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IN OBLIVION.

Come, friend, there's going to be a merry meeting
After the play, Our masks we'll throw aside,
And after chaff and chat and friendly greeting
Our glasses fill and all, like [illegible] tried.
Drink drafts whose [illegible] was so [illegible] cheering
The [illegible] draught until [illegible] were dried,
Then lost the art of making more such wine
And we'll be long forgotten [illegible].

"Who will be there?" you ask. Why, you and I
And all good fellows who were never great;
No warrior there will call commanding cry
No statesman weary with affairs of weight;
No proud [illegible] to proselyte will try;
No bard will drone; no orator will prate
To glow in pompous glory they have won,
But we'll be merry in Oblivion.

The watchword of that banquet hall's "Forgotten."
And if forgotten, why we will forget
Our foolish dreams, the mocking goals we sought in;
The days when hope could lure and failure fret;
The weary days when all our souls were caught in
The snare of life that, like a tangling net,
Holds us in agony and durance till
The spoiler [illegible] death his hand to kill.

Methinks that there, my friend, both you and I
Can find away eternity [illegible]
No [illegible] long [illegible] our lives [illegible]
And [illegible] how our days were spent,
And [illegible] how [illegible] the names that there [illegible] sigh
Will wane and with the closing night be blent,
For while we revel in Oblivion
The great [illegible] must join us one by one.
—P. McArthur in New York Sun.

POINTS ABOUT TIME.

VARIATIONS AND THE CAUSES WHICH PRODUCE THEM.

The Earth's Revolutions on Its Axis, Together with Its Journey Around the Sun, Are the Disturbing Factors—No Watch Is Perfectly Reliable.

If there is one single scientific problem upon which more than another people appear to get mixed that problem is time. Standard time, local time, sun time are exceedingly difficult problems for the public to puzzle over, and when sidereal time enters the calculation the case is hopeless indeed. I have frequently of late seen so many letters addressed this and other journals, all touching upon one or the other of these chronological questions, that I have concluded a short note explaining the main points of difference would be, at any rate, timely. If it only suggests to the young men in the business offices the idea of going to work at 9 a.m., local mean time, and leaving off promptly at 4 p.m., Pacific standard time, the question will have been shown to possess a practical side. The application of it, however, is purely a matter of taste.

Well, to come to time, the great chronometer and regulator in chief to the business, social and scientific world is the earth itself. Turning upon its axis in the period which we divide into twenty-four hours, the sun appears to cross the meridian of each place on the globe once in that interval. The moment at which it crosses the meridian of any place (Greenwich, for example, is termed "local apparent noon" at that place. This would be all very well if the earth and sun remained fixed in their relative positions, or if the earth, completing, as it does, an annual revolution about the sun, did so uniformly in a perfect circle and that circle were in the same plane with the motion of daily rotation. Then the successive intervals between the meridian passages of the sun at Greenwich would all be equal, and a perfect chronometer set at 12 hrs., 0 min., 0 sec., when the sun transited today would indicate precisely the same instant for "apparent noon" at every date.

MOTIONS OF THE EARTH.

But the earth's path around the sun is not a perfect circle; it is an ellipse, and the motion in one portion of the ellipse is more rapid than in another, and this causes a slight variation in the intervals between the solar passages. Again, the plane of the earth's path around the sun, or the ecliptic, is inclined 23½ degs. to the plane of the equator in which the daily rotation takes place, and consequently twice a year the intervals of "apparent noon" are each about twenty seconds greater and twice a year about twenty seconds less than twenty-four hours. To explain just why this results would require more of an investigation into astronomical principles than is here contemplated; but it is so, nevertheless, and any text book will elucidate the reasons. A combination of the two effects causes the sun to be apparently slow fourteen minutes in February and fast sixteen minutes in November. But in the course of a year the average comes out all right, and therefore a "mean solar day" of exactly twenty-four hours is adopted in the almanacs and used for all purposes. This accounts for the difference between mean time and sun time. A regulator keeps the former; a sun dial indicates the latter.

A few years ago (or prior to 1883) every large city in the United States had its own local time, and this was for each place the true mean solar time, obtained as above indicated.

REGULATING TIME.

Consequently, a man traveling westward from Washington would find his watch fast, as follows: At Chicago, 41 minutes; at Omaha, 1 hour 16 minutes; at Denver, 1 hour 52 minutes; at Salt Lake City, 2 hours 20 minutes, and finally, at San Francisco, 3 hours 2 minutes. It will readily be recalled how much annoyance was occasioned by all these various corrections, both to trainmen and travelers. About the year mentioned a great reform was inaugurated. Nowadays a traveler going westward finds his watch fast from time to time, but only the hour hand is in error. All the clocks in the country indicate the minute and second of Greenwich mean time, but the hour is changed for each 15 degs. of longitude. Washington time is 5 hours slow of Greenwich; Chicago, 6 hours; Denver, 7 hours. In San Francisco we are 8 hours slow of the prime meridian. All the intermediate cities and towns are run on one system or another, according to their location in longitude, the standards being eastern, central, mountain and Pacific time. All the time pieces on the coast are set by Pacific standard time, which is 8 hours slow of Greenwich mean time. Therefore, a watch which is set at San Francisco solar time by means of a correction sun dial is still 9 minutes 42 seconds slow of a Pacific standard time clock, because we are that much in longitude west of the 120th meridian, which forms the eastern boundary of northern California and on which only is the "Pacific time" coincident with "local mean time."—San Francisco Examiner.

A Lord in a Ditch.

Lord Mulgrave was distinguished by a singularity of physical conformation, having two distinct voices, the one strong and hoarse, the other weak and querulous, of both of which he occasionally availed himself. So extraordinary a circumstance probably gave rise to a story of his having fallen into a ditch on a dark night and calling for aid in his shrill voice. A countryman coming up was about to help him, but Lord Mulgrave, addressing him in a hoarse tone, the peasant immediately exclaimed, "Oh, if there are two of you in the ditch you may help each other out of it."—London Tit-Bits.

The most useful domestic pet of the natives of Greenland and other Arctic climes is a peculiar looking animal, which the name of Eskimo dog is been given.

A Strange Story.

A strange story comes from a neighborhood about ten miles southeast of here.

Oct. 24, 1890, Alex Yoke, an aged farmer, committed suicide. Yoke's mind had been unbalanced for some time, and he imagined that the discovery of natural gas would prove the ruination of the world. He was opposed to any search for the new fuel, and often pleaded with his neighbors to leave it alone. He also imagined that he was a ruined man, although he owned a good farm and was in a prosperous condition. He thought his family had been doomed to starvation, and he resolved to take his life, thus terminating his misery.

Recently an Elwood company began drilling for gas on the Starkey farm and the work had proceeded nearly to completion. They were rushing the work and a day and night force of hands were employed. The night force, however, is no longer at work and the following is the cause: A few nights since, while the men were at work, they were startled by a slight noise near the derrick, and on looking around they beheld the form of old man Yoke walking from the engine to the derrick. One man approached him and the form suddenly vanished, only to reappear in a few moments.

This sort of thing was kept up for several nights, the old man making his appearance at the same spot each night. The men claimed the place was haunted and they refused to work any more after night.—Tipton Cor. Indianapolis Sentinel.

Spending Their Honeymoon in a Cable Car.

It was pretty cold in the forward compartment of one of the Seventh and Ninth street cable cars last evening. The short benches on each side of the gripman were empty save for one figure—that of a petite and pretty brunette in a warm gray cape ulster, with a big fur boa around her neck.

The conductor put his head through the door for a moment and came back chuckling.

"Love's a funny thing," he said, as he got back on the rear platform and rung up two fares. "There's Jim's wife in there with him. Jim's the gripman, you know. They've been married pretty near two weeks, and I'm blamed if she hasn't put in the best half of the time riding round with him in the car. They couldn't afford to take a trip off, you see, and so they're spending the honeymoon in this way."

"Yes, sir," said Jim, "we've been married two weeks tomorrow. May be you think it a funny way to spend the honeymoon, and so it is. But it's Mary's doing. I'd saved up enough to take a week or so off, but she wouldn't have it. She says, 'We'll just lay that away for a rainy day, and I'll come and ride on the car with you.' Don't you put my name in the papers or maybe I'd get the bounce."—Philadelphia Press.

In the name of the greatest republic on earth let us have decent roads!

To cities contemplating the granting of charters to street railway companies: Make it one of the conditions of the charter that the company shall pay into the public treasury a fixed percentage of its earnings.

The Boston Retail Grocers' association has a motto that may be commended to the trade elsewhere. It is "Pure goods, honest weights and measures and fair profits." But do they live up to their blue china in the first part of the motto?

It is not generally known perhaps that the most terrific storms a ship can encounter are met upon our own south Atlantic coast in the region off Cape Hatteras. The storms our compact American built coasting steamers weather there would break in two one of the long, cigar shaped vessels of the British steamer type. It could not stand the awful seas. For a stormy weather ship, therefore, the American builder has developed a type superior to those fashioned on the Clyde.

They called it the "mud blockade"—the condition of the highways that reigned in the Mississippi valley for a month about the time of the holidays. A telegram from Iowa declares that state alone lost at least a million dollars from the condition of the roads. During the war armies were obliged to wait months occasionally on account of such mud blockades. The loss to the nation from the inactivity of the great peaceful army of trade and commerce is not less than it was then.

It is computed that at the opening of the present century there were about 21,000,000 people who spoke the English tongue. The French speaking people at that time numbered about 31,000,000 and the Germans exceeding 30,000,000.

How High Is the Atmosphere?

One would hardly think of looking to the moon for information about the height of the earth's atmosphere. Yet it is in just that way that evidence has recently been obtained that the atmosphere extends much higher than has commonly been assumed.

Observations of lunar eclipse made at the celebrated observatory of Lord Rosse in Ireland have shown that the amount of heat received from the moon, which heat is, of course, merely reflected sun heat, just as moonlight is only reflected sunlight, begins perceptibly to diminish several minutes before the shadow of the earth reached the moon.

The inference is that the earth's atmosphere partially cuts off the sun's heat as it comes between the moon and the sun ahead of the edge of the solid earth, and calculations based upon the length of time during which the loss of heat from the moon is felt before the eclipse begins, indicate that our atmosphere reaches a height of at least 200 miles.

How different this is from the height usually stated may be seen by consulting a popular schoolbook on physical geography, published within a few years, in which it is affirmed that beyond a height of forty miles the amount of air remaining would be too small to affect the sun's rays perceptibly in any way.

So in the most unexpected and sometimes wonderful ways we are continually learning something new about this common globe on whose surface we dwell.—Youth's Companion.

Afraid of Offending.

When I first knew W. G. Wills in London he had chambers under the roof at No. 1 Clifford's Inn, opposite the Temple. In those days he was known only as a novelist. The "Man of Airlie" had not yet introduced a new dramatist to the stage. He had come to London a short time before "to seek his fortune"—as the old story books put it—and the quest was then not fruitful. Coming home one wintry night late to his rooms, as he opened the door with his latchkey he stumbled and nearly fell over a man who was lying asleep across the threshold. He recognized a seedy, out-at-elbows brother man of letters, pinched by cold and hunger, whose identity he just could fix. He made him come in, improvised a bed on chairs for him and there the Bohemian slept for the night.

In the morning the visitor shared his host's breakfast, and found the quarters and the conditions of life so pleasant that he settled himself there as a fixture. Calling a few days afterward, in the bitter January weather, I found Wills smoking on the staircase. He always suffered from cold. "How are you, Willie Wills, very subject to chills," he used to say should be his epitaph. This day he was wrapped in his great coat. "Why don't you go indoors?" I said to him. "Well," he said, "I have the greatest objection in the world to be home and I would not like to offend him, as he is my guest." Is it not the kind of story that would be told of Goldsmith—the simplicity, the charity, the gentle, manly feeling?—Pall Mall Gazette.

A Hermit in a Hole.

Nelson Purdum, of Jefferson county, Ind., disappeared from his usual haunts a couple of months ago after having squandered a big pension allowance. No trace of him could be found until a few months ago, when hunters came across him on the bank of a river near Madison. Smoke was issuing from the ground, and an investigation led to their finding a room underground, in which Purdum was living. A ride out, a stove and a quantity of provisions were found, but the man, whose long gray beard and locks gave him a wild appearance, declined to come out. The rise in the river is likely to flood the hermit's place of abode, but no amount of persuasion will make him desert his strange home.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Apple Blossoms in Winter.

Perhaps every one does not know how easily fresh apple blossoms can be had in winter. Get the ends of branches with plump flower buds, and place them in water in a warm sunny window, and they will soon bloom. No doubt many other kinds of trees and shrubs will give as good satisfaction.—Vick's Magazine.

A plant is to be erected in Philadelphia for the manufacture of cellulose, a material to be used for a lining for ships. Cellulose will absorb eight times its weight of water.

The Japanese students and others, in New York city, raised a handsome sum for the relief of the sufferers from the recent earthquake in Japan.

Precious Hair.

When the Crusaders returned from the Holy Land in 1099 they were loaded with relics of holy personages who had previously been unknown in the west. Bohemond, one of their leaders, divided between Apulia and certain churches a dozen hairs which the patriarch of Antioch had given him with the assurance that the Blessed Virgin plucked them from her head as she stood—Mater Dolorosa—by the cross.—All the Year Round.

Japs Like the Americans.

A traveler in Japan says that the Japanese dislike the Russians and the Chinese, but like the Americans and the English. They are fearful of the aggressions of the Russians in Corea and of the Chinese in the islands that lie south of Japan; but they do not look for any act of aggression by the United States or by England.—Philadelphia Ledger.

W. D. Howells in "The Shadow of a Dream" makes this apt remark: "Our sorrows don't embellish our persons very much, whatever they may do for our souls."

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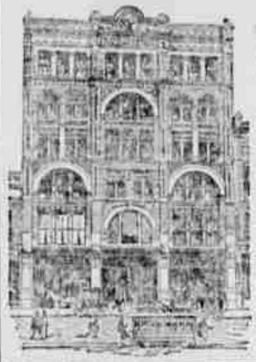

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