

Topics of The Times

From the powers pre-
siding over A Century
of Progress, which is the
official name of the 1933
Chicago World's Fair,
comes a bulletin in which remi-
niscence is blended with promise.

"The streets of Cairo, where Lit-
tle Egypt thrilled visitors to the
World's Columbian Exposition just
forty years ago with her exotic
dancing, will come into glamorous
existence again."

Existence, yes, but no longer
glamorous. One might well speak
of Forty Years of Progress. Exotic
dancing has traveled far from the
streets of Cairo and Tangier in that
time and domiciled itself in the
drawing rooms of the Occident. It
would have to be a very Oriental
exoticism, indeed, to make a fair
show against the staple article in
our post-war literature, theatre
and general conversation. Two
years from now would have been
better. By then we shall be com-
pletely back in Mid-Victoria Land,
and the new 1933 Midway might
carry a "kick."

It is news when Cam-
bridge University calls to
order Oxford University
for radicalism and dis-
loyalty. Oxford's famous
debating society, the Union, was
captured recently by a pacifist
crowd which put through a motion
by 275 votes to 153 that under no cir-
cumstances would they "fight for
King and country." The official
Cambridge Union thereupon de-
nounced the non-resisters on the
Isis, and a demand is heard for sev-
ering diplomatic relations between
the two, including the annual boat
race. This would be a real sacrifice,
since Cambridge has won twelve
out of the last thirteen contests.

The odd thing is that the sister
universities have reversed their his-
toric rôles. Oxford is traditionally
the home of classicism, conservatism
and lost causes. Cambridge is the
home of mathematics, science and
bold, forward thought. Cambridge
is the home of BERTRAND RUSSELL,
JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES and J. B.
HALDANE, and of those two cosmic
radicals, EDDINGTON and JEANS. But
perhaps it is not entirely moral in-
dignation on the banks of the Cam.
Perhaps it is the irresistible oppor-
tunity to point out that Oxford men
are weaklings addicted to woolen
underwear in warm weather.

Economists are not
the only profession
interested in the Law
of Diminishing Re-
turns. The doctors
and the college presidents, to name
only two gainful occupations, are
taking note of its effects. But it
does not always have the same
name. Sometimes it is the swing
of the pendulum. Sometimes peo-
ple say that what has gone up must
come down. In this sense all life
is subject to the principle of Dimin-
ishing Returns.

The doctors have been giving too
much thought to the problem of the
specialist versus the general prac-
titioner. The annual Congress on
Medical Education opened at Chi-
cago the other day with a full-
length debate on the menace of the
ill-trained "specialist." But a cheer-
ful view was taken by one speaker
who argued that it won't be long
now before every medical specialty
will have reached its saturation
point. "This may result in the de-
velopment of a type of general
practitioner better trained than the
graduate of today."

When medical practice has split
up into a mass of narrow special-
ties, the time will obviously have
come for a liaison officer or coor-
dinator. He will be the general
practitioner; once more illustrating
the Law of Diminishing Returns.

Diminishing returns
in the colleges, or the
swing of the pendulum,
or the law of compen-
sation, or action and
reaction, are reported to have pro-
duced no less than two new gen-
erations in the course of a few
years. Dean GILDERSLEEVE of Bar-
nard College points out that flam-
ing youth in the colleges passed out
several years ago. It was followed
by blasé youth, which in turn
passed out about a year ago. The
boys and girls today are neither in-
surrectionary nor indifferent. They
now find a meaning in serious and
simple things — including them-
selves.

To produce this result it is ob-
vious that the swing of the pendu-
lum has been reinforced, so to
speak, by economic conditions. It
was all very well to find no pur-
pose in people or in yourself or in
things when there is plenty of
money in hand for the purpose of
driving away boredom. But when
a person is trying desperately hard
to persuade some other person to
give him a job, he is bound to take
both himself and the other person
and the job seriously.

Dr. JULIUS KLEIN is delighted
about the jig-saw craze. He recalls
that it was mah jong which helped
to lift us out of the 1921 depres-
sion, and that Tom Thumb golf in
1930—but, no, he doesn't recall that.

The news about Mr. ROOSEVELT's
extended fishing trip is ambiguous.
Is it because the fish are biting so
well or haven't bitten yet?

Chancellor of the Exchequer NEV-
ILLE CHAMBERLAIN has just received
from his colleagues a vote of not
guilty but don't do it again.

Governor LEHMAN insists that
official automobiles must be run
80,000 miles before being replaced.
Yet he would be the first to frown
on the habit of using official auto-
mobiles for private little joy-rides
of the kind that just pile up the
mileage.