TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

China admits that in the door business Russia practically has a cinch.

Arbitrating arbitration is a new feature in connection with industrial disputes.

As a genuine fisherman Mr. Cleveland believes in speaking easy and carrying a long pole.

Booker Washington might circumvent the Amalgamated Union of Chamber Ladies by carrying a cot with him.

Some men have about as much chance to become president as they have to earn the fifty thousand a year in any other way.

Dr. Rainsford, of New York, wants the churches to combine. What does he expect the preachers to do when the consolidation is affected?

A Chicago man had an otherwise fatal bullet stopped by a roll of bills in his pocket. A roll of bills is one of the best life protectors there is.

Within the last twenty years at least sixteen J. Wilkes Booths have told their secret to the world and died, usually in some distant and unobserved spot.

There is a certain prominent politician or statesman, he should be nameless here, who is palpably suffering from foot and mouth disease, the former being entangled in the latter.

And now they say pigskin is better than rubber for automobile tires. There is also a certain fitness in its use by those automobilists who take the whole street and want more.

The minister who wants women to solve the servant girl problem by doing the housework themselves must be one of those unfortunate people who never have had a chance to know many women well.

Miss M. E. Braddon has just published her sixty-fourth novel. It is almost terrifying to think what might have happened if Miss Braddon had been the wife of Cyrus Townsend Brady.

King Edward planted a tree in the grounds of the British embassy while on his recent visit to Paris. May the tree live forever, and the new friendly feeling between France and England be equally lasting!

One of the lady doctors says men are more emotional than women. But perhaps she has merely drawn her conclusions from the actions of mothers and fathers over the arrival of twins and triplets.

Dr. Edward Everett Hale has been collecting opinions on the question, "Should boys fight?" Most of his correspondents answer in the negative, but they would probably admit that the other boy should be served with an injunction to restrain him from knocking off the chip.

It is proposed in Stockholm to tax all adult persons weighing more than 125 pounds because fat is an evidence of good living consequent upon prosperity. And yet we have seen millionaires whose dyspepsia kept them as thin as Job's turkey. But what a demand there would be for anti-fat nostrums under such a tax!

Wireless telegraphy will have to compete with ocean cables for some time to come. A company has recently been organized to lay a cable from Seattle to Valdez, Alaska, and thence to Vladivostok. The cable will bring Asiatic Russia and the gold-fields of Alaska into close communication with the markets of the United States, and expand the interest of Americans in the Orient.

Some people will be astonished to hear that the ordnance department of the army has been obliged to contract with the Erhardt company of Dusseldorf, Germany, to build fifty of the new three-inch field guns for the United States army, for the reason that the ordnance manufacturing establishments of this country are overcrowded. These guns with carriages cost over $40,000 each and the total amount of money to be spent abroad on this contract is over $2,000,000.

The London Lancet says that athletics in England have developed too much into gladiatorial displays by picked competitors struggling to win prizes or to earn wages before huge crowds of spectators, and can hardly be regarded as effective agents in the development of the physical strength and physical activity of the people. There is the same tendency in this country, but the fact merely serves to make more imperative the need of supporting and extending such systems of physical training as have for their chief aim strength and not fame.

There is too little elbow room on modern United States warships, especially in the general mess, and this is one reason for the discontent which causes many recruits to desert. Desertions during the last month numbered more than 300. The general mess system has resulted in a very well cooked and plentiful ration of considerable variety, but the space for the mess tables is so small that the men have to sit very close together and all their food is placed on the table before mess call is sounded. This detracts from the neatness which could be obtained by more roomy mess quarters. The extremely large batteries now being placed on shipboard necessitate larger complements on battleships and cruisers, while large amounts of auxiliary machinery take up a great deal of deck space.

Our friends, the Reformed Episcopalians, have decided that, while they expect to go on reforming to the end of time, they will leave the marriage service intact for the present. There was a disposition to cut out the word "obey" from the bride's response, presumably on the theory that it is a dead letter and should be transferred to the masculine part of the ceremony, but it was finally agreed that it might be left untouched, inasmuch as women consider it a matter of no importance, and they "needn't mean it, you know." As Dr. Bishop says: "What's the odds as long as we do the Lord's will?" By which is meant that woman, as an excellent judge of the Lord's will, may be relied on to obey according to the impressions received from on high, a very sensible and convincing view of the case.

America, being a big country and a rich one, is able to spend on its pleasures sums which reach enormous totals each year. There are plenty of amusements which have a place on the country's balance sheet in the hundred million class, but most of them are of a kind in which all or nearly all of the people participate to a great extent. One form of pleasure, however, which comparatively few people can enjoy, and which yet ranks high in the total amount spent on it, is foreign travel. An expert in the navigation business has been recently making an estimate of what our tourists will spend abroad this year, and he places the amount at $100,000,000. From the port of New York there will be sixty-seven sailings of first-class steamships for Europe each month. They will carry approximately 21,500 cabin passengers a month, or 86,000 in the four months of the season. Enough tourists will sail earlier or later, it is estimated, to bring the total to 125,000. For their passage this army of travel will pay $31,000,000, and for their living and other expenses a good $70,000,000 more, or a total of at least $100,000,000. As the steamship lines are owned almost entirely by foreigners, it is near the truth to say that this sum goes into foreign pockets, where it becomes an important factor in the settlement of the balances of foreign trade. Latterly the United States has been sending abroad each year goods to the value of $400,000,000 or $500,000,000 more than the value of the goods it buys abroad. Foreign nations have, therefore, just this large a balance to settle for in some other way than by sending us manufactures in exchange. The $100,000,000 worth of services they give to our tourists helps them out materially in the settlement.

It is a critical period in a boy's life when he reaches the age when he considers it manly to call his mother "the old woman." All boys may feel proud when they can prove by the almanac that they are old enough and wise enough to guide themselves. They may well rejoice when they have outgrown the maternal petticoat. We can forgive the premature youth who exultantly exclaims, "I'm my own boss." It is the spirit of 1776 come home again, and we admire independence in all its phases. But there is no excuse for the boy who belittles his parents by calling them names which "smart boys" invent. Smoke cigarettes, stay out nights or swear like a teamster if you consider it manly, but never fail to treat your mother with the respect due her. Honor the dear old mother. It is homage which the president in his chair and the convict in his cell are not too high or low to deny without everlasting remorse. Time may have strewn snow flakes in her hair, may have plowed furrows in her brow, but she is sweet and pretty to-day. The marks of time which have sunken her lips should sink into your memory how those lips kissed many a hot tear from a childish cheek. Though perhaps dimmed with age, the same devoted eyes are sending forth rays of love. The weight of many years may have enfeebled her step, yet she will go further to carry you aid when needed than all others in the world. Infirm and crippled, yet her love has triumphed over age and there is no cloud dark enough to keep her from your side. With a love kindled at the cradle side her arms will follow you to the scaffold's awful brink. When the world forsakes you, and your fellowmen leave you at the roadside to die reviled and scorned your mother will find you. She will lift you up in tenderness, nurse you and comfort you till you forget the bitterness of life. The grandest religion on earth is the love for mother; the greatest sin is to dishonor her.

Corn Breeding.

Corn breeding is a modification of live-stock breeding, and follows the same general laws and principles. It is the application of principles of plant and animal breeding to the corn plant. The per cent of sugar in the sugar beet has been increased from 3 per cent to 16 per cent. The ordinary beet was improved by seed selection, so that an enormous industry has been built up and a new source of sugar given to the world. This has been done with a plant which seeds once in two years. Corn produces a crop every year; a single seed producing a return of over a thousandfold. From this great number of offspring, varying in size, shape, color, and composition, a selection can be made which will develop any feature of the seed or plant. By continued selection, these valuable attributes can be fixed in the characteristics of the plant, and in the usefulness and importance of the crop increased. To illustrate the point, we have been able, by selecting ears having long shanks to increase the length of the shank nearly two feet in five years' selection. By selecting ears with tall stalks, we have been able to increase the height of the stalk almost three feet in five years. By selecting ears from plants having wide leaves, we have been able to increase the average width of the leaf, and by selecting ears from stalks having narrow leaves, we have been able to decrease the width of the leaf.—Cosmopolitan.

Missed the Curtain Lecture.

"What did your wife say when you came home so late?"

"I really don't know. I can just remember that I woke up three times and she was still talking."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Too many people mistake a polite acknowledgment for an encore.

EDITORIALS

OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

About Appendicitis.

APPENDICITIS is no new disease. An examination of an Egyptian mummy over 2,000 years old, showed that death must have been caused by that illness. But although the disease occurred thus early, it was probably never frequent until the latest decades. Three of the London hospital reports give the number of appendicitis cases treated in 1890 as 38, while in 1900 nearly 400 operations were performed. It is comforting to note that all but 10 of the patients recovered. Sir Frederick Treves, the most noted authority on the subject, has performed successfully more than 100 consecutive operations. It is said that appendicitis may be caused by imagination, but modern foods are probably responsible for most cases, according to Dr. H. C. Howard, of Champaign, Ill. Until the trade demanded an exceedingly white flour the disease was rare. Where coarse breads were used the disease was unknown, as in rural communities, where people secured their flour from small, old-fashioned mills. The malady did not increase until the smaller mills were crowded out by the larger ones and the farmers had to buy the fine flour. Southern negroes, as long as they ate corn bread, were exempt. Germans had appendicitis little or not at all until they began to eat our new-process flour. Dr. Howard says that prior to 1875, in twenty-five years' practice among the people of this section, he did not meet with more than forty cases. Now they are common. Very small children are sufferers. A boy had thirteen well-defined attacks, but came through all without an operation. After changing his food to corn bread and coarse breads in general, fruit, vegetables and very little meat, he had no further trouble.—Springfield Republican.

The Labor Problem.

IT will be strange if the many and powerful influences which are now so actively engaged in the solution of the labor problem upon an equitable basis should result in failure. Some of the best minds of the country are now considering the question more seriously and earnestly than they have ever done. It will be commonly recognized that this activity is not only desirable, but necessary. The dissensions of capital and labor are unusually numerous, and some of them are being fought out with both determination and bitterness. There are obvious causes for the existing conditions in the labor world. One is the conviction of labor that it is not receiving a fair share of the wealth which it contends it creates. Another is that the cost of the necessaries of life has been so largely increased during the last three or four years as to render an advance of wages essential to comfortable living. It is not bread, fuel and shelter alone that labor demands as its due; it asks that its children of tender age shall be sent to school, not to the factory or mine, to the end that they may have a chance to achieve such material success as education assures or promises. Labor similarly demands that it shall be paid something over and above the price of comfortable living; it wants a wage from which a portion can be put by for the proverbial rainy day and for old age, in which no man can work, but still must live.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Jewish Immigration to Palestine.

JEWISH immigration to Palestine continuous space under the auspices of the Alliance Israelite, which alone spends 1,000,000 francs a year on the Hebrew colonies and schools in Turkey, and other philanthropic societies. The latest phase of this migration, known as the Zionist movement, has for its object to revive the Jewish State by purchasing Palestine from Turkey. The movement, though condemned by some as Utopian, and ridiculed by others as sentimental in origin, possesses considerable interest for the unprejudiced observer of Eastern affairs. No one who has watched its growth can doubt its practical importance.

Although the Sultan is not prepared to grant all that Dr. Herzl demanded, there is sufficient ground to believe, with Dr. Herzl, that the negotiations will most probably, at no distant time, lead to a conclusion satisfactory to the Sultan and the Zionists alike. This hope is strengthened by the Sultan's attitude toward the Jews, which in its benevolence contrasts curiously with the treatment meted out to his Christian subjects. Two years ago, he appointed members of the Hebrew community to important posts in the Turkish army, while he attached two more to his personal entourage. On another occasion his Majesty evinced a lively interest on behalf of the same race whose good repute was sullied by one of the blood accusations periodically brought against the Jews by the Christians of the East, and caused the local authorities to take steps to prove its groundlessness, thereby earning the thanks of the Anglo-Jewish Association.

Perhaps it is to this increasing favor of the Jews in the eyes of the Sultan, and the consequent fear of opposition to Russia's designs in Palestine, that we must attribute a step lately taken by the Russian government. The Minister of Finance is reported to have forbidden the sale of the Jewish Colonial Trust shares in the Czar's dominions, a step which has created great perturbation in the camp of Polish Zionists, the most deeply interested in the concern.—Edinburgh Review.

The Age of Political Success.

OF the members of the House of Representatives approximately two-thirds had when first elected reached or passed the age of 40 years. What an amazing contrast is presented by the British House of Commons, where, according to the Springfield Republican, only two members out of 670 were past 40 when elected!

How does that contrast affect Mr. Cleveland's "key of success," as furnished by determination, persistence and courage?

The typical success in American politics is won by a man who has shown himself in some degree possessed of those qualities and who in business or in a profession has commanded attention.

The typical British success is won by a bright young man not long out of an expensive university, who is rich enough to sit in Parliament without pay. Sometimes because of his ability, oftener because of family influence, he is selected by party leaders to "make the race" in a district frequently far from his home, where all assistance possible is given to enable him at least to seem to understand the issues of the campaign.—New York World.

Cost of Ocean Speed.

WHAT it costs to increase the speed of a ship by one knot has lately been determined with great accuracy in the steam trials of the British armored cruiser Cape of Good Hope. On her full-power trial this vessel, of 14,100 tons displacement, attained a mean speed of 23.05 knots an hour. By the speed curves plotted from the trial results, it appears that to go from half speed—11.05 knots—to full speed—23.05 knots—needed, roughly, 20,000 additional horse power, of which the last knot alone absorbed 8,201 horse power. In other words, to increase the speed of this cruiser from 22 to 23 knots consumed as much power as was needed to propel her at 16 knots; or, to put it in still another way, the power required to propel her at full speed would have propelled two vessels of the same size at an average speed of 19 knots an hour. At full speed her coal consumption was 26 tons per hour; at 19 knots it was about 11 tons per hour. This means that at full speed she would move .85 knots for each ton of coal burned under her boilers, while at 19 knots the distance would be doubled for the same coal consumption. This illustrates very clearly the price paid for high speeds afloat. Applying the ratios thus established to steamers of the Atlantic merchant fleet, it will be readily understood why the "greyhounds" earn more applause than dividends.—New York Times.

As to Growing Old.

A FOREIGN writer undertakes to answer the question as to whether it is sad to grow old, and treats the subject most felicitously. He says the art of growing old is a difficult one, but he asks if the understanding how to be young is not difficult also, a question that will readily find an affirmative answer. It is the same with the possession of wealth. Do the rich know how to be rich? Even as to health, the secret of graciously bearing health is as difficult to acquire as that of carrying off gracefully illness. Yet nothing can be finer than a placid and amiable old age. This writer remarks that "one of the most beautiful things in the world is an old person who, made better by experience, more indulgent, more charitable, loves mankind in spite of its wretchedness and adores youth without the slightest tendency to mimic it. Such a person is like an old Stradivarius whose tone has become so sweet that its value is increased a hundredfold, and it seems almost to have a soul." This "adoring youth without the slightest tendency to mimic it" is a fine touch indeed.—Boston Herald.

ORIGIN OF THE VICTORIA CROSS.

Thursday, Jan. 29, is the anniversary of the institution of the soldier's most precious decoration—perhaps the most precious decoration in the world—the Victoria cross, for it was instituted by her Majesty, the late Queen Victoria, on the 29th day of January, 1856, and so is not quite fifty years old. While it is most prized of all the decorations and orders an Englishman can win, it is also the most democratic decoration in the world, for, although it is the official badge of an act of personal courage and daring, it has no concern with rank, long service or wounds, and it may be worn by one who has been only a few months or weeks in the army, while others who have spent their lives in the service and gained rank and other decorations may not possess it. It may be worn by a private soldier or a field marshal, and on the roll of the heroes' names are to be found almost every rank in both the services, for the winning of the cross is possible to any one, as it was granted "as a reward for conspicuous bravery or devotion to the country in the presence of the enemy," or as the inscription upon it records, "For Valor!"

The Victoria cross had its birth during the Crimean war, when Queen Victoria felt that some recognition of the personal daring and heroism of her soldiers in that terrible struggle was needed. The royal warrant clearly lays down the conditions under which the cross may be won, but the whole of them may be summarized in the one sentence, "For conspicuous bravery or devotion to the country in the presence of the enemy."

There are not many who are unfamiliar with the appearance of the cross, but for the benefit of those who have only seen it in photographs or pictures, it may be said that it is about an inch and a half wide and has in the obverse center a crowned lion, underneath which is an escroll bearing the words, "For Valor." It is attached to a bar on which is a spray of laurel leaves and is suspended by a broad ribbon, which is blue for the naval service and dark red for the military. Both the cross and the bar are made from bronze which formerly formed part of some of the Russian guns captured during the Crimean war, and complete with the ribbon and pin weighs just under an ounce, or 482 grains, to be exact. It is engraved with the name and regiment of the recipient, as well as the date on which he won it, and as soon as this is done it is dispatched from the makers to the sovereign to bestow upon the hero.

It is strange to have to record that the first Victoria cross was won by a sailor, for it has come to be looked upon as almost entirely a military decoration, yet such is the case—and it is still stranger that the deed which gained it was performed a year and seven months prior to the institution of the decoration. Another feature is that at the time of winning it he was a boy serving his time as a midshipman on board H. M. S. Hecla, and the story of how Charles Davis Lucas, now an admiral, won the cross as a middy will always form one of the most glorious stories among the many in its history. It was at the bombardment of Bomarsund, in the Baltic, on June 21, 1854, that a live shell dropped in the midst of a group of men of whom young Lucas was in command. The fuse was almost burned away, and an explosion seemed imminent, but without a moment's hesitation the young midshipman sprang forward, grasped the sputtering shell in his hands and, rushing to the side of the vessel, hurled it overboard, where it exploded before it reached the water. Such an act as this displays the sublimest courage, for it combines intelligence and instantaneous action, and in a boy it was especially meritorious, and so young Lucas was chosen as the first recipient of the decoration eighteen months afterward. The winning of a cross, it may be explained, carries with it an annuity of £10, which may be increased to £50, payable quarterly, to all excepting commissioned officers, but including those who have risen from the ranks, while for each clasp an extra annuity of £5 is awarded.—St. James Gazette.

A QUALITY TO CULTIVATE.

Characteristic Incidents Illustrating American Kindness.

A little boy went up Chestnut street in Philadelphia the other day, carrying a bag containing 3,500 pennies from a bank to his employer's office. The bag burst, the coppers were strewn about the street, and the boy set up a wail for help.

Traffic was suspended in that block. Scores of people stopped to help the boy find the pennies, and motormen checked their cars to aid. A good many must have gone into their own pockets rather than search the pavement. When the boy finally delivered his charge he had not only the 3,500 pennies with which he started, but 168 more.

A building was being torn down on Monroe street in Chicago. An old woman came, with others, to gather up the broken and discarded lumber. She made up a huge bundle, so large that she could not lift it upon her head to carry it away.

As she stood looking about for help, a man, who from his dress seemed to be a prosperous merchant or lawyer, came along and saw her difficulty. At the same time a truckman saw it, and descended from his seat. The two men lifted the bundle, helped the old woman to balance it, and then went their ways while she went hers.

It was done as a matter of course, with no posing or professions, just as the search for the boy's lost pennies was undoubtedly conducted in Philadelphia. There was the need, and it was met by the first comers in the prompt and kindly American way.

Prince Henry of Prussia and other foreign observers, whose stations and duties have given them opportunities to note the conduct of street crowds in many nations, have said that the American crowd is the most good-humored and kindliest in the world. Such incidents as those recited above prove the accuracy of the observation.

This kindness is a quality of which the American people may well be proud, and which we ought to cultivate even more. If it were deliberately extended there would be less heckling of employers by trade unions, less vituperation of unions by employers, fewer strikes and lockouts, less industrial strife-tionkqm'..66.. ..6 ..6 dustrial warfare, less danger to prosperity and more peace and profit for us all.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Its Natural Gait.

"Waiter!" called the impatient guest.

"Yes, sir;" said the obsequious servant.

"Seems to me that soup I ordered is a mighty long time getting to me."

"Yes, sir," said the waiter with much respect; "but (deferentially) you will pardon me, I trust, if I remind you that you ordered turtle soup."—Judge

As It Sounds.

Mrs. Newrich—Marie's trip abroad has given her quite a smattering of French.

Mr. Newrich (disgustedly)—Quite a sputtering, I should call it.—Judge.

Knew Her Power.

He—I'm sure if you accepted me I'd make you a good husband.

She—That's impossible, but I'm sure I'd make you a good husband if I accepted you.—Philadelphia Press.

Science AND Invention

Recent observers have found that plumb lines for accurate work should be of copper or bronze. A steel wire in a deep shaft was slightly deflected by the earth's magnetism.

In his latest researches Professor Curie has found that radium keeps its own temperature at 1.5 degrees C. above that of the atmosphere. This paradoxical substance emits more than enough heat to melt its own weight of ice, yet there is no combustion nor chemical nor molecular change.

Peat fuel in freight locomotives in Sweden has hauled the maximum load, the cost being about the same as with English coal. To avoid the expense of an extra fireman, however, the peat is now mixed with an equal weight of coal, and the mixture has proven so satisfactory that it is to be tried on passenger trains.

A new form of safety lamp, giving no heat and possessing no flame, has been invented by Professor Hans Molisch, and described before the Vienna Academy of Sciences, but it may not prove commercially successful. It consists of a glass jar lined with a compound of saltpeter and gelatine, in which a colony of luminous bacteria is caused to develop. Such a lamp gives a bluish-green light, sufficient to render coarse print legible, and to make faces recognizable at two yards' distance, and the luminosity lasts for several days.

An English invention for the use of a current of electricity instead of steam to heat a radiating surface consists of a layer of powdered carbon, placed between enameled iron plates, and kept in position with asbestos cardboard. This constitutes the radiator, into which are led three copper strips, one at the center and one at each end, and a continuous current of electricity is passed from the center strip to the end strips. With a current of eight amperes, at 200 volts, a heating surface of 25 square feet can be kept at an average temperature of 190 degrees Fahrenheit.

A new kind of glass that resists great heat as well as sudden changes of temperature is made from Brazilian quartz pebbles. The pebbles are heated red hot and then thrown into distilled water. The purest pieces are next selected, and welded with the oxyhydrogen blow pipe into long stems like knitting-needles, from which glass vessels of any shape can be made. At present the quartz glass is chiefly employed for making laboratory apparatus. Into a test-tube made in this way a white-hot coal can be dropped without breaking it. Vessels of other forms can be heated white-hot and then plunged into cold water without cracking.

Records are now being searched for notices of the rare white water, or phosphorescent fog, of the Indian Ocean and other seas. This appears as a weird haze, but proves to be a luminosity without mist, and it has been encountered as an ocean river a mile wide and as a broad area through which a vessel sailed fifty miles without touching the limits. One observer found the sea to the depth of a foot to be densely packed with luminous fishes an inch long, while at another time microscopic animals were obtained in chains three inches long. The phenomenon has been seen before violent storms, and it has been suggested that some unusual atmospheric conditions may drive the luminous ocean animals in shoals to the surface.

BUTTONS ON BUSHES.

Strange Nut from Which Buttons Are Made in Great Numbers.

No, the ivory buttons you wear do not represent the death of an elephant in the wilds of Africa; your pearl buttons were probably never nearer than you took them to the shell of a bivalve mollusk, and the probabilities are that no rubber tree was ever tapped to produce the hard rubber buttons that adorn your overcoat. Down in Central America there is a fruit producing palm that has quite metamorphosed the button business and formed the nucleus for one of the most important industries in the United States. The seed of this fruit contains a milk that is sweet to the taste and relished by the natives. The milk when allowed to remain in the nut long enough becomes indurated and turn into substance as brittle and hard as the ivory from the elephant's tusk. The plant that produces these nuts is called the ivory plant. Most of the buttons now used in America, whether termed ivory, pearl, rubber, horn or bone, come from this ivory plant. Thus the probabilities are that your buttons are made from a vegetable milk, and they grow on bushes.

The ivory plant is one of the marvels of the age, and is rewarding its growers with vast fortunes. The nuts are brought to the United States by the shipload and hauled across the continent to the big button factories, from which they issue forth in every conceivable design, color, grade and classification of button.

The ivory plant has recently been discovered in California, but the nut it produces in its wild state is of inferior quality and will not make good buttons. It is believed though, that with the proper cultivation the fruit would be as valuable as the Central American. If so the growing of buttons in America would become an industry of importance second only to the growing of corn, wheat and cotton, for everybody wears buttons.

The best ivory nut for commercial purposes is found on the banks of the River Magdaleria, in the United States of Colombia, where by some it is called the Tagua palm. The fruit forms a globular head about twice the size of a man's head and weighs from twenty to twenty-eight pounds. The head is a kind of cluster of bulbs, and in all contains from fifty to sixty seeds. The seeds are allowed to dry and are harvested several times a year by the natives.

The Apparel Gazette, the great dealers' authority on everything that people wear, says: "The ivory nut is used almost solely in the manufacture of buttons, though some factories also make poker chips from them. The nut, however, has superseded the archaic mud, rubber and bone buttons in vogue formerly. It admits of wider and more varied treatment for this purpose than any other known substance, and is easily worked. The United States consumes more than one-half of the world's product of ivory nuts and nine-tenths of the vegetable ivory is manufactured into buttons.

"When the nut reaches the button factory it is cut into three slabs. In the process of cutting out, the button is partially shaped. Afterwards the thread holes are drilled and countersunk. The button is then sent to the polisher, who uses the shavings and powder made in drilling to polish them in their white state. Afterward they are sent to the designer, who traces on the buttons in indelible dyes the designs needed to make them match the various weaves, coloring and textures of fabrics. After receiving these outlines, if the buttons are to remain smooth and receive another coat of coloring, they are put into dye. If they are to be stamped with a serrated pattern, they are put into a pressing machine fitted with dies of the pattern desired."—Popular Mechanics.

CROWNING IS UNNECESSARY.

Plenty of Monarchs Reign Comfortably Without the Ceremony.

The suggestion is made in certain high quarters that the coronation—unless privately performed—should in future be discontinued altogether.

There are various potent reasons for this. In the first place, the sovereign in these days does not require coronation. The fact of his being on the throne is sufficient justification for his sovereignty. In the old days, before the ceremony became a mere religious function, as at present, it was regarded as essential to crown the king before his right and title could be looked upon as unquestioned. He was then actually accepted by the nobility and the people as the rightful sovereign, against whom all pretenders had ever after no legal claim.

Nowadays the coronation does not even serve the purpose of symbolizing kingship. That fact is assumed by the accession ceremony following the death of a predecessor. That the coronation ceremony is not now regarded in the same light as heretofore is attested by the fact that most of the reigning kings of Europe have never been crowned.

The kaiser, who has now been on the throne for over twelve years, will probably never have the crown, either of Prussia or Germany, placed upon his imperial head.

There is a story prevalent on the continent that the bishop of Posen, whose predecessors have crowned Prussian kings for many generations, is persona non grata with the kaiser, and that as long as the present bishop lives the sovereign will not allow him to perform the ceremony; but there is also a belief that the kaiser is not particular whether he is crowned or not, so long as he is on the throne firmly and irrevocably.

Victor Emmanuel, king of Italy, has not been crowned; nor has Queen Wilhelmina of Holland, who, though her coming of age was generally mistaken for a coronation, has not yet had her crown placed on her head.

The same is true of the king of Spain, whose coming of age and accession were not an actual coronation.

The sultan, who is now one of the longest-reigning monarchs in Europe, has never had the ceremony performed, and it is certain that he never will be crowned. There is no crown symbolic of Ottoman sovereignty.—London Express.

Tolstoi's Little Joke.

An old friend of Leo Tolstoi, writing to the "Novoe Vremya," related an incident which occurred in the novelist's recent visit to the Crimea, says an exchange. A rich American arrived in his yacht, accompanied by a party of friends, and asked permission to see the great Russian, who was ill, promising that they would be content with a glimpse and would not trouble him with talk. Leave was granted.

Tolstoi sat upon his balcony, "like a Buddhist idol," as he said, and the whole party of Americans defiled slowly and silently before him, taking their gaze as they passed.

One lady, however, refused to be bound by the contract. She stood still for a minute, and shouted: "Leo Tolstoi, Leo Tolstoi, all your noble writings have had a profound influence upon my life, but the one which has taught me the most is your—." Here she forgot the name of the work.

The sick author leaned over the rail of the balcony, and whispered with a smile, "The Dead Souls?" "Yes, yes," she replied. "That book," said Tolstoi, "was written by Gogol, not by me."

Worn-out Money.

"Instead of the old-fashioned 'Good-by,' the blase youth now says, 'Don't take any bad money,'" said an official of the Chicago subtreasury the other day. "Well, we go on the proposition, 'Take anything that looks like money,' and those chaps that are so afraid of the bogus money should not be particular.

"There is money brought to this window that resembles anything except the legal tender of the United States. Torn greenbacks and brownbacks, and even yellowbacks, are common, but they do not cause any discomfort.

"'Take anything that looks like money' is my advice. After that, if you don't like the looks of it, bring it here, and we will either give you something better-looking or stamp it full of holes, which spell, 'Counterfeit.'"

Good Reasons for Passing By.

Weary Wraggles—Hey! you won't git nothin' decent in dere. Dem people is vegetarians.

Hungry Hank—Is dat right?

Weary Wraggles—Yeh, an' dey got a dog wa't ain't.—Philadelphia Press.

Their Identity.

Inquisitive Party—What are those peculiar-looking things?

Dealer—Pressed family skeletons the closets of flat dwellers.—Judge.