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TODAY'S WEATHER: Partly cloudy to cloudy, with occasional showers; southerly winds.

PORTLAND, FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 1901

Alaska has ceased to be a mysterious land at the end of the rainbow. It has come to be a country of industrial possibilities, imperfectly known, it is true, but still a tangible, substantial quantity to be reckoned with very much as the rest of the world is.

The men and women had only to go to Alaska to get the gold they could carry home as largely been outgrown, and most people now regard it as it is, a wild and rugged country of rigorous climate, and with few of the refinements of civilization.

With a mediocre President a strong Secretary of State became a person of increased consequence. John Quincy Adams was the diplomatic brains of the medicine Monroe's Administration; Webster and Calhoun stood for penultimate diplomatic force in the Administration of Tyler; Webster was to Fillmore's Administration a commanding figure in National diplomacy, as was Marcy to the Administration of President Pierce.

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Partial biographers and panegyrists of Seward have attempted to credit him with the brightest glory of Lincoln's Administration, a sign of better things at the South. Of course, if wealthy men are permitted to reduce ignorant negroes who are without friends to a state of illegal servitude, why, the next step will be the enslavement of friendless, ignorant, poor whites, and so it will be with this lynching habit if it goes unchecked; every man who is weak or friendless will be robbed of his fundamental rights, which require that he shall not be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law.

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center because the Isthmian Canal will eventually make that country most important in the world. The power of the German sagacity may be said to have scored a good point in securing a foothold for German trade in Central America. Certainly the reorganization of the German Consular service in that country is a significant step, indicating the possibility that the Monroe Doctrine may be circumvented in spirit, if not abrogated in fact, by German industrial and trade methods.

PRESIDENT HIS OWN PREMIER.

John Hay is again confirmed as Secretary of State, and is nominally the head of the President's Cabinet. The failure of the Hay-Pauncefote treaty to pass the Senate excepted in an amended form, and the present disposition promptly to abrogate the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, is a fresh illustration of the decreasing influence and consequence of the Secretary of State. While few intelligent fair-minded men sympathize with Secretary Morgan's bullying attack on Great Britain, nevertheless there is no doubt that the majority of both parties were dissatisfied with the Hay-Pauncefote treaty and believe that the shortest road to the construction of the Nicaragua Canal is the prompt abrogation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty which has survived its usefulness and has been violated repeatedly by Great Britain.

The time has been when the Secretary of State and our Minister to England were very influential persons in our international politics, but that time is long past. Since the days of Secretary Fish under Grant's Administration no Secretary of State can be said to have been a commanding figure in our international politics. This fact is due something to the change of modern life through ocean cables and swift transatlantic investigations which has placed the public in such close communication with Europe that neither our Minister to England nor our Secretary of State fills so large a field of statesmanship as formerly. Even in the first half-century of our National life our Secretary of State was never a distinct commanding diplomatic force in our international politics as was Lord Salisbury when at the head of the English Foreign Office. The truth is that whenever we had a strong President, like Washington, Lincoln or Jackson, or a real diplomatic force behind the treaty was the President. It was the personal influence of Washington that forced the Jay treaty through a sullen, reluctant Senate; Jackson, not his Secretary, Livingston, was the diplomatic force behind our treaty-making with France. With a mediocre President a strong Secretary of State became a person of increased consequence.

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any political experience. During the worst crisis of the Chinese outbreak the real diplomatic brains of the Cabinet were the President and the Secretary of War. Mr. Hay is a good man, but he is not Mr. Fish; he cannot negotiate a treaty on a vexed subject that will stand fire in the Senate.

INJUSTICE ENDS IN ANARCHY.

There are signs of better things at the South. Last month Judge Candier, at Fairburn, Ga., sentenced Pegram Cochran, one of the members of a band of Whitecappers who shot and killed Sterling Thompson, a negro, to the Penitentiary for life, and the Governor and courts of South Carolina are evidently determined to probe the stockade scandal in Anderson County to the bottom and place on trial the persons who are responsible for placing innocent negroes in the chains of illegal servitude. An ignorant, non-criminal negro was put in a convict's stockade and worked like a convict without due process of law. He was under no sentence of the court; he had not been tried, and yet he was guarded like a convict, made to labor like a convict and treated in all respects like a convict. The testimony showed that this poor, ignorant colored man had been arrested on some trumped-up charge, and without being taken into court, was hurried off to a stockade, where he was held under a binding contract to labor like a convict. The negro tried to escape, and was shot down as a felon might be shot down trying to escape under the sentence of the law.

On the same farm eighteen other colored men were held under virtual slavery, and this system has existed for some time in Anderson County. The form of illegal contract under which these colored laborers are held and to which their nominal consent is gained by force and fraud, subjects them to a state worse than slavery.

The Governor of South Carolina denounces this state of affairs as worse than lynching, and says that he will conduct an investigation himself, regardless of cost, if the officers fail to do their duty. Another sign of better things at the South is the fact that this exposure of this outrage is due to the Anderson Mail, which has not hesitated to denounce the system and the nefarious traffic it implies at what must have been a serious personal and pecuniary risk to the editor. The Anderson Mail and the Columbia State agree that the infamous system of leasing negro convicts is at the bottom of this whole draft of business. These journals are right; the convict lease system is a frightful abuse at the South. It was eloquently denounced years ago by the gallant and accomplished Colonel Allston, of Georgia, whose courage and humanity cost him his life, for he was shot to death in the Governor's room by a miscreant named Cox, who was interested in the perpetuation of the convict lease system.

The popular insurrection against this successful attempt to reduce ignorant negroes to a state of illegal servitude is a sign of better things at the South. Of course, if wealthy men are permitted to reduce ignorant negroes who are without friends to a state of illegal servitude, why, the next step will be the enslavement of friendless, ignorant, poor whites, and so it will be with this lynching habit if it goes unchecked; every man who is weak or friendless will be robbed of his fundamental rights, which require that he shall not be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law.

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