

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

A NEW JERSEY man has invented a device to hold doorknobs in place. The long felt want—a device to hold keyholes in place after 12 p. m.—is still unfulfilled.

THE pretender to the Servian throne, Karageorgevitch, has arrived in Roumania from St. Petersburg. He was probably obliged to pay excess baggage on his name.

GO INTO a grocery store about 3 o'clock, and steal a piece of fresh cheese and a cracker, and there is nothing better to eat. And there is nothing you can do that will cause a groceryman to hate you worse.

THIS is the season when women have the best of it. A costume consisting of a Mother Hubbard and a hair pin is just right for summer. Men are all dressed too heavy in summer, although they take off as much as possible.

IT didn't require that a successful surgical operation for cataract to enable Mr. Gladstone to see that his titled successor to the prime ministry of England is making ducks and drakes of the magnificent political heritage bequeathed to him by the grand old man.

WHEN the women become men, who will be the women? Or will there be any women? If there are no women, will there be any children? If there are to be no children, what is the use of inaugurating a reform if there is to be no future generation to enjoy it?

IN St. Louis a few days ago a crackman entered a warehouse and spent several hours in boring a hole into an iron safe in order to destroy the combination lock. He was, however, frightened away before he had completed the job. It was afterward found that the safe had been left unlocked. Brains are necessary in all trades.

FOR years the State of New Jersey has been the resort of persons who wanted to marry and could not comply with the legal requirements of the States where they resided. Matrimonial mills in all the cities of the State did a flourishing business and preachers and magistrates reaped a rich harvest. This state of things has been done away with, the Legislature having passed a marriage license bill that is stringent in its provisions. Reform makes slow progress in New Jersey, but this last is one of the most commendable in recent years.

LONDON correspondents are betraying in their present felicitations over the return of the American visitors how serious was their defection last season. The present summer promises ample compensation. The proprietor of one of the older up-town New York hotels said, recently, that the steamer trade had not been so brisk in years as just now, with big bookings ahead. Out-of-town travelers, bound for Europe, always plan for several days in New York on the way, and it is this tide which at the present moment is exceptionally heavy.

THE woman who must have dimples or die has only to invest in the dimple producing machine which an English paper says has been invented and patented by a woman with an eye for beauty and a speculative turn of mind. She, of all others, ought to be rewarded with one or more of these fetching marks of beauty, providing she can endure the torture of her own device, which is a kind of mask arranged with screws and wooden points which press where the dimples ought to be. This is worn at night, but just how long it must be applied to produce the desired impression is not said.

VARIOUS are the ways of spreading disease. Some workmen tore down an old house in New Haven. Soon an epidemic of diphtheria broke out among their families and friends. They had carried the wood home for fire, and thus were spread germs of the disease which had raged in the house the year before. An old feather-bed was thrown into an open lot. Children played with it, and three out of five died of scarlet fever, and the disease was almost epidemic in the community for a time. Through ignorance or carelessness, that bed had not been properly managed, or it would never have been allowed to leave the disease-stricken house except in ashes.

THE latest discovery of the Parisian police throws a new light on Anarchism. The Anarchist has been regarded as a kind of mad dog, but it has not been supposed that he was a mercenary animal, or that he tried

to kill people for any other reason than that it gave him pleasure. It appears, however, that a man was hired and paid to throw a bomb at Liege. It is necessary to distinguish. To set a bomb with a lighted fuse in a dark alley, and then to run away, is a proceeding in which the risk is not so great that men could not be hired to run it. But such an attempt as that in the Chamber of Deputies is one that requires an active and ferocious misanthropy on the part of the person who undertakes it, because the risk of capture and punishment amounts almost to a certainty. Both kinds of Anarchists ought to be killed as promptly as possible, but upon somewhat diverse grounds.

LIEUTENANT BALDWIN, inspector of the life-saving service for the Chicago district, thinks the Treasury Department will order an investigation of the charges made against the crews because of the inadequacy of the service in the late storm. Probably it will. An attempt will likely be made to shoulder the responsibility for the loss of life upon the members of the life-saving crews, who, from all accounts, did as well as any men could have done under the circumstances. But if the Treasury Department begins an investigation of this kind the public will insist that the whole matter shall be gone into. It won't do to stop at the \$25-a-month men. It will be necessary, for instance, to discover who is responsible for the rotten, leaky boats furnished the crews, and who weakened the crew by keeping half of it down at Jackson Park six months after the World's Fair closed. These matters are far more important than the reprimanding or discharging of a few amphibious persons who risk their lives in the service of the government at wages that the average office boy would reject with scorn.

ACCORDING to London Engineering, the average number of working days in a year in various countries is as follows: In Russia, 267; in England, 278; in Spain, 290; in Austria, 295; in Italy, 298; in Bavaria and Belgium, 300; in Saxony and France, 302; in Denmark, No way and Switzerland, 303; in Prussia 305; in Holland and North America, 308, and in Hungary, 312. In all continental countries holidays are much more numerous than with us, while in this country there are only two or three week days in the year when we give up all work. The tendency in England and elsewhere in Europe is to reduce the average number of working hours in the day, and this is often accomplished by making Saturday a half holiday. Manufacturers have found that the gain in the efficiency of their help compensates for the loss of time. All over the world there is a strong pull on the part of labor organizations for a reduction of the hours of labor, and there are good economic reasons for such reduction. It would be of manifest advantage, for instance, if the hours were so shortened that a much larger number of people could be employed. This, however, is not the sort of philanthropy that the labor organizations aim at. The ideal system would keep everybody at work just long enough to do what was necessary to be done.

A Unique Westerner. During the winter ex-Governor Samuel T. Hauser of Montana, lives mostly in New York city. He is outspoken and fond of humor. One day while he was here he was taken ill and sent for a noted surgeon and physician. He said the surgeon turned him over, thumped him and finally, in triumphant tones declared that the ex-Governor would have to be tapped. "What is that?" cried the patient. "Oh, nothing; I expect to cut into you a few inches," was the reassuring tone of the surgeon. "By the eternal ten-toed, jumping Jehosaphat, do you call that nothing?" shouted the ex-Governor. The doctor called the next day, thumped his patient several times and in a regretful tone of voice stated that after all he would not have to use the knife. In two days the ex-Governor was walking around attending to business as usual.—New York Advertiser.

In Factory Villages. The advocate of woman's rights should find life to her liking in the factory villages of Maine, where men can be appropriately called "house-keepers." In almost any town where much manufacturing is done numbers of these men may be found. If one calls soon after meal time he will be likely to find them with aprons washing dishes. At other hours they may be seen sweeping up, mending beds, washing the children, cleaning house or cooking. These men are housekeepers for the simple reason that their wives can earn more working in the mill than they can, and it becomes a matter of money saving to let them do it. Some of them saw and pile the wood in the shed do the chores, take care of the garden and do other man's work around home, as well as the housekeeping, and the arrangement seems to be profitable.

HYPNOTISM will never reach its perfected state until a dead beat can make a creditor believe he has paid his bill when he hasn't.

A BELATED LAUGH.

But the Englishman Pronounced the Fun Very Good.

The Chicago girl's joke about Western corn came very near suffering the fate of Sir John Franklin, and being lost from the sight of humanity forever. It may be of interest to briefly review the history of this singular international episode.

It appears then, that last autumn Lady Poyle Ayle of Somersetshire, visited certain of the Western States of America just before harvest time. The enormous fields of Indian corn, covering areas like kingdoms, with their beautiful products,

"With its shining robes about it,
And its long, soft yellow tresses," filled the patrician traveler with amazement. From the Wabash to the Kaw extended these illimitable areas of precious grain, of which Illinois alone has yielded more than 300,000,000 bushels in a single year. Out of the \$4,000,000,000 produced yearly by American farms, it was shown that the value of the corn alone reaches \$600,000,000.

While standing before the cereal exhibits at the World's Fair with a young lady friend of Chicago origin, Lady Poyle Ayle remarked, "May I ask you, my dear, what becomes of this quite too awfully immense quantity of mail? You Americans very wrongly call it corn, don't you, but wheat is the only proper corn in the United Kingdom." I really can't comprehend, my dear, how you Yankees manage to dispose of such amounts of maize."

To which the fair Illinoisian made reply: "Oh, that's easy enough. We eat what we can, and can what we can't."

The British matron, of course, missed the point, but the incident was noted down and borne back to England as an illustration of the flippant inconsequence of the young American female. How long this inspired gem of repartee might naturally have lingered unrecognized and unvalued about the shores of the Bristol Channel we cannot estimate. But one evening Colonel Sabretoche, a widely traveled military officer, came over from the adjacent garrison town to dine at Foyle Ayle Castle, and was regaled with the Sphinx-like remark of the Chicagoan. He remained in a pensive frame throughout the rest of the evening, "mulling in an increasing broadness as the purport of the words dawned upon him, bit by bit, until suddenly he broke into a roar which clattered the windows and hauberk on the walls of the ancient hall, ejaculating:

"Yaas, by Jove, I see! Just fawney! To can what they can't! Why, my lady, it is positively a long one worthy of Sidney Smith or the Carlton Club."

By the aid of a careful and patient explanation and a suitable diagram her ladyship in time came to comprehend the bright quip, and the gallant Colonel also communicated it to certain friendly officers of the Gloucestershire Battalion. Thus the long-buried pleasantry was lifted from its catacomb, stripped of its dusty ornaments, and new back to gladden millions of American newspaper readers.

TO RAISE THE PEWABIC.

Superior Men to Search for the Treasure-Laden Hoil.

It has been over two years since an attempt was made to raise the hull or secure the cargo of the ill-fated steamer Pewabic, which reposes on the bottom of Lake Huron in 128 feet of water. Preparations are now being made to raise the abandoned wreck. Superior, Wis., capital will be put into the new undertaking, as it was in the last ill-fated expedition in which Diver Felkey lost his life. The diver, who will join the new expedition on shares, lives in Pennsylvania. So confident is he that he can raise the Pewabic that he is willing to perform the work on much better terms than any other man of his profession. He has perfected a new style of diving suit and has experimented with it for some time. He is not in the least concerned in regard to the depth of water in which the Pewabics, and says the stated depth will not embarrass his working to good advantage. Two good submarine divers, Felkey and McCarty, have lost their lives in trying to get the treasure imprisoned in the sunken hull.

The Pewabic was a propeller of about 1,000 tons. She was sunk in Lake Huron off Alpena outside Thunder Bay in June, 1865. She and the Steamer Meteor came in collision at night and the former was sunk. There were 250 persons aboard and the number lost is variously estimated at from 80 to 130. So far as the loss of life is concerned the sinking of the Pewabic was one of the greatest lake marine disasters on record. The cargo of the Pewabic contained seventy-five barrels of silverware, 300 tons of copper ore, 175 tons of pig iron, 250 rolls of leather—supposed to be buffalo hide—and a great number of trunks, for which there are big rewards offered, ranging from \$100 to \$5,000 for a single one. Among these trunks is one belonging to the army paymaster, which is supposed to contain a large sum of money.

His Explanation.

In a certain town in Nevada there was at one time a justice of the peace who had been born in the Emerald Isle, and whose blunders occasioned many a smile to the better educated members of the community.

On one time a subpoena had been issued from his court to another Irishman to attend as witness in a case where James Smith was the plaintiff, and Isaac Williams et al. were the defendants.

Michael Fennessey, the desired witness, appeared in court before

the trial commenced, and during an informal preliminary conversation he asked, bluntly:

"Judge, who in the world is 'et al'?" That's swat 'Oim wantin' t' be told."

"Well, well, Michael," exclaimed the judge, in evident amazement. "You must say 'O'm a bit surprised at an ordinary intelligence, should not know the manin' of et al. But for the blinfin' at the witness an' any other gentleman present that might be ignorant as well as Michael Fennessey, 'O will explain. It is derived from two Latin words contracted, an' means in its literal an' American sense, at al, at all!"

An Enjoyable Fire!

While the author of "In the Shadow of the Paroda" was making a journey to the interior of Burmah he came to a village that was on fire. The inhabitants did not seem to be doing anything, and the Englishman saw his men at work and called for help. At last one old native and two younger ones took very reluctantly their places at the pump.

They pumped half-heartedly for five minutes; then, as ill luck would have it, a flock of paddybirds appeared overhead. They hovered above the rolling smoke, and the flames gleamed rosy-pink on their snow-white plumage.

"Ah! Red paddy-birds! Look! Red paddy-birds!"

The sight was too much for the lady wretches at the handles. They squatted on their heels, re-lighted their cheroots, and stared upward.

"Whose house is that?" the Englishman demanded, pointing to one now threatened.

"Your honor, that is the house of Poo Too."

"Where is Pho Too?"

"He is there."

The Englishman turned. The man indicated was one of the two that he had driven to the pump. He was squatting on the roof of a tree smoking.

"Are you Poo Too?"

The man nodded.

"Is that your house?"

He nodded again, and smiled pleasantly.

"It will be on fire at once," the stranger said, catching the other man's infectious coolness.

"Yes, your honor, I think so," and he contracted his brows and looked at the house with a disinterested air.

The Englishman burst out laughing; he could not help it, and he made no further effort to put out a fire which seemed to be giving so much pleasure to the persons interested.

Settled the Pass Friend.

I called upon the general passenger agent of one of the big railroad lines running into the city yesterday and was ushered into his private office. He was engaged in conversation with a gentleman when I entered, and after a few minutes of abrupt questioning took a small book from his desk and began writing. An expression of intense delight crept over the visitor's face as his eye followed the agent's pen, and I immediately surmised that he was about to receive a pass. By this time two other persons came in, presumably on the same mission. They sat down in the opposite side of the office, and realizing the situation cast wistful glances at the fortunate man. The agent continued his writing and asked the man where he wanted to go.

"Make it New York City this time," responded the man, who had evidently dead-headed before.

A few finishing touches were applied and the pass was handed over to him. He thanked the agent very politely and assured him that he would not bother him again. He examined the ticket and started for the door, when he noticed that it was good for only one way.

"Why, I guess you have made a mistake," he said, in a tone of surprise, "this ticket will only take me one way."

"Do you expect to return?" asked the agent unconcernedly.

"Well, I should say I do."

"All right, hand me your ticket."

The man gave the agent his ticket and was astounded to see him tear it up.

"Well if you're coming back you can't get any ticket from me. I thought I was going to get rid of you for sure this time." Without further ceremony the chronic pass seeker took leave and the other two persons having seen enough, followed in his train.—Buffalo Enquirer.

Millepede.

The little creature which possesses the distinction of having more legs than any other animal is that which belongs to the family of insects known as millepede, or thousand footed. There are several different species of these, but they all possess the common characteristic of having segmented bodies, each segment of which is provided with its own pair of feet. These are set so closely along the body as to resemble hairs, and when they move one after another with perfect regularity the effect is precisely the same on a small scale as that of a field of oats undulating under the influence of the wind.

Some species of millepede have as many as 350 separate and distinct legs. They are all perfectly harmless, unlike the centipedes, which frequently have the power of inflicting poisonous wounds.

THERE is one good thing about the man with a trouble on his mind; he doesn't break into your office with whistle or song.

CAUTION is sometimes too near-sighted.

RAGED trousers may have sound pockets.

WHY ARE WE RIGHT-HANDED?

A Princeton Professor Answers by Experimenting with His Child.

Prof. J. Mark Baldwin, of Princeton University, has been performing a series of experiments upon one of his children with a view to finding out the origin of right-handedness. There is no apparent scientific reason why a man should use one hand more than another, or why the muscles of one arm should be stronger than those of another. A number of theories have been advanced to account for the phenomenon. One of the most plausible is the people become right-handed from the manner in which they are held and carried when small children. The mother carries the child in such a way as to leave the right hand free, and from this early experience the habit is acquired which runs through its whole life. It is also a curious fact that the observation of animals fails to show an uneven development of the muscles of limbs on one side of the body as compared with those of the other. Monkeys especially are known to swing freely by both arms equally well, although this is a point that Prof. Baldwin might well have studied in the jungles of Africa.

The experiment made by Prof. Baldwin of Princeton, extended over a period of many months, beginning while the child was an infant. This, however, was only in regard to objects placed at some distance from the body of the child, and where it had to reach out for them. When objects were placed near the child it used both hands equally.

More than 1,000 experiments of this kind were tried by Prof. Baldwin, and when the objects reached for were near its body it used both hands about an equal number of times. In stretching out, however, it almost invariably used its right hand. From this he argued that the tendency is inherited. Left-handed children are, it is said, generally descended from left-handed mothers or fathers. Those that are right-handed learn to shake hands more easily than left-handed children, who have to stretch their arms across their body in an awkward fashion to perform the act.

Prof. Baldwin thinks that the right-handed function has some connection with the power of speech. They both belong to the same lobe of the brain, and before a child learns to speak it has been observed that it endeavors to express emotions with its hands. There are some people who are neither left nor right-handed, but who can use both hands equally well, even in writing, the muscles on either arm being the same size.

Whitewashing the Wasp.

The human view of wasps seems to be lacking in breadth. Because they are given to stinging us, we fail to do justice to their virtues. Grant Allen says that the main doctrine of the wasp-are, "If any wasp will not work, neither shall he eat;" and "Every wasp to labor according to his capacity, and receive according to his needs in a free community."

Division of labor, I believe, goes a long way in the nest. Some of the workers seem to be specially employed as foragers and soldiers; others appear to be told off as nurses and guardians; while yet others are engaged as paper-makers and masons.

Wasps are at all times particularly fond of honey. Indeed, they have a very sweet tooth for sugar in any form. Toward the end of summer, therefore, as bee-keepers well know, they will force their way into beehives as open robbers, and carry off by main force as much as they can gorge of their winged neighbors' honey.

The drones of the race, instead of being idle and luxurious creatures, are sober, industrious, and well-behaved members of the community. They clean the streets of their town with exemplary diligence; they act as public scavengers or sanitary officers. And they have their reward; for unlike the doomed bee-drones, they live their allotted life in peace and quietness, till winter involves both them and their epistolar sisters in one common cataclysm of death and destruction.

Observe herein the vast superiority of the unobtrusive wasp over the boastful bee, whose sting is imbued in its brother's blood.

The Hasty Word.

To think before you speak is so wise an axiom that one would hardly think it needful to emphasize it by repetition. And yet in how many cases the nasty temper flashes out in the hasty word, and the latter does its work with the precision and pain of the swift stiletto. Singularly enough the hasty word offends wounds those who love one another dearly, and the very closeness of their intimacy affords them opportunity for the sudden thrust.

We know the weak points in the armor of our kinsman and our friend; we are aware of his caprice, and originally are tender and compassionate even of his fancies and whims, but there dawns a day when it is written in the book of fate that we shall be as cruel as we are loving. We are anxious over unpaid bills, or our expected letters have not arrived, or some of the children are ailing, and we dread the outcome of the malady. So politeness falls us, fortitude is vanquished, philosophy is in abeyance, and we say that which we repent in sackcloth and ashes.

But though the hasty word may be forgiven, it is not at once forgotten. It has flawed the crystal of our friendship; the place may be cemented, but there is a shadowy scar on the gleaming surface. Oh, if the word of hate had but been left unspoken; if the strong hand of patience had but held back the sword as if to strike!—Harper's Bazar.

AMIALE LAWYERS.

A Client Who Found It Impossible to Remunerate His Legal Adviser.

Lawyers, as a matter of fact, are as a rule extremely amiable with their debtors. Some lawyers of extensive practice and ample incomes have a happy-go-lucky way of sending in bills "some time." A New York lawyer who is extremely successful in conducting big cases, and so not worried about finding bread and butter for himself and his family, recently made a flying trip on business to the Pacific coast. He was detained there longer than he had expected. One of his New York clients was spending the season there, and to him the lawyer mentioned the fact that he was running short of funds. "Well," said his client, "I have a comfortable deposit out here. Won't you take \$500 of it?" The lawyer accepted it with thanks, and as soon as he returned to New York sent a draft to his friend for the amount. Now, for five years the lawyer had been conducting extensive legal business for his friend, and in that time his client had never been able to get a bill rendered. So the client wrote back: "Great Scott! Isn't there any way in the world that I can make a payment on my account? I was congratulating myself that I had been able to force you to take \$500 on account. Now, you return it to me." To this the lawyer dictated a little consolation in the following form: "You won't congratulate yourself when you get the account." Now the client goes around wondering if there will be anything left of his estate after the lawyer's lightning strikes it.—Tribune.

Lesson from a "Chestnut."

Every one knows the story of the indolent man who could not mend his leaky roof while the weather was stormy, and who did not see the use of mending it in pleasant weather, because then it did not leak.

Not to be disrespectful toward Congress, this fable seems with a slight variation, to describe the attitude on the subject of immigration. For it does not even take note of the damage the flood causes when it is pouring into the national domicile.

Just at present the roof does not leak. In other words, the hard times in this country deter the people of other countries from coming here, and they are even driving back to their former homes some hundreds of thousands of discouraged immigrants.

There is little consolation to be taken even from the return current, because those who are departing must be persons who have earned and saved something while here. Consequently they are men and women who might have become good and valuable citizens. The idle and thriftless remain here.

Congress has many great questions to decide, but there are not many more important than this. A restriction upon the horde of foreign tramps who mingle with the useful immigrants would mean an enormous saving in taxation. For it would lessen the expenditure for the support of paupers and would diminish vastly the cost of detecting and punishing crime and maintaining prisons.

A vigorous treatment of this matter cannot be postponed indefinitely.—Youth's Companion.

Successful "Fakers."

An interesting book might be written on "street men" or "fakers," as they are called. Dr. Flagg of Baltimore was probably the pioneer in the business. For twenty years he sold patent medicines from the side of a buggy, with a negro banjo player as the attraction to draw a crowd. He retired twice, with fortunes of \$100,000 each time. John Stinson was one of the old-timers. His specialty was the sale of glass-cutters, and when he died he left \$75,000. Tom Wood was another. He sold razor strops, dentifrice and soap for taking out stains. This he used to describe as being useful in taking "stains from your coat, stains from your vests and stains from your character. If you should get shipwrecked, gentlemen, this soap will wash you ashore."

Charles W. Thompson, of New York has sold goods on street corners in every city of more than 6,000 inhabitants in the United States, and has traveled through England, Germany and France, disposing of a wonderful razor strop which he warranted to put a fine cutting edge on a hoe.—New York Mail and Express.

Got What He Wanted.

A small boy, with long yellow curls and leggings to match, was taking a lunch with his nurse at a San Francisco restaurant, says the Post, while his mother sat at a neighboring table, gossiping with a friend and nibbling at a piece of cake. The boy was quarreling with his nurse, and his lusty howls had disturbed his mother three or four times.

"Mary, why will you tease that child?" demanded the exasperated mother. "What does he want?"

The boy knew he was about to triumph, so he discreetly ceased his howling.

"Sure, mum, I'm not teasing him," said Mary. "He is crying for what he calls a firecracker pickie."

The temporary sulk enabled the mother to resume her gossip, so, of course, she forgot about the boy. In a moment she was disturbed by another howl from the boy.

"What is the matter with that child, Mary? Why don't you give him what he wants?"

"Sure, mum, he's got it."

A THOROUGHbred dog is never as smart as a cur.