The Sun.

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Chatham Island.

Chatham Island, the easternmost of the Galapagos group, for which this Government is negotiating with Ecuador, was bought cheap some time ago by a single man; but Chatham is just about as large as Staten Island, the fifth in size in the group, and is the only settled island in the archipelago. Five years ago 230 persons lived there, but at last accounts many of the colonists had wearied of the isolation and returned to the mainland.

It would undoubtedly be to our advantage to have a coaling station there. It is nearly 700 miles from the mainland, 3,000 miles from our nearest territory at San Diego, 4,000 miles from Honolulu and over 5,000 miles from our coaling station at Pago-Pago. These distances show the geographical relation between Chatham Island and the nearest points where our warships or merchant marine can now coal in our own ports. But the convenience it offers will be much enhanced when the canal is cut between the oceans, for the island will be directly on the route between the canal and the South Pacific and Australia and within easy reach of all our vessels in the South American west coast trade.

The Galapagos Islands are the most neglected in the Pacific, though they are healthful, fertile and capable of supporting a large population. They have not been turned to good account simply because they belong to a little republic with no money to spare for colonial enterprise.

The Bryan Philippine Programme.

The line of conduct in relation to the Philippines, which is proposed in the resolutions submitted to the House of Representatives by Mr. WILLIAMS of Mississippi, indicates, no doubt, the policy which Mr. BRYAN will urge the Democratic National Convention to embody in its platform. The WILLIAMS resolutions have no chance of securing the approval of Congress, and even less chance of gaining acceptance in the country at large.

What Mr. WILLIAMS proposes is that we should forthwith proclaim our formal recognition of the right of the Filipinos to national independence, and that we should then proceed, upon the establishment of peace and the inauguration of a constitutional Government or Governments by the people of the islands, to withdraw our land and sea forces. The only proviso suggested is that the Filipino Government or Governments should agree to refund the $20,000,000 paid by us to Spain, to cede to us in full sovereignty, certain naval stations and to grant our people the perpetual right of free access to all the Filipino ports. Mr. WILLIAMS would further have us pledge ourselves for a term of ten years to protect the Filipino Government or Governments from foreign aggression, on condition that they shall entrust to us during that period the exclusive management of their foreign relations, and defray the cost of keeping military and naval forces in the Philippines or the adjacent waters for protective purposes.

There is no doubt that AGUINALDO and the small body of fugitives who still attend him would assent eagerly to the conditions which Mr. WILLIAMS would propose, in return for the concession of national independence. The insurgents have already framed and promulgated what they call a constitution, and they would consequently describe the ambulatory Government, which is moving with AGUINALDO from one place of refuge to another, as constitutional. They would agree to reimburse us for the $20,000,000 paid by us to Spain, because they could easily secure the money in the course of a couple of years from the customs revenues of Manila and other Filipino seaports. They would agree, of course, to give us two or more coaling stations because, at present, they have nothing to give and everything to gain; whether they might not try hereafter to recover the coaling stations on one pretext or another is a different question. They would cheerfully consent, moreover, to leave the foreign relations of the Philippines in the hands of the United States for a certain period in return for the promise to shield them from foreign aggression, because they would thus be relieved from the cost of creating and maintaining a considerable army and navy for self-defence. In a word, AGUINALDO and his few remaining friends would consent to anything, if thereby they could bring about the evacuation of the island of Luzon and the city of Manila by our army, and could see themselves transformed from hunted fugitives into the absolute masters of the lives, liberties and property of their fellow countrymen.

Let us suppose that such a bargain were carried out, and that the last American soldier were withdrawn from Manila. What treatment could be looked for by the great majority of the inhabitants of that large and opulent city, who have been orderly and law-abiding during the last ten months, and have thus exposed themselves to the charge of sympathizing with the Americans? We know what treatment they would receive, because we know what fate has befallen the inhabitants of interior towns who have welcomed the American soldiers, and subsequently have been left at the mercy of the insurgents. Within twenty-four hours after our soldiers had departed, Manila would become a shambles, and we should be responsible for the blood of multitudes of victims, guilty of nothing but obedience to our commands and of reliance upon our protection. Neither can it be taken for granted that, in the vindictive and predatory orgies which would follow our abandonment of Manila, the property, or even the lives, of foreign residents would be spared by the half-civilized Malays who constitute the bulk of AGUINALDO's followers.

The foreign Governments, whose citizens or subjects had been maltreated, would take summary measures to secure redress, whereupon, under the compact which Mr. WILLIAMS recommends, our military and naval forces would be forthwith called to defend Manila against aggression. A similar outburst of butchery and devastation would be witnessed in every considerable Filipino seaport where the well-to-do inhabitants had submitted quietly to our Government, and where foreign residents had evinced a natural preference for our authority over insurgent rule. From the outset of the proposed protectorate until it expired by limitation, we should be involved in ceaseless and serious troubles with foreign powers, owing to provocations which we could neither prevent nor remedy. In the end, we should have upon our conscience the destruction of thousands of educated and well-meaning Filipinos, who had made the mistake of showing us respect and confidence during our occupation, and we should probably find ourselves entangled in a war with one or more foreign States that could plausibly charge us with conniving at the conversion of the Philippines into lairs of robbers and pirates from whom neither property nor life was safe.

The arguments for Mr. WILLIAMS's proposed protectorate were answered in advance by the President in his third annual message. We cannot, said Mr. MCKINLEY, accept responsibility with one hand, while, with the other we divest ourselves of the power to discharge it. If we are to defend the Philippines from foreign aggression, we must retain the means of preventing the islanders from giving grounds for complaint and interposition.

The Great School for Military Instruction.

We are struck by the intelligent discrimination with which the military movements in South Africa are discussed by newspapers in all parts of this country. It contrasts most favorably with much of the treatment of the subject by even the most important of the English journals.

The ignorance of military conditions displayed in England, more especially at the beginning of the Boer war, even by men and newspapers of civil consequence, was often almost childish. The fanciful tales of terrible bayonet charges by the British in these days of long-range and quick-firing guns received credence in such quarters. The element of personal bravery in British officers was made of capital importance in determining judgments as to the outcome of engagements in which it was displayed vainly, though actually in no extraordinary measure. It was alleged to be a tradition of the British service that officers should expose themselves recklessly, from mere vanity, though really, as sensible men, they indulged in no such foolishness if they had had previous experience in war. The casualties among them have not been greater than they are usually in modern war or than they seem to have been among the Boers. Like other troops, the British have surrendered and been taken captives when further resistance was hopeless. Certain regiments were described as redoubtable, though in action they were beaten, as all troops, even the best, whether of famed or unfamed regiments, are liable to be beaten.

The English throughout have exhibited an unfamiliarity with the actual conditions of modern war, which would be surprising, in view of the military experience of British troops, if their wars for half a century past had not been with savages or semi-civilized peoples only. They have not yet been taught the lessons of bitter and strenuous war, but continue to write and talk about it on the strength of a purely imaginary conception of battles, which is far away from the true facts as they are known to soldiers who have been long engaged in practical fighting. In our own country, however, there still remains a large part of the generation which got its instruction in war as it really is during the terrible four years of the civil conflict—the greatest armed contest of modern times. Many thousands of men on both sides who shared in the dangers and exactions and tuition of that superlative strain upon the military ability of a people still survive, and the memories of the lessons taught by it are burned into their consciousness. They are the most thoroughly seasoned veterans of war in the world, for, as compared with our civil conflict, the Franco-German war was only a brief ordeal. They know that fighting practically is something very different from the battles in picture books or on the theatrical stage. When they read of the retreat from Glencoe, the siege of Ladysmith and the defeats of GATACRE, METHUEN and BULLER, they know from personal experience under similar circumstances in just what condition the English are left after the engagements, and no fanciful newspaper description can produce in them any illusions as to it or soften for them the harsh lines of the picture their personal experience of war enables their imaginations to draw. The stories of terrible bayonet charges did not impose on their credulity; they knew better.

Consequently, there is now in this country a great body of competent military critics brought down from the Civil War who are either writing for newspapers or are instructing men who write for them on this South African war, and they are increased by the younger generation of American soldiers who had a chance to see what fighting actually is in the recent conflict with Spain or amid the unexcelled difficulties of the Philippine campaigns.

The Italians in Egypt.

The report that Italian troops are to relieve the British battalions in the garrisons in Egypt, in order to allow the latter to proceed to South Africa, is too startling to be believed without confirmation. It implies an understanding between Italy and England, and, indirectly, through Italy, between England and the Triple Alliance, of a much more far-reaching nature than has been generally supposed. It reveals, too, an unexpected weakness in England's military position in the Mediterranean, which will be noted by other powers. One of the first who may be expected to protest against such a disturbance of the existing condition of things in Egypt is assuredly the Khedive's titular suzerain, the Sultan of Turkey, and his protest would probably have the support of France and Russia.

The position of England in Egypt has never been regularized by any formal European congress or convention; it has been tolerated, the Khedive and his Government being the officially recognized authority in the country. The assumption of a right to transfer the military control of Egypt to another State is another matter, and could hardly be made unless it has been sanctioned by the other members of the Triple Alliance, which remains to be proved. To the Sultan of Turkey such a transfer of military occupation of what he still claims to be a vassal State would be offensive in the highest degree, and especially when Italy is concerned, whose pretensions to Tripoli, between Tunis and Egypt, are at the present moment a source of apprehension.

One thing that lends color to this doubtful rumor is the fact that an understanding has been arrived at between the Sultan and the Senoussi, the great religious reformer in the south of the Province of Tripoli. Arms, ammunition and Turkish officers and soldiers have been sent into the country bordering on that until recently under the sway of the Mahdi and his successor, the late Khalifa, in order to assert the sovereignty of the Sultan in those regions. The Sultan of Wadai, who is said to control at least fifty thousand warriors, may be a party to the reported attempt to reconquer the Soudan for Islamism, the proposed propaganda of Lord KITCHENER through the College of Khartoum being highly resented by the Sultan.

As England is unable, owing to her South African entanglement, to furnish the force required to ward off the danger threatening the Upper Nile from the west, and possibly also from the east, it is to Italy the British Government would naturally turn for assistance, owing to the intimate relations between the two countries in Egyptian affairs. What the Italian people may think in the matter remains to be seen. The report, in any event, is interesting.

Paving.

While the semi-official bridge and tunnel controversy is in progress between members of the city administration who are agreed as to the necessity of enlarged means of communication between New York and Brooklyn but are at variance as to the form of such improvement whether by bridge span or tunnel excavation, scant attention is being shown to the more urgent need of better pavements. There were on the 1st of January, 1899, 403 miles of paved streets in Manhattan, 538 in Brooklyn, 51 in The Bronx, 438 in Queens; a total of 1,430 miles; and 670 miles unpaved, exclusive of territory not graded and opened to traffic, and exclusive of the borough of Richmond. On the 1st of January 30 per cent. of the travelled streets within the Greater New York were unpaved and a like percentage, chiefly in Brooklyn, were paved with cobblestone, gravel or brick.

The report of the Commissioner of Highways for the three months of July, August and September, now at hand, shows the part of the paving work done during the period possible for such work to be almost imperceptible in amount. These are the figures for new pavements laid: Manhattan, 1.34 miles; in The Bronx, 4.97; Brooklyn, 2.77; and in the borough of Queens, 1.76; a total of less than eleven miles of new pavements in a year, a total by no means commensurate with the increased demands of traffic, the enlargement of business, the increase in population and the expectations of city taxpayers generally.

Schleyism.

It is satisfactory to observe that a newspaper of prominence in Chicago besides the *Inter Ocean* has had the courage to tell the truth, at least through a correspondent, Mr. WALTER WELLMAN, in regard to Rear Admiral SCHLEY. SCHLEY's failures as a commander are exposed intelligently, nothing being said of his attempt at fraud in connection with letters addressed to him by Lieutenant-Commander HODGSON.

Yet this fraud calls for denunciation perhaps more imperatively than its author's conduct on shipboard. Dishonesty in the Navy is as intolerable as cowardice or incompetence.

Schleyism is a disease. The cure of all those afflicted with it is a consummation most devoutly to be wished, for it keeps associated with the naval service of the United States a mark of shame unknown to any other naval service in the world.

Gen. LAWTON gave most of his life to his country. He died poor. The fund now being raised for the benefit of his family will have about it not the faintest suggestion of charity. It will be not even a gift. It will be a little portion of the thanks and praise Americans owe to the man who fought so well for them in many wars. The more his career is studied from the time he shouldered a musket until the time when he fell, almost in the hour of final victory over the insurgents, the more gallant, engaging and manly a figure he will be. The care of those who were dearest to him becomes not a public charge, but an opportunity to do honor to the man who said so little and who did so much.

Soothsaying as to how long it will take to put the Currency bill through the Senate should be tempered by the reflection that the Hon. WIND ALLEN of Nebraska is not often content to express his full thoughts as to a question in less than a month; and the currency is a subject upon which he is capable of speaking for a year and a day.

"Puerto Rico" it is to be hereafter, the decision of the Board of Geographical Names to that effect having been affirmed by Mr. MCKINLEY. The official spelling is one thing and the popular spelling another, and often a much more powerful thing. There will be conservatives enough who will insist that Porto Rico it was, is and shall be. It is a little vexing for grown-up persons who used to blubber bitterly in acquiring, after a fashion, the art of spelling to find out from day to day that they must unlearn so much of what they learned so laboriously. But as to "Puerto Rico," politeness seconds the revised orthography. The Americans can afford to spell it as the Puerto Ricans do.

The Hon. RICHARD FRANKLIN PETTIGREW of South Dakota takes the trouble to inform the Senate that "it is vastly more important that the people should have all the facts obtainable than that any man or men should be reflected to office." It is strange that PETTIGREW, who is so anxious that should have all the facts obtainable, never obtains any for his own use.

The utterance by a committee of Silver Republicans of an address of protest against gold standard legislation will not inspire a breathless interest. The number of the Silver Republicans is so disproportionate to the number of addresses which they put forth that these last are getting to be at a considerable discount.

The Hon. JOHN WALTER SMITH, recently elected Governor of Maryland on a Democratic platform lacking the currency plank, is the finest type of the professional Gold Democrat. Mr. SMITH pretended to be an upholder of honest money; but when the Currency bill declaring for the gold standard was up for passage in the House of Representatives, of which Mr. SMITH is still a member, he skulked and didn't vote.

Gold Democracy of the SMITH sort, that won't cast a positive vote for what it pretends to favor, is humbug.

Not Available.

From the Chicago Evening Post.

"No," said the editor of the magazine, "we cannot accept that article."

"But the author is a man who has acquired a great reputation," protested the assistant.

"True, but—in literature," retorted the editor.

THE OUTLOOK IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The anxiety in England over the situation in South Africa will not be lessened by the report that Gen. Buller has found it necessary to withdraw from his advanced position at Chievsley to Frere because, it is said, of Boer patrolling parties from across the Tugela threatening his communications. Four days also have now passed without news from Gen. Methuen at the Modder River camp, which points conclusively to the complete interruption of his communications both by rail and telegraph, while the Boers are believed to be again establishing themselves in the neighborhood of Belmont in the positions from which they were driven on Nov. 23. Gen. French, acting in sympathy with the policy of retreat imposed by the untoward issue of events elsewhere, has fallen back nearer to Naauw Poort, and Gen. Gatacre appears, for the present at least, to be tied to Sterkstroom by the unsettled condition of the surrounding country. Meanwhile, the Boers, now fully alive to the strategic value of Stormberg, the key of the railway communications to the west and north, are collecting a large force there to oppose the British advance up the line of rail from Sterkstroom, while they have provided for an intercepting movement to the south from the Dordrecht district, which is in direct communication with Aliwal North, and at the same time secured their retreat back to there by the main road, in case of being obliged to fall back before a British movement from Queenstown or Sterkstroom.

Colonel Plummer reports having pushed his way with a strong reconnoitring force from Fort Tuli, in Rhodesia, to within about fifty miles of Pietersburg, the terminus of the railway running north from Pretoria, but was compelled to return, the country having the appearance of being completely abandoned and the intense drought making it dangerous to penetrate further with their horses losing strength for want of sufficient feed.

Such is the general situation as it appears from the latest reports, and it cannot be said to be encouraging at any point. The question whether Ladysmith or Kimberley should receive the first attention, seems to be settled by an article in the London *Times*, in which the relief of Ladysmith is spoken of despondingly, and the opinion expressed that the best that can be now hoped is that Gen. White may be able to cut his way south across the Tugela at some point and join Gen. Buller. His being able to do so successfully depends upon the lowness of the water at the fords on the road he may select, and whether the Boers happen to have their attention drawn in another direction. The recent attacks on the Boer positions at Lombard's Kop, Pepworth Hill, and the Isambulwana Mountain, to destroy the guns mounted on them and dislodge the Boers in occupation, are indications that Gen. White had in view the uncovering of the roads leading to the drifts or fords on the Tugela to the eastward of Colenso, either in anticipation of a successful passage of the Tugela at Colenso by Gen. Buller, or of his being himself obliged to try a sortie at the last moment as an alternative to capitulation.

If the *Times* article, therefore, is a correct indication of the policy to be pursued, then it becomes evident that the first object of the next forward movement on the part of the British is the relief of Kimberley, and the sending of strong reënforcements and supplies to Gen. Methuen to avert his being forced back to the Orange River, and all the ground over which he has fought his way to his present position having to be recovered, perhaps with severer losses than on the first advance. This means that the political situation in England and the interest of the Royal South African Chartered Company dominate every other consideration. At the same time, the military position is somewhat changed to what it was a week or ten days ago, when it was only the Kimberley garrison that had to be relieved. It and Gen. Methuen's division, numerically, are more important from every point of view now than Gen. White's, and, for future operations, the possession of Kimberley is more immediately important than that of Ladysmith, as, in the event of Kimberley being shortly relieved, and a strong British force pushed forward through the Free State toward Johannesburg, the evacuation of Natal by Gen. Joubert's army would follow as a matter of course.

The Twentieth Century.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* It seems extraordinary that, despite all the conclusive proofs to the contrary which have been offered through the columns of your admirable paper, there should be people of intellect so obtuse as to still hold that the twentieth century will begin with the year 1900! There seems but small hope of enlightening their befuddled minds; but their present condition of perversity and error is so pitiable that it is but an act of charity to make one more effort to convert them. With this end in view let me commend the following analogy to all adherents of the fallacious theory that the twentieth century will begin with the first day of January next ensuing.

Let us suppose a literary work to consist of twenty volumes and each volume to consist of 100 chapters. It then follows that Vol. I. contains Chap. 1 to Chap. 100 inclusive; Vol. II. contains Chap. 101 to Chap. 200 inclusive; Vol. III. contains Chap. 201 to Chap. 300 inclusive; Vol. IV. contains Chap. 301 to Chap. 400 inclusive; Vol. V. contains Chap. 401 to Chap. 500 inclusive; Vol. VI. contains Chap. 501 to Chap. 600 inclusive; Vol. VII. contains Chap. 601 to Chap. 700 inclusive; Vol. VIII. contains Chap. 701 to Chap. 800 inclusive; Vol. IX. contains Chap. 801 to Chap. 900 inclusive; Vol. X. contains Chap. 901 to Chap. 1,000 inclusive; Vol. XI. contains Chap. 1,001 to Chap. 1,100 inclusive; Vol. XII. contains Chap. 1,101 to Chap. 1,200 inclusive; Vol. XIII. contains Chap. 1,201 to Chap. 1,300 inclusive; Vol. XIV. contains Chap. 1,301 to Chap. 1,400 inclusive; Vol. XV. contains Chap. 1,401 to Chap. 1,500 inclusive; Vol. XVI. contains Chap. 1,501 to Chap. 1,600 inclusive; Vol. XVII. contains Chap. 1,601 to Chap. 1,700 inclusive; Vol. XVIII. contains Chap. 1,701 to Chap. 1,800 inclusive; Vol. XIX. contains Chap. 1,801 to Chap. 1,900 inclusive; Vol. XX. contains Chap. 1,901 to Chap. 2,000 inclusive.

Now let us suppose that, having read this series to the end of the 1900th chapter (which is contained in the nineteenth volume) I start chapter 1900. Do I at the same time commence the twentieth volume? Manifestly not; for Vol. XX. does not contain the 1900th chapter. That is the closing chapter of Vol. XIX. *The twentieth volume begins with chapter 1901.*

If, in the above table, we substitute the word "century" for "volume," and the word "year" for "chapter," we shall see clearly its application to the question at issue. I submit that the analogy is exact and that the conclusion arrived at is unassailable, namely, that the twentieth century will begin with the year 1901. The methods of my deduction may be childish; but, judging from the numerous things which have been written in support of the theories of the "1900-twentieth-century fiends," kindergarten methods seem most likely to prove convincing.

W. M. DENNETT.

NEW YORK, Dec. 20.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* May not light be shed upon the problem by going back to the year preceding the one marking the beginning of the Christian era? Can the year immediately preceding the birth of Christ be other than what is known as the year 1 B. C., which ended, we will say, the instant of his birth? at which time the year known as the year 1 of our Lord began?

Disregarding for the purpose of the argument the difference between Dec. 25 and Jan. 1, we would say the year 1 B. C. ended on Dec. 31, 12 P. M., and the year One, known as the year 1 of Our Lord, began at the same moment.

The year 2 of Our Lord began when the year 1 had ended, namely, Dec. 31 of the year One, and the first day of the year 2 was Jan. 1, being the first day of the first month of the second year. Under the same rule of reasoning, the first day of the 1900th year must be the day following the expiration of 1899 years, counting from the closing of the year known as the year 1 B. C.

As previously stated, the twentieth century cannot begin until 1,900 years from the birth of Christ have passed; but 1,900 years have not passed until the 1900th year has closed, which will not occur until Dec. 31, 12 P. M. of the year 1900. In other words, not until Jan. 1, 1901, at zero o'clock in the morning does the twentieth century begin.

T. H. MCGRAW.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Here are a few questions and answers for some Simple Simons:

Question—How many years in one century?

Answer—100.

Question—How many years in nineteen centuries?

Answer—1,900.

Question—If not there 1,900 don't we have to take in all of the year 1,900?

Answer—*Sure.*

Question—Then, as the *ending* of the year 1900 will end the nineteenth century, the beginning of 1901 will be the beginning of the twentieth century?

Answer—*Sure.*

All answers correct.

Class dismissed.

MOUNT VERNON, New York. G. C.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Can any form of reasoning or illustration make the fact that the twentieth century begins Jan. 1, 1901, simpler than the suggestion of your correspondent of a few days ago?

Let the uncertain one get together $20, a cent at a time. When he has 1899 cents he must add another cent before he has completed his nineteenth dollar. His twentieth dollar begins with his next cent, his 1901st cent.

BROOKLYN, Dec. 19. NEWTON CHURCH.

WOMAN'S HOTEL WILL BE BUILT.

All but About $50,000 of the Amount Needed Has Been Subscribed.

The scheme to build a woman's hotel seems now nearly certain of realization. A single subscription of $50,000 to the funds was received the other day. The subscriber made it a condition that his name should not be made known. Of the whole sum of $400,000 that is needed all but about $50,000 has now been promised, and the projectors of the enterprise have no fear that they will not get it all before the books close on Jan. 31. Two or three sums have, in fact, been more than half promised which will fill out the required amount. The estimated cost of the hotel is $800,000, half of which has been offered on mortgage at 4 per cent.

Charles D. Kellogg, the Secretary of the Woman's Hotel Company, expressed surprise yesterday at the question raised by a correspondent of THE SUN, who called herself "A Questioner." She wanted to know if the enterprise was to be business or charity, and why the working women of New York had not been asked to subscribe. Mr. Kellogg said that he failed to see how the matter could be made plainer than it had been made. It is to be a business venture, not a charity, and as such it is expected to pay. Being a business affair, he said, there will be no boarding school, charitable or reformatory regulations. The shares are $100. THE SUN has published the names of treasurer and trustees. Mr. Kellogg will be glad to receive subscriptions from working women or anybody else. There has been no general call issued to the wage-earning women of New York to subscribe, presumably because they were not supposed to be capitalists, and the question here is about a very large amount.

Information for a Correspondent Desiring It.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Allow me to reply to "A Questioner" through the columns of your paper. I am in no wise surprised at her perplexity as to whether the Woman's Hotel, as now planned, is a charity or a business investment.

The hotel has been "hoodooed," if one may use that word, by the fact that the present plan originally started in the Charities building, and that the principal headquarters have been there ever since. The whole management has been on a charity basis. All the work was done by women, who were working for nothing more substantial than the promise of a possible commission percentage in a mythical corporation.

The thing has lacked the snap and go of a thorough business investment, which it is really intended to be. All the canvassers were people who had worked in the charity field and charity methods were employed to carry the plan through.

In a few words, the Woman's Hotel is a business venture, not a charitable affair at all. At present there has been subscribed $220,000; there is still needed $80,000 before the company can be incorporated. When shares to the amount of $300,000 have been subscribed, a stock company will be formed, ground purchased and a building erected, which is designed to meet the requirements of just such women as a "A Questioner."

As an investment, the ground, the city real estate and the building will make the shares good stock to hold. If it does not succeed as a woman's hotel it may be easily converted into an apartment house or family hotel.

The shares are $100. A fifth is required down, upon incorporation, and the remaining four-fifths as the progress of the building calls for. If the balance of the required $300,000 is not subscribed by Jan. 1, 1900, all the shares so far promised become void, which is rather a disastrous condition of affairs, to say the least of it.

The support desired can be summed up in a few words: "Money and the $80,000 still remaining to make up the desired $300,000." Can "A Questioner" suggest any way in which this $80,000 may be raised? If she can, there are dozens of interested people who would be glad to hear from her.

I should gladly give "Questioner" any further information she may ask for, and will see her upon receipt from THE SUN of her name and address.

ONE WHO IS INTERESTED.

RELIGIOUS "LIBERALITY" IN CHICAGO.

A Methodist and a Presbyterian Minister Assist at a Go-as-You-Please Ordination.

From the Chicago Inter Ocean.

It is hard to see on what principle the Rev. Dr. A. C. Hirst, a Methodist pastor, can defend his course in making himself prominent last Sunday at the People's Church in the ordination of Mrs. Vande la Varnum Thomas.

The Rev. Dr. Thomas, the pastor of the People's Church, is irreproachable as a man, but he was expelled from the Methodist fold twenty-five years ago for his latitudinarian theology, and has departed further and further from the orthodox faith every day since. Last Sunday he even intimated that there was no important difference in theology between Jews and Christians. Of course the presumption is that Mrs. Thomas is in entire sympathy with her husband's views.

The ordination sermon was preached apparently for the express purpose of assailing as a pernicious error the doctrine of the divinity of Christ. This sentiment was emphasized by the presence of two or three ministers who are known to entertain such a view concerning the person of Christ.

Under these circumstances the Rev. Granville Ross Pike of the Millard Avenue Presbyterian Church sanctioned the services by asking the divine blessing on them. Dr. Hirst went much further, and actually assumed to ordain Mrs. Thomas ostensibly to the same ministry as her husband. Now, when it is considered that Dr. Hirst is a venerable minister of a Church that rests on the divinity of Christ as its chief cornerstone, and that he has no power to ordain any one in his own church, and least of all a woman, his position is obviously inconsistent and unbecoming, if, indeed, it is not one of treachery to the Methodist Church.

The Hirst incident recalls a similar mistake made by Methodist people several years ago. A joint convention of Jews and Christians was called at the First Methodist Church, with a view, on the Methodist side, to promote the conversion of the Jews to Christianity. The Jews were averse to the whole proceeding, and would not attend the meeting until the Christians promised that they would conduct the exercises without mentioning the name of Christ. This promise they kept, and actually offered prayer without mentioning the mediatorial work of Christ. As was to be expected, the proceedings simply gave the Jews a contempt for the manager of the convention and left them more settled than ever in their views.

New England's Place in Politics.

From the Boston Journal.

A clear majority of the really important Senate chairmanships are held by New Englanders. Going over to the House, now for the first time ruled by a Speaker from beyond the Mississippi, we find an extraordinary number of responsible committee assignments held by New England Representatives. The one important thing which the present Congress has accomplished—the passage through the House of the Currency bill—is really a triumph for what were at first distinctively New England principles. Not many years ago even conservative men of the middle West and far Western States were rather shy about speaking of the gold standard. They were better satisfied to call themselves "bimetallists." But the leaven of ideas that were largely, if not wholly, New England in their origin has so worked on the Republican party that a bill proclaiming and establishing this same gold standard now goes through the "popular" branch of Congress without a dissenting Republican vote.

British Feeling in New York.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Would that a ship called True Blue might sail bearing relief to our kinsmen across the sea, who, singly and alone, joined hands with this country when every power in Europe was ready to spring at our illustrious nation. The Dutch have taken Holland—that's enough.

DEC. 20. CHAS. D. LANSDON.

A Strong Second.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* It is with great interest I read your editorial of Dec. 12, in regard to that the President of Wellesley College said about the end of the century. But she also says the 19th century ended with one second past the 1899th year of the Christian era. Now, even beginning as a baby, that we are now within a few days of the end of the present century, we would like to know who "one second past" a second is, and how and why we keep the period of time, from which it becomes of that second, to what century it belongs.

E. F. SWEET.

BROOKLYN, Dec. 19.

Scribner's Magazine for January begins the twenty-seventh volume and contains the opening installment of Guy Rousseville's long-expected life of Oliver Cromwell, and the first chapters of Mr. J. M. Barrie's equally long-looked for continuation of "Sentimental Tommy," entitled "Tommy and Grizel." Jesse Lynch Williams has a description of a "Walk Uptown," with photographs of characteristic street scenes of the city. Frederick Palmer compares "White Man and Brown Man in the Philippines"; and there are contributions from Frederic Irland, Eliot Gregory, Henry James, E. S. Martin, Robert Shackleton and Howard Pyle.

THE DANISH WEST INDIES.

Will the United States Buy the Islands Now?—Ours They Should Be.

To exchange island possessions, to sell or to buy, seems to be a present-day fashion among nations. Porto Rico, it is true, came to the United States through the fortunes of war. But the amiable settlement of the Samoan difficulty was not brought about without a suitable compensation to the power that withdrew from the triumvirate. Barter plays no inconsequential part in the insular transactions of the Pacific and the Atlantic.

Very recently the rumor gained currency that Denmark would be willing to dispose of its islands in the West Indies. It was said that the Danish Government had offered the three islands for $3,000,000, and that the proposition had been laid before the authorities at Washington. The American Embassy in London, it was said in addition, was assisting in the negotiations. But the reply of the United States is still held in abeyance.

That Denmark wants to dispose of islands so far away from the seat of government there can be no doubt. What adds interest to this matter is the attitude of France. For France is anxious to secure a coaling station north of Martinique, and nothing would suit the French Government better than to obtain possession of St. Thomas for that purpose. But will the Danish Government sell to France? And will the United States allow a European nation to invade the Western Hemisphere? Those are questions largely for the United States to answer. If by buying the islands this Government prevents a foreign power to gain entrance to the archipelago such course might seem the best of all. For if Denmark says she has no further use for the islands, and if her offer to this country is refused, would not the little nation be somewhat justified in finding a purchaser who stands ready with an offer?

Denmark knows better than any other nation the peculiar predicament in which the present situation leaves her. A well-to-do nation, but with no more means than needed, it stands to reason that her efforts to sell now have some economic base. Patriotic as are the Danes, their patriotism allows them to dispense with possessions which, instead of being a benefit, seem a burden. The same difficulties that beset Spain in the Antilles in a somewhat less degree make the Danish West Indies undesirable quantities for Denmark to own. The price of $3,000,000, if correctly stated, should certainly seem a reasonable sum to a country which, upon one other occasion, offered $7,500,000 for St. Thomas and St. John. That the islands have not decreased in value since then might seem a reasonable supposition.

The several negotiations which have taken place between the United States and Denmark as regards the transfer of the Danish West Indies make not uninteresting reading. The first attempt to gain possession of the islands through purchase was made in Lincoln's time. It was due to the farsightedness of Secretary Seward that the subject was brought up. It was not due to any lack of interest on his part that the scheme of purchase was defeated.

It is a somewhat curious fact that the first suggestion that this country gain the islands came up during a dinner given at the French Embassy at Washington. It was in January, 1865, that Secretary Seward, who was a guest at the dinner in question, turned to the Danish Chargé d'Affaires, Gen. Raasloff, and asked the latter whether Denmark would be willing to sell out. Gen. Raasloff was himself opposed to Denmark parting with its West India possessions, but he told Secretary Seward that he would lay the matter before his Government, which he did.

The reply which Denmark finally gave to the proposal was to the effect that she did not care to part with the islands. Secretary Seward kept insisting, but Gen. Raasloff was told to drop the matter. Then came President Lincoln's assassination, and no further thought was given to the matter.

Mr. Seward recovered from the attempt on his life, and, once he was well again, approached Gen. Raasloff to hear what the Danish Government had to say about selling the islands. It seems that in order to become elected they must maintain a speed of 16 knots and cover the distance in twenty-one days each way. The contract contemplates a mail service for an optional term of either five or ten years, beginning Nov. 1, 1900.

The Cosmos Company now receives a subsidy of $80,000, in addition to the usual allowance for transporting the mails to Sydney. The intent of the new service is to supplant this system of contract service and subsidy. At present the trip requires twenty-one days and only thirteen mails are despatched each year. The new service will enable the Department to send through mails from New York to Sydney seventeen times each year, thus expediting the mail service from London and New York, Asia, Honolulu, and such other points as the Postmaster-General may select.

In framing specifications for this service the Department has been guided by the Subsidy act of 1891, under which the vessels of the American Line were made auxiliary cruisers. Should the Hanna-Payne bill become a law it is thought that prospective bidders for this service will permit their proposals to stand. The general opinion is that the award will go to the Oceanic Company.

RANDOLPH'S SENTENCE STANDS.

An American Citizen to Be Imprisoned Fourteen Years for Murder in Colombia.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 21.—Mr. Hart, the United States Minister to Colombia, telegraphed the State Department to-day from Bogota that the sentence of Charles Randolph, an American citizen convicted of murder in that country, had been definitely confirmed. This means that the highest judicial tribunal of Colombia has approved the sentence of fourteen years' imprisonment imposed on Randolph. Whether this Government will take any further steps in Randolph's behalf has not been determined.

Randolph, known also as Charles Radford, was from Alabama. He left this State under a cloud and settled in Colombia, engaging in business there. He became indebted to a German of the name of Simmons, and when Simmons demanded payment Randolph shot and killed him. Randolph was imprisoned for a long time without trial, but finally, through the efforts of Col. Hilary A. Herbert, then Secretary of the Navy, and other prominent men, tried by jury. The jury found him guilty and he was sentenced to death. The United States Government secured a new trial for him and he was again convicted and sentenced to an imprisonment for life. A third trial resulted in a sentence of fourteen years' imprisonment. While there had been practically no doubt of Randolph's entire culpability, the legal proceedings to which he was subjected were of such a character that this Government felt obliged to protest against them. Randolph was kept in chains for a long time without trial.

FREE LIBRARY WILL CLOSE SUNDAYS.

President Kernochan Says Threats From City Officials Won't Prevent It.

J. Frederic Kernochan, President of the Board of Trustees of the New York Free Circulating Library, said yesterday that, notwithstanding the threats of Comptroller Coler and Corporation Counsel Whalen to cut off city aid to the library unless the libraries are kept open on Sundays, the institution would be closed on Sundays. Mr. Kernochan said:

"I don't know what the people of this city will submit to. They have stood for a good deal at times from the present Administration, and they may submit to the closing of the libraries entirely. In fact they might submit to the closing of the public schools. The trustees will close the libraries on Sundays, as has been announced. I am sure of that. If the city refuses the appropriation further, or takes it away, the libraries may be closed every day. We must retrench. Sunday closing is not a mere whim. It is a great, big, solemn necessity. The Comptroller does not understand the situation. He will be informed and then there will be no misunderstanding between us. When the trustees met in January a statement will be prepared which will be sent to him. Our case is so reasonable and obvious that I have no doubt we shall get a larger appropriation next year."

Mosselookmegantic's Mysterious Salmon.

From the Lewiston Evening Journal.

The mystery of Mosselookmegantic's big salmon has at last been solved. For several seasons now anglers who have wet their lines in Bugle Cove have come back to camp with tackle decidedly out of kilter, and with blood-stirring tales of the monster salmon that "broke" behind a certain overhanging birch, and, hooking or gaffed, then the hitches of their lines—always leaving behind everything notice—in retreat.

It was always the same birch where the salmon rose, and the tactics he employed of sulking in a bulldog tenacity, refusing to be drawn to the surface, were always the same. The fame of this remarkable fish got around throughout the lake, and anglers from the other lakes came down to try and often to try their skill. They never failed in hooking the salmon, but they never succeeded in landing him. It was estimated that Bugle cost a couple of time and that were wasted last season in Bugle Cove.

It was low water now in Mosselookmegantic Lake, and [illegible] though low in some places [illegible] last Monday Mr. Ed Wheeff and Mr. C. of the [illegible] Mosselookmegantic House, ran the bottom an unmarked stump in Bugle Cove. Underneath an overhanging [illegible] they found thirty-seven spoons, [illegible] sinkers and artificial flies.

GERMANY'S DISAVOWAL.

Will Not Take Possession of Samoan Territory Until the Treaty is Ratified.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 21.—The German Government to-day assured the Government of the United States that if it were true, as re