TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

The latest question for the wise people to discuss is, "Is civilization a Failure?"

One crop in Europe is larger than usual, and that is the cabinet complications.

If ignorance is bliss why do we never see a more self-satisfied fellow than the man who knows it all?

The character of the Klondike performance has changed. It is no longer a comedy or a farce, but a tragedy.

"Bismarck," according to a London journal, "has the biggest head in Germany." There's probably a good deal in that.

There is a college up in New Hampshire that is trying to worry along without a football team. The craze for novelty is leading to extremes.

A Paris girl has died of hydrophobia caused by kissing her dog. A girl who cannot find anything but a dog to kiss would naturally go mad.

"When is the best time to marry?" was voted on by a Texas woman's club by secret ballot, and it was unanimously decided that any time was the best time.

Next year straw hats for horses will be generally adopted in England; the royal family, the Episcopal Bench and the House of Lords have placed orders for this equine headgear

A Milwaukee minister claims that the $5 treasury note bears a scandalous picture of a female figure. Fortunately newspaper men have few chances to be shocked in that way.

Englishmen are now playing golf in the very shadow of the pyramids, which is an improvement on England's old habit of playing horse with Egypt in and out of the shadow.

The Salt Lake Tribune prints a long editorial on "What Dollars Are Appreciated." So far as our personal experience extends, any dollar may approximately be included in that category.

That New York judge who holds that swearing is a legitimate ground for divorce evidently has never tried to still the riotous vocalization of an infant son and heir at 3 o'clock in the morning.

A New York scientist declares that it entirely possible for a young woma to marry and live well on $2 a week. The modern young woman, however, exhibits no inclination to make use of all her possibilities.

Train robbers never get anything. In 90 per cent of the train robberies that occur, the robber bandits are out the cost of the dynamite, and don't get back expenses. They could make a better living if they tried honesty.

Railway collisions ought to be considerably less frequent than they are now of the new invention, enabling train dispatchers to communicate directly with moving trains anywhere on their lines, turns out to be a complete success.

Prof. Von Larish, of Munich, says there is no such thing as feminine beauty, that there are no beautiful women and can be none anywhere. It is hard to tell whether such a man should be left to wither in his skepticism or whether a ticket to America should be sent him at once.

"Until recently," remarks the Boston Transcript, "we believed that oxygene rendered the protoplasm of the organ phosphorescent with disengagement of the phosphurreted hydrogen." It is indeed a sweetly solemn thought, brother, that at last you have been set right upon that all-important matter.

When Christine Nilsson, not long ago, visited the little Swedish village where she was raised she played the violin while a group of children danced, just as she used to furnish the music for the dancing when a little girl herself. A snapshot of the Countess Miranda thus engaged would be valued, and some painter should preserve the scene.

Drudgery is inseparable from labors of intellectual research and the efforts of moral improvement. It is the test of faculty, the price of knowledge, the matter of duty; and from the agent's own soul must come the spark and breath that turn it from cold fuel into living fire. Can he not find it and send it forth? Then the stuff is not in him that will make him the true scholar.

Socialism is rapidly growing in Germany and it is bound to get a footing in the Legislatures of all the States of the empire. It is generated by absolutism, and has doubtless within its ranks in the empire at large hundreds of thousands of persons who would belong to some of the more conservative groups if the head of the state were a moderate ruler. Thus the extremer socialists have reasons to like the Kaiser. They need him in their business.

American athletes have been going over to England for years trying to beard the lion in his den, and if they had waited for the spectators to encourage them by their applause they would never have won an event. But they are made of better stuff than their English cousins, and did not allow themselves to be discouraged, and success has crowned their efforts in almost every kind of sport. All of which goes to show that the much-vaunted spirit of fair play, supposed to be the Englishman's biggest stock in trade, has fallen away below par.

Among eminent French widows, on of the most active is Mme. Michelet, who is bringing out a new edition of her husband's histories and editing his memoirs. Mme. Alexandre Dumas refuses to permit the publication of any of her husband's manuscripts, and Mme. Gounod steadily opposes the performance of any of the composer's early works. Mme. MacMahon and Mme. Carnot have both declined the pensions offered by the state. Mme. Pasteur's pension is $5,000 a year, and Mme. de Lesseps receives a pension of $24,000 a year from the Suez Canal Company.

Insurance against non-employment is an experiment, begun in America within the current year. It is a private enterprise. Its dues are heavier than those of similar European societies, but its benefits also are much larger. As in the case of the European societies, voluntary non-employment, or non-employment for any cause within the control of the beneficiary, makes all benefits voidable. This excludes the striker. A significant feature of this movement is the effect which it will have upon employment agencies. It is to the interest of the non-employment insurance companies to help their beneficiaries to get work. Abroad, the societies work in conjunction with employment agencies, the state lending its own assistance in this direction. In Chicago a company insuring against non-employment supplies to its beneficiaries the services of two employment bureaus without charge.

The New York papers have discovered that James Hart O'Toole, a Harlem blacksmith, is King of Ireland. He has documentary testimony that he is a lineal descendant of Shamus O'Toole, who was in command of the main division of the Irish forces at the final battle of Wexford and conducted himself with such distinguished valor that the great Brian Brou bestowed upon him the title of "Gillcruskeen," or permanent king. England having usurped the function of ruling Ireland, the real king sensibly and industriously pursues the honorable occupation of blacksmithing until his throne becomes habitable. And then, when Irish independence is achieved, and Robert Emmet's epitaph is written, there will be some lively skull cracking between the followers of the legitimate king and those of John Finerty, "President of the Irish republic," that was organized on paper in Chicago a few years ago. The English Government has sufficient notice that there are plenty besides the Irish at home who are anxious to take the job of ruling Ireland off its hands.

The Duke of Devonshire has been a busy man ever since he entered English public life, and he has great landed estates which require constant attention. When he was recently asked to stand for Mayor of Eastbourne there was no lack of excellent excuses for declining the nomination. He was Lord President of the Council in the ministry of the day and the leader of the Liberal Unionists, who had seceded from Mr. Gladstone's home rule party; and in addition to his political duties he was overwhelmed with private business and with social engagements. Instead of refusing the nomination he accepted it, although Eastbourne was not a great English town like Birmingham, where Mr. Chamberlain worked out as Mayor new principles of municipal policy; nor like Sheffield, where another titled landowner and Mayor, the Duke of Norfolk, received and entertained the Queen during the jubilee year. No reputation was to be made in that seaside resort, as there was in London when Lord Rosebery accepted the chairmanship of the county council and plunged into municipal politics. The Mayoralty was merely another tax upon the time and patience of a busy man. The Duke of Devonshire regarded it as a public duty to take the office when the corporation urged him to become Mayor. He was willing to sacrifice his leisure and convenience in order to fulfill a public obligation. Americans of wealth and social position are sometimes reproached for imitating English dress and manners and becoming dudes. If they would copy the English nobility in willingness to devote their time and energy to local government, they would follow an example that is worthy of high commendation. There are black sheep among the lords, but the tiled class in England is a working body noted for intelligence, industry and public spirit. The dukes and lords take their full share in the drudgery of local government. As mayors of cities and members of town and county councils they give up many hours in the week to public work, and their service is always without financial reward. They set an example which rich merchants and active business men are ashamed to disregard. Engrossed as they may be with their private business, they find time for attending council and committee meetings and for promoting the ends of good government. This is the secret of the efficiency and success of local government in England and Scotland. The men of education, wealth and influence, instead of leaving politicians to govern their towns and counties badly, look after this public business themselves. They regard it as a public duty, and discharge it at serious inconvenience and from high motives. In America this duty is shirked and local government is frequently not what it ought to be.

ATCHISON GLOBE SIGHTS.

Men do not call it good luck unless it is in money.

Some people should be good; they are not pretty.

A man must either suffer with dyspepsia or hunger.

An old soldier never cares anything for a sham battle.

How soon a bride gets over that fawn-like tremble!

The nearer you get to a big man, the smaller he becomes.

Every bore thinks the people he annoys are fond of him.

Some people are so worthless they can't build a wood fire.

You like some fools because you can feel wise by comparison.

No man works too much, but nearly every man frets too much.

A surprising number of men make the mistake of being deadbeats.

People greatly enjoy hearing that a practical joker has been whipped.

It is easy for a woman who owns a horse and buggy to make friends.

An Irishman can be smart without being cranky, but an American can't.

A girl who "runs" after the boys, never has any trouble in catching them.

You can never tell whether a new preacher is a success until he gets a funeral.

The smaller the hotel the more likely it is to be known as "The Palace."

A foreigner will run after his hat when it blows off, while an American will walk.

A bet with a woman is called a "jawbone bet," because she never puts up any money.

A farmer never feels quite so important as when he comes to town driving four horses.

We have noticed that we are never as comfortable in bed as when called in the morning to leave it.

Remember when you go visiting that you wouldn't be there if the people knew how to get rid of you.

The charge is made that women who talk to men a great deal about honor cannot play cards without cheating.

When a woman can't sleep well in a strange bed, she at once imagines that it is because something is biting her.

If a woman is half as smart as she believes her children to be, she will never praise their smartness to other people.

By "better" society is often meant a society where the cut glass, table linen and carpets are of a better quality.

When an old man becomes interested in a woman, the people discover that he is not as old as his appearance has indicated.

When a man receives a large sum of money his friends tell of it, but not so much in rejoicing as to give his creditors a hint to act.

The women who boast of their economy are not economical. A woman whose saving amounts to genius is kept so busy saving that she has no time to boast.

People who smile to your face, will make fun of you behind your back. Remember this, and act as well as possible when with people, thus giving them as little occasion as possible to make fun of you when your back is turned.

Only One Robespierre.

The world has produced batches of great conquerors, statesmen, reformers, and writers; but it has brought to light only one Robespierre. He was the unique creation of a most exceptional epoch. He was naturally of the type from which men select churchwardens and secretaries of charitable societies, yet he became a beacon portent to all ages.

This monster of crime was precise, methodical, neat in dress, fastidious in his habits, and gentle in his manners. So amiable was he in private life that his dependents adored him and his brother died for him. In an earlier part of his career he refused a judgship because his kind heart would not permit him to sentence criminals to death!

In settled times he would have passed a life of amiable, respectable mediocrity and numerous virtues would have been inscribed on his tomb. But revolution came and the man who would have turned aside that he might not crush a worm quickly developed into a tyrant more bloody and remorseless than the worst of Roman emperors.

Though possessed of very moderate abilities he yet ruled the great French republic with a rod of iron, while the national convention, the elected parliament of the people, trembled at his frown. Such a combination of incongruities has appeared but once on the stage of history, and it is unlikely that nature will ever again be so freakish as to roll into one a country curate, a lawyer's clerk, a dancing master, and a Nero.—Answers.

Women on Horseback.

Perhaps it may not be generally known that Queen Anne instituted the fashion of riding on a side saddle, says a writer in the New York Tribune. She did this because of a deformity brought about by chronic hip disease. In riding horseback the only way in which she could conceal the defect was by bunching herself up on a side saddle. Of course, whatever the Queen did was at once adopted. Many physicians say it is positively and permanently injurious for women to ride regularly and for long distances in the cramped and unnatural position they are necessarily compelled to assume when using the side saddle. The California women, who are adopting the habit of riding "cross-saddle," or astride, say they have neither wish nor intention to be mannish, but simply desire to show they can ride comfortably and be feminine at the same time. Mrs. Dawes and Mrs. Bull, of Alameda, were the first two women to introduce "cross-saddle" riding in their city, and in a few weeks a dozen or more young women and girls joined them and gave up the side saddle. Miss Mabel Beebe, of Oakland, has been riding astride for three years or more, and is a superb horsewoman. The divided skirt is worn by the majority of the women, but in long-distance and country riding bloomers are preferred, and are made up in the smartest possible way. Miss Hanna, daughter of Senator Mark A. Hanna, is one of the converts to cross-saddle riding. Here in Buffalo some of the younger horsewomen ride in this manner with divided skirts so deftly and modestly arranged that one hardly notices anything unconventional about them.—Buffalo Commercial.

BOOK REVIEWS

Seton Merriman's "The Sowers" stands next to "Trilby" in the popular demand.

A new magazine of liberal thought, entitled Mind, has been started in New York under the editorship of John Emery McLean, late managing editor of the Metaphysical Magazine.

Miss Elizabeth P. Wormeley has spent fifteen years in translating Balzac's "Comedie Humaine," and the publication of "The Deputy of Arcis," being the fortieth volume, completes her task.

The edition de luxe of Rudyard Kipling's works which the Macmillans are publishing in England is to follow in arrangement the "Outward Bound Edition" published by the Scribners in this country.

The Forest and Stream Publishing Company, New York, announces in book form Fred Mather's angling sketches, entitled "Men I Have Fished With," which have been running in the Forest and Stream.

Of making of books about Joan of Arc there is aparently no end. The latest is for children. A simply told story is to be illustrated by forty-three colored pictures after drawings by the famous painter, Boutete de Monvel, and published by the Century Company.

In Harper's Capt. Mahan presents a timely discussion of the advantages which Cuba possesses over Jamaica and other neighboring islands as a basis of naval operations for the protection of the mouth of the Mississippi, and of the proposed channel of communication through the Isthmus with our ports on the Pacific.

Maurus Jokai, the prolific Hungarian novelist and poet, author of more than 300 volumes, which have been translated into almost every spoken language, is now at work upon an epic in the form of a drama. The subject is taken from the earliest Magyar history, from the time of the legendary Arpad. It is to be called "Levente," and Jokai says he has hopes it will "take a place in Magyar literature somewhat similar to that filled by the 'Nibelungenlied' in German literature." The force of audacity could no further go! The "Nibelungenlied" represents a whole age.

The Bookman has a good joke on the Independent. In commenting on the fortieth anniversary number of the Atlantic the Independent speaks of the "wild delight with which we breakfasted with the Autocrat in those first twelve Atlantics." Turning back to the files of the Independent of nearly forty years ago the Bookman finds a review of Holmes' "Professor at the Breakfast Table" which says that Holmes "has dashed at many things which he does not understand, and has succeeded in irritating and repelling from the magazine many who had formerly read it with pleasure," and ending with the opinion that the book as a whole "will be pronounced a failure." Truly, "wild delight" is good.

Tiles in Bath-Rooms.

Tiled bath-rooms appeal to the eye and to the sensibilities and sanitary considerations to most people, but don't put them—the tiles—into your house, the plumbers say. The bath room has an uneven temperature When the hot water is turned on and the room is filled with steam, everything capable of expansion in the room expands, only to be followed by a speedy contraction when the room returns to its normal temperature. This uneven treatment the tiles resent, and they show it by dropping out. Persons to whom the expense is not a question are removing the tiles in their bath rooms and are having them replaced with slabs of marble, which can be fastened securely.—New York Times.

Inventions that Will Aid Sketchers.

An apparatus invented by a Frenchman enables one to make a most excellent landscape sketch, even though one has not the slightest idea of drawing By an arrangement of lenses a reproduction of the view is thrown on a sheet of vegetable paper, and all one has to do is to follow with a pencil the outline of the picture, and in a few minutes the result will be startling to the operator.

Delaware's Public Whippings.

At Wilmington, Del., where offenders are publicly whipped, crowds of girls look on and seem to enjoy the spectacle.

A superstitious man is nearly always a petty man

WOMEN AT HOME

WORKING WOMEN INCREASING.

A MANUFACTURER who gives employment to a large number of women and girls cites a few reasons for the preferment shown the fair sex. He says that women are more adaptable, more reliable, more easily controlled, neater, quicker, more industrious, careful, polite and docile than men. "Furthermore," he continued, "where men and women are in other respects equal there is one point of superiority on the part of women that counts heavily, and that is sobriety. Taking this in conjunction with the fact that employers are more and more making it an absolute condition of employment, it will be seen that women possess an advantage that is very marked. The advantage of being willing to accept smaller pay is an unstable equilibrium, but the advantage of habits of sobriety is a stable equilibrium, and sober men possess the same advantage."

The percentage of increase of women in all gainful occupations since 1880 is 48, while the percentage of their increase in mechanical industries is nearly 63. Among the gainful occupations in which women are engaged to the actual number of 4,000,000 are those of pilot, sailor, locomotive engineer, plumber, machinist, workers in iron, steel, brass, lead and zinc; boiler-maker, nail-maker, furnace-maker, roofer and slater. Although as yet women are not found in rolling mills, blast furnaces, nor in any of the occupations that expose the workers to excessive heat, it is probable that there will be inventions before a very long time which will relieve all such labor of many of its special hardships, and the entrance of women will follow.

Barred Out by Their Beauty.

Many reasons have been advanced for the exclusion of foreigners who sought to take up residence in this country, but so far as records show none has been barred for the same reason as now operates to detain Ella and Agnes Frensdorf at the immigrant landing in New York. The girls are sisters from Hamburg, and came to America hoping to find at least a temporary home with their uncle, S. P. De Yough, a New York importer of wealth. On their arrival the rich merchant went to meet them and was at once impressed with the idea that the

ELLA AND AGNES FRENSDORF.

responsibility of looking after two girls was more than he could undertake. Mr. De Yough wants them to return to Germany and promises to send them money regularly after their arrival there, "but," says he, "beautiful as they are I cannot assume charge of them; they are too beautiful."

The representative of Austro-Hungary found them places as governesses in a Brooklyn family, but the head of this household acknowledged that if they did not prove what he wanted he would discharge them. This is one of the contingencies to provide against which the immigration bureau was formed, so the girls may yet have to return to Germany.

Can Assume Their Maiden Name.

A decision which will be of interest to women all over the country was rendered by a Cincinnati judge a few days ago. It is that a woman has the right to continue in business under her maiden name after she is married if she so chooses. The judge in his opinion said that a married woman's legal name is that which her husband bears, and that as long as they are man and wife she can have no other surname, excepting for business purposes, when she can assume her maiden name, or any other name, provided, of course, that there is no intent to defraud.

Scarcity of Women.

Young women are still scarce in Idaho, and bachelors who desire to change their conditions of single blessedness are plenty. As a result of this condition of affairs school boards in that State have difficulty in securing teachers to conduct their schools. There are about ten unmarried men to one unmarried woman in Idaho.

Dr. William C. Whitewell, a druggist, and the Mayor of Salmon City, Idaho, gives the following incident as a sample of the way schoolma'ams are wooed and won in Idaho:

"A charming young lady, Miss Busch, came from Iowa to teach in the public school in Givensville," he says, "but before she was there three months she was engaged to a prominent man of the town, and at the close of the school term they were married. Her sister came to teach the next school year. When the term was half over this sister resigned and married, and sent for another unmarried sister to take her place as teacher The third Miss Busch taught in the school the latter half of the term, but three days after the term closed she was married to a business man of the town."

Fair Sex to Be Gloried.

What woman has done from the time when she began exerting her wiles on unsuspecting Adam up to the present day is going to be told in a book. It is to be written by George Willis Cooke of East Lexington, Mass. He has been collecting material for it during the last twelve years and estimates that it will require three volumes of 500 pages each to develop his plan in a satisfactory manner and that it will take three or four years to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion. The work is being conducted under the auspices of Julia Ward Howe, T. W. Higginson, William T. Harris, commissioner of education; A. F. Chamberlain, Clark University; Edward Everett Hale, Ednah D. Cheney, William Lloyd Garrison, Philip S. Moxom, D. D.; Hattie Tyng Griswold, Caroline Bartlett Crane, Mary A. Livermore, Nathan Haskell Dole, Frank B. Sanborn, and several editors.

Hook for the Theater Hat.

The theater-going woman has always strongly objected to taking off her hat in the theater for the reason that no place has been provided where it can be stowed away without danger of injury when it is off. To carry it on the lap throughout the performance is a more unfeasible idea than if it were a baby, and to place it under the seat is only to tempt the fate which falls upon the unhappy chimney-pot of her male escort. A solution of the difficulty takes the form, however, of a newly invented hat peg, which is screwed into the back of the seat in front, and, being telescopic in its formation, is drawn out when wanted, and forms no obstruction when out of use, and, joy of joys! there is a mirror at the terminal knob, whereby the fair lady may adjust her tresses and her treasured tile and go forth again with a clear conscience and at peace with all men.

Perfumes and the Nerves.

It may not be generally known, but it is nevertheless a fact, that the perfumes which are the most pleasing to the senses are not in all cases helpful to the nerves. Ambergris, for instance, is positively offensive to many, yet it is said to possess a wonderful power of clearing the brain and driving away those evil spirits known as the "blues." On the other hand, attar of roses, with the suggestion of glowing suns and gorgeous eastern colors, predisposes one to tears. A faint odor of musk as a tonic, while civet brings drowsiness of soul, for which the best antidote is the pungent odor of sandal wood. The fragrance of the citron and aloe wood is as soothing to nervous people as far-off music.

Fruits for the Skin.

Fruit acids will cure most skin diseases and will keep the complexion clear when medicine has failed. Apples will relieve a torpid liver, and the sallowness which results from it. Plums and peaches will correct acidity of the stomach. Grapes will stimulate digestion. Oranges supply food and medicine for the throat, and berries of any kind will cure cases of skin eruption. A good physician declares that the best skin and blood tonics are made from fruit acids. Girls with pallid complexions want strawberries; if not to be had, substitute bananas; but of all fruits, the apple stands unrivaled for all general purposes of diet and medicine.

Mine Worked by Women.

It is an uncommon sight in this country to see young women mining coal from the bowels of the earth. Such a sight, however, can be seen any day in Pennsylvania. The Mahoney valley, near Shamokin, boasts of a coal mine worked entirely by women. There are seven employed, and they are all related, being the daughters of a German miner named Hans.

Toilet Odds and Ends.

The favorite sleeve is one closely fitting with a crisp little puff at the shoulder; another is a modified mutton-leg, smooth fitting from waist to elbow, with leaf point finish or flaring tabbed cuff falling over the hand.

A new sleeve shows the forearm very close, buttoned nearly its entire length on the outside, with three upstanding tucks between the buttons, or three rows of Milan braid instead of the tucks. This arrangement reaches to the small shoulder puff.

Upright trimmings on half-large hats are a loose velvet draped about the crown, with a bow on the left from which three or five tips or a cluster of feathers rise. Full velvet crowns are found on hats of every kind for children, misses and ladies, but for 3-year-old girls the choicest headgear is the Bengaline bonnet.

The season's hats are distinctively different. A very becoming idea is for the side-tilted hats to have an ostrich feather under the brim, resting on the hair. All large hats have the turned-up effect on the left side, and a favorite way to trim is a half-long ostrich feather sweeping back from a rosette of velvet, and a steel buckle in the front, and a smaller feather and bow under the left brim.