

## TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

### A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

Some temptations come to the industries, but all temptations come to the idle.

Admiral Dewey's great difficulty when he comes home will be to find enough of himself to go round.

One way of looking at it, that \$20,000,000 given to Spain merely shows America that it pays to lick the other fellow.

While the mignonette is the national flower of Spain, there would not be inappropriateness now in displacing it for mourning glories.

New York has a Chinese base-ball club. Hitting the sphere is better than hitting the pipe, and the exercise may be good for their joints.

Talking of our absorbing Cuba, the people of that island selling "fake" war relics to American visitors shows they are disposed to also take us in.

A recent decision says a husband may whip his wife under strong provocation. For that matter a good husband beats a bad wife every day in the week.

Many of the things you do not understand may seem clear when you reflect that the people of the United States eat 4,000,000 bottles of pickles every week.

Wireless telegraphy having been found practicable for military use, the tide of battle will probably be more than ever turned by sudden flashes of magnetic genius.

A valued contemporary reports that a boy fell from a third story window, lit on a man's head and was saved by the high hat. This is what is known as a stove-pipe story.

To Mr. Kipling's distrust of the peace manifesto because it comes from Russia Edwin D. Mead makes this happy reply: "A bear dressed up and acting the part of a man is a pleasant spectacle than a man acting the part of a bear."

Turkey has paid the last installment of its war indemnity to Russia growing out of the war of 1877-78. Uncle Sam should now remind the Sultan of that "little bill" against the Sublime Porte which has waited so long for settlement.

It is now announced that the Prince of Turin, nephew of King Humbert, who visited this country some time ago, is about to marry an American heiress. Why should the poor noblemen have all the luck? A prince scantily endowed with this world's goods is as deserving of pity and sympathy as any other person of rank who has not the where-withal.

Brambles continue to beset the path of the kodak fiend. One of him was "took," a little while ago, while trying to "take" the flying Filipinos, and barely managed to escape with his life, but without his camera. Another one undertook to snap a dynamite explosion in Pennsylvania the other day and got mixed up with the flying fragments. Up to date no one has attempted to press the button on a thirteen-inch shell coming toward him. He will probably try it some day and the shell can undoubtedly be depended upon to do the rest.

A member of a Canadian school misappropriated a bottle of ink. The city clerk of the municipality where the wrong-doing occurred lately received 5 cents from Chicago in payment for the property thus converted to the pupil's use. Repentance and restoration may find a full illustration, even though the value represented is only a trifle. There is no moral law which declares that sins against honesty do not count unless the sum involved is over one dollar. The stealing of a penny disturbs the ethical equilibrium as surely as the stealing that opens prison doors to the reckless thief.

A pauper woman in France has been tried and convicted of having had her child baptized fourteen times as a Catholic and twelve times as a Protestant for the purpose of securing 5 francs and a dress each time. This is doing slightly better than the American custom of getting married every day on an excursion steamer or on the stage of a traveling show for the sake of a bonus and incidentally to draw money-spending crowds. Those who take advantage of these incentives to mockery of sacred observances are perhaps less culpable than those who offer the prizes.

This illustrates how frequently good men go wrong and how easy it is for wise men to be mistaken. The price paid for Alaska was \$7,200,000. The area acquired was 369,529,600 acres, so that it was about 2 cents an acre. The Alaska fur companies have already taken over \$33,000,000 worth of seal-skins, and they have paid into the treasury over \$6,000,000 as royalties, with \$1,340,533 still unsettled. The fish product of Alaska in 1897 was valued at \$2,977,019. During the last fifteen years it has exceeded \$30,000,000. The Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries in a letter to Congress estimated the value of the Alaska fisheries, excluding whales and seals, at \$67,890,000, or nine and one-half times the cost of purchase. The gold output has exceeded \$15,000,000 already. The Treadwell mine alone up to 1897 had paid \$6,425,945 as dividends to its stockholders, and claims

to have several millions in sight. In that year alone the output of the mine was \$2,439,000, and in 1897 it was nearly twice as much. When Mr. Seward was asked what he considered the most important event in his career he replied: "The purchase of Alaska; but it will take the people a generation to find it out."

The great propelling force in human progress is that which initiates and stimulates an ever-increasing diversification of social tastes, and this is the function of art. It refines and expands the old and introduces the new. The taste stimulated by the introduction of the new and more beautiful is the germ of a social force which is destined to develop an economic interest which sets the world in motion. The desire for a more attractive form of anything habitually entering into the social life of a people creates a demand for its production, which sets the economic machinery in motion to supply it. At first it is produced at an enormous cost, only for the very rich, but, by the force of imitation and contact, what the rich have the less rich desire, and its domain widens from the monarch or aristocracy to larger social groups, until it reaches the masses and becomes the market basis for profitable capitalist production.

The little planet discovered last August by Witt of Berlin has at last been duly christened by the name of Eros, the mischievous boy of Venus-Aphrodite. It has also received the number 433 in the list of asteroids; rather against the will of the discoverer, who contends that because Eros comes so much nearer to the earth than any other planet, it cannot fairly be counted in the asteroidal family. It was, of course, expected that some of the hundreds of photographic plates made in previous years would show impressions of the planet, but for a long time every search failed. At last, however, late in December, Mrs. Fleming of the Harvard College Observatory, guided by the calculations of Doctor Chandler, detected a faint image of it upon one or two plates made at Cambridge in 1896. By the help of these Doctor Chandler was able, in turn, to make his computation so much more accurate that traces of the planet were immediately found on a considerable number of other plates made both at Cambridge and Arequipa, in 1894 as well as 1896. From these photographic observations, combined with the observations made since the discovery, the orbit of the planet is now determined with an exactness which otherwise would have demanded years, and there will not be the slightest difficulty in finding it at its next approach in 1901. It is a beautiful instance of the manner in which the methods of the old and new astronomy can be made to aid and supplement each other, and puts a tall feather in the cap of American astronomy.

While Americans are harassed and perplexed by the necessity for decision in assuming and defining the nation's future relations to its new dependencies, there are difficult problems to be worked out in other countries. Each nation has its own burdens. In France there is a struggle between military and civil authority. A cabal of army officers has been a law unto itself in the Dreyfus case. Justice and national honor require a revision of a military judgment based on tainted evidence. Ministers, legislators and intriguers have been playing with the question of bringing the army under the control of the supreme law of the State. There has been a lack of civic courage in dealing with it, and irresolution and delay have only served to increase public excitement. Military dictatorship cannot be endured by a free state. England also has a question of supreme importance which the governing classes are unwilling to take up. This is the separation of church and state. It is forced upon public attention by the conflict of opposing schools of thought in the English church. So long as the church is established by law, there must be state courts for enforcing obedience and regulating religious doctrine and practice. Whatever may have been done in the past, it is evident that a Parliament representing every form of belief and unbelief cannot revise a prayer book and settle burning questions of faith. Disestablishment will probably come, and a free church be left to govern itself. In Italy, where Cavour's idea of a free church in a free state has been carried out, there is also a disturbing religious question. The Quirinal and the Vatican are rival centers of power between which there is an unending conflict. The state is struggling to maintain its independent position, and the Vatican is seeking to regain its ancient privileges. The religious question, in its relations to the future of Italy, to-day divides the nation into two irreconcilable parties. Men give attention to their own affairs, and conclude that their personal and national perplexities surpass those of their neighbors. Yet the work of civilization goes on. We may be sure there is an established order of moral government in the world. Here hope rests, in the belief that by it—out of the complications and apparent confusion of human interests—man's highest development is yet to come.

**President's Characteristic Reply.**  
Not long ago President McKinley was addressing a great audience in Philadelphia. At the close of the affair the people were closely crowded about the entrance, held back by the police until after the President should have left. Some one, mindful of the President's convenience, suggested that he leave by a rear door.  
"No, I will leave by the front door. I never retrace my steps," was the characteristic reply of the President.  
Woman may be the weaker vessel, but man is often broke.

# POLITICS OF THE DAY

## THE NEXT PANIC.

It is not a pleasant task to sound a note of alarm, but it is necessary in this case. When the end comes it will be a bitter one. The crash will, we are afraid, equal any that has ever preceded it in this country. The panic of 1893 was of tremendous magnitude, but we question if that was as terrible an event as that which will be produced by the present trust movement. When that much-to-be-dreaded day comes it will be necessary to look to other agencies than Congress to initiate restorative measures. We do not, in fact, see how it is going to be possible to produce a change for the better until the panic has run a long course. By the time the crash arrives there will be several billions (par value) of "water"—judging from present appearances—to be squeezed out. It will be impossible to save it. Of course, as we said last week, all the common stock of trusts so far authorized has not yet been issued; but it will be very largely worked off in the course of the next few years, and will be found eventually in the hands of "innocent holders;" that is, in the hands of persons who paid good money for it.

Now these people have got to stand for a terrible loss, and the number of them will be so great that the suffering will be widespread throughout the country. The next panic will work in two ways, at least. It will destroy credit at the start, and well-conducted enterprises will accordingly suffer for a time along with the general run of misguided trusts, and will wipe out hundreds of millions of property in the possession of the owners of trust

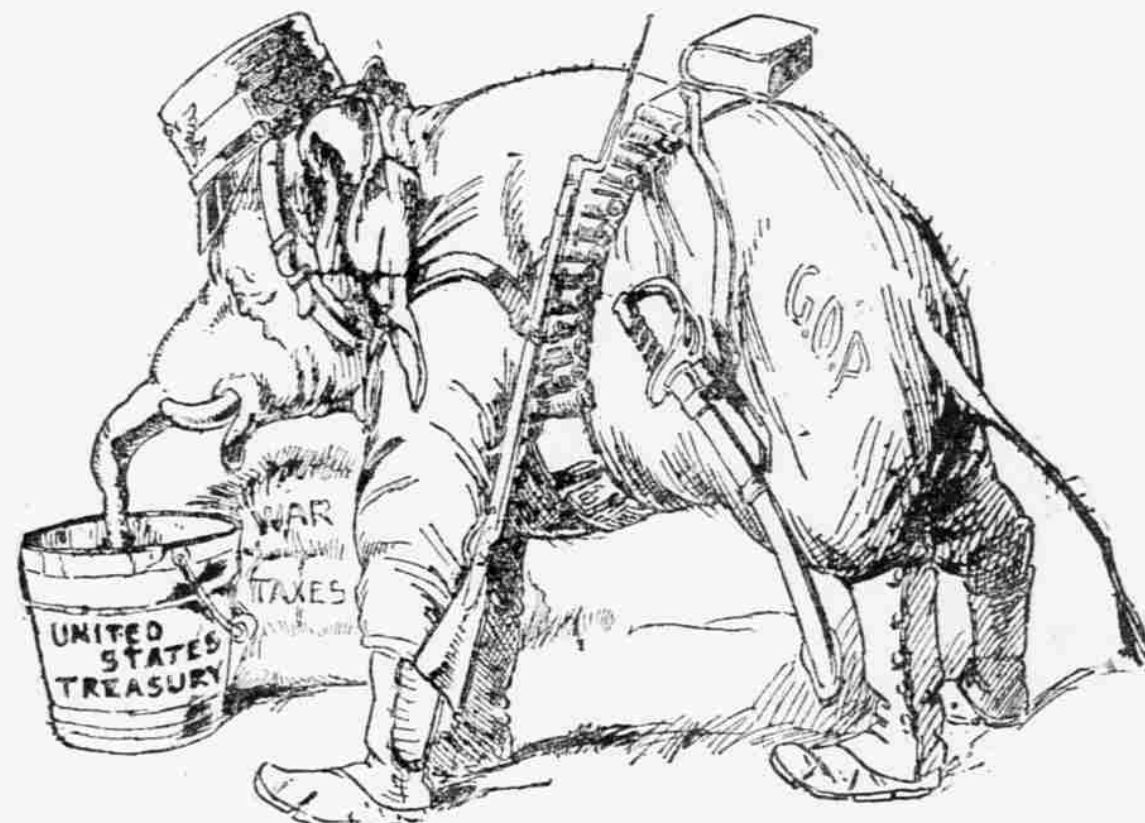
contribute its money and its influence to elect the Republican candidate. Will that fact satisfy the people that the Republican party is the party responsible for trusts? Why should every trust in the United States be Republican, from the gold combination down to the manufacturers of matches? If the American people are not stark mad they will have no difficulty in finding out which party is responsible for the trusts, and if they are really opposed to the trusts they will vote for the other side. Unless the majority of the American people vote as the trusts vote, the Republican candidate will stand no show whatever of winning in 1900.

### A Fatal Disorder.

Sherman was forced out of the Cabinet "on account of ill health." Vice President Hobart is to retire from politics "on account of ill health." J. Addison Porter, McKinley's private secretary, has gone to Atlantic City, and it is reported that he will soon be out of a job "on account of ill health." It is really remarkable how service for Hanna's administration is conducive to ill health—except for buzzards like Alger, to whom such carrion as "embalmed beef" is as dainty as "angel food." Meanwhile Uncle Sam is bearing up under many afflictions, and the people must rescue him in 1900 from a prolonged siege of "ill health," for the Hanna kind of "ill health" appears to be infectious and contagious.—Mansfield Shield.

**They Will Live to Abolish Hannaism.**  
There are plenty of newspapers in the country who are declaring that Bryan and Bryanism are dead, and yet

## OUR EXPENSIVE AND EXPANSIVE MILITARISM.



—Chicago Chronicle.

shares—property represented by certificates which should never have been issued. It may be asked when all this will happen. That, of course, no one knows. The lean period will come in time. We have in previous articles traced the causes that will wreck the trusts. Competition will eventually prove too much for them. By competition we mean the adverse conditions to which they will be subjected by the organization of new companies with legitimate capitalizations and the latest improvements.—United States Investor.

### A Verdict in 1900.

President McKinley, in his zeal to defend the beef trust, who were rewarded with fat contracts in consideration of past and future favors, has gone too far. The soldiers represent all of the States and all shades of politics. They went into the service of their country as patriotic Americans, and they realize that the nation opened its heart and its purse and ordered that they should have the best the nation afforded. It will be difficult for Mr. McKinley and his defenders to explain the disgraceful conduct of the War Department in a satisfactory manner to the soldiers and their friends.

Mr. McKinley may, through the aid of the beef trust and the other trusts, secure the Republican nomination in 1900, but the disgraceful conduct of his administration in the matter of caring for our soldiers in the field will cause him to lose thousands of votes in every State in the nation. The final jury on the beef inquiry will render their verdict in the election of 1900, and it will be on the side of the soldiers and not on the side of the beef trust.—National Watchman.

### The Trust Puzzle.

The twisting, squirming and maneuvering of politicians to avoid the odium of trusts and take advantage of the unpopularity of the enormous combinations recently formed furnish a subject for serious thought. There is no doubt that all parties in the next national campaign will adopt platforms violently against trusts. The Republican party will be so vindictive in its language against those institutions that no other party can exceed its violent abuse. The question to be solved is: Will the people ever find out who is responsible for trusts? The gold standard is the father of all trusts because gold standard contraction creates falling prices which make it necessary for business men to combine to save themselves from bankruptcy. Who is responsible for the gold standard—the party led by McKinley or the party led by Bryan? Every trust organization in the United States will

those same papers are devoting a great deal of space to both the man and theism. This is a singular state of affairs. It is strange that these editors should take so much pains and so much apparent delight in kicking a corpse. If Bryan and what he stands for are dead, let them rest in peace. There is nothing gained by contending against them. But the fact is they are not dead or dying. They are the two most alive propositions to-day before the country. They stand for pretty much everything that Hanna and Hannaism do not stand for.—Cleveland Recorder.

### Committee's New Head.

J. G. Johnson, who has been placed at the head of the Democratic National Committee during the absence in Europe of Senator Jones, is the Kansas member of the committee, and is a warm friend of William Jennings Bryan and a staunch advocate of fusion and silver at the Chicago platform ratio. Mr. Johnson has been active in politics for a long time and is accounted one of the strong members of the National Committee. He divides his time chiefly between his practice of law and the affairs of the Order of Modern Wood-



J. G. JOHNSON.

men, of which he is the head. This leads him to visit Rockford often, for that city is the headquarters of the Woodmen. The temporary head of the Democracy was born in Brooklyn, and early removed to Peoria, Ill., and thence to Peabody, Kan., where he resides.

### Naval Officers Too Chatty.

It has been suggested that among the other improvements of the United States Naval Academy which are now being made and are in contemplation, the establishment of a chair of reticence would be advisable.—Atlanta Constitution.

## FACTS ABOUT BARNACLES.

Commodore Webster, U. S. N., Writer of "Foul Bottoms."

The United States cruiser Bennington was for some time in the harbor of La Union, in Guatemala, and in sixty-three days there was a great growth of barnacles. These growths, as a matter of fact, comprise several varieties of shell fish, prominent among which comes the edible oyster. In the case in point, when the Bennington was placed in the dry dock at Mare Island Navy Yard, it was found that oysters large enough for the table were frequent occurrence.

These growths must be removed while the ship is in dry dock. If removed while the ship is afloat, by divers, the protecting paint comes off with the barnacle and leaves the metal of the hull unprotected. The regulations of the Navy Department prohibit this being done except in cases of great emergency.

The barnacle grows to a length of three and four inches, conical in shape, and from the partially closed apex of the cone project a pair of strong mandibles always in motion, in search of food. These fish are not difficult of removal when in dock, for they soon die out of water. Many of the barnacles are pink in color, some are black, and many are white, being specimens of different families. They not only gather and grow on the ship's bottom, but even on the propeller and rudder. From experience in the tropics it would seem that the water is full of "spat," or embryo shell fish, incessantly in search of a resting place.

Various paints and mixtures which have been applied to ships' bottoms with the object of preventing these growths have not been very successful.

When a ship has been a short time in tropical waters the bottom presents the appearance of having been sprinkled with sand, the marine life is so evenly distributed. But the tropics are not the only part of the world where ships' bottoms get foul. In the waters of Alaska and even further north, animal and vegetable growths interfere with the speed of our ships to an extent little dreamed of before the advent of steel or iron for ship-building.

Beside the animal growths of barnacles, oysters and kindred life, a large and rich vegetable growth causes almost as much trouble. This "grass," as it is technically called, is swept away in large measure when the ship steams at full speed, which is not the case with the animal life.

Ordinarily, a short run in fresh water will kill all of the adhering growths, when the vegetable matter will drop off, but the shells of dead barnacles remain to be scraped off in dock. Many of our ships have had their speed reduced one-half by these growths.

The remedy for all this expense and trouble is to sheathe the bottom with wood, and then copper that sheathing, as with the old-fashioned wooden ship.

The expense of docking and painting a ship of 10,000 tons is about \$1,500. As a safe average the cost of docking our ships, which, as has been said, must take place twice a year, will not be far from \$1,000 for each docking, or \$2,000 a year. At the present time there are seventy-five ships fit for cruising, and requiring this semi-annual docking. A brief calculation shows that these insignificant little barnacles cost the Treasury Department the tidy sum of not far from \$150,000 each year.—Philadelphia Evening Telegraph.

### Gladstone at Church.

A writer in the London Church Gazette tells this story about Mr. Gladstone: "I happened to be in a church one Sunday morning when Mr. Gladstone came in; it was a church he attended very rarely, so he was quite unexpected. He had much difficulty in finding a seat, for it was a free and open church and apt to crowd up dreadfully. A curate deacon, whom we all loved, but whose forte was not preaching, happened to be in the pulpit, and caught sight of the Prime Minister as he hurried in and looked around for a chair. It was almost his first sermon, and nervous before, this quite upset him. This Mr. Gladstone quickly perceived, and, picking up his hat and umbrella, he scurried to the top of the church, and, finding a seat among the children, sat through the whole of a long sermon with his hand to his ear, paying the most marked attention to every word. This gave the curate—I am sorry to say he is since dead—more courage, but after the service Mr. Gladstone took an opportunity of thanking him."

### Bees in Warfare.

Two instances are recorded in which bees have been used as weapons of defense in war. When the Roman General Lucullus was warring against Mithridates, and sent a force against the city of Themisycra, the besieged threw down on the invaders myriads of swarms of bees. These at once began an attack which resulted in the raising of the siege. The insects were also once used with equal success in England and Norway, but their Saxon defenders threw down on them the beehives of the town and the siege was soon raised.

### Consumption Did Not Claim Him.

Victor Baillot, who fought at Waterloo, and was subsequently discharged from the French army at the age of 22 years as a consumptive, died recently at La Roche-sur-Yon, aged 105 years and 10 months.

### Chapel on Execution Grounds.

A Catholic chapel has been built on the spot where Maximilian, Miramon, and Mejia were executed at Queretaro. A poet and a stove form a practical example of the manufacturer and consumer.

# THE PEOPLE'S MONEY

## The Issue of Paper Money.

Every honest man insists on the Government carrying out all of its pecuniary contracts. There is some difference in opinion as to repaying some of the war loans made by the Government, in paper or in coin; but this is not the silver question. It is impossible to drive the idea out of the heads of some people that paper money is the only common sense money and that metallic money, made of the precious metals, is a relic of barbarism. If it is barbaric to believe in this kind of metallic money, I have inherited the belief from my barbaric ancestors and hold them responsible. A post-mortem examination of my brain may possibly show why this belief sticks to me so tenaciously. I want to see the restoration of silver to its old place, as an agent of valuation, at its existing coinage ratio of sixteen parts of silver to one of gold. For the convenience of the people we sound money bimetalists advocate the issue and use of abundant paper representatives, but always redeemable in coin, by the Government at the option of the people; but we insist that the Government should always be allowed to exercise the commanding option of a debtor, and decide as to the kind of coin, gold, or silver, they must use for redemption. I look upon paper representative money simply as an evidence of debt. It is indispensable and fills an exceedingly important position in civilized life.

The issue of paper money is one of the most commanding and powerful functions of a civilized government. It should be most strenuously held by the Government alone. The Government has the taxing power to obtain coin when necessary for redemption; this power will never surrender to any corporation. Surrendering the issue of paper money to partially private corporations would, in my estimation, be one of the most pernicious of economic blunders. A powerful organization, backed up by almost unlimited means and the most influential of the metropolitan press, is in existence for the purpose of depriving the Government of this duty and giving it over to our lenders of money. The dangers that seem to menace this nation from this cause are probably now as great as the dangers that threatened us for other reasons in 1890. In 1895 our people knew more than they did in 1890. They were taught by sad experience. In 1890 it was easier to fight than to think. It seems to me that the Almighty paralyzed the brains of the American people in 1890 for some inscrutable purpose. Is there not a terrible mental paralysis evident to-day? The choice of gold alone in 1873 rather than silver as the sole money standard is an immaterial question. The choice of silver alone rather than gold would have put us in a similar financial position and would probably have been just as mischievous. We must, for stability and safety, stand on both metals as debt-paying standards. Civilized society must have money or its representatives in abundance, and the real center of battle to-day is the effort to take away the power to issue this representative money from the people or our representatives, the Government, and hand over this powerful agent to a small, select class of people whose sole function is to loan money. To drive the Government out of the banking business, as they falsely describe it, is the potent force actuating the single standard leaders, who advocate gold alone. It is the gold standard question in a nut shell.

The average bimetalist has no objection whatever to the Government issuing bonds, if necessary, in order to get coin to liquidate coin obligations; but to issue bonds to purchase gold to liquidate coin obligations is most emphatically condemned. One of the strongest evidences of a want of statesmanship is the condition of our national fiscal affairs and the low prices and hard times among the people. Neglecting to deprive the Secretary of the Treasury of the privilege of borrowing gold, which privilege he has so notoriously abused, is an evidence of national mental paralysis, such as afflicted our nation in 1890. We have millions of coined and uncoined silver in our vaults which can legally be used, and should have been used, to liquidate any coin obligation against the United States. Must we wait until 1900 to awake to a realization of our situation? Is the question for our statesmen to investigate, and for the plain people to decide. Let us use every reasonable effort to reach a wise conclusion.—John A. Grier.

### A Paying Business.

An exchange remarks: "Did you ever give the national statements which are published semi-occasionally by the United States Treasury any attention?" Well, yes, we have, and we find that the banks of this country have about five or six times as much money loaned out on which they are receiving interest, as there is in existence in the country, and this is not all. We find further that the greater part of the real money in them and which forms the base of their "working capital," belongs to their depositors. This bank business is a great "graft" for the bankers.

The idea that the trusts and monopolies are a useful object lesson to awake the people and hurry up the millennium, may be all very well for rich reformers who are not compelled to worry over the bread and butter problem, but what of the poor fellows who lose employment and must face want? This is a very serious side of the problem, and one that should receive prompt attention.—Toledo News.