

Topics of the Times

A man consumes in his threescore years and ten eighty tons of liquid and solid food.

A network of railways has been planned for Bolivia. The cost is estimated at \$37,500,000.

Atlantic City, with a winter population of only 30,000, has a summer population of about 200,000.

In the land of Melukkah, or Median, are old mines in which mining tools of the date 500 B. C. have been found.

Mme. Patti possesses an old doll called "Henrietta," which was given to her when she was seven for singing nicely.

Dr. Frederick Hegar, the foremost Swiss composer, has retired from public life after forty years' activity as a conductor.

Vilgodawickramage, Arnolis Appu and Samalawickramalenege Jamis Appu are, according to the Times of India, "wanted" by the Calcutta police.

Charles Francis Brush, the noted Cleveland electrician, has on his office door: "Office hours, 11:30 to 12." He is there promptly and never works overtime.

The discovery in Ceylon of thorium, the rare earth used in the manufacture of incandescent gas mantles, will deprive Germany of the monopoly of its supply.

New South Wales is just two and a half times the size of the British Isles. Queensland is equal to three times the German Empire and Belgium put together.

The net used by Japanese fishermen for yellowtail, bonito and tunny is sometimes several thousand feet in length. The seine nets are sometimes three miles long.

The Italians do not seem to feel cold when the sky is blue, no matter how low the temperature. It is only when the sky is overcast and the air humid that they complain of a cold spell.

Wurtemberg, Germany, has 487,000 acres of forest from which its net profit last year was \$2,240,000. The Germans cut the older trees and plant enough young ones to take their places.

Heretofore the only real banner in use in the Chinese army was the "Tatu" of the commanders of large divisions. Hereafter every regiment is to have its flag, as in the armies of other countries.

There is a remarkable increase of railway traffic in New York City. Each month this year there have been 100,000 more fares collected than during the corresponding month last year, and 5,000,000 more transfers have been issued.

A cheerful story is told of Deibler, the French executioner, whose salary had been cut off. A gentleman said to him: "Yours is a very unpleasant calling, M. Deibler." The operator of the guillotine replied: "It is, indeed. Such a lot of night traveling, and I never could sleep in a railway carriage."

In proof of the continued effectiveness of the work of Pope Leo XIII. for a renewal of popular interest in Bible study, the Boston Pilot notes from the figures of the Italian Bibliographical Society that during the year 1902 about half a million copies of the New Testament alone have been bought in Italy.

The largest and costliest building thus far undertaken in New York, the city of immense structures, is the magnificent \$10,000,000 Episcopal cathedral of St. John the Divine, now being erected on Morningstar Heights. This will be the greatest sacred edifice in America, and the fourth in importance in the world.

The ancient poets used to sing of the dense forests of Sicily. To-day the mountains are bare. The question of reforesting is a difficult one. Attempts at starting new growth are frustrated by the peasants, who tear down fences and drive in their goats. Only under military protection could new forest trees be grown.

At the birth of a Japanese baby a tree is sometimes planted, and this must remain untouched until the marriage day of the child. When the nuptial hour arrives the tree is cut down, and a skilled cabinet maker transforms the wood into furniture, which is regarded by the young people as the most beautiful of all ornaments of the house.

In a well that has been boring since 1902 water was reached the other day. It is at Boutham, near Lincoln, England, and is to supply that city with water. The well's depth is 1,500 feet. When water was tapped there was a noise like thunder, and in fifteen minutes the water rose 185 feet. In a few hours it was within seventy feet of the top of the shaft.

TAMENESS OF WILD ANIMALS.

Some of the Queer Things to Be Seen in California.

That wild animals become extremely tame is well known. The wild quail of southern California will enter gardens

and nest there, and in the protected season I have seen a flock standing in a country road, a jaunty male between them, and my horse not twenty feet away, moving only when I moved, and then with reluctance, says a writer in the Scientific American.

Several years ago some residents on one of the channel islands of southern California introduced a number of black-tailed deer, which were protected to such an extent that in time they discovered they were privileged characters and assumed nearly the absolute contempt for human beings held by the sacred bulls of India, that crowd men and women from the road. They persisted in entering gardens, day and night, destroying the plants, and finally to locate them, the dwellers on the island had bells fastened to them. One buck made his home near the town of Cabrillo and walked about the place and over the hills with the freedom of a dog. When a boat landed off the pier, the buck ran down to greet the newcomers and share their lunch, and became a welcome guest at barbecues and lobster and clam-bakes.

Nearly all animal life is protected at this island. I have counted half a hundred bald eagles in an eleven-mile run, have seen them take a large fish from the water within easy gunshot, and they build their nests on pinnacles that are not difficult of approach. The sea birds are equally tame. Gulls gather in flocks a few feet from those who feed them. In the winter flocks of cormorants swim into the bays and are so tame that they merely divide when a boat passes, and fishermen often find that the cormorants take off bait almost as fast as they can put it on. Gulls dash at bait, and I have seen a long-winged bird resembling the petrel follow my line under water at a cast, using its wing to fly along, and take the bait, and at times scores of sea birds are seen in shore feeding upon small shrimps, paying no attention to observers photographing them.

The most remarkable illustration of tameness to be seen here is that of the sea lions. For ages the animals have held possession of a mass of rock on the shore of the islands. A few years ago many were killed by vandals, but laws were passed and for a number of years the sea lions have been protected and the rookery has increased in size until a split has recently occurred and another settlement has been established halfway up the island.

It has been the custom for years for fishermen in cleaning their fish to toss the refuse into the bay, and the sea lions formed the habit of coming down to the bay at this time to dine thereupon. At first only one or two came; now a band of two large bulls and several females makes its headquarters at the bay, or passes most of the time there, constituting a valuable sanitary corps, eating every fragment of fish, the gulls joining in the feast. When not feeding, the sea lions pass the time lying within a few feet of the beach, sleeping or playing, the females and young leaping from the water and going through various tricks of interest to the looker-on.

Only a few feet away from the sea lions are the boat stands of the fishermen and boatmen and boats are moving out and over the sea lions constantly; yet they are apparently oblivious to the men, who never molest them. This has had a peculiar result. The enormous animals allow the men to touch them, and readily come out upon the shore to feed from their hands. It so happened that I was upon the sands when no sea lions were in sight, and upon asking a boatman where they were, he began to whistle, as though calling for a dog, and to call "Here, Ben!" repeating the call several times, whereupon out from among the anchored boats appeared not only Ben, but two large bull sea lions, which must have weighed half a ton, followed by two or three smaller females.

Lazy Man.

"Josh Drone is the laziest man in seven States," drawled the storekeeper at Bacon Ridge.

"What's he been doing now?" asked the cheese-counter loafers.

"Wasn't you know he was always so lazy he waited for the lightning to split his kindling wood?"

"Yep."

"And the flood to wash his windows?"

"Yep."

"Wasn't you know he's read somewhere that in the East the hallstones thrashed a farmer's wheat and ever since he has been sitting in an easy chair praying for a hailstorm."—Columbus Dispatch.

All-Embracing.

The Allahabad Pioneer quotes an East Indian doctor's death certificate: "I am of mind that he died for want of foodings, or on account of starvation. Maybe also for other things of his comfortable, and most probably he died of drowning." It is a careful, omnibus opinion, and reads like a weather prediction that cannot miss and runs the whole gamut of meteorological possibilities.—New York Tribune.

One Man's Evil

By EFFIE ROWLAND

CHAPTER XXVI.—(Continued.)

"We thought it possible that this confinement in so small a space might end the matter for us, but if Hubert still lived, it was arranged that George Stanton should conceive some plan of silencing him forever. He demanded exorbitant terms from me, and I gave them. I was mad at that time; I would have given all my fortune to have put Hubert Tenby out of my path, not only because he signified my ruin, but because Antonia loved him."

"What plan did Stanton suggest to you for silencing your victim?" asked Ben Coop in a low voice.

"I do not know this place to which he took Hubert, but he explained to me that it was a lonely spot, and that in the garden at the back of the house there stood an old broken well. This was to be the grave; this, as far as I know, is Hubert's grave. Take help, go and search there, and when you have found him, let Antonia kneel and weep upon him. Though he be dead, he must feel the blessing of her tears."

Ben Coop stood with his hands pressed to his brow and then to his throat. There was a hardness in the recital of this tragedy that stifled him.

"It is well for you to speak so easily," he said, when words would come; "but oh, man, my heart is chilled with horror! What had that poor lad ever done to you? He had loved you; that I know, as all the world knows it. We start," said Ben sternly, as he put his hand with a grip of iron on Gerald Tenby's shoulder, "we start, you and I, this very hour to find the body of the lad thou hast destroyed!"

It was a strange journey back from the North; the officials at the small railway station had looked curiously at Sir Gerald Tenby's companion. But Gerald Tenby seemed sunk in apathy. He moved, he spoke as one in a dream. He was only dimly conscious of the man who sat beside him in the train; his thoughts were always with Antonia.

London reached, Ben hailed a cab, and with Gerald beside him, drove out once again in the direction of that small house. It was evening.

It was a long drive, yet Gerald Tenby never spoke. He sat back in the corner of the hansom with his arms folded across his breast. He had a stiff, unnatural look. He was so quiet at times that Ben hardly knew what might not happen.

A little way from the gate Ben stopped the hansom. He got out, and Gerald Tenby followed him. A shiver ran through the man who had worked such ruin in Hubert's life.

Ben hid the cabman wait, then putting his hand on Gerald's arm, he advanced to the little gate, unlatched it, and passed up that deserted path to the door.

Before he could ring the bell or make any sign, the door was opened hurriedly from within and that same small woman's figure came into view. Once again she uttered eagerly the name of the one creature in the world that was beloved to her.

"Master George, you have come!" she said, and then she was silent, and she drew back, for she saw that it was not her master who stood before her.

"Have no fear," Ben said to her gently; "we are not here to harm you. Let us have a light; we must come in."

But Sarah stood in the passage.

"I was told by Master George to let no one in," she said; "rightly or wrongly, I have kept my word to him. I cannot let you pass."

"Your master is not here, poor woman," said Ben; "I fear you will not see him again for some time at least. We are here and we must enter; there is something in this house that must be searched into."

Then Sarah burst into tears. Covering her face with her apron, she sank on a chair in the hall, and Ben entered, drawing Gerald Tenby after him.

"Dry your eyes," said Ben, "and listen. Rightly or wrongly, as you have just said, you have stood by your word to your master. I fear me it means a great deal. Dry your eyes and answer. Who is in this house with you?"

"Why do you question? Why do you come to me like this? What right have you to come into this house?"

"We come to seek some one who was brought here, some one who was buried here."

"Ah!" she said, with a wail in her voice. "I knew it, I knew it; I told Master George that evil must come. Sirs," Sarah said, rising to her feet, "I am glad you have come, for now there will be an end, perhaps, to this trouble. You say you come to see one who was brought here, to seek one who was buried here; come with me. I will show you what you have come to find. I did not believe that Master George would leave me so long; but if there is any truth in what you have just told me, then trouble has come to him, and I can fight for him no longer. Come with me!"

She led the way along a passage to a room on the ground floor, and the two men followed her, Ben quivering with emotion, and Gerald Tenby stiff, calm, and white as though he were no living creature.

At the door Sarah paused, then she threw it open and they saw before them an empty room save for something shaped

like a coffin that stood in the center of the floor, lighted at either end by candles. The windows were closed in by shutters; the room was poor, shabby, old, yet in its way this resting place of the dead had a dignity about it that penetrated even the stony despair that filled Gerald Tenby's heart.

A moan broke from his lips as he staggered backward against the wall of the passage.

Ben Coop loosed his hold and covered his face with his hands; then he woke from his intensity of grief as he saw Sarah fall on her knees by this coffin covered with black, and burst again into weeping. He bent forward and touched her on the shoulder.

"Why do you weep?" he said in a whisper; "what was this lad to you?"

"He was all that was left to me," the woman said, her voice wrung with anguish; "the child I nursed from the day he was born, the one link left to me of all that had once made life pleasant and good."

Ben drew back in his turn. He scarcely knew how to control his feelings. The force of emotion took even the strength from his voice. When he would have questioned, Sarah spoke on.

"This is the coffin that holds the body of Walter Griffith Stanton, my master's brother," she said; "I put him into that myself, I nailed the wood together. Not woman's work as a rule, but when a woman's heart is eaten up with grief, when she is set a task that her soul turns against, then sometimes a woman can do strange work. You look amazed; you do not question. You come to seek some one whom you thought dead. I will show you that some one living."

Once again they stood before a door.

"Though he lives," she said in that dull, even tone, "it is just a flicker of life, I do not know, indeed, why he has not died a dozen times; but I prayed for his life; I worked to save him, not only for his own sake, poor lad, but because I wished to take away the darkness of a great sin from my master's soul."

She pushed the door open very quietly and stole into the room. Here all looked comfortable. The windows were thrown open and the summer twilight could be seen through them. A light was burning close to the bed on which was stretched a still figure—a figure whose face was turned from the eyes of those two standing looking eagerly into the room.

Ben trod almost noiselessly over the carpet, and when he reached the bed he knelt down and buried his face in his hands. He knelt there a long time, praying wildly, offering up the gratitude of his heart for the mercy that had been vouchsafed for the restoration of this creature whom he loved.

And all the while Gerald Tenby stood leaning against the door, gazing with unseeing eyes at the figure of the man that lay on the bed. Whether he were conscious of relief or gladness it would be impossible to say. He seemed to have touched the last depths of despair a few hours before, when he had turned and seen Ben Coop standing under the trees, like a judge, waiting to give sentence.

Ben drew him out of the room, down the stairs again. When they were in the hall Ben threw open the door.

"Go," he said; "you are free! The lad lives, and all the rest will be easy. If he had died I would have asked his life at your hands, but heaven has been good enough to take away the worst of your evil. Hubert Tenby lives; the rest is not for my hands. Go!"

And then Gerald Tenby woke to the feelings of the situation.

"Where shall I go?" he asked hoarsely. "What place is there in life for me? You don't know what it is, man, to stand as I do and look absolute ruin in the face!"

Ben put out his hand and rested it upon the shoulder of the other man.

"There is no life so bad and black that it cannot be changed, lad," he said. "There is always atonement. Turn and face this like a man. The world need not know the truth. I'll answer for it that my lad will do you no hardship—rather will he be your friend. Turn and face it," said Ben again; "make haste to render up that which is not yours; make haste to give back to the lad that which is dearer to him than wealth—his unstained honor. Be true in this, and much will be forgiven you."

CHAPTER XXVII.

And the next day Antonia stood at the gate of that little house. A message had been sent to her as early as Ben could manage to dispatch it.

"Hubert is found. Come here at once," Antonia walked up the narrow staircase. It seemed to her incredible that the end of this awful anxiety had come at last, that Hubert was found, that within the next two or three minutes she would see him, perhaps touch his hand, though he might not speak to her.

She made very little noise on the stairs, but Sarah heard her coming, and as the girl stood in the doorway, so beautiful in her simple white draperies, the older woman covered her face with her hands. Then, as Antonia moved up to the bedside, she passed out of the room and left the girl alone with her lover.

A day or so later a modest funeral left that little house. The hearse was followed by one carriage, in which sat Sarah, Ben and Antonia. These two felt that though they were strangers in name, a common bond of sympathy linked them in with this solitary, humble woman, who had played, innocently, so great a part in Hubert's life.

There were many, many heart-breaking days before peace began to dawn for Antonia's heart. There was much to darken the happiness that should have been hers. Not even the knowledge that her dear one was creeping slowly back to health could lift from the girl's heart the shadow that fate had thrown upon it. There was always her uncle's death to haunt her, and even sharper and more hurtful than this, the memory of Gerald Tenby's self-sought death. This death was hushed up. The world never knew exactly what had happened, and for a time this same world was full of consternation and even regret for the untimely death of one who possessed so much as Gerald Tenby had done. Perhaps on no one did the report of this death make a deeper impression than upon a certain Englishman who lived under an assumed name in the only land where the hand of justice could not reach him.

The man Stephens had found him and boldly taxed him with all that had been done, but Stanton had not hesitated to buy this man's silence. Yet, at the same time, he trusted so little to this that he had gone as quickly as he could to Spain, where, if Stephens had wished to set the law upon him, he could remain untouched.

Antonia and Hubert were married very quietly. At the girl's own desire, this marriage took place up in the North.

"It is a long way for you to travel, dear," she said to Lady Charlotte Singleton, "but I want you to take this journey. I do not feel that I should be married properly if you were not there."

Simple as the wedding was, a rumor of it had spread in the village, and outside the church all the people who had known the bride and bridegroom as children gathered together to give their blessing and their good thoughts on their marriage day, and as Hubert came out of the church with his wife leaning on his arm, the veil thrown back over her face, her eyes shining like stars, her sweet lips smiling, a cheer went up that was irresistible and heartfelt—a cheer that brought the tears to Antonia's eyes and made her heart leap. As they were alone in the carriage together she turned to her husband.

"Oh, dearest!" she said, "I am almost too happy. What can I do to show my gratitude?"

"Love me, Antonia," said Hubert; "my dear, dear wife, love me, and help me to walk through life as you have walked yourself. I, too, feel that my heart is overcharged; but that is natural, dear, for we have passed through such dark, chill shadows that we are almost afraid to greet the sunshine now that it has come."

The carriage drove along briskly. It turned in at the gates of Mill Cross Court, for, following an old custom, Hubert had carried his wife away direct from the church to his own home, and there stood Antonia's father and his sister Bertha, with her little children, ready to welcome them, to say tender words, and to assure them that life was indeed blessed with happiness.

Later on in the day Sir Hubert and Lady Tenby left the North to travel abroad for a time. When they were gone Ben had a sense of desolation pressing upon him that he could not put into words, and all at once, yielding to a sudden impulse, he turned and went to the village. There in a little cottage dwelt a stately, beautiful woman, who was known to be a great singer, and whom none of the old villagers recognized by her new name. Ben came to her as she sat by the fire in the gloaming.

"Lass," he said, "I cannot live here any longer; I am going back to the life I lived for so many years. I have come to say good-by, Liz."

The woman stood a moment with her hands pressed to her heart, then, with a cry she flung herself upon his breast.

"Go if you will, Ben," she said, wildly; "but take me with you."

When Christmas came again, clear, bright, sparkling Christmas, and Antonia's cup of happiness was complete—for she held her first-born in her arms—a sudden thought came to her. She sent for Ben, and as she watched him holding that small atom of humanity in his great, strong hands she put her thought into words.

"I want you to go to London for me, Ben," she said; "go to Sarah, tell her that a little life here has need of her. I think she will come with you." And Ben's face lighted up.

"I think she will," he answered.

And two or three days later he came back from that journey to London, and Sarah traveled with him, and as she held the infant in her arms she broke into tears, and Antonia knew that, old as she was, this new gift of duty had lifted despair from the woman's heart.

And Sarah reigned at Mill Cross Court, a sovereign in her way. She was supposed to rule the children, but in reality they ruled her, and then, if they could not get their way with Sarah, they trotted off to a certain cottage that stood on the outskirts of the grounds, where lived Ben Coop and his beautiful wife.

"I believe," Hubert Tenby would say laughingly sometimes, "I do believe that Sarah and Ben together regard those children as their property and not ours. I am half inclined to be jealous."

And Antonia answered him once by a question.

"Am I not enough for you, then, my dear one?" And Hubert Tenby caught his wife in his arms and held her pressed to his heart in silence fraught with eloquence; for though years had gone by since the day of their union, their love had grown truer, deeper, more lasting as the years had passed.

(The End.)