

TOPICS OF THE TIMES

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

For the sake of peace give the women the ballot.

England is a right little tight sand in a slight fright.

Hard luck is a machine for testing your friends; it separates the wheat from the chaff.

No woman abstains from matrimony because some other woman advises her to. She has reasons of her own.

Approves of the Gould disclosures: If a lady meet a lady, when too full of rye, if a lady bite a lady, need a lady cry?

When advising girls not to marry to excess, Mark Twain must have thought he was talking to a lot of future actresses.

We would think there was something wrong with our school system if graduates couldn't see a bright future before them.

If it isn't one thing it's another. Just as we begin to feel easy about the coal bin, along comes the annual scare about the ice chest.

Let us hope King Edward does not wear his trousers creased at the sides for the reason—painful thought!—that he is slightly bowlegged.

Spending a honeymoon in the air is something novel, but innumerable lovers have familiarized the world with the spectacle of building castles in the air.

If constantly increasing the taxes is the only guaranty of peace, it becomes almost frightful to think of the price peace will cost fifty years from now.

Russia is about to reduce the number of her public holidays from ninety-one to sixty-three. This ought to give Russia a start industrially that will carry her out of the hand-to-mouth class.

It is no wonder that the man who called his woman assaillant "too beautiful to prosecute" has advanced to the supreme presidency of the "Order of Owls." He is certain to flourish long in wisdom and safety.

There is some satisfaction in the knowledge that the Wright brothers are making oodles of money, but it is not gratifying to the national pride to reflect that they had to go abroad to obtain substantial recognition.

Rev. Charles F. Aked, the oil king's pastor, thinks that the style in which Professor Foster's book is written is open to criticism from the aesthetic point of view. It would be interesting to hear Dr. Aked's opinion of Mr. Rockefeller's prose as exemplified in his recent confessions.

It is proposed to build a \$3,000,000 opera house in Chicago for the purpose of providing a home for Oscar Hammerstein's company. We hope pains may be taken to have the dressing-rooms intended for the stars placed so far apart as to make sudden clashes and unpremeditated hair-pulling absolutely impossible.

King Alfonso of Spain, who has been married three years and a little more, is the father of three children. The youngest, a daughter, was born on June 22, and has been named—after her grandmother—Beatriz, the Spanish form of the English Beatrice, and of the old Latin name Beatrice, meaning one who blesses. If the little girl lives up to her name her parents may well call themselves happy.

There is a growing tendency in American politics toward lengthening the term of service of executive officers, both in state and municipal affairs. The doctrine or principle of rotation in office was once supposed to be the bulwark of representative government. That idea has in a great measure been dispelled. The public office is more of a public trust than it was in the days when the victor captured the spoils without restriction of civil service rules. Conditions have changed. The complex problems of state and municipal life call for expert assistance of a high class. Hence it is that the terms of executive service are being lengthened and well-proven ability is protected in subordinate places in government.

Reversals of verdicts in serious criminal cases continue, in spite of protest and agitation. Supreme courts profess deep sympathy with the demand for substantial justice and protection against crime, but go on upsetting hard-won victories for law and order on purely technical grounds. In one State the Supreme Court sets aside a conviction because a "the" was inadvertently omitted from a rhetorical flourish in the indictment. It excuses itself by saying that the Constitution prescribes the flourish with the "the" and that it can't override the Constitution. Another Supreme court sets aside a verdict in a sensational murder case because the jury was in some small particular improperly drawn. The question of guilt or innocence, of the proof and the justice of the verdict, is not touched. What is needed, says the Chicago Record-Herald, clearly, is a provision in each constitution expressly forbidding the appellate tribunals to exploit technicalities. Some States have already adopted such prohibitions, and all others should follow suit. Rhetoric and surplusage should be swept out of all indictments, informations and legal documents, but, pending that reform, directions to courts forbidding them to exalt trivial or irrelevant technicalities above the merits ought to be made a part of every constitution. To say that courts can't even read a "the" or "of" into an otherwise perfect indictment is to step into the realm

of absurdity. Constitutions should not even remotely sanction legal wanderings in that realm.

The opinion is expressed very often, that American children are imperiously disobedient, notably lacking in respect for their elders and much in need of discipline. Comparisons are made to their disadvantage by persons who have traveled in foreign parts and are accepted as probably fair by others who have engaged in home study only. Added to this unofficial but widely accepted opinion, we now have a judgment based on an investigation of 1,000 schools in every part of the United States. Referring to this investigation, Clifford Webster Barnes said in his address before the National Education Association that nearly all the teachers who were engaged in it passed severe criticisms upon the home and social life of American families so far as they had to do with the moral training of children. Homes of "the lower tier," where drunkenness, profanity and vice of every kind is common, are acting against every good work of the school. And "the homes of the well to do and the refined are not all the very best for the formation of noble and strong characters. There is too much of the namby-pamby discipline in such homes. The children act at their pleasure and place themselves on the same level as their parents." Manifestly little can be expected from a home of vice here or elsewhere. But it is equally obvious that the other homes should help the teacher both by their example and by direct encouragement. We make the assertion, however, without any great faith that there is to be a sudden revolution. For the encouragement certainly goes now to the toward child who advertises himself loudly at home and who is regarded as an injured innocent by his parents if he receives any correction at school. For both moral and mental training he requires a discipline from which he escapes, and he himself is, of course, the greatest loser by the namby-pamby method. If he is not thoroughly demoralized by it he is pretty apt to lament in after years that his childish whims and vanities were accepted as a substitute for rational government.

STRAUSS TO LIVE AGAIN.

Loyal Viennese Hope to Revive Popularity of Their Former Idol. Ten years have passed since the death of Johann Strauss, and Vienna has just awakened to a realization of the complete oblivion into which his compositions have fallen. It took the recent revival of interest in Vienna operetta to emphasize the disappearance of the Strauss works from the stage of the city on the Danube. That the master whose music was thought for so many years to embody the spirit of Viennese life should have been forgotten ten years after his death has turned the thoughts of his fellow citizens to the causes of such an unexpected state of affairs.

It has not taken the deliberations of experts to discover the cause for this neglect. The Strauss scores suffered even in the days of their youth, says a writer in the New York Sun, from the character of their librettos. It was not only to those who knew them in translation that they appeared uninteresting and inappropriate for musical illustration. The composer struggled in vain to secure better material for the inspiration of his genius and the Viennese public of a score of years ago sympathized with his difficulties. Yet there was no improvement in the quality of the texts which it was the task of his bubbling genius to animate. Who can recall the complications of "The Merry War," "The Gypsy Baron" and "The Queen's Lace Handkerchief" without admiration for the composer who could create productions so fully for a musical accompaniment so sufficiently attractive to secure for them any degree of permanent popularity? It is perhaps the greatest tribute to Strauss' genius that he could accomplish so much; but the weight of his collaborator's work dragged his own efforts into disuse.

It was only in one case that the composer derived any real co-operation from his librettist. "Die Fledermaus" has not lost a particle of its popularity. Statistics of the German opera houses annually record its frequent representation. The fact that this libretto came from the French accounts for its enduring qualities, although it has never been sufficient to gain success for it in this country. Our indifference to "The Bat" is one of the curiosities of taste. The French origin of "The Merry Willow," among the latest of the Viennese operettas, and "Fatinza," among the first, shows that we may conclude without rashness that the Viennese operetta made in France. The Austrian as well as the German manufacturers of operetta librettos borrowed liberally from the Gallic supply that has furnished forth so liberally the stage of every country.

Now the loyal Viennese have decided to revive the popularity of their former idol, and his works are to be performed anew; but with different texts. Those that are capable of revision will be liberally changed. Hopeless books will be altogether abandoned. It is probable that the latter class will be more successful, especially if the compilers of the new librettos go to France for their inspiration. Otherwise it may be feared that "The Bat" with its well-built, pointed text will remain the only popular Strauss operetta. Compilers of the new text ought to find in the story of its success excuse for bringing their librettos from Paris and changing them as little as possible in the transfer.

Beginns Sooner.

Hacon—When a man marries, his troubles begin. Egbert—Oh, well, with some fellows it begins as soon as they ask the girl's father.—Yonkers Statesman.

Swat the fly, but always leave one alive in the bedroom—it gets the family up in time for breakfast. The people who think more of dogs than they do of their friends, discourage us.

EDITORIALS

Opinions of Great Papers on Important Subjects.

DRINKING AT MEALS.

WINE by one old and cherished ideas are giving way before the simple application of practical tests. Perhaps no other one idea with reference to eating habits has become more widespread and more persistent than that it is injurious to drink water at meals. The old medical rule against eating before going to bed has been discontinued by the medical profession itself for a long time now, and it has been repeatedly shown that a reasonable amount of food taken before retiring is beneficial to many nervous people, and is not infrequently a cure for insomnia. The rule against drinking at meals has been more persistent, but it appears to be doomed, now that the professors in the physiological chemistry department of the University of Illinois have set about making experiments to prove the digestive value of copious drafts of water taken while eating. One quart of water at each meal was the prescription followed, and it was found that the subject actually thrived on it. The theory is that the water, diluting the saliva, "causes the digestive fluid to assume greater digestive activity."—Manchester Union.

THE TWO-DOLLAR BILLS MUST GO.

A WISH to simplify coinage has led to the disappearance of many coins which it was supposed when their coming was authorized would be a popular convenience. The \$3 and \$1 gold pieces have gone. The last was too small and the first never was needed. It was supposed by the men who suggested its coinage that the 20-cent piece would come in handy. It proved to be a nuisance because it was so near the size of the quarter dollar. It did not help materially in making change. So it did not last many years. The silver half dime was abandoned because too small. The 3-cent piece in silver or nickel had a long life, but was discarded finally. So was the 2-cent piece. It was agreed that there was no need of a coin between the cent and the 5-cent piece. Now it is proposed to get rid of the \$2 bill for a similar reason. The only objectors thus far are the bank tellers. They say it saves them time in handling money when there is a good deal to be handled. Of course it takes only half as long to run through a hundred dollars in twos as when it is made up of ones. But the bank tellers are not the only persons to be considered. There are notes for their special accommodation—\$5,000 and \$10,000 bills, which the common people never own and seldom see. The men who handle money on a small scale—the petty dealers, for instance—would be glad to see the \$2 bill disappear. They consider it somewhat of a nuisance. The twos certainly ought to be called in and con-

THE BOY AND THE DUNCE.

Mr. Peterson did not mind being called a moralist. In fact, he was rather proud of the habit, which he sedulously cultivated, of discoursing in a high, ethical tone about whatever came to his notice. Mrs. Peterson, a silent, hard-working woman, listened to her lord's remarks faithfully, applauding and commenting at what she thought were appropriate spots.

One day Mr. Peterson returned from the village hot with righteous indignation and overexcitement. "These people," he said, fanning himself rapidly with a palm leaf, "these people and their children! I am almost glad we haven't any children, Maria, for if we had I'm sure we should train them to be just as thoughtless and ill-mannered as the rest of the world."

"What—" began Mrs. Peterson, in her soft voice. "Begging!" answered her husband. "Plain, every-day begging! And John Lincoln's son, too! The little rascal! I don't think he's six yet."

"He was five last May," replied Mrs. Peterson, with a readiness which showed that although she herself had no children, her interest in her friends' offspring was keen. "Anyway," maintained Mr. Peterson, "he's old enough to know better."

"This was somewhat illogical, seeing that only a moment before a virtue had been made of the lad's youth. However, Mr. Peterson was a moralist. "He's old enough to know better," said Mr. Peterson, "and he doesn't do better. This very morning, for example," he paused to emphasize again the fact that it was to-day, as if the date made an important difference—"this very morning I was passing by John Lincoln's house on Vernon street and there, in the front yard, was his son John, junior, playing with the puppy. No sooner did the boy see me than he said, 'Please, Mr. Peterson, give me a cent.'"

"I am surprised that Sarah Lincoln's boy—" began Mrs. Peterson. "I am not surprised at anything in this world," announced Mr. Peterson, "after the things I've seen and heard in my life. I am disappointed. So I said to him, 'What do you want with a cent, John?' And to this he replied, 'Buy something.' If any boy of mine had I a boy—were seen on the public streets—" "What did you say to him then?" asked Mrs. Peterson, becoming a little impatient to get to the point of the story, as she had cakes in the oven. "Why," said Mr. Peterson, "I happened to have an extra cent in my pocket, and so I lectured him for several minutes on the crime of begging, and—"

verted into ones. There ought to be in circulation more bills of that useful denomination. There is never a surplus of them, so great and so constant is the demand.—Chicago Tribune.

A SLAP AT HIGH BROWS.

WE ARE overburdened with high brows," says Thomas A. Edison. "We have too many professors and academicians." This surely is a busy world, and the harder a man works in it the more he discovers there is to be done, the more anxious he is to see things done, the less time he takes to brush the dust of granite from his hands before he assumes the next job, the greater the irritation and impatience he displays toward those he terms—with little courtesy—the unproductive. It is given to everyone to catch occasional glimpses of wonders that could be accomplished, of marvels which could be dug from the earth, of happiness which could be brought about, if only such and such work were undertaken. Mr. Edison probably has had more of these great visions than anyone else in this country. It irks him that men should muse over ancient manuscripts or dispute over species of shellfish. Rather, he thinks, should they be up and doing, holding nature up for comforts, forcing content out of the energies of sky and earth.

And still human nature yearns for the wisdom which cannot be utilized. It loves to gorge itself with the indigestible facts of history and science and metaphysical speculation. How fine for humanity it would be if all worked all the time to cure its ills—and how fearfully, fearfully wearisome!—Toledo Blade.

RESPECTING THE LAW.

THE American people need to have more respect for the law," sagely remarks the chief Police Commissioner of the city of St. Louis, relative to the recent outbreak of crime in the Missouri metropolis. True, but what the American people need most is to be taught to respect the law by being punished when they break the law. Abstract ideas of respect for the law as a great moral engine count for but little with a large part of our population. One man in the penitentiary is often worth more than a thousand lectures upon the beauty of law observance.

It is often said that it is much easier to enforce a law in Great Britain and upon the continent of Europe than in this country, because the people of the older countries respect the law more. It would be more proper to say that they fear the law more. If a man breaks the law in England, the odds are about 50 to 1 that he is punished, and punished promptly. Punishment is frequently a great aid in making the law respected.—Louisville Post.

maining go into confections, and the export trade at \$1 per bushel; so there's \$3,000,000 more. The farmers' utilization of the "waste" products nets them about \$4,000,000. In all, it has been calculated that the peanut now brings a revenue of \$36,000,000 annually, without reckoning on the increased fertility it has conferred upon the fields it occupies. That amount is nearly 50 cents a year for every man, woman and child in the United States. We certainly do like peanuts.

SCOTT AS A DUNCE.

Great Author Gave Successor Fee for Keeping His Place Warm. Once there was a dunce. The name of this dunce was Walter Scott, and when he was at school he was such a dull boy that his teacher called him "the great blackhead," according to the Philadelphia Record.

But Walter Scott did not cry and he always tried to do his best, and afterward, when he grew up to be a man, he became famous all the world over because of the great books which he wrote. And because he was so famous he was made a knight, and afterward he was known as Sir Walter Scott.

And yet he was such a dunce at school! One day, when he had become a famous man, Sir Walter Scott went on a visit to the very same school where he had been called "the great blackhead."

He talked to the teacher and to the boys, and then he said: "You have shown me the clever boys. Now show me the dunce. You have one, haven't you?" The teacher, therefore, called up a poor little boy, who was very bashful at being brought before such a famous man as Sir Walter Scott.

Sir Walter smiled cheerily at the little boy, and said: "So you are the dunce, are you?" "Yes, sir," said the little boy. Sir Walter patted him kindly on the head, and said, "Well, my good fellow, I was the dunce when I was here, so here is half a crown for keeping my place warm!"

"FRISKING" SHIP PASSENGERS.

One Old New York Inspector Can Smell Diamonds Six Feet Away.

Timothy J. Donohue, the oldest inspector of customs in this city, is credited by his fellows with possessing a nose which can smell concealed diamonds and other jewels six feet away, the New York Press says. "Old Tim," as he is known, has more seizures of that sort to his credit on the records of the customs house than any other inspector employed there. His duty is to wander aimlessly about the steamship piers and "frisk" incoming passengers. Many persons may not know what "frisk" means in customs house parlance. It is the art of stumbling or brushing against a person so skillfully that the inspector can rub his hands over the pockets and person of the suspect and ascertain whether he has smuggled goods concealed in his clothes and at the same time he is doing.

In the thirty-five years or longer that Donohue has been at it on the New York piers he has "frisked" thousands of Americans and foreigners after they have landed and are awaiting to get their luggage through the hands of the other inspectors. If any incoming passengers standing on a transatlantic line pier see a short, stout, gray-haired, gray-mustached man, quietly dressed, carrying a cheap umbrella tied in the middle with a string and stumbling about as if fresh from the backwoods and looking for some one whom he cannot find, that is "Old Tim" Donohue. In his eager quest he bumps against everybody; seizes overcoats by the pockets, rubs his hands up and down passengers as they pass, never apologizes and keeps right on. After the inspectors are through with a passenger whom he inspects he steps up and invites him to go to the office to be searched. It is not often his suspicions are misdirected.

QUEER STORIES

Progress of the Day.

Greece raises 150,000 tons of currants yearly. Kaiser William is an extensive shop owner in Berlin. The threads of Japanese screws run the opposite way from ours.

Budapest has a school where the students are taught the art of eating. A human hair of average thickness can support a weight of 6 1/2 ounces. A gas-driven street car will soon be in operation on the streets of New York.

The death rate of Queensland, 9.56 per thousand, is almost the lowest in the world. Last year the United Kingdom imported more than \$275,000,000 worth of cotton.

Such serious objection is made to the electric highlight that a substitute is being sought. In New York State there are 10,544 points at which railroad tracks encounter public highways, and at 1,693 of these points the crossings at grade have been removed.

Fully one-fourth of the 13 billion dollars' worth of gold produced in the world since the discovery of America, has come from the mines of the United States.

WHAT WISE MEN HAVE SAID. Ceremony is the smoke of friendship.—Chinnee. Patience is bitter, but its fruits are sweet.—Rousseau.

In all things it is better to hope than to despair.—Goethe. He who wishes to do wrong is never without a reason.—Syrus. Do not yield to misfortunes, but meet them with fortitude.—Virgil.

If the staff be crooked, the shadow can not be straight.—Anon. Rashness brings success to few, misfortune to many.—Phaedrus. Language was given to us that we might say pleasant things to each other.—Bovee.

Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising every time we fall.—Confucius. A Regretted Success.

Massachusetts has furnished some attorneys who have become famous legal lights before the nation. The town of Suffolk, in that State, has one at present who bids for a place among them. This lawyer is noted for the brightness and aptness of his retorts, and any smart witness that gets ahead of him has to sit up nights to frame up the plot.

He was recently counsel for the plaintiff in a case where a woman was very refractory under cross-examination. Although he used all politeness and courtesy in his examination, he received nothing but sharp and unsatisfactory replies. Her husband was in court, a meek and humble specimen of the benighted spouse. Finally the lawyer put another very civil question, to which the woman replied with vindictive fire flashing from her eyes: "Mr. Lawyer, you can't catch me, and you needn't think you can; no, stree, you can't catch me!"

With his most fetching smile, the attorney replied: "Madame, I haven't the slightest desire to catch you, and your husband looks to me as if he very sorely regretted that he had succeeded."

The erier rapped for order as a wave of laughter swept over the court room, and the judge bowed his head to hide a smile.

Vicious Efforts. Kind Old Lady (talking to a tramp, —Have you ever made an effort to get work? Tramp—Yes, ma'am. Last month I got work for two members of my family, but neither of them would take it.—Haman Life.

"Who was Noah's wife, pa?" "Joan of Arc, my boy. Now run away."—Lippincott's.

WHAT SUGGESTION DOES.

Increases and Lengthens the Curative Action of the Cells.

It can be safely maintained that where there is any chance of cure at all, that chance may be increased by suggestion, writes Dr. Frederick Van Eeden. As a matter of fact, the doctor never cures a disease; he enables the body to cure itself by assisting it in the struggle against hostile influences or disturbances. Even the surgeon does no more than remove obstacles; the cells of the body do the really curative work. And in this work they are directed and assisted by what we call the psychic, that part of the body which is not directly perceptible by the senses.

There is no breach between physical and psychical functions; all are in a constantly related action and counter action. It has been demonstrated that sight of food by a dog immediately stimulates the secretion of the different glands necessary for the digestion of that special kind of food, not only in the mouth but also in the stomach. Now, if the visual image alone can have such very material effects, in such appropriate selection, what can be the scientific objection to the possibility of the cells being stimulated in their curative work, appropriately and effectively, by imagination, by emotion or by volition?

This is the way in which suggestion works. By verbal persuasion, by exciting the imagination of the patient, by raising his expectation, by giving him confidence, by strengthening his own power of volition, the idea of cure is fixed in his mind and the curative action of the cells is increased and lengthened—even in such a "physical" case as a broken leg, or an ulcer, or a wound. In this there is nothing unscientific, nothing contradictory to our present knowledge of the human body. In fact, psychical things are just as real as physical things; but as the chain is long and the links are very complicatedly connected, we are not accustomed to realize the first influence of one upon another.

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