

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

The bathtub trust is not supposed to fear water.

Barbed wire as a battle appliance has found its way into Natal. Those like it best who are not stuck on it.

About the most innocent of ways to pull the wool over childhood's eyes is to use the yarn of the stocking.

A Western woman's wanting \$50,000 for a broken heart does not in the least contradict the sex's innate liking for a fine figure.

Talking of cold weather as against other forms of garment, the man just wrapped up in himself is generally a cold individual.

An Eastern man is said to be building an ark. This will remind people of the fact that there has never yet been a trust in that article.

Evidently the only way some people can have any confidence in the remunerative character of a business is to have a trust in it.

Popular sentiment is overwhelmingly opposed to the anti-expansion sentiment that would cut down the nineteenth century to ninety-nine years.

Maybe the new cult of "gentlemen burglars" is due to a knowledge that good manners are necessary to those who would enter the best houses.

The wooden Indian has been vindicated at last—he stopped a runaway horse in New York the other day. There's a theme for a new Hans Andersen.

Newspaper men see the dawn of the millennium. An Eastern railway has adopted the policy of telling the newspapers the whole truth in case of an accident.

A man wants \$10,000 damages because a telegram was not delivered which caused his loss of the girl of his choice. Ten years from now he may feel differently about it.

A man who had injured his hand was in such a hurry to apply salve to the wound that he picked up a can of dynamite by mistake, and, finding that the top would not come off readily, he hit it with a hammer. Why will people keep on going all to pieces over little things?

It seems ludicrous now to believe that Admiral Cervera was actually ordered to come over here and bombard the principal Atlantic ports. Yet if we had been really sure of it then those Boston and Newport panics would not have been so strange—for the strength of the Spaniards was at that time an unknown quantity.

Newspaper statements concerning the will of Rosa Bonheur recall the fact that the principal legatee was, until the last year of the great artist's life, an entire stranger to her. Miss Anna Klumpke, a young portrait painter of promise, greatly desired to paint Rosa Bonheur, and wrote, asking that privilege. Receiving a favorable reply, she at once started from Boston to Fontainebleau, in France, and entered upon her work. The two women found themselves in such close sympathy that Miss Bonheur asked her visitor to make her home with her, and at her death last year devised almost her entire estate—chateau, park, library, paintings and priceless manuscripts—to this young American. The story is a romance in real life. It underscores the poet's query: "Who can answer where any road leads?"

When a resourceful novelist like Mrs. Amelia E. Barr gives up the servant girl problem and abandons her country home on the Hudson to live in a New York hotel the outlook is dark for plain people who do not pretend to write novels or solve problems. Mrs. Barr says she has really been driven out of her home by her inability to solve this great enigma of the time. Her flight to a city hotel, combined with her belief that the household work of the future will be done by men, suggests the probability that before the end of another century everybody may be living in city flats and apartments and dining on the hotel plan. The housemaid apparently holds it in her power to abolish the private home life of the nation. It is high time for the geniuses and reformers to apply all their powers to solving the problem of how to make young women prefer kitchen work in the country to factory work in the city. At present the attractions are mostly on the side of the factory.

What we really want nowadays is a philanthropist who will invent some indoor amusement for people whose noses get red in cold weather. Those of us who have artistic temperaments and who revel only in an entourage of grace and beauty are especially concerned in this affair. We appeal directly to Adolphus—young or old as the case may be—and the elderly Adolphus is, perhaps, the more exacting; we appeal to Adolphus, we say, for sympathy. It doesn't so much matter about men. Who cares whether the nose of Jones or Smith or Robinson is red? Nobody expects them to be beautiful. Nobody is shocked if they be otherwise. But when we encounter Clarissa or Celestine, whom last evening we saw across a flowery dinner

table pale, haughty, with tip-tilted nose and scarlet lips—the incarnation of aristocratic calm—when we encounter her in the square or on "the" boulevard and see her with crumpled cheeks and flushed cheeks what a sorrow perches on our souls! Why, the generation simply yawns for a philanthropist.

Just a short while ago we, meaning the American people, were informed that the primary cause of our longevity and general good health was the fact that we ate hearty breakfasts and prepared ourselves for the day's labors with a good meal. It was shown and proved beyond dispute that the human machinery needed a goodly supply of fuel to run the engine during the day and that the best time to lay in this supply was at breakfast. Thereupon the American people began to eat heartily of toast, griddle cakes, cereals, etc. That is, those who read the article were struck by its force did those things they were told were essential for the preservation of their health, strength and life. Now comes another "authority" and says that the American breakfast is too heavy and that the first hearty meal of the day should not be eaten until noon. This later "authority" "proves" his case just as positively as the other, and there will be men and women who will heed the advice and starve themselves half a day under the belief that they are doing themselves a favor. All of which recalls to mind that if the American people did everything that they were told to do and did not do the things that they were told not to do, always by medical "authorities," every minute would be used to do something contradictory to that which had been done the preceding minute.

There is a significance in the fact that the new treaty between Mexico and China is written in English instead of, as customary, in French. It is in line with the recent instances in which English has been substituted for French as the language of diplomacy in international conferences, but has still deeper significance than that. French was formerly the universal language of diplomacy, and all conferences between the powers were conducted in it, as a matter of course, but English has become so more the language of the world than the French that it is superseding the latter even in that most conservative usage. English is also the language of commerce to a much greater extent than French, as English and American commerce far outrank any that is carried on under any other form of speech. Lastly, the most important, an English-speaking nation, the United States, is not only the nearest neighbor to both Mexico and China, but is rapidly becoming the most important one with which they have to deal; while second to it in some respects, first in others, is England. Both nations, therefore, having far more occasion to use the English than any other foreign tongue, they are bound to become more familiar with it than with any other, and it is so nearly a common language between them that it is very wise for the diplomats to use it for the purpose of a common understanding. They will avoid complications better in this way than by adopting French or any other tongue.

For more than 5,000 years men have been trying to discover "the elixir of life." The earliest searcher, so far as authoritative history shows, was Hermes Trismegestus, born 4800 B. C. Coming down to the Christian era, there was Zosimus, who lived 400 A. D. to 450; Ghebe Ithazek, 880 to 930; Ovicuno, 1080 to 1037; Artaphino, 1075 to 1130; Roger Bacon, 1214 to 1294; Albert Magnus, 1340 to 1384; Ponce de Leon, 1490 to 1521; Paracelsus, 1743 to 1805; Cagliostro, 1843 to 1804; Brown-Sequard, 1818 to 1894. They and others, like the rest of their generations, are all dead. It is noticeable that most of them died early, not living three score years and ten. It is needless to say that they failed to discover "the elixir." Perhaps it is well that some of them did not, considering what they were. The latest candidate for disappointment is Prof. Metchnikoff, a distinguished scientist in the Pasteur institute, Paris, who claims to have discovered a series of lymph that will arrest decay and rejuvenate the human body. He discards the accepted theory of senile atrophy, and holds that "certain cells" which have been believed to be destroyed by age are simply dormant. Not only can they be revived, but multiplied, with his wonderful lymph. In a certain measure corroboration of this claim are the experiments of a physician who announces that he can successfully treat paralysis and other cases. But both are now only experimenting, and the probability is that, like some predecessors, they will make their discoveries just in time to die.

A Leaf from History. Commodore Winfield Scott Schley, in his book, "The Rescue of Greely," thus describes the finding of the explorer and the other frozen and starved survivors of the Lady Franklin Bay expedition in July, 1884:

"On his hands and knees was a dark man with a long, matted beard... and brilliant, staring eyes. As Lieut. Colwell approached he raised himself a little and put on a pair of eye glasses. "Who are you?" asked Colwell. "The man made no answer, staring at him vacantly. "Who are you?" again. "One of the men spoke up: 'That is the Major—Maj. Greely.' "Colwell took him by the hand, saying to him, 'Greely, is this you?' "Yes," said Greely, in a faint, broken voice, hesitating and shuffling with his words. "Yes—seven of us left—here we are—dying—like men!" "Then he fell back exhausted."

The magazine poet may be equal to his task, but few of his readers are.

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