

Topics of the Times

Thus passed into history the embalm... and the tainted railway pass.

By the time the average man achieves success he is too old to appreciate it.

Somewhat a man is unable to get the idea into his head that a girl with a dimple can be in the intellectual class.

Says a writer: "Man is a plain necessity. We hope the men who strut around, feeling like a luxury, will see this.

New York now claims to have more than 2,000 millionaires. We might add that very few of them grew up in New York.

If the czar were any sort of politician, he would be making speeches as the workman's friend instead of dodging bombs.

A prophet tells us that all the rivers of the world will dry up in 1907. We never expect to see the day when all the prophets will dry up.

Fish have been found in Guatemala. It is said, with two pairs of eyes. This offsets those eyeless fish in the Mammoth cave. Nature generally evens up things.

After a while it will be just as hard to recall the name of the miner who was buried for fifteen days as it is to recall the name of the woman who wrote that book on trial marriages.

The robbers who were "going to reform" after cracking one more safe are now in the class with the man who is going to "swear off" after one more drink.

If our scientists have at last settled the question whether it was an apple or a lemon that Eve handed to Adam, we can turn our attention to minor matters.

The Houston Post reproaches the paragraphs for overlooking the fact that a Mr. Cobbs has been elected to the Texas legislature. We acknowledge the corn, Cobbs.

President Castro of Venezuela started in life as a smuggler. The trouble with most smugglers is that they have not the desire or the patience to rise to higher and nobler things.

Diamonds are reported to be going down in price. This is probably due to the fact that general prosperity has made it possible for so many people to have diamonds that they have become common.

A fashion writer announces that tiaras will be worn by ladies in the theaters next season. Well, even when general prosperity prevails, few ladies are likely to be able to afford tiaras that will seriously obstruct the view from behind them.

The government is going to buy 27,000,000 stamps daily. Perhaps you think you have done a good day's work when you have licked a few dozen little stamps, but try and imagine how tired you would be if you had to mangle the mangle on 27,000,000.

If a rich man's son is lazy and dissipated it is not always his fault. It may be due to the life his father and his money impose. These self-made men often have strange ideas concerning society. Denied it in their youth, they put a false estimate upon its value and so constrain the natural impulses of their sons and make them idlers in spite of themselves.

Many persons will be surprised to learn, as they may from a report of Consul-General Michael of Calcutta, that most of the finest rugs which are shipped from India to the United States are made in factories controlled by American capital, and on designs which have been worked out in America, to please the American customer. One firm alone controls ten factories and employs fifteen thousand hands, divided between spinners and weavers. This firm would prefer to do its rug-making in the United States, but it is impossible to induce the best Indian rug-makers to leave India, and Americans will not make rugs by hand.

Socrates used to teach that sin is ignorance. In many cases the identity is evident without philosophic explanation. Recently the United States Civil Service Commissioners received an illiterate letter from a candidate for the place of rural carrier in a small town in New York. The writer naively hoped that the gentlemen would find his papers "satisfactory" and said, "I will be pleased to make you gentlemen a present of two hundred dollars if you will make it in my favor." The next thing he knew he had been fined two hundred dollars and sentenced to a day in prison for attempting to bribe a government officer. The fact that this unhappy offender put his offer in writing and addressed it to a public officer shows that he was not a deep-dyed sinner, but a foolish man who believed the sensational charges that most if not all public officers are corrupt.

The cost of being a loyal college graduate is increasing every day. In addition to paying for "directories," "booklets," "catalogues," "student publications" and various forms of "iana" there are class dinners to be subscribed for, class dormitories to be built, class professorships to be endowed, prizes, scholarships, fellowships and library foundations to be established. There is also a moral as well as a financial drain upon the resources of the alumnus. He has to remain faithful even though his college slays him. He must be ready to approve the policy and even the speeches of his college president. He must praise the curricula.

lum. He must "root" at games and races, however languid his interest in them; must defend the ineffective stroke of the crew, errors on the diamond and on the gridiron and at last must send his sons to be educated where he was educated himself, even if in his judgment some other college would be better. Unless he does all these things with enthusiasm he is thought to be a churlish fellow without "college spirit."

The "old red school house" of fancy is fast becoming a reminiscence in this country. The day when the "district school" played an important part in every rural community is long past. The original idea of dividing a township into fairly regular sections, in each of which was to be a school house, was a progressive one. It had favor even among those whose own education was scanty, but whose hopes for their children were high. The present tendency toward the consolidation of schools in the country does not indicate a backward step. It points rather toward greater efficiency. The system was all right when it was planned. The present trouble is that there are few pupils. The country people, like their city kindred, have small families, where the settlers of two generations ago reared large broods. It is no uncommon thing to hear a man of 50 declare, "When I was a boy there were fifty of us attending the school in this district. Now there are only ten pupils, representing three or four families." When three school directors found themselves meeting to arrange for a teacher for half a dozen pupils and for coal or wood and janitor service, and then found by comparing notes that their neighbors in the adjoining district were facing the same situation, it was easy to consider a proposition to unite the two schools under one teacher, thus saving expense and adding to the zest of teacher and pupil alike by the inspiration of larger numbers. Certain new questions at once arose, notably that of transportation, a thing not always easy during the winter months. If the school privileges formerly enjoyed near home were made more remote it was only fair that the children be carried to the more distant location. But this did not prove a serious difficulty or one of prohibitive expense. A little experience showed a saving in every way in the case of the single school with one teacher, one janitor, one bill for heating, and a conveyance for the use of pupils, when compared with the two schools with two teachers, two janitors, two bills for heating, and no provision for transportation. Nor was combination limited to two schools, for often cases arose where the arrangement of the roads made it possible for successful union of several small schools in one large one, with much better equipment and teaching staff. The plan has been steadily growing in popularity, so that it may be regarded as the practical thing to do in the majority of country districts with fairly limited territorial area. Despite a veto by Gov. Yates the Illinois school authorities were enabled to give it a trial in several counties, and with good results. When it is shown that the cost per pupil in some of the country schools reaches \$52, as compared with less than \$20 in the city schools, the saving by combination is readily apparent. If combination meant retrenchment in the facilities for instruction it would rightfully be unpopular. But where it means better schools and better equipment there is everything in its favor.

AN IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT. FOR a time it was supposed that the relations between the States and the nation had been permanently adjusted by the Civil War. It has lately been impressing itself on the minds of the people that the war decided only the indissolubility of the Union, and that the old conflict between the national power and state rights still continues. It is of great importance that the men of the present and coming generations should give serious thought to these things, so that when they vote they may express their opinion with intelligence. The general question is between a centralized government, supreme in all matters that concern the people of the whole country, and control in local concerns by the State governments, even when the whole people are interested in the decision. How far can or ought the national government to go in the regulation of large corporations chartered by one State, but doing business in other States? Should it interfere in the management of manufacturing as well as transportation companies? If international complications arise because a State refuses to exercise its power over affairs within its borders, shall the national government, acting for the general good, step in and try to set things right? Such are some of the recent forms in which this old political question reappears for decision. It was the issue on which Thomas Jefferson defeated John Adams for the presidency in 1800. The conflict ever it led

EXPENSIVE GIFTS. The two girls were talking of Christmas gifts, and Dorothy asked Helen who of all her tribe of relatives and host of friends seemed to have the keenest intuition as to her longings. "I'm not sure about that," said Helen, after a short period of reflection, "but I know whose gift I always find saves me from embarrassment all the next year—Aunt Mary Colburn's."

EARLY MASONIC LODGE ROOM. The unpretentious ruin illustrated above is at Williamsburg, Va., and was once a Masonic Lodge, the first headquarters of the order in the State of Virginia. It has been unoccupied for many years, but steps have been taken to rescue it from total decay. Patrick Henry was a member of this lodge.

BEATS LAWYER IN REPARTEE. Witness Shows Cross Examiner He Knows Where He Lives. A veteran member of the Baltimore bar tells of an amusing cross-examination in a court of that city. The witness had seemed disposed to dodge the question of counsel for the defense. "Sir," admonished the counsel sternly, "you need not state your impressions. We want facts. We are quite competent to form our own impressions." Now, sir, answer me categorically.

Tennyson's Astronomy. In Tennyson's "Palace of Art" occur the lines: She saw the snowy poles and moons of Mars. That mystic field of drifted light in mid Orion, and the married stars. This at first looks like a literary parallel to Swift's well known fortuitous forecasts of the discovery of the Martian satellites, and J. S. Stevenson, writing from Blairavon, Norwood, Ceylon, points out that Professor H. H. Turner quotes it in "Modern Astronomy" as having been written in 1855. This, however, appears not to have been the case, for Mr. Stevenson on reference to the biography of the late poet laureate by the present Lord Tennyson has found the note: "The Moons of Mars" is the only modern reading here. All the rest are more than half a century old. Scientific discovery was thus not anticipated by Tennyson in the mention of Martian satellites—Nature.

A Bitter Speech. Hilary K. Adair, the noted Western detective, replied to the toast, Detection, at a dinner in Omaha. "Speeches, pregnant with meaning, often help the detective in his delicate work," said Mr. Adair. "Often a speech of eight or ten words will reveal volumes."

Two Sides to Trouble. Mrs. Peters had just returned from a visit to her brother, Calvin Jones, who had recently lost the power of speech through a paralytic stroke. "We must cheer your mother up all we can," Mr. Peters had remarked to his daughter. "She always set considerable by Calvin, and this affliction that has come upon him will be apt to upset her completely."

When He Is Noble. Little Willie—Say, pa, what is one of nature's noblemen? Pa—A candidate for office just before election day, my son.

In 1950. "I am thinking seriously of marrying," said Miss Strongmind, "and with your permission I'll speak to your father to-morrow."

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Where He Falled. Mrs. Harper—Your husband is an expert accountant, isn't he? Mrs. Adder—He is supposed to be, but he failed to give a satisfactory account of himself when he came home at 2 o'clock the other morning.

I. O. U. Downing—What have you named the new arrival? Upon—Ira Ormand Upon. Downing—Judging from the initials he must be a child of promise.

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As we stood there we could hear the rats squealing and rustling about in the flooring. Occasionally one stuck its head up through a hole. The cat would prick up its ears and the slow movement of the tip of its tail told that it was watching. Then I saw the wisdom of picketing it so near.

EDITORIALS

OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

STILL A CHANCE FOR THE POOR BOY.

CRACKERS are forever saying that the average American boy with nothing but his two hands, his brains and his pluck no longer has a chance. Gone, so the croakers lament, are the good old days when merit, with "Excelsior" on its banner, could press upward to the heights. Somehow, the path to success is supposed to be fanned up at its very starting point; and all that the poor youth of to-day is expected by the croakers to do is to sit down outside the fence and bewail his sad fate all his days.

Alexander J. Cassatt, president of the Pennsylvania, and as such guardian of a billion of property and employer of 150,000 men, who died the other day, found his first employment as a rodmann. The first lesson he learned in real life was to work. He knew what it meant to drag the chain through brush and over the hills. Then, step by step, he worked upward, his hillside. Then, step by step, he worked upward, his hillside. Then, step by step, he worked upward, his hillside.

The beaten path to success may be fenced against the boy without capital, but there are always ways across lots and over the hills. He whose ideals are stars swung high in the heavens needs no beaten path to guide him. He who has learned to labor and whose heart thrills with aspiration and resolve has the best capital there is—the best chance. The silver spoon in the mouth at birth is greatly overrated as a factor either for success or failure. There are lots of rich young men whom wealth has not deadened. And lots of poor ones who it would not have helped.—Kansas City World.

AN IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT.

FOR a time it was supposed that the relations between the States and the nation had been permanently adjusted by the Civil War. It has lately been impressing itself on the minds of the people that the war decided only the indissolubility of the Union, and that the old conflict between the national power and state rights still continues. It is of great importance that the men of the present and coming generations should give serious thought to these things, so that when they vote they may express their opinion with intelligence.

How far can or ought the national government to go in the regulation of large corporations chartered by one State, but doing business in other States? Should it interfere in the management of manufacturing as well as transportation companies? If international complications arise because a State refuses to exercise its power over affairs within its borders, shall the national government, acting for the general good, step in and try to set things right? Such are some of the recent forms in which this old political question reappears for decision.

TRAVEL BY RAIL AND SEA.

SEVERAL hundred ships were lost at sea last year, but they were nearly all sailing vessels. Such steamers as foundered were small and antiquated. No first-class steamship such as those which make up the fleets of the great transatlantic companies was ever so much as in danger.

The perils of traveling by sea have been almost eliminated. Modern ocean-going ships are handled with perfect skill and discipline, and one who takes passage in any of them is as safe as he would be in his own bed. But railroad travel is no safer than it was thirty years ago; indeed, it may be doubted whether it is as safe as it was then.

The perils of the sea are tremendous, but men have conquered them. The perils of land are none, and the dangers of a railroad journey are all self-created. If railroads were managed as carefully as steamship lines there should be no accidents. The trouble is that railroads now seem to be in the hands of Wall street speculators who are more interested in big dividends on watered stock than in improving their roads.

Railroads will some day be almost as safe as steamships are now, but that time will not come until men of conscience are placed in charge of them. To-day those who use the railroads of the United States take risks such as ought not to be demanded of human beings.—Chicago Journal.

PROSPERITY'S CONTINUANCE.

PROPHETS and the sons of prophets, prognosticators, star gazers, "financial experts" and other persons who are manifestly not in that class, are still disputing as to the continuance of prosperity during 1907. The alleged lugubrious prediction of Rockefeller and the gloomy views of Stuyvesant Fish are quoted on the one hand. On the other, the cheerful predictions of a British Rothschild and numerous American men of affairs are printed to show that there is nothing whatever the matter with the United States.

The every-day citizen may wisely conclude that the opinion of one man respecting the future is just about as likely to be correct as that of another, and that his own best course will be to apply himself with diligence to whatever trade or occupation he is engaged in, not forgetting the fact that it is always advisable to keep a certain amount of funds available for equally weather. Worrying over the possibility of "reactions" in advance of definite signs of their coming is not unusually a remunerative habit. Sticking at honest work is apt to be much more conducive to useful results.—Philadelphia Bulletin.



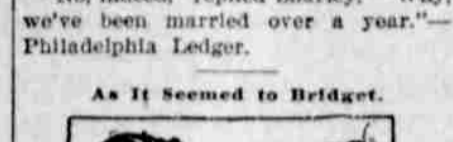
Z. Scheme.

"They tell me you're in love with your employer's wife." "Nothing in it." "But you take her about a great deal, don't you?" "That's a bluff of mine to get myself a stand-in with the boss. He hopes I'm going to elope with her."—Cleveland Leader.

All Changed.

"How about Miss Sneering?" inquired the returned traveler. "I suppose you are still friends?" "No, indeed," replied Sharley. "Why, we've been married over a year."—Philadelphia Ledger.

As It Seemed to Bridget.



Mrs. Pulton—Now that I have engaged you, Bridget, I am going to begin right away to give you a little training in the art of waiting on guests. You see my daughter is coming out next month—

Bridget—Indade, mum! An' how long was she sint up for?

Ten Years After.

Wife—I came across a bundle of your old love letters to-day. Husband—Did you read them over? Wife—Yes. Husband—And what was the effect of the perusal?

Wife—I wondered which was the bigger fool—you for writing them or I for marrying you after receiving them.

Heavy Coasting.

"Russia is a pretty hard country," remarked the man who had been reading all the atrocities committed in the last year.

In Harmony.

Gunner—I met that swell Miss Flasher and her swell French poodle on the boulevard the other morning. She gave me a haughty bow. Guyer—And what did the dog do? Gunner—Why, he gave me a haughty "bow-wow."

THE MATRIMONIAL DIFFERENCE.



A married man. A devoted husband.

Unappreciative. Fond Mother—We are undecided now whether to have Dolly take lessons in painting or in singing. Which would you advise? Bachelor Uncle—Give her lessons in painting, by all means. It is so much less disturbing to the neighbors.—Somerville Journal.

Just So.

"Poverty," remarked the sarcastic person, "isn't the best thing in the world to have."

"No," rejoined the thoughtful thinker, "but, unlike wealth, it seldom makes a fool of a man."

Foregone Conclusion.

Mrs. Ash—John has taken the great fancy lately to patting every baby he sees on the street. Friend—What office is he going to run for?—Detroit Free Press.

An Ice-d Scream.



When He Is Noble.

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In 1950.

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Cut Guards This Baby.

A baby that lives in the north end has a cat for a bodyguard to keep the rats from attacking it. The cat is tied to a bedpost, says the Kansas City Star.

"A few days ago," said E. T. Brigham, of the Helping Hand Institute, "I visited a small shop on 5th street, one of those 'dumps' where da banana is sold in front, and where a living room is maintained in the rear. On the floor in the living room lay a baby, sleeping. Picketed to a bedpost by a long stout cord was a cat. I asked the woman who tied it there.

"Sura," she said, "I tie-a da cat. Keep offa da rat."

"As we stood there we could hear the rats squealing and rustling about in the flooring. Occasionally one stuck its head up through a hole. The cat would prick up its ears and the slow movement of the tip of its tail told that it was watching. Then I saw the wisdom of picketing it so near.

The woman told me that if the cat was not there the rats would be so bold they would swarm over the baby and bite it."

ISTHMIAN ROAD IS IN OPERATION.



General Porfirio Diaz, President of the Republic of Mexico, and Sir Westman Pearson recently nominally superintended the unloading of the first ton of freight from the steamship Venture and saw it loaded into a freight car ready to be transported across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec on the Tehuantepec National Railroad to Coahuaco ready for reshipment by steamer to New York. In doing so they commercially brought San Francisco 11,627 miles nearer New York. The distance around the Horn is 16,553 miles, while that via the Isthmus of Tehuantepec is only 4,925 miles. The Tehuantepec highway, the competitor of the Panama Canal, is now opened to the traffic of the world and the dream of Hernan Cortes almost 400 years ago came true. Eight years before the possible completion of the Panama canal, there is opened from one ocean to the other an American isthmian route. Thirty-five millions of dollars gold have already been expended in perfecting this project, and \$15,000,000 more will be expended before all is completed.

TWO SIDES TO TROUBLE.

Mrs. Peters had just returned from a visit to her brother, Calvin Jones, who had recently lost the power of speech through a paralytic stroke. "We must cheer your mother up all we can," Mr. Peters had remarked to his daughter. "She always set considerable by Calvin, and this affliction that has come upon him will be apt to upset her completely."

But, contrary to their expectations, Mrs. Peters returned home in a cheerful frame of mind. "Your uncle is in good health," she said in response to her daughter's inquiries; "he eats and sleeps well. Of course he can't talk, and that's a dreadful hard thing to bear, especially with a Jones."

"When a man came to the village once, when we were little, and examined our heads—a phrenologist, he was—he said he never saw larger bumps of language in his life than Calvin and I had. But of course that don't help poor Calvin any now, but I had a real

good visit with him, and I shall go often."

"Wasn't it dreadful dull for you, just sitting quiet there?" questioned Mr. Peters. "Quiet?" Mrs. Peters looked at him in surprise. "Quiet! Oh, well, of course Calvin couldn't talk, but he hasn't lost his hearing, and I regard that as a great mercy. He can hear. And for the first time in my life I was able to speak my mind fully and freely, and to be certain that I was understood and sympathized with, and that it wouldn't go any further."