

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

Comments and Criticisms Based Upon the Happenings of the Day—Historical and News Notes.

And yet it can hardly be claimed that the dervish is really a howling success.

Yu Li is the rather unpleasantly suggestive name of Li Hung Chang's successor.

Still, we hardly believe that invention of artificial eggs will lay out the old-fashioned hen.

It's not so very strange after all that the Khalifa's goose should be cooked by a Kitchener.

While foot-balls wear long hair it's really not essential to the game because it has no part in it.

Weyler may not deserve to be hanged with his own flesh, but he ought to be hauled up by the authorities.

That Texas man who had his pipe buried with him must have felt pretty sure he was going to smoke in the next world.

A window glass trust has now been formed. Still it doesn't require as clear a proof as this for these things to be seen through.

Very likely instead of one of the Philippines the Emperor William may have to be satisfied with a large number of castles in Spain.

Twice during his trip to the Klondike Hamlin Garland narrowly escaped starvation. Isn't that carrying realism a trifle too far for comfort?

Spain may be right in wanting the ashes of Christopher Columbus taken back to that country. There's no particular comfort in remembering the Cristobal Colon.

Prof. Rudolph Talk of Berlin recently predicted a thunderstorm which arrived on time and nearly demolished three churches. Hereafter when Talk talks of the weather people will listen.

When the Memphis guard told a railroad president: "If you were George Dewey I wouldn't let you in," he illustrated the feeling that exists throughout the United States for the Manila admiral.

Among the sailors of Cervent's squadron who sailed for Spain there are said to have been two Englishmen, three Germans, five Irishmen and four Italians. It is safe to say that they will not re-enlist under the Spanish flag again.

Japan will never be as prosperous as she wants to be until she invents some way to suppress the typhoons which knock large holes in the national wealth and diminish her population with unfailing regularity once or twice every year.

In stating boldly that the sashes of Weyler, Blanco and Rivera should be around their necks instead of their waists Count Almenas voiced a sentiment that was popular in this country some months ago. Spain is gradually getting dangerously near to the up-to-date line in some particulars.

It is said that Spain deeply deplores her failure to add a large number of ships to her navy instead of applying half of the appropriations to her army. The reason for this grief is not very forcible. If Spain's navy had been larger her whipping would have been much the worse. The wisest man yet developed in Spain by the war was the member of the cabinet who at the beginning of hostilities expressed his sorrow that Spain had a single man-of-war.

Since the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized, in 1784, it has had forty-four bishops. Twenty-six of these have died, their average age being more than sixty-seven years. The average age of the eighteen surviving bishops is more than sixty-five years. It would be quite possible to base upon this one fact of longevity an argument that in elevating these men the church chose wisely. Weak men break down under responsibility, but to strong men, who have learned how to work and forgotten how to worry, it is the very breath of life.

The great prize of the east for which Great Britain and Russia have been playing a deep game of diplomacy ever since the Chinese-Japanese war is the vast and fertile valley of the Yang-tse-Kiang. This is one of the great rivers of the world and, as a writer from Kiu-Kiang in the London Times says, it will compare with the Amazon for length, with the Mississippi for volume, with the St. Lawrence for navigability and with any river of the world, not excepting the Nile, for muddy sediments, "sowing the seed of continents to be." It scatters this sediment over a wonderfully rich area as large as Ireland and has supported millions of people since the dawn of history. The river itself is navigable for ocean-going vessels for hundreds of miles and for vessels of but little lighter draft for more than 1,000 miles. Even under the unenterprising government of Peking this river has always been a great commercial highway, but under the progressive rule or influence of the British it would soon develop a commerce that would be a surprise to the world. The Yang-tse basin supports probably 200,000,000 people and is by far the richest and most productive part of China. With English domination of the Yang-tse basin the capital of China would

probably be removed to Nanking, in the "old middle kingdom," which is the real center of Chinese power. The natives who live in this region have proved to be the least tractable as regards foreigners, but Great Britain would be able, if any power can, to make over and transform or modify national characteristics and thus fashion a new force for the development of the Orient.

The recent attacks on a railway trait in Texas, by a gang of six armed men, is one among other signs that America, like many an older country, is capable of producing its own banditti. In several of our cities—as a few days ago in London—companies of reckless youths have given quiet citizens much alarm, and have caused the police a deal of hard, rough work. Birds of this feather easily discover each other; and there is doubtless a tendency in the criminal class to comradeship and cooperative enterprise. Various causes are at work to produce outlawry and hoodlumism, and not alone among the degraded poor. Not neglected children only, but the miseducated and ill-disciplined, contribute recruits to the army of evil. It is thought that the tolerated lawlessness of a few college students is emulated by lads who never enter college halls; that corrupt journalism and rotten literature work like poison on thoughtless minds; that the lax administration of the laws; the misanthropy which broods on social wrongs; and perhaps more than all else, the widespread disrespect for honest, thorough work; the aversion to it; and the lack of training necessary to success in any form of industry, are creating a class which lives by preying on society. Bandits are not all men of violence. Many of them know that craft is less dangerous, because less offensive, than brutal robbery. Yet all combinations for plunder, whether in defiance of law, by evasion of it, or even by the abuse of it, are of the same bad quality. They alike expose property and person to outrage and degradation. Civilized society, acting in self-defense, while dealing sternly with the evil which shows itself above ground, must also dig up the poisonous root.

The woman who cannot catch a man, must now lay it to other than economical reasons. The old reliable excuse that the supply is not equal to the demand is no longer valid. There are 2,200,000 more bachelors than old maids in the United States. The Government says so, and the Government generally knows. Perhaps it is because old Uncle Sam himself is a bachelor—for whoever heard of Mrs. Sam?—that he has taken such an interest in the matter as to secure the exact figures. Perhaps it was out of solicitude for the old maid and in the desire of bringing her more of the sunshine of hope that he instituted the investigation. At any rate he has the figures, and they are enough to make glad the heart of every spinster in the land. There is not a State in the Union where there are as many old maids as bachelors. Even Massachusetts, the traditional home of the spinster of the poll parrot species, has more men than women of marriageable age. The bachelors outnumber the old maids by only two-tenths of 1 per cent. in Massachusetts, which is a lesser per cent. of excess than in any of the other States. But, even at that, there are nearly 7,000 "superfluous men" there who would be left chanceless if the 219,000 old maids would pair off with the other 219,000 old bachelors. How is that for Massachusetts, the greatest State in the Union for old maids? It would seem that a spinster of ordinary attractions and ability would be able, in the light of the facts and figures which the governmental investigation has disclosed, to arrange matters wherever she might live. But if she wants a territory where negotiations may be completed with even greater ease—where the lottery of marriage must become a dead sure thing—let her live herself from the crowded cities of the East to the rolling prairies or the mountain wilds of the West, where there are ten bachelors to every available maiden. What spinster can resist such an advantage as this, which is offered by the State of Idaho and Wyoming? It would surely be a hopeless case which could not find its cure with the chances ten to one for recovery. Let the old maids try the free, fresh air of these mountain lands for a while. Old maid, go West.

Where the Bullets Struck.

Dr. Ludwig Brandt investigated the deaths of over 100,000 men killed in the Franco-Prussian war in 1870-71, and learned that their injuries were received in the following ways: Forty-three thousand, nine hundred and fifty-two were wounded in the lower extremities, 33,914 by wounds in the upper extremities. Wounds in the head caused the death of 11,041; in the chest and back, 11,495; abdomen, 4,553; in the neck, 1,922. Rifle balls injured more men than artillery projectiles. Saber wounds were extremely few in numbers, and the jawbone, of all the bones in the head, was oftenest injured.

To Encourage Saving.

Mons. in Belgium, apparently by the well-known computation of interest on a penny put in the savings banks by Adam, has decided to present to every child born in the town, a savings bank book, with one franc credited in it, which is never to be touched. The object is to encourage saving. Many Belgium towns are making ready to follow the example of Mons.

A doctor may give a patient hope, but he charges for the time it takes him to give it.

There may be a time for all things, but the wise man only tackles one thing at a time.

It's a poor bill poster that doesn't keep an actor well posted.

THE NAME ON THE TRUNK.

Played an Important Part in the Life of a Boy.

The two men were passing along Seventh street where a trunk store had debouched upon the sidewalk, so to speak, and on one of the trunks sitting conspicuously front was a name written in good black letters.

"I never see a trunk marked that way and set out in front of a store that I am not reminded of an experience that once came under my notice," said the elder man. "When I was a lad of 15 I had a cousin about my own age, who was the apple of his father's eye, and a very fine chap he was, too. He was an only son and a lad of spirit, and before he knew the world at all he had fallen into evil company. He got no better up to the time he was 17, when he disappeared suddenly and mysteriously, and his broken-hearted father had every reason to believe that a gang of gamblers and thieves had got him into their clutches and were going to use him for their own purposes. My uncle immediately set out for St. Louis—he lived in the western part of Missouri—as it was believed one of the gang had come from there, though the headquarters were in New York. A clue was picked up in St. Louis, but was lost two days later, and my uncle had given up hope and was on his way to the depot to take the train home again, when he passed a trunk store, as we have done, and a trunk sat out in front with his son's name on it. He nearly fainted when he saw it, but managed to get into the place and ask a question or two, and then he sat down and waited, as they told him the owner had said he would call for it. But he did not come, and my uncle stayed until the store was locked up, and he was there again in the morning at daylight, waiting for it to open again. At 9 o'clock his son came in, and when the young fellow saw his father the better part of him asserted itself, and before he knew what he was about he had flung himself into his arms and was crying like a baby. You see, the boy was all right, and the lad in him lost its grip for an instant under the sudden assertion of nature. The father had a talk with him right there, and showed him the true character of his new friends, and the boy showed how green he was when he had his own name written on his new trunk and never thought to tell the dealer not to put it out where it might give him away. Well, the end of the whole matter was the boy went home with his father, and his narrow escape from becoming a criminal taught him a lesson which made a man of him, and he has been the Governor of a Southern State and will one day be a United States Senator, for he is worth half a million and is in a fair way to double it."—Washington Star.

Mental Astigmatism.

To illustrate the kind of lapse of reasoning power that great inventors are known to suffer from and which Sir Isaac Newton was under the influence of when he cut one hole in a wall to let a cat pass through and then a small hole for the kitten to use, an old story in the life of Morse has been revived. Long before he invented the telegraph, Morse was known to the officers of the patent office as a persistent applicant for patents. When his great invention of "distance writing" was about completed, he wanted the Baltimore and Ohio Railway Company to try it. To get rid of him the president of the road turned him over to a subordinate. This official was struck with the beauty of the invention, and became so interested in it that he sat up half the night discussing it with its inventor. At length, Morse confessed that there was only one thing which baffled him. "As long as the railroad runs," he said, "where poles may be erected, it will be easy sail, but when we come to the big bridges, what is to be done then? We can't erect poles across the stream, and without them the wire would sag, and perhaps break from its own weight. I confess I don't know what to do. Can't you suggest a way out of the difficulty?" "Why don't you fasten the wires to the bridge?" asked his companion, without a moment's hesitation. For a moment Morse gazed at him with open mouth, and then exclaimed: "Why not, indeed. Why, I never thought of that. It's the very way." The layman's tip put the finishing touch to the work of the great inventor, and thus wires came to be strung on bridges when crossing large streams.

Rain in Cuba.

A sudden pattering in the trees, a sudden darkening in big spots of the white canvas, and down came the tropical rain.

How it rained! Like waves breaking; great heavy blobs of water volleying at you like bullets from a machine gun.

Men who were ten yards from their tents were wet through before they gained shelter.

In five minutes the camp was under water; on the slopes were rushing torrents; on the levels were deep swirling pools. Down the trunks of the trees the water poured in cataracts. From the lower edge of every tent it flowed in a broad stream. The men, drawing up the corners of their rubber blankets so as to keep the flood away from themselves and their belongings, crouched under their tents and shivered.

It rained for two hours without stopping. In the first half hour every man in camp was wet through, so that many of them took off their wet clothes and stood naked in the rain for the remainder of the time.

The sun came out again soon after, hotter than ever, and the damp earth steamed till the camp was an open-air vapor bath.

But blaze away as the sun might, the ground never got dry again that day, and at night we turned in shivering with the damp earth striking cold through the rubber sheet and the blanket. Pity the poor devils now who, when they were marching in the sunshine, threw away their rubber sheet and the blanket.—London Chronicle.

Curiously Worded.

Curiously worded advertisements, which are funny without intent, are common in the London papers, it would seem. One paper recently offered a prize for the best collection of such announcements, and the following is the result:

"Annual sale now on. Don't go elsewhere to be cheated—come in here."

"A lady wants to sell her piano, as she is going abroad in a strong iron frame."

"For Sale—A pianoforte, the property of a musician with carved legs."

"Wanted—A room for two gentlemen about thirty feet long and twenty feet broad."

"Lost—A collie dog by a man on Saturday evening answering to Jim with a brass collar round his neck and muzzle."

"Wanted—By a respectable girl, her passage to New York; willing to take care of children and a good sailor."

"Mr. Brown, furrier, begs to announce that he will make up gowns, capes, etc., for ladies out of their own skins."

"Wanted—An organist and a boy to blow the same."

"Wanted—A boy to be partly outside and partly behind the counter."

"To be disposed of, a mail phaeton, the property of a gentleman with a movable headpiece as good as new."

Died of Heat.

Last winter Andrew Burns, of Oregon, was frozen and lost an arm by amputation. A few weeks ago while hunting in a forest he was overcome with heat, from the effect of which he died. His body was found four days later guarded by his dog.

Italy as a Wine Producer.

Italy produces more wine than any other country in Europe.

A busy man is always willing to talk business, but an "agent" is not a business man.

GOLD IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Greater Yields There than in Alaska and South Africa Combined.

Concerning the promise of extensive gold fields in the Philippines, where it is already known that gold exists, an exchange says the islands are a greater Klondike than Alaska, and even greater than Alaska and South Africa, could these be combined as one country.

The Philippine Islands are rich in gold, rich in rubies and precious stones, and well supplied with coal and all useful minerals.

We have so associated the getting of gold with hardships that it is difficult to believe that any country exists in which gold can be mined without serious privation. In Alaska there is loss of life, and each nugget that is brought stands for just so much suffering. But in the Philippines it is always pleasant, and, in spite of the heat of the summer, a man can live there the year round and enjoy himself.

So attractive have the Philippine Islands been to sailors that for years captains of sailing vessels and steamships have guarded against desertion when at the Philippines. Sailors would willingly lay their freedom and leave the ship, if only they might be allowed to remain in this beautiful and rich country.

Their experienced eyes can see the gold even in the sand, and they bear, as soon as they touch the shore, many stories of the minerals that have been brought from the interior. Every planter coming with his cargo to the vessels brings colored stones in his pockets, which were either precious or semi-precious stones. Rubies were plentiful among the precious stones, and hyacinths among the semi-precious stones. Either of these were valuable enough to make it worth while to collect them.

Almost every kind of mining can be done in these charming islands. The mountains in the center give rise to many streams, which flow down almost to the coast. These frequently bring down heavy nuggets, showing that there is a fine chance up above for hydraulic mining.

Gold can be panned on the level along the shores of the streams, and there are few places where the sand does not pan the color of gold. In fact, the very ground has a reddish tinge, and there are tracts which plainly show color.

An Impromptu Recommend.

"Parlo me, madam," said a rather threadbare but neatly dressed young man, as an elderly lady in deep mourning stepped from the side door of her house, followed by her daughter, a young lady, "but I understand your coachman has left, and I want to ask if I can have the place?"

"Have you references?" asked the elderly lady.

"No, ma'am, I haven't," he replied, politely but bluntly, "I don't live here, and when I came away from home I didn't think to bring any with me."

"I couldn't possibly take you, then," said the lady, but with respectful apology for pressing his suit, the young man repeated his wish to fill the vacancy.

For a moment the two ladies stepped aside to converse over the matter. The young man was standing a few feet from them across the walk when a ragged little girl came running near to him, and searching the sidewalk closely said in synopsized sobs, "I've lost my money!"

"Why, that's too bad," said the young man, "how much was it?"

"Five cents; it's all I had," said the tearful archon.

Then the young man began to help her look for the lost coin.

"Oh, here it is!" said he, taking a nickel out of his own pocket, and pretending to pick it up. "Here's your money!"

The child ran away delighted.

The elderly lady saw the little act. "Come to-morrow," said she; "I think I can trust you."—Detroit Free Press.

A Pretty Pickle.

There is sometimes good luck coming out of apparent misfortune. As an illustration, there is the story of a fire occurring in a gentleman's country house in Maine. There had been a prolonged drought, the well was dry at the time, and there was no other water within a half mile. The woman of the house discovered the fire burning on the roof, and help was as scarce as water. She began wringing her hands and saying over and over to herself: "Here's a pretty pickle!—a pretty pickle!" The word "pickle" unconsciously repeated itself, and then, like a flash, came the recollection of a barrel full of pork pickle in the cellar, saved for boiling over. She darted down the cellarway, and soon began deluging the roof with brine. Every one who has tried knows that salt water is an excellent fire extinguisher, and in this case it worked like a charm. Before the supply of "pickle" was exhausted she had the fire out and the home was saved. She never will get over the thought that uttering the word "pickle" turned disaster into relief.

Russian Fortune Telling.

Russian girls try to ascertain their prospects of matrimony in the following manner: A number of them take off their rings and conceal them in a basket of corn. A hen is then brought in and invited to partake of the corn. The owner of the first ring uncovered will be the first to be married.

Curious Work for Men.

Among the Rifian pirates of Morocco the women do all the agricultural and other hard work, while the men, when at home, do the cooking and mend the clothes, including the women's.

Stiff hats cover a multitude of soft brains.

The Public Schools.

The Little Red School House.

A mile up the roadway from the place where I was born, nestled 'mongst the roses and the waving golden corn, stood the little red school house we all loved so well.

And in fancy now I harken to the music of its bell.

O, the ding, dong, ding of its staccato ring. The memory of it takes me back to life's glad spring.

And I trod once again the long, winding lane, With all the dear companions whom I look for now in vain.

There we gathered every week day, heard the old schoolmaster's prayer, Lord take unto thy keeping the lambs within my care;

Then we loved one another, in happiness we dwelt, Never asking of the other at what shrine we knelt.

But times have changed since those dear days of childhood, long ago, And folks to-day seem different from the ones we used to know.

When we were boys together, romping 'thru' the field and dale, And chasing down the roadway when we heard the old school bell.

Education in the United States.

The annual statement of the commissioner of education shows satisfactory results for the work of the year ended June 30, 1898. The report says:

"One cause of congratulation on the part of those who hold the doctrine that popular education is the safeguard of our American institutions is the continued prosperity of the elementary schools. The increase during the year 1896-97 amounted to 257,896 pupils over the previous year. The total enrolled in elementary schools amounted to 15,452,426 pupils. Adding to it those in colleges, universities, high schools and academies, the total number reached 16,255,033.

"The total amount of schooling received per individual, on an average for the whole United States at the rate of school attendance for 1897, is nearly five years of 200 days each, and reaches quite seven years in a few of the States that are the most lavish in their expenditures for education. A little more than one-fifth of the entire population attended school at some time during the year.

"A still greater occasion for congratulation is the increase of students in colleges and universities. This increase has gone on steadily for twenty-five years. In 1872 only 590 persons in the million were enrolled in those institutions. In 1897 the number had risen to 1,216 in the million."

Cherish the mess.

Every teacher must be cheerful. Especially must those be cheerful of young children be so. The magic influence of the bright morning smile makes the boys and girls happy for the day and secures a pleasant day's work. The teacher must also be patient. He must never allow the dull to tire him, nor the mischievous to annoy him. Though the children are not angels, he must persevere, remembering that the impressions he is making will become permanent and ever wider in their influence.

But, in order that a teacher may be cheerful and patient he must be sound and healthy in body and mind. He must have plenty of sleep, exercise and fresh air. He must have a good digestive apparatus and supply it with plenty of wholesome food. He must keep good hours, read good literature, and never study after 10 o'clock. With these things kept in mind and obeyed the teacher's life will be very pleasant; his labors successful, his efforts appreciated, his services sought for, and his salary constantly increased.

Teaching the Young Idea.

The 75,000,000 school books constantly in use in this country would make a volume comparing in size with the encyclopedia.

School Books of the Nation.

It is at Washington, as shown in this picture. If they were bricks, they would build a four-story schoolhouse, 350 feet square.

Superintendents' Salaries.

The salaries of some of the State superintendents of public instruction are as follows: New York, \$5,000; Illinois, \$3,500; Pennsylvania, \$4,000; New Jersey, Missouri, Rhode Island and Colorado, \$3,000; Indiana, Kentucky, Minnesota, Montana, Texas, Washington, New Hampshire, and New Mexico, \$2,500; Nevada, \$2,400; Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, California, Florida, Kansas, Vermont, Virginia, Wyoming, and North Carolina, \$2,000; South Carolina, \$1,900; Oregon and Arkansas, \$1,800; West Virginia and Idaho, \$1,500; Wisconsin, \$1,200; Michigan, \$1,000, and the Indian Territory, \$600.

Educational Notes.

Westminster Seminary, in Fort Wayne, Ind., a school for young women, has been taken under the care of the Synod of Indiana.

Honolulu had a summer school, conducted by Dr. Elmer E. Brown, of the University of California. There were 200 teachers in attendance.

The entire school population of the United States is estimated at 20,000,000. There are 249,968 public buildings, 400,725 teachers, and the public school property is valued at \$455,948,164.

