

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A banana trust is the latest fruit of this business in making corners in trade.

From the gallant old Constitution to the wonderful Olympia, what a stride in naval history!

The new bank bills are "powerful" ugly, but there seems to be no trouble in disposing of them.

In fact so much does golf seem to be spreading, after a while the earth may not only be called a ball, but a golf ball.

It's not exactly known what the weather says to the trees when the autumn leaves, but it makes them change color.

A special typewriter has been invented for the blind. What for? Even a blind man can secure a typewriter who can see.

A woman recently wheeled 800 miles with only five hours' sleep. She ought to get a leather medal and ninety days in jail for that.

A painter may be an artist or an artisan, and the same rule holds good with some of our poets and, also, with some of England's poets.

Buying Texas mules for use in South Africa will have the effect on the military establishment of the British soldiers needing a greater rear guard.

The Queen of Holland will get a reputation as a cynic if she backs up the remarks she is quoted as making—that she doesn't intend to marry at present because she wants to enjoy the first part of her life.

A war in South Africa commands supreme attention in this country. A generation or two ago it would have been almost ignored. So much have human interests been extended, and so much nearer has the "brotherhood of man" been brought.

While Marconi's system of wireless telegraphy was rendering practical service in its rapid and accurate accounts of the Columbia-Shanrook yacht races, Tesla took occasion to again inform the world of some very wonderful invention of his own in the same line that is about to send the Marconi system far into the background. The public has declined to get excited over Tesla's inventive pipe dreams and will await results before indulging in any salvos of applause. So far as the record goes Tesla's inventions are a good deal like the thoroughbred hobo. They will not work.

The stand taken by Bishop Potter in New York against the divorce evil has had a good effect not only in rousing the influential and wealthy Episcopal denomination against it, but also in spurring the Presbyterians to action at the meeting of the synod of New York. The Presbyterian synod enjoined "upon its ministers absolutely to refuse to marry divorced persons, except it is the innocent party under a divorce granted for reasons fully recognized in the New Testament." This is more liberal than the stand taken by Bishop Potter and more fully accords with the prevailing sentiment that the innocent should not be made to suffer with the guilty.

England is being invaded by the mosquito, an institution which heretofore it has only known by hearsay. It already knows enough by actual contact with the new-comer to be greatly alarmed at the invasion. Whether the new immigrant got in with imports from South America or timber from Canada, or was purposely transported from America to quicken the British conscience, is not known, but the insect has got a firm foothold on British soil and has come for more than a nominal visit. The entomologists are trying to account for its long delay in visiting England, but this does not lessen its sting, nor its possibilities of multiplication. Its familiar song will doubtless long abide in the land. Perhaps, considering the consequences of the new invasion upon the peace and tranquility of the island, the Queen has done well to call out the entire militia reserve.

While the increase of armies in Europe is now so slow that it may be said to have practically ceased, the continental states are working with incessant energy toward the creation of big navies. It is evident that in course of time the forces afloat, unless a change of policy is compelled meanwhile, will bear comparison in offensive strength with the forces ashore. The other day we had the news that Russia had established a naval credit of \$7,000,000 rubles, which, of course, means a tremendous addition to her first line of defense and offense. France is doing something all the time in the building of small and swift destroyers, while Italy, though crippled as to resources, is by no means idle. Even poor Spain is considering how to get ten ironclads. In Germany the latest naval estimates mean that the floating armament is to come well abreast of the American, and if the Kaiser has his way it will equal that of France. The question is asked by economists, Where is all this armament going to stop? The European powers are now so deeply in debt that they can hardly hope to get out in centuries, if they ever do so at all. Ships cost millions; they are unproductive investments; their types alter so quickly that the first-class

battle-ships of to-day are the second-class ones of to-morrow; improvements in guns and armor-plate are compelling each power to undo completed work.

Afar to the northwest of the Klondike gold-fields—this time on United States soil, but on a waste unspcakably bare, desolate and Arctic—some placer gold-mining has lately been begun in regions which are known as the Cape Nome and Kotzebue districts. Nome is a cape and Kotzebue a sound, but both mining districts are far inland from the coast. Neither of the districts has any growths of timber. To them all the fuel used in mining must be carried. The hardships experienced by miners are far more severe than those likely to be encountered in the Klondike. But thither miners are flocking in large numbers, although it is known that more than a hundred men of one expedition perished of scurvy, and the returns in gold have been but meager. It is a strange, yet perhaps on the whole a creditable characteristic, that hardships and suffering, and even desolate surroundings and depressing circumstances, seem to attract men of our race. An American public man once said: "There is no employment, no matter how terrible and repellent it may be, for which a man cannot be found. At any rate, I shall not doubt this so long as there are two applicants for every vacancy on the Nantucket light-ship." The men upon this ship must spend months in practical solitude, anchored fifty miles from the shore, seeing only their few companions, having only the most restricted opportunities to go on land, restrictedly heaved to and fro, night and day, and subject to death in any furious, overwhelming storm. The new gold-fields—where death is nearer at hand than gold—literally yawn with privation and misery as compared with the Nantucket light-ship; and yet men seek them, impelled by the gambling spirit that makes mining attractive, and by a love of desperate venture over which they apparently have no control.

The conference of commissioners on uniform State laws which was held in Buffalo last August has had published through its committee on publication the acts that were prepared on divorce and considered at the several sessions of the conference. One of these acts enumerates the competent causes for divorce as follows: Adultery, extreme cruelty, habitual drunkenness or the confirmed habit of intoxication, conviction of felony, with sentence of imprisonment to a State prison or penitentiary, and continuous desertion, the time limit to be specified later. Fully as important as this definition of causes are the provisions of the other act, which relate to questions of procedure. These are aimed against the practice of chasing from one State to another to escape the jurisdiction of the proper courts and against the equally pernicious practice of secrecy. A reasonable period of residence is specified, and the greatest care is taken that due notice of suit shall be given, and that there shall be no unseemly haste in arriving at and announcing judgment. As to the causes there can hardly be a rational difference of opinion. They are all sufficient, and if nothing less were accepted as a justification for divorce under the regulations of the second act the number of legal separations would diminish amazingly. But supposing that there were a general acceptance of the causes nothing could be accomplished in a reformatory way without the regulations. As matters stand now the spirit of the laws is constantly evaded by dodges of many descriptions. Once a man or woman has lost respect for the sanctity or the serious contractual character of marriage, and the way for a separation is clear, especially if there be an inclination toward collusion. The evil has grown to enormous proportions and has become a really dangerous menace to society. If the barrier of a traditional sentiment did not still exert great influence, marriage as an institution would be deprived of all its defenses. But lax laws create a lax sentiment, and every time a divorce is granted for insufficient reasons new strength is added to the insidious and demoralizing forces already at work. Brazen advocates for the abolition of restrictions who have enjoyed the liberty of doing what they pleased help to break down the resistance of others by boldly justifying their own license and encouraging discontent and rebellion. There is no subject in which the welfare of society is more deeply involved, and the States should try to get together along the lines suggested by the conference.

Metropolitan Beggars' Trust. The New York police have recently made the discovery that most of the successful beggars in the city belong to a trust. The Beggars' trust is said to own a large house in Brooklyn, which provides every description of beggars' supplies, including bogus wooden arms, legs, humpbacks, pitiful placards for alleged blind men and cripples, etc. The beggars pay the trust a certain percentage of their earnings, and the trust regulates the hours of their labor, selects the districts, furnishes a list of charitably disposed people, and looks after members when ill. The police say that several wealthy and cultured mendicants belonging to the trust live in fashionable flats. Several attended the grand opera last season, and one rides in his own carriage.

Laborers Causing Consumption. More cases of consumption appear among needle makers and filemakers than any other class of laborers.

When a married daughter boards at home, it means that her parents must regard as guests all of her husband's relatives.

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