

Topics of the Times

There will be few American babies named Usous.

Dickens overlooked a point when he failed to call that book of his "Usous-Notes."

One of the disagreeable things about living long is that it involves so many sacrifices.

Mrs. Chadwick could contribute an interesting magazine article on frenzied financiers.

A rich mine is said to have been discovered in County Galway, Ireland. Now watch England get it.

You notice that your uncle Russell Sage is not in the list of those who have money coming from Mrs. Chadwick.

Finance may be, as Mr. Lawson says, "frenzied," but almost everyone wants to put the coin in his own strait-jacket.

There are kind stepmothers in the world, but the neighbors don't talk about them, hence they are never heard of.

The people of Kentucky are suffering because of a lack of water. Many of the distilleries have had to close owing to the failure of the power.

A contemporary speaks of the voting machine as "the coming thing." We take exception. The voting machine has arrived and is now waiting.

An insane woman in Minnesota has won a prize offered by a magazine in a literary contest. But this doesn't seem so strange when some of the magazine "literature" is considered.

The letters of Queen Victoria are to be published, after being edited by friends of the royal family. We have no doubt that it will be quite safe to place the book in the hands of young girls.

Wouldn't it be better for Dr. Wiley not to tell us any more about the scandalous way in which our food is adulterated until he can offer some suggestion as to a convenient way for bettering the situation?

Philip Armour once said to a young man who wanted to marry, "Pick out a good woman and marry one of her daughters, no matter which." We would go a little further and advise looking up the pedigree of the old man. Girls take after their dads.

A box of candy mailed by a young friend to a retired clergyman in his 92d year, whose eyesight some years ago failed him, brought out this touching response: "When I was a boy we had in our home a book entitled, 'Solitude Sweetened.' I think it remarkable that after 90 years I should receive a second edition." Think of the message of that title through the years!

It takes a hard blow at the pocket-book, such as a crop failure, to show some people the advantages of diversified farming. Every poor wheat year has been followed by greatest attention to other crops in the localities where the failure was most felt. These experiences have taught the farmers that wheat land will do splendidly for other things besides wheat, and that some of the other crops bring more reliable returns.

The opening of the subway in New York, with its admirable convenience and its attractive decorative characteristics, has roused enough civic pride in the citizens to lead them to protest against the glaring advertisements which appeared on the interior walls of the station the very day of the opening. One prominent citizen went so far as to urge the patrons to tear down the signs and kick holes in them. This was poor advice, in that it suggested mob violence instead of legal methods; but the indignation is a hopeful sign, and other cities may take the hint.

Barrels have been scarce in the apple districts of the East, and enterprising orchard-owners in a few instances have followed the California custom of packing their apples in boxes. They have learned that there is a demand for boxes of apples. The officers of the State Agricultural College in Massachusetts discovered this two years ago, when they had a large crop of Gravenstein apples. They packed one-half of the crop in barrels, and the other half in one-bushel boxes, and received \$2 a box and \$2 a barrel, thus netting nearly three times as much for the boxed apples as for those packed in the old-fashioned way.

In its present commercial aspect at universities football has evolved a class of players who may be termed temporary professionals, selected as they are for their ability to stand battering and bruising and their quickness to seize any chance to maim their opponents. The coarse tone which a university is supposed to mitigate in youth, if not eradicate, is encouraged by these stimuli to brutality, and younger people of both sexes are led to admire the very traits a college education should suppress. The degeneracy of football has reached so low a level that parents are already stipulat-

ing with their sons that they shall not go to the university at all unless they promise not to play football. This may be weakness on their part—in the eyes of their offspring—deplorable weakness; but from the parental side perhaps we may be magnanimous enough to allow the argument, that since the starting of their offspring on their careers with as little handicap in the way of broken bones and absent noses and ears as possible is not only their natural desire, but in some sense their duty, why, objection to football on their part is not exactly a crime!

Secretary Wilson conveys to the American people the more than welcome information that the desertion of the farms for city life which has been going on at an alarming rate for the last twenty years seems to have come to an end and that something like a reaction has set in. If this is true nothing could be a more hopeful sign for the future prosperity and happiness of this country. Until a few years ago American cities prided themselves greatly on their rapid growth in population and never wearied of presenting statistical tables showing an annual increase of 10 or 20 per cent. After a while it was observed that all the cities not only of this country but of all countries were growing in the same way. Finally it dawned on our understanding that the farms were being proportionally deserted and that what we had been priding ourselves on was nothing more nor less than a deplorable national disease. What we had hailed as solid municipal muscle and fat was seen to be dropsical wind and water. This wild flight of the country people to the cities is something of a mystery, because it has taken place simultaneously with an immense amelioration of the loneliness and hardships of farm life. In our day the trolley car darts by the farmer's gate, the letter carrier hands him his mail and a bus calls to take his children to school. Farm work is now beginning to be done by storage batteries. The farmer is no longer compelled to manufacture everything he needs, but can buy it for a trifle at the nearest town. On his table are the finest periodicals and books in the world, he reads them by an electric light, he telephones his orders around the farm or his gossip to his neighbors and rides to the depot in an automobile. How it is that men so pleasantly situated, with the sweet privilege of looking nature in the face, breathing unpolluted air, drinking pure water and eating pure food, can give it up for the grime and filth, the smoke and stench, the close quarters and adulterated food, the starvation wages and incessant strikes, lockouts and mobs of the city will always be regarded as an insoluble problem. Not only do the farmers wrong themselves when they flock to the city but they inflict a terrible injury on society. Agriculture is paralyzed and the cities are glutted, impoverished and corrupted. "Back to the farm" should be the watchword of Americans. It is to be feared that Secretary Wilson is far too sanguine, but if his prognostication is correct it is the best news this country has heard in many years.

VAST COMMERCE OF EARTH.

International Trade for a Single Year Amounts to \$11,000,000,000.

The world's commerce, as noted in the annual report of the chief of the bureau of statistics of the Department of Commerce and Labor, shows the total exports of all nations of the world to be, in the latest year available, \$10,515,000,000, and the value of the total imports of all nations \$11,800,000,000. This would give the total value of the world's imports and exports combined as \$22,324,000,000, but since all articles which were counted as exports became in turn imports when they entered the country of destination it would appear that the actual value of the articles entering into international commerce is, in round terms, \$11,000,000,000.

The value of these articles forming the internal commerce of the United States is estimated at \$22,000,000,000 in a single year. Thus, while it has been customary to speak of the internal commerce of the United States as equal to the entire international commerce of the world, it appears from this statement that the actual value of the merchandise entering into the internal commerce of the United States is practically twice as great as that entering the international commerce of the world.

Europe, of course, supplies a large proportion of the world's international commerce, both as to exports and imports. The exports of Europe amount to \$6,498,000,000, out of a total of \$10,515,000,000 exports of all the countries of the world, and her imports are \$8,301,000,000, out of a total of \$11,800,000,000 of the total imports of all the countries of the world. Thus Europe's total international commerce, combining imports and exports, amounts to practically \$15,000,000,000, out of a total of \$22,000,000,000 of combined imports and exports.

Of the \$8,301,000,000 of imports into Europe, \$1,202,500,000, or 14.48 per cent, are from the United States, and of the \$6,498,000,000 of exports, \$407,868,000, or 6.27 per cent, were sent to the United States.

When a preacher's wife expects her husband to light fires and carry in wood, the women of the church wonder that lightning doesn't strike her for being so impious.

In a very small town, there is the same demand that a widow remember her dignity, as there is in all towns about a preacher.

EDITORIALS

OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

The Distressing Abuse of Christmas Presents.

ANY people will sympathize with a writer in the Nineteenth Century, who complains that the custom of gift-making has degenerated into a system of barter.

How true this is we all must realize with the approach of Christmas and the shopping it entails. Pretty soon we shall sit down some morning, look over our memoranda, find out who sent us presents last Christmas, remember what was the approximate cost of each, and then start on a tour of the shops to purchase gifts of about the same value. And these we shall send to our creditor friends with a written message of Christian charity and holiday good cheer, but heaving over each parcel a heavy sigh of relief that this is off our minds and we are even.

Nor is that the worst of it, for very often we seriously embarrass our finances by paying our obligations of this sort and many a bill collector has made a man's life miserable for months because of such meaningless tokens of love and affection that generally do not exist.

As a matter of fact, the Christmas present, like the wedding present, has become a nuisance. It had its origin in a sweet sentiment, but that sentiment, except in the cases of families that are closely knit in genuine fondness (and how many are they?) has long since been destroyed by the ever-increasing costliness of gifts. The generous simplicity of the past is gone and ostentation has taken its place.

If you doubt this, just try sending no Christmas gifts next Christmas and the Christmas following, and see what happens. You will find that the man who gives no presents gets none. Even the glowing and philanthropic humanity of the Christmas season takes account of the dollars and cents and insists upon value received.

It is time for a reform of the abuses that have surrounded and spoiled the beautiful custom of celebrating Christ's birthday with evidences of peace on earth and good will toward men. As it is practiced now it is commercial, sordid and destructive of everything but hypocrisy.—Chicago Journal.

A Land for Felons of All Nations.

WHAT is the logic of keeping criminals at the public expense? Why should the community give a man free board and lodging for his life because he has broken the law? If a man is unfit to be at large in society, then, if self-preservation is the first law of nature, society has the right to eliminate him. This it does, foolishly, at present, by locking him up for a term of years or for life. In a few cases society kills the criminal, and thus gets rid of him irrevocably and cheaply; but this is hard on the criminal who may not be incorrigible. Hence capital punishment would be too severe for crimes less than the most heinous. The maintenance of prisons, however, is a heavy drain upon the taxpayers. Moreover, prisons are not reformatories, but rather colleges for education in the criminal arts and for the formation of the professional criminal character. Therefore, they are menaces as well as burdens to society.

Some nations have made a compromise with logic by establishing colonies, where felons are permitted, in a measure to shift for themselves. But these colonies are only half-way measures. The logical, humane and most effectual solution of the problem would be the setting apart of some great territory—say the heart of Africa or some large island, not too fertile—as a general dumping ground for the criminals of all nations. There the outlaws could set up a society of their own. Necessity would compel them to dig and build for themselves. They would have to work or starve. The frontiers or coasts of the felons' land could be policed by a patrol composed of detachments from the armies and navies of all the nations in order to prevent escapes. Summary death should be, of course, the penalty for breaking bounds. The powers, however, could refuse to take any part in the internal administration

TRAVEL BY AIR.

Using Collapsible Air-Bag Inside Balloon Proper Meets with Success.

To regulate the height to which a balloon shall rise or fall is one of the interesting problems of aeronautics, and it usually has been solved by throwing ballast overboard or allowing the gas to escape. In balloonet balloons, which have recently been tried in successful experiments, this is accomplished by having collapsible air-bags inside the balloon proper, into which air can be forced or withdrawn. While the idea is old, going back to the time of the first hydrogen balloon in 1783, it has only recently been put into successful application, though in 1884 air-reservoirs were employed to regulate the shape of balloons. During the first year Henry de la Vaulx and Henri Havre have made improvements whereby successful ascents and voyages have been made, and the altitude of the balloon nicely regulated. The balloonet is an annular compartment of lens-shaped section placed around the lower part of the balloon proper and provided with suitable valves. By forcing air in or out of the balloonet the displacement, and consequently the buoyancy, is altered. Thus in the first ascent made by M. de la Vaulx a crossing of the English Channel was made at a height of about 1,000 feet with the balloonet filled. On rising above the clouds the sun's rays would have expanded the gas within the balloon proper and carried the aeronauts to a strata where they would have been driven toward the Arctic Sea by the prevailing southerly winds had they not been able to descend to a lower level by using the balloonet. Thus they were able to proceed in the desired direction on this particular voyage, landing in Yorkshire after a trip of sixteen hours. By regulating the position of the balloon with the balloonet it is possible to save ballast, so that much longer trips can be taken with favorable winds. Further trips in this balloon were equally successful, and demonstrated the success of the balloonet, and this arrangement should be advantageous in dirigible balloons or on air ships, as they would supply a simple means of regulating the buoyancy of the envelope containing the gas.

Webster's Lost Opportunity. The campaign of 1840 had a dramatic and unexpected sequel. Th-

of the territory set up. The criminals could do what they pleased, have anarchy or a communism, a republic or an autocracy, whichever suited them.—San Francisco Bulletin.

At What Men Work.

A TABLE of the division of labor in different countries, published in the "Industrie Zeitung," of Berlin, presents some interesting facts and offers some profitable suggestions. Occupations are divided into three classes—namely, agriculture, horticulture and forestry; manufactures and mining, and commerce and transportation. It is interesting to observe that in the last named class America leads all the world save only Holland. With that one exception a larger proportion of our people are engaged in commerce and transportation than of any other in the world. That is doubtless because of the enormous development of railroads in America. Our percentage of men thus engaged is 16.3, while Holland's is 17.2, England's is only 13, Germany's is 10.6 and France's 9.4.

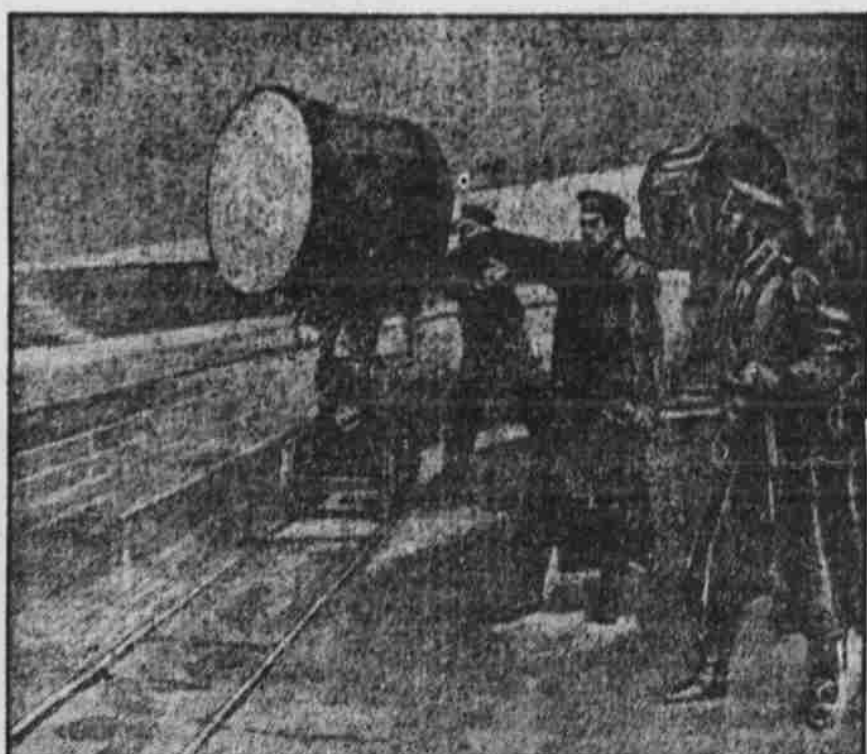
In manufactures and mining America has a comparatively low rank, her percentage being only 24.1. Scotland leads all, with 60.4, followed closely by England and Wales with 58.3. Germany has 37.4 and France 33.6. Belgium, Holland and Switzerland also, of course, rank high, each of them having more than one-third of the working population thus engaged. In the first class, of agriculture and allied occupations, America has a percentage of 35.9, while Germany has 37.6, France 44.3. Austria and Hungary, respectively, 58.2 and 58.6, and Italy 50.4. The only nations having smaller proportions in this class than America are Holland, with 30.7; Belgium, with 21.1; Scotland, with 12, and England and Wales, with only 8.

It may be seriously questioned whether it is well for a nation to show so great a disproportion among its occupations as England does, with only 8 per cent agriculturists against 58.3 in manufactures and 13 in commerce; or as Hungary does in the opposite direction, with 58.6 per cent engaged upon the land and only 12.6 in manufactures and 3.3 in commerce. A more even balancing among the classes would seem to be preferable, such as that of the United States, in which the balance is most even of all, with the possible exception of Holland. There is an old warning against carrying all the eggs in one basket, and farmers have long since learned the disadvantage of depending upon a single crop. So it is not well for any nation to devote itself too much to a single department of industry. The more varied and well balanced its occupations are, the more self-contained and independent it will be.—New York Tribune.

May Test Britain's Strength.

IT is evident that in some Continental capitals the idea is cherished that the opportunity for a blow against British sea power is to be expected before the end of the conflict between Japan and Russia. Any Power that is to be drawn into the attempt will be expected to use not only its navy, but as much of its army as can be made available. We think that bold and far-sighted statesmanship might prevent any such combination being brought into existence. But if the possibility exists, it ought to be the basis of all Great Britain's naval and military arrangements. It is such a combination as this which ought to be the hypothesis in every scheme of imperial defense. The people of this country ought to be well aware that a combination against them is possible. They ought to know that this is the one danger against which their preparations should aim at rendering them reasonably secure, and that security against the most dangerous attack would involve greater security against less formidable forms of conflict. Recent ministerial accounts of the ideas of the Committee of Defense hardly carry the conviction that the hypothesis has been worked out. Yet there never was a time when both the political and the strategic vigilance of a British Government were more urgently necessary than at the present moment.—London Morning Post.

POWERFUL SEARCHLIGHTS AT PORT ARTHUR.



One of the big searchlights used by the Russians at Port Arthur is shown in the illustration. From the forts these projectors were worked incessantly at night, and their intense white rays disclosed whatever movements the Japanese made. The light, when thrown on an advancing enemy, also tends to dazzle and confuse them. In conjunction with the electric projectors the Russians also used star shells, which in exploding brilliantly lighted up the immediate territory.

low Weed, before the meeting of the fish convention, sought out Webster and urged him to take second place on the ticket with Harrison, but the suggestion was rejected with scorn. An acceptance of Weed's advice would have made Webster President in little more than a year.

Fish's Tenacity of Digestion.

A singular instance of tenacity in the digestion of fish is reported from a fishing village on the Atlantic coast. The fish, which is a ling, four feet long, had what appeared to be an abnormally hard liver. But the cutting up process revealed something far stranger. The supposed hard liver turned out to be a piece of stout netting, over two yards long and fourteen inches wide, which had been pressed into the form of a football. How this great mass of indigestible material came to be swallowed by the creature is a mystery, and the suggestion that

the fish caught in the toils of a fisherman's net solved the problem of how to escape by devouring his prison walls is not considered scientifically practicable.

Not a Favorite Breed.

Lovers of good, plain dogs which have been allowed to grow naturally will appreciate the story of the English peddler who went to a dealer in dogs and thus described what he wanted:

"He wants a kind of dog about as 'igh an' so long. Hlt's a kind of gry'ound, an' yit it ain't a gry'ound, because 'is tyle is shorter nor any o' these 'ere gry'ounds an' 'is nose is shorter an' 'e ain't so slim round the body. But still 'e's a kind o' gry'ound. Do you keep such dogs?"

"No," replied the dog man. "We drowns 'em."

When an attorney offers to settle, listen.

MEN'S HAIR FASHIONS.

Not So Various as Women's, but Subject to Change.

"We hear a great deal about the various styles in which women dress their hair," said the barber, "but we don't hear much said about the styles in which men wear their hair."

"Yet men do have styles in this regard which they follow closely, though they do not change their styles so frequently as women do theirs, nor are their styles so various. They are, indeed, confined mostly to changes in the part."

"Two or three years ago, as you will remember, it was the fashion for men to part their hair in the middle, and this was a fashion very commonly followed, and by many elderly as well as by young men. There were many older men not averse to following the fashion of the younger men to make themselves more like the younger men in appearance, and then many an older man found that by parting his hair in the middle he was enabled to cover up the bare spots that time had brought to his temples, and he took kindly to the fashion on that account."

"So parting the hair in the middle was really the prevailing fashion, and men, old and young, wearing their hair in that manner were to be met on every hand. But now a man with his hair so parted is but rarely seen; pretty much every man now parts his hair on the side, and a man, old or young, with his hair parted in the middle would be so conspicuous as to attract attention."

"Men have individual ways in the wearing of their hair, as for example some men who think long hair is becoming to them may wear their hair long, and some men with naturally curly hair may not try very hard to comb it out straight. There are men who follow their fancies as to how they shall wear their hair, just as there are some women who disregard the style and wear their hair in the manner they believe to be the most becoming to them; but as to the part, the prevailing style for men now is to have that on the side."

"Women say that men look better with their hair parted on the side than in the middle, but I don't think this has anything to do with making style, for most men consider themselves attractive anyway, and I look in due time to see the middle part become fashionable again."

"As a matter of fact, the side part, which is the natural part for men, does prevail in the long run, taking a long series of years; but men like a change, and the middle part pleases their vanity, or in some cases serves a purpose, and it will no doubt come in again, to last at least for a while. Men change their ways of wearing their hair just as they change the style of the shoe they wear."—New York Sun.

Latest Swindling Game.

Here is one of the latest schemes for making money, which has flourished in town for some weeks past, says the Philadelphia Press. A man stops you on the street and in the most confidential of tones asks you to direct him to a good pawnshop where they don't ask any questions. Then, without undue ceremony, he whispers in your ear that he has been working as valet for a rich old man, who has used him very meanly, and because of this he has stolen a lot of jewelry and only wants to sell it for enough to pay his railroad fare to Baltimore.

He then pulls from his pocket a collection of watches, rings and stickpins and offers any one of them for what you have in your pocket, providing you have at least three or four dollars. Whether you buy any of the "stolen jewels" or not, the man prays you in a voice full of emotion not to tell the police, at least not until he has time to get out of town.

Of course, the jewels are nothing but cheap imitations and the watches not worth a dollar at retail, but, nevertheless, the scheme has been worked successfully, and a number of people have bought these "stolen goods," and found out later, much to their regret, that they had been swindled with ease.

Antique Furniture.

An electrical journal supplies a description of the treatment of worm-eaten furniture. Everybody has heard of furniture which is given an appearance of antiquity by worm-eating artificially produced. The old crude way was to bore holes with a gimlet. A more subtle way is now in use. The bacteria which bore holes in wood are cultivated on potatoes, and are thence rubbed into modern imitations. They eat their way in; but, as everybody knows, if wood is too much worm-eaten it rots and collapses into dust. Therefore, when the process of decay has gone far enough to give to the "modern antique" a venerable appearance, but not far enough to make it unsafe to sit down on or to lean against it, becomes desirable to kill off the bacteria. This can now be done, it has been found, by submitting them in their new quarters to the action of the X-rays.

Georgie Wanted More Pie. "Gran'ma," says Georgie, "you gave me a awful little piece of pie!" "Why, Georgie!" cries the dear old lady, "I gave you an extra large piece. I remember cutting an enormous piece for you."

"Gran'ma"—the small boy ruminates a few minutes before speaking again—"Gran'ma, your glasses magnify a good deal, don't they?"—Cleveland Leader.

Football Frolics.

"How did your college contain have his new photograph taken—full front?" "No; half back. He is on the football team."—Judge.