

The Special Correspondent

CHAPTER XIII.

In 1870 the Russians endeavored, without success, to establish a fair at Tashkend, which would rival that of Nijni-Novgorod. Some twenty years later the attempt would have succeeded, and as a matter of fact the fair now exists, owing to the making of the Transcaspian to unite Samarkand and Tashkend. We left Tashkend at precisely 11 o'clock in the morning.

As soon as we are on the move I begin to think of Kinko. His little love romance has touched me to the heart; this sweetheart who sent himself off—this other sweetheart who is going to pay the expenses. I am sure Major Noltitz would be interested in these two turtle doves, one of which is in a cage; he would not be too hard on this defrauder of the company, he would be incapable of betraying him. Consequently I have a great desire to tell him of my expedition into the baggage van. But the secret is not mine. I must do nothing that might get Kinko into trouble.

And so I am silent, and to-night I will, if possible, take a few provisions to my packing case—to my snail in his shell, let us say. And is not the young Romanian like a snail in his shell, for it is as much as he can do to get out of it? We reach Khoshkent about three in the afternoon. The country is fertile, green, carefully cultivated. It is a succession of kitchen gardens, which seem to be well kept, immense fields sown with clover, which yield four or five crops a year. The roads near the town are bordered with long rows of mulberry trees, which diversify the view with eccentric branches.

Beyond Kokhan we shall turn due east, and by Marghehan and Oeh pass through the gorges of the Pamirs, so as to reach the Turkestan-Chinese frontier.

The train had only just started when the travelers took their seats at the table, where I failed to notice any fresh arrival.

Ephrinnel is in his usual place. Without going as far as familiarity, it is obvious that a close intimacy, founded on a similarity in tastes and aptitudes, exists between Miss Horatia Blinnet and the Yankee. There is no doubt, in our opinion, but what it will end in a wedding as soon as the train arrives. Both will have their romance of the rail. Frankly, I like that of Kinko and Zinca Klorik much better. It is true, the pretty Romanian is not here.

The dinner lasted till rather late, and terminated in an unexpected manner by an offer from Caterina to recite a monologue.

Our train more and more resembled a small rolling town. It had even its casino, this dining car in which we were gathered at the moment. And it was thus in the eastern part of Turkestan, four hundred kilometers from the Pamir plateau, at dessert, after our excellent dinner served in a saloon of the Grand Transasiatic, that the "Obsession" was given with remarkable talent by Monsieur Caterina, grand premier comique, engaged at the Shanghai theater for the approaching season.

"Monsieur," said Pan Chao, "my sincere compliments. I have heard your Coquelin."

"A master, monsieur; a master!" said Caterina.

"Whom you approach—"

"Respectfully—very respectfully!"

The bravos lavished on Caterina had no effect on Sir Francis Trevelyan, who had been occupying himself with enomatic exclamations regarding the dinner, which he considered execrable. He was not amused. And yet nobody took any notice of this grumbling gentleman's reprimands.

Baron Weissenschneiderdorfer had not understood a single word of this little masterpiece, and had he understood it, he would not have been able to appreciate this sample of Parisian monologue-mania.

As to my lord Faruskar and his inseparable Ghangir, it seemed that, in spite of their traditional reserve, the surprising grimaces, the significant gestures, the comical intonations, had interested them to a certain extent.

The actor had noticed it, and appreciated this silent admiration. As he rose from the table he said to me:

"He is magnificent, this signeur. What dignity! What a presence! What a type of the furthest east! I like his companion less—a third-rate fellow at the outside."

During dinner the train had passed Kastakos Station, situated in the center of a mountainous region. The road carried a good deal, and ran over viaducts and through tunnels, as we could tell by the noise.

We enter Kokhan Station at 9 o'clock in the evening. The stoppage is to last two hours. We get out on to the platform. As we are leaving the car I am near Major Noltitz, who asks young Pan Chao:

"Have you ever heard of this mandarin Yen Lou, whose body is being taken to Pekin?"

"Never, Major."

"But he ought to be a personage of consideration, to be treated with the honor he gets."

"That is possible," said Pan Chao; "but we have so many personages of consideration in the Celestial Empire."

"And so this mandarin Yen Lou—?"

"I never heard him mentioned."

Why did Major Noltitz ask the Chinaman this question? What was he thinking about?

CHAPTER XIII.

Kokhan, two hours to stop. It is night. The majority of the travelers have already taken up their sleeping quarters in the car, and do not care to alight.

Here am I on the platform. This is rather an important station, and from the engine house comes a more powerful locomotive than those which have brought the train along since we left Uzun Ada. These early engines were all very well as long as the line lay over an almost horizontal plain, but now we are among the gorges of the Pamir plateau, there are gradients of such steepness as to require more engine power.

I watch the proceedings, and when the locomotive has been detached with its tender, the baggage van—with Kinko in it—is at the head of the train.

The idea occurs to me that the young Romanian may perhaps venture out on the platform. It would be an imprudence for he runs the risk of being seen by the police, who move about taking a good look at the passengers. What my No. 11 had better do is to remain in his box, or, at least, in his van. I will go and get a few provisions, liquid and solid, and take them to him, even before the departure of the train, if it is possible to do so without fear of being noticed.

The refreshment room at the station is open, and Popof is not there. If he was to see me making purchases he would be astonished, as the dining car contains everything we might want.

At the bar I get a little cold meat and some bread. The station is not well lighted. A few lamps give only a feeble light. Popof is busy with one of the railway men. The new engine has not yet been attached to the train. The moment seems favorable. It is useless to wait until we have left Kokhan. If I can reach Kinko I shall be able to sleep through the night—and that will be welcome, I admit.

I step on to the train, and after assuring myself that no one is watching me, I enter the baggage van, saying as I do so:

"It is I."

In fact, it is as well to warn Kinko in case he is out of his box. But he had not thought of getting out, and I advise him to be very careful. He is very pleased at the provisions, for they are a change to his usual diet.

"I do not know how to thank you, Monsieur Bombarnac," he says to me.

"When shall we be at the frontier?"

"To-morrow, about one in the afternoon."

"And at Gachgar?"

"Fifteen hours afterward, on the night of the nineteenth."

"There the danger is, Monsieur Bombarnac."

"Yes, Kinko; for if it is difficult to enter the Russian possessions, it is no less difficult to get out of them, when the Chinese are at the gates. Their actions will give us a good look over before they will let us pass. At the same time they examine the passengers much more closely than they do their baggage. And as this van is reserved for the baggage going through to Pekin, I do not think you have much to fear. So, good night. As a matter of precaution, I would rather not prolong my visit."

I have come out; I have regained my couch, and I really did not hear the starting signal when the train began to move.

The only station of any importance which the railway passed before sunrise was that of Marghehan, where the stoppage was a short one.

Beyond this station the road reaches the frontier which divides Russian Turkestan from the Pamir plateau and the vast territory of the Kara-Khizhizes.

This part of Central Asia is continually being troubled by plutonian disturbances beneath its surface. Northern Turkestan has frequently suffered from earthquakes—the terrible experience of 1887 will not have been forgotten—and at Tashkend, as at Samarkand, I saw the traces of these commotions. In fact, minor oscillations are continually being observed, and this volcanic action takes place all along the coast, where lay the stores of petroleum and naphtha, from the Caspian Sea to the Pamir plateau. In short, this region is one of the most interesting parts of Central Asia that a tourist can visit.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Pamir, or Bam-i-Douniah, is commonly called the "Roof of the World." From it radiate the mighty chains of the Tian Shan of the Kunen Lun, of the Kara Korum, of the Himalaya, of the Hindoo Koosh. This orographic system, four hundred kilometers across, which remained for so many years an impassable barrier, has been surmounted by Russian tenacity. The Slav race and the yellow race have come into contact.

The travelers of the Aryan people have all attempted to explore the plateau of the Pamir. Without going back to Marco Polo in the thirteenth century, what do we find? The English with Forsyth, Douglas, Biddulph, Younghusband, and the celebrated Gordon, who died on the Upper Nile; the Russians with Fendchenko, Skobelev, Prjevalsky, Grombchensky, General Pevitzoff, Prince Gallitsin, the brothers Groun-Grinvald, the French with Auvergne, Vovyalot, Capus, Papin, Breteuil de Rhins, Joseph Martin, Grenard, Edouard Blanc; the Swedes with Doctor-Swen Hedin.

This roof of the world, one would say, is lifted up in magic hand to let us see its mysteries. We know now that it consists of an inextricable entanglement of valleys, the mean altitude of which exceeds three thousand meters; we know that it is dominated by the peaks of Gourosan and Kaufmann, twenty-two thousand feet high, and the peak of Targama, which is twenty-seven thousand feet; we know that it sends off to the west the Oxus and the Amou-Radja, and to the east the Tarim; we know that it chiefly consists of primary rocks, in which are patches of schist and quartz, red sands of secondary age, and the clayey, sandy loess of the quaternary period which is so abundant in Central Asia.

The difficulties the Grand Transasiatic had in crossing this plateau were extraordinary. It was a challenge from the genius of man to nature, and the victory remained with genius. Through the gently sloping passes which the Kirghizes call "bels," viaducts, bridges, embankments, cuttings, tunnels had to be made to carry the line. Here are sharp curves, gradients, which require the most powerful locomotives, here and there stationary engines to haul up the train with cables; in a word, a herculean labor, superior to the works of the American engineers in the defiles of the Sierra Nevada and the Rocky mountains.

The desolate aspect of these territories makes a deep impression on the imagination. As the train gains the higher altitudes this impression is all the more vivid. There are no towns, no villages—nothing but a few scattered huts, in which the Pamirian lives a solitary

existence with his family, his herds of yaks, or "koutars," which are cattle with horses' tails, his diminutive sheep, his thick-haired goats. The molting of these animals, if we may so phrase it, is a natural consequence of the climate, and they change the dressing gown of winter for the white fur coat of summer. It is the same with the dog, whose coat becomes whiter in the hot season.

As the passes are ascended, wide breaks in the ranges yield frequent glimpses of the more distant portions of the plateau. In many places are clumps of birches and junipers, which are the principal trees of the Pamir, and on the undulating plains grow tamarisks and sedges and mugwort, and a sort of reed very abundant by the sides of the saline pools, and a dwarf labiate called "terskenne" by the Kirghizes.

The major mentioned certain animals which constitute a somewhat varied fauna on the heights of the Pamir. It is even necessary to keep an eye on the platforms of the cars in case a stray panther or bear might seek a ride without any right to travel either first or second class. During the day our companions were on the lookout from both ends of the cars. What shouts arose when panthers or felines appeared along the line with intentions that certainly seemed suspicious! A few revolver shots were discharged, without much necessity perhaps, but they amused as well as reassured the travelers. In the afternoon we were witnesses of a magnificent shot, which killed instantly an enormous panther just as he was landing on the side step of the third carriage.

It was our superb Mongol to whom we were indebted for this marksman's masterpiece.

"What a hand and what an eye!" said I to the major, who continued to look on faruskar with suspicion.

Among the other animals of the Pamirian fauna appeared wolves and foxes, and flocks of those large wild sheep with gnarled and gracefully curved horns, which are known to the natives as arkars. High in the sky flew the vultures, bearded and unbarred, and amid the clouds of white vapor we left behind us were many crows and pigeons and turtle doves and warblers.

The day passed without adventure. At 6 o'clock in the evening we crossed the frontier, after a run of nearly two thousand three hundred kilometers, accomplished in four days since leaving Uzun Ada. Two hundred and fifty kilometers beyond we shall be at Kachgar. Although we are now in Chinese Turkestan, it will not be till we reach that town that we shall have our first experience of Chinese administration.

Dinner over about nine o'clock, we stretched ourselves on our beds, in the hope, or rather the conviction, that the night will be as calm as the preceding one.

It was not to be so. At first the train was running down the slopes of the Pamir at great speed. Then it resumed its normal rate along the level.

It was about one in the morning when I was suddenly awakened. At the same time Major Noltitz and most of our companions jumped up. There were loud shouts in the rear of the train. What had happened?

Anxiety seized upon the travelers—that confused, unreasonable anxiety caused by the slightest incident on a railroad.

"What is the matter? What is the matter?"

These words were uttered in alarm from all sides, and in different languages. My first thought was that we were attacked. I thought of the famous Ki-Tsang, the Mongol pirate. In a moment the train began to slow, evidently preparing to stop. Popof came into the van, and I asked him what had happened.

"An accident," he replied. "A coupling has broken, and the two last vans are left behind."

(To be continued.)

English Epigrams to Date.

Queen Victoria transformed Great Britain into a crowned republic, a nation in which the will of the people is the supreme law.—Andrew Carnegie.

Great poetry is the surest antidote to the prevailing virus of materialism.—Alfred Austin, the Poet Laureate.

The educational system of this country is chaotic and utterly behind the age.—Prime Minister Balfour.

In dealing with education the first thing is to consider the children; the churches come afterward.—Austen Chamberlain.

We want sometimes in this country a little more of the spirit of tolerance.—Earl Spencer.

This is above all a reading age, but how many people read the Bible?—The Bishop of Manchester.

Plenty of porridge and milk will do more for the physique of a nation than the most up-to-date physical drill.—Professor Laurie of Edinburgh University.

We must dispel the blight of inquisitorial oppression which stunts, distorts and withers every branch of the national life of Ireland.—The Right Honorable George Wyndham, Chief Secretary for Ireland.

The bicycle nowadays is part of the necessary equipment of a lad.—County Court Judge Sir A. Marton.—New York Sun.

Better than Antifat.

Woggins—Blowitz, the pugilist, lost 130 pounds of flesh while training for his last fight.

Snoozem—Get out! What are you trying to give me, anyway? Woggins—Straight goods. His wife eloped with one of his trainers.

Knew Whereof He Spoke.

"One-half the world," remarked the party with the quotation habit, "doesn't know how the other half lives."

"I guess that's right," rejoined the married man, "but the feminine half works overtime trying to find out."

Where They Differ.

"Theory and practice are different things," said the professor. "Yes, indeed," assented the medical student. "I pay for theory and intend to be paid for practice."

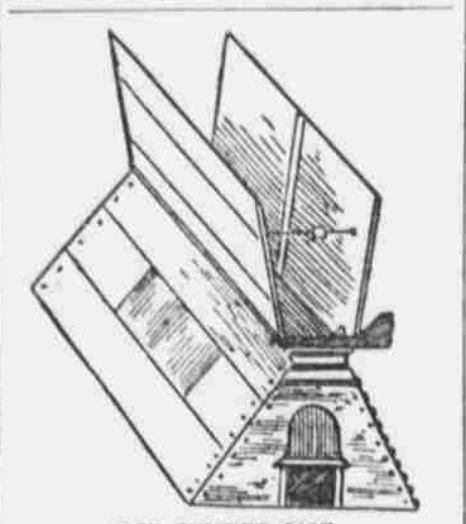
The worth of a state, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it.—J. S. Mill.

FARMS AND FARMERS



Good Chicken Coop.

This is especially valuable for raising early chicks. One and two are two common window glasses, which are fastened in grooves in the boards. The opposite side of the coop is simply plastering lath. The roof is composed of two doors which can be raised when sunlight or more air is wanted than can be had at the ends, which have a short piece of lath at the top. The small door slides up and down, and can be kept at any desired height by a nail being put through the hole in the door into the hole in the board.



GOOD CHICKEN COOP.

above; if the coop is set on a board platform it will be vermin proof. This coop is cheap, durable and can be made of any size.

Best Horse to Raise.

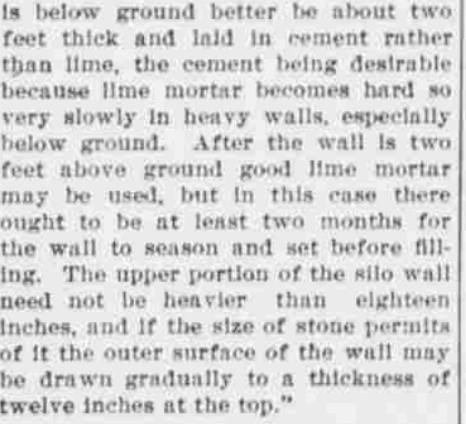
There is no doubt that the best horse for the farmer to raise is the draft horse. The farmer needs sometimes to raise roasters and driving horses; but in the main the draft leads all others. The demand is not so much for an improved kind of horse as for a first-class animal of the kinds we now have. The draft horse can be raised with little expense to the farmer, and he begins to pay his way before the time comes to market him. The draft coat works in easily with the general work of the farm. The farmer may find it difficult to sell a light harness horse for carriage purposes, but he never has trouble in selling a first-class draft horse. In any event it should be remembered that it requires no more labor to care for a good draft horse than for a poor one. The horse of quality will consume no more feed than the other, but the margin between cost and selling price is very much greater in the case of the good horse than between the cost and selling price of the inferior horse.

The Silo.

King gives the following statements in regard to building stone silos, says Hoard's Dairyman: "The portion of the silo wall which is below ground better be about two feet thick and laid in cement rather than lime, the cement being desirable because lime mortar becomes hard so very slowly in heavy walls, especially below ground. After the wall is two feet above ground good lime mortar may be used, but in this case there ought to be at least two months for the wall to season and set before filling. The upper portion of the silo wall need not be heavier than eighteen inches, and if the size of stone permits of it the outer surface of the wall may be drawn gradually to a thickness of twelve inches at the top."

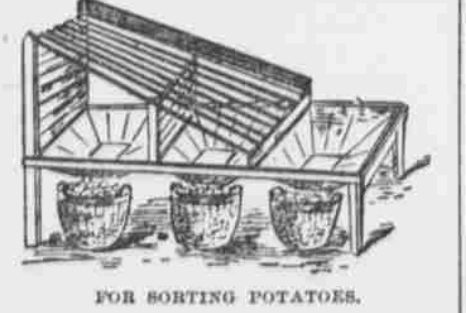
Sorting Potatoes.

Make a box 12 feet long and 4 feet wide, like the illustration, with three partitions, the back piece should be about 4 feet high, the next 3 feet and



FOR SORTING POTATOES.

the next 1 1/2 feet high. Nail pickets on for first incline, and further apart on the second. This sorts them in three grades. Shovel them on the top or first incline and poke them down, and you have them sorted in three grades.



DELIVERING CREAM TO CREAMERIES.

In the summer time, at least, cream must be delivered to the creamery every day, if a good article of butter is to be made. In the winter a system of delivering cream every other day may do well enough, but it should not be made to suit the situation in summer. When whole milk was hauled to the factory the farmer realized that it was necessary to haul it every day. With the hauling of the cream the work is greatly reduced, because a lighter rig may be used. The patron should therefore be contented with this saving in cost and not try to double the saving by establishing a system of every other day delivery.

Abolish the Mongrel.

The mongrel fowl should be given no place either on the farm or the city lot. It costs just as much to feed and care

of a mongrel as a pure bred, and the profits are nowhere near so great, to say nothing of the pleasure derived from a nice, uniform flock of fowls.

Profit in Pigs.

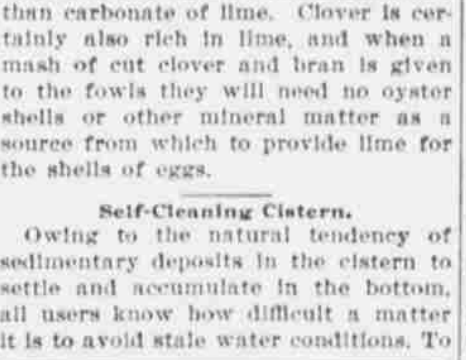
A good way is to have pigs come in March or April, and that they may enjoy plenty to eat, feed the sows on waste milk with buckwheat meal, bran and oats ground together, or corn and pea meal. A sufficient quantity of this should in due time be put in a shallow trough, set in a separate part of the pen into which the pigs, but not the sow, can go. As soon as pasture is ready they should be turned out to feed, and by sowing as early as possible three pounds of rape per acre on good land, preferably that which needs summer following, the pigs may be put on to this with excellent results along in the latter part of summer, provided a portion is reserved for recovery after feeding, while the rest is fed down. Giving three or four pounds of corn meal apiece per day, will nicely fatten the pigs while on the last of the rape; but if so desired, they may be finished on grain, screenings, corn or peas and oats ground together. The feeding value of these grains, including barley, is improved by having them ground two or three months before using, only in that case the meal must be kept dry, and not allowed to heat or get sour. Set in barrels in a dry store room is the best place for it.

Feeding of Bran to Poultry.

It is certainly excellent for poultry and one point in the favor of bran is that it contains a much larger proportion of lime than any other cheap food derived from grain, and, as the shells of eggs are composed of lime, it is essential that food rich in lime should be provided, writes A. V. Meersch in Western Poultry Journal. It may be urged that the use of oyster shells will provide lime, but it will be found that it is the lime in the food that is most serviceable because it is in a form that can be better digested and assimilated than carbonate of lime. Clover is certainly also rich in lime, and when a mash of cut clover and bran is given to the fowls they will need no oyster shells or other mineral matter as a source from which to provide lime for the shells of eggs.

Self-Cleaning Cistern.

Owing to the natural tendency of sedimentary deposits in the cistern to settle and accumulate in the bottom, all users know how difficult a matter it is to avoid stale water conditions. To



SELF-CLEANING CISTERNS.

relieve such conditions is the object of this invention. In ordinary construction, overflow action is intended to merely prevent running over, consequently the top water only is drawn off, while all sedimentary elements gravitating to the bottom, remain. W. J. Slack of Fort Wayne, Ind., conceived the idea that overflow action brought through and from the bottom of the cistern would prevent this trouble. "Cut" shows how automatic overflow action is brought about.

Alfalfa for Hog Pasture.

An experiment station has stated that on good alfalfa more than 2,000 pounds of pork should be produced each season from an acre, and that half of this at least should be credited to the pasture. This being the case it is about as valuable a crop as can be grown on the land for feeding purposes.—Farmer's Advocate.

Change of Feeds Desirable.

Milk producing foods should be fed to the dairy cow, not fattening foods. A variety should be provided when possible. A change in the feed every few days will be quite acceptable to the dairy cow.

Chicken Notes.

Green bone should be fed three times a week to the laying hens and daily to the male bird.

Remember that a lousy hen cannot give you the results that she could if free from lice.

A few drops of tincture of iron in the drinking water make an excellent spring tonic for the fowls.

All deformed chicks should be killed as soon as hatched. It is a waste of time to try to raise them.

If the eggs from a certain pen are found to be largely infertile, lose no time in getting a new male to head the pen.

Never set a deformed or ill shaped egg. It is a waste of time. Select the best shaped eggs and be sure that they are from strong, vigorous stock.—Commercial Poultry.

Labor Notes.

The teaching of typewriting will be begun in the normal school at Zacatecas, Mexico. The government of the State has bought a number of machines of the most modern and best types for the school.

Chicago and Alton employes have been instructed not only to give up drinking intoxicating liquors, but to stay away from gambling places and dance halls. The company says it means to keep its men up to as high a physical and mental standard as possible.

WASHINGTON GOSSIP

Maple-sugar-making is getting to be a restricted industry, and may, indeed, become a lost art. The Bureau of Forestry, which has recently made a study of the business, has brought some interesting facts to light. Since 1860 the area of maple-sugar-farming has greatly changed and shrunk. In early days maple-sugar was made even in the South, because cane-sugar was scarce and expensive. In New England, New York and a few other States the industry has held its own or been extended. The bureau finds that seven-eighths of what is sold as maple-sugar or maple-syrup is spurious; but in most cases the adulteration is the work of middlemen, not of the producers. The net income of a maple-sugar grove is conservatively estimated at \$3 an acre; and since the work can be done at a time when there is little other farm employment, and the grove will also furnish the family firewood without deterioration, a sugar-orchard is a fairly profitable investment.

Greater secrecy than ever before will be exercised this year concerning the scores made at target practice by the various vessels of the Atlantic fleet. While some of the details of the results may be made public, it is not the intention of the Navy Department to give out the scores. This government has never been able to gather information concerning the target practices of other navies and there seems to be no reason why the scores of our navy should be made public. Great Britain carefully guards all of the scores made by her warships. Some years ago an officer of a British vessel on the Asiatic station told of the results of the target practice then just finished. The information reached this country and was published. A thorough investigation was made and the officer would have been court-martialed if it had been possible to produce positive proof against him.

The expenditures of the government exceeded its current income by more than \$9,000,000 in April, and the treasury deficit for the first ten months of the fiscal year is upward of \$34,000,000. While the months of May and June nearly always show a balance on the right side of the government's account books, many fear that the deficit at the end of the fiscal year, June 30, will reach \$50,000,000. The problem of the deficit is a serious one in the opinion of the treasury officials. The cash balance in the treasury has declined to \$133,181,777, including the amounts held by the national bank depositories, and Secretary Shaw has found it necessary to withdraw from the banks \$20,000,000. The cash balance actually on hand in the treasury is said by some to have fallen below the point of absolute safety.

"Beware of the high rate of interest," is the lesson of most of the swindles against which the Post Office Department has recently issued fraud orders. An offer of exceptionally large returns for either labor or capital should at once awaken suspicion. If the enterprise is so promising, why does not the person who controls it keep it for himself? The fact that there are a few, a very few, cases where large risks have been taken and large profits have been realized is the argument most used by those who have patent rights, gold mines and other such properties to sell at a thousand times their value. The person of moderate means cannot afford to take such risks.

In 1904 the number of arrivals at Ellis Island was 608,000, the number in the entire country being 800,000. Of these 263,510 settled down in New York City, and the great majority of the remainder went to other cities as laborers, etc., where they are not needed. It is now estimated that one million immigrants will come to this country during the year 1905. The task of absorbing this great mass into the political system is one of the penalties which the United States pays for its unrivaled economic opportunities. Its relief from great standing armies, and its atmosphere of freedom.

During the last year more than five thousand rural mail routes have been established, and during the coming summer a thousand more will be opened. Every route over which the carrier takes his little packet is a thread which binds this great, spreading country into more solid unity.

Expansion seems still to be the national watchword. The general staff of the army has decided to lengthen the United States bayonet by four inches. Still, it was a dictum of Oliver Wendell Holmes that as nations lengthen their weapons they narrow their boundaries.

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