

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

PERHAPS Lillian Russell is merely going through matrimonial rehearsals with a view to a permanent engagement.

SAN FRANCISCO differs from Chicago in that it is suppressing the dance du ventre at the beginning, instead of at the close of the fair.

THE \$6,640,000 of Cherokee bonds sold will give to every Cherokee in Indian Territory about \$30 in cash, and will make times lively in the Territory the coming season if the money is promptly distributed.

It is alleged that a manufacturing plant in Switzerland will soon be able to produce aluminum at a cost of 45 cents per pound, which fact should greatly extend its use. From 60 to 75 cents per pound is about as low as it has yet been produced in any quantity in the United States.

It is expected that the tunnel and appliances about completed at Niagara Falls will be capable, when fully utilized, of developing at least 100,000 horse power for use in manufacturing enterprises in Buffalo and neighboring country, as well as propelling boats on the Erie canal.

BRAZILIANS would not victual or otherwise help the Nietheroy for Peixoto because he had employed North American "mercenaries" in her staff and crew. The Hessian is not more popular in that guise than he was in another when we were doing a little fighting ourselves.

THE triple lynching at Russell, Kas., shows the Sunflower State, like many of its neighbors North and South, occasionally declines to await the slow processes and uncertainties of court justice when particularly revolting crimes have been committed. Three at once is quite an unusual record for Kansas, however.

CALIFORNIA FRUIT-GROWERS: By a system of free hand computation known only to digital manipulators in Chicago, that city is made to show a population of 2,045,043. If the fellows had not been so exact in putting down that last 43 people, we might almost think they had been lying about it. All will be forgiven, however, if they will cross off Pendergast's name from the list and send us an account of the obsequies.

FIRE ISLAND, on the Atlantic Coast, will soon boast the most powerful light for the guidance of mariners in the world. At present there is a flash-light on the island; this is now to give way to an electric light of 240,000,000 candle-power. The new light will flash every five seconds. It is estimated that these flashes will be discernible fully twenty-five miles. Its reflection, thrown on the heavens, will be seen with ease by vessels one hundred miles away.

A MAN by the name of Hause, an inventor of a petroleum-boat, was fined \$50, a fortnight ago, for speeding his boat on the Thames. Many of the fishermen's boats were capsized by the wave which followed in the wake of the boat. The boat attains a speed of twenty-eight knots an hour, and the inventor claims he will make it go thirty-five knots an hour. He can get up steam in three minutes, and his idea is to have the English Government adopt it for use as a torpedo-boat.

APPROPOS of Charles Coghlan's apparently bigamous marriage with a young woman named Kuehne Beveridge, the mother of the latter remarks: "It was a meeting of two artistic hearts—something that occurs only once in a thousand years." It would be cheering if this conservative estimate of the infrequency of such stage marriages could be accepted as correct. Unhappily they are only too common, as the vulgar records of the divorce courts which are called upon to set free the "two artistic hearts" will demonstrate.

JACKSONVILLE, Florida, now one of the most important hotel and railroad centres in the South, has appropriated one million dollars, to be raised by bonds of the city, to be spent in public improvements. Two hundred thousand dollars is to be used in paying off some old bonds, and the rest applied to a water supply, sewer extension, the river banks, pavements, electric-light plant, city building and market, and pavements. The real estate of Jacksonville is assessed at fifteen million dollars, and the city owes nothing but a bonded debt of two hundred thousand dollars and a small floating liability.

TURNS is a class of people not otherwise objectionable to whom one is continually inclined to recommend the study of the English

language. The language they use verges on slang, but is mostly like the "White Knight's" pudding," an invention of their own, which they weakly regard as humorous. Their term for the ocean is always "the mill-pond" or the "briny deep." They never step on land, but on "terra firma." They "gaze at the starry firmament" instead of looking at the sky. And they meet their friends only upon "the Bialto." They never ask you to dinner, but "to grace the festal board." Their home is always their "vine and fig-tree," and their children are only their "olive-branches." Such cheap wit is far more tiresome than slang.

The report recently current that Major Wilson and party were killed by King Lobengula's forces is corroborated by dispatches from Cape Town. These are to the effect that Wilson and his entire party have been annihilated by the savages. This was accomplished, however, only after a hard fight in which Wilson's force acquitted itself with soldierly honor. The Matabele greatly outnumbered the whites, who, after a long and gallant resistance, were unable to withstand the final charge of the natives. Those who did not die fighting were killed and robbed of clothing and accoutrements. Whether the fate of Wilson and his followers will move England to interest herself in the behalf of Cape Colony in his trouble with the Matabele remains to be seen.

DINING with Queen Victoria does not seem to be an exhilarating function. A woman who has been there describes the routine, which never varies. The visitor is conducted immediately to her room. There she remains until a quarter of an hour before dinner, which is set for a quarter to nine. Punctually at that minute the Queen enters, and the company proceeds to the oak room, where dinner is served. There is no general conversation. If the Queen and her family speak together it is in undertones. After dinner the Queen addresses every guest briefly and retires. A young attaché sent from a foreign court and thus entertained gives a still more gloomy view of the Queen's hospitality in the Pall Mall Budget. For three hours previous he was confined to his room, not daring to walk through the corridors. At the rendezvous before dinner no one spoke to him. At dinner two guests conversed across his shoulders without noticing him. After dinner no one addressed him. The next morning, expecting a special interview, he was ushered into the presence of a private secretary, and in a few words curtly dismissed.

Twice over in the history of comparatively modern Spain have her guerrilla soldiers saved her national independence. Capt. Ariza, who organized the band that went against the Rifians at Melilla, is described as a very tall, dark man, an athlete of three aspect, "bearded like the pard," but gentle of manner and courteous of speech. "What sort of a fellow is your captain?" asked a Spanish correspondent of one of the guerrilla soldiers, who had just returned from the first sallies against the Rifians. "Es hombre! He is a man!" was the emphatic answer. The men, many of whom were convicts who had received life sentences, were ready to face any danger on the chance of securing their freedom. In the selection of recruits, the officer gave the preference to those who had been convicted of crimes of violence. They were armed with rifles and daggers, and before entering upon active duty were addressed by their commander, who, handling his revolver and dærk, told them plainly that any one who disobeyed orders or turned his back on a foe would meet instant death at his hands. The "Black Watch," as they were called, proved an immediate success, drawing the Moors, by clever tactics, under the fire of the forts, which did great execution. The people of Melilla were soon able, under the alert protection of these defenders, to rest in security against the Rifians, who previously had made nightly raids up to the very walls of the city. The regiment was finally disbanded, owing to the mutilation of a captured spy by one of the convict soldiers, an act which led not only to the death sentence being carried out in the case of the guilty convict, but to the return to their chains of the whole guerrilla band.

Heine's Impressive Wit. Heine's sense of humor did not leave him until the last. A few days before his death, Hector Berlioz called on him just as a tiresome German professor was leaving after working him with his uninteresting conversation. "I am afraid you will find me very stupid, my dear fellow," he said; "the fact is I have just been exchanging thoughts with Dr. —" (On one occasion, when the doctor was examining his chest, he asked him: "Can you whistle?" He replied: "Alas! no—not even the pieces of M. Scribe.")

CONSUMPTION.

Most Valuable Suggestions Offered by the Michigan State Board of Health.

Consumption is the most common and fatal disease. In Michigan it causes more deaths than any other disease. According to the registration reports, the average annual number of deaths from consumption in this State for the nineteen years, 1899-1887, is 1,698; but it is believed that not more than two-thirds of the deaths are reported, so that the number of deaths which actually occur in Michigan from consumption is probably over 2,500 per year. A large part of this mortality can and ought to be prevented.

Consumption is now known to be a communicable disease, in which, frequently, the contagium is carried from the dried sputum of a consumptive to the lungs of a susceptible person, where it grows and multiplies and thus produces the disease. The germ which causes consumption is called the bacillus tuberculosis, and it is present in the sputa (spittle) of consumptives. These bacilli are from about one twenty-thousandth to about one ten-thousandth of an inch in length, and their breadth is about one-sixth of their length. These bacilli have been thoroughly studied, and by inoculation with them the disease has repeatedly been caused in lower animals. Interesting experiments have been made in this connection by Dr. George Cornet of the Berlin Hygienic Institute, with the dust of rooms inhabited by consumptives. Dust, collected from those surfaces not likely to be contaminated directly by the spitting or coughing of the patient, was mixed with sterilized bouillon and injected into the peritoneal cavity of guinea pigs. Forty days later the animals were killed, and a careful necropsy was made. Twenty-one hospital wards, in which there were consumptive patients were examined in this way, and from the dust of fifteen of them, tuberculosis was set up in the guinea pigs experimented upon. Private houses where consumptives lived gave similar results: where patients had been in the habit of expectorating on the floor, the dust from the walls was certain to yield infectious cultures, but where cloths or spittoons had been used this was not the case.

The mode of communication of this disease is mainly from the dried sputa from consumptives. The germs in the sputa are carried into the air by sweepings, and deposited upon walls or contents of rooms, or find their way to the lungs of persons. It is evident that the only certain preventive of consumption is to destroy the sputum from the consumptive before it has an opportunity to dry and scatter the seeds. It is for the consumptive's own safety to destroy the sputa, because it reduces to a minimum the possibility of re-infection. Any person who has an habitual cough, and raises sputa, should have a microscopical examination of the sputa to ascertain whether it contains the bacillus tuberculosis. Without waiting for such examination, in all such cases the sputa should be disinfected.

No consumptive should expectorate on the floor. Cuspidors, in hotels and other public places, and in rooms occupied by consumptives, should be partly filled with water. They should be washed twice each day in boiling water, and the contents should be disinfected with a solution of bichloride of mercury. The cuspidor might well contain constantly a disinfectant, such as a 5 per cent. solution of carbolic acid, or one ounce of carbolic acid dissolved in a pint and a half of water.

The consumptive should carry pieces of cloth (each just large enough to properly receive one spit-up) and paraffined paper envelopes or wrappers in which the cloth, as soon as once used, may be put and securely enclosed, and with its envelope, burned on the first opportunity. All dejecta (bowel discharge and urine) of a consumptive person should be destroyed or disinfected; because it has been shown that the bacilli are to be found in the urine of persons having tubercular disease of the urinary organs, and in the faces of those having tubercular disease of the bowels, and they may be the faces of those who swallow sputa containing the bacilli, that is, possibly, of any consumptive. Disinfect each discharge from the bowels by thoroughly mixing with it at least one ounce of chlorinated lime in powder, or one quart of "Standard Solution No. 1."

"Standard Solution No. 1" is made by adding to each gallon of soft water four ounces of chloride of lime of the best quality, which should contain at least 25 per cent. of available chlorine. Use one quart of this solution for the disinfection of each discharge from the bowels by thoroughly mixing with it at least one ounce of chlorinated lime in powder, or one quart of "Standard Solution No. 1."

Through better systems of ventilation, much may be done for lessening the micro-organisms inhaled with the dust of floors, carpets, etc., especially by having the foul-air exits at the floor level, so that the general motion of the foul air shall be downwards, and not upwards into the nostrils of the inmates of the room. This is especially important with reference to all public buildings, as, also, that they shall constantly have a liberal supply of fresh air.

Those who sweep and dust rooms which consumptives have occupied might well use respirators. Much may be done to lessen the liability to contract consumption by having the sanitary surroundings as nearly perfect as possible, and by keeping the lungs strong and healthy. It is stated that "in no less than 60 per cent. of all patients dying at Bellevue Hospital there were old tubercu-

lar changes in the lungs, the disease having been recovered from." Similar observations have been made at the Philadelphia Hospital, and at the Paris Morgue. Dr. Trudeau's experiments prove that rabbits inoculated with the bacillus tuberculosis and kept in a cellar like place, on restricted diet, died of the disease in much greater proportion than did similar animals similarly inoculated but kept in the open air with an abundance of food. These facts emphasize the importance of pure food, pure air, and healthful exercise.

Exposure to cold should be avoided. Statistics of sickness and of deaths, collated with meteorological statistics, seem to prove that the consumptive progresses go on most actively after times of low atmospheric temperature, and least actively after times of high atmospheric temperature. This makes it important that consumptives and persons susceptible to consumption, should especially guard against the inhalation of cold air. It enforces the importance of having such persons spend the winter and spring months in a climate warmer than that to which they have been accustomed.

The dusting of objects in the room, the cleansing of the floor, walls, or ceiling of the living or sleeping room of a person suffering from pulmonary consumption, should be deferred until after the room and contents have been subjected to the fumes of burning sulphur.

The unwashed clothing of a consumptive should not be mingled with the unwashed clothing of another person; care should be taken that the handkerchiefs be boiled, and other articles liable to harbor the bacillus shall be disinfected, and that no virus comes in contact with a cut or injured hand.

No one should sleep in the same room with a consumptive patient; or in a room which has been occupied by a consumptive, unless the room has been previously subjected to the fumes of burning sulphur. A room which has been occupied by a consumptive person may well with all its contents be thoroughly disinfected, first, by subjecting it, for twenty-four hours, to strong fumes of burning sulphur, and then it should for several hours be exposed to currents of fresh air. After fumigation the walls may be rubbed with bread crumbs, which should then be burned.

Rooms to be disinfected by sulphurous fumes must be vacated. For a room ten feet square at least three pounds of sulphur should be used; for larger rooms proportionately increased quantities, at the rate of three pounds for each 1,000 cubic feet of air-space.

Hang up and spread out as much as possible all blankets and other articles to be disinfected; turn pockets in clothing inside out, and otherwise facilitate the access of the sulphurous fumes to all infected places.

Close the room tightly, place the sulphur in iron pots or pans which will not leak, supported upon bricks over a sheet of zinc or over water in a tub or pan, so that in case melted sulphur should leak out of the pot the floor may not be burned; set the sulphur on fire by hot coals or with the aid of a spoonful of alcohol lighted by a match; be careful not to breathe the fumes of the burning sulphur, and when certain the sulphur is burning well leave the room, close the door, and allow the room to be closed for twenty-four hours.

The Law of the Jungle. St. Nicholas contains a story by Rudyard Kipling, called "Mowgli's Brothers"—the tale of a child—a "man's cub"—who was rescued from a tiger by a wolf, and adopted into the wolf's family. It contains a number of ever ideas about animal life in the jungle, one of which is this:

The Law of the Jungle, which never orders anything without a reason, forbids every beast to eat man except when he is killing to show his children how to kill, and then he must hunt outside the hunting-ground of his pack or tribe. The real reason for this is that man-killing means, sooner or later, the arrival of white men on elephants with guns, and hundreds of brown men with gongs and rockets and torches. Then everybody in the jungle suffers. The reason the beasts give among themselves is that man is the weakest and most defenceless of all living things, and it is unsportsmanlike to touch him. They say, too—and it is true—that man-eaters become mangy and lose their teeth.

His Opinion. It takes some lawyers to know how to achieve success whether or no, says the Detroit Free Press. To such a one an acquaintance applied the other day.

"I say, George," he said: "I've got a case I want to ask you about and see if you will undertake it for me."

"Take it," responded the lawyer. The acquaintance did so.

"Now what do you think of it?" he asked.

"I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole."

"Is that your professional opinion?"

"That's just it."

"All right, I'll drop it," and he started out.

ROBBED OF DISCOMFORT.

How a Wealthy Eastern Tourist Arranged for a Lengthy Oriental Trip.

Mr. and Mrs. N. A. Baldwin of New Haven; Dr. and Mrs. Morton Grinnell of New York, and Mrs. Baldwin's maid, have left Washington on a journey which will occupy 183 days. Mr. Baldwin is a wealthy private citizen of New Haven, and is a world traveler of long experience, his winters being devoted to exploring its nooks and corners wherever the beautiful and the novel may be found. This year he decided to visit Japan, China, and Korea, lingering in California long enough to enjoy its winter climate. What makes Mr. Baldwin's trip remarkable, says the Washington Post, is the fact that before he left New Haven the entire itinerary had been arranged, and he knew to a minute when the train which carries his private Pullman car would arrive at and leave every place visited in America, both going and returning, as well as the schedule of the boats and other modes of transportation which would take him across the Pacific and be at his disposal on the other side. Not only is he equipped with a printed schedule containing this information, but he also has a packet of railroad and steamboat tickets covering the entire journey of the party. Mr. Baldwin had all this arranged for him by an official of the New York Central in New York, and gave him a check covering the entire expense of transportation in accordance with the program Mr. Roach arranged.

The party left Washington for New Orleans, going over the southern Pacific to California. Some time will be spent in California, and the Pullman will then take a northern route, reaching Vancouver, British Columbia, March 1. On March 5 Mr. Baldwin will sail on the steamer Empress of China for Yokohama, arriving there March 19. The points of interest in Japan and China will be visited and the curiosities of Korea investigated. Returning, the travelers will embark at Yokohama June 1, on the Empress of Japan, reaching Vancouver June 12. Here a private Wagner car will be awaiting them and the Canadian Pacific Road will be taken back eastward. The party will branch off and visit Chicago and arrive home at New Haven on the afternoon of June 24, 1894. In conversation Mr. Baldwin said he would not know a simple discomfort of traveling. "We have an excellent cook on the car and the servant is one of the best in the Pullman service. We will be just as comfortable as we are at home, and if we desire to stay longer at some place than the schedule calls for, all I will have to do will be to telegraph Mr. Roach and he will arrange things satisfactorily. Every detail of our trip has been arranged. Our staterooms on the steamers have been engaged, and we will not have a single one of the annoyances to which those who make long journeys are usually subjected. Yes, they are certainly getting travel down to a science in these advanced days."

The Dude's Delight. It does not lie in the mouth of one newspaper to criticize another for changes of policy, or of characteristics which had made it distinctive, but a journal may become so important in its relation to a community or to the country that an altered course calls for comment and besides the case is cited as an illustration. Harper's Weekly, "a journal of civilization," formerly justified its sub-title. Its new columns were not behind the editorial department in dignity, and of the high character of this paper's editorial discussion in Mr. Curtis' day nothing need be said. His career as an editor is a part of the history of American journalism. For some time before the death of Mr. Curtis the news and literary features of the weekly showed signs of deterioration. A venturesome young man was made the executive editor of the paper, and before long he had caused radical changes. Mr. Curtis' editorial was not disturbed, but his contributions remained alone and singular of the features of the old Harper's. The new editor placed great stress upon the doings of college boys, and a department established for the discussion of the merits of football teams and of "crack" amateur pitchers. The literary quality of the paper fell off sadly. Its short fiction is not what it used to be, much of the verse printed is by a writer who endeavors to hit off incidents of the ryme. Machine-made poetry attains something akin to grandeur in his performances. Some one writes each week a conservative editorial on a political or economic topic, and this is followed by other editorial that is only trivial or silly, bringing down the level of the whole. Of all this we say it is melancholy, pitiful, and shameful that a valuable journal should thus abdicate its place, becoming a picture paper for the amusement of young men of fraternity chapter houses and college clubs. It is too bad that a "journal of civilization" should so degenerate.—Indianapolis News.

A Sure Winner. "Eureka!" shouted the young inventor. "I have got it at last."

"Got what?" asked his friend.

"The invention of the age: a fountain pen that will not write at all."

"What in the name of common sense?"

"It's the certainty of the thing that will make it a success. Most of these fountain pens are so uncertain—liable to write, or not write, as the mood takes them. As this one will not write at all the owner will know right where he is at, see?"—Indianapolis Journal.

A WOMAN can die for her friend as well as the bravest Roman knight.

FLOATING VEGETABLE MATTER.

Nature's Method of Distributing Seeds Through the World.

In some parts of the world, notably in the Malay Archipelago, vast quantities of vegetable matter are always floating about on the sea, says the Washington Star. On the Molucca Islands the trees seem to dispute with the waves of the ocean for the possession of the soil. Not only are their roots and often portions of their trunks immersed in water, but their branching crowns incline in the same direction and are bathed by the tides. Thus the numerous currents of the Molucca Sea are charged with seaweeds, intermingled with flowers, fruits, cocoanuts, nuts or other palms and even whole trees. The amount of driftwood thrown upon all shores is enormous. Eskimo along the Arctic coast of Alaska depend upon it wholly for wood supply. Natives of the coral islands of the Pacific get all their staves for tools from the roots of drifted trees, in which the staves were found imbedded.

The carrying of seeds by ocean currents is one of nature's most interesting methods of distributing plants through the world. Darwin, who devoted much attention to investigating the matter, proved that many kinds of seeds will bear immersion in water for 100 days, or even more, and still retain their vitality, so that when thrown ashore they are ready to sprout. Not a few species, which will sink when green, float if they have chance to dry before falling into the ocean, which carries them to the ocean. For the very purpose of accomplishing this distribution by water, nature has made the husks of many seeds practically waterproof. Among the familiar objects picked up on the ocean beach are the so-called sea-beans. It is popularly supposed that the plants which bear these beans grow in the water. The beans are found in enormous quantities on the Florida shore and in diminishing numbers northward along the Atlantic Coast. They are the seeds of various pod-bearing vines—climbing plants plentiful along the shores of the Caribbean Sea. Each pod, resembling an exaggerated pea-pod, contains a number of seeds. The latter, falling when ripe into the water, are carried by the Gulf stream around the south end of Florida and up the Atlantic Coast. There are three important varieties, one reddish and flat, another more round and gray, and the third much bigger and of a mahogany color.

From a Tramp's Point of View.

A young man who disguised himself as a tramp, and consorted with tramps for several months, tells in the Century some interesting facts concerning them. Although Boston is the beggar's metropolis, New England as a whole is poor begging territory for these vagabonds. They object to its district jail system. In many of these jails the order and discipline are superb, and work is required of the prisoners—and work is the last thing a real tramp means to undertake. Very gratifying results may be anticipated from this system, for anything which brings the roving beggar into contact with sobriety and labor is bound to have a beneficial effect. I must admit, however, that it will be difficult ever to banish the entire tramp tribe, for some of them are exceedingly clever, and when decently clad can play the role of almost any member of society. For instance, I tramped through Connecticut and Rhode Island once with a "fawny man" (a peddler of bogus jewelry). Both of us were respectably dressed, and according to my companion's suggestion we posed as strolling students, and always offered to pay for our meals and lodging, but the offer was never accepted. The farmers considered themselves repaid by the interesting accounts of our travels and talks on politics, etc. My friend was very sharp and keen, and carried on a successful trade in spurious jewelry with some of the foolish country boys when he was not discussing the probabilities of the presidential election. I am sure that I could travel through New England to-day, if respectfully clad, and be gratefully entertained wherever I should go; and simply because the credulity of the charitable is so favorable to "traveling gentlemen."

A New Locomotive.

The new plan for railroads brought forward in France is the subject of much comment. The system aims to combine the features of greatest value in electric and steam motors in railway lines—a system which, as claimed in the account given, can be adopted anywhere without change of track or rolling stock. The electric current is to drive the wheels, but is not to be conveyed from stationary machines along the line, and is generated on the train, the locomotive being simply a traveling electric plant.

A steam engine at the rear of the locomotive works the generating dynamo, this furnishing current to a small motor placed on each axle of the cars. The absurdity of converting the steam into electricity before using the power is said to be only apparent; and the double loss in thus using the energy of the fuel is more than offset by the gain in applying rotary power direct to the axles, avoiding slipping of the rails, and making unnecessary the conducting rods, cranks and wheels, whose jar and friction absorb a great part of the motive force. The new locomotive is said to give exact regulation of power and an increase of speed per hour, of fifty-two to sixty-two miles, without change of roadbed.

FAME is, for women, only a splendid mourning for happiness.