BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY
WHITEHEAD & MITCHELL.

Entered at the postoffice at Birmingham, Mich., as second-class matter.

The hornets of doubt sting the soul of peace.

The only way to get a good crop of virtue is to sow the seed early.

Everybody is agreed that Spain began hostilities by firing Minister Woodford.

It will be England's turn next. No wonder Mr. J. Bull is trying to act friendly toward us.

When a man goes fishing he may not catch a good string, but he is sure to come home with a long yarn.

Sorcula discusses such questions as "contemporaneous thought as a formative element in literature," "the nature of realism," etc., and buys headache powders by the bushel.

The Fish and Game Protection Club of Montreal, Canada, asks the province of Quebec to give a bounty for wolf scalps, and one of their observant members suggests that while they are about it they should include foxes, as these animals, he is convinced, are much more destructive of small game than wolves, even. The fox, he says, is the great destroyer of partridges, and in his tramps through the woods he has had abundant proof of it.

The "radius of influence" of a great institution of learning is strikingly suggested by a recent gathering in historic Lucknow, when twenty-one missionaries came from all parts of the Indian Empire to organize the Boston University Alumni Association of Southern Asia. Most fittingly to their and other fostering mothers might one apply the Psalmist's saying, "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

"The condition of women," says a Sorosister, "has changed from that of a slave or a plaything to that of a companion for man." More than that, sister. The woman is his rival in business and in ordinary work, and she frequently deprives him of work that he needs in order to live and support his family. That, however, is no crime. Fair play demands equal chances, and she has as much right to life and labor as he has. And as to her companionship there is none better, if as good.

One of the subjects of discussion at a recent banquet of the Merchants' club, Chicago, was the proposition for the establishment of a provident loan association to advance money to needy small borrowers at reasonable rates of interest. The object of such a plan would be to relieve from the grasp of usurious and frequently dishonest pawnbrokers persons in straitened circumstances who are compelled to seek small loans on personal security. An act of the legislature is necessary to give proper authority for the organization of an association calculated to meet the needs of the situation.

The profound impression produced when two hundred and sixty sailors perished with the warship Maine is contrasted by a Chicago paper with the apathy of the people over the annual loss of four thousand lives because of the contaminated water supply of that city. This gives the Union Signal occasion to call the attention of the American public to the annual sacrifice of a hundred thousand lives by the use of more dangerous kinds of drink. We may take a wider view still. In the whole United States, the number of deaths per annum is about eighteen hundred thousand. According to the estimate of physicians, more than half, or nearly a million, die from "preventable causes." Civilization has on its hands a tolerably big contract, if it is to save its own children from courses of conduct that involve something very much like wholesale murder or suicide.

Among the disquieting incidents of the war is the recrudescence of Mr. John L. Sullivan of Boston. Mr. Sullivan has been gratefully quiescent for several months. He has indulged in no public jamborees, he has pounded no bartenders, he has not even fallen off a railroad train lately. But now he has heard of the "scrap" and his professional enthusiasm is aroused. He wants to knock out Spaniards, and he is very likely to utilize the war department as a bureau of publicity and promotion until he attains his object. Secretary Alger should lose no time in accepting Mr. Sullivan's services. We shall have no peace until he does. And if, in addition to Mr. Sullivan, Messrs. Fitzsimmons and Corbett can be induced to volunteer, we predict that the Spaniards will soon throw up the sponge. Even Castilian bravery is not proof against the rapid fire oratory of the modern prize ring.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the southerner is either reckless or inflammable in emergencies involving the welfare and repute of others. There he is an example of the loftiest and calmest conservatism. Ask him to act for you in a quarrel which points to a violent termination and he is at once the coolest and most deliberate of men. Of himself he would not take a second thought under bitter provocation. Of you he takes a thousand. He is responsible for you, and he is wise and cautious and dispassionate as a tribune.

Let the volunteers remember this, that in the war of the rebellion the men got along best who stuck to army rations and did not pamper their stomachs with sutler's canned stuff. Another thing: Don't wear narrow-soled or high-heeled shoes. The army brogan is not handsome, but it is the easiest on the long march.

Sagasta says he has done everything possible to satisfy the Cubans, and we must say that no complaint is made by the four hundred thousand who have starved to death.

Roosevelt's Rough Riders.

They are Going to Meet the Spaniards on Cuban Soil.

"Rita used by Lieutenant-Colonel Roosevelt in the Spanish-American war, 1898."

Perhaps some day among the relics of the present engagement there may be a tag bearing the above inscription affixed to a fifty foot coil of raw hide, says New York Journal of May 1. It is not improbable that the denizen of North Dakota, where Lieutenant-Colonel Roosevelt learned to throw the lasso when he was breaking his own mustangs, may stand with uncovered head and weave stories around the dusty rope, and say kind things about the man who threw it with so much skill. For since Mr. Roosevelt resigned as assistant secretary of the navy to take up arms in the field, he has been assigned to a commission and his soldiers are to be picked from the cowboys of the wild west, every one of whom will have to give evidence of his ability to cast the terrible coil and rope the enemy before he can enlist. There is no fiction about the formation of this dangerous regiment. It is to be one of the most serviceable arms of the fighting contingent, and the pride of Spain's best men will be turned upside down when the cow puncher brigade begins hostilities. The men are now being carefully selected and Lieutenant-Colonel Roosevelt is giving the matter his personal attention. The lariat will not be the only implement of warfare by any means. Every cowboy will be provided with a cavalry rifle and a brace of six shooters, those handy weapons whose sharp bark means death. These men will not go into the field for pastime, although the art of picking off the enemy will have certain elements of pleasure to the cowboy, whose life has been spent on the plains and whose hands prefer to fondle the butt of a revolver rather than the hilt of a sword. The horses to be picked for these cowboy regiments, of which there will be three, will have seen service before. They will be animals that have hoofed the ranges of the westerland and forded the rivers that run riot in the spring. They will be inured to the assault of the pesky mosquito, that is said to abound in vast numbers in Cuba. The horse and the man will understand each other, operate as one creature, plunge without fear into the thickest of the trouble and come snorting and blowing into the open with a Spaniard in tow. At the first shot these men of the plains will lean forward in their saddles, draw their weapons and follow their leader into the jaws of death, and Spanish steel and machete will not repulse them until the last man has toppled from his stirrups and gone crashing to the earth, wiped out. There will be some historic fighting done by these rangers, and the scenes that were part of the life of Custer, Jack Crawford and Buffalo Bill will be again enacted, but with better weapons and with some of the comforts and conveniences of civilization. In the early days the cowboys wore clothing made from the skins of the beasts of the field and the grasses of the plains. But Lieutenant-Colonel Roosevelt's soldiers will wear canvas uniforms of a gray tint and trimmed with brass buttons; canvas leggings, canvas shoes and slouch hats. There will be no unnecessary trappings to impede their movements, and when the order to charge is given a tornado of men and horseflesh will pour into the ranks of the enemy. In after years the pages of history will glow with the story of how Roosevelt's regiment of cowboys swept into Matanzas, or Havana or Cardenas and engaged the Spaniards in hand-to-hand conflict and roped those who escaped the bullets. Nothing could be more picturesque in warfare than a crack regiment of cowboy cavalrymen fully equipped for service. They are all men who have learned the art of combat, and whose trigger fingers are like unto the electric button for rapidity and action. Picture a hollow square of sharpshooters delivering the contents of a thousand six-shooters into an advancing enemy in less than three seconds. Then the nervous snap of carbines swiftly emptying their magazines into the torn and shattered ranks around the square. In the midst of the repulse the Spanish begin to retreat; then the lariats, coiling and circling overhead, entwine the fleeing remnant of the enemy, and Spaniards by the score are jerked headlong into the dust and flying horses are brought up with a standstill on their haunches. No class of men can endure the hardships of a rough life and the toils of the saddle like cowboys. From morning until night they do nothing but ride and keep their eyes open for trouble. At dusk a cowboy throws his saddle on the earth, turns his faithful horse loose to graze, knowing that the animal will not leave his master, and covering himself with only a saddle blanket lies down and sleeps with one eye open for intruders. Inside of thirty days the first regiment will be ready for the march, under the command of Colonel C. R. Wood, with "Fighting Teddy" as lieutenant-colonel. Lieutenant-Colonel Roosevelt is of the plains himself, having spent many years among the cowboys, hundreds of whom are employed on his cattle ranges in North Dakota. He is an excellent pistol and rifle shot, having written a big volume on wild game, and on the pommel of his saddle will be thonged the regulation lariat. When occasion presents itself he will swing it with the rest of his soldiers, and if he does not rope the man or horse at which it is thrown, then he has forgotten a trick for which he was famous out on the range. A particular advantage of being able to throw the lariat will be evident when the cowboy regiment wants to replenish its horseflesh. There will be no play of bullets, no cracking of rifles and no bloodshed. But the silent coil will fly from deft fingers and settle down with a Spanish horse struggling in the noose. In camp the life of the cowboy regiment will be nothing more than luxurious domesticity and home comfort, for most of them will be uncomfortable under any other circumstances. They will go to Cuba for business and will surely engage in plenty of it.

A CHARGE BY LIEUT. ROOSEVELT AND HIS ROUGH RIDERS.

Artistic Dinner Given.

The ideal dinner company is never large; six has been said to be the magic number, but eight, and even ten, are perfectly manageable, both in the matter of smooth service and in the higher harmonies. Do not confine your choice to intimate friends, but add to their pleasure and your own the fresh experience of meeting new spirits whose congeniality you have divined.

A really artistic dinner, it is the writer's conviction, should never exceed four courses—including the coffee. The scheme of the dinner is that each dish shall be perfect; worthy of the palate and of the appetite—enjoyed to the full for its merits, and not to be trifled with and instantly forgotten. The second point in importance is that a dish shall be as attractive in appearance as it is perfect in flavor; that it should be placed upon the table as an added enjoyment and hospitably served by the host or hostess. The third point, also of importance, is that a dinner should be seasonable—not an anticipation of seasons—for every chosen article should be at its very best. A lean, half-shriveled January tomato, which has ill-borne its travels, is but a forlorn apology for the plump and luscious summer product—certainly not fitted for an "artistic" appearance.

Patriotic Smiggs.

Mr. Smiggs has been very loud for war. He has laid aside the Newgate Calendar, which was his favorite reading, and has bent of late over accounts of campaigns by land and by sea. Brantome's old French has not deterred him from tackling "Rodomontades Espagnolles," and he has gone so far as to investigate the origin of the phrase, "to walk Spanish." Mrs. Smiggs and the little Smiggses have wondered why the master of the household did not wear epaulets and a sword. Tuesday night—so we are informed by Mrs. Smiggs—a charming woman—we knew her before she was married—they were all sitting at dinner in their luxurious flat near the Charlesgate. Mr. Smiggs was explaining the fortifications of Boston. "My dear," he shouted—and he banged the table with his fist—"you need not have the slightest uneasiness; there is no possible danger of bombardment." There was a strange, disturbing, sinister whistle. It came from the Charles. Nothing like it had been heard before. Mr. Smiggs' face was a death-mask. "Pa," said young Augustus; "pa do you suppose that is a Spanish torpedo destroyer boat?" "Maria," whispered Mr. Smiggs, "I think I'll go down a minute to the cellar to see if your bicycle is safe."—Boston Journal.

That Innocent Child.

Shop Assistant—Shall I send this for you, madam? Lady—No, thank, you; I'm driving. Lady's Little Girl (in ecstasy)—Oh, mummy, are we goin' back in the yellow 'bus?—Tit-Bits.

HERMIT AND PATRIOT.

Queer Old Gottlieb Leitsof, a Constituent of Congressman Hitt.

Congressman Robert R. Hitt, chairman of the house committee on foreign affairs, and who represents the Ninth Illinois district, occasionally receives a letter from a queer old constituent who resides on an island in the Mississippi river. The land is in Illinois, though it is cut off from the mainland by a slough which the swift current has cut through the soil of Jo Daviess county.

This old man, now in his 73d year, has resided on the island twenty-seven years. He is a hermit of the most eccentric character, living entirely alone and away from sight or sound of any other human being. He is completely isolated, his rude hut being hidden in a network of willow brush and wild grapevines. His hut can not be reached without the aid of a boat and a guide, who must find his way through a maze of sloughs which wind around in a thousand acres of lowlands. The old man is disturbed only by high water, which has three times invaded his abode and washed him off the island. He would like to have Mr. Hitt induce Uncle Sam to build a dam across the lowland to protect his little farm on the island.

The old man is named Gottlieb Leitsof. He was born in the province of Pomerania, Prussia, seventy-three years ago. He comes from a family of warriors. Two of his sons distinguished themselves in the war with Austria in 1866 and again in the Franco-Prussian conflict in 1870. He says he has written his congressman that if any help is needed to whip the Dons he will emerge from his home in the brush and take a willing hand.

Leitsof cooks, eats and sleeps in a little room ten feet square. It is a part of a hut which he built with his own hands. He has a flock of chickens, a cow and two cats. He farms the land without the aid of man or beast. He has constructed a queer plow after his own odd ideas. It is made from the forked branch of a tree. The forks serve as handles and thills. The odd feature about the contrivance is that the share points backward. The aged Prussian harnesses his own body and hitches himself to this plow. His harness fits over his back and around his waist. He couples onto the share by means of a wire, reaching from his harness. Then he stands between the thills, with which he takes hold with his hands. He walks backward like a horse in its breeching. The share takes hold in the soft soil and plows a furrow four inches deep. This is all that is necessary in such rich land.

In this manner he has broken up many acres. He raises enough stuff to support him and keep his stock. His taxes are always promptly paid. In his old age he performs all kinds of hard work without experiencing any deleterious results. He takes a turn at hunting and fishing, is a good shot and a lucky angler.—Philadelphia Press.

The Legend of Tannhauser.

Sir Tannhauser was a legendary hero of Germany, and won the affections of the fair maid, Lisaura, but, filled with the spirit of adventure, the knight set out to visit the mountain where Venus was said to dwell, vowing that he would kiss the queen of love and beauty, herself. When Lisaura heard of this, she committed suicide. Tannhauser succeeded in entering the enchanted mountain, but after living there for some time, becoming weary of Venus' society, and by a crafty excuse obtained permission to visit the upper world, he returned to earth, and when he found that he had been the cause of Lisaura's death, he went to Pope Urban for absolution. His holiness refused to grant, it saying: "You can no more hope for mercy than this dry staff can be expected to bud."

Whereupon the knight returned to the enchanted mountain. In a few days the papal staff actually did bud, and the hope sent for Sir Tannhauser, but the knight could not be found, and was never again seen on earth.

A Merited Kiss.

A story is told of the poetical sensibility of Margaret of Scotland, wife of the Dauphin of France. She was irresistibly attracted by the poetry of Alain, the monk, who was absolutely repulsive in appearance. Passing through one of the halls of the palace, she saw the poet sleeping on a bench; she approached and kissed him. Some of her attendants could not conceal their astonishment that she should kiss a man so ugly. The amiable Princess smiled and replied: "I did not kiss the man, but the mouth which uttered so many fine things."

The Quickness of Thought.

To illustrate the rapidity of thought, a distinguished scientist says that if the skin be touched repeatedly with light blows from a small hammer the brain will distinguish the fact that the blows are separate, and not continued pressure, even when they follow one another as rapidly as 1,000 a second.

Personal magnetism enabls a man to make others believe he is right when they know he is wrong.

OUR BUDGET OF FUN.

SOME GOOD JOKES, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

Some of the Latest Jokes and Satire Original and Selected—Possibly Biased—A Mere Suggestion—Flotsam and Jetsam.

The Christening of the Kentucky.

There is weeping in Kentucky;
Sighs are seeping through the air;
Blue Grass cavaliers, once plucky,
Stoop, dejected, everywhere.
For the sponsor that's selected—
Christine Bradley—"Gov'nor's daughter"—
Has—amazing fact—elected
To "uncork a flask of water!"

"Don't!" shouts mighty Henri Watterson, his eye a jet of flame,
"With that stuff don't dampen, daughter,
That grand ship and our proud fame!"
"Don't!" yells Colonel Chinn, eye flashing,
"If you want the ship to fight
Bourbon o'er her sides be dashing
And she'll navies put to flight!

"Water for some good's intended—
What it is I ne'er could note;
To lay dust it may be splendid—
Not the kind that's in the throat!
But for untried scrappers, daughter,
It will chill 'em to the heart;
It, in fact, just 'pours cold water'
On their courage at the start.

"Give the proud ship spirit, daughter;
Do not dampen it, I pray;
Must it e'er be said: 'Took water,
Did Kentucky, in the fray?'
No! Let it be written: 'Whipt she
Champion ship of champion nation!'
Now, she says to others: 'Git ye
Off and get a reputation!'"
—J. Noel Johnson in Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

Vanceburg, Ky.

Possibly Biased.

Deacon Oldboy (life insurance)—"Our beloved pastor is looking poorly. I move we give him three months' vacation with full pay."

Deacon Crum (undertaker)—"No no; let him stay and earn his salary."—London Graphic.

Miseries of Our Business.

Caller—"Seems to me your paper's been rather dull lately an' so I dropped in to give ye some local news. Local news is what the people wants, ye know."

Country Editor—"Yes, indeed; and I am always grateful for assistance in that direction. Have a cigar. Have you written the item out?"

Caller—"No; I ain't no Horace Greeley; but I'll give ye the idee, and you can dress it up to suit y'rself. Just say in y'r paper next week that our enterprisin' townsman, Mr. Jacob Hogson Colcash—that's me, ye know—what keeps the ole reliable dry goods an' grocery store at the corner, has gone to the city to buy a new stock an' on his return he'll show his customers the finest lot of dry goods and groceries they ever set eyes on. Prices low as the lowest. Good day."

Country Editor (to himself)—"Thank fortune, the cigar I gave him was one of those left by a dramatic agent. It'll kill him."

Prosaic.

"I would go with you to the end of the earth," he asserted passionately.

"Not with me, you wouldn't," she replied, coldly.

"Why not?" he demanded.

"For two reasons," she answered. "One is that I'm not going, and the other is that there isn't any."

When one meets the prosaic new woman one has to be careful what he says.—Pall Mall Gazette.

Just for a Change.

Lady—"Sir, you should introduce a little change in your style of dancing."

Gent—"How do you mean, mademoiselle?"

Lady—"You might occasionally step on my left foot; the right one is nearly smashed."—Tit-Bits.

Plain.

She—"I know there's something I've forgotten to buy."

He—"That's just what I thought."

She—"Why did you think so?"

He—"Because you have some money left."—Tit-Bits.

A Suggestion.

"How did Broker get the money for his campaign?"

"Well, you see, everybody was betting on his chance of election."

"Well?"

"He held the stakes."—Punch.

His Definition.

A teacher asked a little boy to spell "responsibility," which he did.

"Now, Tommy," said the teacher, "can you tell me the meaning of that big word?"

"Yis, mum," answered Tommy. "If I had only four buttons on my trousers, and two came off, all the responsibility would hang on the other two."—Pall Mall Gazette.

Comparatively Easy.

Charlie Flyup—"Now that you're married, don't you find it rather hard sitting down?"

George Fastus—"Not nearly so hard, old boy, as setting up."—Tit-Bits.

How to Prepare Kneipp Coffee—Take three heaping teaspoons full of ground Kneipp Malt Coffee for one quart of water. Boil the water and the Coffee, then let it boil slowly under cover at least five minutes. Take it off the fire, let it stand a few minutes to settle and pour it through a fine sieve into the coffee pot and it is ready to serve. Use cream and sugar to suit your taste. If milk is used instead of cream, it should be boiled first.

How to Use Kneipp Malt Coffee in addition to other Coffee—For six cups of coffee (2 1-2 pints of water) take two heaping tablespoons full of ground Kneipp Malt Coffee and after boiling the same five minutes as above indicated, add two tablespoons full of ground coffeebeans, let it boil up for a few seconds longer, then let it settle about five minutes. This mixed coffee will settle slower than pure Kneipp Malt Coffee. Use cream and sugar or boiled milk to suit your taste.

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AND

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R·I·P·A·N·S

No matter what the matter is, one will do you good, and you can get ten for five cents.

A new style package containing ten tablets, sufficient for an ordinary occasion, sold for five cents, is now on the market. This low price is for the purpose of placing the tablets within the reach of all. The ten-cent packages will be kept in stock for the present. Ask your druggist for them. Some druggists may not have them at first, as they have been accustomed to order only the dozen packages, but they will procure them from their jobbers if asked to do so. Or the five-cent packages will be sent for ten cents by addressing the Ripans Chemical Company, No. 10 Spruce Street, New York.

Ripans Tabules may be had of druggists everywhere. The dozen packages (120 tablets) are sold for sixty cents. The family bottle (72 tablets) for forty-eight cents.