

## Topics of the Times

About nine-tenths of what people say doesn't amount to anything.

The world could better have lost a fleet of Petropavlovsk than one Vereschagin.

A scientist claims that he has discovered that fish can talk. Good gracious, what lies they might contradict!

Meantime the Germans are busy whipping the Hereros, who in their ignorance tried to drop the black man's burden.

A Yale professor is credited with saying that the masses eat too much. He said this, doubtless, for the benefit of the classes.

Mr. Morgan will not be missed so much as formerly during his trip abroad. Events are not quite so Morganked as they were.

There is something in the finger nail diagnosis. If you have aches all over you, and your nails are thin and brittle, you have rheumatism.

It isn't quite so bad if rheumatism attacks a man after he has lost his hearing; then he doesn't have to listen to everybody's cure for it.

When a young man tells a girl he loves her for herself alone it's equivalent to an injunction against interference from the rest of the family.

A New Jersey man broke both his legs while getting out of bed. And yet wives will go right on bemoaning husbands for staying up late at night.

A New York alienist declares that Hetty Green is insane. Tut! Tut! Hetty hasn't been going around voluntarily to have her taxes raised, has she?

A woman sues for separation on the ground that her husband never kissed her. This is a point upon which intelligent comment cannot be made without seeing the plaintiff.

The Academy of Medicine at Paris has decided that excessive meat-eating causes appendicitis. If this is true why abuse the so-called "beef trust" for putting meat beyond the reach of so many people?

Young John D. recently said to his Bible class: "A man who is proud and puffed up is sure to fall." True. And a man who climbs too high on a slender pole is likely to break it off and run it into himself.

The Emperor of Austria has been chided by his physicians for working too hard. Pity the case of a poor old, tired emperor who can't put a substitute on the throne for even a day or two for fear the sub won't give it back.

Walter Wellman wants to know what has become of the writers of great American novels? They have probably found out that it pays better to write the kind of novels that the great American public seems to want.

Will those who have been descending on the injurious effects of the "poisonous sulphur" taken by Niedermeyer, the Chicago desperado, in his attempt to cheat the gallows, try to recall how their mothers shoveled it into them, mixed with molasses, when they were too young to protest effectively?

Not a big-selling novel in two years, say the publishers. The searchlight is applied in every direction for a possible hidden genius. The typewriters of the land creak and get wheezy with the rapid production of rapid literature.

Life Easy on This Railroad. There is a small railroad in Michigan which doesn't figure on the map. It is only forty miles long and meanders through the countryside in a casual sort of way, touching such brisk villages as Parsons Mills, Sleepy Corners and Appledale. Trains do not run on this road—they creep. The locomotives appear to be heirlooms of antiquity, say of the year 1000 B. C., and the antediluvian rolling stock suggests the ark. The road is operated on the good old easy-going principle that haste makes waste, and it is said, doubtless with malicious exaggeration, that a cow once poked her head through the car window and ate all the lunch in a picnic basket while the train was going by.

One day a woman and her little boy took a trip on the road. By the time Dandelondale and the Junction were passed the pair had succumbed to ennui and slumbered in their seats. "Tickets!" drawled a brass-buttoned Charon with a punch in his hand. The lady woke up and presented two tickets, her own and the boy's. The conductor eyed the youngster and remarked that he guessed he was much too old to ride on a half-fare ticket. "Of course he is," the mother replied. "But he wasn't when we started."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Not an Extensive Edition. "I think," said the first author, "that I shall write a two-volume novel as my next effort." "Yes?" smiled his rival. "Yes, I think that will be a large enough edition."—New York Daily News.

A man can make his wife believe almost anything—during their honeymoon.

Words are like men. They start well, but now and then they fall on

evil ways, and are corrupted thereby out of all likeness to their former selves. Take "garble," for instance. It used to mean "to select for a purpose." There was once an officer called the garbler of spices, whose business it was to visit the shops and examine the spices, and order the destruction of all impure goods. His duties were similar to those of the modern health department inspector who forbids the sale of decayed vegetables or tainted meats. The word comes from a root meaning to sift. The impurities sifted out have in the course of generations corrupted the term till a "garbled report" is no longer a report from which all uncertainty has been removed, but one which is full of misrepresentation and made misleading with deliberate intent. The word "yellow" is passing through a similar transformation in our very sight. It describes the color of sunlight or of beaten gold, of the buttercup or of the dandelion. But not many years ago one of the sensational newspapers printed a series of colored pictures illustrating the adventures of a "kid"—that is what the child was called—wearing a long yellow garment. The yellow pictures appeared week after week, till men began to use the term "yellow journalism" when they desired to describe the journalism that was sensational, coarse and vulgar. Now we have yellow politics and yellow preaching, yellow base-ball and yellow warfare, and it has got so that when one is told that a woman wore a yellow gown to a party one does not know whether the color of the gown is meant or its extreme vulgarity. Never was there a better illustration of the truth of the saying that a word is known by the company it keeps.

President Roosevelt says the one and main lacking of the American boys is conservatism. By this he means, doubtless, that American boys are lacking in solid qualities, that they do not believe in the good old virtues, that they are prone to set their own pace, disregarding advice. The President is mistaken. The average American boy is your true conservative. Attack his mother's religion or the institutions of his country and you will find out. The average American boy has been well brought up. And he believes in certain things with all his heart. Mischievous? Yes. Restless? Yes. Loud sometimes? Yes. But you are mistaken if you conclude that under his boyish gaiety there are no well-settled convictions. He may be by conduct a radical, but in principle and belief he is a stayer. And even though he may depart for a time from the teaching of his family he will return to it. American boys are the finest in the world. They wake up to intellectual power the quickest. They are capable of greater enterprises at an earlier age; they bear heavier burdens on younger shoulders; they are the largest wage earners; they are the most independent-acting; and withal, they are made of the stuff of which the grandest and highest type of manhood comes. Because, while the American boy is apparently light-hearted and care-free he is not necessarily frivolous. There is a vein of true ore in him which a little mining will disclose. Sooner or later innate manhood will appear. At bottom he is all right. Give him good home training and a show for his life and he will make a man of himself. The youths of other lands may seem more solid and conservative. It is because they are more stolid in temperament. They are less jovial and prankish because they are slower in development. The American boy has initiative. He sees quickly. That puts him in the race before his cousin across the sea gets started. But he has staying qualities also and he wins in the long run because of those qualities. If the President's idea of conservatism in boys is that our restive youngsters should sit still and let moss grow on their backs then the American boys are not conservative.

These are simple extracts from the writer's long article and it shows the vast difference between the American and the English husband. In England the husband thinks that he has to "keep tab" on every penny and dime money out to his wife in gingerly portions and, to the American way of thinking, look upon his wife merely as a servant. The writer in the London paper is perfectly right in his report. The American husband is extravagant. He does not bother his head with the price of meat and flour and potatoes and other things for the table. Why should he do so? He has confidence in his wife. The culinary department is not his department. He runs things in his office and allows his wife to run things at home. Both parties are well content. He has no interest whatsoever in the bill sent in by his grocer or butcher beyond paying it. He knows that his wife has done the best she could. On the other hand, the wife does not concern herself with his business. She knows that the bills are paid promptly and that her husband is satisfied. That is all she thinks about the business.

The natural independence of the average American girl would resent a husband's constant interference in her household duties and expenses. She considers herself perfectly capable of looking after that end of the family, and she is right. This shows the difference between American and English girls.—St. Louis Republic.

THE case of Captain Richmond Pearson Hobson shows that the war hero does not always have the open sesame to the prizes of politics. Young Hobson resigned from the navy a year or two ago, and announced that he intended to seek an election to Congress. One of his objects in Congress, as he recently declared, would have been to work for the construction of a bigger navy for the United States than England has. He would give this country the same pre-eminence on the sea that Great Britain has had for the past third of a century, even if this necessitated the expenditure, within the next twenty years, of two or three billions of dollars.

But Hobson's war record did not prove to be so powerful an asset as he and some others supposed it would be. He has been beaten by John H. Bankhead, of the Sixth Alabama District, a very much less picturesque person, but a person who has had an experience of eighteen years in Congress, and who served in the Legislature of his State many years before going to Washington, while Hobson never has had any political service of any sort.

Like his companion in arms, Dewey, the hero of the Merrimac has had bad luck in politics. The sailors in this country have been less fortunate than soldiers. Moreover, the war in which Hobson figured has given no political prize to anybody except President Roosevelt. It furnished him the governorship of New York, and this led to the presidency. The chances are that it has no more political posts for anybody.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Will Penmanship Become a Lost Art. DISCUSSION of "vertical writing" in the schools, which has been revived of late, naturally raises the question as to the future status of penmanship as a means of recording the facts of commercial exchange or conveying the thoughts of men.

Is penmanship destined to become a lost art. "Vertical handwriting" was introduced in the schools because it was supposed to be better adapted to the needs of our time than the old Spencerian, running hand. It is more condensed, and, if properly taught, more legible than the old style. But now comes the parental objector with the contention that the "vertical" writing disqualifies the child for clerical positions in mercantile or banking concerns, that it is "not a good hand for bookkeeping." And yet it was this objection to the old, running, long hand that led to the introduction of the vertical system, whose condensed, legible form was supposed to adapt it perfectly to mercantile uses.

# EDITORIALS

## OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

**American Husbands.** WRITER in the London Telegraph deplors the fact that the American husband of the "middle class" does not interfere in domestic affairs and "seldom examines the accounts of the grocer, the butcher or the baker and hardly knows the cost of staple articles of food." He also regrets that the husband is extravagant and "does not make his wife a regular allowance, but gives her as much as he can spare, freely, but without system."

These are simple extracts from the writer's long article and it shows the vast difference between the American and the English husband. In England the husband thinks that he has to "keep tab" on every penny and dime money out to his wife in gingerly portions and, to the American way of thinking, look upon his wife merely as a servant. The writer in the London paper is perfectly right in his report. The American husband is extravagant. He does not bother his head with the price of meat and flour and potatoes and other things for the table. Why should he do so? He has confidence in his wife. The culinary department is not his department. He runs things in his office and allows his wife to run things at home. Both parties are well content. He has no interest whatsoever in the bill sent in by his grocer or butcher beyond paying it. He knows that his wife has done the best she could. On the other hand, the wife does not concern herself with his business. She knows that the bills are paid promptly and that her husband is satisfied. That is all she thinks about the business.

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### The Hero in Politics.

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The question suggested by the discussion of "vertical writing" is: How long will penmanship of any kind last? How long will we need to teach it in the schools? Isn't the typewriter supplanting it in all departments of business endeavor?

To discuss intelligently these questions we have first to get rid of the notion that there is anything sacred about "penmanship." Following the law of evolution, if it becomes useless, it will have to go. As a matter of fact, isn't its usefulness even now confined to social correspondence and bookkeeping? How long will it take to break down the social barriers against the use of the typewriter for polite correspondence? May not the typewriter become as common and as necessary in the home as the sewing machine?

As for bookkeeping, machines have already been invented for writing in books, and it can be but a question of time when mechanical ingenuity will supply the perfect and practical bookkeeping typewriter. And then what will become of penmanship—and the sticklers for a particular form of writing?—Chicago Record-Herald.

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**Mixed Marriages.** THE people who have lately been agitating the question of "mixed marriages" of various sorts—meaning by the term, marriages between people of different white races and different sects—are, of course, looking at the question from their own race or religious standpoint altogether. This is a matter in which all the bane, or all the good, depends on the point of view.

Broadly speaking, the interest of the American nation lies in a multiplicity of mixed marriages. The safety of the republic demands that there shall be no upgrowth of castes, no hard and fast delimitation of component elements. Our public schools are the greatest mixing agency on the earth. Our politics are themselves a mixed marriage of races and cults. America is the melting pot of the nations.

Our young people have taken their cue from the school and the hustings. They mix, and no one can stop them from mixing. Nine out of ten of the young families known to every reader of these words are probably in some sense fusions. Religious considerations are a more potent bar to mixture than race considerations, save when the race happens to be African. But even religious bars fall before a fusion of elements which is proceeding here on a grander scale, and in more rapid movement, than has ever before been known.

Love laughs at canons, at rules, even at anathemas. Perhaps it would often do better to obey them than to scorn them. It all depends, in the last resort, upon the individual will. And we have here a land in which Cupid is as free as air, with no will or tradition or authority to overmaster him.—New York Mail and Express.

### Boy Bandits and Their Origin.

HERE is a great moral in the execution of the three Chicago boy bandits, and it shows that there is something worse for boys than cigarettes. It is the dime novel that glorifies the deeds of train robbers, bank robbers and other robbers. This may be the initiation of public sentiment building for the suppression of publishing houses that issue such pernicious books.

Four legal hangings and one prospective hanging in Illinois and Missouri and nine murders are the latest crop of this kind of printing. The criminal press becomes as much a part of the care of the state as the criminal who performs the homicides. The criminal play staged at the theater is also part of the machinery that supplies gallews' fruit. A censorship of publications and of plays is likely to suggest itself to the public mind, although Uncle Sam's supervision of the United States mails in some measure serves the purpose.

This is a free country in which no one is allowed to incite to crime by public speech. Is any one to be permitted to incite to crime by public print? Books sold under the name of "The Boy Bandits" or similar titles will continue to do their pernicious work until public authority must interfere.—Illustrated Home Journal.

### FEED CALVES COD-LIVER OIL.

Animals Make Great Gains on This Kind of Nourishment. An attempt is being made to substitute cod-liver oil for the natural fat of milk in feeding calves, according to the Philadelphia Record. Milk contains, as is generally known, all the nutrients necessary for the full development of young animal life. If one of these elements is removed it has to be replaced with a substitute of like kind in order to insure thrifty development. Butter fat and cream, of course, are the most highly prized and valuable of dairy products and some resourceful individual suggested that these might be extracted by pressing the whole milk through a separator and their loss be made up to the calf by adding an equivalent amount of cod-liver oil, another fat nutrient.

Experiments have accordingly been in progress for some time at one of the agricultural colleges in Yorkshire and recent reports seem to indicate that they are entirely successful. There is but little labor involved. The cod-liver oil and skim milk is a cheaper feed than the whole milk and the calves appear to thrive on it. During a feeding experiment embracing some 28 weeks it was found that the average daily gain of the calves fed on whole milk until they were weaned was 2 pounds; those fed on skim milk and oil and continued on an oil ration, 2.4 pounds, while those which had been fed oil and milk but from which the oil was subsequently withheld gained only 2.1 pounds.

On slaughtering the animals no injurious effects on the flesh could be discovered. The daily ration that appeared to be successful was made up of five quarts of skim milk and two ounces of cod-liver oil. Fortunately the calves do not develop that aversion to cod-liver oil which is natural to most human beings, but, on the contrary, readily become accustomed to it.

Why don't they put rubber heels on boys' shoes?

Food for Fishes. A recent publication of the Illinois State Laboratory of Natural History makes a new departure in the literature of scientific investigation in America. This is a report of the results of an approximately continuous study of the minute plant and animal life (called the "plankton") of the Illinois River and its tributary waters, carried on for five successive years by the staff of the Illinois biological station.

It appears from these studies that the ratio of the "plankton" of the river, year in and year out, was 2.7 parts per million of the water in the stream, and its total average amount moving downstream past a given point reaches the astonishing aggregate of 75,000 tons per annum, or two and one-half tons an hour. This annual aggregate is about fifteen times the total weight of the fish taken from the river in a year.

The conditions which favor a large annual production of this minute aquatic life also seem to favor a large catch of fish, but no direct connector of cause and effect is here made out. "Plankton" is, however, an indispensable element in the food of fishes, the young of nearly every species in our waters being absolutely dependent upon it at some period of their lives and adult fishes of several species making large use of it during the season of its greatest abundance.—New York Evening Post.

After awhile, you find out what is best for you. Profit by your experience.

## JUDICIAL DECISIONS.

The obligations imposed upon a man by a second marriage are held, in *Staty ex rel. Brown vs. Brown* (Wash.), 62, L. R. A. 974, not to relieve him from the payment of alimony, according to the provisions of a divorce decree.

The habitual and intemperate use of morphine, unaccompanied by any conduct reasonably justifying an apprehension of danger to life, limb or health, is said, in *Ring vs. Ring* (Ga.), 62, L. R. A. 878, not to be such cruel treatment as the law recognizes as a ground for divorce.

If a space inside the building line is permitted by the abutting owner to remain open and to be used as part of the sidewalk it is held in *Rachmel vs. Clark* (Pa.), 62 L. R. A. 959, that he must exercise due care not to place there dangerous obstructions that may result in injury to persons lawfully on the walk.

A brakeman on a railroad is held, in *Murray vs. Boston & M. Railroad* (N. H.), 61 L. R. A. 408, not to assume the risk of accident from the proximity of a jigger stand to a switch, where he does not know of it and is not chargeable with such knowledge in the exercise of ordinary care in the performance of his duties.

The mere fact that the witnesses who attested the signature of a mortgagee and the notary public taking his acknowledgment are stockholders of, but not otherwise interested in, the corporation named in such mortgage as grantee is held, in *Reid vs. Toledo Loan Company* (O.), 62 L. R. A. 700, not to render the mortgage void.

A voluntary willful act of suicide of a person rendered insane by a negligent injury, who knows the purpose and physical effect of the act is held, in *Daniels vs. New York, N. H. & H. R. Co.* (Mass.), 62 L. R. A. 751, to be such a new and independent agency as does not come within and complete a line of causation from the accident to the death, so as to render one guilty of the negligence responsible for the death.

A prima facie case of negligence, rendering a city liable to a traveler injured by the explosion of a boiler under the sidewalk, in the absence of evidence that it exercised reasonable care in the premises, is held, in *Beall vs. Seattle* (Wash.), 61 L. R. A. 583, to be made out by showing that it consented to the maintenance of the boiler there under conditions which were a violation of a city ordinance prescribing the structural work to be used in case the space under the walk was to be utilized. A note to this case collates the other authorities on liability of municipal corporations for injuries to travelers caused by persons using the space under the street.

### Coal Is Still Supreme.

The tendency to spontaneous combustion of coal when stored in bulk—in masses of, say, 1,000 tons or thereabouts—may appear to be a somewhat unusual point to make in favor of the gas engine as a large size power unit for central station work. It was, however, made as such recently by a central station engineer, whose contention was that the nearly always present danger of spontaneous ignition in the large reserve stock of coal expedient for a power station of any considerable size to carry, to tide over possible temporary interruptions in the supply, from strikes or other causes, was entirely eliminated by the use of gas engines which took their gas from central gas plants.

Curiously, however, the fact appears here to have been overlooked that with the large gas engine plant will come, as an almost inseparable adjunct, the gas producer, taking the place of the steam boiler now accessory to the steam engine installation, so that the large coal pile will remain in evidence as before, and the spontaneous ignition troubles as well, even with certain precautions against them, in the way of selecting and storing the coal. Experience in some cases has dictated the safe height to which coal of certain sulphur percentage may be banked, but this height will vary with some other governing conditions easily enough imagined. The gas engine, therefore, will, after all, have to depend for favorable consideration upon its several other well known good points rather than upon the one mentioned in the opening lines of this paragraph.

### Population of Russia.

In population the Russian Empire surpasses Japan nearly threefold. According to the census of 1897 the empire had 129,562,718. Within the last half century the increase in population has been tremendous. In 1815 it was estimated at 45,000,000. At the present time it is nearly 150,000,000. According to its different divisions the population was distributed by the census of 1897 as follows: European Russia, 107,000,000 (including 9,500,000 Poles and 2,500,000 Finns); Caucasus governments, 9,300,000; Siberia, 5,730,000; Central Asia, 7,720,000. In European Russia the average annual increase of births over deaths, according to the New International Encyclopedia, is 2,000,000 souls. The empire has seven cities with a population of over 200,000, and they are: St. Petersburg, 1,489,570; Moscow, 1,147,245; Warsaw, 641,936; Odessa, 414,218; Loda, 316,145; Riga, 290,717, and Kiev, 255,699.

### A Natural Inference.

Tommy—An unmarried man leads a single life, doesn't he, pa?  
Father—Yes.  
Tommy—Well, then, does a married man lead a double one?—New York Sun.

No grown person should ever hate a child.