

TOPICS OF THE TIMES

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

And then we might say that dyspepsia is the cost of high living.

Aggressiveness takes men to heights where modesty would never land them.

It is possible for a man to reach the pinnacle of fame and still not be above suspicion.

The lazy man's philosophy is never to do to-day what somebody will do for him to-morrow.

"Man was once a sponge," says a Chicago professor, and a lot of them haven't gotten over it yet.

Grafting, in order to be truly scientific, should be so managed as not to attract anybody's attention.

The King of Denmark when speaking of Dr. Cook smilingly said: "Well, the best of us are sometimes fooled."

The new year cannot be a complete success unless some real boosting is done for the cause of good roads.

To facilitate census taking every patriot should have his nose ready to count when the enumerator comes around.

If there is anything that annoys people it is to be told of their faults. What they like is to be told of other people's faults.

Dr. Cook's secretary says the doctor has not yet heard that he did not reach the pole. The doctor should read the papers.

In spite of the revelations which are being made by investigators here and elsewhere we believe that there are some honest people.

The Secretary of Agriculture estimates that a toad will eat \$19.40 worth of flies and insects in a season. Treat the toad with kindness and respect.

A St. Louis ragman, who was thought to be penniless, died the other day leaving a fortune of \$60,000. He had no relatives while living, but no doubt many have been found by this time.

Based upon precedent and practice far more ancient than written laws is the decision solemnly handed down by a Missouri judge, to the effect that a wife has a right to scold her husband.

A police captain says that the reason why dogs chase automobiles is that they are intoxicated by the smell. If it could be proved that cats, tramps, trains and the neighbor's hens are also run by gasoline, we should have a simple explanation of an annoying canine phenomenon.

Young men who have aspirations toward the diplomatic service have had the cardinal virtues of a diplomatist—to keep his mouth closed—forcibly impressed upon them by a recent episode. Not that a minister must not talk at all; the career of the eminent Mr. Wu shows that harmless conversation is likely to please and amuse the people to whom an ambassador is accredited. But discretion in choosing the subjects of his utterances is a first essential.

From a papyrus found wrapped about an Egyptian mummy we learn of an ancient Alexandrian named Dorian, who made a fighting machine so deadly that it was called "the Ender of War." That was two or three centuries before the birth of Christ, but the invention of explosives which are to accomplish the same result by their very destructiveness still goes merrily on. It is safe to say that by no such means will warfare be brought to an end. The human race will not easily be frightened out of the business; it must be raised above it.

Clergymen who are engaged in the complicated task of curing physical ills as well as spiritual ones tell us that among women self-pity is one of the most obstinate of diseases. Apparently there is only one class of women immune to this intrusive and dangerous microbe. They are the women so busy that they have not a minute to spare for themselves. It takes leisure to nurse real woes, and imaginary ones are still more exacting. But given even twenty minutes a day, one may accomplish much in the line of self-pity. Madam begins by mourning that she is misunderstood by husband or daughter or mother or minister. Once let this regret arise and gain recognition, and it is next to useless to suggest the question, "Is there anything in me worth understanding?" "It's no use for me to try to make a pleasant home," complained Mrs. Thompson. "My family misunderstand and thwart all my efforts." The listening friend required courage to say that Mrs. Thompson's idea of a pleasant home was a parlor full of bric-a-brac and tight closed against opportunity, whereas the family preferred a cheerful living room, not too fine for every day. Miss Brown pities herself because she has no money for shopping; Miss Black pities herself because she has too much shopping to do. Mrs. Green mourns over her mending basket full of children's stockings, and Mrs. White, because her home is empty of little feet. There is always a chance to be sorry for oneself; by the same token, there is always a chance to rejoice in one's fortune. A poor Irishwoman, with a dozen children, setting forth her condition to a friendly visitor, ended with, "And, thank God, we've never lacked for a bit of salt with our praties!"

Dr. Edward Anthony Spitzka, one of the most noted brain specialists, recently made this statement: "It is criminal to force a child that is nat-

urally left-handed to use its right hand. The reason some children prefer to use the left hand is because their brains are constructed that way. There are left-hand brains and right-hand brains. The center that controls the action may be on either side of the brain, and it will dictate which side of the body will be the most active." We know that the first thing the average parent does, upon discovery that a child is left-handed, is to try to change the natural order. Why? Because the left-handed minority seem awkward to the right-handed majority. They violate our monkey ideas of conventionality, though we know left-handed people who excel in the use of their hands. The majority of men are a good deal like monkeys, imitating each other in all things and showing no spark of originality. They even pervert natural laws to act or look like other people. This is strange because we all know that the great men of the world are ones who have defied conventions, have dared to stand apart from the herd, have been willing to follow nature's rules, and have merely smiled at the majority's sneer: "You are different from us, and so you are a fool." This taunt is as old as the world. It is the price men pay for being themselves. The compensation derived from independent living, however, more than offsets the little snipers. If you are left-handed, be left-handed, for it is nature's will. In all things be what you are—don't try to be someone else. You have a right to live as you were made to live, and you have the right to your own experiences. Use your intelligence, not written rule, as your life guide. Thus you will possess original, free, satisfying life action. Don't be a monkey, and do not try to make monkeys of your children. The lesson the great scientist gives us from his observation concerning the cause of left-handed action is that there are natural causes of human tendencies. We will do well if we try to curb only our evil tendencies and develop the good ones, even if they are left-handed.

Reflex Motions of a Decapitated Snake With Unconscious Motion.

Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, the famous writer, is one of the greatest authorities on snakes in the world. He used to keep cages of live snakes in his laboratory for experimental purposes. In one of his treatises he speaks of the great tenacity of life on the part of snakes. It is very remarkable, he says, in the rattlesnake, whose reflex motions are admirably retained for some hours after decapitation, and occasionally are seen as late as the 36th hour. At this late period they consist in wavelike movements, which run from the tail upward.

Dr. Mitchell's experiments showed that immediately after the head has been cut off the body writhes slowly along the floor, or, if hung up, returns on itself, twisting the pendant trunk around the tail. If, while the body is entirely fresh, some one seizes the tail, the headless trunk frequently returns on itself in an effort to strike the offending hand. Occasionally this movement is so perfectly executed that the bleeding and headless trunk strikes the operator's hand before it can be withdrawn.

In one or two instances that came under Dr. Mitchell's observation, persons who were ignorant of the possibility of this movement have been so terrified at the blow which has greeted them as to faint on the spot. To hold thus the headless snake has been made a test of firmness in some parts of the west, and few have been found composed enough to retain their hold upon the tail until the innocent but ghastly stump struck the hand.

The Puzzle Case.

The pretty young woman with a small suit case stepped briskly up the gravel walk and said, "Good morning," to Miss Eliza Long, who was enjoying life on her south porch. "Would you like to look at some puzzle pictures?" inquired the young woman.

"I'd like to," said Miss Long, frankly, "but I've promised Philander—that's my brother—not to touch another one for six weeks. By that time he thinks the fever'll be broken up."

"No, isn't any use of opening that case; I can't look. 'Twas only last night I promised Philander," and Miss Long turned her head resolutely away.

"I think he was unkind to extract such a promise," said the young woman with a suit case, indignantly.

"No, he's a kind man," said Miss Eliza, dispassionately. "He's borne a good deal. He said last night that he was willing to stand irregular meals and silent evenings, and mornings of neighbors dropping in to exchange while the work stood still, and all such."

"He said he and the other men round had agreed that it had got to run its course, and then 'twould be over and done with; but when it came to having me look at him across the supper table as if he's a dummy, and tell him I'd been thinking what an elegant picture he'd make, squared off with the wall behind and the table in front, he saw 'twas time to take measures—and, thinking it over, I don't know but he's right."

Asiatic Turkey.

Asiatic Turkey had a civilization thousands of years ago. The interior of that country is populated to-day by farmers to whom modern knives and forks are unknown. The spoons they use are of wood, and each family makes its own.

As She Is Spoken.

"English is a funny language, after all, isn't it?" "Why so?" "I heard a man talking of a political candidate the other day say: 'If he only takes this stand when he runs he'll have a walk-over.'"

A man went hunting yesterday. "What did you get?" he was asked on his return. "Ham and eggs," he replied, "at the home of a farmer."

Being read out of the party doesn't seem to hurt much.

Editorials

Opinions of Great Papers on Important Subjects.

STOP FUNERAL EXTRAVAGANCE.

A YOUNG business man died unexpectedly, leaving a widow and three small children. For two years he had worked hard to establish a business, which was just beginning to pay well and gave promise of becoming highly profitable during the coming spring and summer. But his cash resources were small, his insurance was almost nothing, and, with his ability and hard work taken away, the business he left offered precarious support for the widow and children. All this his widow knew. Yet, with rent overdue, the doctor to pay, and her children and herself to look out for, she buried her husband's body in a \$150 casket, and the undertaker's total bill ran more than \$250.

The desire of the living to pay final tribute to the dead frequently outweighs the dictates of common sense and prudence, even to the point of violating the known wishes of the dead. Extravagance along this line is encouraged by undertakers, who suggest expensive funerals and offer long-time credit, as many a family knows to its sorrow.

In other countries societies, the members of which agree to keep all funerals under their direction within a certain cost limit, have done much to check extravagance. There is room for organizations to reduce funeral expenses in this country, and a movement in that direction should be encouraged.—Chicago Journal.

EXPENSIVE ERRAND BOYS.

THE American farmer in 1909 received \$300,000,000 for the egg crop. The American consumer paid \$540,000,000 for the same eggs. Who got the difference of \$240,000,000? The farmer raised the hens, took care of them, fed them, housed them, and paid about 50 cents apiece for the care of each one. It cost him not less than \$75,000,000 to keep the hens satisfied and prolific. So, all together, his earnings were reduced to \$225,000,000. But somebody else got \$240,000,000—which is \$15,000,000 more than the farmer received. From the time the eggs left the farmer to the time they reached the consumer the price on them was almost doubled. And the consumer, of course, paid.

Somewhere there is a leech in the egg market and the butter market and the meat market and the grocery market, and all the other markets, that is sucking away at the American consumer's pocketbook. Until this leech is found and beheaded prices of living will be tremendously high, and will grow higher, just so long as there remains anything in the pocketbook to be sucked out. It has not yet been shown that the leech is not the rail-

road and the express companies. In 1909 the traction companies increased their indebtedness by \$1,015,000,000. The interest that is to be paid on this, of course, comes out of the public's pocketbook. And the express companies during the year paid dividends that ranked among the highest on the whole list of industrial institutions. They're expensive errand boys, the railroads and the express companies.—Cincinnati Post.

COST OF LIVING.

IN THE current number of Vogue is a most pathetic essay by Maria Scott on the successful management of a small income. Maria admits—though reluctantly—that a young couple may venture to begin life in a simple manner on \$5,000 a year. Realizing that this is a drastic saying and one that may be received with incredulity by the mass of the people, she goes on to apologize even for hinting that really "nice" people could live on so meager a sum, but is obliged to admit that by dint of a great effort it may be done in a way.

She asks what denials are necessary for those who contemplate living on \$5,000 a year, and then, seeing nobody rising to answer her, answers it herself by saying that great self-denial will be necessary to keep the wolf from the door.

The one consideration that forces itself on the mind after perusal of Maria's reflections is the tremendous amount of self-denial that is being practiced all over the country by persons who are living nobly on this small amount, not able to have more than one automobile and one short trip to Europe annually.—St. Paul Dispatch.

A ROAD THAT STANDS WEAR.

NEW JERSEY claims to have discovered that bituminous roads cost less than macadam and stand the wear of automobile traffic much better. The State has eighty-five miles of this road already and announces that it will lay no more of the old-fashioned kind. The objection to macadam is that it is picked up by the wheels of automobiles and scattered to the four winds of heaven. The wear on the good roads leading out from automobile centers like all of the large cities shows conclusively that an improved material is urgently needed. The bituminous road seems to serve the purpose because it has sufficient resiliency to meet the needs of traffic and at the same time is compact enough to prevent the particles from being picked up by rubber tires.—Nebraska State Journal.

Juliet Bredon's book on her uncle, Sir Robert Hart, as having certain theories concerning one's diet and one's mental attitude toward life which have had much currency among Occidentals of late years.

Wu Ting-fang prided himself upon his alert manner, which made him appear much younger than he really was, and his favorite boast was that he meant to live to be two hundred. Furthermore, he would explain how the feat was to be accomplished.

The first thing, naturally, was diet. The man who would cheat time should live on nuts, like the squirrels. Under no conditions should he touch salt, and he should begin and end each meal with a teaspoonful of olive oil.

"I have hung scrolls in my bedroom," Wu Ting went on to explain, "with these sentences written upon them in English and in Chinese: 'I am young, I am healthy, I am cheerful.'"

"Immediately I enter the room my eye falls upon these precepts. I say to myself, 'Why, of course I am, and therefore I am.'"

Was ever simpler or saner method discovered for warding off old age?

WHAT HABIT WILL DO.

"It was a cold, misty morning in Liverpool, and urgent business required my presence in Sheffield at once, so I was in a hurry," says a young American girl who lately returned from England.

"I expected the unavoidable delay of the custom house, and sighed resignedly. An official opened my suit case, ran his hand hurriedly about, closed it with a snap, and returning it to me, said politely, 'Thank you!' All in about two minutes! Joyfully I hailed a cab, and was driven to the railway station. As I paid my fare the cabman said distinctly, 'Thank you!' with emphasis on the 'you.' When I bought my ticket, the man at the window said emphatically, 'Thank you!'"

"This time I noted the oddly rising infection and long drawn lingering on the last word. The guard who examined my ticket closed the compartment window with a bang, but I caught a faint 'Thank you!' as the train started.

"Arrived in Sheffield, I registered at the station hotel, and the young man at the desk said 'Thank you!' as I signed my name. I took a tram-car up-town, and gasped in amazement at the conductor collected my fare. 'Thank you!' he said, earnestly, as he punched a little ticket receipt for the half-penny which I gave him. 'Let me off at High street, please.' 'Thank you, I will,' he replied. Presently I thought he nodded as he looked at me, and as I started to my feet, I asked, 'High street?' 'No, thank you,' he answered, 'not yet.'"

"I inquired the way of a passer-by, and as he directed me he said, 'Thank you, good afternoon!' This was really making me dizzy, and my mind reverted to an entertaining habit of my childhood, when I would repeat the same word over and over until it lost all meaning to my brain.

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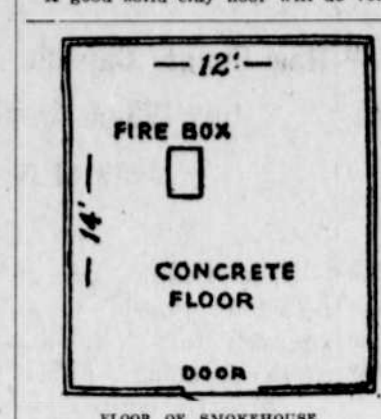
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To Make Farm Smokehouse.

What I have found to be a good smokehouse for curing 75 to 100 hams should be about 12x14 feet. Build a good, strong frame and fill the space between the siding and ceiling with soft brick, writes A. C. Wharton in American Agriculturist. This will make your house cooler in summer and will keep the temperature more even in winter. Cover with shingles. A good solid clay floor will do very



FLOOR OF SMOKEHOUSE.

well, but a tight plank floor is better, but best of all is a good concrete floor. In the center of the floor there should be a firebox built of brick; this is about 12x18 inches inside measurement and 12 inches deep. When curing build your fire in this and cover with a piece of perforated sheet iron.

The house should be eight feet high at the corners and left open to the comb, the inside of the rafters preferably celled. Place 2x8 joists two feet apart on the plates, and 2x4 feet above these put in another set of joists on the rafters; these can be 2x6, and in both sets of joists which will be used to hang your hams place iron meat hooks two feet apart and two inches from the lower part of the joists. These hooks can be made of

a natural fork at the end for the neck yoke, as shown. Have your blacksmith make two loops from an old wagon tire as seen at A, with half inch holes and bolts to attach them to the two forward cross-pieces of sled, holes being bored in the cross-pieces to match holes in irons. The tongue is then notched a little to receive the cross-pieces.

Filling Washy Places.

If there is no other trash on the farm for filling washy places in the fields straw manure from the stables is excellent. The straw will fill the places and catch and hold all of the soil that washes into them. The manure in the straw will help to make the ground more productive when it is again cultivated. Never plow in a gully with fresh dirt without some trashy and brushy filling to hold it and catch more.

Control of San Jose Scale.

Although the San Jose scale is a thing to be avoided, it is not dreaded so much as it used to be. The lime sulphur wash will prevent the disease from spreading. It is a cheap wash for small trees, but quite expensive for large trees, but it pays. Spraying, cultivation, pruning and care of any crop, if properly done, are to a certain extent expensive and troublesome, but they pay in the end in the quantity and perfectness of the fruit.

Keeping Cellars in Order.

Very frequently the cellar is lacking in conveniences. This should not be so; there ought to be a cement floor, bins for potatoes and a rack for milk pans, and such articles. Here is a good rack. Take a post 6 inches square; on this nail cleats, 1 inch thick and 1 1/2 inches wide, in pairs, that is, one on the north side, one on the south side exactly even, and just above these one on east and one on west, leaving 4 inches between each two pairs, and have them long enough to hold milk pans at each end. To use for plates, cans, etc., fasten some boards on for shelves.—Cor. Farm and Home.

Tile-Drained Soils.

Tile-drained soil is more profitable, being more quickly gotten into condition for crops and insuring a better condition all through the growing season. It is also true that crops in drained soil do not suffer as much from drought as do crops in undrained soil.

Pointers in Farm Management.

Acidity may be overcome by applying from 500 to 1,000 pounds of lime per acre, or by the use of floats or grounds shells.

There is much of value written these days about work on the farm which will never benefit some farmers, because they have the notion that they are too busy to read.

No other people set so high a value on good soil as the Hollanders, and we are learning that not many acres, but rich ones, make the profitable farm.

The roots of the cowpea penetrate rather deeply into the subsoil and enable the plant to feed upon the mineral food that is not readily extracted by other crops.

Do not sow alfalfa on a foul field; money is lost, time and patience worn out and the crop of alfalfa will be disappointing. Alfalfa should be sown on land thoroughly prepared for it and in a clean seed bed.

It is the wise farmer who feeds all he raises and then buys some from his neighbors to feed. The farmer who carries such an amount of live stock will be constantly improving his land and making it more productive.

The wise farmer wants assurance on the soil of any land that he may contemplate buying.

Thin Sod in Pasture.

Never let the sod get thin on the pasture land, for this always means the decrease of the root systems of the plants and a decrease in their ability to penetrate the soil in search of plant food. When sod becomes so thin that the hoof of the animal will break through it in wet weather, it has reached a state of exhaustion that requires attention.

Preparing Corn Seed Bed.

It is a good rule in plowing never to leave the corn field either at noon or at night without first harrowing the ground that has been plowed. Spring plowing is often abused by turning the clods up to the sun and dry wind to bake and dry, and depending upon a shower to mellow the ground before planting. No ground is really properly prepared as a seed bed for corn without the use of the disc.

A poorly prepared seed bed means a poor stand and an uneven growth.

As It Struck Pat.

Father Flynn—Your daughter seems far from robust, I notice, Patrick. She looks rather fan-faced.

O'Brien—Begorra, yer rivivence, an' it is two-faced y'd want her to be lookin'?

His Use of Love.

"Let us confess our love," murmured the heroine, "and live for love hereafter."

"Suits me," responded the hero. "I'm about out of epigrams."—Washington Herald.

Even a truth-loving detective gets a shadowy reputation.