

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

Hawaii may now claim to be at least a distant connection of ours.

What a grand old world it would be if we were all working for J. P. Morgan & Co.

Russell Sage now has a valet. "Uncle Russ" must have had a chance to get one at a bargain.

New Jersey claims to have a bachelor who is 130 years of age. There is little hope now that he will ever outgrow it.

A judge has decided that women may smoke if they want to. The decision is all right, but why should they want to?

Some people regard life as a tragedy, a few find it to be a comedy, and most of us go through it longing for a better show.

There are a great many people who don't know exactly what the Monroe doctrine is, but who are red-hot for its enforcement.

A Chicago man thinks it will soon be possible to string a cable from the earth to Jupiter. There will be trouble when the people want that cable put underground.

The Krupp girl who owns a \$100,000 cannon factory will probably marry some undersized chap who would faint away if he heard a toy pistol explode.

It appears that one of the life insurance companies has been paying taxes on some of Hetty Green's property by mistake. Let us hasten to explain that Hetty made no complaint on account of the error.

The new laziness disease, prevalent among the "poor whites" of the South and others, has been officially christened and named "ankylostoma." We believe that ankylostoma germs love to perch on the lawn mower.

A boy of 5 was left in charge of a baby of 3 in their home. They played "fire engine" and the baby was burned to death. This is but one of a long list of such fatalities; still mothers will leave their children alone where danger constantly lurks.

Sir James Crichton H. Brown, one of London's noted physicians, pronounces the erstwhile inoffensive oyster to be a prolific source of typhoid fever. Every oyster should be boiled for at least twenty minutes or else eaten with a raw lemon.

The census shows that there are in the United States 2,000,000 more bachelors than spinsters. Judiciously used, this information should enable the spinsters to direct the thoughts of the bachelors to more serious matters than ping-pong and theater parties.

More money is being turned into the "conscience fund" at Washington every year. Either the American conscience is becoming better or more people with troublesome consciences are stealing each year. At present the morals of the case seem a little dubious.

Gentlemen from both sides of the line may talk at banquets about the prospects of annexing Canada, but when sober they know that no such prospect exists. Other considerations aside, annexation would deprive our Canadian friends of the comfortable revenue which they now enjoy from American embezzlers, absconders and all-round scoundrels who seek shelter in the dominion and pay liberally for it. That consideration alone renders all talk of annexation idle.

Probably there are few men who have not sometimes wondered what they would do if they should suddenly be confronted on a dark night in a dark street or at the mouth of a dark alley by a real, live robber, who should shove a pistol at them and command them to throw up their hands. Whatever decisions different men may have come to as a result of these speculations it is quite certain what the average man would do under such circumstances. He would throw up his hands as quickly and as high as he could and with very little protest would allow his new acquaintance to divest him of all his change and any other articles that the gentleman of the road might find on him and want.

Many airy castles have "gone up in smoke," but at least one substantial building on terra firma may be said to be founded on smoke. The resourceful head of several large industries at the "Soot" nestled great clouds of sulphur floating away from the stacks at the nickel smelters. He wanted sulphur, and put chemists at work to discover a way of saving it from the smelter smoke. This was soon made possible, and immediately he began smelting nickel ore. The sulphur hitherto wasted, combined with limestone and water, furnished him with all the calcium sulphite necessary for his manufacture of wood pulp. When some reader, perchance, discovers how to make diamonds of the first water from carbon, the black smoke now belching from thousands of stacks may be set in our finger-rings, and at last be got "in hand."

The statistics of suicide for the past year contain some interesting particu-

lars. It is significant that the number of women who have done away with themselves has increased threefold, which would indicate, possibly, that since women have assumed the responsibilities of men they have lost much of the joyousness of living. The entire number of suicides is put at over 8,000, and of these less than 400 resulted from "disappointment in love," though nearly 1,000 were caused by "domestic infelicity." It will be observed that there is a fine distinction between "disappointment in love" and "domestic infelicity," and that figures would seem to prove that early disappointment is much more wholesome and hygienic than matrimony. Now that the fall crop of brides has been harvested, and the spring supply is in only a tentative state, it may be advisable to take these figures into consideration.

The scientific journals are discussing the question, "Did we originate on this earth or on a star?" It has been established by scientific experiment that certain living germs can retain life for a long period under disadvantageous circumstances. It may have been, say the scientists, that the first germs of animal life floated down to this earth from a star. Suppose it did. Are we any nearer an understanding of the mysteries of life? It is accounting for the origin of life much as the ancients accounted for the stability of the earth. According to their science the earth reposed on the back of an enormous elephant. When asked where the elephant stood, the wise men of that day shook their heads. When it comes to finding the origin of life the human mind cannot dispense with the idea of creation. There must have been a beginning, and a thing animate or inanimate cannot begin itself. So that it does not change the problem to say that our first ancestors in the animal kingdom floated down to the earth in the form of a germ of a tadpole. The wisest men of our day have failed to solve the mystery of life. They can scarcely agree on a definition of it. The human mind, like a lost hunter, travels in a circle. When it leaves the circle, it runs against the stone wall of mental limitations.

It appears that Bret Harte left an estate which is valued at only \$1,800, but he also left an estate which is invaluable, since it is beyond all price. He was richer both in his life and in his death than a convention of multimillionaires. We can think of no one who would be entitled to a seat in that convention who could match him in the power to get or to give. There have been some of the class who had their start in mining camps, and who enjoyed the experience, but Harte saw many things beyond the range of their vision. His sensitive temperament, his fancy, his imagination, not only multiplied the objects but revealed in them, responded to every touch of humor and pathos, to every inspiring suggestion of man and nature. Hence the quality of his enjoyment was unapproachable, and when the period of observation was past there was a new enjoyment in the exercise of that art which made him not only the first but probably the greatest of the writers of short stories in the modern style. While the memory of the camp was growing less distinct with others, he accentuated all the old pleasures by recreating picture after picture and so saved them for all time. It was thus that he built the great estate which compares with the estates of the multimillionaires as his best happiness does with theirs. This is said without any intention to disparage industrial genius, its material contributions to human progress or its public benefactions. We are considering now merely the value of the possession to the individual himself and to his future fame, and it is safe to say that from this point of view nine people out of ten would rather be a Bret Harte than a Rockefeller or a Carnegie.

No Presents for Him. Up on Columbia Heights there's a cunning little boy-child with many flaxen curls and ultramarine eyes like moss-agates, who was totally cut out of his maiden aunt's gift-giving scheme at Christmas. About ten days before Christmas the maiden aunt was visiting her sister, the boy's mother, when, in a violent explosion of laughter, her store teeth became loosened and fell on the floor. The boy happened to be in the room at the time, and the dropping of his spinster aunt's teeth caused him speechless amazement.

Three evenings later there was a dinner party at the Columbia Heights house, at which the maiden aunt was one of the guests. The aunt is just at an age when she doesn't want to look it, and she "touches up" her hair and goes after the make-up box a-plenty. She was fixed up pretty splendidly at the dinner party and was talking animatedly at the table with a widower who is just commencing to "take notice" when the angel boy, from his little chair down at the end of the table, piped: "Auntie, auntie?" "Well, what is it, precious?" inquired the spinster aunt.

"Say, auntie," said the kid, amid the solemn hush which usually falls upon a table company when one of the youngsters of the family is about to say something cute, "show 'em how you kin spit out your teeth an' then swaller 'em again, like you did the other day?"

As observed above, the presents that that boy didn't get from his maiden aunt on Christmas would fill a large folio catalogue.—Washington Post.

We'd hate to be as tough as every woman thinks a man is.

DEFENSE OFFERS TESTIMONY.

State Contest to Rest in Lillie Murder Trial—Strong Chain of Evidence.

David City, Neb., Feb. 25.—After more than two weeks of testimony wholly in the introduction of testimony, the state Tuesday rested in the prosecution of L. M. Lillie, charged with the murder of her husband. From the standpoint of the prosecution it has been well handled and a remarkably strong chain of circumstantial evidence established. It is hardly thought the defense will require the time occupied by the prosecution.

At this time the state rested its case, and the defense began calling witnesses.

Mrs. Georgie Leper was the first witness for the defense. She said in part: "On the morning of October 24, 1902, I was at the Lillie home and saw Mrs. Lillie. I went from there to the hospital. Mrs. Lillie was there, and she told me that in the morning she was woke up by a shot, and I saw a man standing at the head of the bed pointing a revolver at her. She was crying all the time, saying she wished it could have been her instead of her husband; that Edna thought so much of him. She was continually asking how Harvey was, and wanted to go upstairs where Mr. Lillie was. She was weak and faint. We took her out of doors and one of the ladies got some camphor. After this they took her upstairs. Ed Hall and I went up with and assisted her. When she arrived in the room she dropped down into a chair, laid her head on the bed and kept saying, 'Oh, dear, oh dear, why couldn't it have been me instead of Harvey.' Mr. Hall and I helped her down stairs.

Mrs. Lillie was not dressed warm enough. Mrs. Woodward got some other clothing and I assisted in putting them on her. Mrs. Lillie was crying and asking how Harvey was all this time. In assisting in dressing Mrs. Lillie I noticed there were no pockets in her clothing. Mrs. Lillie went home about 9 o'clock. I went over there soon after she got home and took her back to the hospital with my horse and buggy. On the way to the hospital Mrs. Lillie was crying and feeling very badly. After we arrived at the hospital she asked Ed Hall how Harvey was, and he said he was about the same. Mrs. Lillie went home a little after 12 o'clock, ate her dinner with the rest. I could not say whether she ate heartily or not. She was feeling badly and her actions were not natural. She went back to the hospital after dinner. Hewitt and Ed Hall advised her not to go to the room where Harvey was, as she could do aim no good. She remained there until Mr. Lillie died.

"I have been in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lillie and they got along very nicely. I never saw a cross look from either one of them. I have seen them at lodge. They were very affectionate." Cross-examination: "I do not know what their conduct was when I was not there. It has been about two years since I saw them at lodge. I have passed the house frequently and have seen them sitting on the porch. I do not remember any particular time that I saw them together on the street."

When court convened this afternoon the cross-examination of Mrs. Leper continued. She said:

"The second time Mrs. Lillie went to the hospital she did not go into the room where Mr. Lillie was." Mrs. Bell Bond said: "I am a cousin of Harvey Lillie. Since they moved to David City I have been at their house two or three times. Mr. and Mrs. Lillie were always kind and affectionate toward one another. Their conversation was always pleasant."

On cross-examination witness said: "I cannot recall that I have seen Mr. and Mrs. Lillie together but once."

Mrs. Clara King said: "I saw Mr. and Mrs. Lillie quite frequently; lived on the lot adjoining the Lillie residence. Mr. and Mrs. Lillie seemed to be on very friendly terms. It was Mr. and Mrs. Lillie's custom to stay at home evenings." On cross-examination witness said: "I saw Mr. and Mrs. Lillie every evening out in the back yard feeding the chickens."

Mrs. Carrie Wilson said: "I was at the Lillie house on the morning of the murder. Mrs. Lillie was getting ready to go to the hospital. She was crying and wringing her hands. I saw her at the hospital, when she was walking around the room and out on the porch. She wanted to go to the room where Harvey was. Some of them told her that the wound was not dressed yet. She was continually moaning, wringing her hands and crying part of the time. Mrs. Lillie went home before noon and requested me to stay, saying if Harvey got worse to telephone her. I told her I would. I left the hospital about 11 o'clock." Cross-examination: "Mrs. Lillie went up stairs once in the forenoon where Mr. Lillie was. I went with her. No one asked her that I remember. I heard Mrs. Lillie speak about going home and taking care of her sewing; 'locking it up.'"

City Safe From the Waves Galveston, Feb. 25.—The cornerstone of the \$125,000 sea wall was laid today with imposing ceremonies and a large number of citizens and marines and officers from the United States and ships at anchor in the harbor here. The work on the wall has progressed satisfactorily since its beginning last October. The wall will be three miles in length and give absolute protection to the city, even from a stage of water equal to the great and disastrous tidal wave of 1900.

WORST OF HIS KIND

KNAPP PROVEN TO BE MURDERER MANY TIMES OVER

KILLING WOMEN MANIA

FIVE STRANGLED IN TURN, TWO BEING HIS WIVES

SHERIFF GAINS ENMITY

Makes a Full Confession to Officers at Hamilton Ohio—Whole Career One of Crime Known in Many Cities

Indianapolis, Ind., Feb. 23.—Albert Knapp, arrested in this city yesterday, who lies in the Butler county jail at Hamilton, self-confessed as one of the most depraved criminals run to earth in recent years, has the following crimes laid at his door:

Emma Littleman killed in a Cincinnati lumberyard January 21, 1894. Mary Eckert, strangled to death in Cincinnati, August 1, 1894. Jennie Connors Knapp, his second wife, murdered in Cincinnati, and thrown into the canal there August 7, 1894. Ida Gebard, a child, assaulted and murdered in Indianapolis, July 19, 1895.

Hannah Goddard Knapp, his third wife, murdered at Hamilton, O., and her body thrown into the Miami river, December 22, 1902.

Knapp had served five prison sentences, three for larceny and two for assault. He had served two terms at Jeffersonville, Ind., one at Columbus, O., one at Joliet, Ill., and one at Michigan City, Ind., to which prison he was sent from Indianapolis in 1896 for assault on Bessie Drapier, a child.

Since his return to this city in December he has, the police feel sure, been guilty of two barn burnings. When he was convicted for the Drapier assault he threatened to get even with every one concerned in his conviction.

Ex-Sheriff Womack, then sheriff, gained his enmity. His barn was recently burned and several thousand dollars' worth of fine horses and imported cattle were roasted to death. Al Boardman was one of the jurors who convicted him. His barn was burned about six or seven weeks ago. Almost every hour adds to the long list of crimes laid to the man's door.

Anna Gamble, the fourth wife of Knapp, received a letter from her husband today, evidently written after his confession to the Hamilton authorities last night. From its tone Knapp expects to be sent to the penitentiary for life. He writes in a most affectionate manner to the wife. Mrs. Knapp said she did not know anything about the Hannah mentioned in the letter as her husband had never spoken to her of the woman.

"He spoke of having a wife at one time," she said, "but I did not ask him any questions. It didn't bother me."

Mrs. Knapp abused her husband's family and said they had objected to the marriage.

"They wrote to him," she said, "and told him if he did not give me up they never wanted to see him again. That was after we were married. Allie told them he had married me and intended to stick by me through thick and thin. He loves me and I love him. All I am afraid of is that they will kill him in the electric chair. If they send him to the penitentiary it won't be so bad, because I can go and see him once in a while."

When asked if she thought Knapp was insane, the woman said he had never acted as though anything was the matter with his mind.

Hamilton, O., Feb. 23.—Alfred Knapp, the Indianapolis man arrested yesterday, who confessed to the murder of his third wife, today made a full confession of five murders. Among them is that of Ida Gebard, the West Indianapolis girl, who was found murdered in a stable, July 3, 1895.

Knapp's confession, which was sworn to before Mayor Bosch is as follows:

"On January 2, 1894, I killed Emma Littleman in a lumber yard in Gest street, Cincinnati.

"On August 1, 1894, I killed May Eckert in Walnut street, opposite the Y. M. C. A., in Cincinnati.

"On August 7, 1894, I killed my wife, Jennie Connors Knapp, under the canal bridge in Liberty street, Cincinnati, and threw her into the canal.

Kills Wife on the Street. Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 23.—James Orton, a cook, thirty-five years old, last night shot and killed his wife, Mollie Orton, twenty-one years old, in front of the home of the woman's mother, Mrs. Mary Cronin, of this city, and immediately thereafter shot and killed himself.

Several members of the Cronin family witnessed the shooting, which was the result of a series of quarrels in which Orton, his wife and her family were involved.

STOLE THE STAMPS.

Chicago Postoffice Robbery a Mystery so Longer—Woman Makes Confession.

Chicago, March 2.—State's Attorney Deneen announced this afternoon that he had come into possession of proof's showing who robbed the Chicago postoffice on October 20, 1901, of postage stamps valued at \$74,601, and that he and Postoffice Inspector Stuart were at work preparing the evidence for presentation to a federal grand jury. The state's attorney through a full confession made by Mrs. Lulu Moll, who turned state's evidence against Attorney Richard Wade, Thomas McNelly and others charged with receiving stolen property, learned how the proceeds of the postoffice robbery were divided, who dug the tunnels under the building, who bored the holes in the floor of the steel vault, and where the plunder was stored.

Mrs. Moll broke down this afternoon in State's Attorney Deneen's office and admitted the truth of the evidence against the postoffice robbers, Charles Moll, husband of Lulu Moll, and one of the most daring and dangerous crooks known to the police of the United States, is now serving a term in the Michigan penitentiary for burglary in Lansing. Richard A. Wade sprang into prominence when he defended Prendergast, the assassin of Mayor Carter. Harrison.

Attorney Wade was found guilty tonight of receiving stolen property and disposing of it. The value of the property is fixed by the jurors at \$185, entailing a penitentiary sentence. Wade was on trial with Margaret Winters and Thomas McNelly. Mrs. Moll changed her plea of guilty and was a state witness, Friday afternoon, by direction of Judge McEwen the jury found McNelly and Mrs. Winters not guilty and dismissed them, leaving only Wade to be tried.

The property in question was a shipment of furs stolen in Clinton, Ia., by Charles Moll, husband of Mrs. Moll. Furs valued at \$8,000 were shipped from Clinton in one night. Mrs. Moll obtained the storage receipt from her husband and told Wade of it. He said he could dispose of anything "from a postage stamp to a frame house for 90 cents on the dollar," and he and the woman secured the furs and shipped them to Chicago. Wade then sold them to a State street furrier.

Dog Stood Guard Over Body. Kansas City, Mo., March 2.—A Star special from Bentonville, Ark., says: For twenty days a faithful dog stood guard over the body of A. E. Perkins, formerly of Kansas City, who had evidently been murdered at his home, nine miles north of here. The crime was only discovered today. Mrs. Perkins, a young and attractive woman, and Perkins' adopted son, W. J. Powell, have left the country. They were seen here February 9, and left Rogers over the Frisco railroad, going south, leaving their wagon and team at that place.

Perkins was about sixty years old. He was a man of considerable intelligence and was well thought of by his neighbors. The house was better furnished than most of those in the community. For days the few passers noticed that the house seemed deserted and no living thing was in sight around the premises except a large dog, that slunk about in the bushes near the house and growled fiercely when anyone approached.

The prolonged absence of the family at last awakened suspicion and today some of the neighbors made a search. The dog, emancipated by his long vigil, permitted them to approach close enough to see the body of Perkins hidden under the bushes. An examination showed that his skull was fractured, in the back and there was a wound in the right temple. The recent cold weather had helped preserve the body, so that there was no trouble about identification or in discovering the cause of death.

Will Tear Down Barriers. London, March 2.—Captain Shawe-Taylor, secretary of the Dublin landlord and tenants' conference, who has just returned from a visit to the United States, describing his visit to the Associated press correspondent tonight, said:

"President Roosevelt, who is himself half an Irishman, and extremely proud of it, received me most cordially. I believe there is nobody in the United States more anxious than he for Ireland's welfare. Referring to the Dublin conference Mr. Roosevelt said: 'I am not speaking now as a politician when I say that in company with the whole civilized world I heartily welcome the prospect of a final settlement of the Irish land question.'"

Catholic Church at McCook Burned. McCook, Neb., March 2.—St. Patrick's Catholic church of this city was entirely consumed by fire this morning about 11 o'clock. The fire was caused by a defective flue and broke out while high mass was in progress. No one was injured. The loss on the building is \$3,500, insured for \$1,800; loss on furniture and fixtures, \$1,000; insurance \$1,200. There was slight damage to the furniture of the priest's house, adjoining.

Nebraska Notes.

Joseph Tower Smith of Fremont left an estate worth \$150,000.

The Methodists of Adams have dedicated a new church, costing \$7,750.

The Rev. R. M. Stephenson is about to resume active work as president of Bellevue college.

Rev. Edwin Clutter has closed his meetings at Johnson, and is now conducting one at Liberty Bridge. were compiled from observations made of the Platte and the Loup at Columbus, the Elkhorn at Arlington and the Niobrara at Valentine.

Scotts Bluff is to have an auditorium with a seating capacity of nearly 1,000. Arrangements have been practically completed and ground will be broken for it soon.

Charles Thorson committed suicide by hanging himself to a bedpost. The deceased was a highly respected Swede, who formerly lived in Platte county, and who built a residence and moved to Genoa about a year ago. Mr. Thorson had not been known to touch liquor for about ten years, but he returned from a trip to Columbus intoxicated. His wife, fearing to stay with him, went to a neighbor's house and spent the night, and on returning home in the morning found him hanging to the bedpost.

Present indications are that Jesse Roate, a single man about 40 years of age, who has been for many years making his home with his sister, Mrs. Steve Hartman, a short distance east of Dawson, has fallen a victim to the Nemaha. A few days ago Mr. Roate came in from the field, where he had been herding cattle, and started for the Nemaha river, close at hand, for a pail of water. He did not return immediately and has not been seen since. Tracks in the snow indicate that he followed the usual path to a low footbridge which is about twelve inches above the water, and as the tracks ceased at the middle of the bridge it is supposed that the unfortunate man slipped when he attempted to draw up the water. After he had been gone about twenty minutes a search was instituted and his cap was found under the edge of the ice a few feet below the bridge, but the tin pail was missing and has not been located yet. In the center of the stream, both above and below the bridge, the current is so strong that no ice formed, and the probabilities are that if the man fell in his body did not come up until it had washed under the ice, and in this event it will likely not be located until the spring thaw. A large crowd of men worked steadily for some time cutting a channel in the ice and using poles to search for the body without avail, and yesterday the hunt was abandoned. The accident occurred but a short distance from where Mrs. Harrison fell in and lost her life some four years ago.

As a rule of life, one finds that the truth lies somewhere between first impressions and final decisions. J. C. Stevens, a draughtsman in the office of the state board of irrigation, has compiled a table showing the amount of water that is available for irrigation and not used. The statistics run back to 1895, and give a mean annual average of 6,854,000 acre feet which is sufficient to irrigate 3,457,000 acres. These figures

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