

Topics of the Times

It was the hills that made Fort Arthur come so high.

The year 1904, it appears, was not noted for its frenzied matrimony.

Radium has, since May 1, fallen in price \$1,000,000 a pound. It must be made of cotton.

Girls who succeeded in getting married in 1904 will always have something to explain.

The boy who ate twenty-nine bananas to win a \$1 prize probably really needed the money.

Mrs. Chadwick is making a heroic fight against the fallacy that a woman cannot keep a secret.

It is all right to spend a little time looking over the record of 1904, but the matter of most concern relates to the year 1905.

Two Frenchmen fought a duel the other day, in which both were severely wounded. Accidents will happen even in French duels.

By court-martialing and shooting eighty-five sailors of the Baltic 8 a fleet Russia has saved some powder for the Japanese.

It doesn't mitigate one bit the grief of a man who breaks a leg by falling on the ice to read about the workman who tumbled 135 feet without serious discomfort.

The price of diamonds has gone up. Perhaps this is merely a strategic move to make the poor people believe they are not the only ones whose money the greedy magnates want.

Dr. Chadwick says the public has misunderstood his wife. Iri Reynolds may have misunderstood her when he thought she said that package of brown paper was worth \$15,000,000.

The pneumatic rubber tire to be worn in the trousers legs to improve the shape of men's lower limbs may be well enough for some, but most men's legs are tired enough already now.

Dr. Spitzka says the brains of criminals are in no sense abnormal. If the whole truth were known it would probably appear that a majority of the criminals are merely too lazy to work.

A professor says no woman should marry until she is able to support her husband. He does not go so far, however, as to insist that it must be according to the style in which his mother supported him.

If there are 600,000,000 practically useless silver dollars piled up in United States vaults there would seem to be 600,000,000 good reasons for coining them over into the fractional currency for which the business interests of the country are howling so lustily.

A man who never subscribed to a newspaper in his life went to an editor the other day and asked him to let the public know through the paper that he had a sewing machine to trade for two hogs. He wanted the "ad" free. The editor looked at the man a moment and then replied: "I can't see what you want the hogs for as long as you are around home so much yourself."

A few decades ago the position of a United States Senator was looked upon as so dignified and exalted that it protected the incumbent even from reproach. Many Senators have shown political bias and bad judgment, but the number who have been impeached for personal dishonesty has been very small. In recent years, however, the Senate seems to be falling somewhat in the estimation of the people. A man is no longer considered great and honorable merely because he is a Senator. His position simply gives him a fine opportunity to prove himself as such, and in some cases the most has not been made of this opportunity.

The total vote for President in the late election was 13,508,496. This was 490,078 less than the vote in 1900, notwithstanding an estimated increase of nearly 7,000,000 in population and of 1,400,000 in eligible voters. What should the total vote have been in November had the interest of citizens in the result been profound and their preference between the candidates sharply defined? The fullest vote in proportion to population ever cast in a Presidential election was in 1896, when the ratio was 1 to 5. By this ratio the vote in November would have been 16,000,000. The vote actually polled was 8,002,000 short of this.

Professor Triggs' plan of arranging congenial pursuits for every sort of person would soon drive most people to distraction. Inquiry was made of twenty clergymen whether or not they would choose the ministry if they could live their lives over again. Nine replied in the negative. The same question was put to eleven experienced teachers, with the result that only one stood out in favor of the profession. If these are specimens of the sentiments of scholarly men who ought to know their own mind what would be the status of things among people of lesser stability who have lit-

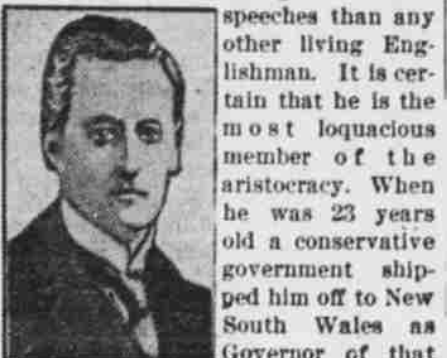
tle idea of what they wish to do and still less purpose of staying in any line of work when once work begins to be irksome? Professor Triggs means well when he plans his Utopias, but he is sadly ignorant of human nature and the real means of regeneration.

"The church survives only as a tradition; the real pulpit of to-day is the newspaper." So says a prominent lawyer. But he is mightily mistaken. Had he said that the power of the church has become such that it dominates even the secular newspapers he would have spoken the exact truth. The newspaper represents the public thought and feeling and action. It is a mirror that reflects mankind as it is. The world may look in it and see itself. The bad is there as well as the good, and more bad than good because truth requires it. If moral sentiment is there it is because moral sentiment of the public demands it. The progressive newspaper must keep pace with public morals, though it does not create them. It must note and reflect and appeal to man's increasing love for man, which other agencies than itself, however, have promoted. The pulpit still appeals to those whose ideal is perfect morality. It steadily elevates that ideal and cultivates enthusiasm and activity in making the ideal applicable in the every-day lives of those who accept it. This is the heaven in the human loaf. The newspaper knows nothing of morality as its prime purpose. But it is nevertheless a great leveler. To the vast mass that the pulpit cannot directly reach the newspaper carries the heaven that the pulpit gives to a class. It brings all men into knowledge of the ideal, whether they seek it or not, because it is in the life that is reflected. The torch that the pulpit keeps burning the press waves on the mountain tops, carries through the valleys and thrusts into the darkest shadows of human existence. If the torch burns true, it may be said that the press gives moral light to the world; but it does not supply the torch—it does not take the place of the pulpit. It is true that the newspaper may inculcate moral principles without direct relation to religion, just as an infidel may lead a clean life; but it must be remembered that it is all due to the influences of a religious civilization that has been promoted and is being promoted now, more than ever before, by the pulpit. The newspaper is one of the most matter-of-fact institutions in the world. Good people are prone to complain against it sometimes because it does not preach more and portray less. They mistake its mission and misunderstand its conditions. The newspaper is a ceaseless series of living pictures of the punishments that follow crime, of the suicides that follow sins, of the want and despair that come of improvidences or unjust conditions, of the successes that come of right endeavors, of the joys that are linked with honest loves, and of the sweet and serene old age that ripens with right living. But the illumination, the clear vision and the sense of discrimination between right and wrong come through the pulpit.

DUDE OF THE PEERAGE

Earl of Beauchamp the Most Talkative Man in Britain's Aristocracy.

Though he is only 32 years old, the Earl of Beauchamp is said to possess the distinction of having made more



speeches than any other living Englishman. It is certain that he is the most loquacious member of the aristocracy. When he was 23 years old a conservative government shipped him off to New South Wales as Governor of that antipodean, who have much less respect for hereditary titles than English folk, did not take very kindly to him. It was long supposed that he would never marry, because, according to traditions, a curse had been laid on the family. It was directed against the eldest son of an eldest son, and declared that such an one would never inherit the wealth of the family because it had been derived from the spoils of the church. The Earl is an eldest son, but in 1902 he decided to risk the curse, so far as any future heir might be involved, by marrying Lady Lettice Grosvenor, a daughter of the late Earl Grosvenor and a sister of the second Duke of Westminster. It was what is called a brilliant match. In his younger days he was regarded as the dude of the peerage, and is still considered the best dressed man in the House of Lords.

The Debts of Miller.

The father of M. Casimir-Perier called on Corot one day and found him in the act of finishing a picture. "A masterpiece!" exclaimed the visitor. "I must have it."

"It is yours," promptly replied Corot, "if you will agree to pay the butcher and baker bills of my illustrious but poor friend, Jean Francois Millet."

"Agreed," said the patron, well pleased. The bills were presented to him, and they amounted to nearly \$3,000, neither butcher nor baker having been paid for twelve years.

Suffering from a Painful Error. Christian Science Mother—Eleanor, what is the matter?

"Oh, mamma, I got a terrible error of mind in my stomach."—Life.

Honeymoons are often eclipsed by financial stringency.

EDITORIALS

OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

Back to the Farm.

AN important change is quietly but irresistibly coming about in the industrial situation in this country. For years the tendency of ambitious young men has been from the farms to the cities, lured by the higher wages and greater opportunities. The steady migration has resulted in a decided effect both upon the city wages and upon the value of farm products. Wages are at a standstill; farm products are steadily rising in value. There is a labor congestion in the cities and a growing inability on the part of the farmers to meet the ever-increasing demands for their products.

The American Agriculturist has prepared a comparative table of farm values, acreage, production and selling prices of the staple crops for a series of years. The three years taken for special comparison are 1904, 1901 and 1896; 1901 is taken as an average year, 1896 as a low year and 1904 as the most prosperous year that American agriculture has ever known.

The total value at the farm of the staple crops was \$1,820,000,000 in 1896, \$2,532,000,000 in 1901, and \$3,278,000,000 in 1904. Thus the total value of the last season's crops is almost double that of the 1896 yield, an increase in value out of all proportion to the increase in production. Apples are the only crop which are less in quantity than in 1896, but hay, rye, wheat, corn and flaxseed were produced in almost the same amount. The only large increase in production is in cotton, where the crop is almost a half larger than in 1896. Potatoes and oats show increase, but not much. In no case except cotton and barley has the increase in production at all approximated the increase in value. The increase in farm values has come not from increased production, but from increased demand and consequent higher prices. The comparison of bushel farm values makes this more marked. Corn is selling for twice what it did in 1896, wheat for one-third more, potatoes for two-thirds more, hay for a third more.

The remarkable conclusion of this crop compilation is that in ten years there has been hardly any appreciable increase in the quantity of staple crops produced except in cotton. Even in such products of less total value as onions, hops and cranberries the quantity produced in the past year is almost exactly the same as the production of ten years ago. The meaning of all this is that laws above human control are bound to turn the tide of migration back from the cities to the farms.—Indianapolis Sun.

Churches and Theaters.

EVERY little while some preacher deplores what he believes to be the fact that the theaters are more successful in securing audiences than the church. Is it true? It may be doubted if in any given city more persons attend the theater than go to the churches. And all things considered it may be said that the churches succeed better than the theaters.

The theater has these advantages: It changes its actors and its performances frequently. It is always presenting something new. The church has the same message and the same man in the pulpit from Sunday to Sunday. And yet the churches are filled. In another important feature the theater has an advantage. It advertises thoroughly and successfully. A large percentage of its earnings go into modern advertising. Seldom does the church spend a dollar for advertising; or if it does spend a little money it is injudiciously spent.

And yet the church draws. There must be a reason. There is a reason. The church ministers to a great human need. It appeals to what is highest and best in life. A great vacuum requires to be filled. A great longing clamors to be satisfied. Men and women realize that they are threefold beings and that to cultivate body and mind alone is only two-thirds of culture. The man whose spiritual life is atrophied may not feel this, but the normal man does. This is the church's opportunity and the reason for its existence.

The church makes a mistake when it fails to advertise.

ROYAL RUBBER MERCHANT.

King of Belgium Owns Territory Rich in Product.

The King of Belgium to-day, according to the statement of M. Vanderelde, a socialist leader in the Belgian parliament, is the greatest rubber merchant in the world, says the Boston Transcript. The story of how the king gained that proud position is the story of how he made himself absolute master of 30,000,000 of people and 1,000,000 square miles of the richest territory in the world. Quite as marvelous in its way as Stanley's discovery of the great Congo basin is the story of King Leopold's conquest of central Africa—more marvelous in some respects, since the king has accomplished this great enterprise by the mere strategy of a diplomat without ever setting foot upon the soil of Africa.

Stanley dreamed of founding a great international state in the center of Africa, but it never occurred to him to set up a kingdom of his own there, and make himself absolute monarch of the whole vast region to which his discoveries would seem to have made him, if any one, the natural heir. Stanley knew the wealth of the Congo, and saw there a great future for the enterprise and trade of European nations, but it never occurred to him to treat that whole vast territory and its inhabitants as his personal property, converting the country into a plantation, and making the natives serfs.

This has been the special mission of the royal rubber merchant of Belgium and he has accomplished it by the simplest possible of political devices. By the decree of 1885 he dispossessed the natives of all the land except the little strips of tilled soil about the villages, making it in theory as it has since become in practice, a crime for natives to gather rubber or ivory in the forests and for the traders to buy it of them. As it was by playing off the powers one against another that the king obtained his first foothold in central Africa, so it has been by pitting the savage tribes of the interior against each other, arming one tribe and employing it as a policeman for the others, that he has been able with a handful of white men to subjugate the country, establish state slavery and enforce the rubber tax.

True, this has only been accomplished with terrible destruction of the native peoples and with a cynical disre-

gard of every pledge that was made to the European powers at the time the Congo government was first established. This is precisely the source of these complaints of traders and missionaries that come to us from the Congo. It is the meaning of the international movement now on foot to compel fulfillment of these earlier pledges.

In international affairs it is not justice but "the accomplished fact"—not what should be but what is—to which we invariably bow. In the relations of the great powers we seem to have as yet little more than the mere play of natural forces. But sooner or later the civilized world must unite in setting a limit to the ruthless exploitation of native peoples that is now going on over the whole earth. Economical interests demand it, and nothing but international jealousies and the lack of an informed international opinion can prevent it. Why should the powers not make a beginning here in what at inception was called "an international colony," the Congo Free State?

LAWS OF HEREDITY.

"Three Generations to Make a Gentleman," Is Fact, Not Fancy.

Prof. Karl Pearson, F. R. S., who has taken a leading part in founding the doctrine of evolution on a statistical basis, explained to a deeply interested audience at the Royal Institution some of the results which have been arrived at. Two of these are of special importance, says the London Telegraph. It is shown by examination of large numbers of persons that "mental and moral as well as physical qualities are inherited, and to the same extent. Taking school children and examining them minutely with respect to curliness and color of the hair, length, breadth and height of the head, color of the eyes, the cephalic index, and health, on the one hand; and, on the other, testing them for intelligence, vivacity, conscientiousness, popularity, temper, self-consciousness, shyness and handwriting, the degree of inheritance in the two categories came numerically as close as 521 to 522. Secondly, it is proved that two or three generations will suffice to create a new stock. Statistics of large numbers show that there is more than is often supposed in the saying, "It takes three generations to make a gentleman," and in the expression, "Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and

fourth generation." Pedigree in humanity, as in the lower animals, is a vital factor. Thus a family or a nation will certainly progress or degenerate as the issue of heredity. It needs but to repress the numbers of the better and higher and to multiply the numbers of the lower and less fit for two or three generations to make national degeneration terribly real. Prof. Pearson's tabular results showed the universality of the laws of inheritance, not only in animals like horses and dogs, but in lowly insects, and even in plants.

Growing Use of Spectacles.

"Spectacles," said an ophthalmologist, according to the Philadelphia Record, "are as old as wagons. I suppose, or as clothes. Wasn't a pair found recently in a mummy case that dated back to something like 300 years before Christ? But the spectacles of the ancients were merely magnifying glasses, and the modern sorts—the prismatic, the spherical, the concave, the convex and the cylindrical, which correct double vision, refraction, myopia, hypermetropia, astigmatism, etc.—are comparatively modern inventions. They are made of rock crystal, and they have done more good than anything else in modern medicine, except, perhaps, anesthetics. Medical records show that there is now 40 per cent less of blindness than there used to be in the world, and this improvement is due entirely to the use of spectacles, which have kept weak eyes from succumbing, as braces keep weak limbs from succumbing. There is also much less of headache than there was. A great deal of that came, you know, from the eyes, and that sort of headache spectacles have banished entirely."

Russians and Gambling.

The gambling propensities of the Russians are indicated in the fact that more than \$1,500,000 is spent in Russia for playing cards. The Tsaritsa Maria charitable institutions have a monopoly of the manufacture, and they make a large profit, as the production costs only about \$250,000.

Beyond Words.

He—It is wonderful. Prof. Jones and his wife speak both at least six languages.

She—And yet they don't seem to understand each other in a single one.—Brooklyn Life.

FOLLOW ONE LINE IN CRIME.

Lawbreakers Seldom Branch Out Into New Fields, Experts Say.

"Criminals seem to be the strongest kind of fatalists," remarked Judge Neff, of Pittsburg, recently. Judge Neff is widely known as an authority on criminology, and his long experience as prosecutor, judge and lawyer has given him unusual opportunity of studying scientifically the causes and characteristics of crime.

"I have noticed that when a criminal is arrested after finishing one sentence, the second charge is generally the result of a crime almost exactly the same as the one which first got him into trouble. It seems like a strange kind of fatality. I've known instances where one criminal has been arrested and punished five or six times on charges exactly the same.

"What makes them do it? I'm not sure I can explain it satisfactorily, but I know it to be the case. It has occurred to me, and possibly this is the simplest explanation, that the reason for a criminal adhering strictly to one line of work is the same as the fascination which holds a gambler to a table, although luck is against him.

"Each failure or loss shows the victim a point which he has hitherto been ignorant of, and it is easy to convince himself that next time he will escape that mistake.

"And so it goes. Ever the next time, just one more chance, and then another, ever confident that the luck must change and that each turn of the wheel leaves him just that much better equipped and that much more likely to win, finally. Then there is the desperation, the unconscious and gritty determination to make a success of the thing.

"If he fails, and is arrested, convicted and punished, the process of the law simply goes to show wherein his first job was bunglingly and poorly carried out. The first feeling of resignation that follows the bitterness of punishment is when he tells himself that next time he will not repeat the error which led to his detection on the present occasion. No sooner is he out of the penitentiary than he assays again to try his luck, this time carefully avoiding the mistake which first brought him to grief.

"It is a well-known fact that no criminal, no matter how expert or how daring, can cover up all his tracks. The very best of them will leave at least one loophole, will commit at least one error which eventually fastens the guilt on him. The poorer criminals leave clues according to their skill or experience. So our imaginary crook, the second time he plans a job, while he carefully avoids a repetition of his first error, is almost sure to make some other one. And so on, each succeeding crime and detection pointing out to him the lines of his weakness, so that he is irresistibly led onward to his destruction."

The Sarcastic Cabman.

The whip flexing hero of this story had driven an irascible old fellow a good three mile journey. When the fare climbed stiffly out and slowly produced a big pocketbook cabby drew a deep breath and prepared to be sarcastic. A watchful constable standing near prevented all thought of his relieving his feelings by the use of picturesque terms.

Cabby watched his fare make a lengthy mental calculation of the distance he had been driven, select the exact legal fare, count it twice over and then proffer it to him, with an expression on his face plainly indicative of "Now, then, you dare dispute it and I'll take your number."

But cabby didn't dispute it. Instead he promptly accepted it; but, slipping his hand into another pocket, he produced a farthing, which he handed to the fare.

"What's this for?" demanded the old fellow.

"One farden, currant coin of the realm, sir," said cabby, gathering up his reins. "I driv yer jest the exact distance represented by arf of that there shkel under the three mile you reckoned. I ain't got no arf arden about me, but it don't matter. You can keep the change. I ain't mean. Goodby, sir, and God bless you. Geup, 'orse!'"—London Standard.

A Dreaded Quilt.

Queen Victoria was an expert and indefatigable knitter. During the Egyptian campaign she and the ladies of the household employed themselves in knitting quilts, which at the end of the war were sent to Netley Hospital for the use of the wounded. One of these, made entirely by her Majesty and bearing an elaborate V. R. in the center, was the coveted par excellence of the institution and in universal demand for a time. In assessing the claims of the candidates for the honor of sleeping upon it the medical staff naturally gave the precedence to the most severely wounded, and as the most severely wounded was the one most likely to die very soon, alas, an evil omen attached itself to the distinction, the climax of which was reached one night when a poor soldier, feeling something touching his bedclothes, woke up with perspiration pouring down his face and cried out, "Oh, sir, do anything you like with me, but for God's sake don't give me the quilt!"

Pensions for Australian Orphans.

Every child in Australia not supported by parents receives a government pension for support until he is 14 years old, hence there are no orphan asylums.

The average woman is as touchy about the unreliability of the family clock as she is about the rickety family piano.

One isn't necessarily wealthy because he has more money than brains.