

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

Comments and Criticisms Based Upon the Happenings of the Day—Historical and News Notes.

Women know as much about politics as men know about war maps.

Some men are eagerly sought after because they don't pay their debts.

A man's idea of hard work is any kind at which he can't sit down and smoke.

"He was a follower of the golden rule," should be a soul-satisfying epithet for any man.

Civil service is said to work well in the Philippines. Wait till the Filipinos get on to the ways of civilization.

For a steady, consistent casualty record, however, the gasoline car has the Russo-Japanese war beaten a mile.

Pauline Astor is not the only American heiress who has become allied with the Spender family of England.

Men should be elected to office because of their qualifications for the job and not for the purpose of keeping them out of jail.

We've seen so many sales of "mill ends" advertised lately, that only the central portions of all the factories must be left by now.

After walking home from the race track a man is in the humor to sneer at his wife for taking chances on the prize cake at a church fair.

A Kansas woman is said to have left her husband because he persisted in refusing to argue with her. Could anything be more aggravating?

Professor Mason of the Smithsonian Institute declares that "the blondes are a disappearing human type." Not while the peroxide supply holds out, professor.

A California surgeon operated on a patient while the house in which they were was burning. It's simply impossible to stop some surgeons when they get their patients down.

Newspaper wits do not always treat antiquities with proper respect. One of them remarked, upon reading about the discovery of a captain two thousand years old in the Forum of Rome, that it must have been the one used in winding up the affairs of the Roman Empire.

Russell Sage is not the only man who does not take a vacation. The editor of the prison paper at Sing Sing admits that he has not taken a vacation for five years, and says that his engagements are such that he does not see how he can take one for at least seven more years.

A Southern clergyman is trying to convince a convention of his church that Santa Claus is a myth and an abomination and that to allow little children to believe in him was to train them to be deceitful. Let us hope that the good, foolish man has no children of his own who are never allowed to play that a doll is alive or a chair is a horse or that there are Indians and grizzly bears lurking behind the rose bushes in the garden.

One thing must be said for John Alexander Dowling—he never steals upon his victim from behind. For instance, he has made public announcement of his intention to dethrone Edward VII, with an added warning that the Kaiser is to be the next victim; the czar and Emperor Francis Joseph to be spared until further notice. "I may be assassinated for saying these words," exclaimed the Interlop Elijah III, "but I fear nothing." With such a daredevil adversary his majesty would better look out.

When should a girl marry? Governor Warfield, of Maryland, thinks not before she is twenty-six, and he bases this age on the fact that his wife was twenty-six when she blessed him with her presence. A certain Dr. Smith regards eighteen as a good age, and Dorothy Dix sends a long screed to the Sabbath press giving various suggestions. Meanwhile the person most vitally interested makes her arrangements to accord with her opportunities, and we incline to the opinion that from now on to the end of the chapter the girl will marry just when she is satisfied that she cannot afford to throw away the golden chance. Girls are very much alike in this respect; so are parents.

One of the distinct features of the age is the tendency to return to agriculture. Where a few years ago the farmer boys were rushing to the cities to crowd the professions, there is now a decided move in the other direction. The natural reaction that must always follow a movement so radical in some measure, accounts for the disposition to return to the soil for a livelihood, but there is more. The agriculturist has become a professional man. The college and the university have added a special course for his benefit, and gives him a degree. He is a botanist and a chemist, and science has taught him to take in the jaded and worn-out farm, and with intelligence cause it to blossom like the rose. The distilling labor which bears the forms of the elders and sent the lads scurrying cityward has been lightened by devices that better accomplish the end sought. The long hours are short ended, and the farmer finds time to indulge in the enjoyments of life. This new condition, added to the fascination of Independence, has turned many men from other professions toward the country, carrying with them the mannerism of their class until the extermination of the chin whisker is threatened by the Prince Albert coat.

Recommendations for a change from the vertical system of penmanship have been made before the Chicago Board of Education. One of the trus-

tees, Mr. Cameron, is quoted as saying of vertical writing: "It may be good to write love letters, but it is not good for keeping books. I do not know of a set of books in Chicago where the up and down writing is allowed. If a boy can write only in the vertical style business houses have little use for him." If that is the case it is a sufficient reason why pupils should not be required to learn vertical writing.

If business houses have no use for boys who write only the vertical style surely no boy ought to be required to learn that style against his natural inclination. It does not follow, however, that those to whom it is natural to write the vertical should be forced to learn the inclined style. The obviously common sense rule is not to attempt to force the pupil out of his natural bent. That involves something worse than a waste of time. It results either in total failure or the acquirement by the pupil of an irregular, nondescript style not suited to bookkeeping or anything else in which uniformity and neatness are desirable.

Very few pupils left to themselves would write the vertical style. Perhaps as many would write with a backward inclination. There is no danger that there will be any lack of penmen writing with the forward inclination if pupils are taught to make the best of the style which comes natural to them. There is no obvious reason why books should not be written in the vertical style, other things being equal. Indeed, that style has the advantage in point of legibility.

When Thomas A. Edison was a telegraph operator he had few equals in speed and anybody who could read "course print" could read what he wrote at top speed and his page was almost as even and handsome as print.

There is no valid objection to a set of books kept by such a writer so far as the penmanship is concerned. But if business houses will not have that style very well. Those who can write it like Edison can find enough writing to do if they wish. They should not force themselves to write another style which they can never master merely to please the business houses.

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EDITORIALS

OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

Carrying Money.

A returned Alaskan miner went to sleep in a Pullman car in Pennsylvania the other night with \$12,000 in gold on his person. He may not have been wiser when he awoke next morning, but he was \$12,000 poorer. If he had put his money in a bank and carried only a letter of credit and a small sum of cash on the Pullman he would have had his fortune yet.

The mistake of carrying too much money is a common one. Even good business men sometimes make it. There is no sense in any man's carrying more than a very small amount of cash. Whether he lives in the country and is going to town, or lives in the city and is going downtown, a few dollars will be sufficient to meet any emergency which cannot be met by checking on the bank. A little money to pay for lunch, for possible telephone and telegraph messages, for street car fare, for a carriage in case of accident—everything ought to carry enough for these purposes, and there usually is no good reason why anyone should carry more.

Even those who are traveling need less cash than many habitually carry. So perfect and so extensive has the modern banking system become that a man can go all over his own country and around the world on a few slips of paper that would be worthless to anybody else but a bold and skilful knave and would be very dangerous for a fool. The best and safest place for one's roll is in the bank. Banks fail once in a while; but the chances of losing money deposited in them are infinitely few compared with the chances of losing it from the person.—Kansas City Journal.

Women and Work.

THE census returns of the United States show very clearly that women are pressing forward more and more into professional and business positions. The perfect and so extensive has the modern banking system become that a man can go all over his own country and around the world on a few slips of paper that would be worthless to anybody else but a bold and skilful knave and would be very dangerous for a fool. The best and safest place for one's roll is in the bank. Banks fail once in a while; but the chances of losing money deposited in them are infinitely few compared with the chances of losing it from the person.—Kansas City Journal.

The Church and the People.

THE pastor who asks why it is that the younger generation is losing its respect for the church, need not go far afield in search of an answer. It is because a majority of the churches do not meet the demands of people now on earth for an outlet to their physical and mental activities. The congregation to which the preacher propounded his query appears to realize this fact. It is erecting a house of worship which, when completed, will be furnished with a kitchen, dining room and gymnasium for the boys. It will supply the craving for social and physical enjoyments while ministering to the spiritual needs of its members.

But the church which hopes to hold the young must go even further than this. It must compete with the school,

ALL FOR HAROLD.

Just then one of the partners looked out of the window. "Why, it's raining!" he said.

This was serious. Aunt Jane at once grew concerned over the risk of taking Harold out in the night air when it was raining.

"What do you think, my dear?" the fond father asked of his wife.

"Why, of course, if it is going to be a rainy evening it would never do to take him."

Then the other partner peered through the window and said it looked pretty bad; not a mere shower, he thought, but the beginning of a storm.

"I shouldn't take any risk, Julia," said the other sister.

"It's lucky you didn't tell Harold!" said the junior partner.

"Where is he?" asked Mr. Fuddleston.

"Upstairs with the nurse," answered Mrs. Fuddleston.

"Well," said Fuddleston, decidedly, "we won't take any chances. Besides, my ticket is for a box, which only seats six people."

So little Harold was left at home, and six adults, instead of two, sacrificed their entire evening that he might not run the risk of getting wet and catching a cold.

CITY MAN OUT-OF-DOORS.

Vacation Habit Means Improvement in Public Health and Happiness.

A general and killing absorption in the business of life was once the accepted theory of American activity. It is true that there is still tremendous stress shown by Americans in the pursuit not only of their business vocations but of their social vocations. Yet the business man's summer vacation is getting to be more and more an accepted institution. He manages to get longer periods of complete rest and recreation, and he contrives, more and more, to seize upon any number of half holidays and over-Sunday outings, especially in the warmer months. When he can control his time he gives greater portions of it than ever before to horseback exercise and to golf and kindred sports. The business man's family, instead of being satisfied, as of old, with a few weeks in a crowded hotel by the sea or in the mountains, spend the whole summer in the country, as boarders in hotel or farmhouse, or as dwellers in a country place of their own, modest or sumptuous in accordance with their means and taste.

The city man's modern discovery of the country and his increasing use of it in the summer months has been a subject of comment now these many years. There has been discussions of its effect upon the city people themselves, and upon the country people into whose communities they enter; of its effect upon manners and morals; of its economic bearings and its relation to the abandoned farm problem,

the club, the social function, the outdoor diversion and the many other attractions which go to swell the sum total of the joy of living. It also must compete with every organized activity having for its purpose the amelioration of human ills and human wretchedness. And it must compete successfully or fail in its mission.

The church which lives and moves and does its work close to the world and its tolling, struggling, aspiring, inquiring, practical millions will be successful in retaining its hold upon the people. Mankind demands something more satisfying than sounding theories; something more nutritious than doctrinal husks. To retain its influence the church must be of the people, for the people and by the people. Summing up, the church must come down out of the clouds and abide with the people living here below.—Chicago Journal.

Blow for Phonetic Spelling.

THE cause of "spelling reform" has received a serious setback. The valorous and persistent champions of "phonetic" orthography have received a blow from which they may not recover.

When it came to a discussion of the proposed reform to make an appropriation of \$2,000 a year for five years for missionary work in phonetic spelling before the directors of the National Educational Association at St. Louis, the distressing fact was revealed that none of the educators could remember the dozen words which the association had decided in 1898 must be "reformed."

What progress can be made in spelling reform if the great educators themselves cannot remember the words to be reformed? At the meeting in 1898 the national association recommended twelve orthographical reforms as follows: Program, the, thru, thoery, altho, thorefore, decaolog, pedagog, prolog, catalog and denagog. It now transpires that, notwithstanding the vigorous missionary work that has been done in behalf of these twelve "reforms" for six years past, the educators at St. Louis who were called upon to consider the question of extending the fight for spelling reform were forced to make the humiliating confession that they had not used the words and hence could not recall them.

Could anything be more thoroughly exasperating? The those pedagogs have continued the agitation of spelling reform thru six years they confess they have made no attempt to use the adopted words in private correspondence or in any other way. And so the great cause of phonetic spelling languishes.—Chicago Record-Herald.

The Girl of Twenty-eight.

GOVERNOR WARFIELD, of Maryland, is evidently not an advocate of large families. In an address to the graduating class of the high school at Wilmington, Del., he said:

"Don't do the foolish thing of getting married early in life. I have three daughters, and will not give my consent to any one to marry before she is 28."

The world has changed a good deal in the last forty years. We have "girls" of 30 now, whereas in the old days a woman became an old maid at 25. Seventeen years was then deemed an eminently marriageable age, and this proverb prevailed: "At 20 a woman gets a man better than herself for a husband; at four and twenty, one as good; at eight and twenty, one much worse." Nowadays the public experience a certain shock when a girl is 18 married.

The finest years of womanhood lie between the ages of 25 and 35. It is the privilege of every woman to decide whether she shall spend them in single blessedness or in duplicated bliss. Considering marriage merely as a refuge, or even as a business venture, it may be that she who deliberates up to the age of 28 is lost. Regarding it from the point of view of the individual woman's own preferences, she may quite properly wait longer if she pleases. It is with her a question of marriage with the man she wants or no marriage at all.—New York Mail.

and of the influence upon the nation of the great mingling of people from various parts of the country.

With all this search for recreation and health, what with Westerners going East, and Easterners going West, with Northerners going South and Southerners going North, summer and winter; with all this search for the opportunity to fish and shoot, or to enjoy social pleasures; with all this interchange of national advantages (for any and every climate can be found in the United States), one may look for an improvement in the public health and happiness, as well as for a dissemination of a knowledge of our own people and of our own country which ought to be decidedly conducive to an intelligent patriotism.—Century.

ARE WE MATERIALISTS?

The Very Development of the Country Seems to Refute the Claim.

Nothing is more common than the charge that the American people are too materialistic, says Leslie's Weekly. That was Matthew Arnold's chief indictment against us, and nearly every other critic of American life, before Arnold's time and since, has said the same thing. Dickens described us as a people who cared for nothing in particular except to eat pork and chew tobacco. That we are as a whole a set of sordid money-grubbers seems to be in fact, a very general impression among the cultured men and women of other lands. But the impression is a false one. Hamilton W. Mabie, who speaks not unkindly of any subject, is entirely right in denying that Americans are materialists. It is true, as Mr. Mabie says, that if we were asked to name the highest types of American life, it would not be the leaders of commercial life, but the pioneers of the West, men of the old South, sturdy New Englanders—idealists all; men not of the selfish and sordid order, but dreamers of splendid dreams that have had a glorious realization. It required a noble idealism to lay the foundations of a nation like ours and to develop and maintain it as it exists today. A land of churches and schools, of more noble philanthropies and magnificent charities than any other land under the sun—this is not the product of that gross materialism unjustly ascribed as our chief characteristic, an estimate of life in which nothing is counted as of value or of consequence that does not make for the filling of the purse. This view may prevail among us more than it should, but it distinctly is not the view of the vast majority of the American people.

Every one seems to be going through the world compelled to see a good deal of the society of those he doesn't enjoy.

It is hard to get a good washwoman but then it is mighty hard to wash for a living.

GOOD Short Stories

A man in North Carolina who was saved from conviction for horse stealing by the powerful plea of his lawyer, after his acquittal by the jury was asked by the lawyer: "Honor bright, now, Bill, you did steal that horse, didn't you?" "Now, look a here, judge," was the reply, "I ailers did think I stole that horse, but sense I heard your speech to that ere jury, I'll be doggoned if I ain't got my doubts about it."

At a dinner given some time ago in honor of Hall Caine, Thomas Nelson Page was invited to introduce the English novelist. One of the guests next to Mr. Page, just before the toasts began, passed his menu card around the table with the request that Mr. Caine put his signature on it. "That's a good idea," said Page; "I must do that, too. I've got to introduce Caine in a few minutes, and I want to be able to say that I have read something he has written."

A young globe-trotter was holding forth during a dinner in Paris about the loveliness of the island of Tahiti, and the marvellous beauty of the women there. One of the barons Rothschild, who was present, ventured to inquire if he had remarked anything else worthy of note in connection with the island. Resenting the baron's inquiry, the youth replied: "Yes; what struck me most was that there were no Jews and no pigs to be seen there." "Is that so?" exclaimed the baron, in no wise disconcerted; "then if you and I go there together we shall make our fortunes."

Frank Everest, of Atchison, Kan., is a good deal of an American, having small admiration left for foreign lands or people. Not long ago he went to Europe on business. During the voyage he and other passengers were much annoyed by a Bostonian, who talked a great deal about the number of times he had been abroad. He laid great stress on the fact that he went over twice a year. "Have you ever been abroad?" he asked Everest. Everest admitted he was making his first trip. "I go over twice a year," said the Bostonian. "Oh, do you?" replied Everest; and he added: "Have you ever been to Omaha?" The Bostonian said he hadn't. "Well," said Everest, "I go there twice a week."

Noah Webster was, as might be supposed, a stickler for good English, and often reproved his wife's misuse of the language. On one occasion Webster happened to be alone in the dining room with their very pretty housemaid, and, being susceptible to such charms, put his arms around her and kissed her squarely on the mouth. Just at this moment Mrs. Webster entered the room, gasped, stood aghast, and in a tone of horror exclaimed: "Why, Noah, I am surprised!" Whereupon Mr. Webster, coolly and calmly, but with every evidence of disgust, turned upon her. "How many times must I correct you on the use of simple words?" he remarked; "you mean, madam, that you are astonished. I, madam, I am the one that is surprised."

HOW TO DETECT FORGERY.

Experts in Handwriting Are Able to Read Many Signs.

"I am not an expert in chirography, but I have at least made enough of a study of handwriting to tell why it is often easy to detect the forgery of a name, though even the man whose name has been forged may declare the handwriting a perfect replica of his own." Arnold Keating says: "Of course, you know—everybody knows, for that matter—that a man or woman never writes his name twice exactly in the same way. There is always a slight difference, and where two signatures of the same name appear identically alike it is safe to assume that one or both is a forgery. But suppose the signature has been forged but once, suppose the handwriting of which it is an exact copy has been destroyed or is not obtainable, of what avail is the comparative method then? The exact comparison cannot be employed, but other almost infallible comparisons are still available. When a child is taught how to write, at first its penmanship is severely stiff and cramped; then it becomes very much like that in the copybook, but after this is discarded the child's character begins to creep into its handwriting. There are little idiosyncrasies apparent that are not to be found in the chirography of other children, and this manifestation of character in writing continues to change it with development until about the age of 25, when a person's character is fixed and his handwriting from that time on continues about the same. The forger's copy of the signature or writing will appear to be exactly like that of the man, but when examined under a powerful microscope, the tiny evidences of character that appear in every loop and line will be found to be largely missing, for the same character is not behind the pen. It is in the minute details that the forgery is discovered. Then, again, a man's mental condition will impress itself upon his writing. If he is nervous, bubbling over with joy or depressed, the fact will be apparent to the expert in writing. If the alleged handwriting doesn't show traces of the mental condition the man was really in at the time he was supposed to have written a certain letter or signed a certain letter, the signature or the writing is a forgery. These are some of the ways by which an expert detects even the most successful forgery."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

On His Trail.

The Lady—Now, if I could only trust you.

Gritty George—Lady, did yer ever hear dat old proverb, "Don't trust a man dat a dog won't follow?"

The Lady—I have.

Gritty George—Well, yer can trust me, 'cause every dog in the country follows me.

He Knows.

"You must visit our new country club," said the suburbanite. "The grounds are beautiful; the golf links superb. You won't find such scenery elsewhere. On entering the grounds the first thing that strikes your eye is—"

"I know!" interrupted the city man. "A golf ball!"—Philadelphia Press.

All spinsters are single from choice—they say.

Why They Won't Go Out of Place in the Suggested Role.

A writer in an English review expresses the opinion that if, for a while, men could take over all housekeeping duties, keeping women entirely out of domestic management, the ensuing revolution would solve the servant problem. By planning everything on business lines about 50 per cent of the present labor would be saved. It is asserted that all the labor-saving devices in use at present are the inventions of men, and that there are plenty more of these beneficent ideas on tap in the masculine brain only awaiting an opportunity for realization. Men do not have the same troubles with their employees that women do with their servants, says the writer, and it would not take the mighty masculine intellect very long to do away with the servant question entirely.

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As for us, we do not want a home run on "strictly business principles." There are plenty of them in the land, but they are called hotels. Here is a commentary: When is a home not a home? When is a man for house-keeper. Home is that realm where woman rules.—Housekeeper.

A Cabin Full of Cuckoos.

An old prospector who, between his periods of gold-hunting, has made his home in a little cabin in a lonely canyon a few miles from Los Angeles, Cal., says the Nestor New Tribune, has discovered not only gold, but a continuous entertainment for the hours he must spend indoors.

About six months ago the prospector "struck it rich." He was able to show such assays of the ore in his claim that a party of capitalists purchased his property and paid him forty thousand dollars.

On receipt of the money the prospector visited Los Angeles. Among other places he went into a restaurant in which is a cuckoo clock. It was just the clock he had seen in his cave in the mountains. He remained in the eating house nearly all the afternoon, listening to the music of the clock, which also announced the quarter and half-hours.

He learned from the proprietor the name of the firm of which the clock had been purchased, and hastened to the shop. He wanted a clock which would cuckoo every five minutes. Not being able to find this kind, he did a little mental problem, and devised a plan for "continuous performance." He bought a dozen of the ordinary cuckoo clocks, and took them to his lonely cabin.

The cabin is no longer lonely. He has set the clocks at different times in five-minute sequence, so that with the voicing of the hours and quarter hours there is scarcely a moment of the day in which a cuckoo is not singing in the cabin.

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Why They Won't Go Out of Place in the Suggested Role.

A writer in an English review expresses the opinion that if, for a while, men could take over all housekeeping duties, keeping women entirely out of domestic management, the ensuing revolution would solve the servant problem. By planning everything on business lines about 50 per cent of the present labor would be saved. It is asserted that all the labor-saving devices in use at present are the inventions of men, and that there are plenty more of these beneficent ideas on tap in the masculine brain only awaiting an opportunity for realization. Men do not have the same troubles with their employees that women do with their servants, says the writer, and it would not take the mighty masculine intellect very long to do away with the servant question entirely.

As for us, we do not want a home run on "strictly business principles." There are plenty of them in the land, but they are called hotels. Here is a commentary: When is a home not a home? When is a man for house-keeper. Home is that realm where woman rules.—Housekeeper.

A Cabin Full of Cuckoos.

An old prospector who, between his periods of gold-hunting, has made his home in a little cabin in a lonely canyon a few miles from Los Angeles, Cal., says the Nestor New Tribune, has discovered not only gold, but a continuous entertainment for the hours he must spend indoors.

About six months ago the prospector "struck it rich." He was able to show such assays of the ore in his claim that a party of capitalists purchased his property and paid him forty thousand dollars.

On receipt of the money the prospector visited Los Angeles. Among other places he went into a restaurant in which is a cuckoo clock. It was just the clock he had seen in his cave in the mountains. He remained in the eating house nearly all the afternoon, listening to the music of the clock, which also announced the quarter and half-hours.

He learned from the proprietor the name of the firm of which the clock had been purchased, and hastened to the shop. He wanted a clock which would cuckoo every five minutes. Not being able to find this kind, he did a little mental problem, and devised a plan for "continuous performance." He bought a dozen of the ordinary cuckoo clocks, and took them to his lonely cabin.

The cabin is no longer lonely. He has set the clocks at different times in five-minute sequence, so that with the voicing of the hours and quarter hours there is scarcely a moment of the day in which a cuckoo is not singing in the cabin.