

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

All men fall in love, but most of them get up again.

Gastro has been president of Venezuela for six years—off and on.

Uncle Sam is rapidly becoming everybody's uncle in both hemispheres.

Making out a bill against the Sultan is one thing. Collecting it is several others.

The Baldwin north pole party has been heard from. The letter was not dated at the pole.

A boon companion is seldom considered a boon by the family of the man with whom he associates.

Few women are interested in the study of prehistoric man. Their specialty is the man of to-day.

It is wonderful what a bore even a good natured dentist can turn himself into when his buzzer gets busy.

Santos-Dumont is said to be very superstitious. Perhaps he thinks he was born to be run over by an automobile.

The mothers' congress was unanimous on one point, at least, and that is that mothers are necessary institutions.

A Missouri man has decided to stock his farm with 400 goats this spring. Hereafter the Missouri butter is likely to cut an enlarged figure.

A Russian has invented a monorail-road that carries passengers at the rate of 200 miles an hour. It is a good deal like dropping out of the airship.

An English professor says women are incapable of learning the Chinese language. If he can prove it Chinese may yet become the universal tongue.

The Senate is anxious to protect its dignity, and will do all it can to that end. But the States which select its membership will have to help some.

Elephants are said to be disappearing. It is still possible to see them in our larger cities if you don't care for your wife's restraining influence.

Gatling, the gun man, has invented a plow that does the work of sixty horses. But what can the ordinary farmer do with a contrivance of that kind?

A prominent "educator" in the East speaks of High School Latin and Greek as sanctified relics. Never mind. The boy is able to forget the past quite easily.

Turkey is to be held responsible for the kidnapping of Miss Stone. Turkey is already held responsible for so many things that one more or less will not make much difference.

We hope there will be no unseemly squabble over "marconigram." The idea of calling a wireless telegram by that name sprang spontaneously in a hundred places at once.

The new kind of novel that is well written, but which begins nowhere and ends nowhere else, makes a person mad enough to strike his father. No wonder we go back and read Dickens to get the taste out of our mouths.

General Zano, a Filipino millionaire, is reported to have offered \$500,000 each to the American army officers who will marry his daughters. Why does the general limit the offer to American soldiers? Let him open it to titled Europeans and his daughters will go like hot cakes.

The Marconi wireless systems are now in use on seventy ships and there are twenty-five land stations. The Marconi company now takes several hundred commercial messages every day for ships that have left port as well as for those coming in. The fleeing cashier can no longer consider himself safe when out of sight of land.

Lord Francis Hope, since coming of age, has spent \$3,000,000, and, seeing no end to the waste, he turned over all his property and expectations to a life insurance company, which guarantees him an income of \$10,000 a year for life. In this way he is assured a fair living and time to meditate on what a clump he has been.

Ordinance statistics now show that it cost \$84,000 to extinguish Cervera's squadron and \$50,000 to blow Montejó's out of water. Other statistics at Washington will show that the type-writing expense for the Santiago affair made the subsequent expense fully as great as for the ammunition. But the official figures will fail to record what the two engagements cost in the way of heartburnings, injured pride and reputations.

"Pluk adorned with ambition, baked by honor brite will always command success even without the almighty dollar." This is part of an inscription on a large card which hung in a conspicuous place in the largest wholesale notion house in the United States. It was written by Charles Broadway Rous, the founder of the business, who was known to the world as the "blind millionaire." And in the above quotation is the secret of

his success. When he went to New York City in 1865 his entire capital was only \$1.80. When he died at the age of 66 he was worth millions. "Pluk" and "onor brite" did it. He worked at least twelve hours every day, six days in the week. He was always the first at his desk, and the last to leave. To him every minute counted, and he even spelled phonetically in order to save time. Each of his employees was expected to work eleven hours a day, and each received his pay at the close of each day's work. When Rous closed his store at night it was his boast that he owed no man a dollar. But Rous paid dearly for his millions. He gained wealth and a place among the merchant princes of America, but in doing so he lost his eyesight. Overwork made him blind. He offered \$1,000,000 to any one who could restore his sight. Many alleged remedies were brought forth, and he hired a blind man at a large salary on whom these remedies were tried, but none was effective. "Pluk" and "onor brite" will win success, but if in the pursuit of the almighty dollar all rules of health are thrown aside the millions of a Rockefeller would not be worth fighting for. The man without great wealth, and yet healthy and with his eyesight, is far more fortunate than the blind millionaire.

With the death of "Neil" Bryant there has passed away the last of the old-time negro minstrels. By a curious coincidence "Jack" Haverly, "Billy" West, "Billy" Emerson, and "Billy" Rice, and now "Neil" Bryant, the only prominent representatives left of the genuine burnt cork "artists," died within a few weeks of each other. With the exception of Haverly and Emerson, they were old men, but they preserved their sense of humor to the last. It was a genuine bit of humor, of the same kind that so moved Thackeray when he first heard the negro minstrels in America, when the dying impersonator said: "Tell all my friends I have gone 'way back and sat down and they will find me on the end seat." With these men negro minstrelsy also passes. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that it passed away before they did. The minstrel troupes now on the stage have nothing in common with the old-time performers save their blackened faces. They represent no class and their programs are a hotchpotch of absurdly sentimental drivel and eccentric vaudeville specialties. The purpose of the old minstrel, beginning with the Christy troupe, fifty or more years ago, was to represent the plantation negro in his native humor and with all his racial peculiarities. The dances were the double shuffle, the breakdown, the pigeon wing, and the "Jim Crow." The instruments were the banjo, the fiddle, the bones, and the tambourine. The songs were the racy plantation melodies, the jubilee, hymns, and the melodies of a still higher and yet characteristic kind, which flowed so rapidly and so easily from the pen of Stephen C. Foster and were subsequently transplanted by Dvorak in his new world symphony as specimens of American folk music. In these minstrel performances the comedy of negro life in the plantation cabins, in the cotton fields, on the Mississippi River steamboats, and in the songs and dances of their recreation time was given with admirable truth and humor. In the place of all this we now have vaudeville acts, "coon" songs, ragtime, sentimental ballads, and, in fact, everything except negro minstrelsy. A row of performers with blackened faces sing and act a succession of numbers which have no more relation to the negro than they have to the Chinaman. Even the so-called "coon" song has nothing of the Ethiopian flavor. The sentimental ballad, when it was connected with the negro, as in "Way Down on the Suwanee River," "O! Susanna," "Old Dan Tucker," "The Old Kentucky Home," "Jump Jim Crow," and others had an element of real humor, at times mingled with pathos, because of a personal motive in it. The sentimental ballad of the modern troupe, on the other hand, is simply a mixture of sensational slang and maudlin sentiment. When "Billy" Emerson danced and sang "The Big Sunflower" he expressed the happiness of the darky enjoying his holiday. When a modern minstrel sings "The Goo-Goo-Eyes" he expresses mere drivel. Negro minstrelsy was comparatively short lived, but it enjoyed great popularity. Few artists, indeed, have been more successful than the four in black who have recently gone. They were comedians of a high order of talent.

Not So Greene as Her Name. Prof. Syle of the State University of California, who spent the holidays in New York, tells this story of himself. At the beginning of the last session, while calling the roll of his new scholars, he came upon the name Miss Greene. He stopped and expressed his disapproval of the final e in her name by asking: "G-r-double-e-n-e. does that spell Green or greenie?" Miss Greene responded promptly: "S-y-l-e, does that spell Syle or sillie?" Then the roll call proceeded amid suppressed laughter.—New York Times.

A Poor Sort of Heaven. Fair Arrival—May I have a crown of the latest style? St. Peter—Fashions never change here. Fair Arrival—Dear me! I have made a mistake, and come to the wrong place. I thought this was heaven.—New York Weekly.

The average woman loves to boast that the money her husband gave her for new clothes she spent for "the house."

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