

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

Minds in which credulity is more than ordinarily well developed must be possessed by those who believe, or even suspect, from the evidence as yet made public, that the steamer *Tillie* was voluntarily sunk by one of her own passengers. It may be that Spain has among her spies men heroic enough to face in her service what was not much unlike the prospect of certain death, but to admit this possibility requires an effort that is really painful. The *Tillie* was a long way from shore, there was no assistance in sight, a freezing wind, blowing with hurricane force, had raised a mountainous sea, and there were not enough small boats on board to carry more than two-thirds of the crew. And in circumstances like these the spy broke a big pipe and let the Atlantic Ocean into the vessel's hold? If he did, Spain, poor as she is, can afford to erect a statue of him in every province of the kingdom. The traitor theory is extremely weak—much weaker, at all events, than the fittings of a craft as old as this undoubtedly were, and we are going to wait a while before we accept it. One should not forget, either, that the yarn about a traitor serves to repress questions as to the wisdom displayed by the Junta in sending men and supplies on antiquated vessels whose only recommendation is their immediate cheapness. Such economy may well be reckless extravagance.

All the resources of the word-builders seem to have been exhausted in finding names for the simple but ingenious machine that throws moving pictures on a screen. The essential features in every device of this sort are the same—a brilliant light before which a long band of minute photographs is rapidly drawn, and a lens to focus and distribute the rays properly. The arrangements for manipulation of the light, the band, and the lens are numerous, but they vary only in inconsequential details, and for all practical purposes the machines are identical. Some mysterious impulse, however, has impelled almost every purchaser of the apparatus to buy with it, or to invent for it, a distinctive name. Vitascope and biograph are most familiar here, with cinematograph coming next at a considerable distance. These hardly begin the list that might be formed from a careful study of the amusement advertisements in the papers of this and other countries. From such sources might be taken phantoscope, criterioscope, kinematograph, wondorscope, animatoscope, vitagraph, panoramograph, cosmoscope, anarithmoscope, katoptikum, magniscope, zoeoptrotrope, phantasmagoria projectoscope, variscope, cinograph, cinnomonograph, hypnoscope, centograph, and xograph. This is far from exhausting the supply. Electroscope exists, and so do cinagraphoscope, animaloscope, theatrograph, chronophotographoscope, motograph, rayoscope, motorscope, kinotiphone, thromotrope, phenakistoscope, venetrope, vitrescope, zinematograph, vitropticon, stinnetscope, vivrescope, diaramiscope, corminograph, kineoptoscope, craboscope, vitaletiscope, cinematoscope, mutoscope, cinoscope, kinetograph, lobsterscope, and nobody knows how many more. Here, surely, is a curious development of the managerial mind.

PERSONAL.

FRANCIS CABOT LOWELL, the newly appointed United States Judge for the District of Massachusetts, is the grandson of a JOHN LOWELL, to whom the same office was given in 1865, and the great-grandson of another JOHN LOWELL, who held it as far back as 1789. This earliest representative of the line was extraordinarily successful as a lawyer, and he took just that interest in the political formation of the new Republic which was needed to place his qualifications on a sure basis. He was a delegate in 1780 to the convention that framed the Constitution of Massachusetts, and served on the committee appointed to draft the Constitution. He secured the insertion of the clause that "all men are born free and equal," thus avowing his belief in the abolition of slavery in the State. Two years later he became one of the three Judges appointed by the Continental Congress for the trial of appeals from the Courts of the Admiralty. The second JOHN LOWELL was graduated from Harvard in 1843, admitted to the bar three years later, and elevated to the bench in 1865. He held the position until 1878, earning respect and esteem the longer he exercised his authority. He afterward was appointed to the bench of the United States Circuit Court, an office that he honored until he retired to take up the practice of law in an office with his son, JOHN LOWELL, Jr. He died in 1897.

Accusation of the dead is by no means always unjustifiable, despite the ancient command to praise or keep silent. It often happens that undeserved laudation of those who have gone before deludes the living to their harm, and even silence may sometimes have the same effect. In such cases the truth should be told. Simple decency, however, suggests that the powerlessness of the dead to defend themselves should always be remembered, and that every attack upon them should be based on the certainty of accomplishing a definite and appreciable amount of good. It is with pained surprise, therefore, that we see in *The Boston Journal* an apparently gratuitous assault upon the memory of HORACE GREELEY. At the last meeting of the Channing Club the editor of *The Christian Register* said of GREELEY that he was a man ruled by many theories, "but every one knew that he had an absolutely incorruptible conscience." This is a fair statement of a general belief in regard to the character of one whose whole life was passed in the plain sight of his fellow-men, but *The Boston Journal* chooses to challenge the statement. "Softly, softly," it says. "There are letters in existence signed by HORACE GREELEY and addressed to politicians in Albany which show conclusively that Mr. GREELEY, in spite of his good old Uncle Amos pose, was a child of this world, and to further private ends would not hesitate to say the thing which is not. We have read these letters." That is pretty small work for a grown-up Bostonian to be engaged in. "I could tell dreadful things if I would," he whispers, but since he neither makes his charges nor keeps silent, most people will decide that he doesn't talk out loud because he has nothing to say that would endure analysis.

Gen. BLANCO, according to reports from various sources, and therefore probably true, is now marching against the rebels in Eastern Cuba with a very strong force. There is some uncertainty as to the exact size of this force, one dispatch putting it at \$380,000 and others as low as \$150,000, but either figure is large enough to justify the expectation of soon hearing of great accomplishments. Whether the whole of this money will be used in recalling a single prominent Cuban leader to his allegiance, or whether it will be expended for job lots of pacificos and minor traitors, cannot be predicted with any certainty from this distance, but that point will be set-

tle by next week's official advices about surrendering insurgents and new advocates of "autonomy." This is a new and interesting method of waging war, and the Spaniards are to be congratulated on their determination and ingenuity. They first tried the ordinary system of fighting, but the unsuccess of Gen. CAMPOS wearied them of that. Then Gen. WEYLER was allowed to demonstrate the effects of murdering male non-combatants outright, and of starving to death their wives and children. The effects were not pleasing, and now Gen. BLANCO, having no taste for assassination, and no soldiers for real campaigns, has resorted to bribery as wholesale as the state of Spain's exchequer and the rapacity of his subordinate officers will admit. So far he has had no great luck, but this last effort may turn out better. He wants to hurry, though. An inventor of original phrases would say that "the beginning of the end" is at last clearly visible in the Cuban situation.