

## Topics of the Times

"Ideals in America are as high as anywhere else," says Mr. Bryce, and a good many things are higher.

The scientific world is taking the moral seriously. It isn't as if it were advanced by Nikola Tesla.

Ambassador Bryce sees a great future for the United States, and is otherwise making himself agreeable.

Harry Orchard doesn't set up the claim that he had to do it because of the high prices of groceries. Let us be just.

A New York court has decided that an oyster is a wild animal. Those who have hunted him in the soup have often remarked his wildness.

Bernard Shaw claims that he has read every line Mark Twain ever wrote. Then it is a wonder he got time to write anything himself.

Andrew Carnegie reports that Emperor William has a sweet smile. Andrew has never insisted that William should raise a similar amount.

Once in a while some girl who has never been in a chorus succeeds in getting a rich husband, thus showing that there are exceptions to all rules.

The wife of a Philadelphia clergyman occupied her husband's pulpit on a recent Sunday, and the audience came away well pleased with the hat she wore.

It is scarcely probable that the thoughtful, more conservative element among the Japanese people would be in favor of kicking another nation for a year or two at least.

Mark Twain probably would have waited a few years before beginning his autobiography, but he had an uneasy feeling that Murat Halstead was about to take the job off his hands.

"Fate couldn't conceal him by naming him Schultz," says the New York Evening Mail. Some concealment was possible, esteemed contemporary, until he was deprived of the Ruef that sheltered him.

Sir William Preese, the scientist, declares that he can hear the clash of electric storms on the surface of the sun. And when he was a boy it was probably hard for him to hear his mother calling him to get up in the morning.

Mrs. Potter Palmer ridicules the rumor of her engagement to the Earl of Munster on the ground that she doesn't know the gentleman. She is evidently going to set her sisters a good example by getting acquainted with a man before she marries him.

The favorable impression which Japanese make upon people of other nations is largely due to their courtesy, good manners, and the taste they display in doing the most ordinary things. When the crews of the Japanese warships which lately visited New York were allowed shore liberty, they had their choice between spending the day on the Bowery, the delight of every sailor's heart, and visiting Grant's tomb. They went to the tomb. Is there any other nation the sailors of which would use their shore leave in paying their respects to a national hero of the people they are visiting?

The English government has been engaged in the auction sale of some most costly national toys. Instead of selling a lot of obsolete warships to recruit the navy of some second-rate power the government has chosen to knock them down, guns and all, under the auctioneer's hammer, to be broken up by the purchasers. Among these pretty national playthings is the famous first-class battleship Sans Pareil, of 10,470 tons, which cost \$3,032,005 to build and was knocked down for \$84,000. The whole lot was sold off at the same or greater depreciation from the original cost. It is estimated that the warships of the nations rapidly become so obsolete that in twenty years they are fit only to be broken up for more useful purposes.

A few months ago it was announced that the Italian government had consented to a proposal of Prof. Waldstein of Cambridge university that there should be an international excavation of Herculaneum. It appears that, on further consideration, the government has rejected the proposal, and no foreign aid will be accepted for the excavation of these or any other ancient ruins. This is much to be regretted, as Italy is not in a financial condition to provide funds for an effective prosecution of the work. Although Herculaneum

itself may not suffer by the delay, there are other sites which cry aloud for speedy excavation, for valuable evidence is in their case being destroyed daily by the "march of modern improvement."

Truly life is full of peril. Not merely the peril that comes with steam and electricity, and gasoline motors, perils by land and perils of water, but the dangers that confront us even when we think we are following the most hygienic laws of nature. Exactly where we stand we know not, for just as we have learned from Mr. Gladstone and Dr. Fletcher that each mouthful of food should be chewed patiently from 20 to 150 times, according to the substance thereof, along comes Dr. Wiley and warns us against the danger of too much chewing. Rather should we bolt our food, after the manner of the intelligent dog, for notably in the case of meat much chewing is the forerunner of serious indigestion. And when we have meekly accepted this doctrine up rises a physician, fresh and ruddy from his sixteen days' fast, and tells us not to eat at all, but drink copiously of sparkling water, for eating is a vile habit, productive of many diseases of the digestive organs. Still bewildered, we are constrained to resort to a cold bath, which is much admired of certain medical gentlemen. On the brink of the tub a Los Angeles expert halts us and assures us that nobody ever did enjoy a cold bath, and that, moreover, it is as dangerous as it is unpleasant. We heat the water, and again we are checked by an English scientist, who warns us to forbear from soap if we must bathe, because, as the *Lancet* admits, soap is the cause of "the frequent inability of the Anglo-Saxon to resist disease." Even the fact that if we die we die clean cannot entirely reconcile us to the thought of a premature demise. And so, unfed, unwashed, we go about our daily business or seek in germ-infested sheets the sweet oblivion of all that makes life one perpetual menace. Assuming that we have slept three hours and a-half, Mr. Edison wakes us up and assures us that in excess of slumber we are despoiling our natural resources and swiftly inviting general debility. We arise, possibly reluctantly, and await the next expert opinion as to the development of a long and merry life. Now, in the absence of testimony from Methuselah and old Parr, we must accept every suggestion that is offered or reject them all with "a plague o' both your houses," or try to live up to the teachings of the grandmothers. These were not numerous, but they were explanatory and mandatory. They involved the general principle, "Eat slowly; chew your food," without any special enumeration of jaw movements. They maintained the doctrine, "Early to bed and early to rise," without defining the exact hours. They insisted upon the old-fashioned Saturday night soak, with soap and plenty of it. And the subjects of this treatment lived to a fine old age or died young, according as Providence decreed, and with no haunting fear that sleep, or meat, or soap was shortening their days. Artemus Ward said, "We air governed 2 mitch," and Artemus passed away before the medical experts and the scientific gentry assumed entire charge of our living and dying, even when quarrelling one with the other. What he would say in the present emergency would require probably all the ingenuity of his exuberant spelling.

### SKUNKS EAT GRASSHOPPERS.

Hitherto Shunned Animal Is Declared to Be the Farmers' Friend. Skunks are the farmers' friends, according to the biological survey of the department of Agriculture, and deserve to be cultivated rather than destroyed, says the Pittsburgh Dispatch.

The experts of this bureau have found that the skunk, shunned and avoided as it is, is the greatest grasshopper exterminator known. It takes rank ahead of the red-banded woodpecker, barnyard fowls and meadow larks. In the past the skunk has been an animal regarded as worthy only of the price of its pelt or the lard its fat would produce.

Now the biological survey insists that when a field is overrun with grasshoppers all that is necessary for the farmer to do is to gather together a working force of skunks and turn them loose in the infested area. The skunk will do the rest.

While skunks are not animals to be handled with impunity, a herd of domesticated skunks might be kept on hand on every farm to use in an emergency. If the skunk is not immediately applied to the grasshopper pest the grasshoppers will eat up the field and pass on to the next.

### Not a Dumb Waiter.

Patron—A nice way you serve things in this blankety blank restaurant! Here's a hairpin in the salad.  
Waiter—That's part of the dressing, sir!—The Bohemian.

Why is it that a married woman seldom has any use for a pretty female servant?

## The Popular Pulpit

### AN ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICE.

By Rev. Henry F. Cope.

If I were hungry I would not tell thee; for the world is mine and the fullness thereof. . . . Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows to the Most High.—Psalms 1:12-14.

Men are not drawn together by a collection box. To make this the standard emblem of the church is but to emphasize the difference between the institution and the one who said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." It little helps the need of a hungry world to stand ever before it begging it to give, to bring in its offerings.

To the plain man there will always seem some absurdity in the request that he, human and finite, should sacrifice his own lamb or his few hard earned pennies to a being who is almighty, to whom the whole creation belongs. He cannot understand a Father who does nothing but sit by his altar and watch the tithes brought in.

Is this the only concrete expression we can make of the spirit of worship, to give up material things to a spiritual being? Whence this change of conception, from the servants of the Man of Nazareth, who were sent out to heal and help and do good, to an institution going out to collect everything that is good for itself?

Surely nothing could be farther from the old seer's and singer's thought of the wondrous one, from whom all things came, the source of all being, all beauty, all worth and wealth. He, as they clothed his glory in terms of mankind, was the great giver instead of a getter. To him the hungry looked and were fed, the naked were clothed, the sad cheered; to all he gave their meat in due season.

The emphasis was not on God's need of man and his possessions, but on man's need of the Most High. The life and spirit, the eternal power that moves through all our lives, needs not our bare pittance wrung with anguish from field or loom, but the opening of our hearts, the lifting up of ourselves into touch with things sublime and spiritual. Heaven needs our hearts.

Who is to be pitied more than he to whom religion is the dropping of pennies through the slot of a collection box and seeing the world through its narrow crack. Rather is it the learning to see the eternal goodness, the unremitting giver in all this world, in every event, until the whole being goes out in grateful praise, offering the sacrifice of thanksgiving.

True, there is no religion without sacrifice. But there is none in the sacrifice of gifts to the Almighty as though he were hard up, nor in gifts regarded as payments on paradise mortgages or as means of mollifying an offended judge. The sacrifice whose aroma rises sweet to heaven is the service of love, the self-denial born of gratitude or affection, the gifts to men because they are the children of the good Father.

The broken heart, the contrite sigh, the sympathy that serves—these are the sacrifices on which the welfare of the whole universe waits. We honor the divine less by lofty steeple or pealing organ than by entering into the beauty and enjoying the riches of the great temple of nature and making its wealth known, available and appreciable by all men everywhere.

The winning of the world waits for the revelation of the wealth of the Lord of all being. Men need not tarry till they have taxes for him; with empty hand, with hungry hearts, with needy spirits, they are invited to come to the Father of spirits and the feast of his love as men came, the sick, the weary, the sad, long ago to one in whom they found the wealth of infinite love.

### RIGHT THOUGHTS.

By Rev. Dr. Frank Oliver Hall.

Think on these things.—Philippians 4:8.

What things? Things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, attractive, virtuous, honorable. Upon these things says Paul, "Let your thoughts dwell."

Thoughts are things as much as brick walls and paved streets are. There is such a thing as insanitary thinking as surely as there is such a thing as insanitary plumbing. There is a mental atmosphere conducive to health as much as sunshine and fresh air, and there is a miasma of the soul which is as deadly as the malaria of Dismal Swamp.

To select a spiritual dwelling place where the atmosphere is heavy with hate and poisonous with passion; to pull up the shutters of despair and exclude the sunshine of hope; to close the windows of the heart and exclude

the light of faith and the warmth of love, is as deadly as it would be to build one's house in a stagnant marsh or to live in a dark, unventilated cellar.

Notice that Paul writes as if men had the power to select their own intellectual dwelling places. So they have. Physically most men must dwell where circumstances ordain. But the poorest man may have a dwelling place for his mind more desirable than the region in which many a millionaire is content to reside, in an atmosphere of the soul filled with unclean odors.

Every man has within himself the power to change his mental dwelling place. The normal man has power to direct his thoughts as he has power to direct his hands. By the exercise of such power he may win success, character and righteousness.

The mind is master of the body. Experiment demonstrates that thought pumps the blood into the head or hands or feet according as one directs his mind, and that emotions, controllable by the will, may refresh or poison the physical system as they are good or bad.

Paul has given us not only the secret of health, but the secret of happiness. Not the dwelling place of the body, but the dwelling place of the thoughts, determines whether one's life shall be filled with joy or with misery. Some of the most miserable people live in mansions, dine sumptuously and dress luxuriously. Some of the happiest people live in very lowly circumstances. The difference is entirely mental.

One man is miserable in spite of his fine physical circumstances; another is happy in poverty because of his mental dwelling place. Moreover, Paul indicates here the road to success. More people fail to achieve their worthy ambitions because they cultivate wrong mental habits than for any other cause whatever.

Life is full of splendid opportunities for the man who will seize them, and all the forces of the universe help on the man whose mind dwells in faith and courage and confidence and indomitable hope; and all the forces of the universe set against the man who dwells in a mental atmosphere of doubt and despondency, suspicion of himself and his fellow man.

Finally, thought means comfort. What you do depends upon what you think. Conduct is first in the mind, afterward in the body. Beware of wrong thinking. Beware of holding evil pictures before the imagination. Do not play with evil even in your thoughts, for what you think will register itself ultimately and inevitably in what you do.

On the other hand, one can overcome all the evils with which his inner life is beset by exercising the will in the direction of right thinking. If you would do the things you ought to do and leave undone the things you ought not to do, then look to your thoughts and in whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, attractive, virtuous, honorable, there let your thoughts dwell.

### Short Meter Sermons.

Difficulty often is a divine challenge. Singing cures more sorrow than sighing.

The finger of scorn never is on the helping hand.

No man ever did his duty standing on his dignity.

Soul culture is a matter of spiritual companionship.

Knocking the saints will not open the doors of paradise.

Character is the only absolutely indispensable capital.

He who has no faith in goodness has no experience of it.

Our goods do us no good until we try to do good with them.

Men who elope with a single idea never get wedded to truth.

Men always are weary until they take up some worthy task.

He who does not fight his appetite must forego his aspirations.

The most up to date feature of some sermons is the dust on them.

Only wings of pride imagine themselves rising on the breath of applause.

The mountains of transfiguration are few; the valleys of service everywhere.

The foolish virgins usually go back to conduct classes in the art of illumination.

You always can measure a man's faith by inverse ratio according to the fuss he makes over it.

When a man's cake is dough he is quite likely to advertise himself as a dispenser of the bread of life.

One of the great mistakes of this age has been the substitution of the church as an institution for the church as an inspiration.

This world succeeds in keeping many a man poor in person, but it never will succeed in keeping one poor in heart without his consent.

When the gift of a little for charity seems to put a man into mortal pain you may be sure the root of evil is striking down into a vital spot.



Hewitt—What did they charge you a day at that summer hotel? Jewitt—I only know the minute price.—Town Talk.

First Commuter—What do you do with yourself evenings? Second Commuter—I take the 5:03 train from the city.—Puck.

"How was the comic opera?" "My wife thought the costumes were disgusting." "I guess I'll go."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Cook—Now we've 'ad words, you'll be lookin' for another cook to keep company with? Policeman—Not me, I'll starve first!—Punch.

Hadsum—I want a good revolver. Dealer—A six-shooter? Hadsum—Better make it a nine-shooter. It's for a cat next door.—Ally Sloper.

"Now that your son's in college, I suppose he'll be getting very exclusive; he'll be getting into the 400." "Oh, he's more exclusive than that already; he's on the nine."—Philadelphia Press.

"Do you regard baseball as a healthful game?" "Well," answered the physician, "I should say it ought to do a great deal toward strengthening people's lungs."—Washington Star.

Comparative Stranger—What's all the excitement about? Summer Boarder—Nothing; just a lynching. The man who wrote the folders about this place is coming down on the train.—Puck.

Yeast—Our boarding-house lady has been taking cooking lessons, and she says next week she is going to try her hand in her own kitchen. Crismonbeak—Is that a threat or a promise?—Yonkers Statesman.

First Boy—Did you really win three prizes at school? Second Ditto—Yes, and one was for my excellence of memory. "How did you win the others?" "The others? I forget what they were for."—Black and White.

Father—Well, how does your husband succeed with his art? Does he sell any pictures? Daughter—I should think so! Why, there is not a single one left of those you gave us for a wedding present.—Fliegende Blätter.

Mrs. Goodart—I always feel so sorry for those poor shop girls; they're so overworked, you know. Mr. Goodart—Well, my dear, the best way to help them is to keep away from bargain sales.—Catholic Standard and Times.

Miss Elderleigh—Jane Jones is a mean, spiteful old cat. Miss Younger—What's the matter? Miss Elderleigh—I told her that my family came over in the Mayflower and she asked me if I was seasick.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Mr. McDooley—Faith, an' it do be a Mission O' have fer yez, me darlin'. Miss Clancy—P'fwat is it, Pat? Mr. McDooley—Whin it comes toime for the funeral, how would yez like t' be th' Widder McDooley?—Chicago Daily News.

Wise—He's very wealthy. Mrs. Wise—Yes, and very stingy and mean. Wise—Come now, you're not sure of that. You mustn't judge a man by his clothes. Mrs. Wise—I don't. I'm judging him by his wife's clothes.—Philadelphia Press.

"Our engagement will have to be temporarily suspended," announced the summer girl, calmly. "Oh, impossible," the young man vowed. "It will have to be. My husband writes that he is coming down for a week."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

"My good man," said the lady missionary, "do you ever pause to think where you are going?" "Sure t'ing," replied the unlaureled hobo. "Ef I didn't I might get on de wrong freight an' land back at me startin' place!"—Chicago Daily News.

"Do you think the time will come when there will be no money in politics?" said one boss. "I don't know," answered the other. "It won't be our fault if it doesn't. We have done the best we could to take out all there was in it."—Washington Star.

Russian Official—You can not stay in this country, sir. Traveler—Then, of course, I will leave it. "Have you a permit to leave?" "No, sir." "Then I must tell you that you can not go. I give you twenty-four hours to make up your mind as to what you will do."—Tattler.

"Train holdups," said the old traveler, "are nothing new for me. I've been in lots of them." "How does it seem to be covered with a revolver?" asked the listener. "Can't say," replied the old traveler. "I've always been held up with a whisk broom."—Milwaukee Sentinel.

"Can you give bond?" asked the Judge. "Have you got anything?" "Jedge," replied the prisoner, "sence you ax me, I'll tell you; I hain't got nuth' in the worl' 'cept the spring chills, six acres o' no-count land, a big family, a hope of a hereafter, an' the ol' war-rheumatism!"—Atlanta Constitution.