

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

The Methodists are trying to raise \$20,000,000. So are we.

The Ohio man will please sit down and give the Iowa man a chance.

After the King of Siam has inspected the United States he may signify a desire to be annexed.

A little spanking now and then is just as necessary, it seems, in the White House as in any other.

The cabinet is maintaining its record for members with one-syllable names. Gage is succeeded by Shaw.

The government of New Zealand, when it came to the bridge, decided to cross on an American structure.

Lucy Page Gaston finds that cigarettes are adulterated. Evidently they are trying hard to make cigarettes better.

When there is talk of a cabinet vacancy every man in Iowa starts perceptibly and wears his hand tucked into his vest.

So long as they keep Alfred Austin off the work, the revision of England's national anthem will not be viewed with alarm.

Italy's commercial invasion of America, now that we think of it, may be reckoned among the successful affairs of that kind.

King Edward has decided that there will be no court jester at the coronation ceremonies. Waiting so many years for the crown is a serious matter.

Prof. Jacques Loeb of the University of Chicago has an elixir that holds off death from sea urchin's eggs. This ought to be a great thing—for sea urchins.

When the new telephone service which will enable talkers to see each other while conversing comes into use, will it be necessary to cross the wires for cross-eyed patrons?

A New York man has been paying his wife's alimony in postage stamps of un-negotiable denominations, which suggests that the champion mean man would better look to his laurels.

The Emperor of Germany recently talked in eight languages during one day. Still, that isn't much. A neighbor who pounded his thumb the other evening used eleven in about four seconds.

The fable of the dog who lost his piece of meat in trying to reach for the larger piece which he saw reflected in the stream below him is respectfully referred to the notice of the Panama company officials.

Congress will use the District of Columbia as a sort of experimental station for divorce reform. A law is to be formulated for the district which shall serve as a national model. There is call for great wisdom in the making of such a law.

According to some persons, Marconi is either suffering from a diseased imagination or given to unbridled mendacity. According to history, Fulton, Edison and a long line of other pioneers in the field of invention were once regarded as crazy or worse.

Representative Eddy's statement that there are not a dozen men in Congress who, on a strict salary basis, could command from private corporations or interests the salary the government pays them is no sign that any member is to introduce a bill for the reduction of Congressional pay.

Chinese diplomats broke over an old tradition when they attended a dinner given by Minister Conger, in which American women participated. Formerly it was considered degrading to dine with foreign women. When the Chinese nobles expose themselves to captivation by the charm of American womanhood it is easy to see a finish for the musty traditions of centuries.

The submarine boat, the Fulton, recently remained sixteen hours under as many feet of water. Its officers and crew spent the time in entire comfort, unaware of the great gale that was blowing above. If the International Association to Prevent Seasickness would only contrive attachments by which the life-boats on ocean liners might take susceptible passengers down to the bottom of the sea while storms rage above, and bring them back alive, its claim of practical utility would be no longer questioned.

There was never an innocent and improving pastime, suitable alike to the learned and the laity, to compare in genuine fun and literary profit with the spelling "bee." So general has become the vice of bad orthography that signs multiply in favor of a revival of the "bee." There will be a little more difficulty than of old in agreeing upon a standard, but the words spelled more ways than one are comparatively few and not important. Teachers of spelling, the few that remain in the schools, should be the first to encourage the jolly "bee" and are liable not to be the last to be spelled down.

The new Hay-Pauncefote treaty removes the diplomatic obstacles which

hindered the construction of a canal across the continent, in Central America. The report of the canal commission presents the judgment of experts that the Nicaraguan route is the best. The attitude of Congress promises prompt action. So the connecting of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, which has been a dream of adventurous spirits for centuries, approaches realization. The enterprise, when begun, will have behind it the resources of a great nation; and the canal, when completed, will be the property of the United States, operated and controlled and its neutrality guaranteed by the United States alone. That one nation should spend two hundred million dollars, and probably more, in building a great public work in the territory of another nation is unprecedented. It is justified by the fact that the new waterway will bring the commerce of the Pacific coast ten thousand miles nearer the ports of the Eastern coast. At present the distance by water from San Francisco to Cadiz is less than the distance to New York. The cutting of the canal will end this anomaly, and in proportion to the length of the waterway will save to commerce a greater distance than any other canal that has been or could be built. The canal will promote general peace and international commerce. It will be open to the ships of all nations on equal terms, and will lighten the cost and lessen the time of transportation for all. The day which witnesses the turning of the first spadeful of earth on the canal and the day on which the first vessel passes through it will be historic days for the United States and for the whole world.

At last the fool who rocked the boat has been run to cover, and the law has its hand on him. He is the typical practical joker of a breed which on April 1 puts pepper in the baby's mouth and gleefully yells "April fool!" when the child shrieks in agony. As he grows older he stretches a rope over the sidewalk at night, and his soul is filled with delight as pedestrians come to grief. If a leg or two is broken or a skull is fractured he is always sorry, and declares that he was only in fun and didn't mean to hurt anybody. Then he reaches the age where he rocks a boat or drops a lighted match into the Fourth of July fireworks, and he weeps bitter tears at the funerals. That brings us to Frank Rinehart, of Hagerstown, Md., and the time is August. A merry party, including Rinehart and Mary Finck, were rowing. Rinehart was a born "cut up." He wanted to give the ladies a good scare, and rocked the boat. He was implored to desist, and answered it by a violent rocking, at the same time roaring with amusement. Then the boat capsized, and all were rescued with the exception of Miss Finck. Her body was recovered two days later. Mr. Rinehart felt very badly about it. He was also vexed when he was indicted for manslaughter. The jury deliberated for 41 hours, was unable to agree, and there is to be another trial soon. Whether a conviction is reached or not the case should be a lesson to practical jokers. It should even penetrate the intellect of L. B. Spalding, of Taftville, Vt., who sent a note to his wife, telling her that he would never be seen again alive. He wanted to see how she would take the news of his death. It was not so much of a joke as an experiment. After ponds had been dragged and Mrs. Spalding's mind had been wrecked so that it is doubtful if she is ever sane again, the jovial husband was found playing checkers with a friend. He is very sorry.

Great Singers Off the Stage.
I remember how amused I was when Madame Eames told me how capitally Jean de Reszke, who undoubtedly is the greatest of living tenors, imitates animal sounds—how he "bow-wow," and "meows" with the same voice which has thrilled thousands. Also how Edouard de Reszke delights in imitating the sounds of various orchestral instruments; but in order to do this he is obliged to assume the pose of the player, so that if he is imitating the sounds of a cello he sits as if he had the instrument between his knees and were drawing a bow across the imaginary strings. As for Piancon, whenever he and the prima donna step out upon the stage together he always whispers to her just as they are leaving the wings, "Now they are going to see the two most beautiful noses in the company."—Woman's Home Companion.

A Burst of Generosity.
A man from Dunedin once visited (the town of) Wellington. An Irish friend insisted upon the visitor staying at his house instead of at a hotel, and kept him there for a month, playing the host in detail, even to treating him to the theaters and other amusements, paying all the cab fares, and the rest. When the visitor was returning to Dunedin, the Irishman saw him down to the steamer, and they went into the saloon to have a parting drink.

"What'll you have," asked the host, continuing his hospitality to the very last.

"Now, look here," said the man from Dunedin, "I'll hae nae mair o' this. Here ye've been keepin' me at yer hoose for a month an' payin' for a' the theaters an' cabs an' drinks—I tell ye I'll san' nae mair o' it! We'll just hae a toss for this one!"—Scotsman.

What Pauperism Costs.
England spends \$8,400,000 a year on her paupers. Scotland \$900,000. Ireland \$1,400,000. France spends less than \$1,500,000.

Every woman admits, in telling of some other woman's troubles with her husband, that the other woman does not use enough sugar.

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