

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

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

Never enter a guessing contest in competition with a doctor.

To prove its right to statehood Oklahoma raised two crops of potatoes last year.

The trunkmakers have formed a trust, thus tightening the grip of the octopus.

People who think the world is going to the bad generally keep busy helping it along in that direction.

Major Glenn has been acquitted. This will make it unnecessary for him to write or lecture about it.

It is not surprising that molasses should prove to be good food for horses. Children have thrived on it for many years.

Do not put your light under a bushel, but keep it in a can where it may give light to all that are in the house—at so much per.

A milk dealer has given up his business because he has become converted. Evidently he didn't put water enough in the milk to wash away his sins.

It now appears that William K. Vanderbilt's house, Idle Hour, is built on sand. Why should a man with so many "rocks" make such a blunder?

There is this to be said in favor of Cardinal Gibbons' plea for stricter divorce laws—a good many people would not get married if they figured they were in for life.

A woman, talking to women, lately enunciated the interesting proposition: "If you can't get your vote, you can always get your voter, and you can influence him in his vote."

Mr. Rockefeller's daily mail now consists principally of letters advising him how to get a new stomach. If he undertook to read them he would soon have more headache than stomach ache.

Sousa gave back \$3,000 to the purchasers of concert tickets in order that he might play before King Edward and the royal family of England. Sousa has evidently discovered that advertising pays.

To establish a limit of \$10,000,000 as the maximum amount any person may acquire or lawfully hold we fear would result in Uncle Russell Sage packing his grip and emigrating to some other country.

A Chicago boy committed suicide because his father wouldn't give him five cents. That boy should have taken to heart the noble lesson given out by young John D. Rockefeller, who says that money is not all.

The powers maintain that China will be able to pay that indemnity in gold by the exercise of due economy. It will be observed that the justice of the claim does not enter. The sole question is what the traffic will bear.

Col. Pope's declaration that cessation of advertising was responsible for the wreck of the bicycle trust offers a suggestion to the associated trust busters at Washington. Let them pass a law forbidding the octopuses to advertise.

What a pity it is that our learned anthropologists never discover that a man has criminal eyes, mouth, ears and nose until after he has committed a murder! O Science! how many frauds are perpetrated in thy helpless name!

Mark Twain said of the Legion of Honor that it was a decoration which few people now escape. The same thing must be true of the German order "pour le merite." The Kaiser has taken to decorating gunboats with it, thus indicating that it has already been conferred upon everybody whom there is the slightest excuse for decorating.

A man with a taste for statistics began, early in November, to keep a record of the corporations, employers of labor, which because of the coal shortage had undertaken to furnish fuel to their employes at cost. In three weeks, by the help of the newspapers, he found more than two hundred such corporations, including several trusts, and this was only the beginning of a movement which, when colder weather came, assumed widespread proportions. The willingness of these corporations to extend such help, at the cost of considerable bother and expense, ought not to be forgotten.

Compulsory cleanliness may, of course, be as difficult to attain as compulsory morality, but should one be made possible the other might follow. Already, in the minds of some philosophers, physical and moral cleanliness grow on the same stem, and to them a scrubbing brush is not a mere scrubbing brush; it bristles with moral possibilities and wipes out spiritual as well as physical stains. Every housekeeper knows the spiritual exaltation that follows the spring cleaning, and it is said that a woman is never so capable of heroism as when she is conscious that her pantry shelves are speckless and her curtains fresh from the wash. To such housekeepers the skeleton in the closet is not so much

to be dreaded as that more shameful visitant, dust, and they would welcome any number of ghostly presences provided the closets offered nothing in the way of disorder to catch a phantom eye.

Some one wants to know more about the life of Abram S. Hewitt, who died the other day. In almost every city you can find at least one rich man who has looked upon his wealth more as a trust than as a personal possession. Hewitt came up from the soil, the same as nearly every famous man this country has known. We have poets and players, Presidents and warriors, from the farms. The old men of now who have risen above their fellows were nearly all country boys years ago. In the peaceful atmosphere of a thousand villages, close to nature, they learned how to live. They imbibed clean morals with the air they breathed; they inherited honesty and rugged principles, and were taught by fathers and mothers who believed that, after God, their first duty was rearing their children right. Hewitt went through all that. He was born in a log cabin, worked on a farm, got an education, because he felt that he must have it to succeed in life. In college he paid his way by tutoring, and worked so hard that he injured his health and sight for life. Did it pay? Depends on how you look at it. In business he made a large amount of money, and he used a fortune in making it easier for other boys, who were as poor as he had been, to gain an education. New York never knew a man fairer to his employes. He tried to put himself in the other fellow's place, and judged accordingly. When he died no one thought about his money. There was no person to blackmail his memory; no scandal was attracted to his name. The world drooped a few tears; the poor placed flowers on his tomb, and humanity knew that a really good man had done his work and quietly passed on. That is about all that Abram S. Hewitt accomplished. Has any man done more?

It is a commonly expressed opinion that the railroad business of the country is being overdone—that too many lines are being built and too much money being put into improvements. Exactly the reverse is true. Railroad building in America is yet in its infancy. Vast as is its present extent, and seemingly complete as is its equipment, the systems of to-day will only provoke a smile from the next generation. Our grandchildren will wonder how we ever managed to get around and do business under our present crude transportation facilities. Not only will the trunk lines of the future be double-tracked separately for freight and passenger traffic, but they will be fed by electric lines running in all directions in every well-settled community. Fifty years from now electric car tracks will be almost as numerous as are wagon roads to-day. The farmer of the future will load up his car, instead of his wagon, upon a spur running to his granary, will adjust his trolley and be whirled away to market or to the freight depot in the twinkling of an eye. Farm produce, coal and grocery supplies will be delivered in your alley from street railway spurs while yet only servants are awake. Electricity will transport from producer to consumer direct, practically "without change of cars." A nickel in the slot and machinery will do the rest. Time, too, will be annihilated. Already an electric speed of one hundred and forty miles an hour has been attained in practical operation. A Chicago suburban system is even now regularly operating under a ninety-mile schedule. With double tracks, air lines and rock-ballasted tracks, there is practically no limit to what may be attained through the inventor's genius and the mechanic's skill, backed by unlimited capital and Yankee enterprise. From coast to coast in three days? It will be done. A railroad at your very door? Aye, all that, and more. Where there is a mile of track to-day there will be fifty as many years from now. The railroad industry overdone? Forget it—the infant has but just begun to shed its swaddling clothes.

Good Service.
Many good stories have from time to time been told of the Rev. Thomas Hunt, the temperance orator, who was a well-known figure in the early history of the Wyoming Valley. During the Civil War he enlisted, and served as chaplain in one of the regiments of infantry raised in the valley. One day in the midst of a fierce battle a major rode up in front of the regiment, and to his amazement found Father Hunt at the head of the ranks. "Chaplain, what are you doing here?" he asked. "Doing?" echoed the old minister, briskly. "I'm trying to cheer the hearts of the brave and look out for the heels of the cowards."

And it was so evident that he was performing both parts of this self-appointed task that the major asked no more questions, but left him to his work.

A Doubtful Compliment.
He brought her a present. It was a dream of a little teapot—fine china with pink roses and gold beading all over it. "Oh, you dear!" she cried, holding it up from its wrappings. "Isn't it just the prettiest thing?" "Yes," he said absently; "it's a pretty teapot. It reminded me of you when I bought it."

And she didn't know whether to throw it at him or not.—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Those persons you would really like to talk with are always going the other way.

CASTRO TO QUIT

Revolution in Full Swing in Santo Domingo—Rebels in Full Possession.

San Domingo, Republic of Santo Domingo, March 24.—The revolutionists have attacked and captured one of the forts defending this city. The fighting continues.

The garrison at Fort San Carlos, about two miles from this city, has declared itself in favor of the revolutionists.

President Vasquez is absent in the interior of the republic.

General Peppin at the head of a force of revolutionists, attacked the fort at 1 o'clock this afternoon and released the political prisoners.

Many persons have been killed or wounded in the streets. The stores are all closed and business is at a standstill.

Serious consequences are expected to result from the fighting between the government forces and the revolutionists.

The revolutionists are in full possession of the city of Santo Domingo. They have taken charge of the cable office and of the government land lines.

Foreign Minister Sanchez has sought refuge in the United States consulate. The fighting continues.

Assistant Governor Echenique and the commander of the government forces, General Pena, have been killed.

It is expected that the government troops outside the city will attack the revolutionists who are in Santo Domingo.

General Vos Gil has assumed command of the revolutionary forces. The number of men killed or wounded is not known, but it is reported many have been killed on both sides.

Washington, March 24.—United States Consul General Maxwell, at San Domingo, has cabled the state department that a revolution has broken out in that city, and that the hour he sent the cablegram heavy firing was in progress.

No Foundation For Charges.
Washington, March 24.—Secretary Root today took official action on the charges made by Estes G. Rathbone against Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood.

He made an endorsement on the papers, saying that no answer to the charges was required from General Wood and no action will be taken thereon; that it was known to the secretary of war that the charges in every respect were without just foundation.

The secretary refers to the part taken by the military governor in the postoffice cases in which Rathbone was defendant, saying that General Wood at every step had the approval of the secretary of war and exercised only such control as was necessary as military governor.

He refers to the game of "ja alai" and declares that the gift accepted by General Wood had no relation whatever of any official action of his, but was part of the expression of gratitude of the Cuban people toward the representative of the United States, and to have refused the gift would have been discourteous and unjustifiable.

The action of the customs officials in reference to the gift, the secretary says, was strictly in accordance with the law and official propriety. The endorsement closes as follows: "There is no foundation for the charges."

Gas Explodes in a Mine.
Springfield, Ill., March 24.—A terrible explosion of gas in the mine of the Athens Coal company at Athens, Menard county, twenty miles north of Springfield, today resulted in the death of six men and one being seriously injured.

An entry in the mine had been for some time stopped up on account of gas, and this morning an attempt was made to open it by drilling another entry, in order to allow air to enter and the gas to escape.

While engaged in this work a miner fired through to the stopped up chamber, causing a terrific explosion of gas, which had accumulated in the chamber. Nine men were in the mine and as a result of the explosion six were killed outright and one was badly injured. Two men escaped.

Some of the men killed were 100 feet away from where the explosion occurred.

Iowa Having a Snowstorm.
Des Moines, Ia., March 24.—During the night three inches of snow fell throughout Des Moines valley. Reports from all over the state indicate that the storm is general but the railroads will not experience any difficulty, unless it should turn suddenly cold and freeze.

Peoria, Ill., March 24.—Today a heavy, wet snowstorm started to fall in considerable quantities.

Fire at Grand Rapids, Mich.
Grand Rapids, Mich., March 24.—Fire at the large greenhouse plant of Henry Smith, just west of this city, resulted in the loss of one life and \$53,000 damage to property today. The blaze started in the boiler room, presumably from the explosion of a lantern carried by Daniel McQueen, one of the employes who was afterwards found dead. The flames spread to the boarding house where the employes lived and then to the other buildings.

GREAT FIGHT IS ON.

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WIELDS AN AXE

SHOCKING TRAGEDY IN THE HAMLET OF FISKDALE, MASS.

MOTHER KILLS CHILDREN

CRUSHES IN THEIR HEADS AND TAKES HER OWN LIFE.

NEIGHBORS PUT OUT FIRE

Shuts Off Means of Escape and Sets Fire to the House—Blackened Corpses of Five Found in a Closet.

Sturridge, Mass., March 25.—A frenzied mother in the little hamlet of Fiskdale, after cutting off every means of escape by fastening windows and doors, crushed in the heads of her four little children Wednesday, threw their bodies into a closet, scattered oil over them and herself and then, after setting all on fire closed her awful work and her own life by cutting her throat.

It was Mrs. Peter Burk, aged thirty-four the wife of a machinist, who committed the fearful deed and her victims were Lilla, six years old; William, five years old; Louise, eight months, and Mary, five months old.

That the woman had previously shown signs of mental derangement, seems to be admitted, but that it should have taken such a violent form was not even thought of by her husband, now completely prostrated by her own relatives.

But for the accidental discovery of the fire, the deed of the mother might have been hidden forever from the world by the destruction of the house.

Two boys happened to be passing the house when they saw smoke coming from a window.

They burst in the doors and tried to put out the fire with buckets of water, but it gained on them so fast that they were obliged to run for help. The neighbors prevented the flames from reaching above the first floor. Up to that time no one knew of the tragedy.

But on looking into a closet a blackened mass was seen. In this heap were the bodies of Mrs. Burk and her four children. The head of each of the children was split open, while the cause of the mother's death was seen in the gaping wound in her throat.

From the appearance of the room and position of the bodies, it would seem as if Mrs. Burk had first cut off every means of escape for the little ones by nailing down the windows, and locking all the doors. The weapon with which she crushed out the life of her offspring was a large axe.

Mrs. Burk must have dragged all the children into the closet and then poured kerosene oil upon their clothing, about the walls and upon herself. The fire had so completely charred the woodwork and the flooring that no blood spots could be found. The bodies of three of the children were burnt almost beyond recognition, but that of Louise was only scorched. The body of Mrs. Burk was also badly burned, but this did not hide the wound on her throat. As soon as the fire was discovered in his house Mr. Burk was notified and arrived just as the bodies were found. He fainted from the shock. Friends say the family has always been a happy one.

A Mysterious Message
Plattsburgh, Neb., March 25.—Some young men who were recently hunting on a small island below the Burlington bridge found an old whiskey bottle which contained a rather strange message. The attention of the young men was first attracted by the fact that the cork of the bottle was securely fastened with a wire.

When the cork was removed a sheet of ordinary writing paper, neatly folded was brought out. Naturally the curiosity of the young men was thoroughly aroused, and for the next half hour they were engaged in deciphering about as strange a letter as they had ever tackled. At the top of the page were the words "My last drink." It was dated "Omaha, September 4, 1892," and signed with the letters "J. W. S."

The writer had evidently been very much addicted to the liquor habit. Among other things he stated that the foolish habit had ruined his home and made his life so unhappy that he had about decided to end it all by the suicide route. Probably the most pathetic part of the letter was the writer's account of how he had gone on a protracted spree of from one to two weeks, leaving his wife and little child at home, hungry and ill-clad. "Yesterday," the writer continued, "my wife and child disappeared. I do not blame them for leaving me. I now intend to search for them, and if I fail in my search I will cast myself into the river just like I intend to cast away this bottle and the message I am now writing."

Editor Struck By Train
Wilber, Nebr., March 25.—William H. Stout, editor of the DeWitt Independent, had a miraculous escape from instant death here this evening. He was attempting to cross the railroad track from the east side in order to take the train home, just as the train was approaching. He miscalculated the distance and was struck as he was stepping over the last rail. His right leg was broken squarely off at the ankle.

Nebraska Notes

The postoffice at Birch, Pierce county, Neb., has been discontinued. Claude C. Campbell of Clay Center, has been appointed a railway mail clerk.

Edwin R. Pease has been appointed substitute clerk at the Fremont postoffice.

May 1st an additional free delivery route will be established at Gretna, in Sharpy county.

The Omaha Builders' Exchange with a capital stock of \$5,000 was incorporated last week.

Henry L. Lowery has been appointed postmaster at Richfield, Sharpy county, vice A. Becker resigned.

Articles of incorporation have been filed by the Sampson and Qualla Mining Co., of Omaha. The capital stock is fixed at \$10,000.

J. W. Jones, the Burlington yard master had his hand badly crushed while making a coupling. He will lose the third and fourth fingers.

Governor Mickey signed H. R. No. 152 which reduces the members of the board of education from nine to five members, and the bill is now a law.

Joseph Fehringer of Humphrey will probably lose his arm as the result of falling from the wagon and breaking it while on his way home from town the other night.

The postoffice at Rescue, Saunders county, and Olson, Fremont county have been re-established with Mary Palensky and Fred B. Morris postmasters, respectively.

The Rev. Father Carney, priest of St. John's church at Plattsmouth is very ill. An attack of the grip was followed by erysipelas and a return of heart trouble, and it is feared that he cannot recover.

After a married life of one week John Johnson 78 years of age, a resident of Mead, left his bride who had been Christina Peterson, sixty-two years old, and passed to "that bourne from whence no traveler ever returns."

Tom Himburger and John Kelley the two men who held up and robbed Everett Carmichael of \$180 in Wyoming recently were each sentenced to three years in the penitentiary by Judge Stull. Charles Miller a boy of sixteen years of age, who was implicated in the robbery, was sentenced to the reform school.

Announcement has been made of the secret marriage in Rockford, Md., on March 16 of Ernest H. Coolidge of Washington and Miss Jean M. Thurston, daughter of former United States Senator Thurston of Nebraska. In a statement made by Mr. Thurston, the bride's father, it was said the young couple had been engaged for some time with the entire approval of their respective families. Miss Thurston is 17 years old.

The Citizens' State Bank at Wisner has been authorized to convert into the Citizens National Bank of Wisner, with \$50,000 capital.

Norman T. Bliss, a prominent farmer was shot and instantly killed by William T. Turley. The killing occurred on Bliss' farm, three miles north of Shelton, and was the culmination of a quarrel over a number of hogs, which were trespassing in Bliss' corn field. Bliss and Turley occupy adjoining farms. When the body of F. P. Bloom, the stock farmer of Steward, who was found dead at his home, was examined by the coroner, a bullet hole was discovered in the right temple. The jury returned a verdict of suicide.

Fire entailing a loss of about \$10,000 destroyed the plant of the Norfolk Press and badly damaged the surrounding property. The newspaper office and equipment was totally destroyed. The building was owned by G. A. Luikhart and P. F. Sprecher. The latter was also proprietor of the paper. The loss on building and contents is estimated at about \$8,000 with \$4,000 insurance.

MONEY TO COOKS.
\$7,500.00 Donated, to Be Divided Among Family Cooks.

The sum of \$7,500.00 will be distributed between now and midsummer among family cooks, in 735 prizes ranging from \$20.00 to \$5.00.

This is done to stimulate better cooking in the family kitchen. The contest is open to paid cooks (drop the name "hired girl," call them cooks if they deserve it) or to the mistress of the household if she does the cooking. The rules for contest are plain and simple. Each of the 735 winners of money prizes will also receive an engraved certificate of merit or diploma as a cook. The diploma bears the big gilt seal and signature of the most famous food company in the world, The Postum Cereal Co., Ltd., of Battle Creek, Mich., the well-known makers of Postum Coffee and Grape-Nuts. Write them and address Cookery Dept. No. 487, for full particulars.

This remarkable contest among cooks to win the money prizes and diplomas will give thousands of families better and more delicious meals as well as cleaner kitchens and a general improvement in the culinary department, for the cooks must show marked skill and betterment in service to win. Great sums of money devoted to such enterprises always result in putting humanity further along on the road to civilization, health, comfort and happiness.