

Austria is the country most lenient to murderers. In ten years over eighty persons were found guilty of murder, of whom only twenty-three were put to death.

A number of capitalists have bought a tract of land near Reading, Pa., on which they will raise silver foxes, opossums, racoons, jack-rabbits, minks, weasels, skunks, wolf dogs and other animals for their fur and skins.

There lives in Paducah, Ky., a blind mechanic who can and does place laths as evenly and drive the nails as truly as can any workman gifted with sight. He puts up his own scaffolds and does as much work in a day as any man in his trade.

Frank Leverett, of the United States Geological Survey, has been in the neighborhood of Ann Arbor, Mich., for about six months making a study of surface geography for the government. He finds that the site of Ypsilanti was at one time the bottom of a lake which was connected with Lakes Huron and Erie.

From the Esercito Italiano it is learned that owing to the slowness of promotion in the Italian army and the consequently greater age at which officers obtain their commissions and become field officers, it has been found necessary to provide for mounting captains in the infantry, after from four to six years' service.

In a recent contested will case in New York evidence was introduced to show that the testator was not of "sound and disposing mind," because for some years before his death he had been in the habit of drinking liquor 40 times a day. The remarkable thing is, not that he was able to make a will, but that he had anything left to bequeath.

It will be some considerable time yet before the memoir of the late duke of Argyll is given to the world. The present duke, who has the work in hand, has a huge mass of the late duke of Argyll's correspondence in his possession, and he will utilize the manuscripts the late duke had written for a volume of autobiography and reminiscences.

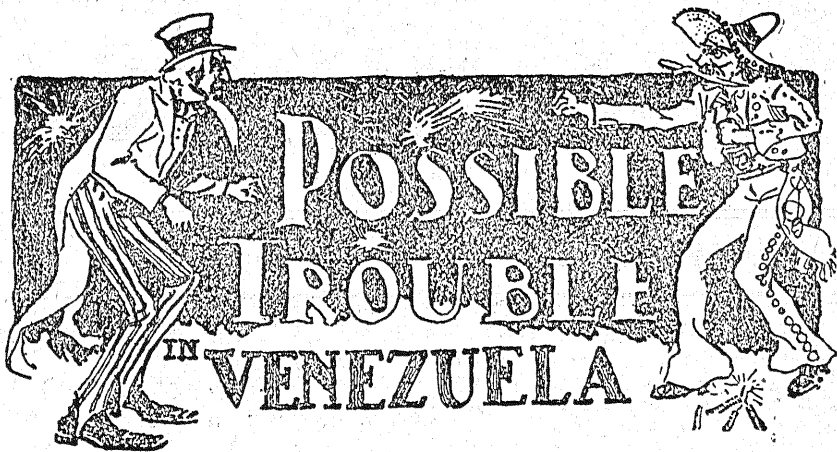
Of a western senator who was brought up on the frontier, it is said that he never sits with his back to the door. For thirty or forty years he "lived with a gun in his hand," and it grew to be second nature to keep an eye on the approaches. What a useful legislator such a man would be if his habit of watchfulness enabled him to "get the drop on" all the bad bills that enter Congress!

The habit of absinthe-drinking has reached such alarming proportions in France that the chamber of deputies has now prohibited its manufacture and sale. Already "the green terror," as it is called, has destroyed such brilliant geniuses as Guy de Maupassant, Alfred de Musset, Baudelaire and others hardly less noted. Since 1894 the consumption has doubled. It is now estimated at ten million six hundred thousand quarts a year. The drink was forbidden in the army some time ago, and the radical action of the chamber of deputies shows how serious the government considers the case of the people themselves.

An interesting discovery in the neighborhood of Jerusalem is described in the quarterly statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund. About thirty yards from the Bir Eiyub, or "Well of Job," which Jewish tradition identifies with En Rogel or "The Fuller's Fountain" (Joshua xv. 7), from thirty to fifty vats have been found in the rock. Their shape is wholly different from that of the vats connected with oil and wine presses, and one, at least, is exactly like the fuller's vats depicted on one of the tomb paintings of Ben-Hassan. So it is suggested that they represent the remains of ancient fulling works, a relic of an industry of Jerusalem which may be as old as the time of Joshua.

The Rev. Dr. William Jones, formerly chaplain of the Army of Northern Virginia, has discovered a number of old documents relating to the civil war. They have been made public with the consent of the Lee family and the authorities of Washington and Lee university, with which institution Dr. Jones is now connected. Among them is a letter written to President Johnson on June 13, 1865, in which General Lee asks "for the benefits and full restoration of all rights and privileges extended to those included in the proclamation of amnesty and pardon." General Lee was not individually pardoned, but was included in the list of the general pardon to all not under indictment.

During some excavations at Pompeii a magnificent bronze statue of Grecian workmanship four feet high was brought to light. The discovery was made in the presence of Prof. Orsi, director of the excavations of Syracuse. The statue, which strongly resembles the celebrated "Idolino degli Umzi" of Florence, is estimated to be worth £20,000. It is in perfect preservation, and seems to have been designed to support a lamp in some villa outside the walls of Pompeii. It is the most important discovery made at Pompeii for the last thirty years.



Trouble between the United States and the little Central American state of Venezuela is possible as the result of a quarrel between rival asphalt companies, who have conflicting claims to the great Bermudez asphalt lake located on the shores of the Orinoco river. Both of the asphalt concerns are United States corporations, one of them being the National Asphalt company, commonly known as the asphalt trust. It is even charged that the trust has had a hand in encouraging the rebellion in Venezuela which is now in progress. The leader of the rebellion is Celestino Peraza, who until recently was the secretary of the present president of the republic, General Castro. General Castro himself came into power as the result of a successful rebellion which resulted in the overthrow of the government headed by President Andrade. Since Castro took control of the government in the latter part of 1899 he has successfully suppressed at least two rebellions, so that he knows what he has to deal with.

Leader of the Trouble.

Celestino Peraza, the leader of the present rebellion, began his outbreak in the country along the Orinoco river in the last days of December, 1900. A force of 2,500 men was immediately sent against him by President Castro, and several small engagements have taken place between the rival forces. Now it appears the rebels are running low on powder and munitions of war in general. As a result they are said to be about to seize the arms and other property belonging to the New York and Bermudez Asphalt company at the Bermudez pitch lake, while the regular government, under President Castro, has seized a couple of steamers belonging to a steamboat company owned in the United States. In order to protect the property of citizens of this country from being confiscated in this way the United States warship Scorpion has been ordered to leave the harbor of La Guayra and run up the Orinoco river, and it is reported that the government at Washington stands ready to send the north Atlantic squadron with a force of marines down from Pensacola, Fla., to Venezuela if the situation does not improve.

Venezuela's Chief Seaport.

La Guayra is the chief seaport of Venezuela and the gateway to Caracas, the capital of the republic. At La Guayra the mountains overhang the water, rising to a height of 8,000 feet. They are visible at sea seventy miles away. Caracas is distant only ten miles, but it is reached by one of the most tortuous pieces of railroad building in the world. The journey by rail from the seaport to the capital covers a distance of seventy miles. The climate of Caracas is mild and pleasant, which explains why large cities of tropical America are usually situated some distance from the coast. Caracas is 3,000 feet above the sea level, and the temperature averages 71 degrees above zero all the year round.

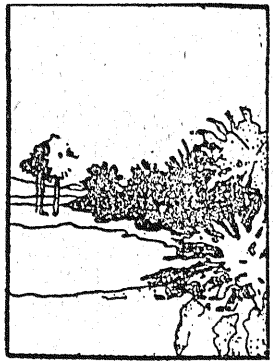
Looks Like Absurd Prospect.

Some idea of the absurdity of a serious war between the United States and

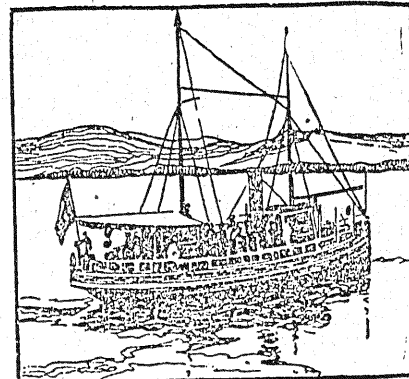
Venezuela may be gathered from the statement that the Central American country, which has an area five times as large as that of the state of Michigan, has a total population of only 2,320,000, somewhat less than that of Michigan, of which number nearly one-fourth are uncivilized Indians. The regular army of Venezuela consists of 3,600 men, with a militia which in time of civil war has put as many as 60,000 men into the field. So far as a navy is concerned, Venezuela has only three small steamers and two sailing vessels, with three or four small river gunboats. Furthermore, it has been only four years since the United States intervened on behalf of Venezuela in its dispute over the question of boundary with Great Britain and secured the appointment of an arbitration commission, by the decision of which several hundred square miles of valuable territory, including some rich gold mines and the country to the south of the mouth of the Orinoco river, were saved to the smaller state.

The Bone of Contention.

The asphalt lake, for the possession of which the rival American companies are fighting, lies between a range of mountains and the shore of one of the outlets of the northern delta of the Orinoco river, near the bay of Paria. The lake is a mile and a half in length by a mile in width and comprises more than 1,000 acres of swampy land. Most of the surface of the so-called lake is covered with a rank growth of grasses and shrubs rising to a height of eight or ten feet and interspersed with tall palm trees. The pitch or asphaltum, as does not lie in an unbroken surface, as on the Trinidad lakes, but bubbles up, as if from springs. The pitch, however, underlies most of the surface included in the lake and has a depth varying from two to ten feet. In the center of the lake is a patch of about seven acres which is free from vegetation and in which the pitch is so soft that it cannot be walked on. The whole surface of the lake is so low that during the spring floods it is entirely covered by water. The pitch is dug out to a convenient place near a seaport, where it is refined. The raw asphalt is put into huge kettles and slowly heated from above until the whole mass is brought to a liquid condition. The process of heating drives off the water and gas with which the raw



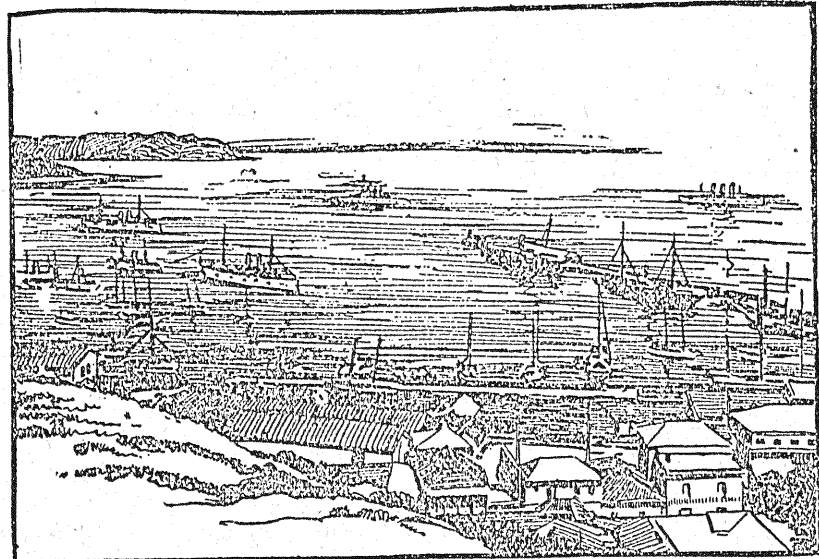
Glimpse of an Asphalt Lake.



A VENEZUELAN MAN-OF-WAR. The pitch is filled, while the heavy impurities sink to the bottom of the kettle. The pure asphaltum can then be poured off.

Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Fitzgerald of Danville, Va., have deeded their place on the north bank of the Dan river, worth \$20,000, to the Danville Orphanage as a permanent home.

The late Chief Justice Faircloth of North Carolina bequeathed \$20,000 to the Baptist Female University of Raleigh.



A VIEW OF THE HARBOR OF LA GUAYRA.

A Asphalt in History.

Asphalt has been known from prehistoric times. Some forms of it were used as building material in ancient Babylon, and others were used in the preparation of mummies. During the middle ages it dropped almost from sight. In 1712 a Swiss physician discovered large beds of it in the Alps and succeeded in reviving the use of it as building material. It is said that the value of asphalt for paving purposes was discovered by accident

while the crude asphalt was being hauled from the deposits where it was dug. Pieces of the asphalt dropped from the carts and were gradually ground into the roadbed by the feet of the men and horses. It was noticed that such roads soon presented a hard and resisting surface, and the idea of using asphalt on other roads was developed. It was not largely used, however, until 1832, and within the last 25 years it has made its greatest progress.

CONVICTED OF MURDER

Were the Paterson, N. J., Fiends on the 18th.

MURDER IN SECOND DEGREE.

This Means at Least 30 Years Behind the Bars for Three of the Men—Required 14 Ballots to Decide Their Fate—Showed no Concern at Sentence

Paterson Fiends on Trial.

Walter C. McAllister, Andrew J. Campbell and Wm. A. Death, the Paterson, N. J., fiends, were placed on trial on the 14th, charged with the murder of Jennie Bosschiet, the young mill girl, on Oct. 19th last. Geo. J. Kerr, the other accused man, will not be tried until the fate of these three have been determined. The case against Kerr is not as conclusive as that against the others and in consequence he has been granted a separate trial.

Murder in the Second Degree.

Walter C. McAllister, Andrew J. Campbell and Wm. Death, three of the four persons indicted for the murder of Jennie Bosschiet, the Paterson, N. J. mill girl, who was murdered on the Oct. 18 last, were on the 18th adjudged guilty of murder in the second degree. According to the New Jersey law, the maximum penalty for the prisoners is 30 years' imprisonment. The jury took 14 ballots, and after summoning Judge Dixon and the prisoners, filed into the court room with the above verdict.

Are Becoming More Optimistic.

Optimism is taking the place of conservatism among the military men at Manila, the cause being the numerous surrenders, captures and destruction of insurgent camps, coupled with the increased understanding of the Americans intentions among the natives, the propagation of the principles of the federal party and the knowledge that they are approved by the U. S. Philippine commission and the military authorities, and that the carrying out of the terms of Gen. McArthur's proclamation, classing all who do things inimical to the interests of the army as rebels and traitors, are having pointed effect, with the offering of local autonomy and protection, and showing the certainty of the punishment of those who remain rebellious.

Valuable Almanac Free.

We have received a copy of the new almanac for 1901, published by the Royal Haling Powder Co. It is an artistic and useful book and will be of interest to housekeepers. A noteworthy feature of the almanac is a prediction of the weather for every day of the year, by Prof. DeVoe, who correctly prophesied the great Galveston cyclone and other important meteorological events. We are authorized to say that any woman reader of this paper can secure a copy without cost by sending a request to the company, at 100 William St. New York.

Epidemic of Crime in St. Louis.

The final report of the grand jury at St. Louis, Mo., composed of prominent business men, who have been investigating municipal matters, has been returned. Twenty-four indictments, only four of which, for minor crimes, are made public, were handed down. The rest, which are against persons not yet in custody, are withheld. Among the 20 indictments is one against an official of the house of delegates, who is charged with attempting to bribe a state witness against men accused of highway robbery. He was served with a bench warrant on the 14th.

Queen Victoria's Death Hourly Expected

A dispatch from Cowes, Isle of Wight, dated the 21st, says: Queen Victoria is still alive, but all hopes of her recovery are gone. The patient was recently stricken with paralysis in the face, one side of which appears to have lost all nerve and muscular power. All England is in a state of mourning.

The Prince of Wales is also indisposed, which at this time makes it doubly important, for should the queen succumb the prince by official title becomes ruler.

Burned at the Stake.

Fred Alexander, the Negro who assaulted Eva Roth at Leavenworth the other day, and who was supposed to have assaulted and killed Pearl Forbes in that city last November, was taken from jail and burned at the stake at the scene of his crimes by a mob on the 14th. Nearly 8,000 people witnessed the lynching. The Negro asserted his innocence to the last.

NEWSY BREVITIES.

Gen. MacArthur on the 14th reported the surrender of Delgado, commander-in-chief of Iloilo province, Panay.

As a result of a riot in Corbin, Ky., on the 17th, several persons were killed. The trouble grew out of a love affair.

In view of the excessive sugar stock in Argentina, the sugar manufacturers have resolved to export 50,000 bags of sugar at a loss.

J. Prevost Mason, third teller of the Continental National bank of New York, is in jail, charged with embezzlement. Mason was arrested on the 15th. The specific charge is the stealing of \$3,000 by means of false entries.

After a memorable struggle Col. M. S. Quay, regular Republican nominee for U. S. senator, was elected by the Pennsylvania legislature to fill the vacancy created by the expiration of his term on March 4, 1899. Geo. F. Hoar, of Boston, was re-elected to succeed himself in the U. S. senate by the Massachusetts legislature on the 15th.

CONGRESSIONAL NOTES.

The senate on the 18th finally disposed of the army reorganization bill. The measure having originated in the senate, the final question was not upon its passage, but upon agreeing to the senate amendments. They were agreed to by a vote of 43 to 23. While party lines were drawn on the measure, four Democrats voted for it. The bill has occupied practically the entire attention of the senate since the 3d of January, when it was made the unfinished business.

Several members of the Cuban constitutional convention assert that one of the delegates has received a letter from a recognized authority in Washington saying that if the convention completed the draft of the constitution before the middle of February and presented the same to congress it would be considered during the present session. The strictest secrecy is maintained as to the sender of the letter and as to its recipient.

The President on the 18th sent the following nominations to the senate: Franklin Moses, of Alaska, to be register of the land office at St. Michael, Alaska. Marine corps—First Lieutenants to be captains: Henry Leonard and Henry W. Carpenter. Second Lieutenants to be first lieutenants: R. G. McConnell, John W. Wadleigh, Wm. R. Coyle and R. S. Hooker.

Hoar has given notice of an amendment he will offer to the legislative, executive and judicial appropriation bill, increasing the salary of the chief justice of the U. S. supreme court to \$15,500 and that of the associate justices to \$15,000 each. The chief justice now receives \$10,500 and the associate justices \$10,000 each.

After an hour spent in miscellaneous routine business during the course of which several bills of minor importance were passed, the house devoted the entire day on the 12th to a continuation of the debate upon the river and harbor appropriation bill which was interrupted the day previous by private bill day.

Senator Geo. F. Hoar was on the 14th renominated as the candidate for U. S. senator by the Republican senators and members of the house of Massachusetts. The vote was unanimous.

Every item in the river and harbor \$60,000,000 appropriation bill for the improvement of harbors, passed the house in committee of the whole on the afternoon of the 14th.

TRANSVAAL WAR ITEMS.

The official list of the British casualties in the recent fighting at Belfast shows 29 killed, 53 wounded and 72 missing. This does not account for the British losses at other points of simultaneous attacks by the Boers, namely Wonderfontein, Nootgdacht and Wildfontein, and shows that affairs in that quarter were more serious than Lord Kitchener reported them to be.

Gen. Brabant, while addressing a conference of mayors at Cape Town, said the authorities were anxious to keep the war away from Cape Town, if possible, but that the only hope of doing this lay in sending 1,000 men to the front. He urged that no precaution should be omitted to prevent the enemy from advancing further south.

The casualty list shows that there has been a severe engagement, with a loss of 6 killed 17 wounded and 5 missing at Murraysburg, where the Dutch are said to have joined the invaders. Murraysburg is 16 miles west of Graaff Reinet.

The British government has decided to send large reinforcements to Lord Kitchener, and the London war office, in carrying out this decision has determined to enlist 5,000 yeomanry volunteers.

Three hundred Boers captured a small British convoy at Bronkhorst-spruit, near Pretoria, on the 15th, but made off after liberating the prisoners.

CHINA WAR NEWS.

So far as the state department at Washington can influence the negotiations now about to begin at Pekin between the ministers and the Chinese plenipotentiaries on the basis of the agreement just signed, it will seek to clear the way of all minor matters and of points upon which there is no disagreement whatever between the allies, before undertaking the solution of the more difficult problems involved in the settlement of the questions of indemnities, guarantees and commercial treaties. It is fully expected that the Chinese representatives will offer opposition to almost every point in order to secure more favorable terms.

According to the Gaihois, M. Pichon, French minister to China, will shortly be recalled from Pekin at his own request, owing to ill health.

The protocol was signed at Pekin on the 14th, the idea of protesting against any clause having been abandoned.

BRIEF NEWS PARAGRAPHS.

It is estimated that the barley crop of the U. S. was about 25 per cent short this year.

The customs committee of the French chamber of deputies has adopted the proposal to raise the import duty on corn to five francs.

There is a famine in the province of Shen Si and it is said that 5,000,000 people are facing starvation.

An armless and legless baby boy was born at Irishtown, Ill., one day recently that weighed four pounds at the time of birth.

The following were inaugurated governors on the 14th: A. M. Dockey, of Missouri; Richard Yates, of Illinois, and Wm. T. Durbin, of Indiana.

The people's bank of Livingston, Overton county, Tenn., was robbed of \$5,000 on the 15th. No trace of the burglars has been discovered.

IS A BUSY PASTOR.

HE MAKES GOOD SERMONS AND PLAYS THE FIDDLE.

A Pennsylvania Clergyman Who Vowed to Defeat His Grandmother, and Did It with Pronounced Success—Maker of Violins.

Center county, Pa., has a minister who is a phenomenon. He is not only a very good preacher of the gospel, but he is a thorough musician, can teach music, and to climax all and add to his salary as pastor, this minister makes "fiddles."

The minister in question is the Rev. W. W. Rhodes, now pastor of the United Evangelical church at Center Hall, and he has come to regard the making of violins as much of his life's work, possibly, as preaching, though the latter is in nowise neglected in the interest of the former. Pastor Rhodes is a natural mechanic. It was born in him, and greatly to this does he now owe the trade of violin maker which he carries on with his work of ministering to the spiritual wants of humanity.

Of German Extraction.

Mr. Rhodes is of German extraction. He was born in 1843 at Unionville, Chester county, Pa., and was of humble parentage. At the early age of 8 years the boy manifested a rare taste for music. His boyhood days were spent with his aged grandparents and it was during this period that his mechanical ability developed. Without instruction of any kind young Rhodes made wagons, plows, harrows, etc., and even constructed a rude fiddle at the age of 19.

A Mechanical Genius.

To this latter incident he ascribes all his future success. The fiddle was made out of shingles, with wax ends for strings, and a corn stalk bow. When completed William gathered about him an audience of young companions to hear him play the instrument. But his grandmother heard it also, and being conscientiously opposed to fiddles, suddenly appeared on the scene, but not before William had warning sufficient to hide his instrument in the woodbox. "What is going on in here?" exclaimed the aged lady, adding that she had heard a devilish fiddle. The youngsters attempted to evade the wrath to come, but it was only a minute until the grandmother found the rude fiddle, broke it over the head of the maker, and threw it into the stove. Next morning William was given a sound thrashing, and after escaping from the hands of his grandparent, shook his fist at her and cried, "I'll make a fiddle yet before I die," and he has.

Was a War Volunteer.

At the death of his grandparents William went home, worked on the farm in summer time and went to school in winter, until the war broke out, when he enlisted as a volunteer. He was mustered out of service in 1865 and went to Minersville, where he worked at the carpenter trade. From there he gravitated to Shamokin, and finally landed in Williamsport. In the latter place he worked part of the time and attended Dickinson seminary. He took up the study of music as a specialty, becoming a close student of Beethoven and Mozart. But the old penchant for making violins ever remained, and Rhodes read all the works he could obtain on violin making. The Stradavarius and Stiner models he made a study, and took more than 200



REV. W. W. RHODES.

instrument to pieces to see how they were made. Finally he took a number of lessons from an old German in Philadelphia by the name of Voght.

Iron Melted in Five Seconds.

A European inventor recently performed a remarkable experiment in the laboratory of Thomas A. Edison at Orange, N. J. He placed a cup half full of a chemical in a crucible and covered it with a small quantity of powdered aluminum. He then placed an iron wrench about half an inch thick and six inches long in the crucible. Touching a match to the compound, the mixture blazed furiously, and in five seconds the iron wrench was melted. It was estimated that the heat evolved in the process was 3,000 degrees centigrade, hitherto considered impossible to reach. The inventor keeps the nature of his chemical compound a secret.

A Substitute for Eggs.

Science, prompted and urged by the commercial instinct, has demonstrated that casein, from ordinary cow's milk, is quite as good for baking as the finest hen eggs, and a company with \$5,500,000 capital has been formed to manufacture out of it a substitute for the "fresh" and "strictly fresh" product of the poultry yard. One pound of casein is equal to six dozen of eggs.