

BAND OF THE BOYS' CHARITY SCHOOL, SANTUCE, PORTO RICO.

PROGRESS IN PORTO RICO.

Natives Have Acquired "Get There" Spirit of Yankees.

According to William H. Hunt, the Governor of Porto Rico, who is now in Washington, the natives of that island have been attacked with a widespread contagion. The inhabitants have never had the epidemic before, and some believe it incurable. Its symptoms are a remarkable activity of mind and body, an eagerness on the part of the young to learn, and a willingness among those older to work. Mr. Hunt is on a visit to this country at the present time, and when asked last week for a diagnosis he answered:

"The Porto Ricans have contracted the 'get there' spirit of the Yankee. The island is fast becoming a prosperous American community. We are awakening the natives from their ancestral lethargy, and find that they can hustle as well as ourselves, with some encouragement."

Mr. Hunt had many facts to prove his statements. He said that the coffee export trade had grown from \$21,000 last year to \$500,000 this year. Sugar had been shipped north to the amount of \$500,000 since January 1, a heavy increase over last year. Steam railroads, trolley lines and automobile mail routes were stimulating the Porto Ricans to faster methods of transit. Revenues had increased to such an extent that the Treasury now showed a balance of \$400,000, or an increase of \$100,000 over the preceding year.

As Porto Rico will always be essentially an agricultural country, efforts are being made to develop as rapidly as possible the agricultural rural schools. There are now twenty of them, all of which have been established in one year.

Along established educational lines the Department of Education is pushing the work of lifting Porto Rico from illiteracy with still greater vigor. Nearly 1,200 schools have been opened in the island, with 1,225 teachers, of whom 150 are Americans. In the normal school for the training of teachers over one hundred Porto Rican young women and men are pursuing the regular course of study.

The industrial school at San Juan was opened with fifty-nine pupils. The number has subsequently been increased to seventy-five. Some of the most respected young men and women of the city are among the pupils. The work of the first year will be purely elementary and includes language, English and Spanish; commercial arithmetic, business methods, mensuration, science, commercial and industrial geography of the United States and West Indies, paying special attention to crops, products, manufactures, sources of raw materials, and routes of trade and travel; history, especially that of North and South America and the West Indies; freehand and mechanical drawing, sloyd work for boys, use of tools in woodworking; construction of simple models, requiring accuracy of hand and eye; construction of articles of household use and light furniture.

The girls the first year learn sewing, cutting from patterns, fitting, basting, buttonhole making, drawn work, knitting, darning, embroidery, etc. The plans for subsequent years contemplate the establishment of a carpenter shop, plumbing, printing, tailoring, shoe and harness shops for the boys, and more elaborate training for the girls in cooking, dressmaking, basketry and weaving. A complete kitchen and studio have already been equipped, where the girls are taught to cook.

In the two government charity schools, one for boys and one for girls, in Santuce, a suburb of San Juan, the attainments have been surprising and full of promise. These institutions, sheltering more than five hundred waifs of from

five to fourteen years of age, are the particular pride of Mr. Osterhaut, the Director of Charities. Colonel Hoff, under the military government, was the pioneer in this reform. He found several hundred orphans in cramped, dirty quarters adjoining the insane asylums. They were as soon as possible removed to Santuce, where commodious buildings were erected by the Americans. Director Osterhaut took charge in April, 1900. He at once introduced a course of moral, physical and intellectual training which has resulted in a high standard of self-respect and self-discipline among the boys. Being a firm believer in military training, Mr. Osterhaut soon organized the boys into a battalion, with a band of thirty-eight pieces, and the evolutions of this body always attract much attention and excite favorable comment.

In the industrial class rooms the boys are making rapid progress as tailors, carpenters, shoemakers and woodworkers, while in the bakery they assist in turning out 550 loaves of bread daily. On the land adjoining the school they

conditions. It was organized as a result of the disastrous cyclone of 1899. Following the disaster, appeals were made to the United States for assistance, which was readily and liberally given. The distribution of the relief supplies was delegated by the Governor of the island to committees in the various districts.

Robert A. Miller, the postmaster at San Juan, was appointed chairman of the committee for the Ponce district, and he called the women of Ponce to his assistance in looking after the distressed in the city. But the work did not cease after help had been given to the cyclone sufferers. The aim of the society at present is to assist the poor and to end the system of begging, which seems to thrive to such an alarming degree in many Spanish-American countries.

AN AUTOMOBILE MAIL SERVICE.

While horses drag the mails of New-York up and down its streets in cumbrous wagons, Porto Rico boasts of a postal system which employs

over the mountain, reaches an altitude of sixteen hundred feet.

Postmaster William K. Landis of San Juan said recently that he had ample proof that the improved mail service was making the people here more friendly to American occupation. He believed the post office went a great way in satisfying the natives with American customs.

FERRETS IN THE HOUSE.

Rough on Nerves but Rough on Rats Also.

"Did you ever suddenly come upon an animal looking something like a woolly snake mounted on four very short legs, nosing about in your clothes closet?" asked a Manhattan girl who had just returned from visiting friends in the suburbs. "Well, if you never did," she added, "your nerves have yet to undergo one of the severest tests that mine ever experienced. What the uncanny thing was and how it came to be there I will tell you:

"The house, a large rambling wooden building, was fairly overrun with rats and mice, which broke our nights with their constant scratching, gnawing and soft but distinct footsteps in the walls. They also did not a little damage in the store cupboard, where quantities of certain kind of jam and several delicious hams fell victims to their appetites.

"And on one dreadful occasion I lay awake the entire night with my gas burning, keeping off a huge invader with various bootbrushes, shoes and other available ammunition, regretting sadly that my golf bag, with its formidable contents, reposed downstairs in a cupboard.

"To tell the truth, the animal showed little propensity for an attack, but I had heard stories of their acts of violence and dared not close an eye. Of course, womanlike, I longed to get up and scream for help, but my room was some distance from the others and the door was far away—unlike that of my own room in the city—and I dared not cross the floor.

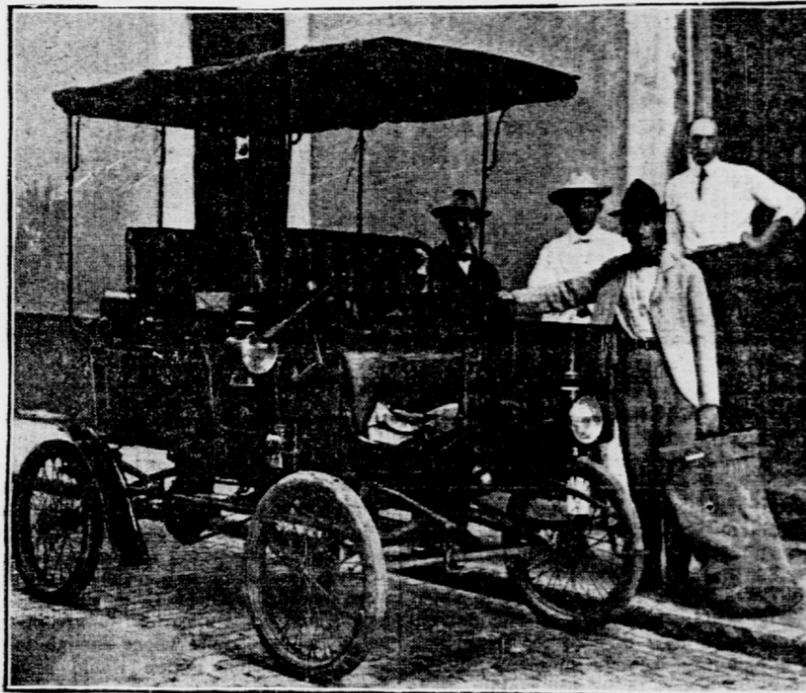
"So Mr. Rat took the floor and nosed around among my shoes and wastebasket and even got into my bureau drawers, where he tossed things about and chewed up various bits of lace. In the morning when he tactfully retired to his hole I dressed and going down with a pale, determined face related my night's adventure, to my host's horror and my hostess' admiration of my courage. However, I plainly intimated that, now my reputation was established, I could not stand another night in that room until a trap caught or drove away my noisy intruder.

"My host said little, but on his return from his office that evening to our delight he informed us that he had engaged a man with ferrets to visit the house that same night, and see what they could do toward lessening the evil.

"So about 9 o'clock a cart drove to the door and a young man got out. In one hand he carried a valise, in the other an oblong box, about fifteen inches long, covered with a newspaper. Through a hole in the paper I peeped in between two slats and saw a pair of bright eyes peering out in mingled curiosity and hunger.

"The 'ratman,' as the children called him, went up to the attic with the master of the house to view sundry holes and reconnoitre, while my hostess and I sat in the hall at a safe distance from the box. A faint disagreeable odor came from it, and in a few moments a strange moaning tremolo, which was inexplicably weird as it sounded from the box in the shadow of the stairs.

"When the ratman returned we made him show us the ferrets, which were two quaint, long, brown and white creatures, with broad heads coming suddenly to a sharp point, and bright, beady eyes that gazed about blindly, for, like the owl, they see best in the dark—snake-like beings that crawled out and over the box



MAIL-CARRYING AUTOMOBILE STANDING BEFORE THE SAN JUAN POSTOFFICE.

study practical farming. Notwithstanding all that has been done, there remain nearly three hundred thousand children of school age without school facilities. Nearly every school now open has a long waiting list of pupils who are ready to crowd in when a vacancy occurs or when a new school is opened in the district.

Discussing the higher education of Porto Rico, Commissioner of Education Lindsay said recently:

The strategic position of the island of Porto Rico as a part of American territory, whether regarded from the industrial, commercial, political or military viewpoint, points unmistakably to the necessity of creating as soon as possible an American-Porto Rican university. Already several hundred Porto Rican boys and girls, some of whom have been sent at the expense of the insular government, are in the United States attending colleges or other institutions of higher learning, especially professional schools. A university here would do more to extend the sphere of American influence throughout the West Indies and the countries of South America and to equip men and women for the important work of teaching and leadership in professional life and in governmental work in Porto Rico than any other gift the American people could make.

The Porto Rican Benevolent Society is also doing much for the betterment of social con-

ditions. Between San Juan, the capital of the island, and Ponce, its chief port, an automobile service has been established because of the heavy, ever increasing amount of mail from the United States. For the pony coaches which were in use hitherto the government paid \$11,000 a year. The coaches made the trip daily in from twelve to fifteen hours. The automobiles cover the distance in nine hours, and though they cost \$13,000 a year they carry twice the mail almost twice as rapidly. The chief fault with the ponies was the way they became winded. At the end of each fifteen mile section the team had to be changed. The automobile thus far has been credited with a continuous performance that would satisfy even a New-York vaudeville manager.

When the "auto" started its first run to Ponce into the lowland coconut palm districts and across mountain ranges the natives thought it was an infernal machine. Now they regard the swift speeding machine only with admiration. The automobiles travel the military road, which for some distance has a solid foundation. There are stretches in the road, however, where it seems almost impassable. It is crossed by three rivers. A part of the road, where it leads