

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A Boston swimmer issues a challenge for "a mile dash." Wouldn't "a mile splash" be better?

The only chance the Indian has to avoid a hair cut is to learn to play football or the piano.

A Chicago man shot five times at his wife, wounding her slightly. He is probably a French duelist in disguise.

The successful politician must be serious in public, but that does not necessarily prevent him laughing at the public in private.

The roasted peanut has just found its way into London. No wonder some of the London editors are complaining about the slowness of that town.

Some of the people of Germany are apparently just beginning to realize that Christopher Columbus discovered quite a strip of country over here.

A scientist says the Rocky Mountains are moving southward. Anyone who has traveled from the north toward them may well believe the statement.

If a young man is in love with a girl and she refuses to marry him it may break his heart; if she does marry him the chances are it will break his pocketbook.

Emperor William may conclude to be his own J. Pierpont Morgan and buy up the German steamship lines to prevent them from falling into the hands of the American.

On the day that the steel trust announced that its earnings the past year were \$84,000,000 the census bureau gave it out that this country has a population of 84,000,000.

Carnegie's intense desire to die poor will not prevent him from defending the title to his \$2,000,000 island off the coast of Georgia which the sea island and cotton king claims to own.

The ways of the world are changing. A certain man kept tab on his children up to eleven. When twins jumped the number up to thirteen he committed suicide. In the days of our forebears the father would simply have gone on calmly keeping tab.

The price of \$4,500,000 or \$5,000,000 which we are now paying for the Danish Islands in the West Indies is a bargain counter quotation compared with the price asked for them formerly. Denmark's asking price was \$15,000,000 a generation back and Mr. Seward offered \$7,500,000 for them. Apparently the market for islands is less active and high than formerly.

A couple recently married set an excellent example to prospective bridegrooms and brides. The money each would have expended for a present to the other was constituted a fund for the endowment of a free bed in a hospital. Persons of ample means, who study to obtain some novelty as a wedding gift to husband or wife that is to be, can always find opportunities along the paths of charity to establish a memorial of their own happiness by conferring happiness upon those who pass their days in life's shadow.

The young woman in Pennsylvania who puts the value of a broken rib at \$100 was influenced by the mitigating circumstance that the rib was broken by a young man in an affectionate hug. At first she offered to compromise on a basis of payment of the surgeon's bill of \$11.50, and when the young man foolishly and ungraciously tore up the bill, proper feminine pride compelled her to raise the price. It would seem to us that \$100 may be regarded as a ridiculously small sum for the pleasure of giving such a hug as would fracture a rib; but, of course, this is not to be fully determined until the lady is shown in evidence. And perhaps the rib had been broken before. Or possibly it was not one of the more important ribs. All these things must be taken into consideration by unbiased legal authorities.

Ottmar Mergenthaler was one of the greatest inventors the world has produced. It was his mind that fashioned the Linotype machine, now used by every large newspaper in the country. He gave his life largely to the perfecting of this typesetting machine, which, as he said, was able to do everything but think. Before he died, however, he perfected another labor-saving device, a machine that turns out fruit or berry baskets or boxes from the raw lumber. With but one employe to tend it it makes as many baskets in an hour as a dozen of the most expert hand-workers can make. It is said that one of these machines operating at ordinary speed produces complete strawberry boxes at the rate of 12,000 a day, 1,200 an hour, 20 a minute, or one every three seconds, and then by the simple movement of a lever or two and the turning of some thumbscrews, the machine is so changed that it can go to work at making peach baskets, grape baskets, or anything else the manufacturer may want, the matter of size being but little trouble, as the dimensions can be instantly changed by simple movements. Modern invention is rapidly bringing about the day dreamed of by reformers. It is not to come by agitation or legislation, but by invention. The multiplication of labor

saving machines will make it possible to produce all that the world needs by the work of a few hours each day, leaving the remainder for cultivation and recreation.

In all directions steadily and surely the world is getting better. It is getting better morally, physically, socially, industrially—in every direction. Some social developments are temporarily discouraging and some are hard to understand—but, as in the growth of a child from feeble infancy to mature manhood, the tendency is constantly to a better state. Mumps, measles and whooping cough correspond to revolutions, strikes and trust formations in society. Many of the most important agencies for improvement are ignored and misunderstood. The earth-worm that the boy digs up when he goes fishing are absolutely essential to the agricultural growth of this nation. How many realize the importance of these little wriggling worms? How many people know that the dust in the air gives color to the sunlight, colors the clouds, makes the fruitful rainfall possible? How many have thought of the extraordinary good which comes into the world because of the universal habit of celebrating each person's birthday? When is your birthday? Has not every single birthday made you at least for a time a better man? We may ignore the beginning of the New Year, for that is a very general celebration. No man ignores his own birthday, the day which begins all of his years on earth. And very few human beings, indeed, fall on each recurring birthday to make good resolutions, determined that they will try to do better. Even a man's apparently selfish birthday resolutions are good for all the people. He resolves to succeed better—that means that he must work harder and add to the productiveness of the race. He resolves to be temperate, to exercise self-control, to give up gambling, or in some way to improve himself—every such resolution, multiplied by millions, is good for the whole race. Of the 1,400,000,000 human beings on the earth 4,000,000 on an average celebrate their birthdays every day. Every single day 4,000,000 of human beings begin a new year. Every single day that great number of people form good resolutions, and determine to do better than they have done. Nobody can estimate the power for good on earth of this constant exercise of the greatest moral force, the will to do right. Whenever your friend has a birthday, encourage him if you can in this noble human tendency toward good resolutions. And when your own birthday comes make up your mind that, as one little drop in the ocean of humanity, you will do what you can to make yourself a better man or woman, more worthy of the trouble taken by your father and mother, and more useful to the other human beings who cling to this little ball of earth with you.

The Nervous New Yorker. One of the most marked outward manifestations that the New Yorker gives of the high nervous tension under which he lives is his habit of talking aloud to himself in the street. This habit is one of the first things that observers of street life in New York notice. It is a form of nervousness that is due not only to the high pressure at which so many New Yorkers are kept, but to the noise of the street traffic. When the rush and rumble of the streets is so great that a man "cannot hear himself think," he speaks his thoughts aloud. It is only rarely that a woman is observed doing this. Sometimes the man who is talking to himself, if he is happy, will mumble only phrases and half sentences audibly. If he is angry or deeply concerned he will speak steadily and sometimes make emphatic gestures. But nearly all of the men who talk aloud in the streets have their business affairs uppermost in their minds, and the word "dollars" is the one that is oftenest heard. Downtown, in the financial section, this habit of a large number of New Yorkers is particularly noticeable, but one may observe it in almost any part of the town. Paris is possibly the only other one of the great cities of the world where the habit is so noticeable as it is here. Actors and writers and the many minor poets of the French capital may be seen declaiming their lines or verses, unheeding their observers.—New York Evening Post.

A Dr. g-Net Writ. This story is told of a judge who was for some years on the District bench of North Dakota, says an exchange. On one occasion an attorney appeared before him with a written request that a writ of duces tecum, linguis licet, issue; and the judge, after adjusting his glasses and giving the paper a very careful reading, handed it to the clerk with instructions that the writ issue, whereupon the clerk informed the court that he was not an attorney, and did not understand the nature of the writ; so the court again took the paper, bowed his head, and apparently went off into the far land of study, and after some moments had elapsed arose and addressed the clerk as follows: "Mr. Clerk, you will issue a writ that will play the deuce generally, and take 'em in goin' and comin', sick or well."

Big Coal Field. St. George's Bay, Newfoundland, contains an immense coal field fully twenty miles in length and ten in breadth. It has been estimated that if the output were to reach 250,000 tons per annum, the coal bed would not be exhausted in a century. When you pass a woman on the street and she draws in a breath and says "and" to her companion, some one is catching it.

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