

Topics of the Times

On the stage of life the leading lady is usually the cook.

A woman never tires of shopping as long as her hair stays in curl.

In a successful matrimonial firm the husband isn't a "full" partner.

Sermons would be shorter if they had to be practiced before they were preached.

War would probably be the most horrible thing in the world if it were not for the comic valentine.

Enjoy the pleasures of life when you have a chance, or when you get ready to enjoy them you may find them missing.

"Localization of hostilities" and "administrative unity" are two more delightfully vague verbal morsels to roll under the diplomatic tongue.

One advantage of depending upon the Missouri mule is that no disguised Jap would dare to get near enough to blow him up with dynamite.

Physicians are constantly discovering some popular pastime or mode of attire that injures health. But the average of human life remains about the same.

The "limousine" is described as a cross between an automobile and a sleeping car. There must be something doing when a limousine goes into a muck pond.

We are glad to learn that this new germ, kamite, is not a mysterious affair at all, but just a spodieme, sometimes known as triphane, and perfectly harmless when not hungry.

President Roosevelt says the editor is necessary and useful. Now let him prepare to lose the votes of "Veritas," "Pro Bono Publico," "One Who Knows" and old man "Vox Populi," not to mention space writers and all egotistic correspondents to whom the editor is always an idiot.

M. Roche, French ex-minister of commerce, estimates that in the event of a general European war, France must expend \$5,000,000 per day during its continuance. In 1871 she had to pay not only the cost of her own armies in the field but to contribute a "million" of francs, or \$200,000,000 as an indemnity to Germany. For crushing the freedom of the Boer republics, for the dubious profits of turning uneasy neighbors into slaves and impoverished subjects, Great Britain spent upon the South African war \$20 for every acre of the two republics. The Civil War cost the United States the additional of \$2,700,000,000 to her public debt.

It is announced that the United States recruiting stations will continue to accept young men 5 feet 4 inches high as recruits and will not for the present require them to touch the marks at 5 feet 7 inches. It is pleasant to know that three inches makes not the slightest difference in a man's ability to discharge a Krag-Jorgensen, and from time immemorial hasn't it been maintained that a little man is more pugacious than a big one? Little men are more high-tempered; they will fight quicker and longer. It is easy to comprehend why they do it. It is because they won't be "put on." They fear that you labor under the impression that because they are small they are not as likely to maintain their rights with the same firmness as a bulkier man, and they mean to undeceive you.

When in doubt consult your mother. That advice applies to children, generally, but it applies especially to girls. Your mother, young woman, has had the advantage of experience which you lack. She knows the ways of the world, which you do not know. You see things from your point of view. It is necessarily a narrow point of view. Your mother knows. She has gone by the way you are coming. Happy that daughter who confides in her mother. Happy she who can go to her mother with her little secrets and misgivings, her girlish hopes and fears, and talk of these, freely assured that mother will understand and advise tenderly and sensibly and rightly. Happy that mother who has seen and kept her daughter's confidence, who knows how important it is to listen sympathetically to her daughter's doings and plans. Happy the mother who has not driven her daughter away by speaking of the girlish notions as "silly," and "propertious," or by scolding the girl's petty delinquencies. The bond between mother and daughter should never be broken. The bond of comradeship between the two is a natural one. If it binds them together the daughter's problems become the mother's problems and the solution will be a wise one. "A son is a son 'till he gets a wife; a daughter's a daughter all the days of her life"—If the bond holds true. The old song says: "A boy's best friend is his mother." That's true. But a mother is in a peculiar sense the best friend of a daughter. And the girl who forgets this is likely to make a mistake in life. Ask your mother.

It begins to look as if consumption had had its day. Without waiting to note what affect X-rays or any of the new forms of light may have upon destroying it, it is evident that the most serious scourge of our northern latitudes is already more or less under the control of physicians. In New England, where the registration has been fairly accurate, the decrease of the death rate from this disease has been 50 per cent in the last half century, the rate of decrease being far more rapid in recent years. The reports from New York are to the same effect. Where blocks of houses were formerly infected with tuberculosis conditions are so changed that the city has been able to reduce its death rate from this disease nearly one-half in the last twenty years. Strange to say, cold outside

air, once thought to be so pernicious to consumptives, is now regarded as one of the best remedies. The treatment is heroic, but it works for an appetite, and this, coupled with nourishing food, is sure to make good blood, which is exactly what the patient wants. In fact, cold air seems to be a popular remedy just now for many ills. Not far from Wellesley College is a hospital for crippled and otherwise deformed children. These children are living in a baroque shack, and while protected from drafts they are allowed free exposure, especially at night, to plenty of pure, cold air. The experiment is novel, but so far the improvement in the anemic children has been marked. It may be that civilization will have to take a step or two backward in order to advance in the right direction; that some of the luxuries now enjoyed by the rich are not so desirable after all, and that health and the happiness which comes from health are to be bought more easily than most of us dream.

It is no longer the fashion to blame the dime novel for the exploits of runaway boys. Indian fighting and gold digging are no longer the gilded paths to glory. The up-to-date way is different. A New York letter tells that a fond Gotham mother had her two boys returned to her after they had been away for two whole days. The boys are 14 and 10 years old respectively. The mother blames Andrew Carnegie, Charles M. Schwab and John W. Gates for their escapade. "They had been reading," she explained, "how Mr. Schwab started in life with a single gallus, carving cheese in a country delicatessen shop, and how afterward he made a million a minute. Carnegie and Gates yellow literature was also attractive to them. If Mr. Carnegie could accumulate such a bewildering number of millions by starting on a 30-cent capital, why not they? Not having an iron works to sell to a shipbuilding company, the boys started to work in a laundry at \$3 a week. They were agitating a vat of soiled clothes with a stick when the police found them for me." Running away from home to work in an honest employment is a good many shades better than running off to fight Indians or hold up stage coaches. Carnegie and Schwab are not perfect models. There is plenty in the careers of each to be criticized. If the lives of these two men have any practical lesson at all for the average boy of this commercial age, it is that the boy and the business must grow up together.

Each a part of the other. This pair of runaway boys whom the police found "agitating a vat of soiled clothes with a stick" had found an opportunity and knew what to do with it. If the police never found boys doing worse than this, there might be rozier hopes for the world's future. Nobody in the world has as good a chance to become a master of the laundry of business as the boy who is not afraid to begin by "agitating a vat of soiled clothes with a stick." Here's luck to this pair of boys and the hope that the police may never find them in a worse business.

Nothing is so injurious as unoccupied time. The human heart is like a millstone; if you put wheat under it, it grinds the wheat into flour; if you put no wheat it grinds on, but then "tis itself it wears away."—Philadelphia Ledger.

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EDITORIALS Opinions of Great Papers on Important Subjects.

Age of Retirement.

WE live rapidly in the telephonic age. It has been truthfully said that we can crowd much more work into the day than our most industrious forebears did. Invention has given us many hands. Time and space have been conquered, so that the modern man of 60 has accomplished infinitely more than the man who lived to the patriarchal age, and from this point of view, has earned the rest which his grandfather would not have dreamed of enjoying at threescore. Whether this be so or not, many of the finest achievements in business, statesmanship, literature, in all accounts, have been wrought by men long past 60. No strong man will accept 60 as the arbitrary limit of his ambition and working ability.

Writers who have discoursed most knowingly on the obligation of the aged to leave the active scene have not undertaken to fix the year for retirement. The youth who is anxious to push his way into the working world thinks that a man is old at 40 and should be preparing to go on the retired list. In the fierce competitions of modern life it is probable that the age of retirement is gradually falling. The theory is worth the investigation of the curious statistician. Asked when he considered a man to be in the prime of life, Palmerston replied: "Seventy-nine, but as I have entered my eighty-third year, perhaps I am myself a little past it." Such is the view of old men on this delicate subject.

Many men retire too early, and like the old war horse, years for the march and the battle. The habit of work holds us to the accustomed cares and tasks. This explains why the great lawyer or the multi-millionaire merchant remains at his post long after his prime. The powers of men whose lives have been very active are likely to decline rapidly in retirement, the result of idleness and ennui.

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Mistakes in Life.

ONE of the most unprofitable ways of spending time is the practice, to which many persons are addicted, of brooding over the mistakes one has made in life, and thinking what he might have been or achieved if he had not done, at certain times, just what he did do. Almost every unsuccessful man, in looking over his past career, is inclined to think that it would have been wholly different but for certain slips and blunders—certain hasty, ill-considered acts into which he was betrayed almost unconsciously and without a suspicion of their consequences.

As he thinks of all the good things of this world—honor, position, power and influence—of which he has been deprived in some mysterious, inexplicable way, he has no patience with himself, and, as it is painful and humiliating to dwell long upon one's own follies, it is fortunate if he does not implicate others—friends and relatives—in his disappointments. Perhaps, as education has never been free from mistakes—mistakes, indeed, of every kind—he imputes the blame to his early training, in which habits of thoroughness and accuracy, or, again, of self-reliance and independence of thought, may not have been implanted. Perhaps a calling was chosen for him by his parents, without regard to his peculiar talents or tastes and preferences; or, if he was allowed to choose for himself, it was when his judgment was immature and unfit for the responsibility. The result was that the square man got into the round hole, or the triangular man into the square hole, or the round man squeezed himself into the triangular hole.

Exploring the Niger.

In connection with certain French military maneuvers in the Sudan the question was raised not long ago of the practicability of revictualing an army in the region south of the Sahara by means of the Niger. Theorists disagreed. Lieutenant Hourst, who had come down the river, said it could not be done. Captain Tzee, who had gone up, said it could. There was but one way to settle the dispute. Captain Lenfant was ordered to take ten thousand boxes of provisions and two thousand of equipment to the mouth of the Niger, load the material into bateaux, deliver seventy tons of supplies on the bank at Niamey, whence it would be borne overland to Colonel Perot at Lake Tchad, and with the remainder to revictual all posts along the river from Say to Assogou, the latter about two thousand miles up and above the last important rapids.

For this tremendous task Captain Lenfant was assigned two lieutenants and about forty negroes, but was able to hire natives at necessary points en route. He was required to fortify a base of operations at Aroneberg, a point on the Niger which he had recently reached, especially as he had recently received a letter from a famous European animal dealer who wanted a large male tiger, and who commissioned him to procure one for him if possible. In the Boston Herald Major Beck tells the startling story of securing the beast. He employed Remachunda Dhas and his brother Ghunga, noted huntsmen, to help him.

For two weeks we worked in vain, says Mr. Beck. At last we set up a great trap in the jungle. It was on the same plan as a mouse trap wherein hangs bait to tempt the mouse to enter. When the weight of the mouse presses on the floor of the trap the door springs shut and makes him a prisoner. The tiger trap was a huge wooden cage. The bait was to be a goat, hung up in the cage by the hind leg. The sound of its bleating was expected to draw the Striped Death to the spot. I doubted the strength of the trap, so Ghunga, after fastening the door open, stepped inside and began to strengthen the bars in their sockets. I withdrew several yards distant and sat down in the shade. Remachunda rested near me. Then came the tragedy. A gleam of tawny fur shot out from the side of the trap the door opened before either Remachunda or I could spring to our feet the Striped Death had sprung through the propped-open door upon Ghunga Dhas.

The village wept over the dead man.

On the Use of the Imagination.

IN a practical age the imagination is apt to get less than its due. We want naked facts, or we think we do, and imaginative people insist upon clothing them in gay apparel; consequently whenever we lose sight of a fact we suspect the imagination of having run off with it, and raise the hue and cry with a fine indignation against the deceiver. Yet to the art of living, as to every subordinate art, imagination is the one indispensable quality. For lack of it we fail not merely in sympathy and courtesy, in toleration, in all the minor graces, but even in actual truthfulness of thought and of demeanor. So far is it from reality to consider imagination as the enemy of fact, that without it no fact can be properly apprehended, much less shared with our neighbors. The greatest fact of social life is the fact that we are all different, and it follows from this that without the power to picture a different mind from our own we are incapable of communicating the simplest feeling. . . . If you define imagination as the faculty of seeing what is not there, you may take away its character without contradiction; but this is the perverse description of statisticians; the poet that lives in each of us knows better. . . . And if we come down to the amenities, the small change of life, the imagination calls to us ceaselessly for employment. Formal courtesies are base money, passed about among stupid people only until they are found out; the courtesies that will stand every test, and pass current in all emergencies, must be the fruits of a genuine traffic between mind and mind, in which every interest is active and every want is taken into account. And this can only be got by sending the imagination on its travels for us.—London Guardian.

The Chief Language.

WITH the increasing intercourse of the nations the old question of a universal language comes up—at least in the German mind—affording a topic of discussion. The tendency toward a common tongue is and has been for years most strongly marked by the spread of the English language. Mullhall's statistics of a dozen years old (being the latest available) show the spread of languages for the first ninety years of the last century. At the beginning of the century the languages of Europe were spoken by 191,000,000 people. In 1890 they were spoken by 401,000,000, an increase of nearly 100 per cent. The four principal languages in 1891 amounted to 184 per cent and the Spanish to 16.2. English-speaking peoples amounted to only 12.7. But in 1890 the standing was: English, 27.7 per cent; Russian and German, each 18.7 per cent; French, 12.7 per cent; Spanish, 10.7 per cent, and the remainder divided between Italian and Portuguese. The number of English-speaking people had grown from 20,520,000 to 111,100,000, German and Russian-speaking people from about 30,000,000 to 75,000,000 each, and French-speaking people from 31,450,000 to 51,200,000.

The English language had risen from fifth to first place, and was spoken by at least 50 per cent more people than any other European tongue. Of the increase of about 61,000,000 English-speaking people, about 70,000,000 were in the United States.—Indianapolis News.

Not at All Strange.

"Why, William, I'm surprised!" "It's natural, ma; it's natural!" "His Own Little Panic." "Hi Tragedy—You don't look very well this morning, old man." "Lowe Comedy—No, I was the victim of a fire panic last night." "Hi Tragedy—What! I hadn't heard of it." "Lowe Comedy—Oh, no. You see, I experienced the panic when I heard it was going to be fired, but I learned this morning that it was a mistake."—Philadelphia Press.

Accounting for It.

"I can't understand love at first sight." "Why, it is due to the fact that love is blind."—Judge.

A Natural Mistake.

The passenger has been lying back in his seat, half dozing, for an hour or so, when the train slowly pulls into the yards at the outskirts of the great city. Still in the borderland between sleep and waking, the passenger looks upon a huge freight car on a siding. One look at the display of foot-high letters on the freight car is enough. The passenger fumbles in his pocket and yells: "Here, boy! Bring me one o' those extras."—Judge.

Very Nervy.

Star Boarder—The landlady objects to you complaining about the fare. She says all the food she serves is nerve food. Mr. Kicker—I don't doubt her assertion. It takes a great deal of nerve to serve such food as this.

Self-Protection.

Tom—What! Eating onions? I thought you detested them? Jack—So I do. Tom—Then why are you eating them? Jack—I'm going to a leap year ball to-night. See?—Chicago News.

Product of Meat and Grain.

Since 1840 the world's production of meat has increased 57 per cent and of grain 420 per cent.

SUPPOSE WE SMILE.

HUMOROUS PARAGRAPHS FROM THE COMIC PAPERS.

Pleasant Incidents Occurring the World Over—Sayings that are Cheerful to Old or Young—Funny Selections that Everybody Will Enjoy.

A painful interview had just been pulled off in the washhouse. "Now, sir," said the stern parent as he hung the old trunk strap on a nail, "you stand corrected."

"I do," sobbed the youthful victim, "and I won't be able to sit corrected for a w week."

She Was a Hustler. "George," said the leap year girl who meant business, "I love you dearly. Will you be my husband?" "Why—or—is this no sudden?" stammered George. "G'give me time to think."

"Well," she rejoined, as she looked at her watch, "think quick. The last car is due in fifteen minutes."

A Refuge.



"Hi, you fellows, come and have a game. Here's a horse that can't flick his tail."

No Fault of Hers.

Mrs. Flathead—I was surprised to hear that you didn't keep a girl. Why is it? Mrs. Suburban—I don't know, I'm sure. I hire enough of them, but they simply refuse to stay."

By Leaps and Bounds.

Gyer—Time will probably go much faster this year than it did last. Myer—Because why? Gyer—Because this is leap year, see?

A Sudden Change.

Higgins—Do you believe that any person's hair ever turned gray in a single night? Wister—Oh, I don't know. I should think it might happen. Once I knew a young woman's hair which turned from red to golden in a single day. It was the day she came into a fortune.—Boston Transcript.

A Manly Man.

Three women stood before him and glared at the paper he held in front of his somewhat sanguine face. At length he half arose and said: "Take this seat, madam."

Too Many.

"Do you read any novels?" asked our lady, correspondent of her visitor from the country. "Oh, yes, a good many," was the reply. "Have you ever read 'Ten Thousand a Year'?"

"Lord, bless us, ma'am, no," answered the astonished visitor. "I never read as many as that in my whole life."—Boston Traveler.

Not Safe Even Then.

"Did old Gofco kick you out of the house when you asked for his daughter?" "No, but he broke my ear drum." "Ear drum? Why, he surely didn't kick you in the head?" "No; I asked him over the telephone."—Cincinnati Times Star.

These Busy Days.

"Smithers says he hasn't got up to give his seat to a lady in a street car for a month." "And I always thought Smithers the most polite man alive." "Oh, he's polite enough. He just hadn't had the seat to give."—Cincinnati Times Star.

Grave Filters.

"Sir," said the man whose knees shook when the train entered a tunnel, "do you know the most dangerous thing on a railroad train?" "Yes," responded the gay drummer, "it is the cigars the train boy sells."

Vivid Imagination.

She—So you are a professional humorist? How delightful it must be to earn a living writing jokes! He—Yes, er—I always imagined it would be.

Future Ability.

"We've got a fine new talking machine up at our house." "That so? Run by a spring?" "No; by air. It's a girl baby."—Cincinnati Times Star.

Elastic Marble.

In one account of Rome the author mentions five or six slabs of elastic marble as being in the possession of the Prince Borghese. Being set on end they bend backward and forward. When laid horizontally and raised at end they form a curve. If placed on a table and a piece of wood or any other substance is laid under them they fall into a kind of curve, each end touching the table. The Abbe Fortis was told that they were dug up near the town of Mondrago, in the kingdom of Naples. The grain is like that of fine Carrara marble or perhaps of the finest Greek. They seem to have suffered some attack of fire. A slab of marble similar in every respect to those described and highly polished has been exhibited for years at the British Museum. M. Fleuvain de Bellevue succeeded in making common granitic quartz completely flexible by exposing it to a certain degree of heat. In Lincoln cathedral, England, there is an arch built of white marble which is quite elastic, yielding to a heavy tread and returning or rebounding to its original position on true elastic principles.

A Consolation Balance.

Passions—Then you still have faith in humanity? Optimist—Of course; there are 20,000,000 people in this country, and I still have faith in those who haven't played me any mean tricks.

Trifles.

Miss