Evans after that battle that he had a strenuous spirit. When he was taken to the hospital it was decided that both his legs must be amputated. Bob heard the decision and that night armed himself with a revolver, which he hid under his pillow.

Next day when physicians broke their views to him the wounded youth

stopped the procession rather than passing down a side street, as we would be apt to do, but actually took the dead youth by the hand, risking what meant much to an Oriental. On the other hand, we have a list of those we do not care to associate with, because they do not belong to our particular class of society.

Never has there been a time when there was greater need of a more enlightened and a more Christian way of living. Conditions in America are such that it is impossible to follow the ideas of the founders of the land. The early Puritans had certain ideas which would be simply ludicrous were we to try to live up to them. We must add new standards.

SOCIAL PROGRESS DEPENDS ON INDIVIDUAL.

By Jeremiah W. Jenks.



We may not expect an immediate revolution in moral ideals or in business practices. But we may hope for steady improvement. Measures suggested favor greater publicity in business management—in itself a measure of reform.

The principles of business hold also in politics. The time is coming when deception and trickery in diplomacy will no longer pay, when cruelty and unscrupulousness in international relations place a nation at a disadvantage. The prosperity of the nation, as of the individual or of the corporation, is in the long run secured not by hostile measures but through the closely linked commercial and social intercourse in times of peace and friendship.

Among nations, as among business corporations, we may see that in the long run, if the moral sentiments of individual citizens are right, moral practices pay. The ultimate responsibility rests with us as individuals; and the outlook for the future is hopeful. The evils clearly must be seen before the remedy can be found. Many of the evils deeds of the last few years have been committed because, under the changing conditions, the nature of these evils has been clearly seen. There is still, however, much more to do for each of us in the way of seeing more clearly the application of the simple old fashioned principles of private honesty to the great transactions of corporate business, and to the still greater problems of statesmanship.

GREAT WEALTH NOT MENACE TO NATION.

By Henry Clews.

Let us bear in mind that the vast individual fortunes of Americans are nearly all self-made and in the hands of men who began life in poor circumstances, and that most of the most successful men in business are those who possess high character, as well as remarkable capacity, great thrift, and other good qualities; and that men of this type with great wealth have never proved a menace to the public welfare. New laws could be enacted to prevent the evil and dislodge us of inherited wealth. So deep a conviction have I that a proper sense of responsibility comes only with earning and saving wealth, that I often have thought it a most and just way for a man to distribute an estate by first providing for his family and then dividing the remainder among the employees who had served him faithfully and aided him to amass his fortune.

ARIZONA'S GREAT DAM NEARING COMPLETION.



The \$4,000,000 Tonto dam and reservoir—one of the most marvelous engineering feats ever attempted—is being completed at Roosevelt, Ariz., in the heart of nature's wonderland. Towering mountains and wild, rocky canyons that have stood for ages almost unknown to man are being fitted into a harness of rock and masonry.

Tonto dam will hold in check the largest artificial body of water in the world—a lake 25 miles long, with an average width of 1½ miles. This store of water will make change 200,000 acres of desert into a veritable fairyland. Any fruit, vegetable or grain that will grow in the semi-tropical region thrives on Arizona's deserts—but only when there is water to irrigate it.

The Tonto reservoir is on Salt River about seventy miles from Phoenix. Work has been progressing upon this great project four years. The total estimated cost is about \$4,000,000. The project was one of the first taken in hand by the engineers of the United States Reclamation Service.

pulled the gun. "You will never take off my legs while I have a bullet left," was his ultimatum. They didn't think then that it was absolutely necessary. In 1891 Evans gained his title of "Fighting Bob." He was in command of the little Yorktown at Valparaiso, Chile. It needed not the drop of a hat, it seemed, to start war between that country and the United States. Evans was in the harbor, facing ten forts and the Chilean fleet. He took on his ship the refugees from the American legation in the teeth of the protests of the Chilean government. More than that, he kept them safe and bluffed the entire fleet and all the forts by calmly threatening to open fire. The world read of it—gaped in sheer admiration of the nerve of it—and he became "Fighting Bob" forever.

Evans commanded the Iowa at the battle of Santiago and was in the thick of the scrap that destroyed the Spanish fleet.

He was always quick to meet an emergency. While dining the German emperor on board the Columbia, at the opening of the Kiel canal, he told the emperor all of the watertight doors in the ship could be closed in thirty seconds. To make good he ordered the signal blown on the siren. There wasn't enough steam and the emperor laughed. Evans quickly turned in his seat, pushed the general alarm buttons, and in a minute and a half the doors were closed.

Every man lies a little when he writes love letters.

LOST—A NEW WORLD FRONTIER.

Canadian Northwest Is a Region of Great Contrasts.

The day in the Canadian Northwest is one of contrast, says Emerson Hough in Outing. The scene still stands beside the new mansion of the real estate agent. The pony races of the Cree are held close to the splendid driving park at the capital of what you and I thought was the frontier. Lacrosse survives, but with it polo. You see a bundle of silver fox skins worth \$40,000; but the merchant does not care for that; he wants to show you wheat and oat fields, the crops taller than your head. They tell you of hunting grounds to the far north full of appeal to the adventurers; but they add that a railway is building to Lac la Poudre and another to Hudson's Bay; and they add casually that if the great bay shall prove too icy for winter transportation of these millions of bushels of grain to England, then they will build a road from its east shore across Ungava and Labrador. And these things they will do! But what is the frontier? Among the green poplars which enfold what we thought was to remain forever the wind-swept capital of the fur trade show now many tents, scores of them. They are the tents of Cree and Breeds, but of new settlers who have not had time to build their houses. Wild fowl still breeds thereabout; but close to the wild lakes and billows are cutting away the bush and opening up the rich black soil for farms.

But where is the frontier? They show you pictures of the old Hudson's Bay Company's stores of other days and tell you of low-roofed rooms, smoky and filled with a jumble of furs and dog harness and gaudy clothes for the native trade; yet when you find the Hudson's Bay Company's stores to-day, you discover windows filled with lingerie from Paris, picture hats and boots of dainty make as those of Broadway, gloves for gentle hands, silks, furs and fine linens. Alas, for the Hudson's Bay Company; it caters no more to the Fur Face, the Esquimaux belle, but to Estelle and Augustina from Ontario, Katie and Bess from the States and Mary and Nora from over seas.

WIT OF THE YOUNGSTERS.

"Johnny," said the teacher of the juvenile class, "define 'ostentation.'" "It's the way our neighbors show off," answered Johnny.

"Tommy," queried the visitor, "how do you stand in school these days?" "In the corner most of the time," replied truthful Tommy.

Uncle Bob—Johnny, if you could have your way who would you rather be than any one else in the world? Johnny—Just me, I guess—if I could always have my way.

Visitor—How many sisters have you, Ned? Ned (aged 5)—Only one. Visitor—Why, I thought you had two? Ned—Well, I've got two half-sisters, but that only makes one whole one.

Snail Tommy—Our teacher whipped a boy to-day for whispering, but it didn't do any good. Mamma—Why not? Snail Tommy—Cause it made him holler ten times louder than he whispered.

A little 3-year-old awoke one morning and gazed in wonder at the snow-covered ground, the first he had seen. "Oh, Eddie!" he exclaimed, turning to his older brother, "now you'll get it; mamma will whip you for spilling all the suit outside."

"How old is your baby brother?" asked little Tommy of a playmate. "One year old," replied Johnny. "Huh!" exclaimed Tommy, "I've got a dog a year old and he can walk twice as well as that kid can." "Well, he ought to," replied Johnny. "He's got twice as many legs."

Said a Sunday school teacher, all smiles, "What queen traveled thousands of miles. Just to feast her eyes On Solomon wise. And his wealth—of which he'd great piles?"

Now, this teacher believed much in aids. To help pupils climb the steep grades; So she said: "Guess— It begins with an 'S'. And a small boy yelled, "Queen of Spades!"

Honest, Although "Tight."

They were taking up a Christmas collection for the poor people of the parish, and Mr. Hardman, one of the richest men in the community, had subscribed a sum so small as to be out of all proportion to his ability to contribute.

"Is that all you can afford, Mr. Hardman?" asked the man with the subscription paper, who was a good, easy soul, but not a person of much force. "Yes," he answered, "I think that's enough for me." "You don't like to give away your wealth, do you?" said the other, with a smile that was meant to deprive the words of their sting. "No, I don't," responded Mr. Hardman. "If you hated to give away money half as badly as I do, Bingley, you wouldn't contribute a single cent."

Ten Thousand Telegrams at Once.

In 1871 at a celebration held in New York in honor of Professor Morse the original instrument invented by him was exhibited, connected at that moment by wire with every one of the 10,000 instruments then in use in the country. At a signal a message from the inventor was sent vibrating throughout the United States and was read at the same time in every city from New York to New Orleans and San Francisco.

Not for Her Eyes.

Stinjay (playing host)—Tell me, now, what do you think of that cigar? Kander (holding the weed at arm's length)—Well—er—can't you first send your wife out of the room on some pretext or other?—The Catholic Standard and Times.

Many a man who says nothing wouldn't know a wood saw if he saw it.



"What was it Franklin said? 'If you'd have a thing well done—' " "Tell your cook you'd like it rare," interrupted Subbubs.

Agent—I'd like to sell you this bottle of mosquito extermiator. Mr. Jackson—No, sir—ee! I'm a manufacturer of mosquito netting.

Mistress (to colored cook)—Maria, is your little girl a bright child? Maria—Deed she am. Sometimes Ah think she's a little too shiny.

"Say, dad." "Well, son." "What's a pedestrian?" "A pedestrian, son, is one who doesn't have time to get out of the way of an auto."

"So you will make a dash for the North Pole by airship. Have you the ship yet?" "No, not exactly." "How far along are your preparations?" "We have the air."

Mrs. Justgott Herum—My new home has stained glass in all the windows. Mrs. Noiset, Rutson—Now that's too bad. Can't you find something that'll take it out?

Paddy (oblivious on the track, with train advancing)—Where will I catch the express for Dublin? Stationmaster—Ye'll catch it all over ye if ye don't get off the line mighty quick.

Merchant—I would be glad to give you the position, young man, but I make it a rule to employ married men only. Applicant—Beg pardon, sir, but have you an unmarried daughter?

Jack's Mamma—There were three slices of cake in the cupboard, Jack, and now there are only two. How does that happen? Jack—It was so dark in there, mamma, that I didn't see the others.

Mrs. Gadabout—My husband is so sloshed. His buttons are forever coming off. Mr. Grim—Perhaps they are not sewed on properly. Mrs. Gadabout—That's just it. He is so careless with his sewing.

"Are you chief engineer of this concern?" asked an excited individual of the sub-editor. "No, sir, I'm not the engineer. I'm the boiler." And he proceeded to "boil down" six sheets of matter into a note of six lines.

Lawyer—I say, doctor, why do you always running as lawyers down? Doctor (dryly)—Well, your profession doesn't make any, no, certainly! Lawyer—Why, no; you mean, does the advantage of us there, doctor.

A family recently purchased a cow, greatly to the excitement and joy of the children of the household. The following Sunday as the dessert, which consisted of ice cream, was placed on the table, the 3-year-old son of the family announced proudly to the assembled guests: "Our cow made that!"

An English rector was burying one of his parishioners in the churchyard, when he was interrupted by a woman. "You must wait until I have finished," said he. "No, sir, I must speak at once." "Well, then, what's the matter?" he inquired. "Why, sir," exclaimed the poor woman, "you are burying a man who died of the snailpox next to my poor husband, who never had it."

A burly, broad-shouldered man passed through the gates at the Central station at Jersey City, and hurried with his two solid-looking suit cases toward a Pullman porter who stood stiffly and erect beside the steps of a parlor car attached to the train. The passenger, who was long on suit cases but short on breath, asked the proud-looking porter: "Does this train stop at Rahway?" "No, sah," replied the negro, in a superior manner. "This train do not stop at Rahway, sah. It do not even hesitate at Rahway."

A gentleman who spent his time visiting among his friends, wearing out his welcome in his own neighborhood, thought he would visit an old Quaker friend some twenty miles distant. He was cordially received by the Quaker, who, thinking the visitor had taken much pains to come so far to see him, treated him with a great deal of attention and politeness for several days. As the visitor showed no signs of leaving the Quaker became uneasy, but bore it with patience until the eighth day, when he said to him: "My friend, I am afraid they will never come again." "Oh, yes, I shall," said the visitor. "I have enjoyed my visit very much and shall certainly come again." "But," said the Quaker, "if they will never leave, how can they come again?"

Ecstasies of Mecca.

Mecca, at the season of the annual visitation of Mohammedan pilgrims, is thus described in Everybody's in "With the Pilgrims to Mecca," translated from the narrative of Ibtu Jahary Ali of Bandar Abbas:

"Like a gigantic catafalque, somber, shrouded in mystery, the Kaaba rises out of the seething sea of white garbed humanity that crowds the great sacred square of Mecca. Its door is covered with plates of solid silver studded with silver nails. From the exterior of the roof, above a stone marking the sepulcher of Ishmael, which lies at the base of the northern wall, there projects a horizontal, semicircular rain spout five yards long, twenty-four inches wide, made of massive gold. Within the roof is supported by three columns of alve wood; the walls are hung with red velvet alternating with white squares in which are written in Arabic the words, 'Allah-Jal-Jelal' ('Praise to God, the Almighty'). The building is packed with pilgrims, praying, weeping, beside themselves in an ecstasy of passionate devotion. Mingled with their voices there rises from outside the chant of the Talbi, the song of the winding sheet, which every pilgrim must sing on entering Mecca, on donning the sacred Ihram, on entering the Haram, and on starting for Mina, the valley of desire, and Arafat, the mountain of compassion."

It's better to be fresh than stale—but don't get too fresh.