

# Topics of the Times

Probably you haven't noticed it, but according to reports, lobsters are rapidly becoming extinct.

The late George Washington probably felt that he had lived it down by subsequent good conduct.

One of the greatest puzzles to the man who works every day is to understand how the chronic loafer lives.

The Dublin exposition also has been a failure financially. Apparently the exposition business has been overdone.

Man is a slow animal. About the time he has made up his mind that he likes his wife's hat she is ready for a new one.

Although it may be some time before we have universal suffrage, the women should prepare for it by learning how to get off a street car.

Whether they have chairs or benches in the House of Representatives, a good many Congressmen will insist on riding their bicycles as usual.

The empress dowager of China has turned reformer, but there is no assurance that she will not soon grow tired of reform and try some other kind of amusement.

Mrs. Rockefeller's declaration that she and her husband cannot afford oysters is not easily reconciled with the statement that the Rockefeller income is \$10 a minute.

Some of the people are so old-fashioned, however, as to enjoy a trip on the ocean too much to want to be whisked across it with the speed of a belated comet making up for lost time.

A judge has decided that it is perfectly proper for a man to want to kiss a woman if she's pretty. If she isn't pretty we assume that a fine of ten dollars and costs would be about the proper punishment.

A Philadelphia man who killed himself by inhaling gas left \$2 to pay for the gas he used. We have no proof, however, that he always presented his nickel when he was overlooked by a street car conductor.

A Chicago paper tells of a resident of that city who tried to commit suicide six times within a year. Foolish man. As if it were possible to commit suicide more than once within a year—or within a thousand years.

Although Chinese historians declare that balloons were made and sent up in their country more than 600 years ago, and although balloon ascensions were made at Lisbon in the year 1709, it is safe to speak of the art of inflating the air as still in its infancy. It may not be growing fast, but it seems to have considerable vitality.

Public opinion is in itself a most powerful weapon with which to combat the anarchy of genius and wealth, but if that should fail to be effective the public sentiment is so easily translated into statutory law, with all of the power and resources of all the people behind it, that unless a majority of the people should become debauched the efforts of licentious men who would hide behind genius or wealth to defy the conventionalities of decent society or the canons of good morals will certainly fail.

Walter Wellman, after an unsuccessful attempt in 1906, and again in 1907, to get started for the north pole in an airship, has had to postpone his trip for another twelve months. This year he had the balloon towed for an hour through Smeerenburg Sound, Spitzbergen; then it was cast loose from the steamship and started north under its own power. It encountered a heavy snowstorm almost at once, and its steering gear refused to work. A northwesterly wind drove it on a glacier, where it was later picked up and towed back to its storage house. No steerable balloon, even under the most favorable conditions, has made a voyage anywhere near so long as that contemplated by Mr. Wellman in the arctic cold.

Many scientists have averred that they could see canals, some of them parallel, on the planet Mars, canals geometrically so correct that they could not be the work of nature, but most have been constructed by intelligent beings. Other scientists denied that this was so. They could see no canals on Mars, and explained the fact that some persons thought they saw them by saying that the vision was an optical illusion. These skeptical scientists so far outnumbered and outvoted those who said they did see that science generally has of late years held the opinion that belief in the existence of canals was a mistake. But now comes Prof. Todd of Amherst College, who has been observing Mars from the mountains of Chile, bringing with him more than 7,000 photographs of the star. Every one of these photographs shows plainly and unmistakably all the canals, single and double, just as observers said they existed. This evidence does away with all incredulity, for the camera does not have optical illusions. It pictures things as they are, and its representation of the canals is absolute proof that they are there. The body of the planet is covered with canals, ranging from the polar seas everywhere, in such peculiarly regular lines it is impossible that nature could have caused them. Hereafter few persons will be disposed to deny that intelligent life exists on Mars and that men there live much the same sort of life as earth-dwellers. They may not bear much resemblance to earthly human beings, for conditions there differ greatly from those on the earth, but that they possess intelligence is now almost certain. Of how many other of

the uncounted millions of heavenly bodies it is true that life is exhibited there, just as it is on earth? We have no monopoly of existence or of intelligence; the starry universe was not created only for our benefit. There is thought worth dwelling on.

Some of the friends and admirers of the Francis Scott Key family are much exercised because it is proposed to tear down the old Key home and convert the property to business uses. It is understood that a patriotic appeal will be made to the country to avert this sacrilege and subscribe funds sufficient to preserve the homestead as a reminder of the author of "The Star Spangled Banner." While there may be the polite hope that the friends in question will be successful, it is extremely doubtful that the country at large will be especially interested in the project. So far as is known there is nothing beyond the mere matter of Mr. Key's residence to associate the home with grateful and patriotic memories. Certainly "The Star Spangled Banner" was not written in the house, and its other and genuine claims are hardly convincing. If it is the purpose to preserve for special distinction every spot where a great or distinguished man has resided we shall soon have a curious collection of "historic places." It would seem, with due allowance for the ravages of time, that "birthplaces" and "homesteads" and spots "where formerly lived," etc., must soon decay and vanish from the earth. It would appear unwise, then, to select for preservation such houses as have no marked appeal to public interest or emotions of sentiment. There are better and more enduring ways of perpetuating a great or good man's memory and spending money judiciously. It is true that there are some homes so fragrant with grateful sentiment that they should be cared for and maintained to the limit of time and possibility, but this is hardly true of many buildings for which frantic appeals for funds have been sent out to the country. In a majority of such cases the sentiment is either largely local or is misdirected, and as relics, monuments, or memorials the buildings have little claim to general recognition. Every city or town in such instances should provide for its own places of interest as it may feel regarding them. To this extent the "old home" sentiment is worthy of encouragement.

## Good Housekeeping

"I never, never will marry you unless papa consents." She said this so often that I began to fear that she meant it, and her father was one of those hard-headed men who take pride in the fact that they never change their minds.

"Then I'm going away," said I, desperately.

## WIFE LOOKED AFTER THAT!

What Women in the Business World Are Doing for Men. In an absorbing article in "The Influence of the Business Woman on Home Life," in the Woman's Home Companion, Mrs. Anna Steese Richardson cites the following true instance from real life to prove her point that the less successful husband of the successful business woman is always held in contempt:

"The superintendent of a large department was interviewing an applicant for the position of floor walker. The man was well groomed, well dressed and prosperous looking. He had some excellent credentials, too, but as is customary, he was obliged to account for every month of work for three years previous.

"He admitted lightly that he had not worked for the preceding four months. "Where were you?" asked the superintendent.

"Up state, visiting my folks. Hadn't seen father and mother for a good while."

"But who supported your family during that time?"

"Oh, my wife looked after that. Perhaps you have heard of her—Mrs. Blank of Dash & Co."

## SCHOOL DAYS.

Every morning, just about 8, Little Pink Sunbonnet opens the gate, And a tin bucket upon her arm, Trudges away from grandma's farm.

There are cookies, and apples, and butter and bread, Tucked away beneath that shining lid; And a dear, little, childish, curly head, Under the sunbonnet's crown is hid.

The saucy kitten refuses to play; Oh, it is looniness at home all day; Nobody singing about the place; Nobody coaxing the dog to race; No little feet on the fresh-scrubbed floor, Breaking to pieces grandma's rule.

Oh, it is sad when summer is over, Little Pink Sunbonnet starts to school.

Little girls grow, of course they should Soon to a beautiful womanhood, Then from the door, some happy day, Dear little maiden will go away, It is not strange we should think of this, When in the morning, bright and cool, Not forgetting a good-bye kiss, Little Pink Sunbonnet goes to school.

## THE RUNAWAY ENGINE

running away. They will believe I did it on purpose."

"Didn't you?" I asked innocently. "You know I didn't," she declared, withdrawing from my arms.

"It looks much like you are running away with me," I said. "If you are, I can't help it, can I?"

"You are ridiculous," she laughed. "Any way you can't start to New Zealand today."

"Unless you go with me," said I. By this time the engine was going so rapidly and the racket was so great that we could not converse. I made Nell sit on the engineer's seat and to be sure that she did not fall out I held my arm about her waist.

There was a crowd of people lined up at the first station to see us go by and now I had no further fear of a collision. The train dispatcher would be sure to clear the track. I saw by the gauge that the steam was dying out and after we had passed the third station the engine ran perceptibly slower. It stopped dead still on the outskirts of Cherrydale.

I helped Nell from the engine and we walked to the station house. The telegraph operator met us at the end of the platform. He had a condescending grin on his face.

"It's all right," he said, as he thrust a yellow envelope in Nell's hands. I looked over her shoulder and read the message.

"Come back home and be married with our blessing. All is forgiven," Chicago Tribune.

## A QUAKER ROMANCE.

The Wooing of Katherine Hollingsworth by George Robinson. Valentine Hollingsworth accompanied William Penn in the good ship Welton, and settled in Delaware upon the banks of the Brandywine. Katherine, his daughter, a delectable Quaker maiden, the pride of the little settlement, was wooed and won by big George Robinson. But George was of the Church of England, and Katherine must be married in meeting.

"George," writes the author of "Heirlooms in Miniature," was willing to join the society, be a Friend and be married in meeting or anywhere else that Katherine said. Accordingly he and Katherine made their first declaration fifth day, first month, 1688.

## QUEER STORIES.

Germany leads the world in the production of chemicals.

A ton of oil has been obtained from the tongue of a single whale.

Previous to 1700 the French would eat potatoes. It being supposed that they would cause freckles.

Vanilla grows well in Panama, but great difficulty is experienced in curing it because owing to the extreme dampness of the climate.

One tea company in India has under cultivation 1,450 acres, while another has 1,268 acres. It costs to produce the tea and place it in the market at Calcutta from 7 to 9 cents a pound.

Arthur Mallet, who translated the works of Andrew Carnegie into French, is at the head of a party of French scientists and engineers now in this country investigating the steel industry.

Emperor Nicholas of Russia has given Premier Stolypin permission to wear the Japanese Order of the Sun of the Empress of Japan. This is the first time since the late war that the czar has granted such a request.

There is no doubt whatever that the drinking habits of the nation, and especially of the women of the nation, are doing more harm to our financial and social position than is any depression in trade or other economic causes.

Over 50,000 tons of peanuts are brought to Bordeaux annually from Africa, and the value of the oil made from them is \$2,000,000. Many French families prefer it for table use to olive oil, and it is much cheaper, too, the price being 35 to 32 cents a gallon, according to quality.

Good Chinese ink, better known as India ink, improves with age, and should not be used for a few years after it is made. Some persons, in rubbing it up, make circular movements that soon ruin it. It is better to rub it in straight lines backward and forward with slight pressure.

Native historians of Afghanistan assert that the inhabitants of their country are the lost tribes of Israel. According to these chroniclers, the Afghans are descended from Afghana, who was the son of a certain Jeremiah, who was the son of King Saul. The astward removal of the seed of Afghana is attributed to Nebuchadnezzar.

The Price of a Boy. (John Graham Brooks estimates that it costs about \$25,000 to properly educate a middle-class American boy.)

What is the cost of a good, strong boy, if he is well bred? It is not less than a youthful prize of Lincoln size or a little Napoleon B.

For a Henry Clay or a Franklin, say, or a Burns or an Andrew Lang? And what must we bid for a Chinese kid with a mind like Li Hung Chang?

What! twenty-five thousand to raise the lad? Well, that is a blow, for sure!

I wonder what the price of fame is to those who remain obscure. "Time was when I was, ere they fed on fads. Grew up till we called 'em great and marched corn-fed to a nation's head. For a tenth of the sun you state."

rather thought that a boy home-taught or schooled in a modest way. I'm born with brains and for taking pains might rise in the world some day; and I dreamed, in truth, that a college youth

With nothing-a-week or less fight still pull through (as I've seen them do).

And race for the goal of success. Though boys there are who are worth the price, I think it would wrench my craw to pay so dear for a Harry Lehr. And more for a Harry Thaw; if you raise boys cheap that are worth a heap.

Do you wonder the gods felt hurt when they educate at a princely rate? The boys that are as cheap as dirt? Then what is the use of a boy, say I? Brought up at the price of Brooks? Can you give him mind of a better kind? In your costly ecote de luxe? And if not, say I, I can raise my son on a rational, frugal plan. Where he'll get the best and can stand the test.

When he grows to the size of a man. Wallace Irwin, in Life.

## Fresh Sheets at Premium.

The woman who had just returned from abroad, where she had visited some country towns, was telling of the comforts and discomforts of the European country hotel. "They have at the beds for every new guest," she said, "and we always pulled down the bed clothes for the minute we were assigned our rooms to examine the sheets. Test chances to one they were wrinkled and had that 'sleep in' appearance, and we invariably insisted on fresh ones. Finally we struck a series of towns where the hotel proprietors got the best of us, for the sheeting they used was a sort of crepey stuff, something like seersucker, and for the life of you you couldn't tell whether they'd been slept on or not."—New York Press.

## THE SHIP'S MUSIC.

Custom of Band Playing Aboard Originated by Germans. The custom of band playing on merchant ships originated on the German liners, says Shipping Illustrated. Afternoon concerts were given by improvised bands, generally recruited in the steward's department, and the same Hans who spilled sauce on the lapel of one's coat at breakfast could be seen earnestly blowing the trombone, while the band was murdering "Hell, fir in Siegenkranz," or a selection from "Frischluft." These primitive musical attempts have progressed like everything else and to-day professional orchestras are by no means uncommon on passenger steamers.

The most conservative of British liners has been obliged to follow suit, and very soon it will be as impossible to escape from this food of harmony on the broad Atlantic as it is now to find actual rest, and for a week at least to remain out of the reach of Wall street news. Whether this evolution of the steamship into a floating hotel, with all the discomforts of the latter, as well as its advantages, constitute a real improvement remains as yet to be proved. The question may be asked in all seriousness whether steamship companies are not now giving their patrons more than they really expect for their money, and certain it is that there are many—and among these genuine lovers of music—who would prefer to eat their dinner in peace and silence.

It is said that music as a feature of the dining room has become in vogue owing to the prevailing dullness of the present age. Conversation is a lost art and nothing better than music could be found to enliven the atmosphere while all are maintaining an awkward silence. To the few, however, who need the spice of agreeable talk to facilitate digestion, music at table is a positive nuisance. The man making a trip to banish unpleasant memories from his mind will not take kindly to the heartrending notes of "I Pagliacci" or to Schubert's "Serenade." The flighty music of Puccini may become perfectly as a matter of fact, and his just been apprised by wireless of enormous financial losses, while the inexperienced napping his first trip, who may be thinking of "the girls he left behind him," will become unnerfed when the orchestra unfeelingly reminds him that the donna e mobile, in short, music should be restored to sea to what it originally was. Nothing is better than an open-air concert on the boat-deck of a calm afternoon, but let the atmosphere of the dining room at least remain free from all melody save that produced by the soft murmur that rises over an assemblage of well-bred folks gently conversing.

What shall I read you first? "The marriages." Here is an article about some boys who were found playing with dynamite. "Well, read it. It possesses the same elements of interest."—Houston Post.

"What," queried the young man, "is the difference between white lies and black lies?" "White lies," answered the home-grown philosopher, "are the kind we tell; black lies are the kind we hear."—Chicago News.

"Yes," said the Summer Girl, "it's all off. I sent everything back to him yesterday." "Not the ring?" asked her friend. "No, he said I could keep that if I'd send him the hammock I caught him in."—Yonkers Statesman.

Mistress—Did you remember to feed the cat every day during my absence? Servant—Every day but one, ma'am. Mistress—And didn't the poor thing have anything to eat all day? Servant—Oh, yes, ma'am. She ate the canary.—Chicago Daily News.

First Stranger—Excuse me, but you are a physician, I believe? Second Stranger—You are mistaken, sir. First Stranger—But I overheard you say you followed the medical profession. Second Stranger—And so I do. I'm an undertaker.—Chicago Daily News.

Mrs. Subbubs—How long were you in your last place? Bridget O'Shaunessy—Tree months, ma'am. Mrs. Subbubs—Is it possible? Bridget O'Shaunessy—Yis, ma'am, but it wasn't me fault. Oh had de smallpox an' de house was quarantined.—Philadelphia Record.

"An artist," said the man with pointed whiskers, "must not think about money." "I suppose not," answered Mr. Cumrox. "Every time I buy a picture the artist wants enough to keep him from thinking about money for the rest of his life."—Washington Star.

Yeast—It is difficult to tell the waiters from gentlemen diners at fashionable restaurants now. Columbus—Well, if you happened to search when they went out you could tell the difference. The waiters have all the money in their clothes. —Yonkers Statesman.

Mr. Jagway (at a late hour, groping his way toward the foot of the stairs)—There's just twice as many chairs in this hallway as there ought to be. My eyes might fool me on that proposition, of course, but when I stumble 'gainst 'em, by George, I know they're there.—Chicago Tribune.

The millionaire from Pittsburg was observed to be loitering outside of the pearly gates. "Why don't you hurry up and knock?" queried a shade. "I'm waiting for that other chap to get his million." "And who is he?" "Why, a grafter from San Francisco. By the side of him I will seem as innocuous as a lamb."—Chicago News.

Farmer Pastertol (discussing literature with the new boarder)—There's was one book that my son Bill thought of a heap of, when he was t' hum—all about swattin' and bliffin' an' blood. "One of those washbucket romances, I presume. Do you recall where the scene was laid?" "Well, I took it t' be a Jersey story, from th' name of it." "Twas called 'The Three Musketeers.'"—Puck.

In the Battle Royal. "Are you an active candidate for the presidential nomination?" "Certainly not," answered the sagacious statesman. "In fact, that is exactly what I am trying to avoid. An active candidate for the nomination is as a rule merely the one who invites attention as a formidable rival and gets put out of the game early."—Washington Star.

You may think you live in a good country, but the real estate agent is the true optimist.



"If it wasn't for one thing Tompkins would be the most successful liar 'She hasn't any friends to speak of.' 'No? Then what are they for?'—Puck.

I ever met." "And that?" "No one ever believes his lies."—Milwaukee Sentinel.

"I will pay your debts to-day, but it is positively for the last time!" "Oh, dear uncle, then wait at least until tomorrow!"—Edgewood Blatter.

"Out of a job?" "Yes—and they put a woman in my place." "Gee! Well, I'll tell you—why don't you marry the woman?"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"Sbe—I heard about the elopement. Has her mother forgiven them? He—I think not. I understand she has gone to live with them."—Illustrated Bits.

"Did you ever bite a Boston girl?" "No, I am afraid to go near them," replied the second mosquito. "I've heard they are very cold-blooded."—Houston Post.

"My bride wanted to go on a week's wedding tour, and I wanted to stay at home. Well, we compromised by going on a tour around the world!"—Meggendorfer Blatter.

Clara—As Ethel married in haste, I supposed she repented at leisure? Maude—No; she repented at a cheap boarding house, I understand.—Chicago Daily News.

"I have come all the way over here," said the tenderfoot, "to see your beautiful sunset." "Somebody's been stringing you, stranger," replied Arizona Al. "It ain't mine."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Wesley Walker—De world's all wrong. Tired Tatters—Wo's eatin' you now? Wesley Walker—Ef I'd had de makin' uv it I'd made all de roads runnin' down hill.—Chicago News.

Mrs. Tourist—I'm afraid that the monkey wouldn't please my husband. Vendor—But madame will find it easier to find another husband than to get a monkey like that for three piastres!—Le Rire.

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