

Prisoners and Captives

By H. S. MERRIMAN

CHAPTER XXIV.

There are many people who go through life without ever knowing what it is to fight a gale of wind.

There is a breath of heaven of which the sole message is death. It is a wind with no fine-sounding name, for it belongs to the north, where men endure things and have no thought of naming them. It blows for six months of the year. It veers from south-west to north-west-by-north, and it is born upon the gray heathlands round the pole. For many hundred miles it raves across the frozen ocean, gathering deadly coldness at every league. On its shoulders are carrels tons of snow, and then striking land, it rages and tears, howls, moans and screams across northern Europe into far-frozen Asia. In passing it clothes all Russia in white, and still has plenty to spare for bleak Siberia, northern China and Japan.

A few northern races manage to live on in such numbers as to save extermination, and that is all. More than a third of them are partially or wholly blind. Their existence is a constant and unequal struggle against this same wind and its pitiless auxiliaries—snow and frost. The earth yields no increase here. A little sparse vegetation, sufficient only to nourish miserable reindeer and a few horses; a scattering of pine trees, and that is all. Although no sanctifying spirit can be said to walk upon the waters, the sea alone sustains life, for men, dogs and reindeer eat fish, not dried but frozen when they can get it.

It was across this country, and in face of this wind, that a party of men and women made their way in the late summer several years ago. By late summer one means the first fortnight in July in those high latitudes. These travelers were twenty-one in number—sixteen men and five women. One woman carried a baby—a jail bird—born in prison—unhappily. It did not count, not even as half a person, to any one except its mother. Men and women were dressed alike in good fur clothing, boggy trousers tucked into felt boots, long blouse-like fur coats, and caps with earflaps tied down. Boots, trousers, coats and even caps bore signs of damage by water. When northern Siberia is not frozen up it is in a state of flood, and traveling, except by water, is almost impossible. These people had come many miles by this comparatively easy method at imminent risk, for they had traveled north on the bosom of the flood. Since then they have literally burned their vessels in order to cut off pursuit.

The men dragged light sledges, three to a sledge, and four resting. The women carried various more precious burdens—delicate instruments, such as compasses and aneroids. Beneath the fur caps protruded some singular brains. From under the dragged sledges looked on some strange faces. There was a doctor among them, a few army officers, a judge and others who had not been allowed time to become anything, for they were exiled while students.

The whole party pressed forward in silence with tight-lipped lips and half-closed eyes, for the rushing wind carried a fine blinding snow before it. Only one person spoke at times. It was the woman who carried the baby, and she interlarded her inconsequent remarks with snatches of song and bursts of peculiar cackling laughter. Suddenly she sat down on a boulder.

"I will sit here," she said, "in the warm sun."

The whole party stopped, and one of the women answered:

"Come, Anna," she said, "we cannot wait here." Still speaking, she took her arm and urged her to rise.

"But," protested she who had been addressed as Anna, "where is the picnic to be?"

"The picnic, Anna Pavloski," said a small, square-jawed man, coming forward and speaking in a wonderfully deep and harmonious tone of voice, "is to be held further on. You must come at once."

"I think," she said gently, "that I will wait here for my husband. I expect him home from the office. He will bring the newspapers."

They were all grouped round the woman except one man, and he stood apart with his back turned toward them. He had been dragging the foremost sledge, and the broad band of the trace was still across his shoulders. He had been leading the way, and seemed in some subtle manner to be recognized as chief and pioneer.

Again the woman who had first spoken persuaded; again the broad-shouldered man spoke in his commanding gentleness. It was, however, of an oval. Then after a few moments of painful hesitation, he led the group and went to where the leader stood alone.

"Pavloski," he said, "He never turned his head, but stood rigid and stern, looking straight before him, avoiding with eyes from which the horror now would never fade, into the gray, hopeless distance. No marble statue could reproduce the strong, cold despair that breathed in every limb and feature."

"Something," said the doctor, "must be done. We are behind our time already."

"I suppose it is my duty to stay with you," said Pavloski. "I cannot leave the party? I cannot stay behind?"

The little man made no answer. His silence could have been a deadly and dramatic picture that these two friends who dared not to meet each other's eyes. And yet, in a moment, it was rendered infinitely sadder by the advent of a third person.

Seated as she was in furs, it was difficult to distinguish that this was a woman at all, and yet to a close observer her movements, the manner in which she set her feet upon the ground, the suggestion of graceful curves in limb and form, betrayed that she was indeed a young girl. Her face, however, was a study in eyes and a rosy mouth, round cheeks delicately tinted despite the wild wind, and little wisps of golden hair straggling out beneath the ear-flaps, and gleaming against the dusky face.

"I," said this little woman, "will stay with her. Sergius, I will try and take her back. We will give ourselves up. It does not matter. Now that Hans is dead, I have nothing to live for. I have no husband."

The little doctor never had been; not a pilot at all, and never had been; not a personal appearance he had resembled one. There was something horribly real in the words that came from the girl's rosy lips. Sergius Pavloski shook his head and moved a step or two toward the group half hidden by a fine driving snow.

"No," he answered. "We arranged it before leaving London. There is only one thing to be done."

The doctor and the girl exchanged a

look of horror, and hesitated to follow him.

"It was agreed," he continued, mechanically, "that the lives of all were never to be endangered for the sake of one. You are said that."

Slowly the two followed him. As they approached the group some of these sledge-pullers, who had walked away a few paces and stood apart with averted faces.

"Can you tell me," said the woman, looking up suddenly and leaving the baby's face and throat fully exposed to the cruel wind, "whether I can find a lodging near here?"

She addressed Pavloski, who was standing in front of her. He made no answer, but presently turned away with a convulsive movement of lips and throat, as if he were swallowing with an effort. Then he raised his voice and, addressing the companions generally, he said, with the assurance of a man placed in a position of exact obedience:

"Will you all go on? Keep the same direction, north-by-west according to the compass. I shall catch you up before evening."

He stood quite still, like a man hewn out of stone—upright, emotionless and motionless—awaiting the fulfillment of his commands. All around him his companions waited. It almost seemed as if they expected the Almighty to interfere. Even to those who have tasted the bitterest cup that life has ever brewed, this seemed too cruel to be true—too horrible! And the wind blew all around them, tearing, raging on.

At last one man had the courage to do it. It was he who had spoken to Pavloski, the man whom they called doctor. He went toward one of the sledges and proceeded to disentangle the traces thrown carelessly down when a halt had been called. The men stepped silently forward and drew the cords across their shoulders.

The women moved away first, stepping softly on the silent snow, and like phantoms vanishing in the mist and windy turmoil. The men followed, dragging their noiseless sledges. The doctor stayed behind for a moment. When the others were out of earshot he went toward Pavloski and laid his mitted hand upon his arm.

"Sergius," he said, with painful hesitation, "let me do it—I am a doctor—it will be easier."

Pavloski turned and looked at the speaker in a stupid, bewildered way, as if the language used by him was unknown to him. Then he smiled suddenly, in a sickening way; it was like a cynical smile upon the face of the dead.

"Go!" he said, pointing to windward where their companions had disappeared. "Go with them. Let each one of us do his duty. It will be a consolation, what ever the end may be."

The doctor was bound in honor to obey this man in all and through all. He obeyed now, and left Sergius Pavloski alone with his mad wife and his helpless babe. As he moved away he heard the man prattling of the sun and the birds and the flowers.

He turned his face resolutely northward and pressed forward into the icy wind, but a muffled, gurgling shriek broke down his strong resolution. Without stopping, he glanced back over his shoulder with a gasp of horror. Sergius Pavloski was kneeling with his back to the north; but he was not kneeling on the snow; for the doctor saw two fur-lined arms waving convulsively, and between the soles of Pavloski's great snow boots he caught sight of two other feet drawn up in agony.

"Oh, God!" exclaimed the man, aloud, "forgive him!"

And with bloodshot eyes and haggard lips he stumbled on, not heeding where he set his feet. He fell, and rose again, scarce knowing what he did. Despite the freezing wind, the perspiration ran down his face, blinding him. It froze and hung there in little icicles on his mustache and beard.

And in the agony of his strong mind his brain lost all power of concentration. His lips continued to frame those four words over and over again until they became bereft of all meaning and lapsed into a mere rhythmic refrain, keeping time with the swing of his sturdy legs.

(To be continued.)

OLD MAIDS AS MOTHERS.

How Splendid Display Parentalism When to Charge of Children.

A woman may not be especially devoted to children, or feel any acute desire to possess them, and yet, nine times out of ten, if she has to take some small boy or girl shopping or walking, she will, half unconsciously, begin playing mother.

There are certain ways of pulling down little skirts and settling caps that are distinctly parental and possessive, a manner of grasping small hands and answering shrill questions that proclaim to all the world, "This is my jewel." Few parents can avoid a trace of self-conscious pride when treating the community to a sight of their offspring. But let a spinster take a small relative in charge, and she will outmother the most demonstrative mother of them all in her airs and gestures.

Her "dear" is a masterpiece of indulgent parentalism, and if the unappreciative youngster shouts out, "Auntie," a look of sharp mortification comes across her face. She buys little shoes and socks with an air of mature deliberation tempered by a half humorous tenderness, and the clerk, if she knows her business, asks questions about the age and size and smiles sympathetically over the small garments.

A woman may restrain herself from obviously making believe in the street, but before a counter of frilled caps or Dutch little trousers she is a moral giant and cannot resist the alluring mantle of motherhood. She may love her spinsterhood and exult in her freedom, but down beneath the eternal feminine is awake and clamoring for its birthright.—Chicago Tribune.

Not incoherent.

Neil—You don't mean to say you're going to marry him?

Belle—Yes.

Neil—The idea! Why, you would not marry him if he were the last man on earth.

Belle (snappily)—Well, my gracious! he isn't, is he?

Nasty.

"I don't feel like myself to-day."

"Let me congratulate you."—Cleveland Leader.

Pat—Can you support my daughter in the style to which she is accustomed, without having to borrow money and getting in debt all the time?

Suffor—Yes, sir.

Pat—Then take her. It's more than I can do.—Cleveland Leader.

BED STREWN WITH ORCHIDS.

French Marquis One of Many Who Burn Up Their Money.

When the people have more money than they know what to do with they sometimes develop a remarkable ingenuity in devising methods of squandering it, as in the case of the French marquis, who, according to the papers, has her bed strewn with rare and exquisite orchids at a cost of several thousand dollars a week.

Even more remarkable is the story told of a wealthy Frenchman who dines twice a week at a famous Parisian restaurant. His appetite is of the poorest, but he always insists on having a tureen filled with a specially prepared soup placed before him. Next comes a huge joint of meat from which he cuts one tiny slice. Then follow four quails or a large chicken, of which he eats one mouthful. His dessert consists of four grapes and a cup of coffee, while during his meal he just moistens his lips from a bottle of expensive claret and another of the finest champagne. At the conclusion of each meal, for which he pays \$25, he hands \$5 to the head waiter, \$4 to the waiter who has attended him, \$2 to the woman cashier and \$1 to the porter.

A weird form of extravagance was that of a woman named Hiller, who recently buried her husband in a \$20,000 coffin. The casket was made of richly carved mahogany, with solid gold trimmings (a single knob costing \$1,750) and lined with silk which is said to have cost 75 cents an inch.

The nizam of Hyderabad has a set of false teeth for which he paid a Madras dentist \$5,500 and Dixie W. Thompson, a wealthy rancher of Santa Barbara, Cal., not long ago spent \$3,750 on a saddle, which is of the finest embossed leather, heavily and most elaborately mounted with silver. Henry G. Marshall lavished \$50,000 on a grand piano, exquisitely painted by Sic L. Alma-Tadema and studded with precious stones. Jan Van Beers has a piano, a miracle of painting, precious metals and jewels, which cost him \$30,000.

One of the most remarkable cases of extravagance on record was the indulging by the Sultan of Turkey of a child's whim. One day the Sultan found his small son in tears because, though he had been promised to be made an admiral, he could not see his flag hoisted on a particular ship from his nursery windows. The Sultan promptly had the vessel brought up and moored in front of the Doima-baghteb, to the child's great delight. In order, however, to bring the vessel to the required position it was necessary to pull down a newly constructed bridge, which at the Sultan's bidding was done at a cost of \$500,000.

THE WORLD'S OLDEST CITY.

The Damascus Seen by Saul of Tarsus.

If you were suddenly asked to name the oldest city in the world which is still in a flourishing condition, what would be your answer?

In nine cases out of ten, the person to whom such a query might be propounded would hark back to Egypt, Greece, or Rome. He would be wrong. The oldest city in the world is Damascus.

Tyre and Sidon have crumbled on the shore; Baalbec is a ruin; Palmyra is buried in a desert; Nineveh and Babylon have disappeared from the Tigris and the Euphrates. Damascus remains what it was before the days of Abraham—a center of trade and travel—an island of verdure in the desert; a presidential capital, with martial and sacred associations extending through thirty centuries.

It was near Damascus that Saul of Tarsus saw the light above the brightness of the sun; the street which is called Strait, in which it was said "the prayed," still runs through the city.

The city which Mohammed surveyed from a neighboring height and was afraid to enter "because it was given to man to have but one paradise, and for his part he was resolved not to have it in this world," is to-day what Julian called the "Eye of the East," as it was in the time of Isaiah "the head of Syria."

From Damascus came the damask, our blue plums, and the delicious apricot of Portugal called damasco; damask, our beautiful fabric of cotton and silk, with vines and flowers raised upon a smooth, bright ground; the damask rose introduced into England in the time of Henry VIII; the Damascus blade, so famous the world over for its keen edge and wonderful elasticity, the secret of whose manufacture was lost when Tamerlane carried the artist into Persia; and that beautiful art of inlaying wood and steel with gold and silver, a kind of mosaic engraving and sculpture united—called damaskeening—with which boxes, bureaus, and swords are ornamented.

Her Serenest Suggestion.

"Mr. Sloppy," said the landlady, "I am astonished that a man like you should live in such an inexpensive apartment. I should think that with your financial status you could take a more elegant—"

"Why-er-really, Mrs. Rentham," stammered the lodger, "you must know that I am not able—"

"Yes, I know you're not. You never pay your rent, anyhow, so why don't you get a plenty while you're getting it?"

And she sailed majestically forth.—Cleveland Leader.

Our Own John Phillip.

John Phillip Sousa, the conductor, has been gazetted "officer de l'instruction publique" of France. This distinction gives Mr. Sousa the golden palms and rosette of the French Academy. He is the only American who has received this decoration. He is also a member of the Royal Victorian Order of England, having been decorated by his majesty five years ago.

Consent.

Pat—Can you support my daughter in the style to which she is accustomed, without having to borrow money and getting in debt all the time?

Suffor—Yes, sir.

Pat—Then take her. It's more than I can do.—Cleveland Leader.



The Disk Cultivator.

Disks as farm tools are growing more popular all the time. They are used at all stages of farm work, from plowing to final cultivation. A man of long experience says of them:

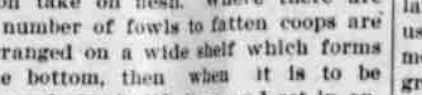
The main points in favor of the disk are that it will work closer to young corn without covering it, will work ground without injury that is too wet to be plowed with a shovel plow, will not throw up clods, but leaves the ground always in a fine tilth, can be set to run varying depths, shallow next to the corn and deeper in the middle of the row, which is the proper way when making the last two cultivations. However, the disk will not plow deep in very hard ground or turn the soil in such a way as to kill large weeds, yet if the weeds are taken in hand before they become too large the disk is satisfactory in this as well.

When corn is checked it is not practicable to plow across the field with the disk. If the disk is run across the rows, it will be very inconvenient, and the gangs are more nearly rigid and cannot be so easily adapted to the inequality of the ground.

For barring away the young corn, cutting the dirt away from it, and for giving the last cultivation, laying by, I consider the disk vastly superior to the shovel, but where land has been severely packed, as by hard rains, nothing, in my opinion, will take the place of a four-shovel cultivator of the twisted pattern, and they should not be less than five inches wide.

Fattening Coop for Poultry.

In the fattening of poultry for market it is always a good plan to confine the birds to quite small quarters in order that the food given them may accomplish the best possible result. The fattening coop should be where it is light and dry and the birds must be kept comfortable at all times. More than all, the coop or coops must be kept clean, else the fowls are likely to become sick and will not in such condition take on flesh. Where there are a number of fowls to fatten coops are arranged on a wide shelf which forms the bottom, then when it is to be cleaned simply lift it up and set in another place, leaving the shelf free to clean thoroughly. Any box of light material will do for the fattening coop with wire netting to within six inches of the bottom. Across this space a bar may be placed with just enough space between it and the wire netting so that the hen can get her head out to feed. A narrow trough should be kept in front of the coop and be filled with a variety of grain in mixture so that the fowl may help her when it desires. These coops are very inexpensive, easy



THE FATTENING COOP.

Value of a Butter Cow.

The value of a cow considered as an investment was lately figured out by H. P. Guerier, the Illinois expert. Starting with a poor cow, one that produced 200 pounds of butter a year, he reckons the food cost at \$30 and the labor at \$12.50, while the butter is worth only \$25, or less than the market value of the food consumed. The fancy butter cow produces 400 pounds of butter per year, and on the same basis of reckoning nets her owner interest on \$400, besides paying for the food and labor. The price of butter in both cases is reckoned at 20 cents. The fancy cow consumed somewhat more food than the other, but the difference was more than offset by the increased amount of skim milk. According to Mr. Guerier, the fancy cow is better worth \$400 than the ordinary cow taken as a gift.

Cost of Making Butter.

In a recent report published by the Iowa state dairy commissioner, the average cost of producing one pound of butter is given as follows:

In the creamery that makes 40,000 pounds of butter a year, it costs 4 cents to make one pound of butter, and in a creamery producing 50,000 pounds it costs 3.4 cents to make one pound; while in creameries making 150,000 pounds per year it costs only 1.85 cents. In some of the very large central plants, that are producing over 200,000 pounds of butter per year, it costs 1.4 cents per pound. These figures clearly show that the larger the creamery the cheaper butter can be manufactured, and they also show that it takes about 400 cows, tributary to one factory, before a profitable creamery business can be established.

Farm Notes.

A man makes a mistake when he depends on a scrub bull to head his herd of cows.

If you want to make the strawstack benefit the cow, put some of it under her for bedding.

It is claimed that although the conditions of food and climate in Japan offers no serious obstacles to sheep farming, there were in 1901 only 2,545 sheep in that country.

At a recent public sale of mule teams and other farm stock in Hancock county, Indiana, the mules averaged \$208 a year. This was the average price set by the buyers themselves, the teams being placed in the ring to sell for just what they would bring.

Waste Land in Corn Fields.

Most corn growers plant more acres to corn than they harvest. Investigation has shown that there are twenty-five acres and often a much larger area of idle land in every corn field of 100 acres. This idle land results from the failure of seed here and there throughout the field to grow. It is cultivated just the same as if it were properly engaged. The farmer, therefore, wastes labor and loses the use of the land. Where a large acreage of corn is grown the aggregate loss is an important item.

Tomatoes and Nitrate.

One hundred pounds to the acre of nitrate of soda applied to the tomato crop will largely increase the yield and hasten the time of ripening. Spread the nitrate broadcast or between the rows just before a shower, and then cultivate it into the soil. One quarter of an ounce to a plant is about right in small gardens. Experiments at the New Jersey station have shown that nitrate applied about the middle of June had a much greater effect on the crop than the same amount applied earlier in the season. A dressing of 100 pounds per acre increased the crop one-third above that of a plot not so treated. Nitrate of soda is a very quick working fertilizer. It produces rank, dark green foliage, which obstinately resists the attacks of insects and of mildew. We have found nitrate excellent also to produce early asparagus, but care must be taken not to apply too much.

Method for Testing Eggs.

A simple method for testing eggs, which comes from Germany, is based upon the fact that the air chamber in the flat end of an egg increases with age. If the egg is placed in a solution of common salt it will show an increasing inclination to float with the long axis vertical. By watching this tendency the age of the egg can be determined almost to a day. A fresh egg lies in a horizontal position at the bottom of the vessel; an egg from three to five days old shows an elevation at the flat end, so that its long axis forms an angle of 20 degrees, and an egg a month old floats vertically upon the pointed end.

When to Dock Lambs.

The docking of lambs should take place when they are 2 or 3 days old. Of course, it may be done later, but the injury resulting is less at the age named than later. When docking is deferred until the lambs are several weeks old bleeding is usually profuse. In some instances it will cause the death of the lambs unless it is stayed. The flow of blood may be checked by tying a cord tightly around the adhering portion of the tail, and better still by searing the wound with a hot iron.

NEXT AFTER THE QUEEN.

Baroness Burdett-Coutts a Most Noble Subject of King Edward. King Edward, when Prince of Wales, once said of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, who lately celebrated her 93d birthday, "She is, after my mother, the most remarkable woman in the kingdom." His words become still more true as the long life draws to its gracious close.

Her grandfather, Mr. Thomas Coutts, was an eccentric man and set the family for his example of peculiar marriages. For his first wife he chose his brother's housemaid, and for his second a beautiful actress. Both marriages were happy ones, and on his death he left his immense fortune to his second wife. She had no children by him or by her second husband, the Duke of St. Albans; and on her death she passed on her great wealth to her step-granddaughter, Angela Georgina, whose sweetness and ability had won the regard of the sensible duchess.

The girl had not been brought up as an heiress, and her plain Christian education stood her in good stead in her sudden change of circumstance. When she found herself in a day the richest woman in England, she threw herself not into gaudy and display, but into intelligent charity. She built and endowed St. Stephen's Church in London, and put under its wise care primary and technical schools, workshops, lecture courses, and instruction in cooking and housekeeping years before others recognized these needs.

A list of her charities would cover almost every effort for the improvement of men, women and children. She has endowed bishoprics, built model lodging houses and markets, planted and opened London churchyards as recreation grounds, sent a whole village full of poverty-stricken people from Scotland to Australia, endowed a reformatory for women, endowed a geological scholarship at Oxford, built up the Irish fisheries and other industries, besides giving wise personal aid to thousands of the needy and suffering.

She proved herself her grandfather's own child by making in 1881 a marriage which set all England agog. She was then 67 years old, and she married an American gentleman of 30. The marriage seems to have been a romantic one on both sides. He had made her acquaintance in the course of administering the Turkish relief fund, and after their marriage he devoted himself to the noble charities of her devising. He has been a member of Parliament since 1885, and is a man whose opinion commands respect there and elsewhere.

The whole long life of the baroness has been one of wise and unselfish devotion to good works, and a constant testimony to the glorious possibilities in the hands of a rich woman who is filled with the true Christian spirit, and finds it more blessed to give than to get.

QUEER STORIES

A ton of coal produces nearly ten thousand cubic feet of gas.

St. Petersburg is to have a school of agriculture for women only.

The first lighthouses had fires of wood and coal kindled on top of them.

The smallest bone in the human body is to be found within the drum of the ear.

The small steel screws used in watch-making are worth six times their weight in gold.

"Hoeh der Kaiser"—for he is now a grandfather at forty-seven. It is rapidly becoming the style for great men to be grandfathers before they are fifty, according to the Springfield Republican. Mr. Bryan is a grandfather, and he is only forty-six. Mr. Roosevelt is forty-eight and has his chances of arriving in the grandfather list before his fiftieth birthday. Yet many people still look upon all three as young men who have but lately blossomed out in the world's affairs.

Lord Kelvin has recently celebrated his birthday. Though one of the most eminent of the world's scientists, Lord Kelvin has a most modest view of his own attainments. He once walked incognito through some electrical works, and asked a workman the simple question, "What is electricity?" "I am sure I don't know, sir," the man replied. "Well, I don't either," said Lord Kelvin. He said the other day that, though he had studied hard through fifty years of experimental investigation, he could not help feeling that he really knew no more than he knew when he first began.

It is rather interesting to know that a large number of buttons supposedly made of horn or bone or some such substance are in reality made out of the common potato, which, when treated with certain acids, becomes almost as hard as stone. This quality of the potato adapts it to button making, and a very good grade of button is now made from this tuber. The potato button cannot be distinguished from others save by a careful examination, and even then only by an expert, since they are colored to suit the goods on which they are to be used, and are every whit as good looking as a button of bone or ivory.

The monkey is catching up. He is climbing the evolutionary ladder with an agility to be expected of one of his arboreal habits. There is a spider monkey in Breslau, Germany, which has been operated on for entaract and now wears glasses. For more than a year after it was received at the "zoo" it was very healthy and lively; then it became very quiet, ceased to play, and crouched in a corner. It was examined and found to be suffering from cataract, so it was immediately taken to the eye hospital and operated on. In less than a month it was fitted with a pair of spectacles, which it wears with becoming gravity.

When a wife admits she has a suspicion, how all the other women become interested!

Many a firm has failed because it wasn't firm.



Secretary Metcalf of the Department of Commerce and Labor has ordered the coast survey to make an investigation to ascertain whether there has been any subsidence of the earth's crust on the Pacific coast as a result of the earthquake of April 18 last. This will be necessary in order to rectify existing charts and maps. In India, after the earthquake of 1897, revision of the triangulation showed difference in distance of 25 feet and 13 feet in height. Prof. Omori of Japan, who is investigating the effects of the earthquake in San Francisco, says that, if accurate observations had been taken of the smaller shocks which have followed the great shock, it would be easy to predict when the earth would again tremble. He predicts that small shocks will continue to occur for two years or more, but that there will not be another great shock in that part of the country for fifty years.

Postmaster General Cortelyou has issued an order rescinding the regulation under which patrons of rural mail routes are compelled to purchase boxes from one of the two hundred listed manufacturers who have put on the market 300 different styles of boxes, approved by the department, costing from fifty cents to four dollars each. Patrons of rural routes will be permitted to construct their own boxes to the requirements of the department as to size, durability, safety and protection from the inclemency of the weather. In order to maintain the government protection of the mail placed in rural boxes the patron must secure the approval of the postmaster for the office which serves the route, and paint on the box the words "Approved by the Postmaster General."

Secretary of Agriculture Wilson announces his purpose to enforce thoroughly the new meat inspection law, and said he would go personally to Chicago to organize the inspection force in that city. He said every packing house would have to satisfy him before he would pass it as sanitary, and that the civil service commissions already had a number of inspectors selected. Supervision and inspection would be extended "from the pasture to the package," and the government stamp upon the can would be a "guarantee, not only of the healthfulness of the animal, but also that the product was prepared in sanitary surroundings and with the addition of no deleterious chemical or preservative."

By direction of President Roosevelt orders have been issued that violations of the eight-hour law by contractors on public buildings shall be reported by army and navy officers or other government officers detailed to take charge of such buildings. These reports will be turned over to the Department of Justice, that prosecutions may follow. Labor organizations have reported many violations of the law to the President, who had Commissioner of Labor Neill investigate them. He found the law being freely violated, and it was decided to get the co-operation of the army and navy officers to check the practice.

A surplus of \$26,187,150 is shown by the Treasury Department's statement of the government's financial transactions during the fiscal year ending June 30. The receipts were \$594,591,714, being \$51,400,855 more than in the prior year. The increase is in customs and internal revenues. The expenditures for army, navy, pensions, interest, civil and miscellaneous were comparatively lower than during 1904-05, but were more than offset by the increased expenditures of \$25,504,189 for public works, including the Panama canal disbursement.

The big \$100,000 16-inch gun, with a range of twenty-one miles, which was made by this government, has been discarded. It having been found that, with the power of smokeless powder now in use, it would not stand the strain of fire and consequently would be more dangerous to those who fired it than to the enemy.

In making a promotion in the naval bureau of supplies and accounts, Secretary Bonaparte refused to appoint a man who had been passed over a woman, who had a higher official record. The woman, Miss F. G. Thomas, got the place.

The capital of Alaska was changed from Sitka to Juneau, Thursday, when Gov. Hoggatt rented rooms at the court buildings at Juneau for an office. The Attorney General decided that this action effected the change.

At the War Department Thursday it was announced that Secretary Taft had granted permits to three companies to withdraw from the Niagara River water for power. It permits the Niagara, Lockport and Ontario Company to import from Canada the equivalent of 25,000 horse power from the Ontario Power Company of Canada, and a like amount by the Niagara Power Company of the Canadian company of the same name.

A statement issued by the Department of Commerce and Labor says the foreign commerce of the United States in the fiscal