CURRENT TOPICS.

Prof. Stanley Jevons has been most famous perhaps as a historian. But he is fated to become quite as celebrated as a prophet. He founds his prophecies on his history, and in that way deduces them as logical and natural and inevitable sequences from his premises. They are the answers to puzzles, the answers to problems in arithmetic. They are the calculations of an astronomer who fixes the course of comets thousands of years before the destined date of their visible arrival, although the professor most evidently expects his predicted phenomena to sweep over the heavens far within the period of a thousand years. And that although they are far stranger and rarer than comets. Indeed in his latest vision he forsees what never has been. And that is a world state, a world nation.

The Bible talks of all people dwelling together as one nation. Prof. Jevons believes it. He has outlined the sort of government that will rule the world state. And he has found the names for the officials, and he has predicted a world executive, the literal king of the earth. And he believes there will be such a sovereign within the next eighty years. He finds the beginnings of him and his cabinet in the petty officials connected with The Hague tribunal and the outgrowths of The Hague peace conferences. Some international government officials exist now. And they have existed for years. Only they work so silently and unobtrusively that no one knows about them. But the significance of their position is not discounted by its quiet and non-notoriety. Rather, it is glorified. They—these humble world officials—are the attaches of the international postal service with headquarters at Bern, Switzerland. They supervise and negotiate many momentous little matters which affect you and me and which we know nothing about. And they are held by the zealots of the world state to be the first forerunners of the world government departments.

They are the first fruits of the world state idea which really was born before it was conceived. It came with a spontaneous generation and began to be ere any one realized what its coming pretended. Unless Prof. Jevons saw and understood. He interprets a good many things in the light of the nascent world state. There are the machines of war. They are anni hilating the war which they were invented to abet. When airships arrive they will be the most powerful military accouterments ever dreamed. But they will be more powerful in doing away with military tactics. Besides, of course, people are growing more friendlier. Good will on earth is realizing as we all become more and more cosmopolitan. Overweening love of country is ceasing to be a virtue among the ethically modern, among the ethical elite. They prefer worldism, cosmopolanism. They have evolved beyond the thought of the "bloody furriner." Foreigner and native alike are desirable citizens. Somebody has written on patriotism as a primitive ideal. The civilized and cultured prefer the world state.

BRISKER TIME FOR ANTHEM.

Playing of "God Save the King" is Altered.

The national anthem, by special desire of the King, is in future to be played more briskly by all military bands.

An order of the British Army Council has been issued instructing military bandmasters that the tempo of the national anthem is to be increased from crotchet equals 60 to crotchet equals 84. This means that the time value of the crotchet will be an 84th part of a minute instead of a 60th.

The order which cancels the regulation fixing the slower time was made, it is understood, because his Majesty and other members of the Royal family have objected to a dirge-like rendering.

The national anthem has been played in the new way before the King, who was greatly pleased with the alteration, and expressed his desire that it should be the permanent time.

Acetylene-gas is now used on some French railways for illuminating carriages.

LIFE IS WHAT WE MAKE IT

Greatness Is Not in Circumstance, Nor of Condition, But of Character

"He leadeth me beside the still waters."—Psalm xxiii., 2.

By far the greater number of us must live quiet, simple lives. To the few who live in the limelight the existence of the many may seem to be humdrum, flat, and uninteresting. But we are all too ready to measure living by its externals and to decide that the life that never leaps into the public glare must be lived in a pitiable gloom.

Are there not for all our lives, for these ordinary, simple lives of ours, high lights, flashes that redeem the soul from sordid living, high levels to which we may rise in spirit at least and save life from the dull level of mere existence? How may we find and know such occasions.

Are there not, too, what is of greater importance, splendid motives, lofty aims, and inspiring ideals that may enter into and fill all the dull valleys of the lowliest life? May not even the most commonplace lot be transfused with the glory of a great sacrifice or a splendid aim?

Who has not known great hearts, high minds, and noble souls that have never become known beyond their little circles, who have died, not unwept or unhonored, but unsung because the sounds of their living have never reached the ears of the bards of the great, noisy world?

ORDINARY PEOPLE

may often be the best people. We tend to measure lives by their vicissitudes rather than by their steady virtues. Those who make startling ascents and descents get themselves talked about, but for the plain business and real work of the world the folks who stay on the ground are the ones we can count on.

It is a good thing to be able to see the glory in the commonplace. We are so easily carried away at the sight of the ancient, tawdry trappings of mediocrity that when true worth appears in homespun we reject it; it lacks epaulets and feathers. We complain of fortune because it refuses to dress us in tinsel array.

Modern heroes are more likely to be in jeans or in khaki than in crimson, and great lives are more likely to be found in kitchens and workshops than in the council chambers of kings. It's a cheap and futile way to greatness, this plan of buying its uniform when you lack its heart.

The size and worth of your life depends on its aims and motives and not on the measure of its popular recognition. The world needs to-day not so much men and women of startling powers as those of sterling qualities; not so much a few giants as many of plain goodness. The worth of our day depends more on what we are building into the everyday things than on what some man may be saying or doing in the glare of publicity.

Often it seems a weary business to take up the daily task, the same old grind day after day. Many affect to despise those who do it, but the pirits of eternity look down and

AWARD THE CROWNS

to those whose toil costs most, to those who steadily face and fear not the awful foes of monotony and dull plodding. Even genius is a matter of that steady grinding at one thing.

We ought not to despise our commonplace lots or the apparently dull level of other lives. We need vision to see how great is any life, how much of the real riches of life there may be in any lot, how gloriously grand are the meanest tasks, the lowliest labors, when love is their motive; how the stains of toil become a garment of praise when the object is known.

When we see the days as they come along, not as so many hours of dull tasks but as having so many opportunities for self-discovery and development, so many chances to do good, to give love, so many occasions for the graces and virtues, and so many invitations to learn the real worth of things, then the days are transformed from gloom to glory.

We need new eyes and new hearts rather than new circumstances. Whether we live in a prison or a palace depends not on the walls about us but on the wall within to be either slave or king, bound by our lot o rfree in heart, whether we regard life as an imposition or as an opportunity. The quiet parts are rich to the open heart, and no way is so quiet that heaven may not be there.

HENRY F. COPE.

HEALTH

READING IN BED.

We used to betaught that reading in bed was wrong because it might set the house on fire. Though we sinned it was hardly with the assurance of Macaulay that not even the fear of "committing matricide and patricide and fratricide" restrained him from taking a book and the longest candle to bed. The coming of gas and electricity has removed all these fears; but now a German doctor appals us with new alarms. He finds that the eyes are imperilled by reading in bed in a host of ways. The light is bad, or it is placed so that it dazzles. In bed you can never hold the book so as to use both eyes. You hold it too close to the eyes, and make yourself short-sighted. If your eyes have naturally any defect, short-sight, or inability to read small print, or astigmatism, you will infallibly increase it by reading in bed. The conclusion of the whole matter is that children under 18 should never be allowed to take books to bed with them, and adults ought not to do so, save for serious and weighty reasons.

TO STOP HICCOUGHS.

Dr. Louis Kolipinski reports the arrest of persistent hiccough by lepressing the tongue. A patient was attacked by hiccough which had persisted for four days before being seen by the doctor. He complained of the fulness in his throat, a condition which he thought the result of the hiccough.

He was directed to sit up, and with a large spoon handle the tongue was pressed down and back with steady force to allow inspection of the fauces. Firm pressure on the tongue with the hope of further noting the action of the palatal muscles was continued, when to the doctor's surprise and the patient's astonishment and joy the hiccough ceased. When the hiccough returned the patient himself stopped it by using the spoon handle.

THE HOME DOCTOR.

To remove foreign bodies from the eye, put a grain of flax seed under the lower lid and close the eye.

For Earache.—Put a pinch of black pepper on a bit of cotton batting, tie it up, dip in sweet oil and insert in the ear. Put a flannel bandage over the head to keep it warm.

To keep on damp shoes or wet petticoats is a risk of taking cold that is not worth running. There are a few exceptional individuals to whom wet feet do not mean cold, but the sole of the foot is one of the most sensitive parts of the body and it should be protected accordingly.

It is a common occurrence for children to get beans, grains of corn and foreign substances up their noses. This simple remedy is worth remembering. Get the child to open its mouth, apply your mouth over it and blow hard. The offending substance will be expelled from its mouth.

SIBERIA HAS GREAT FUTURE.

Its Soil Rich and It Has Vast Timber and Mineral Resources.

The vast area of Siberia is as yet scarcely touched commercially, when we consider the richness and capability of production of its soil and its constantly growing population

In 1900 it was estimated that out of a total of 19,727,000 acres of cultivated land 11,625,000 acres were under crops in Siberia. Crops greatly fluctuate in Siberia; the yield in a good year is two or three times that of a bad one.

Siberia's exports of dairy products are rapidly increasing and have a most promising future. In 1898 4,000 buckets of butter, each containing thirty-six pounds, were sent as an experiment to the London market; 30,000 buckets of butter at week were sent thither in 1901. The pasturage in this butter producing region, which lies chiefly in the district of Tomsk, is so good that there is 7 per cent. of butter fat in the milk.

In 1902 a Danish firm was the first to export salted beef, mutton and pork from Siberia to London. Its success showed that Siberian mutton was good enough to compete with the best Icelandic mutton and may in future become an important factor in the meat markets of western Europe.

In 1902 the first canning establishment in Asiatic Russia was opened at Omsk. Exports of hides and skins from Siberia increased from 2,800 tons in 1899 to 5,200 tons in 1902. More than 1,000 tons of Siberian eggs are exported annually, many of them finding their way to the London market.

The fisheries of Siberia are very important. The River Amur is especially rich in salmon. The amount of preserved fish exported from Siberia grew from 640 tons in 1899 to 2,000 tons in 1902. The high price of salt and tin plate and the lack of skilled knowledge are retarding the Siberian canned fish industry.

The vast coniferous forest zone of Siberia is yielding ever increasing quantities of timber. On January 1, 1906, the State forests of Russia in Asia covered 650,687,497 acres. The timber industry has scarcely begun to be developed in Siberia.

Mining has the greatest future of any Siberian industry. Gold in places is the chief mineral product at present. No statistics as to the amount of gold produced in Siberia can be obtained, as the figures are contained in the total output of the Russian Empire.

The average annual production of pig iron in the Ural and Siberia (separate statistics for Siberia not given) from 1902 to 1906, inclusive, was 657,440 tons. The Siberian output of coal, chiefly from the province of Akmolinsk, rose from 660,770 tons in 1902 to 1,325 tons in 1905. Copper is mined in small quantities. More and more foreign capital is becoming interested in the mineral wealth of Siberia, and American miners are prospecting in those parts of the Primorskaya, opposite and near Alaska.

WORLD'S TRADING FLEETS.

Some of the Great Companies in the Passenger Trade.

The Hamburg-American Line, which is building and will employ the two latest additions to the list of 700-foot steamships, is the pioneer German trans-Atlantic line, organized in 1847. Its employees number nearly 7,000. Its present fleet comprises 308 vessels, with a total tonnage of 728,799 tons.

The advances in steamship building—in the number of the ships as well as their size—have been enormous in recent times. Lloyd's Register gives the following statistics concerning the fleets of the world:

"Considerably the largest of these is the Hamburg-American Company, which owns 134 vessels of large size, of an aggregate gross tonnage of 668,000 tons. The next largest is the North German Lloyd Company, whose 120 vessels aggregate 556,000 tons. The third company is the British Elder-Dempster Company, which owns 153 vessels, aggregating 431,000 tons. Then follow the British India Steam Navigation Company, with 122 vessels and 384,000 tons, and the United States Steel Corporation, with 113 vessels aggregating 343,517 tons.

"In point of total number of vessels owned and of their gross tonnage, the fleets of the United States stand second among those of the world. Great Britain and her colonies, out of a total for the whole world (including countries possessing 1,000,000 tons of shipping) of 29,091 ships, aggregating 30,600,510 gross tons, possesses 10,869, with a total tonnage of 14,708,206 tons, one-seventh of which is composed of sailing ships. The United States owns 3,286 vessels, with a gross tonnage of 3,077,344 tons,, of which two-fifths are sailing vessels; and then follow Germany, with 2,905,782 tons, of which one-sixth are sailing vessels; Norway, with 1,627,220 tons, one-half of which are sailing vessels; France, with 1,406,833 tons, a quarter of which are sailing vessels; and Italy, with 1,117,538 tons, of which two-fifths are sailing vessels."

SENTENCE SERMONS.

Practice is prayer.

Piety never parades itself.

The self-satisfied need to be short sighted.

There are no wolves in the empty sheepfold.

A man may be measured by the things he seeks.

You canot hoodwink heaven with a holy aspect.

Love gives no license to dispense with courtesy.

They who walk with God do not walk away from men.

He can bear a great trust who can bear little trials.

It is better to lose your joys than to escape his sorrows.

It is slow work getting rich in grace at a penny a week.

A veneer of religiosity has none of the virtues of religion.

It takes less than two half truths to make a full-sized lie.

Men are not drawn to the church by using the creed as a club.

It's a poor religion that lets the prayer meeting hide the poor.

Heaven does not stop to consult the vogue before it picks out a man.

You cannot blame a bag of wind for steering clear of pointed facts.

Habit may be one of our best allies as well as one of our worst enemies.

Half an evil eye can see more iniquity than the whole of an innocent one.

The man who hates to see another happy is certainly safe from catching it himself.

It may be a greater thing to lift up another's heart than it would be to carry his load.

The men who have turned the world have never been too great to touch it with their hands.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL LESSON, DEC. 27.

Lesson XIII. Quarterly Review. Read Prov. 4. Golden Text, Prov. 4. 23.

HOME READINGS.

M. God's promise to David. 1 Chron. 17:1-15.

T. The joy of forgiveness. Psa. 32.

W. David grieves for Absalom. 2 Sam. 18:24-33.

Th. The Lord our Shepherd. Psa. 23.

F. The birth of Christ. Luke 2:8-20.

S. Solomon anointed King. 1 Kings 1:32-40.

Su. Solomon chooses wisdom. 1 Kings 3:4-15.

The lessons of the quarter extend over a period of 31 years. They are all concerned with the life and words of David and Solomon. A profitable review could be conducted along the line of what the lessons teach about God. Another would be to study the teaching about sin, its consequences and pardon. Material for such reviews can be found in the notes. Still another review would be to get each member of the class to give the central teaching of the lesson. A number of opinions will be given about the teaching in each lesson. The following are given simply as suggestions:

Lesson I. The necessity of serving God in the precise way His Word instructs.

Lesson II. God's superabounding grace; David purposed to build God a house and God covenanted to build him a house and to establish his house and his kingdom forever.

Lesson III. David's kindness to Mephibosheth, a type of our David's kindness to us.

Lesson IV. If we seek to cover our sins from God He will uncover them and fill our hearts with heaviness, but if we uncover our sins before God with frank and full confession God will cover them up and fill our hearts with praise and light.

Lesson V. Whatsoever a man soweth that will he also reap: a sinful father will reap in his wayward children an awful harvest of the sins he has sown; the king who is disloyal to God will reap the disloyalty of his people.

Lesson VI. The man who destroys the love and peace and joy of another's family will reap heartbreaking agony in his own house.

Lesson VII. Jehovah is the believer's Shepherd. Every want will be met, every fear will be vanished, every longing will be satisfied.

Lesson VIII. God keeps His promise in spite of all the schemes of men to thwart it.

Lesson IX. There is utter ruin for the individual, and for the nation, in the wine cup.

Lesson X. We should desire wisdom that we may serve God effectively, more than we desire long life or death.

Lesson XI. When a house is set apart for God in the way appointed He will fill the house with His glory.

THE SOVEREIGN'S ABSENCE.

Royalty Hedged About With Many Laws in Great Britain.

According to the ancient British law the sovereign shall not leave the kingdom without the consent of both Houses of Parliament. In ancient times the absence of the King was met by the appointment of an officer called the "justiciar." This officer was afterwards superseded by the appointment of lords justices under the great seal, but none has been commissioned since 1821. In 1845, when Queen Victoria was about to visit Germany, Lord Campbell urged that the lords justices should be appointed according to constitutional practice, but the Lord Chancellor (Lord Lyndhurst) convinced the House that this was no longer necessary, owing to the modern facilities of communication. This has served as a precedent ever since.

BREAKING IT GENTLY.

It was evident that something of more moment than usual was weighing on the small boy's mind. Three times he passed the door of the house and peered through the window before he dared to enter. Then he made his appearance with an air that dozens of broken windows or bushels of stolen apples could not have given him.

"Mrs. Murphy, little Mickey's new tin whistle's all broke."

"And how did that happen, dear?"

"Well, Mickey was playing on it when the steam-roller wint over it."

"Do you know anything about flirting?" "No," he replied sadly. "I thought I did, but when I tried it the girl married me."

Some people never pray "forgive us our debts," except when the offering bein gtaken.

YOUNG FOLKS

DANNY'S DREAM.

Danny was having great fun. He had tied a long thread (drawn tightly, so it wouldn't slip), around a poor, unoffending bee, and was delightedly watching its struggles, as it feebly fluttered one way and another in its vain endeavors to be free. The bee was the stingless kind, so Danny handled it without fear, and finally pulled off its wings, thus rendering it still more helpless. He thought it great sport to see it crawl desperately, first in one direction, then in another, in order to get away from its tormentor. The harder it pulled at the string, the more it pleased Danny, who yanked the poor insect here and there, laughing heartily at its efforts to escape.

After a time the bee's struggles became less violent, its movements more feeble, until finally they ceased altogether, and the little creature lay, apparently lifeless, on the ground.

Danny took it up in his hand and dangled it on the string. It hung there, quite inert and limp, so he threw it into the long grass, declaring that the fun was over.

It was too warm to hunt up something else interesting to do just then, so Danny lay down on the soft, green grass, and blinked lazily up at the tiny, white clouds sailing about in the clear, blue sky, wishing he could have a ride on one of them. He was just "making believe" that he was flying in an airship, when suddenly he felt a violent pull on his arm; then another, and still another. He was about to protest against being so rudely disturbed, when he saw something that made him forget everything else.

A great creature (it seemed to him a giant), towered above him. In his hand he held one end of a rope, while the other end he fastened to Danny's arm. Every minute or two, the giant would give a jerk to the rope, and the poor boy was pulled hither and thither, with an abruptness that was anything but agreeable. Besides the rope hurt Danny cruelly. The giant, however, was so big and strong, and Danny so small and helpless, he could do nothing but cry out with pain and anger. The giant only laughed at that, and pulled the harder. Poor Danny was yanked this way and that, until he was so dizzy and sore it was misery to move.

When he felt he could bear no more, to his horror, the giant came quite close to him. "I think I will pull off your arms and legs," roared he, in tones of thunder.

In an agony of fear, Danny burst into tears, crying out, "Please, Mr. Giant, do not kill me!",

"But you did not minl killing the poor bee," returned the giant, coming still nearer, so close that Danny could see, quite plainly, his dreadful, rolling eyes.

"But I'll never do it again," wailed Danny; "I never once thought I was hurting it. It was only a bee."

"Well, you are only a boy, and I'll have you to know that bees have feelings as well as boys," retorted the giant. "But as you say you will never be so cruel again, I will let you off this time," and the giant turned as if to depart. Before he dropped the rope, however, he gave a final jerk, which was so violent that Danny—awoke.

It was only a dream, after all, but dreams sometimes teach useful lessons, as this one did to Danny, for never again was he known to torture, for his own diversion, even such an humble creature as a bee.

THE WHITE ANT.

Railway Builders in Africa Have Trouble With Them.

Every month brings us nearer to the realization of Mr. Cecil Rhode's dream of a Cape-to-Cairo railway. The rails have been laid for a distance of over 2,000 miles from the Cape, and Tanganyika is now not much more than 400 miles off.

In these parts the railway stations are built of galvanized iron, while the telegraph-poles, and the "ties" into which the rails are clamped are of steel. Even in the huts for the railway workers little or no wood is used, on account of the tens upon tens of thousands of white ants which infest the regions north of the Zambesi.

These voracious pests will destroy anything in the nature of wood, and their mounds are occasionally as high as twenty feet.

The only value of these ants is that their homes form a natural cement, which the natives use in the construction of their huts. Put on wooden uprights like plaster, it becomes as hard as stone, and acts as a perfect protection from the weather.

When the history of this gigantic undertaking comes to be written, not the least interesting will be the account of the engineers' fight with the white ant. If the latter ever learns to dine off steel, the work of years will be undone in as many weeks