

TOPICS OF THE TIMES

It will be hard to put a permanent coat of whitewash on the licorice trust.

When a girl is pretty she doesn't have to learn housekeeping to get married.

The man who doesn't want anything from the public has a way of helping himself.

Indications are that the interurban is going to make itself a characteristic of 1907.

Can you think of anything that is easier or that pays better returns on the investment than pleasing a little child?

Professor Lowell says there are canals on Mars that are thirty-five miles wide. This may be accepted as a rather broad statement.

Now that several Frenchmen have been accidentally injured in duels, we may soon expect a clamor for the de-britualizing of the sport.

The world is certainly growing better. Fewer public officials are riding on free passes this year than in any former year for a generation.

It is explained that the robber who held up a train in Virginia recently got nothing. That is unfortunate. He should have got five years at least.

All Merzi, the new Shah of Persia, is described as a man who possesses an iron will. Also he has more step-mothers than any other ruler now extant.

The new pure food law does not, as we understand, prevent the manufacturers putting pictures on the cans that will make our mouths water to look at them.

The Standard Oil crowd may be fined \$58,000,000 by the Ohio courts. Don't, however, make any big wagers that the maximum penalties will be imposed.

Nobody is now talking about annexing Cuba. It seems much more satisfactory to have the United States military down there, with Cuba paying the expenses.

The Howard Goulds are again being sued. Mr. and Mrs. Gould have for some years past been enabling the New York lawyers to keep from being overtaken by anything like ennui.

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.

The Czar has written a poem in which he expresses the belief that sadness will pursue him through life. If sadness is the only thing that ever gets after him Nicholas will be luckier than most of the other prominent Russians.

With a view to facilitate the transaction of business, the London Times Company has been converted into a limited liability corporation. The shares of the private company which publishes the Times have become so subdivided in the course of descent through four generations that there are now about one hundred and fifty proprietors, some of whom hold as little as one-fiftieth part of the one-hundred and fifty-second part of an original one-fifth.

Assassination never yet won a victory for an individual, a party or a cause—and it never will. The murder of Lieutenant General Pavloff adds another to a shamefully long list of similar crimes in Russia, but like all those that have gone before this one will bring no fruits to the assassin and his friends. A class of people, whether under a Czar or a president, who resort to the torch and the bomb are not entitled to liberty. The man who slays in the dark or who shoots down in cold blood and the party which supports such a man are unfit for self-government. The yoke of national oppression can't be broken by murdering individuals.

A corporation recently paid more than a hundred and fifty thousand dollars in fines imposed by the court for breaking the laws relating to rebates. This was an important episode in the moral housecleaning to which American business is being subjected. But it is not so important as another payment that was made within the same week. A prominent citizen of New York voluntarily paid the city twenty-seven thousand dollars back taxes which he had had deducted because he misunderstood the law relating to

the exemption of mortgages. How many Americans pay the taxes which they know they owe, even if the amount is more than the assessor determines?

Joseph H. Choate tells lawyers that they should be courteous in the cross examination of witnesses. He also expresses the judgment that rudeness and discourtesy hurt the lawyers who employ them. Lawyers as a class are not loved. Most men at some time or other have had disagreeable experience with them and while they may respect individual lawyers their feelings toward lawyers in the mass is not one of respect and affection. The badgering of witnesses under cross examination which small lawyers delight in and which judges permit when they should not is an old evil which creates for the badgering lawyers the cordial dislike not only of the badgered victims but of most of the laymen who witness the performance.

There is a homing instinct among men as there is among birds. It is a pretty fact in what may be termed innate psychology that men as they grow old and see the end approaching have a disposition to return to the places where they were born to await the summons. They do not always obey this prompting; indeed, it is disregarded in more cases than it is heeded. But the instinct is there. It is declared by students of biology that the love of one's birthplace is congenital and that a man who was born near the sea, for instance, will always have a yearning to return to the ocean, even though he dwells far inland from infancy to old age. Another phase of this homing instinct is the desire that men experience to be buried among their kindred. It is this instinct which accounts for the transportation of dead bodies over thousands of miles of land and sea that they may lie in some country graveyard, perhaps, within sight of a farmhouse deserted half a century ago. The author of "Waverly" compared the course of a man through the world to that of a hare, which is started from her form and after a long chase and making a large circle ends by returning to the nest from which she started. Like the wounded deer, man yearns to reach home to die. Any eastbound overland train contains evidence of it in the poor consumptive who, having vainly sought the climate of Arizona or California in the hope of prolonging life, turns his face backward when all hope is at an end. "Going home to die" is one of the saddest sights in life. Collateral to this instinct and akin to it in origin is the desire which city men of country birth experience for rural life as they grow older. This yearning for the country is, indeed, not confined to the country bred. Nearly all men experience it and this is the result of atavism—inherited love for the soil persisting through many generations of city dwellers. As man grows old he desires to get back to nature. So that in these things, as in many others, we are really not free agents, but the creatures of heredity, governed literally by the instincts and tendencies of ancestors dead for centuries. Our forefathers live in us and it is a picturesque thought. It promises an immortality that we can all understand and appreciate.

WHERE IDEALS QUICKLY DIE.

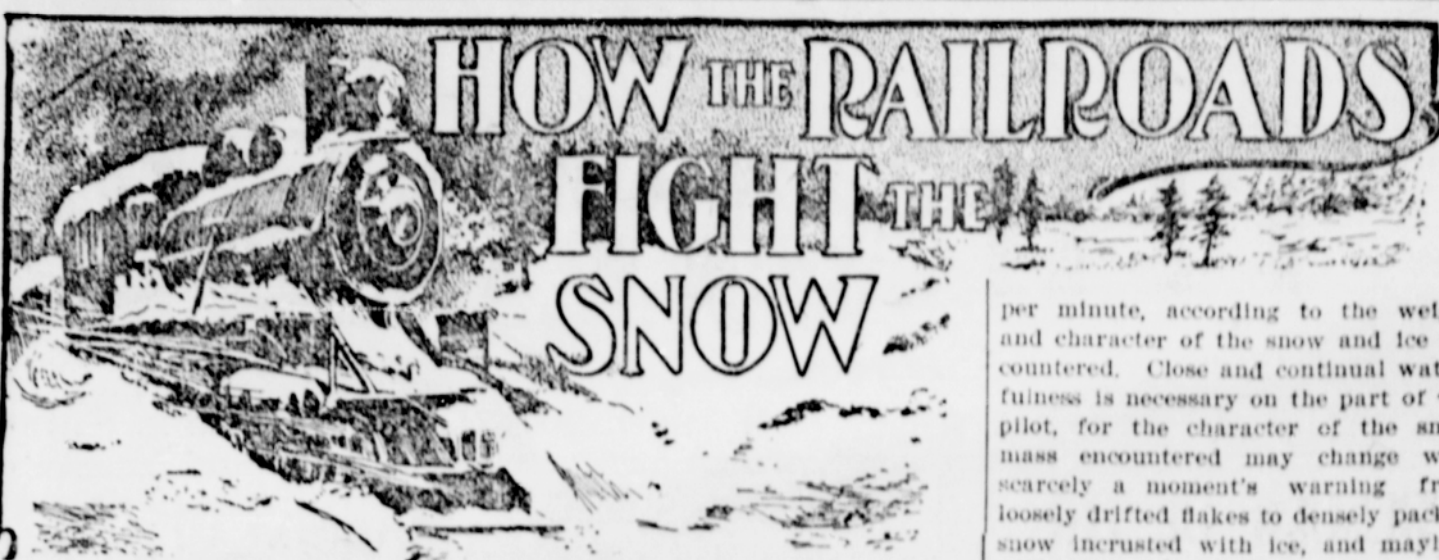
Commercial Atmosphere of New York City Acts as Cramp on Genius.

What ability or skill the great man of the provinces brought with him to the metropolis may be only the foundation for real work. There will surely be extensive revising of ideals and methods. A story is told of a poet who arrived in town with a complete epic. This found no acceptance, so after cursing the stupidity of the public and the publishers he took to writing "Sunday stuff." Soon the matter-of-fact attitude of the workers around him, with the practical view of the market he acquired, led him to doubt the literary value of the work he had done in the sentimental atmosphere of his native place.

Presently a commission to write a column of humor a week came to him and he cut his epic in short lengths, tacked a squib on each fragment and eventually succeeded in printing it all as humor at a price many times larger than the historic one brought by "Paradise Lost."

Another newcomer brought unsalable plays and high notions of the austerity of the artistic vocation. Three months after his arrival he was delighted to get a commission to write the handbook which a utilitarian publisher proposed to sell to visitors seeking the metropolis. This commission brought not only a fair payment for the manuscript on delivery but involved a vital secondary consideration. The title of the work was "Where to Eat in New York," and its preparation made it necessary for the author to dine each evening for a month in a different cafe at the proprietor's expense.—Atlantic.

As long as Father retains any rights at all, he is pretty sure to remove his shoes out by the sitting room fire.



Probably the most picturesque phase of American railroad operations is found in the manner in which the steam roads of the West battle with the giant snowdrifts of the mountain regions. This novel activity is seen in its most spectacular form on the higher levels of the Rocky mountains. The largest rotary snow plow in the world is in service on that engineering marvel, the Moffat railroad in Colorado, and the manner in which it bores through the great white banks that block the steel-tracked highway has solved one of the most perplexing problems of operating a railroad more than 11,000 feet above the level of the sea.

In the early days of railroading in the region beyond the Mississippi river the familiar hand shovel was the main dependence for clearing the tracks, and after every heavy fall of "the beautiful" an army of men that included every available employee of the road was hurried to points where blockades might be expected. Locomotives, in strings of two, three or four were also hurled against the drifts in an effort to dislodge the troublesome masses of icy crystals.

As a solution for this last-mentioned makeshift some genius invented the push plow, a huge wedge-shaped structure on wheels, which "bucks" the drifts, impelled by the force of several powerful locomotives behind it, and if the snow barriers be not too heavy, can force a pathway through the mass. However, the fact that even the heaviest snow plows are oftentimes baffled by the drifts in the mountains indicated the necessity for a yet more powerful type of snow fighter, and thus in time there was evolved the snow plow known as the rotary, which has revolutionized the methods of fighting snow and is represented in the rolling stock of every railroad that is liable to feel the grip of the western blizzard.

In the principle of its operation the rotary is radically different from all other designs of snow plows, for instead of being anything in the nature of a scoop or shovel that shoves the snow aside, its chief working mechanism consists of a monster wheel which burrows through the snow, tossing the more or less fleecy material in every direction. The wheel or snow screw

at the forward end of a rotary resembles the propeller of a steamship or a giant electric fan, although, of course, it has many more blades than either of these.

The wheel of the average rotary snow fighter is from 8 to 12 feet in diameter and consists of a series of hollow, cone-shaped steel scoops, each equipped with a knife-like piece of metal. As the wheel revolves at high speed, these blades strike the snow and ice loosening it and throwing it into the scoops. The wheel proper is inclosed in a metal hood, at the top of which is a square opening or funnel. By the revolution of the wheel, the snow caught up by the scoops is thrown through this opening with great force, and the funnel is so shaped that the snow is hurled in an oblique direction and caused to fall at a distance of from 50 to 100 feet from the side of the track, according to the speed at which the wheel is being operated. Moreover, the hood is inclined inward, so that the falling snow does not descend upon the top of the rotary and bury the machine in a drift of its own making.

The rotary plow, like the old-fashioned type of push plow, is propelled by a couple of powerful locomotives, but the power for operating the great propeller is contained within the plow itself. This is supplied by an engine somewhat resembling a marine engine, but capable of developing almost as much power as a locomotive. The rotary must withstand the force of pushing engines behind, as well as counteract the side motion of the great whirling wheel, and consequently the roof and sides, as well as the framework, are of metal, and the machinery is set as near the ground as possible, in order to help "steady" this energetic mechanical toiler. The weight of the average rotary, complete with tender for fuel and water, is more than 100 tons. At the forward part of the plow is the pilot house, wherein is stationed the pilot who directs the operation of the rotary and communicates the necessary instructions to the engineers of the locomotives in the rear.

A giant rotary can force its way through almost any snow barriers at a speed of from four to six miles per hour, as a minimum. The ponderous, knife-armed wheel spins around at a speed of from 150 to 300 revolutions

per minute, according to the weight and character of the snow and ice encountered. Close and continual watchfulness is necessary on the part of the pilot, for the character of the snow mass encountered may change with scarcely a moment's warning from loosely drifted flakes to densely packed snow incrustated with ice, and mayhap with ice formations four or five inches thick scattered through it. Into some portions of the vast snow coverlet the rotary may plunge with impunity at a speed of only 400 or at most 600 feet per minute, while banks of soft snow permit a speed of say twelve miles per hour. However, an indicator in the pilot house records every fluctuation in the resistance offered by the snow barriers and a pneumatic whistle enables the pilot to quickly signal for any desired change of speed.

The snow depths at some of the higher altitudes of the American Alps are almost incredible, but a big rotary, working like a herculean augur and towsing aside its snow borings like chips driven out of a fan blower in a planing mill, could actually burrow to any depth if there were any way to get rid of the snow thus excavated. The whole principle of the armored car with the big wheel churning the snow before it is so simple that once it had been devised railroad men wondered that they had not hit upon the scheme long ago.

There are places where the work of the rotary plows in keeping open the trail for the iron horses is ably augmented, on the principle of prevention, by great snowsheds—stout fences or wooden tunnels designed to keep the snow from drifting over the tracks—but it is probable that had the efficiency of the modern rotary marvels been anticipated, many railroads would not have expended as much money as they did some years ago in constructing snowsheds. Thirty-two miles of snowsheds, costing \$64 a foot, or nearly \$11,000,000 in the aggregate, represents the price one transcontinental railroad had to pay before it could successfully operate its trains over the Rocky mountain division.

Nowadays the rotaries cost something like \$10,000 each, but even at that price they represent a great saving over snowsheds which, aside from their first cost, eat up thousands of dollars in repairs every year. Moreover, the rotaries have been instrumental in saving countless lives—not merely by carrying aid and food to snow-bound trains and snow-bound villages, but also by reducing the number of casualties among railroad men engaged in fighting the snow.—Walden Fawcett in St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

IN OLD "LYCEUM" DAYS.

The golden days of the lecture platform are past, and the lecture bureau is no longer the active feature of the intellectual life that it was fifty or even twenty-five years ago. At one time almost every town, East and West, had its lecture course each winter. Many were the adventures experienced by the lecturers as they penetrated the provincial parts of the country to deliver their messages of wisdom or amusement. Sometimes a concert by the Mendelssohn Quintet Club, or some other musical organization, was sandwiched in between two lectures. Thomas Ryan—a member of the famous quintet club—in "The Recollections of an Old Museum," tells of the reception of a young woman lecturer in a small Wisconsin town:

It was a young men's society which had summoned her, made up of very youthful members. When she reached the station the entire association was lined up to meet her, and she was ceremoniously introduced, then and there, to each one. As the weather was extremely cold, the process was an ordeal. This over, the leader wiped his brow and looked about as if asking what to do next. Miss Andrews suggested the hotel. A one-horse sleigh was produced; the leader handed the lecturer in, got in himself and offered her the reins. She declined, saying he knew the horse and way better than she. The young man seemed relieved, and quite satisfied that he had shown the guest of the society every courtesy possible.

That evening the whole association again met and escorted the lecturer to the hall. The room was packed.

On the stage was an old-fashioned settee with legs in the middle and at each end. When Miss Andrews sat down the affair tilted with her. A large, heavily built clergyman came in and seated himself on the other end. Up went the settee, and up went Miss Andrews until her feet no longer touched the floor. The audience giggled and

Miss Andrews laughed; there was nothing else to do.

The lecturer scanned the house. Foremost, leaning with folded arms on the edge of the stage, sat a young man in a red flannel shirt who never took his eyes off the lady on the platform.

Finally the reverend giant rose to introduce the lecturer. This suddenly let Miss Andrews' end of the settee down with a thud.

The clergyman was long-winded, and the red-shirted young man became restless. At last he called out in impatient tones:

"Dry up, old man! Give the young gal a chance!"

AMERICAN OFFICER INSULTED BY KINGSTON GOVERNOR.

Rear Admiral Charles Henry Davis, who was practically ordered away from



Kingston, Jamaica, by the British governor, won fame in the Spanish war as the man to whom the town of Ponce, Porto Rico, surrendered. He

was then in command of the gunboat Dixie. He is a native of Massachusetts, and was graduated from the naval academy in 1864. He was connected with several expeditions to determine differences in longitude, was superintendent of the naval observatory for a short time and served on the Anglo-Russian North Sea commission at Paris.

With Thanks.

Notices to the public are usually made with little regard to politeness. The wayfarer is likely to meet with a warning or a caution couched in strong but curt terms. "A Wanderer in London," however, reports one instance where the regard of the passer-by is taken for granted and is acknowledged.

At the hospital just opposite the entrance to the East India docks and the Blackwall Tunnel—under the Thames—notice boards are set up asking the drivers, for the sake of those who are ill within, to walk their horses past the building.

That is a common enough request, but what gives it a peculiar interest here is that the carter, having complied or not with the modest demand, is confronted at the other corner of the building by another board, saying, "Thank you, driver."

Absent-Minded.

The Judge was at dinner in the new household, according to the Philadelphia Public Ledger, when the young housekeeper asked:

"Did you ever try any of my biscuits, Judge?"

"No," replied the Judge, "I never did, but I dare say they deserve it."

Mahoney's Forethought.

Dentist—I've filled all your teeth that have cavities, sir.

Mahoney—Well, thin, fill th' rist av thim, too—thin whin th' cavities come they'll be already filled, b'gobs.—Puck.

When a woman gets a letter from her kin, her husband waits anxiously till she gets through reading it, to learn who is coming this time.