Topics of the Times

Newfoundland proposes that we shall take her fish or cut out her bait.

A girl doesn't believe all she hears when the neighbors begin to call her a spinster.

"Don't talk; it's a bad habit," says Tom Lawson, who has discovered that it pays better to write it.

Doctors say that no smoker of cigarettes can be a hero. And yet every time he rolls one he takes his life in his hands.

A Boston statistician shows how a woman can dress on $65 a year, but the interesting question is, "Can he show his wife?"

Bishop Fallows thinks the world is growing better. Well, it ought to be. Anthony Comstock has been at work reforming it for thirty-two years.

The girls who drew lucky numbers in the Bonesteel lottery last year are now being besieged by appeals to take a chance in the matrimonial lottery.

Oil baths are coming into favor with some women in the East. Dr. Gladden would be glad to see Rockefeller given the treatment if the oil were boiling.

The Cincinnati Enquirer asks: "Was Hamlet really mad?" Probably not. He hadn't seen the performances of any of the people who were to try to play him.

The conceded fact that there is "no nonsense" about Mr. Shonts is regarded generally as a trustworthy guaranty that the Panama canal will be built on sane and sensible lines.

President Plaza of Ecuador has recently been married to Senorita Avelina Lasso. We hope he will never in future years be ungallant enough to set up the claim that he was roped in.

Susan B. Anthony insists that divorce is not an evil. Miss Anthony is convinced, in fact, that nothing should be thrown in the way of a married woman who at last sees the folly of marriage. But Miss Anthony may be prejudiced against the men.

Mrs. Rose Dolley, of Brunswick, N. J., wants to sell her 9-months-old baby for the purpose of raising money so that she may return to Italy. She would probably be sorry if she found a purchaser and went back and then, some day, the boy became President of the United States.

In a certain half-civilized country they say that when a man becomes too old to catch game his eldest son kills him, that this is the duty of the eldest son. But the Indians have a better way; when an Indian man becomes too old to work he takes a walk and never comes back. That saves the eldest son the trouble. But the terrible Chinese; they are the worst—they love the old and care for them tenderly. No wonder people hate the Chinese.

Japan has a proverb which says: "Thy father and mother are as the sky and earth, thy lord as the moon, thy teacher as the sun." This is the nation that takes lessons wherever they are to be learned, and goes to school at the feet of the Western nations in admiration and respect, but without loss of national character. It is significant that people who worship their ancestors and whose emperor claims direct descent from 26 centuries of emperors should possess the motto, "Education is more than birth."

Sociologists in recent years have been giving us a lot of views and statistics as to the restrictions which society has placed upon the ordinary course of nature and we have been instructed time and again that the chief duty of man is to multiply and replenish the earth. On the whole that seems to be what the race is doing, for every census in civilized lands indicates that the population is growing rapidly, due not only to a general cessation of wars, but to the fact that people take better care of themselves and live longer. A statement from the life insurance companies indicates that the average life of the insured man is more than forty years, which indicates that for the whole race it must be much nearer 40 than the former standard of 33. Largely this is due to the fact that more babies reach maturity.

The census of the Philippines has now been published in four volumes of over 3,000 pages. As the completion of this work heralds the approach of a grant to the Filipinos of a share in the general government of the islands it is well to note the census facts as to the literacy of the people, which have a bearing on their fitness for self-rule. Of the 7,635,426 inhabitants 44.5 per cent are able to read, but of these less than one-half are also able to write. Classified as Christian are 6,987,686, or more than nine-tenths of the inhabitants. Of the Christians nearly one-fourth are males of the voting age. Of males of the voting age only one-third are literate. Ninety-seven per cent of the males of voting age are of Filipino citizenship. The figures, even as given, must be accepted only with the recognition that literacy means the ability to read or write any language, whether English, Spanish or a Malay dialect. The census report tells us that the Spanish friars discouraged the learning of Spanish, as they felt that the general acquirement of a single language throughout the islands would lessen their authority. The native dialects were encouraged, and the result is that the majority of the literates can read or write only in a single dialect. While these facts are not encouraging as to the capacity of the Filipinos for self-government, it must be remembered that the American school system is accomplishing wonders, that a share in the local governments has already been giving the Filipinos much valuable training, and that the coming participation in the central government will only be of a limited nature at the start. The change will give the islanders power for good, but restrain their power for harm. There is not the slightest reason for fearing that the experiment will be dangerous.

It is related that Diogenes and a party of friends were reclining on the hay in the barn, indulging in a secret and seductive game of "seven-up," and that Diogenes, after putting the ace where it would do him the most good, remarked there were two things that Times could not destroy—the interest in "high, low, jack and the game," and baseball. Thereupon it was announced in the afternoon edition of the Daily Yellow that Diogenes was a philosopher, as well as a youth with a keen regard for truth and accuracy. We do not profess to have any intimate knowledge of cards. It is common knowledge that "bridge" is for those who have money to lose; that euchre appeals to women, and that pedro and hearts are cut-throat amusements built for certain classes. But, somehow, baseball appeals to all. It is to the great majority THE American game. It is amusement that calls for shouts and yells and handclapping. It drives away the blue devils. It makes you forget that business is bad and profits scant. It heals domestic troubles. It induces boys to cut out cigarets and bad habits and strive for brawn. And it arouses public sentiment. We may be a little shy in rendering proper credit to men who have achieved fame in letters, in art, in music, but we bow low to the individual who shuts the Bostons out or holds the Pirates down to one hit. We apply such nicknames as "Heinie," "Cy," "Chip," "Cupid," "Dusty," etc., to men whose one talent is the ability to play ball hard and well, and that is our way of getting close to their hearts and letting them know that we are friendly; that we love them; that we will cheer their victories and weep over their defeats. Now, fellers, go ahead and play the game for all there is in it. We will sit on the bleachers, or on the grass, or stand out in the sun and get the back of our necks blistered, while we attend to it that you get all the applause you deserve.

A Tokyo Incident.

The Russian Cathedral in Tokio, which is a conspicuous feature in the district of the capital where it is located, has been carefully guarded by police ever since relations with Russia have been strained. When hostilities broke out precautions were redoubled. No one is now allowed to go into the building without permission.

Recently an American journalist paid a visit to the cathedral, sent in his card and was permitted to enter. The day was Sunday, the time about 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

On entering the building the visitor was astonished to see a number of Japanese collected in the space beneath the dome. It turned out that a marriage service was being celebrated according to the rites of the Russian Orthodox church, the bride and bridegroom being Japanese.

It says not a little for their high courage and firm faith in their religion that these people should have determined to get married in the Russian cathedral at a time when such a cloud rests upon everything Russian. It speaks still more strongly of the broad toleration of the Japanese people, who permitted the ceremony to be performed.

Impassioned Fiction.

A reader for a prominent magazine recently received a manuscript which contained an exquisite bit of emotional writing.

The young writer thus described how a beautiful young woman refused the hand of a despicable wretch responsible for the ruin of her father:

"Scornfully and spurningly she refused the cad and slapped his face!"

A woman seldom means the mean things she says.

MANCHURIAN CART AS AN AMBULANCE.

As may be seen from the sketch, the conveniences for transporting the wounded on some of the Manchurian battlefields have not always been everything that could be desired. Owing to the rapid movements of the forces it sometimes happened that the ambulance corps was left far in the rear, and it was necessary for the Red Cross workers to impress into service some of the rough Manchurian carts, which are innocent of springs and afford about as crude a means of locomotion as has ever been devised by the hand of man. They are at best only the most indifferent makeshifts and were used only when there was absolutely nothing else available.

NEW NAVAL STATION.

Galapagos Islands to Be Important Pacific Base for Uncle Sam.

The persistent rumor that the United States government has decided to purchase the Galapagos islands has recently derived additional strength

MAP OF THE GALAPAGOS GROUP.

from certain semi-official admissions made at Washington. The probability of such action on the part of the government is demonstrated still further by the announcement that diplomatic negotiations of importance are in progress between the Washington authorities and Ecuador, the owner of the property in question. Since the acquisition of the Panama canal by the United States the islands seem to be necessary as a base for naval safeguarding.

The Galapagos group lies about 600 miles west of Ecuador, and it is of no actual value to that republic. She has never made but one attempt to colonize it, and that was a dismal failure. About sixty-five years ago a penal colony of 200 convicts, all negroes, was established on one of the islands, but in the course of time all of these unwilling settlers managed to return to the mainland. Since then the islands have been practically deserted, except Chatham, the property of Senor Cobos, who has established a plantation there and peopled it with Guayaquil laborers.

If the Galapagos were inhabited they would become the stopping place for all the vessels plying between North and South American ports. They lie about ninety miles on either side of the equator and consist of eleven good-sized islands and a host of unimportant satellites. They are of unmistakable volcanic origin.

All of the islands are barren along their coast line, the landscape showing only a waste of shattered masses of lava. In the wet season, however, they do not appear to be so infertile when viewed from the sea. The lava is half hidden by masses of verdure which on closer inspection proves to be a variety of cactus which flourishes during the rainy season and then withers and turns black. Toward the interior the prospect grows quite different. Ascending from the coast to an elevation of from 800 to 1,000 feet, one enters a region of the most luxuriant vegetation. In the craters of the extinct volcanoes the decomposed lava soil is extremely rich, and all forms of tropical plant life are developed rapidly. Numerous springs are found in these basins, and showers are frequent.

The Galapagos archipelago is the habitat of the most gigantic species of land tortoise known to naturalists. It was from this animal—the galipago—that the name of the group was derived. Single specimens of this huge creature frequently weigh 400 pounds and over.

Chatham island, one of the group which has been most frequently explored, now the scene of Senor Cobos' hacienda, is populated by thousands of domestic cats, all of them perfectly black. It is believed that they are descendants from cats which have escaped from ships that have stopped at the island. They live in crevices between the lava masses near the shore and subsist on crabs and fish. Other animals derived from domestic progenitors are numerous.

SCENE ON CHATHAM ISLAND.

Emulate Count Tolstoi.

Not long ago the Vienna newspapers were speaking of a Hungarian doctor of philosophy who had become penetrated with Tolstoi's ideas and had apprenticed himself to a Budapest shoemaker, says the New York World. Now a Bulgarian doctor of philosophy, Lubekoff, who has passed his examinations at the University of Sofia "cum laude," and was engaged as professor of Latin, has become a bootblack at a street corner in Sofia. His customers come because they wish to have their boots polished by a doctor.

Lubekoff does not forget that he is a Tolstoist and impresses on his customers the virtue of lowly labor and the happiness which it brings. He has actually succeeded in founding several little colonies of Tolstoists in Sofia.

Where to Look for It.

"No," said Subbubs, "he's not living in Swamphurst now. He's been in Florida all winter, and now he's in California for his health."

"I should think he'd go back to Swamphurst for it," remarked Citiman.

"Really?"

"Of course. That's where he lost it."—Philadelphia Press.

Terrible Temptation.

An eminent English surgeon, whose brusqueness with grown-ups recalls that of the famous Abernethy, is quite another person when children are his patients. Then he is as amiable as an angel of a big St. Bernard dog.

A short time ago, according to St. James' Budget, this gentle giant got up out of a warm bed at 3 o'clock in the morning to attend a tiny boy in piteous plight from diphtheria. He performed the operation of tracheotomy and saved the child's life.

Time went on and his general condition improved, but there was one disquieting symptom. He refused to use his voice. When he was questioned he nodded or shook his head, but would not speak. Finally the surgeon found a way. One morning he talked at his stubborn little patient.

"I'm sorry he can't speak to me, nurse," the surgeon said, "because I'm going up to London to-morrow, and sha'n't know whether to bring him a horse or a gun."

There was a brief silence. The surgeon and nurse waited breathlessly. Then a tiny finger stole up to a wounded throat, and the ghost of a baby boy's voice said:

"Please, doctor, bwing me a lickle gun!"

"He" Is a Girl.

A tired mother with two children, a baby of 2 years that sat on her lap and a bright-eyed boy of perhaps 4, who sat beside her, were trying to enjoy a little luncheon in a restaurant in the business section of the city. Two young ladies entered and sat down at the same table. Seeing the difficulty the woman had in eating lunch and holding her younger child at the same time, one of the young ladies leaned over and said in a propitiating tone: "What a sweet little boy! Won't you let me hold him until you finish lunch?" The mother gladly granted the request and was transferring her charge into the arms of the younger woman, when the little boy, with never a smile, raised his voice and exclaimed: "He ain't a boy; he's a little girl!"—Philadelphia Press.

The Curious Limpets.

The limpets are a curious kind of shellfish. They resemble the abalones in their habits. The interior is made of the most brilliant colors, bronze and iridescent hues predominating. They are found on the west coast of Mexico and are so large that the people use them for wash basins.

They are ferocious animals and prey with great ferocity on clams. The process seems slow, but the limpet always gets there. He gets his cover over the unsuspecting clam and puts his big foot on his shell, generally on a weak spot. Then he whips out a long, wiry tongue and proceeds to bore a hole in his captive. When this is done the shell flies open, and the limpet is free to feast on the poor clam's carcass. He eats but a part and leaves the rest for the fishes of the sea.

Marriage in Spain.

In Spain a bride has no girl attendants to stand at the altar with her, but instead a "madrina," or godmother. Neither does she have a wedding cake or any festive departure after the ceremony. The wedded pair go quietly to their new home, where they remain until the following day, when they start on their honeymoon. Before leaving they pay a formal visit to their respective relatives.

In the great wave of popular feeling for Norwegian independence which is agitating Norway the hero of the hour is Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, the explorer, and it is freely prophesied that he will be his country's next prime minister, if not her president, should the union with Sweden be broken.

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