

Topics of the Times

But the czar never knew before that there were so many kinds of trouble.

Times never become too prosperous for dishonest bank officials to steal and run away.

An Eastern ice company is reported to have failed. It must have a dishonest bookkeeper.

The age of a woman at 35 is represented by any combination of figures that appears plausible.

A New York ice man has gone into bankruptcy. The only possible explanation is that he refused to join the trust.

A woman author has sued Secretary Loeb for \$50,000 for causing her arrest. There are many ways of advertising a book.

A Western preacher confesses that his best sermons are prepared while he has a good cigar in his mouth. Holy smoke!

A man who climbed Mont Blanc says it gave him "rheumatism in the head." He seems to have found plenty of rheum at the top.

Senator Tillman says he is almost convinced that women know more than men do about voting. Isn't he getting to be the ladies' man, though?

A Tennessee man wants Congress to pass a law against peek-a-boo waists. He must possess an unholly desire to get Congress to hunt for trouble.

Large new coal fields have been found in Pennsylvania, but the consumer may as well be notified at once that the coal trust is going to control them.

Amateur photographers have been pestering Harry Lehr again. Harry is wholly justified in indignantly asking why the amateur photographers don't try to think of something new.

A returned army officer says it will take a hundred years to subdue the rebellious Philippines. This encourages the hope that the Philippine war and the Panama canal will be finished about the same time.

The Duchess of Roxburghe, who was formerly May Goelet of New York, gave the Queen of Spain a gold cigarette case as a wedding present. If the duke was equally thoughtful he probably gave King Alfonso a jeweled garter buckle.

A Kansas lady insists that woman can never hope to be man's equal until she is able to open a telegram as calmly as she is able to open a can of corn. Why not give her a chance? Let her have equality as soon as she is able to open a telegram as calmly as a man opens a can of corn.

That opportunities for poor but energetic young men are still to be found in this country is manifest in the circumstance that such a young man, with no other capital than a 2-cent stamp, cleaned up a matter of \$25,000 by bidding for the Panama canal bonds. If that youth does not develop into a Napoleon of finance the indications are at fault.

Manuel Garcia, who died recently at the age of 101 years, was famous not only as a teacher of singing, but as an accidental contributor to the profession of medicine. In order to study the vocal cords as the instrument upon which he taught his pupils to play, he invented the laryngoscope. This instrument in improved form is in the hands of every throat specialist. When Garcia's friends celebrated his hundredth anniversary, art, music and medicine united to honor him.

Bee-sting is said to be good for rheumatism, but that is not the bee's intention in administering it. The bee has other problems than those connected with the curative art. His intention is to lift his man out of position, and he does it—unless the latter is intoxicated. If the man has rheumatism, no matter. The bee moves him at once by eliminating acid from the blood and arousing the gamiest leg from the lethargy of ages. It is well before annoying the bee to get your rheumatism established, because one bee-sting will lap over a good deal of rheumatism, and if you have an insufficient supply of the latter to neutralize it the bee in his earnestness is prone to overdo his part.

Every country fixes upon some period of its past history which it delights to call its "Golden Age," but it is always some time so remote that nothing is known of it with certainty and around it myths and legends accumulate until all its events are seen through the glorifying mists of poetry and romance. No one has ever the courage to say "we are now living in the Golden Age of this country," however much he may realize the fact that it is far better than any period which has gone before it. With the good he sees intermingled so much evil, which he fancies to be incompatible with the highest prosperity, that he hesitates to speak of it with much enthusiasm. Did he but know it, in that Golden Age so much lauded by the poet and romancer, evil was far more rampant than it is to-day and there was far

less of what is admirable to counter-balance it.

The first experiment with rural free delivery was made in 1897. In 1898 the expenditure on the service was only \$50,000. In 1905 the expenditures had risen to nearly \$21,000,000. The appropriation for the current fiscal year is \$28,350,000, the routes number 35,874, the carriers 35,768. There is daily service on all the routes except 253, and on these there is service every other day. The benefits of the service extend to 3,228,990 families, or 13,967,994 persons. This brief story of an amazing growth is made up from an article by Postmaster General Cortelyou in 'The Independent'. But the article was not written primarily for the purpose of showing how great and how rapid the development had been. The writer begins by saying: "From time to time publications appear asserting that ever since the rural free delivery was inaugurated certain named States have been discriminated against, and that it is now proposed to carry this discrimination further by discontinuing routes or changing the service from daily to tri-weekly, as the result of some new policy adopted by the Postoffice Department." Here is a charge that is met with an emphatic denial and with an exposition of some of the difficulties the department has to contend with that is curiously interesting. It is an old saying that there are tricks in all trades, and from this showing it appears that tricky schemes for getting rural delivery are by no means unknown. In most cases the trickster is the man who is after the position of carrier. He circulates the petition for the establishment of the route. The petitioners may be indifferent and may not know what the requisite conditions for the service are. Some of them will sign a petition and then sign a remonstrance shortly afterward. As a description of conditions that are found upon inspection by rural agents we have the following: "The majority of the families to whom this route would extend are of the poor tenant class. It is a conservative estimate to say that not more than 15 per cent are land owners. One-half the houses counted during the drive over the territory have but one room. Some of the houses did not even have a window. Most of the country is boggy and swampy; only a small tract here and there is dry enough for cultivation. Seventy-five per cent of these people have not the money with which to purchase the necessities of life, let alone money for improved mail service, subscriptions for newspapers and postage stamps." Manifestly to withhold the service from long stretches of wilderness is not a political discrimination or the denial of a right to any part of the country. Nor, in view of the figures that we have presented, is there any ground for a complaint that the government is niggardly. On the contrary, it is plain that it is very generous, and though the service increases the revenues both directly and indirectly, the actual revenue on mail matter dispatched by its patrons is only 18 per cent of the cost. Under the circumstances the exercise of some business sense is required and the demands of every man who wants to be a carrier cannot be granted. At the same time the immense value of the system to the country is clearly recognized, and it is certain to expand in response to the needs of the people.

Little Lessons in Patriotism

It was at the battle of Shiloh that the conspicuous bravery of Thomas Kilby Smith won the praise of Gen. Sherman. In the official report of that officer he gives more than a little praise to the gallant soldier, and so great was the impression that it made upon his memory that years afterward, in speaking before the Ohio Society of New York, he mentioned THOMAS K. SMITH the brigade that Smith had led. "They came back to me under a heavy fire. As Gen. Smith rode at the head of his men I thought that I had never seen such handsome conduct under fire."

This same regiment was the advance guard in the occupation of Corinth; Smith commanded the brigade at the battle of Chickasaw Bluffs; he led it again at Arkansas Post, and in the various battles and operations preparatory to the siege of Vicksburg. He took part in the Red River expedition, where he protected the fleets of Admiral Porter in a daring and arduous series of fights during the retreat to Alexandria, a retreat made necessary by the disaster to Banks' army at Sabine Crossroads.

Probably few officers in the service won such approbation from their superiors as did Gen. Smith. Grant and Sherman were enthusiastic concerning his bravery and capabilities and earnestly sought promotion for him. His war record is indeed a most enviable one of trust faithfully kept and duties well performed.

A Six Poke.
Nell—When I met May to-day I had my new gown on. Of course, I expected her to say something about it, but she pretended not to see it.
Belle—Yes, she's an awfully considerate and tender-hearted girl.—Philadelphia Ledger.

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