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HEADLIGHT PIRATE.

Doles Out Gems of Current Topics and Events.

The suggestion that money be used to bring about a truce in the Philippines, in other words that the United States shall adopt the plan of Spain with Aguinaldo and the other Filipino leaders of buying them off—is said to receive no consideration from the Washington government. It will not be approved by any considerable portion of the American people. It is possible that an offer of a few million dollars to the Filipino leaders would induce them to cease hostilities and accept American rule. The fact that Spain found them purchasable appears to justify the opinion that they could be bought by the United States government. If so, it would admittedly be less costly than subjugating them and many lives would be saved. But there are two obvious objections to such a proposition. In the first place it would not be creditable to this republic to purchase peace by bribing the Filipino leaders.

REFERRING to the effort of the democracy to masquerade as peculiarly the foe of trusts, the Philadelphia Press says the effort will fail if the republican party places itself right before the country on this question. "The republican party," says that paper, "has nothing to fear from this question of trusts if the people are fully and accurately informed on the subject. They should be so informed." The position of the republican party on this question is shown in the fact that it enacted the anti-trust law of 1890 and that it was a republican administration that made the only serious effort to enforce that act. The succeeding democratic administration continued in a perfunctory way the proceedings begun by its predecessor, but so far as possible, through its attorney generals, it discredited the anti-trust law. The republican party is on record against all combinations of capital organized in trust, or otherwise, to control arbitrarily the condition of trade among our citizens. A republican congress must not fail to give this record whatever support is within its power.

THE Chicago Tribune recalls in connection with the present Samoan trouble ex-Secretary Gresham's not only interesting but prophetic comment upon the Berlin act of 1889 "for the neutrality and autonomous government of the Samoan Islands" through a tripartite foreign government over the natives. Mr. Gresham, we are told, then declared we had gained nothing "beyond the expenses, the responsibilities and the entanglements that have so far been the only fruits of our relations with Samoa." He claimed that the act of Berlin, "besides involving us in an entangling alliance, had utterly failed to correct, if, indeed, it had not aggravated, the evils it was designed to prevent." In saying that these utterances of nearly a decade ago have been strangely fulfilled the Tribune is eminently correct. But more strange, it goes farther and admits that "it has become more than ever apparent that the triple control in Samoa is cumbersome, ineffectual and productive of international dangers out of all proportion to the paltry group of islands in question. The United States should seize the earliest opportunity to withdraw from this anomalous and impractical arrangement. The coaling station at Pago Pago harbor is the only interest this nation has in Samoa, and the sooner it disencumbers itself of the Berlin compact the wiser it will be."

AN AGENT of the Government just returned from Cuba reports that the only

sentiment he found there in favor of annexation to the United States was among the resident Spaniards and large property-holders, says the New York World. The Spaniards of course would have preferred the continuance of Spanish rule, but now that it is done for they want American government rather than any that the Cubans, with their large uneducated class, are ever likely to set up. They are concerned for that order upon which depend the security of property and the prosperous conduct of affairs. The educated young Cubans, for the most part, desire a republic, if only to try their hands at governing. The great mass of the people distrust Americans and do not much care for the maintenance of order. All observations of this character are interesting, but they furnish no secure grounds of prediction as to the future of the island. The question is not one to be decided just now. American occupation and control will continue for some time to come. Emigration from this and other countries, the investment of capital in developing resources, and the success of American administration in improving the condition of life, will pretty certainly have their effect upon opinion there. Similar causes made Texas far more American than Mexican long before that State was added to the Union.

FOUR states will be only partially represented in the senate at the coming session owing to failure of the legislature to elect successors to retiring members. These states are Pennsylvania, Delaware, California and Utah. Of the four three of them had republican and one—Utah—democratic legislative majorities. Thus factional quarrels have deprived the party of votes which may be needed during the next two years, and it is by no means certain that the next legislatures in Delaware has been more often democratic than republican and California has on numerous occasions elected a democratic legislature.

THE country will anxiously await further information in regard to the officers and men of Dewey's fleet who were ambushed and captured by the Filipinos. There is natural apprehension that these men may not be treated as prisoners of war and be required to be by civilized nations, but will be subjected to cruelties, if not put to death. This fear, it appears, is not entertained at Washington, where it is said that the few Americans who had before fallen into the hands of the enemy were being well treated and also the Spanish prisoners.

THE state of Iowa has paid the last of its floating debt and has a surplus of over \$200,000 in the treasury to meet running expenses. Iowa is reaping the reward of republican prosperity and economical republican administration.

ACCORDING to the best estimated fully 1,000,000 workers have been granted an increase of wages since the first of the year. That makes at least 1,000,000 men who cannot be convinced by the calamities that there is no prosperity in the land under republican rule.

THE fate of the meat inspection bill which is before the Reichstag, a matter of no small interest to the live stock growers and packers of this country, is uncertain. As was expected the measure is vigorously opposed by the agrarians, who take the grounds that it is more favorable to foreign than to home producers. They particularly urge that American meats should not be exempted from the regulations, but at least should be placed on an equality, as to inspection, with German meats, and they are likely to win support for this view outside of their own party. The bill is really liberal in its terms and its enactment would be helpful to American meat exports, but the indications are not favorable to its passage, at least in the present form and it is said to be doubtful whether the government will accept it if greatly amended. Made to suit the agrarian view it would, of course, be of little value of our trade and it appears to be the earnest desire of the government to remove the existing discrimination against our meat products, by placing them on an equal footing with those of other countries, which is all that

could reasonably be asked. The debate on the measure Monday disclosed the fact that the army beef investigation has received attention in Europe and has made a most unfavorable impression. There is no doubt, as we have already pointed out, that this scandal will work serious injury to our foreign trade in meats and it is likely to prove a strong influence against the German inspection bill.

THE PLETHORA OF GOLD.

The bank and the Treasury alike are suffering a novel embarrassment. They have too much gold.

There is a cash balance of \$281,330,878 in the Treasury, of which \$241,496,016 is in gold, while the small remainder is divided between Treasury notes, greenbacks and about four and a quarter millions of net silver.

At the same time the banks have so great a glut of gold that their storage facilities are overtaxed, and to get rid of the burden they are paying a large proportion than ever before of customs dues in the yellow metal. Thus during March, 1897, no gold was received for customs; during March 1898, the proportion of gold received was 17.6 per cent.; during March, 1899, it has no less than 85.6 per cent., and during the first ten days of April it rose to 89.1 per cent.

Americans do not and will not use gold in ordinary business. This is partly because of long habituation to the more convenient paper money and partly because we have small notes. In England where the smallest Bank of England note is for £5, or \$25, and in France, where the smallest is 50¢, or \$1.00, gold passes freely from hand to hand and a large amount of it is kept in circulation. Here we hurry our gold to bank and the banks hustle it into the Treasury.

The present plethora of the more precious metal confutes some economic theories and disproves a great many political prophecies, but "facts are stubborn things."—N. Y. World.

CAGED WOMEN OF SOUTH SEA

Wives Trained from Infancy to Obey Future Husband.

How would the modern American girl enjoy life in a cage, following the example of the modern woman of the South Sea islands? At any rate there are no breach-of-promise suits on the Island of New Britain in the South sea. The natives, in their simple Polynesian way, have solved the problem that worries so many American mothers of young daughters, and the maidens of the island never get into bad company or entanglements of any sort up to the day of their marriage.

These natives are a simple sort of folk, if simplicity can be used in connection with a people that renounced cannibalism only within the last fifteen years. They are of a dark brown color, medium height, and they would rather eat than fight. It was not so long ago that a feast followed every fight on the island, and the edibles were the roasted or fricasseed bodies of the worsted combatants in the battle. But now the tribes no longer make war on one another. Instead they loaf and eat and do as little work as they can.

Their ideas of morality could be given in a very short chapter—almost as short as the famous one about snakes in Ireland—but they are great sticklers for their complicated and peculiar marriage customs.

There are two classes, and a man may not marry out of his class. Girls become wives at 11 or 12 years of age, and their wedding is literally their "coming out party."

From the age of 1 year to the date of their marriage these poor little maidens are kept in wicker cages inside the small thatched huts. They are as much prisoners as any unfortunate criminal behind prison bars. The cages, to be sure, are light and airy, and the occupant is able to see all that is going on in the free world outside. But they can't "come out and play," and all the pleasures of childhood—even a South sea childhood—are denied them.

This is not such a hardship as would seem at first consideration, because the little ones are immured in their cages at such an early age that they grow up without thinking to rebel against their enforced captivity.

Once a day only are they taken from their cages to be washed. Food is given them through the interstices, which are plenty large enough to admit the little fresh air that gains entrance to the low cabins. The girls grow fat and healthy on this sort of life, and these are doubtless the qualities deemed most desirable in a South sea wife. But to an American it seems almost incomprehensible that a people living almost altogether out of doors in an equatorial climate should so bring up their young females.

Still, the plan has its advantages. There is no fear of the frisky maidens staying out too late at night, nor need their parents be alarmed lest the daughters get into bad company. When the ardent young man finds a girl whom he would like to make his wife he is compelled to do his wooing through the bars. Papa's chairs are never broken because of having to carry double weight, and all the courting is necessarily done in daytime. As a consequence, when the young girl leaves her cage to become a wife the husband is possessed of none of those harassing doubts that come with a higher civilization. And they make good wives, too, and are ready, should the fates bring them daughters, to keep them close within the same cages.

Still, the South sea girls of today are luckier than those of thirty years ago. They were not brought up at all then, but simply killed at birth, and the young men of the tribe went to neighboring islands for wives. So the march of civilization has the Island of New Britain in its path after all.

RACING AGAINST TIME.

Marvelous Feats of Rapid Production by Enterprising Firms.

Many astonishing feats have been performed against time, but probably never anything more wonderful than that of producing a printed newspaper from trees, which were growing two hours and a half only before the papers were in the hands of their readers.

This feat was performed by a firm of paper pulp manufacturers at Essenthal, in Austria. At 7:35 in the morning the three sturdy trees were cut down and carted to the paper mills. The bark was stripped from them, they were split and pulped and sent to the defibrators, where they were quickly converted into paper pulp. At 26 minutes to 10 the trees had been converted into sheets of paper, which were quickly taken to the newspaper office, and at 10 o'clock thousands of copies were in circulation.

An American publishing firm not long ago achieved a feat of rapid book production which is not only unrivaled, but almost incredible. An order reached them late on Saturday to produce 2,000 copies of an illustrated book of 350 pages by the following Wednesday evening. The task was begun early on Monday morning, and before the day closed the entire book had been reduced to type, and electrolyte plates prepared for the press. On the following day printing began, and a number of presses were so busily at work that by noon the next day all the 2,000 copies were printed. The book-binders had been equally expeditious in preparing the covers, and the whole edition was bound and delivered by Wednesday evening.

A short time ago the Prussian war department made a very interesting experiment in the rapid manufacture of boots under war conditions. An army of 1,200 bootmakers was collected in Berlin from the eighteen army corps, and commenced a course of four weeks' work under the supervision of a number of commissioned officers.

The men were divided into two sections, one section working from 2 a. m. to 2 p. m., and the other taking up the work from 2 p. m. to 2 a. m., with two intervals of half an hour each in each period of twelve hours. The men-worked, ate and slept in barracks of the First Field Artillery regiment of the Prussian Guards. In the four weeks the men made no fewer than 60,000 pairs of boots, each man thus completing fifty pairs within the month.

The most remarkable feat in bridge building stands to the credit of Messrs. Handyside, who substituted a new railway bridge for an old one in the incredible time of four hours. The new bridge was one of steel, weighing over 200 tons, which replaced an old bridge spanning

the Stroud Green road, near the Great Northern station at Finsbury park.

Commencing operations in March last, the contractors built by the northern side of the old bridge a new one resting on six carriages, which ran on a tiny railroad under the ends of the girders. At 3 o'clock one afternoon enormous cranes removed the girders of the old bridge; its successor was hauled along the lines into its place by means of steam crabs and within four hours the bridge was made firm, the roads connected and traffic was resumed.

An engineering feat still more remarkable was performed not long ago at the Stratford works of the Great Eastern railway. The engineers had sent them selves the task of building a luggage engine and tender in the quickest time on record.

All the component parts had been carefully arranged and placed at hand, and when work commenced early in the morning the engine quickly began to assume shape. By dinner time it was practically completed, with the exception of painting, and within ten hours the engine and tender in all the glory of new paint, and perfect in every detail, were taking a trial spin on the line.

A Useful Coin.

It is not generally known that the five-cent nickel coin of the United States currency was designated with special reference to its use as a unit of weight or measurement by the decimal system, but it is true.

For some reason the metric system, though its use has been legalized in this country, is not popular with the Americans, and it has not come into general use and perhaps never will. If it does, the usefulness of this coin will at once become apparent. It is exactly five grammes in weight and two centimetres in diameter.

This is, of course, not an accident, and if there shall be any change in our system of coinage other convenient measurements and weights may be adopted, according to the same system.

"It done his wicked heart good to see her bathed in tears!" wrote the novelist. Kind friends led him gently aside and told him that he wasn't writing good English.

"Ought I to say 'tubbed in tears?'" he thereupon asked, betraying much anxiety.

DOMESTIC PLEASANTRIES.

Waggles—What a pretty baby!
Proud Mother—Do you think so?
Waggles—Yes, and a perfect image of his mother, too!

"A woman cries at her wedding as if she had lost her best friend."
"Well, she's made a husband of him, and it comes to the same thing."

"Consistency's a jewel."
"That's all right, but you can't work it off on any girl instead of a diamond ring."

"She was determined to be married in her bicycle suit."

"Well?"
"Well, that's why she never has been married."

Lillian—Marie, does your husband get vexed if you interrupt him when he's talking?

Marie—No; but he gets furious if I interrupt him when he's eating or sleeping.

"Do you think he will propose?" asked her mother.

"He will if I want him to," answered the daughter, for the modern girl is usually quite conscious of her own power.

When a man has bought a lot of furniture on the installment plan he has the satisfaction of knowing that there is at least one man who is deeply interested in his welfare.

In the uncertain light of evening he contemplated her, bitterly.

She was sitting silently, resting her dimpled chin upon her hands.

"Yes and then there's the matter of a new springbonnet!" she proceeded when her chin was a bit rested.

All the while he had felt that the end was not yet.

"Do you think his intentions are serious?" asked her best girl friend.

"Altogether too serious," was the reply.

"He asked me only yesterday if I would consent to have my life insured in favor of my husband when I married."

"That man," remarked Senator Sorgum, "is an Englishman."

"Politician?"

"Yes."

"Liberal party?"

"I dunno. I suppose his liberality all depends on what kind of a bill he's trying to get through Parliament."

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