TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

Counterfeit money is not half so dangerous as counterfeit honesty.

It is easy enough to see through the objects of the window glass trust.

In one way our naval officers have no equals on earth. It's in flooding the magazines.

A copper trust is the latest, and naturally enough its projectors expect to make a pretty penny out of it.

The national conference to discuss trusts will also cuss them. That is what the people are doing, at any rate.

After the way they have been running, it may be hard to accustom the Filipinos to the ordinary walks of life.

The preacher who refuses to vote, claiming that his citizenship is in heaven, must be a reconcentrado at present.

All things considered, the best way to avoid the dangers that lurk in headache cures is to keep away from the headache.

An exchange says the wise man goes away from home to do his lecturing. True, and he often goes home and gets his lecturing.

The Chicago river again caught fire. When the drainage channel is completed the intention is to fill the river with non-combustible water.

After carefully looking over the ground, Spain has come to the conclusion that she is strong enough to field a profitable position in China.

Half of these reports of general starvation in China are fakes. The most terrible cases of want in that territory are felt by England and Russia.

The average age of the American girl at marriage is said to be a little more than 23. It would be impolite, perhaps, to inquire how much more.

Angry dames with horsewhips are making a good deal of news capital for the Eastern journals. It is a poor way, however, for lovely woman to put in her best licks.

The great city of London, brimfull of iniquity and vice of all descriptions, refuses to sustain Sunday newspapers. It is a most flagrant case of straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel.

A New York dentist predicts that the time is near when the human race will lose its teeth. If that is the case, we may look forward with some hope to the time when there will be such a thing as painless dentistry.

A German biologist is authority for the statement that the nerve cells change so constantly that a man has a new brain every two months. At this rate it really seems as if the improvement in some instances ought to be more marked.

When the history of the Tagal rebellion is written the name of the man who will be remembered longest in the rebel ranks will be that of brave General Luna, who is not very strong on sprinting or speech making, but who can fight and is not afraid to do it.

In New York a woman has applied for a divorce because she is constantly pursued by her husband's first wife. One might reasonably suppose that the man ought to be able to keep them apart, but he is probably so busy keeping as far as possible ahead of the procession as to be unable to give much attention to what is going on in the rear.

"Sanitary, non-sweat-shop make," is a new label placed on the ready-made clothing of a prominent firm. Another firm advertises in connection with a sale of underwear, "Made by clean, contented and well-fed people. No 'song of the shirt' horrors are stitched into our garments." When such goods can be procured, no generous-minded shopper will, for the sake of saving a few cents, buy any other.

There is no perfection of circumstantial evidence that might not possibly be overset by the truth if the truth could be reached. This must be so while human judgment remains fallible. And as long as that limitation is conceded there will always be brave men who will say that a fellow man shall not suffer the extreme penalty of the law on circumstantial evidence. The steadily increasing belief that it is wrong to hang people on circumstantial evidence is a worthy sign of advancing civilization.

A number of people have no doubt been greatly refreshed by a perusal of Russell Sage's remarks as to the danger of overeducation. As Mr. Sage says, a young man should be able to start in his life work by the time he is 18 years old, and Mr. Sage speaks advisedly, for "I have given money to colleges." Under our present system a young man nowadays is not fitted for college until he is 18, hence we are driven to the melancholy conclusion that Brother Sage has thoughtlessly thrown away his money. But perhaps this matter can be satisfactorily adjusted. Several of our proudest and most influential universities have now so scaled down the requirements of college duties that it will soon be possible to enter a university in the fall and receive the degree of LL. D. in the spring. With four commencement exercises each year the studious young man is enabled by close application to his lessons to cram four years into one and come up to the high yet practical standard set by Mr. Sage. We have the utmost confidence in Mr. Sage's judgment of matters educational as well as financial, and we see no good and sufficient reason why a bachelor of arts should not be hustling freight or making out bills of lading in celebration of his eighteenth anniversary.

Cities that are securing cannon that were captured in the Spanish war as war relics with which to ornament their parks would do well to see whether they are loaded or not. As a large gun captured by Dewey at Cavite was being placed in the National Museum at Washington, it was accidentally discovered to contain two shells and a grape shot, placed there by its former Spanish owners with intent to do deadly work upon the Americans.. A gunner from the navy yards removed the dangerous missiles, every one connected with the museum leaving the buildings meanwhile.

Three very similar railway projects are now claiming the attention of the engineering world. The trans-Siberian railway, across the backbone of Asia, will shorten enormously the time necessary in a trip around the world. In Africa, Cecil Rhodes has an elaborate scheme for a railroad from Cairo to the Cape; and in this hemisphere the Intercontinental Railway Commission has just completed a seven-volume report on the surveys for a railroad which would make a through line from this country to Buenos Ayres. Three continents it is thus proposed to span with iron highways.

When so close an observer as Captain Colleran of the Chicago police force, objects to the wheel exercise for women it is time to pause. The captain writes to a worthy minister of the gospel:

Women of refinement and exquisite moral training addicted to the use of the bicycle are not infrequently thrown among the uncultivated and degenerate element of both sexes, whose coarse, boisterous and immoral gestures are heard and seen while speeding along our streets and boulevards. * * * A large number of our female bicyclists wear shorter dresses than the laws of morality and decency permit, thereby inviting the improper conversations and remarks of the depraved and immoral.

The W. C. T. U., the Y. M. C. A., the Christian Endeavor, the King's Daughters and other organizations of moral standing must look into this matter at once. For, while bicycling may be so helpful and stimulating to feminine ears as to enable women to hear gestures while on the wheeel, this advantage is entirely overcome by the danger arising from "improper conversations." It seeems almost incredible that a woman of refinement and exquisite moral training should be led into immoral conversations through the agency of the bicycle, but we take the captain's word for a thousand pounds of women. Would it not be possible to lengthen the immoral and indecent skirts, stuff the cars with absorbent cotton and wear blinders? Under such conditions would the wheel, as the captain would say, be "detrimental to the stability of morality?"

Summing Up Forty Years.

One of the noted men of Wall street, who had been forty years among the bulls and bears, said to a young man who went to him for advice: "One afternoon when I reached home I said to my wife: 'My dear, did you see that magnificent dress in So and So's window. I want you to have one like it. Go down and order the material and have it made up right away. I think it will please us both very much.' She looked at me incredulously, and replied: Why, George, how can you afford it? You were pleading poverty the other day.' That roiled me. I said that I was running the finances of the establishment, and she must have that dress. She agreed. It was to be purchased next morning. The price was about $2,000. When I got home she met me at the door and exclaimed: 'What's the matter, George, dear? You are ill.' I couldn't speak for a moment. I took her hands and led her into the room, then looked into her eyes and hissed: 'My dear, did you buy—that—dress?' She said she did not, because it rained and she didn't care to go out. I never loved her as much in my life as I did that minute. The market had gone against me, wiping out everything I had in the world."

Deserved Rebuke.

A story is told of the way in which a Massachusetts clergyman, long ago dead, once reproved a young man in words both apt and stinging.

The young man, with a heartlessness which nothing could excuse, whispered to a friend a comment upon a poor cripple who was near him in a crowd.

"You'll find his case in the Bible," he whispered, none too softly. "In the twenty-sixth chapter of Proverbs, it says, 'The legs of the lame are not equal.'"

The clergyman heard, and bending the gaze of a pair of piercing black eyes upon the whisperer, he said clearly, "You would do well to remember the last clause of that same verse, young man; it reads, 'So is a parable in the mouth of fools.'"—Youth's Companion.

Dwellers in a Mine.

There is a quicksilver mine in Peru 170 fathoms in circumference and 480 feet deep. In this profound abyss are streets, squares, and a chapel where religious worship is held.

A man may dodge the earthly collectors, but he must pay the debt of nature as he goes.

POLITICS OF THE DAY

M'KINLEY'S BLUNDER.

As a politician President McKinley has always been ready to shift his position whenever such a change promised the slightest advantage. This characteristic has served the President fairly well in his self-seeking career, but has cost him the title of statesman and won for him the place of politician. But McKinley's latest political move—his attack on civil service—has certainly proved a blunder, and Republican editors have not been slow to point out this fact. There is not a Republican newspaper of national importance that has heartily approved McKinley's act, and many of them have roundly condemned it.

In this connection it is significant that the Chicago Tribune sees in McKinley's action a profound political blunder. Among other things, the Tribune editorially says:

It is a mistake to believe that the giving of 10,000 offices into the hands of the bosses will help to strengthen the Republican party. The people are growing to care less and less about the political creeds of the men they place in subordinate and merely administrative offices. The time for spoils politics in national affairs is forever past. No such move has strengthened the party that committed it since as far back as 1872. The exemption order will strengthen the politicians, but it will not strengthen the party.

Why give this vicious and vitiating power into the hands of political bosses when there is no need of it? How can the friends of the administration justify, defend or apologize for this intolerable order? The President has undone the good work of years and has put a blanket mortgage upon his political future and that of his party. His action is a grievous disappointment to the friends of good government.

Under the circumstances it is not necessary for Democratic newspapers to worry much over the situation. The attack on civil service is a blunder of monumental proportions. It opens the way for assaults on imperialism, as it shows the hand of the administration and its intention to send "carpet-baggers" to rob the people of the acquired possessions. Imperialism, which might not have been an issue had McKinley kept his platform pledges, promises to loom up tremendously, and shrewd Republican politicians are trembling over the prospect.

Trusts and the People.

The growth of industrial trusts has been so rapid during the last two years that no intelligent person can now plead ignorance either of their existence or of the principle which controls them. The trust is usually organized to monopolize the manufacture and sale of some article of merchandise. The first question to be settled is whether such an organization is an evil or a blessing. Monopoly finds an occasional defender who argues that production upon a large scale can be carried on more economically, but this argument is not complete. The trust cannot be justified unless it can be shown, first, that it effects an economy in production or distribution; second, that the consumer will receive a fair share of the benefits in a reduced price of the product, and, third, that the economic advantages of the trust are sufficient to outweigh the social and political evils wrought by monopoly.

To establish the first proposition, it is necessary to show that improvement in the processes of production will be greater under monopoly than under the competitive system, whereas it is generally understood that competition is the greatest stimulus to invention. The effect of rivalry is seen in the effort of each producer to furnish to the public the most perfect article at the lowest price. To accomplish this end each firm seeks to secure the brightest and most skillful operators and the most improved machinery. It is not in accord with human experience to expect this struggle to continue when a monopoly has been secured.—W. J. Bryan.

Fixing Finance.

The Senate Finance Committee is busy in New York fixing up the financial policy of the next Congress for the Presidential campaign. While professing an eager desire for "reform" in the currency, the committee is not so convinced of the benevolence of its mission as to suggest changes in the financial system that would cost votes for McKinley and the Republican party. It is evident, however, that the proposition to allow banks to issue paper to the full value of their bond deposit and to reduce the tax from 50 to 75 per cent. meets with favor.

Wildcat currency secured by the office furniture of banks is not regarded with favor by the committee, probably because the people oppose it. It is admitted that there is a scarcity of small bills, and that efforts to remedy this matter are handicapped by the banks for the purpose of forcing the "wildcat" theory on the Republican "reformers." It may be concluded, however, that the Senate committee will go just as far as it dare toward the establishing of the single gold standard and the granting of special favors to the banks.—Exchange.

The Free (?) Cubans.

Newspaper readers are advised that smoking in public conveyances has been forbidden in Havana; that a workman employed outdoors, or where he may be seen by the public, must wear something more than a gauze undershirt as a covering for the upper part of his body; that cockfighting has been made a misdemeanor; that a thousand and one little errors to which the Cubans have been born and bred must be stopped forthwith on penalty of fine and imprisonment. If our administration at Havana would devote a little less attention to fool "regulations" and a little more to the big problems demanding solution, it would be more respected both there and at home.—Minneapolis Times.

Hanna Has His Way.

Mark Hanna had his way in the Ohio Republican State Convention, which simply illustrates the fact that Federal patronage in the hands of a political boss is far more powerful than the protests of the people. Of course, the platform adopted by the Republicans and subscribed to by Hanna's hired man, who was nominated for Governor, is a document full of fair promises, none of which was made to be observed, but all of which were constructed to fool the dear people and to catch votes.

It is a sign of the times, however, that the Republican boss of Ohio should allow his minions to pass a resolution condemning trusts. To be sure, the resolution is nothing but "buncombe," but even viewed as such its presence in the platform is a confession of judgment on the part of the Republican wire-pullers. When Republicans such as Mark Hanna and his followers pass resolutions against trusts and foam at the mouth over these "unlawful combines," their sincerity can be tested by asking them if they are willing to repeal the protective duties and allow competition to enter the lists against these trusts.

There is no sincerity in the Republican resolutions. The St. Louis platform has been disregarded in many of its most solemn promises, and the Ohio platform will fare no better. Practical politicians in the Republican party have no use for truth or for consistency.—Chicago Democrat.

Future Justice.

If there be any meaning in the signs of the times the producing millions are firmly resolved that equal justice shall be something very much more than a barren ideality, and the corporations will do well to set their house in order without the least delay. The trend of events is toward a course of treatment which will startle the world by its rigor and ruthlessness. Over the heads of the railway corporations the sword of Damocles is suspended, and it rests with them to say whether inexorable justice shall sever the sustaining hair.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

A Trust Study.

The influence and power of trusts is significantly illustrated in the window glass combination. By the fourth day of July all the mills of that industry will be shut down indefinitely, and behold the result. Seventeen thousand skilled workmen will be unemployed. They only know how to make window glass and will have much difficulty in seeking other employment. But the trust must look after its own, and that is best exemplified by making another large dividend among the members of the trust.—Indianapolis Sentinel.

More Money Needed.

At the beginning of the present administration Congress was called in extraordinary session for the ostensible purpose of relieving the treasury of a deficit. The President assumed that prosperity could not return while the Government expenditures were in excess of receipts. Congress was to revise the tariff so as to provide sufficient money to keep the wheels of government moving without resort to further borrowing. Under that act the running behind has continued.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Unjustifiable Boycotting.

It is hardly the right thing for the postoffice department to discontinue the postoffice at Lake City, S. C., because the last postmaster, a negro, was murdered by a mob. Atrocious as was the murder of Postmaster Baker, it does not justify the administration in refusing postal facilities to all the people of the town. The government should be above boycotting.—Buffalo Courier.

Trusts Get It All.

The people of the United States are piling up wealth at a more rapid rate now than ever before in the history of the country, and there is no present condition to indicate a halt in this accumulation of riches. It will come to an end sooner or later, to be followed by a period of depression and reaction, as such eras always do, but there is no sign now of such a setback.—Kansas City Star.

Personal Liberties Curbed.

The "undershirt" law and the anti-smoking law went into effect in Havana last Monday. It is stated that on the first day there were something like 500 arrests. Such ill-considered, picayunish, tyrannical laws can hardly have any other effect than to convince the Cubans that we mean to institute petty tyranny instead of freedom in Cuba.—Savannah News.

Wanted—A Policy.

Some of the shouters for empire are irritated because David B. Henderson of Iowa, an anti-imperialist, is leading in the race for Speaker of the House. "Does Henderson stand by the policy of the administration?" they shout. He can readily answer this and floor his interrogators by asking, "What is Mr. McKinley's policy?"—New York World.

SOLDIERS' STORIES.

ENTERTAINING REMINICENCES OF THE WAR.

Graphic Account of Stirring Scenes Witnessed on the Battlefield and in Camp—Veterans of the Rebellion Recite Experiences of Thrilling Nature.

"Our regiment was a sort of an orphan," said the Captain. We were credited to a state in which very few of us belonged, and there was no strong-willed Governor like Morton or Brough to look after us. After our three months' organization went to pieces, we were sworn into the United States service, "for three years, or during the war." The boys believed then that the government could hold us until the end of the war, even if the thing ran on for ten years. In proof of this, the jokers of the regiment used to point the timid fellows to our belt plates, which were marked "U. S." instead of "O. V. I." or "I. V. I.," as were the belts worn by the men of other regiments in our brigade.

"Our three years' term expired on the march to Atlanta, and as the time for discharge approached many of the men became greatly excited. One boy's mother wrote him that she had been reliably informed that Sherman was going to hold all the men until he captured Atlanta, even if it required two years. Another man's father wrote that he heard Lincoln had decided to discharge no more volunteers until the war was over. If this was true the writer thought all the men in the regiment ought to throw down their guns and get home in time for corn plowing. The boys talked loud about the injustice of holding them in the service, but every morning the bugle sounded in the old way, and the boys had their march and skirmish.

"A few days after the battle of Resaca the regiment was ordered from the front and instructed to board a waiting train. Then there was protest loud and long. 'Who was interferin'?' the indignant men wanted to know. Who was sending them to the rear when there was fighting right under their noses? They wouldn't go until Uncle Billy said so, and there was delay until a staff officer rode back to say that Morgan was in the rear and the regiment was ordered back to show the new regiments how to take the rebel raider in out of the wet.

"This stirred up considerable enthusiasm, because nearly every soldier in the army of the Cumberland had a score to settle with Morgan, and the men marched to the train with all their belongings. As night came on the boys began to figure out that we would strike Morgan near Chattanooga. But when we crossed the river at Bridgeport they thought he must be cutting in about Murfreesboro, and they went to sleep, so as to be ready for business. When they found they were in Nashville, and no Morgan, they began to smell a rat, and when the next day all the men on detached and special duty and all the teamsters reported to their companies, the men said one to another, 'The jig's up.'

"We took steamers at Nashville, went down the Cumberland and up the Ohio to Newport barracks, where we were mustered out on the day our term of enlistment expired. Some of the men re-enlisted without going home, and others who got home for corn plowing didn't stay to do it, but entered the new infantry and cavalry regiments The father of one young man boasted that he had written General Sherman an abusive letter about holding the regiment in the service beyond its term, and the next day the son disappeared. Two weeks later he wrote from in front of Atlanta that he re-enlisted in a regiment of his old brigade for three years, or during the war."

"On one occasion," said the Colonel, "I received a letter from an acquaintance living in my home county, stating that the writer's son was at home, telling extravagant stories of the hardships and dangers of camp life. He feared the boy was shirking, and he asked me to write plainly about the case. The young fellow had not been with the regiment a year, and was reported home on discharge furlough. This explanation was written the father, who sent the young man back to the regiment, where he did good service until the close of the war. This young fellow told me, not many years ago, that his father's action in tearing up his discharge furlough and sending him to the front made a man of him.'

"He had played the sick man in hospital and convalescent camp until he had lost all nerve. Then he had gone home, and, to save himself, had told extravagant stories of the sufferings and abuses in the army, and in so doing misrepresented his comrades and unduly alarmed their relatives and friends. A few days before he left home for the front he met a wounded man of his company, home on furlough, and received such a tongue-lashing that he was glad to leave the neighborhood. Smarting under the reproaches of the soldier who had really been in battle, the man who had seen nothing of war returned to become one of the best soldiers in his company, and to have an experience that he is proud of to this day."—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Dewey as a Commander.

Lieutenant Dewey was the executive officer of the Mississippi when she attempted to run the batteries at Port Hudson, on the night of March 15, 1863. The vessel ran aground, and being under the guns of the batteries was riddled with shot, and sunk.

The forethought of Dewey provided the crew with a valuable aid for fighting the man-of-war at night. All lights were out aboard the ship, so that the enemy might not have an illuminated target to fire at. But Dewey had the decks of the Mississippi whitewashed, so that the guns' crews could see the running gear of the guns. A similar smartness marked his arrangement at Manila.

As a commander Dewey was popular with his men. He could get along with any man except a liar; could hear or see what should be seen and heard, and could be blind and deaf to petty irregularities. He had to punish—the regulations obliged him—but he had a way of ordering the release of men he had to sentence before their sentences were half worked out. A messenger in the Navy Department, who made a cruise with him—the gossip is reported in Watterson's "History of the Spanish-American War"—says:

"Dewey was the best liberty-granting skipper I ever was shipmate with. He hated to keep quarantined men aboard when the good-conduct men were flocking off to the beach. One fine Christmas day in Genoa harbor all the men entitled to shore liberty lined up at 10 o'clock in the morning to answer muster before taking the boats for shore. There were about forty of us, myself among the number, who were quarantined for having 'raised Cain' ashore in Nice a few weeks before.

"Our quarantine was for three months, and wasn't half run out on this Christmas day. Dewey stood at the break of the poop with his hands on his hips, watching the liberty party line up.

"We fellows that couldn't go were standing round the gangway, smoking our pipes and looking pretty down in the mouth. The big liberty party—there were a couple of hundred men in the batch—finally got away.

"Dewey watched us for a while out of the tail of his eye. Then he walked up and down, chewing his mustache, and now and then shooting a look at the men forward. Finally he walked down the poop-ladder and straight forward to where we were grouped.

"'You boys,' he said, 'hop into your mustering clothes and go off to the beach. I'll let you have a couple of the boats. Come back with the other men, and don't raise any more trouble on shore than you can help.'

"There wasn't a man of us that didn't want to hug little Dewey. We gave him a cheer; and when we came back we were marked in the log as 'clean and sober.' We were not going back on Dewey."

Chaplain Overreached Himself.

Colonel J. A. J. Smith, the coal man, well known in G. A. R. circles, a member of the Fred C. Jones Post, and who resides on Kemper lane, near Nassau street, Walnut Hills, is full to the brim with thrilling tales of his experiences during the late war. So, whenever the Colonel is in a reminiscent mood, any one within range of his voice is sure of hearing a hair-raising narrative. Here is his latest:

"During the winter of 1863-'64 my brigade was in winter quarters near Nashville, Tenn. I was at that time acting as hospital steward and made my headquarters in a log cabin. We had for chaplain a Kentucky gentleman—never mind his name—who could preach a ringing sermon and who fairly worshiped a good horse. This reverend gentleman had long been casting an envious eye on a beautiful cream-colored gelding on a neighboring farm, which he could not become the owner of for love or money. So at last he suggested to a veterinary surgeon connected with the command his desire for the horse, and did the veterinary think he could secure the animal in any way for a consideration? The horse doctor thought he could, and did. He just went and stole the horse. Next morning the chaplain came over to my log cabin and asked if I could mix up a hair dye. I looked up a formula, mixed up a feed bucketful of stuff containing plenty of nitrate of silver, and nitrate of silver was dern scarce in those days, and the horse was then led behind my cabin. A soldier was put to work on the animal with a sponge, and in a minute one side of the cream-colored steed was a beautiful bay. He then steered to the other side, and after vigorously stirring up the mixture with a stick commenced his work. But by the time he had finished and used up all the dye and the last nitrate of silver in camp he saw his mistake. He had stirred up the sediment in the bottom of the bucket, made the dye much stronger, so the nigh side of the horse was a deep black, the off side a bright bay. We had to run that horse out of camp. A circus clown would have made his fortune with him, but he wasn't fit for a chaplain."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Once Was Enough.

According to the Woman's Journal this is one of General Miles' stories. In the Confederate army Longstreet's corps was making a night march. About 4 o'clock in the morning, when everyone was worn out, a Georgia regiment stopped. A Georgia soldier put his rifle up against the tents on the other side of where Longstreet was. "Well," he said, "this is pretty hard—to fight all day and march all night. But I suppose I can do it for love of my country." He continued: "I can go hungry. I can fight. If need be, I can die for my country, because I love my country. But when this war is over, I'll be blowed if I'll ever love another country."

Kautz a Confederate Prisoner.

When Admiral, then Lieutenant, Kautz was exchanged, and thus liberated from his Confederate prison in Richmond, his was the first case of exchange of prisoners sanctioned by President Lincoln.

This is a maxim of unfailing truth, that nobody ever pries into another man's concerns but with a design to do, or to be able to do him a mischief.—South.