GENERAL NEWS.

Spinal meningitis is reported epidemic in Texas.

Mrs. John A. Logan is seriously ill at her home in Washington.

Rear-Admiral Lord Charles Beresford is visiting in New York.

The Pope of Rome is seriously ill. It is said he has pneumonia.

The government will send no more troops to the Philippines via the Suez canal.

Major-General Joseph F. Reynolds, retired, is dead at Washington, aged 77 years.

Republican editors in Pennsylvania advise Quay to retire in the interest of harmony.

The inventor of angel's food cake died in New York Friday at the advanced age of 86.

In the Spanish cortes Thursday the debate on the war with the United States continued.

Evansville, Ind., was swept by a tornado last night. Great damage to buildings resulted.

It is proposed to effect a national organization of the union reform party at Cincinnati this week.

Baron Paul Julius Reuter, famous as a news gatherer of Europe, is dying at Nice. He was born in 1816.

The Elliott Square bank in Buffalo, N. Y., has closed its doors. Depositors will be paid upon demand.

Nicholas II, czar of Russia, is reported seriously ill and unable to perform the governmental functions.

McBride's bill to appropriate $100,000 for a public building at Salem was favorably reported to the senate Thursday.

Daniel L. G. Frobisher, a well known trotting horse writer and authority, is dead in New York city, aged 60 years.

El Correspondencia Militaire of Madrid, estimates that the last two years of the war in Cuba cost Spain $40,000,000 pesetas.

The business partner of Secretary of War Alger, A. S. Smith, denies the report that Alger intends to resign his portfolio in the cabinet.

Paddy Shea, the pugilist, was sentenced at Topeka, Kansas, to 30 years in the penitentiary for the murder of Ed Dawson in a saloon row.

A combine having for its object the absorption of the light and power interests of the entire country has just been organized at Pittsburg.

The postoffice department has shipped to Porto Rico 4,000,000 United States postage stamps, with the words "Porto Rico," printed on each.

President McKinley has promised to attend the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Moravian college for women at Bethlehem, Pa., June 14.

In consequence of the breakup of the trans-Atlantic liner combine American line managers have reduced first-class fares to $60 and second-class to $35.

President Zelaya's army has captured Cilit mountain and Aguas Calientas, thus virtually terminating the Bluefields revolution in Nicaragua.

The naval committee of the house has directed a favorable report on the senate bill creating the grade of admiral and intended for Rear-Admiral Dewey.

James Creelman, the special correspondent of the New York Journal at Manila, cables his paper that the back of the insurrection in the Philippines is broken.

The arrival at Honolulu February 6 of the battleship Oregon is reported. The Oregon has been undergoing repairs there, and will proceed at once for Manila.

President Zelaya, of Nicaragua, has been notified by the rebels that they are ready to disarm if the president will guarantee protection to their lives and property.

The steamer Neuvtra Sonora del Carmen has arrived at Manila, bringing news that the American flag has been raised over the island of Cebu, west of the island of Negros.

Marshal Frank D. Mooney was shot and probably fatally wounded at Crawford, Neb., last Sunday by Louis Grossman, late trumpeter of company C First cavalry. Lynching is threatened.

Arrangements have been concluded by which a sealing vessel will search Franz Josef land for Walter Wellman and the members of his expedition to Greenland, unless the explorer returns shortly.

Colonel Amos C. Babcock, an intimate friend of Abraham Lincoln and a prominent figure in abolition times, died in Chicago, Saturday. He was born in New York in 1828 and came to Illinois in 1846.

Mattie Winston killed her husband with a shotgun Wednesday, in Lee county, Va. Her husband had been in the habit of whipping her, and tried again when she killed him. Mrs. Winston is an invalid.

Germany has recalled all of her war vessels from the Philippines and left her affairs under the protection of the United States government, thus removing all cause for suspicion of her intentions to embarrass the United States.

John Ruskin has just celebrated his 80th birthday quietly at his home in the south of England. Only a few friends were admitted to see the great critic and philosopher, whose mind is slowly but steadily failing.

At a caucus of the democratic members of the house, held in Washington city, they declared against the retention of the Philippines. Congressman Joe Wheeler only dissented from this policy on the part of the democrats in congress.

The Quay conspiracy trial in Philadelphia has been postponed until April 10. It is asserted that the discovery was made that the jury had been tampered with in the interest of Senator Quay and his son, the defendants in the case.

A grand funeral mass for the repose of the soul of the late President Faure of France was celebrated in the Roman Catholic cathedral at St. Petersburg Thursday, Emperor Nicholas, the court and all the government and diplomatic officials attending.

A ministerial crisis in Spain is imminent. The cabinet is convinced of the impossibility of avoiding defeat in the final vote on the bill for the cession of the Philippines, as the opposition may increase, while the government cannot hope to gain a single additional supporter.

The second trial of Mrs. Fayne Strahan Moore, the Oregon girl, has commenced in New York. Mrs. Moore is accused of complicity with her husband, now in Sing Sing, to extort money from Martin Mahan. Mrs. Moore was an Oregón girl—a daughter of Judge Strahan, former justice of the Oregon supreme court.

With the impressive ceremonies of the Episcopal ritual, the Rev. T. N. Morrison, for years rector of the Church of the Epiphany, was on Wednesday consecrated bishop of Iowa by Right Rev. William Edward Maclaren, by whom, nearly a quarter of a century ago Dr. Morrison had been ordained as a priest.

Amos B. Cole, of San Diego, Calif., charged with the murder of his wife, whose charred corpse was found in the burned ruins of their dwelling last January, was discharged from custody on the preliminary examination on the ground that, although there are many suspicious circumstances against the prisoner, the evidence did not warrant holding him for trial.

The meeting of the river and harbor committee of congress on Monday developed a new phase of the interocean canal question. Chairman Burton took the lead in favoring a full government investigation, both of the Panama and Nicaragua routes, before committing the government, and after the meeting Mr. Burton expressed the view that the sentiment of the committee was opposed to the senate Nicaragua amendment and favored full investigation.

The most positive identification of Jesse James as one of the Leeds train robbers was made in the courtroom at Kansas City, Saturday, by William J. Smith, of Stockberry, Mo., who was a passenger on the Missouri Pacific train that was held up. Smith testified that he got out when the train was stopped and walked up among the robbers, one of whom placed a gun against his breast and ordered him back into the car. He declared young James, who was a prisoner in the court room, was that man.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST NEWS.

The annual convention of the state college Y. M. C. A. closed at Salem Sunday evening.

It is announced that Dan Burns will withdraw from the California fight, in the interest of harmony.

The La Follette railway maximum freight rate bill was killed in the Washington legislature Tuesday.

Reports from Willamette valley points state that grain crops came off practically uninjured after the late cold weather.

Walter Cleaviand, aged 14 years, fell under a moving train at Grant's Pass last Sunday and suffered a severely mangled foot.

President James J. Hill, of the Great Northern, and President A. L. Mohler, of the O. R. & N., held a conference in Seattle Sunday.

F. C. Brewer, a business man of Tacoma, was held up and robbed of his money, watch and papers in the streets of that city Tuesday night.

There are 22 grain ships in the Columbia river to load with wheat, having a total carrying capacity of about 50,000 tons, or 1,500,000 bushels.

Much stock has been lost on the bottom lands along the Callapooia river by reason of the heavy rains of the past few days and consequent flood.

Slot machines are still running in Astoria. The officials have not as yet attempted to enforce the Proebstel law against nickel-in-the-slot machines.

Allen & Woodward, druggists, who have been partners in Corvallis for 30 years, have recently moved for the first time. They are one of the oldest firms in the state.

The police in Portland have not received any money on account of salary since December. The city will not have any money for police purposes before April.

Mrs. Jessie Cole died in Portland, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. J. V. Beach, a few days ago, aged 82 years. She had been a resident of Oregon for 35 years.

Major John C. Bell, an Oregon pioneer of the '40s, suffered the fracture of a thigh Wednesday morning, in Portland, the result of colliding with J. C. Walker.

Cottage Grove, Lane county, is under three feet of water in some portions, and many families have been driven from their homes by the flood of the past two days.

The tax roll for 1898 in Clackamas county shows a total taxable property of $4,150,039 and the total tax to be collected by the sheriff from this property is $138,157.81.

President James J. Hill, of the Great Northern railroad, authorized a denial of the report that the Great Northern would build a branch line into the Republic mining district. He said the business would not justify the extension.

Claude Branton, the condemned murderer at Eugene, showed but little concern when notified that the supreme court had sustained the decision of the circuit court in his case. His attorney states that an application will be made for a rehearing.

THE LAW AND THE BIBLE.

The Letter of the Holy Book is Contrary to Law.

A decision in a remarkable case has been rendered by the high court of England. It denies the right of a parent to refuse to summon medical aid in cases of serious illness in his family, and affirms the verdict of manslaughter returned by a jury in the lower court. The facts are given in the London Daily Chronicle of December 12.

Defendant was a member of a faith cure sect known as the Peculiar People, whose religious doctrines as to the treatment of sick people were based on the epistle of James, chapter 4, 14th and 15th verses: "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

The Peculiar People did not allege that medical aid was there expressly forbidden, but said that to make use of it was to indicate a want of faith in the Lord.

It was shown at the trial that the defendant was a kind father, and bore an excellent character; that he was able to employ a physician, and that he did everything in his power to save his child except to call a doctor.

Judgment on the appeal was rendered by Lord Russell, chief justice. He said that the law required that a parent must take such steps as the general experience of mankind showed to be proper, provided of course, that the means of rendering such treatment were within the reasonable power and competence of the person upon whom the duty rested to render them. The proposition of the learned counsel for the defendant was that because this particular parent was in other respects an affectionate parent, and was willing to supply all that could be done for the care and nourishment of the child, except the one thing which was a necessity, he was not guilty of wilful neglect, because of the peculiar religious views which he entertained. But where could the line be drawn? One could not shut one's eyes to the dangers of the view presented. There was, in his opinion, ample evidence to justify a conviction, and the summing up of his learned brother was perfectly right on law. The conviction would therefore be affirmed. All the other judges concurred.

DEAD AND WOUNDED.

The Result So Far of the War With the Philippine Insurgents.

General Otis reports, from Manila, under date of February 27th, the casualties by regiments as follows:

	Killed	Wounded.
California	3	28
Washington	14	59
Idaho	6	29
Fourth cavalry	0	2
Four-teenth infantry	14	35
North Dakota	0	1
We-ntieth	1	2
Sixth artillery	0	2
Third artillery	6	35
Twenty-fourth Kansas	6	28
Montana	5	41
Tenth Pennsylvania	2	7
Colorado	3	7
Nebraska	8	24
South Dakota	5	24
Utah artillery	3	6
Twenty third infantry	1	1
Thirteenth Minnesota	0	13
Oregon	1	1
Eighteenth infantry	1	8
Medical department	1	1
Total	69	362

Lieutenant-Colonel Fife, First Washington, was not acquitted at the court-martial trial at Manila, as announced from Tacoma. On the contrary he was found guilty of debauchery on the transport Valcenia on Thanksgiving eve, and was suspended from duty for one month and deprived of one month's pay.

CENTENNIAL IN THE NAVY.

Captain Barry and What He Accomplished One Hundred Years Ago.

Though the American navy is not so very old, it is plenty old enough to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the first shot ever fired by an American frigate against a foreign enemy—for the struggle with Great Britain on the sea during the war of the revolution was, after all, a domestic struggle. And the shot fired was a good one, and had no less an effect than the sinking of the enemy's vessel without the need for firing a second, which is an excellent beginning, leading up to no less excellent an ending.

In 1798 the French directory made itself obnoxious to the United States in more ways than one. It demanded that America should take up the struggle then going on with England. This was declined. Then, being very young and inexperienced, the directory demanded that the government of this country should pay tribute. This being refused also, a desultory sort of warfare began between the two nations, the French privateers beginning the trouble by capturing several American merchantmen. It was needful that the French should be taught a lesson, and the brand-new navy of the United States, made up of the most powerful ships of their class afloat, though none of them were much larger than frigates, sailed down to the West Indies, where most of the trouble was going on.

At this same time Great Britain was at war with France, with the result that two or three times American and British men-of-war came within an inch of opening fire upon one another, each taking the other for a Frenchman. Though not allies, this resulted in the elaboration of a set of private signals for use between the war ships of the two nations, who were then, for the only time in history, engaged in fighting a common enemy.

There were two squadrons of American cruisers in the year 1799, one under command of Captain Thomas Truxton, with the Constellation for flagship, the other under Captain John Barry in the United States, as good a frigate as ever flew the stars and stripes. Early in the morning of February 3, 1799, this last-named ship was standing to the windward of the Island of Martinique, waiting for something to heave in sight. It was not long waiting, for a sail with a French cut came up over the horizon as soon as the sun gave light enough to see by, and the United States went out to investigate. Closer acquaintance developed the fact that she was a privateer, and, a brisk breeze blowing, the foreigner was soon within gunshot.

Finding himself outsailed, the Frenchman turned about and did the best he could to get to windward, perhaps thinking better of his abilities there. Preferring not to run any risks—and the French were tricksters in those days—Captain Barry ordered a shot fired, to prove that he meant business. One of the 24 pound guns spoke in response. Now, the 24-pound gun of those days was hardly larger than the projectile of the 13-inch gun of these, but, if not as deep as a well or as large as a church door, it was enough, and it served. It caught the Frenchman between wind and water, and the Amour de la Patrie, which was the name of the privateer, began to fill and settle with a promptitude which left everything on board in a fright.

The sails came down, the officers and crew ran hither and thither in alarm, with the shrieks which testified to the presence of a more excitable race, and there was little hope remaining. The United States lowered her boats, and it is a curious fact that the first man to reach the Amour de la Patrie was that good and gallant man, Stephen Decatur, then a midshipman. It was a matter of some amusement to the Americans to find the Frenchmen, all of them a godless race by order of the supreme authority of the republic, one and indivisible, calling on heaven for aid with a loud voice and both hands raised to attract attention from above. But they were too frantic to be helped by men under the circumstances, so Captain Barry signaled them to put about and make for the frigate. This was done with the speed of desperation, the ship sank near the United States, and all the officers and men, 80 in number, were saved after they had jumped overboard, clear of the wreck.

With his prisoners aboard, Captain Barry sailed on to the French port of Guadeloupe, where there were a number of American merchantmen moored as prizes, their crews all suffering agonies in loathsome cells. It was the intention to effect an exchange of prisoners, the more so that the United States picked up the privateer Tartufe with sixty more Frenchmen aboard on her way. But, though a flag of truce was hoisted, the authorities at Guadeloupe opened fire. Thereupon Captain John sailed around the harbor, firing broadsides as he went, dismounting a number of cannon on shore and leaving a fragrant memory of boldness and skill behind.

HISTORY AND ARISTOCRATS.

If the historians go on as they are now doing there is going to be trouble. They have caught the pestiferous "scientific spirit." They not only search out facts with the callous indifference of an expert accountant looking for false entries in some errant cashier's books, but they have latterly begun to insist upon truth-telling itself as a positive virtue. It is not merely that they relate uncomfortable facts without gloss or disguise, but they insist upon interpreting the facts without romance or patriotism, or loyalty to the "forefathers," or respect for the descendants of the forefathers, or any other of those saving perversions which have laid the secure foundations of American aristocracy.

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Edward Eggleston, for example, proclaiming in the preface to his "The Beginners of a Nation" that he has been unable to treat his own Virginian ancestors, or the Pilgrim fathers, or the rest of them, "otherwise than unreverently." And in his book he relentlessly prints a great multitude of facts and records to show not only that the men of Jamestown were an idle, quarrelsome lot, and the Pilgrim fathers and Bay Colony people a set of absurdly cantankerous, intolerant, hair-splitting theologians, but that all of them were thoroughly "common" people, farmers, shopkeepers and the like, without even a relationship to a lord or to what was called a "gentleman" in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He shows that "Colonial Dames" milked cows, made butter, wore linsey-woolsey and submitted themselves to the superior guidance of their farmer or tradesman husbands in a way that our new aristocracy of Colonial Dames and Daughters of the Revolution would never think of doing.

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Now, if this sort of thing goes on what is to become of the "first families of Virginia," the "descendants of the Mayflower company," the Delft blooded, Holland society of descendants from the Dutch traders, shoemakers and the like of New Amsterdam? If these historians go on it must presently appear that proof of descent from any of these early settlers, so far from being a patent of nobility, is in fact a demonstration of thoroughly plebeian origin.

Then what is to become of all the aristocratic orders recently established?

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Here is Prof. McMaster, another of the cold-blooded, unromantic, truth-telling historians, actually amusing the Authors Club in New York with an anecdote to this effect:

A very aristocratic lady of the "Colonial Dames" organization, he says, came to him recently for information. She said that in her researches in the family history she had discovered that her primordial colonial ancestor had held a distinguished office, and she desired to know from Prof. McMaster what were the peculiar dignities of that office.

"What was your ancestor's office?" Mr. McMaster asked.

"He was set down," the aristocratic lady said, "as cordwainer."

We are most of us descended from good, plain, honest, narrow-minded, common people. Our pride ought to be not that we are their descendants but that we have outgrown their narrownesses and built a great, free, enlightened nation upon the wretched foundation of prejudice and persecution that they laid.

THE WHEAT SUPPLY.

Sir William Crookes lately gave to the world a presentment of the wheat problem of the future which has been met by a storm of criticism. According to his computation, and it is made with careful fidelity to detail, the continuous production of wheat upon the lands now devoted to its culture will, in about a third of a century, exhaust the soil of nitrogen to an extent that will greatly limit the production unless the laboratory comes to the assistance of the farmer with an adequate artificial supply. The first storm of criticism with which this estimate was met has abated somewhat, and the more the subject is looked into the more reasonable the proposition appears. Among the latest analyses of the subject is a paper in the North American Review by John Hyde, statistician of the department of agriculture, under the head of "America and the Wheat Problem." Mr. Hyde in this paper carefully reviews the statistics of production, computes the area of available wheat lands, and reaches the conclusion that in 1931, when, it is estimated, the population of the United States will reach 130,000,000, it will be a difficult task for this country to produce its own wheat consumption, assuming that the soil may maintain nearly its present supply of nitrogen.

* * *

In the principal wheatgrowing sections the soil is being robbed year after year of its accumulated nitrogen, with scarcely a pretense of restoring it. No argument is required to support this statement, it being a matter of common knowledge. On a large area of wheat lands leguminous plants, as clover, cowpeas, etc., do not thrive, and if they did the resort to rotation would limit the wheat crop to every alternate year. It is true that in the older sections of the wheat area rotation with legumes is somewhat extensively practiced, but these, and especially clover, will not grow on some lands, and they are either being robbed of nitrogen or fertilized by commercial preparations which cannot be profitably employed in wheatgrowing.

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The Crookes idea of furnishing a nitrogen supply by extracting it directly fom the atmosphere awaits development. Pending this, it is suggested that a temporary supply may be furnished by the utilization of the ammonia by-product from coke-making. Utilization of the supply wasted in the form of sewage is also regarded as practicable, and from the standpoint of public health, desirable. It is held that these two sources of nitrogen supply should be able to carry the world well over the period named by Sir William Crookes—a single generation. But it is not at all certain that they will suffice for two generations if the per capita of wheat consumption continues to be as great as at present. Upon this "if," indeed, may depend the solution of the whole matter, since it is in the line of probability, at least, that civilized man will change the proportion of wheat in his food supply, and so adjust the demand to the supply. This may be considered even more probable than that he will resort to extraordinary measures, such as the extraction of nitrogen from the atmosphere, to keep up the present ratio of wheat production and consumption.—Portland Oregonian.

The Old Story.

Rev. Dr. Swallow, the reform candidate for governor of Pennsylvania, started a daily paper at the state capital. It has failed, for lack of support. He says he sent appeals to the ministers of the state, to subscribe for the sort of paper they had been demanding, but not one in a thousand responded. Reformers throughout the state were asked to advertise, but very few did so. They would give the good doctor and his cause their moral support but no money. So he retires from the newspaper business wiser than he was and somewhat sad. The doctor will understand henceforth that very many people like to use newspapers to their advantage, if some one else pays the bills.

Steel and Wire.

It is stated that the American Steel and Wire Company has obtained contracts to fence in nearly the whole of Australia and South Africa with barbed wire. The company is also getting orders from Japan, which was never heard of before. It is turning out 50 miles of woven wire fence daily this in the winter, and is thirty days behind its orders. It has a single contract for 1000 miles of barbed wire from Australia, and is now negotiating a contract for wire for railroads in South Africa, which, when completed, will be the largest single order for wire that was ever known to the trade.

Demand for Diamonds.

One of the most remarkable results of the recent Hispano-American war is the largely increased demand for diamonds in America. Patriotic jubilation in the male bosom manifests itself in a great variety of ways, sparkling through Pommery or taking a rich blood hue from fruitly port. The ladies, however, rejoice in brilliants. So great has been the demand for diamonds during the past few months that an appreciation of at least 20 per cent has taken place in the price paid by the public.—South Africa.

The Youngest Senator.

William J. Bryan and A. J. Beveridge, republican nominee for United States senator from Indiana, once took part on different sides in an intercollegiate oratorical contest, and the latter's friends are pleased to recount the fact that he secured first honors, and Mr. Bryan second. Mr. Beveridge is the youngest republican senator ever elected from Indiana, his present age being 36. The youngest man who ever represented the Hoosier state as senator was Jesse D. Bright, who was elected in 1845, at the age of 32.

Ambassador Choate.

Joseph H. Choate wears a 7 5-8 hat, the biggest made for the trade, and only kept in stock by the largest stores. His head is what scientific hatmakers with classical edifications call Dolichacephatic, or shaped like this:

He generally wears a high hat, about two seasons shy of style, but owns a broad-brimmed soft hat for vacation use. He never wears a derby.

The time has come when men with hearts and brains
Must rise and take the misdirected reins
Of government, too long left in the hands
Of tricksters and of thieves. He who stands
And sees the mighty vehicle of State
Hauled through the mire to some ignoble fate,
And makes not such bold protest as he can,
Is no American.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Advices from Dawson says that men are dying of scurvy in the suburbs of that city. Recently John McPhail was found almost dead in a tent on Victoria gulch. His food was gone, and he was waiting for death, unable to do anything to help himself.

WORK OF THE WEATHER BUREAU.

Each year a concise report of the chief of the weather bureau gives an idea of the splendid work which this bureau is doing. During the latter part of the fiscal year which ended June 30, 1898, it became apparent that the methods of gathering information of the approach of the West Indian hurricanes, which serve so admirably as warnings for the Gulf and Atlantic coasts, were wholly inadequate for a service which should cover the waters of the West Indies in which upward of two hundred naval and transport vessels of the United States were operated. The presence of this large fleet in the hurricane region made it imperative that precautionary measures should be taken. Accordingly a bill was submitted to congress on January 16, 1898, authorizing the bureau to establish and operate observation stations throughout the West Indies and along the shores of the Caribbean Sea, and this bill became a law, and arrangements were made for making meteorological observations and displaying hurricane signals at Kingston, Santiago de Cuba, Santo Domingo, Barbados, Port of Spain, St. Thomas, Curacoa, and Barranquilla. At the above named places observations will be made twice daily and cabled to Kingston and the central office in Washington. Even during hostilities Prof. Carbonell forwarded daily reports from Havana, which were especially gratifying to officials of the bureau as well as to scientists all over the world. Although the protection of our naval forces was a primary object in the extension of the storm warning system to the West Indies, other considerations scarcely less important made the step a wise and beneficent one. Now that the exigencies of war permit the removal of a greater part of the fleet from West Indian waters, the meteorological service will still serve a useful purpose in the protection it will afford to the commerce of that very extensive region.

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Steps have been taken to equip about 30 stations in the Mexican republic by that government with the most modern type of meteorological instruments and to establish a service similar to our own. Additional observation stations have been established in arid and subarid regions of the West. It is believed that the additional stations will not only assist in the development of agricultural and industrial interests in the respective states in which they are located, but will also be of material benefit in improving warnings and forecasts, especially for the regions west of the Rocky mountains.

The work of producing a thoroughly satisfactory kite was begun in the latter part of 1895. Various forms of kites were devised and thoroughly tested and many valuable laws relating to the strength and efficiency of the kites were developed. The kite finally adopted for practical work was an improved form of the Hargrave cellular type. A popular idea prevails that any one possessed of a few materials and a little ingenuity can construct a thorough-going kite. This is not true as regards the present weather bureau kite. The size and construction of every detail have to be worked out with reference to the several strains at the different points, securing thereby the maximum strength with the minimum weight. Suitable forms of automatic registration apparatus have also been devised. Sixteen stations have been equipped with kites and other necessary instruments, and the observers chosen for the work were, with three exceptions, drawn from the list of eligibles from the civil service commission. These men were called to Washington and given a practical course of instruction in the art of flying and managing kites. The period of construction extended from the 17th of March to the 18th of April. If each station had made an ascension daily during June, five hundred and ten ascensions could have been made, whereas two hundred and seventy-eight actual ascensions were made, in each of which the elevation attained exceeded 1000 feet. The weather bureau kite stations are now in a position, as far as means and applicances are concerned, to obtain a complete series of observations. It is expected that the kite observations will add largely to our knowledge of temperature of the gradients aloft, and thus contribute to the solution of the problem of reducing barometer readings on the plateau to sea level.

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As is usual, all forecasts and warnings issued by the department are of the greatest possible value to the community at large. The true measure of efficiency of the weather bureau is found in the promptness and accuracy with which notice of the approach and force of severe atmospheric disturbances is given. The efficiency of the bureau during the year 1897-98 was fully up to the high standard of the previous year. Hurricanes, wind and snow storms, freezing weather, and floods were heralded by timely and accurate warnings, and undoubtedly saved many lives and a vast amount of property. The distribution of the forecasts was in accordance with methods tried and proved by the experience of previous years. The daily press, the mail, telegraph, telephone, railroad bulletins, etc., were utilized to the greatest possible extent; and forecasts, warnings, maps, and bulletins were issued and distributed to the extent of 23,531,500, which is a most remarkable showing; 5,239,800 weather maps of all classes were issued, and 108,600 bulletins were distributed during the year. Each map or bulletin contains daily forecasts and statistics showing the weather conditions over some part of the United States. In the large cities the map contains a large number of reports. These are exposed on bulletin boards, etc., by boards of trade, business houses and public offices. There is also a very considerable number issued to the schools and colleges for purely educational work. Climatic work was carried on in the cotton, corn, and wheat regions, consisting in reporting the daily temperature and rainfall at 129 stations in the cotton region and 131 in the corn and wheat region. The establishment of an agricultural experiment station in Alaska in April, 1898, led to the detail of an official of the weather bureau for duty in organizing a climate and crop service in that territory. The central station of the new service is situated at Sitka, at which point continuous observations are registered. Various publications and the Monthly Weather Review were continued.

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Among the interesting features of the scientific work carried out by the bureau were observations on the rainfall and outflow of the great lakes, minute oscillations by the great lakes, and meteorological chart of the great lakes. In 1891, 633 miles of telegraph lines on the sea coast and frontier were turned over to the weather bureau as appropriate to a purely meteorological service. These lines traverse thinly settled regions or connect islands with the mainland by submarine cable at points where there is not enough commercial business to warrant the construction of a private line. These lines serve a double purpose. First they enable the bureau to receive early information of changes in the weather of exposed points on our coast, and they permit of display of storm warnings near several of the great highways of vessels leaving or entering our ports.

Instruction given in meteorology in the United States varies in its character as the subject is considered as a part of a course in climatology and geology, or a course in mathematics and physics. The former method of treatment is appropriate to high schools and to those who contemplate becoming observers in the weather bureau. The latter method of treatment is appropriate to those in universities, and should fit one for the prosecution of important work in dynamic meteorology. The importance of the subject has been kept in mind specially in the assignment of observers to duty at points where there are colleges and universities not already provided with instructors in meteorology. Prof. Cleveland Abbe, editor of the Monthly Weather Review, has been requested to prepare a report of the general conditions of the subject in the United States. A meteorological observatory has been erected at Columbia University, and a complete course of instruction in this subject will undoubtedly follow. Important improvements in experimental equipment were also introduced during the year, and classes of students visit weather bureau stations regularly, and advantage is taken of this opportunity to instruct large numbers of pupils in the use of meteorological general work of the bureau.

LIQUID AIR.

At a recent session of the American Chemical Society in the College of the City of New York Chalres E. Tripler gave an interesting demonstration of the manufacture and properties of liquid air. Among those present was Professor Raoul Pictet of Geneva, who was one of the first scientists to liquify oxygen. Great interest was manifested by the spectators in the extraordinary experiment made by Mr. Tripler. Several gallons of liquid air were brought into the laboratory and Mr. Tripler sprinkled it over the crowd. The liquid, which is extremely cold to the touch, evaporated in a minute.

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The curious effects of the liquid on different metals were shown. Copper immersed in the steaming fluid in a few moments became soft, steel grew brittle as glass and was as easily broken. Mr. Tripler filled a tin cup with the liquid, gave the cup a squeeze and it fell at his feet in fragments.

A piece of steel bicycle tubing, plunged into the liquid and then struck with a hammer, crumbled to pieces. A rubber ball, dipped into liquid air, froze and turned white, and when thrown to the floor cracked like an eggshell. Whisky poured into a glass containing liquid air at 312 degrees Fahrenheit froze in a few moments. Alcohol requires a temperature 200 degrees below zero to freeze it, but Mr. Tripler formed an icicle out of a glass of alcohol by pouring it into the extraordinary fluid.

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To show the paradoxical nature of the liquid Mr. Tripler filled a tea kettle with it and placed it on a lighted gas stove. Then he poured a glass of water into the kettle. As the heat of the stove increased the liquid air grew colder, until the water was taken from the kettle in the form of a lump of ice.

"This is the air we breathe, nothing less," said Mr. Tripler. "It is oxygen and nitrogen, and the nitrogen boils off first."

He obtained pure oxygen by pouring the liquid from one glass to another to hasten evaporation. Then, placing some of the liquid in a rock salt cup, he showed that oxygen gas is magnetic, the fluid attaching itself to a magnet overhead.

Professor R. Ogden Doremus, at the close of the session, performed an interesting experiment by burning a diamond in liquid oxygen. He placed the diamond in a coil of platinum, passed an electric current through the coil and the diamond became white hot. Plunged into the liquid oxygen the little gem burned away with a brilliant glow.

McKINLEY AND ALGER.

Secretary Alger resignation reports continue to fill the air in Washington. There is no foundation for the rumors that the secretary of war intends to retire of his own motion and none whatever for the story that the president intends to force him out of the cabinet, or that their relations are strained. The president has gone out of his way several times lately to prove that he is on close terms with his minister of war, and that he entertains for that gentleman the kindliest feeling. He has repeatedly stated that the responsibility for the conduct of the war is upon his own shoulders as much as upon General Alger's, or more, and has let it be known that attacks upon the head of the military branch of the administration are attacks upon the executive. His position in this respect has been stated with emphasis and directness many times and to many persons.

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It is not difficult to trace the persistent reports of Alger's resignation to their source. They emanate with frequent periodicity in the columns of two or three New York journals which have been engaged for months in reflagging villification and defamation of the war office and of Secretary Alger and Adjutant General Corbin. Singularly enough, say the friends of McKinley and Alger, the newspapers which have been expending the largest volume of energy in attacks upon the war department take the General Miles end of the unhappy controversy between the general of the army and the officials of the department. Direct proof that the campaign to drive General Alger from the cabinet originates with and is being pushed by General Miles is lacking, but the secretary of war's most vicious and tireless enemies are found among the friends of General Miles.

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The president has noted the coincidence and has taken the precaution to keep himself fully advised of every development and every move on both sides. He is thoroughly informed as to the merits of the situation. He feels that those who are working most zealously against General Alger are not inspired by motives of friendship for himself, and is therefore not favorably impressed with the anti-Alger crusade.

A Church Debt Lifted.

Rev. D. C. Garrett, of Trinity church, Portland, has lifted the indebtedness on that institution by selling to its members $40,000 in bonds, on which no interest is to be paid until the principal is forthcoming, also. The bonds are to run five years. The smallest bond was $100 and the largest $10,000. Rev. Garrett secured the total subscriptions to the bonds inside of two weeks. This work places the church's finances in good condition, so that the whole debt can be wiped out within the term of the bonds.

A Great Project.

An extraordinary scheme has been mooted in India, namely, one for the construction of a pneumatic tube line 4400 miles in length between London and Bombay for the transportation of mails. The theory is that these could thus be conveyed from city to city in 24 hours. The engineering difficulties include the great height of some of the mountains to be crossed in Asia Minor and the maintenance of power house in remote places. The air pipe project is still very much in the air.

Roland B. Molineux, son of General Leslie Molineux of Brooklyn, was arrested in New York Monday night charged with murdering Mrs. Katherine J. Adams in that city on December 28, 1898. He was locked up in the Tombs prison. The coroner's jury, which has been investigating the case for several weeks, brought in a verdict accusing Molineux of the crime. A witness testified that he had rented Molineux a private letter box in the name of H. C. Barnett. Handwriting experts to the number of a dozen testified that the address on the poison package sent to Cornish by which Mrs. Adams was poisoned, was written by Molineux. There was other evidence that tended to show that Molineux was the guilty man.

AN ICE WELL.

A correspondent writes from Lame Deer, Montana, to the Spokesman-Review, as follows: I suppose I ought to begin this story in a half apologetic way, for I can scarcely blame anyone for refusing to believe that well water can freeze in the hot weather and thaw when the icy season comes. The well is to be seen, however, for I have seen it, and "seeing is believing." I will describe it without any effort to embellish the recital. The ice well, as it is called now, was sunk in the early eighties, probably in '82 or '83, by a party of men prospecting for gold. They had found indications of copper ore and began operations on the east side of Greenleaf creek, which is one of the tributaries of Rosebud. At that time there was some talk through the Yellowstone valley of gold being found in paying quantities in the Wolf mountains and the report caused quite a number to go prospecting for the yellow metal.

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The party I have referred to sunk their well about 40 feet. E. Wilder and Jim Campbell, two of the prospectors, were the last to abandon the neighborhood when their dreams of gold finds faded. A man named William Shantle came to the place later, and, building his house there, attached the well to his domestic arrangements. He soon discovered the amazing peculiarities of this well, and made good use of the freakiness by keeping his vegetables and fresh food in the natural refrigerator. He told me that no matter how warm the summer, the well was always frozen solid, while in the winter the conditions were exactly reversed.

* * *

Last summer I went over to see the sight for myself. The ice was then about eight feet from the top of the well and was solid, as I tested it with heavy weights. The greater the heat of the day the harder the ice was frozen. On real hot days icicles formed from the dripping water on the sidewalls at times 18 or 20 inches in length, while on cool days they would not form at all.

The shaft is situated on what is called Small Point, the side of a ridge between the main Greenleaf creek and a ravine running out from the creek. It is a quarter of a mile from the top of the divide in a young growth of pine timber, having an eastern exposure. The formations seem to be of volcanic nature. From that part of the sidewalls which are exposed at the well and the surrounding country, I should say, the whole formation had at one time passed through active volcanic action, but not being very well versed in the science of geology I do not venture to express an opinion with regard to the reason for the well acting in so strange a manner.

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The Odessa correspondent of the Daily Mail, referring to the order which has gone to the United States for 8000 tons of rails for the Manchurian railway, says: "The American price was 57 kopecks per pood; the lowest European tender was 72 kopecks, and the Russian tender was very much higher."

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