PORTO RICO.

The Actual Condition of That American Island.

AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION MAKING THINGS BOOM THERE.

Laborers' Wages Will Nearly Double With the Change of the Currency to the American Gold Basis in August and Taxes Are Going Down—Comparisons Between the Old and the New System—No Opposition to the Tariff, Which Was Necessary to Raise the Money Needed to Carry On the Island—The Only Criticism Made of American Rule Is of This Nation's Too Great Generosity.

If the Democratic party expects to get any campaign material out of the island of Porto Rico this year it is doomed to bitter disappointment.

A SUN reporter has just returned from a trip over the island, which included visits to all of the chief towns and rides through the country from one side of the island near the west end to the other side near the east end. He was sent there to find out from personal observation the conditions that exist now, and just how the United States are caring for the ward that came to them with the fortunes of war. Of the things that are written here, the reporter knows from personal observation and personal experience.

No man who did not see the island immediately after the war and who does not know something of the conditions that existed then can realize now the extent of what has been done since the American occupation. Whatever mistakes have been made, if any have been made, have been on the side of generosity to the people. It is said there of the military government that it is altogether too lenient. It was not a military government in fact, for there was the largest measure of personal freedom always. The thrifty people of the island say:

TOO MUCH CHARITY.

"You have given away too much food. Wherever you found want and distress you relieved it with food. This is all right in America, perhaps, but our people are improvident and they will not work when they can get food. You have relieved distress, but the more you have relieved the more you have found to relieve. So with the orders suspending the foreclosure of mortgages. You have been too generous with the planters. They have taken advantage of your generosity. Had you let the law take its course they would have been forced either to sell or to work their plantations to the limit of their capacity. In either case, labor would have benefited. For, if the plantations were sold, they would have been bought by men who would have worked them. Instead of that the planters with mortgaged lands no longer fearing the day of settlement, have worked their plantations only as they felt like it."

These instances of generosity are spoken of by the thrifty people of the island as the mistakes of the United States, but if mistakes they are, they are certainly on the right side of the ledger. The purpose of this article is to tell particularly about the sources of revenue of the island and the operation of the tariff, the imposition of which made Democratic politicians looking for political capital foam at the mouth and shed crocodile tears over the "wrongs" of Porto Rico.

TRUTH ABOUT THE TARIFF.

Right here at the beginning it may be said, that there never was any honest opposition in Porto Rico to the imposition of 15 per cent. of the Dingley tariff rates on imports into the island or on imports of the island's products into the United States. Everywhere that THE SUN reporter went this statement was made to him. Men like Andres Croesus, one of the biggest importers and exporters on the island; Henry Luce of the banking firm of De Ford & Co., and a big sugar planter as well; Mr. Dooley of Dooley & Smith, the biggest American grocery firm of the island; Dr. Collay Tosta, probably the best informed man in Porto Rico on all island matters and island needs, these men and fifty others with whom the reporter talked, volunteered the statement that there was never any honest opposition on the island to the tariff and the reason for that is easily explained.

Two-thirds of the revenue of the island come from duties on imports. As it requires all of the revenues of the island to pay the running expenses, if there were no tariff the money now raised by the tariff would have to be raised by internal taxes. The burden not being scientifically distributed would have been felt tenfold. A tariff was absolutely necessary to raise money to pay the public expenses of the island until such time as a scientific system of internal taxation could be devised to take the place of the system in vogue under Spanish rule, which included a tax on everything that was eaten everything that was drunk, a tax on every industry, taxes on exports, a tax on skill, a tax on education and even a tax on brains. Tax gatherers stood at the gates of the cities and practically every article that came into a city paid its tax. It was a system under which, by the way, the influential escaped all tax and the poor and the uninfluential paid it all.

The new tariff in Porto Rico went into operation on May 1. Under its provisions the duty on all imports from countries other than the United States is the same as the duty on like imports here. On all imports from the United States the duty is 15 per cent. of the Dingley tariff rates. For instance: If the Dingley tariff imposes a duty of $1 on an article, the duty on the same article going from the United States to Porto Rico is only 15 cents. On all articles entering the United States from Porto Rico the rule is the same. The money collected in Porto Rico, exclusive of the actual cost of collection, goes into the Treasury for the benefit of the island, and the money collected here on imports from Porto Rico, not even deducting the cost of collection, is sent to Porto Rico and is all used for the benefit of the island. So Porto Rico gets not only the tariff tax that her own people pay, but she gets also the tariff tax that the American people pay on her productions. But further than this, many articles taxed under the Dingley law are absolutely exempt in Porto Rico. These are articles of universal use, articles of food chiefly, such as flour, codfish, rice, beans and salted meats. Articles needed by the Porto Ricans in their business, such as agricultural implements, are also free.

Such in brief is the much abused and much denounced Tariff bill. This bill is operating, according to the merchants and according to the officials, with a minimum of hardship. The only complaints that are made about the tariff generally relate to the imposition of a duty on two articles of food. One is rice and the other is codfish. Rice that is grown in the United States is admitted free, but the complaint is made that there is not enough rice grown in the United States to supply the island. Rice in Porto Rico has been the food of the people, as much the food of the people of Porto Rico as it has been the food of the people in China. Laborers have lived almost exclusively on rice and codfish. There is a duty of two cents a pound on rice imported from countries other than the United States, and the Porto Ricans say that because the United States do not produce sufficient rice for their consumption that duty should be removed so that they could save this two cents a pound.

Codfish imported from the United States is also free, but the Porto Ricans have been used to getting the larger part of their supply of codfish from the Canadians. The American codfish is better than the Canadian codfish for the United States, but the Porto Ricans think that the Canadian codfish is better for them because it is cured differently. The Canadian codfish is kiln-cured while the American is sun-cured. The kiln-cured fish lasts in the tropical climate much longer than the sun-cured. The Porto Ricans think that in the matter of codfish they should be permitted to get what they are used to having without paying any duty on it. In the reporter's trip over the island, the only complaint that he heard from any source whatever about the tariff was in regard to these two things, and every man to whom the question was put regarding the necessity of the tariff answered in effect thus:

"Why, yes, of course we had to have the tariff. How could we have paid expenses if there hadn't been a tariff? We expected to have to pay 25 per cent. instead of 15. It couldn't possibly be any lower."

OLD TAXES ABOLISHED.

While the duty on imports into the island has been reduced to the point where only enough is imposed to raise the money necessary to conduct the affairs of the island, the duty on exports of all kinds has been abolished. The three great products of Porto Rico have always been coffee, sugar and tobacco and on these products the Government of Spain always imposed an export tax. Every quintal of coffee, that is, every 100 pounds, exported from the country had to pay an export tax of $1.50. The coffee production of the island made up six-tenths of the total production. Every 100 pounds of tobacco had to pay a duty of $1 if it was exported. If manufactured into cigarettes it had to pay $1.12 a thousand and if manufactured into cigars it had to pay $1.68 a thousand. Wood was another export of the island and that had to pay a duty of 15 cents for each 100 kilogrammes.

The United States have always been the great market for the products of Porto Rico. Now, as an instance of what the tariff bill has done for Porto Rico sugar may be cited. Before the Tariff bill went into effect the best profit the sugar planters could get was in the neighborhood of $3 a ton. The 85 per cent. reduction enables them now to make a profit of something like $37 a ton. The importance of this will be understood when it is explained that the sugar land district of Porto Rico runs almost from end to end on each side of the island and extends inland more than five miles. The island, roughly speaking, is 100 miles long and 50 miles wide.

Under the new tariff coffee is admitted to the United States free and there is no export duty either. When these facts are considered it will be readily understood why the people of Porto Rico are laughing at the idea of Democrats making political capital out of Porto Rican affairs at this time.

The work of introducing into Porto Rico a scientific system of internal taxation has not yet been completed, but it is under way and the officials are confident that before the end of the two years, at the expiration of which time the tariff is to be wiped out, Porto Rico will have a system of taxation that will be least burdensome and most satisfactory to her people. At the present time the burden of taxation is much less than the burden of taxation under the Spanish rule. For instance, in 1897-98, the last year of Spanish rule, the Spanish Government exacted from the people $3,064,255.73 gold. It expended $2,869,152. In the first year of American rule the Government collected $1,909,390, and expended $1,943,678.

OPPRESSIVE SPANISH TAXES.

It is very difficult for an American to understand the system of taxation under which Porto Rico sweated when the Spanish were in power there. To understand the difficulties that have beset the American officials who are charged with the duties of raising upon the island revenues sufficient to pay the expenses of the island, and who at the same time must do it so that there shall be no oppression to either rich or poor, it is necessary to know something about the old Spanish system. Under that system there were in Porto Rico two great direct taxes. One was called the territorial tax and the other the industrial and commercial tax. These taxes, of course, were internal taxes and entirely exclusive of the almost prohibitive tariff under which duties were collected at the custom house. Porto Rico never knew such a thing as a tax on capital value. The industrial and commercial tax was a license to do business. It was the same as the saloon licenses in America, but in Porto Rico the regulations extended to everybody. The first article of the Spanish regulations for the levying and collecting of the tax was as follows:

"Every Spaniard or foreigner who is engaged in the province of Porto Rico in any industry, profession, art or trade is subject to the payment of the industrial tax with the exceptions mentioned in the list of exemptions attached to these regulations."

It is impossible to give here a list of the taxes imposed. But here are some things taken at random:

"Representatives of insurance companies not having their domicile in the island shall pay for each company they represent 15 pesos.

"Agents whose business it is to manage before courts or public officers private or public matters shall pay 20 pesos.

"Custom house brokers in towns where there is a custom house shall pay 25 pesos.

"Capitalists who employ their funds in loans and other transactions shall pay 5 per cent. of the amount of interest that they receive.

"Merchants who receive or remit, import or export, buy or sell at wholesale or retail, on their own account or on a commission, native products, shall pay in the capital, Ponce, and Mayaguez 700 pesos.

"Those who make agricultural loans for the improvement of sugar estates shall pay 100 pesos."

Ticket agents at railroad stations had to pay 10 pesos; agents of ocean going steamships had to pay 100 pesos.

Bathing establishments had to pay from 12 to 46 pesos; mineral water establishments had to pay 115 pesos; theatrical and circus companies had to pay 5 per cent. of the proceeds of a ful house for each month they performed, whether the house was full or not; editors had to pay 8 pesos; daily newspapers had to pay 29 pesos and weekly newspapers 10 pesos; coin and bank note brokers had to pay from 20 to 60 pesos; commission brokers from 35 to 40 pesos; laundries had to pay 12 pesos; undertakers had to pay from 12 to 18 pesos; private schools had to pay 16 pesos, and if they boarded their pupils, 25 per cent. additional; boarding stables had to pay 25 pesos; every truck and every wagon owner had to pay 6 pesos for each horse; every oxcart owner had to pay 2 pesos for each ox; hack owners had to pay 3.50 pesos a horse; tugs had to pay 50 pesos; mills for grinding sugar paid from 60 to 75 pesos; sugar refineries paid 75 pesos; other factories paid all the way from 25 pesos to 500 pesos; surveyors who did not work all the year round had to pay 15 pesos; engineers, civil, military, mining, land or industrial, had to pay 24 pesos; professors of languages and drawing had to pay 5 pesos each; lawyers had to pay 48 pesos. And so on through the list—umbrella menders, tinsmiths, saddle makers, venders of anything to eat boiler makers, doctors, veterinary surgeons, pedlers, carpenters and everybody but the common laborers. Practically nobody escaped.

THE SPANISH TAX ON LAND.

The territorial tax was a tax on the income derived from property. The landlord of a house paid a certain percentage of the rental value of that house. The owner of a plantation paid a certain percentage of the income he derived from working the plantation. If he had land he didn't work that was taxed also.

Besides these taxes there was a consumption tax. The consumption tax was levied on everything that came into a town to be sold. A farmer bringing in vegetables was held up at the gates of the city and was made to pay a tax on what he had with him to sell. Every pound of food that came into a town had to pay this consumers' tax, and of course the consumers of the food had to pay the tax, for the seller added the tax to his selling price.

The evils of the old system lay not so much in the laws themselves as in the administration of the laws. Under the Spanish rule the influential men, the men who voted with the party in power, were able to escape their taxes. The man who was not influential had to pay or go to jail. In the imposition of the territorial and the industrial tax the Government divided the island into certain classes or districts, according to the population, and people in the big towns had to pay more than people in the small towns. For instance, in the first class there were the towns of Ponce, San Juan and Mayaguez. The second class consisted of towns having Custom Houses of the first class handling commerce in general, such as Aguadilla, Arecibo, Arroyo, Humacao, Vieques and Fajardo. The third class consisted of towns having more than 12,000 population. The fourth class consisted of towns with from 8,000 to 12,000, the fifth class of towns with 4,000 to 8,000 and the sixth class of towns with less than 4,000 population.

The Government apportioned the tax among these six classes. It said to those of the first class, "You must produce so much"; to those of the second class, "You must produce so much," and so on down to the bottom. Then the trades of the town were divided into classes. In the first class would be wholesale and retail dealers who imported things. In the second class would be the merchants who didn't import. In the third class would come the druggists, the tailors, the grocers and the furniture men. In the fourth class were the butchers, bootsellers and grocers selling at retail only. In the fifth class would come ice dealers, barber shops, cigar stores, bakers. In the sixth class would be butchers in the streets, boarding houses, wine shops, second-hand furniture stores, fish dealers, cafés, fruit stores and dressmakers. In the seventh class would be the eating and the lodging houses, public halls, stores selling wood and coal, taverns and grog shops. In the eighth class would be barbers who didn't have any shops, stationery stands and news stands, and so on. The professional men were in another class—doctors, teachers, lawyers, &c. Each profession had a class of its own.

The Government would say to each class, "We assess you so much. Now get it," and all the wholesale dealers who were importers would meet, find out what they had to pay in the aggregate, divide it up and then pay it. The retailers would meet, find out what they had to pay and divide up. All the doctors would meet, all the lawyers and so on through each class. They would all have meetings, find out what had been assessed against their business and divide the thing up.

There was nothing equitable about this. A man might have a retail store and do a big business in it, and right alongside of him might be another man with a retail store who did little business, but if they were in the same class each paid the same tax, unless the man who did the small business was able to make the other men in his class bear a part of his burden. The man who didn't report himself at the beginning of the fiscal year was a defrauder of the revenue and punishments were provided for him. The man who did any business that he was not licensed to do was a defrauder. Such a thing as a department store was an impossibility, for a man who undertook to sell different kinds of goods would have to pay the tax on each kind. Again, the man who had two entrances to his store for the public might have to pay tax on two stores instead of one.

REFORMS MADE BY AMERICANS.

Now to come to the changes that have been made in the system of taxation in Porto Rico, the Americans abolished absolutely the consumers' tax. That was a tax that came out of the pockets of the poor. It was a tax that made them pay more for their food. It was a tax that oppressed them heavily. One of the first things that was done was to wipe that tax out. Then came the wiping out of the tax on skill and the tax on the professions, the tax on art and the tax on education. The teachers and the doctors and the artists and the mechanics, the engineers and all men of that class were placed on the list of those exempt.

Next came a reformation in the tax on land. The change that was made, it is understood, will not be permanent, but the system now is better than the system that existed. The land, by order of Gen. Henry, was divided into three classes. First class—sugar land—was taxed one peso a cuardo, which is a little less than an American acre. The second class was made up of land not so good. That was taxed one-half peso a cuardo. The third class was land that was good only for grazing purpose and that was taxed one-quarter of a peso a cuardo. The income tax on urban property was continued and houses still pay taxes according to the rental value.

In addition to these taxes there is a school tax imposed. There are internal revenue stamp taxes, which include a stamp of $2 on each certificate issed by any of the bureaus of the Government and one-tenth of a cent stamp on each box of matches made. A tax of 3 cents a litre is imposed on spirituous liquors; a tax of $5 for a license to carry firearms; a tax of $7.50 for each trademark issued; a tax of 2 cents a pound on oleomargarine and a tax of 20 cents a pack on playing cards.

This will give the reader an idea of how the money that is used to run the island of Porto Rico is being raised. Not only has everything been done to lighten the burden of the people of the island in ordinary times, but in the extraordinary times following the hurricane in August, last year, the law was stretched by military decree so that no man who was impoverished by the hurricane was asked to pay any taxes at all. Land owners and others were permitted to apply for the remission of all their taxes, and thousands upon thousands of dollars in taxes were remitted.

Porto Rico since the close of the war has been probably the most misrepresented bit of territory in the whole world. It has been the subject of word painting by specialists in calamity howling who were egged on by enemies of the country to such an extent that thousands upon thousands of the good people in America honestly fear that this nation has turned oppressor and is grinding down the people of Porto Rico. For this fear the eminent journalistic calamity howlers are responsible. One of the most recent visitors of this character to the island went to the extent of hiring 200 of the Porto Ricans to march into San Juan crying for bread, in order to back up the story that he wrote about the distress on the island. This same journalist had printed with his articles a lot of photographs depicting starvation, disease and distress, alleged to have been taken by himself and alleged to show things actually existing on the island at the present time. As a matter of fact, the photographs were old ones, taken immediately after the terrible hurricane that swept over the island a year ago, when distress actually existed through no fault of any one. These photographs are on sale now and have been for a year.

The fact of the matter is that under the new tariff and the new civil government and with the assurance of a speedy introduction of a gold standard to take the place of the rotten Spanish money system, the island is improving in a marvellous fashion. Congress, so far as it has gone, has legislated wisely for the island. There is every prospect now that with a wise administration such as has been inaugurated, increased industry will bring a measure of prosperity such as the island has never known before in its history. This result is not going to come about in a month or perhaps in several months. Necessarily it is a work of time, but that things are pointing right there can be no doubt. Conditions have been constantly changing since the American occupation. New ideas have been introduced. The intelligent people of the island are taking kindly to the new order of things. The merchant is getting more for his goods than he ever got before. The laborers in the chief cities are getting more wages than they ever before received, and with the complete going out of the island currency and its replacement by the American monetary system, the making of every dollar, whether of gold, silver or paper, as good as every other dollar, the wages of the laborer throughout the whole island will be almost doubled. With better wages will come increased spending power, better food and more comforts. The Porto Rican laborer will have something to live for, and he has had nothing to live for for so long a time that his ambition had been practically killed.

WAGES.

Agricultural laborers—and they make up the greater part of the population of the island—have always received 50 cents a day. When the gold standard was in force there they received this sum. When Mexican currency took the place of the gold they still got 50 cents a day. When that went out and Porto Rican currency came in there was still no change. The fifty-cent wage of the Porto Rican laborer has since 1886 been paid in a constantly depreciating silver currency. Fifty cents in Porto Rican currency to-day is worth 30 cents American. The United States have agreed to redeem the Porto Rican silver currency at the ratio of 66 1-3 cents American for $1 Porto Rican between now and Aug. 31. It has been decreed that after that date the money of Porto Rico shall be American currency and unredeemed Porto Rican money shall be worth only what its weight as old metal will bring for it.

The laborer who has always received 50 cents a day, whether the money was worth 50 cents or 30 cents, will insist upon getting 50 cents still. Employers generally will demand that he take 30 cents gold, the equivalent of his wages for years past. In some cases employers may be able to make him split the difference with them and make him take 40 cents gold, but generally from end to end of the island it is the opinion of men of judgment that he will get all the increase. This opinion is based on the fact that the needs of the laboring people are so small and the country is so rich that it is possible for a good part of the year for people to live without work. The employer will need the labor more than the laborer needs the money. Further, the people of the whole island, including the employers, realize that wages have been too low to make any sort of general prosperity possible, and in the contest public opinion will be a unit in favor of the laborer.

As in the case of the distribution of food and the suspension of the foreclosure of mortgages this generosity was grossly abused in many cases. But this will be fully told about later, together with other facts concerning the administration of the affairs of the island.

ODD EFFECTS OF CARGOES.

Sufferings Caused to Sailors at Sea by Coffee, Sugar and Pine Lumber.

It was in one of the little river front eating houses in Brooklyn frequented by sailors from the coasters which are loading or unloading. A big, powerful sailor who looked as if he had never in his life known what it was to be sick for a day entered and took a chair opposite a longshoreman who had already ordered and was waiting for his dinner. As the sailor was looking over the bill-of-fare with that critical and hesitant eye that characterizes Jack ashore from a long voyage with a discriminating sea appetite upon him, the waiter brought in a cup of steaming coffee and set it down before the longshoreman. As the odor of it reached the sailor's nostrils he bent upon the cup a gaze of concentrated disgust and hatred. Then he turned deadly pale, rose from his seat and staggered toward the door.

"Been drinkin' a little too much for your tonnage, mate?" asked the proprietor, helping him to the door.

"Haven't had a drop to-day," said the man, huskily. "It's that coffee."

"What's the matter with the coffee?" asked the proprietor, angrily. "There ain't any better coffee than that on the river front."

"That's all right," replied the sailor with an effort, "but I just got in off a coffee ship this morning."

"Oh," said the proprietor, comprehendingly. "If that's the case I'll fix you off in the corner where you'll be all right."

A table was set for him far from the others, and there he ate his dinner in apparent peace. Now there was in the eating house a landsman of an inquiring turn of mind who failed to understand the wherefore of all this, so he questioned the proprietor, who has been long on the river front and is himself a graduate from before the mast and has sailed in many waters of the world.

"Nothing queer about that," he said, in response to the landsman's question. "He's been out on a coffee ship, that's all. He wont want to see or smell coffee for weeks, let alone taste it."

"Do they feed them nothing but coffee on the coffee ships?" asked the landsman, in the innocence of his soul.

"Feed 'em? 'Tisn't the feed. It's the smell that knocks 'em. For a week or ten days it isn't bad; in fact, it's rather a pleasant smell, that of the green berry, but after that it begins to get on your mind. In damp weather if it's a long voyage it's something terrible. I've seen a whole ship's crew in a dead calm over the rails, just getting breath enough to swear between times. If anybody had been going by they'd have thought there was a shipful of lubbers getting the worst of the ground swell. By and by a breeze came up and it didn't take any orders from the captain to get us astern and to windward of our cargo in two seconds. But we hardly had strength enough to work the ship the rest of the voyage home and if we'd struck another calm spell I reckon we'd have all dropped overboard from plumb disgust.

"There's other cargoes," continued the ex-sailor, "that's just about as bad. You might think guano was one of 'em, but it isn't. Guano's rose of Sharon perfume compared to sugar. Didn't suppose there was any smell to sugar, eh? Well, you take it in a bowl and there ain't. But take a cargo of it and let it steam in a temperature of from ninety to one hundred and ten with plenty of damp to work it up, and I'd like to see what you'd think of it then. You get so mortal sick of the sweetness of it which you smell and taste, too, with every breath, that you'd be glad to fill up with anything that would offset it, even if it was wormwood. I've seen the time I felt as if I could drink a gallon of vinegar flavored with lemon juice at a gulp. That voyage was a sufferer, sure enough. We couldn't live between decks at all and we all berthed as near the stern rail as we could get, and even put out the small boats when it was still and lay in them to get relief. When provisions had to be got out of the hold the cook went down with jute bagging tied over his nose and mouth to keep out the fumes, but after a couple of trips he fainted and they sent me in. Two descents laid me out. I thought I was going to die. In my time I've seen folks that were tolerable seasick, but all they did was a maiden's sigh to my performances. If it wasn't convulsions it was so mighty near it that I thought I was gone and felt like I couldn't go too quick to suit myself. They brought me around with lime juice, but it was weeks after landing before I wanted any sweetening in mine, and even now I have never got back to my old fondness for sweets.

"The fact is that in the tropics almost any cargo you have kind of tinges existence for you. I'll bet if a ship came up from there with a cargo of steel rails they'd give off fumes and the crew'd turn sick every time they saw a street car track for a month after they landed. Oil is pretty tough, particularly petroleum. A man'll dream of petroleum after he's associated with it for a month or so on shipboard. But pine lumber really takes the cake when it fairly gets to sweating. The resin oozes out and gets into everything. I never happened to suffer much from that sort of cargo myself, but I saw a crew that came just as near death from too much pine resin as men can come and pull through.

"We were in port at Rio when a ship came in laden with pine lumber. More than that, the fool of a skipper had let somebody supply him with pine water butts. Well, the resin began to get into the water and first they knew the crew was pretty well poisoned with it. Then they got so that they couldn't swallow the water at all, or if they did they couldn't hold it down a second. And there wasn't any other water aboard. They were in mighty great danger of dying of thirst with plenty of water aboard just because the old man was new to that kind of voyaging. Rio happened to be the nearest port and though it was far out of their course they put for it as the only chance of saving their lives. I'd hate to see again such a looking lot as they were. They were dried out like mummies and so weak that I don't see how they ever worked the ship at all. When they got in we thought at first it was black smallpox, they were such fearful looking objects. When they did get sweet water again they drank till I thought they'd burst; and how they did fight when we tried to get the pannikins away for fear they'd kill themselves! Some of 'em were laid out for weeks and I think one of 'em died in the hospital from the effects. I never shipped on a pine-loaded ship after seeing that."

CALIFORNIA'S FRUITS.

The Glorious Horn of Plenty Which She Holds Up to All the World.

The California orange crop for the season now closing was the largest in the history of orange growing in that State, amounting to between 16,000 and 17,000 carloads of about 360 boxes to the car. There was a time, and that not so very many years ago, when southern California chuckled a little over the shipment of oranges in carload lots; now trainload shipments of oranges are common. New York received of this season's crop, up to July 13, 2,639 carloads.

The California orange season is at its best from December to May; it actually begins in November and lasts until July 1, so that California oranges can now be had nine months in the year. Cold storage fills the gap and makes oranges a year-round fruit.

Some oranges are imported from Jamaica and Mexico, but 85 per cent. or more of the oranges eaten in this country are now grown here, and of this percentage by far the larger proportion comes from California.

Considerable quantities of lemons are now shipped from California, some of this fruit coming as far East as New York, but most of it being distributed between California and Chicago. The bulk of the lemons consumed in this country still come from Mediterranean ports, whence they are imported in steamer loads. At the New York fruit auctions lemons are sold to the extent of from 100,000 to 200,000 and more boxes a month for local consumption and for distribution throughout the country, but while the greater part of the lemons used here is still imported the California output is constantly increasing.

This season's crop of California prunes will amount to from 120,000,000 to 125,000,000 pounds; last season the crop was about 65,000,000 pounds. Ninety per cent. of the prunes eaten in this country nowadays are American prunes, grown in California. Formerly prunes were imported in great quantities from Turkey and other European countries in enormous casks and in bags, and from France in smaller fancy packages; now such importations of prunes have almost ceased, and on the other hand large quantities of American prunes are now exported. Of last year's crop of California prunes hundreds of carloads were sold in Germany and France, competing there with native products in both price and quality.

California puts up enormous quantities of dried peaches, in boxes and bags, of various sizes and styles, and California dried peaches are sold all over the country, everywhere. This is the only country in which apricots are dried in any considerable quantities, and it is in California that they are grown and dried. California sent out last year 1,500 carloads of dried apricots, of which 400 carloads were exported.

Of almonds California shipped last season 250 carloads; and of English walnuts a like quantity.

California raisins are now sold everywhere throughout the country; 90 per cent. or thereabouts of the raisins consumed here are now produced in California.

Of dried vegetables, as, for example, lima beans, California ships quantities, as it does also of canned vegetables, as for instance, asparagus; while it ships as well quantities of fresh vegetables, cauliflower, celery, new potatoes and so on. California's cauliflower comes East as far as New York. The bulk of its other fresh vegetables that are shipped out of the State are sold in the Western two-thirds of the country; say of and to the west of the longitude of Chicago. California's canned fruits, peaches, pears, plums, apricots, cherries, nectarines and grapes are sold all over the world.

California's green fruits, its cherries, and apricots and peaches, and plums and prunes and pears, and nectarines and grapes are now sold all over this country and in Canada, and some are exported; in the United States they are an increasing factor in every market. The first carload shipment of green fruit from California was one sent to Chicago in 1868. California shipped in 1899 of green fruits, 7,000 carloads.

NEARLY FROZEN IN A JIFFY.

An Artificial Lowering of the Temperature 100 Degrees Coated Him With Ice.

From the Pittsburgh Dispatch.

While the torrid temperaure is causing sunstrokes, prostrations and general discomfort, Allegheny has furnished the remarkable case of a man being almost frozen to death. The victim is Anton Klozen, an engineer living at 1703 Greenwood street, who has been employed as engineer at the candy factory of James McClurg & Co. on Martin street.

Klozen discovered a leak in a valve attached to a large ammonia tank which is used in freezing candies. He attempted to stop the leak and was repairing the broken valve when a connecting tube burst, the contents spurting in a heavy stream over the engineer. The effect was the same as the temperature taking an instant drop of 100 degrees.

The ammonia deluged Klozen from head to foot, freezing his clothes and body into a solid mass. Klozen was rapidly freezing to death when the employees of the factory went to his rescue. He was dragged in front of a hot furnace and the frozen liquid torn in pieces from his face and body. His clothes were taken off and were stiff enough to be stood upright against the wall.

Klozen is in a critical condition from the effects of the accident. His eyes are both destroyed by the acid. He is also suffering intense pain from having inhaled the fumes of the ammonia. An operation was performed yesterday to restore the stricken man's sight, but it was unsuccessful. The physicians express grave doubts as to Klozen's recovery. He is about 30 years of age and married. Klozen was in the employ of the McClurg firm for a number of years and was an industrious and popular workman.

THE RAILS IN HOT WEATHER.

Immense Perplexity Caused to Trackmen by the Sun in Summer.

The heat almost caused a wreck on one of the minor railroads in this State one day during the recent hot spell by causing the steel rails to expand to a dangerous degree. Happily the danger was discovered in time to send out a "slow order" until the tracks could be mended. The road in question is not a great trunk line, but it does considerable business at this season in carrying city folk to a land of milk, scenery, no mosquitoes and altitude.

The theory of a correct roadbed is to construct it with the greatest possible degree of solidity, and at the same time to preserve the necessary elasticity. The need of the latter will be appreciated when one considers that the striking force of a train at full speed is several hundred tons. Further to preserve this elasticity the rails are laid with a slight space between them; with this space entirely occupied by the expansion there was danger that, in the instance cited, the rails might curl underneath the train or possibly be thrown entirely out of place when sufficient pressure had accumulated in front of the engine. A train in motion is preceded by a wave, just such a one as you may have noticed in front of a man skating over very thin ice, although it is of course in much less degree noticeable.

A railroad track in summer is about the hottest place on the top side of the earth. It generally lies perfectly flat and is unprotected from the sun's rays by a bit of shade, and the cinders, gravel, crushed stone and steel which make up the roadbed all love the heat and cherish it. It becomes so hot after a few hours' exposure to the sun's rays that a man can scarcely keep his hand upon it anywhere. If you happen to be out on the line on a sunny day, away from the congestion of terminal traffic, you can repeatedly hear a long, sliding kind of "Clink! Clonk!" The trackwalker will tell you that the rails are creeping, as they always do in hot weather, and that is literally what is happening. Where the rails are joined to each other there is perhaps a space of a quarter of an inch. If you place a bit of paper in one of these cracks early in the morning and return at noon the space will be entirely shut and the paper cut almost as cleanly as though it had been done with a pair of scissors.

As a matter of strict truth, however, there is almost no danger of rails creeping enough to cause damage on an up-to-date railroad where the rails are of standard weight and properly laid upon a well-ballasted track. It is doubtful whether a wreck caused in this manner by the natural heat is in a legal sense an act of God, and in an ordinary case of this kind it is more than likely that the company is negligent in not having kept its track up to the standard required for the running of modern trains, with their contantly increasing weight and speed. The danger is augmented, too, when the track has not been properly tamped and filled. Men who have had much experience in railroad construction and repair work are familiar with this very danger and many of them have had practical experience in cleaning up wrecks caused by the heat of the sun.

The pressure of a train upon the heated track has been known to cause a rail merely to budge, and sometimes the rails have been known to bend like the lash of a whip and assume the shape of a letter S; and once upon a time it happened that a railroad lost one rail completely. Presumably it wrenched itself loose and flew into the air. At any rate, it has never been seen since, and it is supposed to be resting in the bottom of the river on whose bank the railroad runs. While the danger is not imminent enough to cause passengers even a momentary terror, nevertheless the sun at this season causes the trackmen an immense amount of perplexity. Some of the difficulties of their position may be suggested by recalling the roadmaster's story of the two Kansas towns that were thirty-eight railroad miles apart in winter and forty-one in summer.

Like most things that go on day after day on the railroad, the work of the section foreman is scarcely understood and more often underestimated. The man in charge of the maintenance-of-way department is, of course, a skilled engineer, with many other engineers under him who do the field work and plan things. But the man upon whom finally devolves the duty of keeping the tracks in good riding shape is the section foreman. He is usually Irish, gets from $40 to $55 a month, must be on hand or within reach at all times of the day and night, and must understand a multitude of things connected with his practical trade, every detail of which must be completed by hand labor. The thunderous traffic makes it necessary for him to be out of doors on every day of every season, for a very slight depression in the track is enough to throw the passengers of the mile-a-minute flyer out of their seats, and it may soon be pounded into a dangerous hole. He is not an engineer and he rarely uses any instruments, but he can glance at a stretch of track and tell you exactly what is the matter with it and how to mend it, and he can lay a curve with a skill and accuracy that baffles the boys on the engineer corps. Day after day he is tinkering away at his tracks, and on occasion he can rip out a mile of rails and lay new ones in their place without stopping a single train. The Irish track foreman actually accounts for a greater proportion of the railroad's expenditures than any other employee, because the greatest cost of railroading is in the roadbed and its equipment and the expense of maintaining it. The track foreman is in fact an important employee, but about the only time a passenger ever sees his sunburned face is while he is being whisked by between stations at sixty miles an hour.

REVENUE FROM THE TERRITORIES.

Ledger Account of Four of Them With Uncle Sam—They Are Paying Investments.

The theory that the maintenance of the Territories, the residents of which do not enjoy, or do not demand, full political rights, is an element of loss to the country responsible for their maintenance is one which does not get much support from the figures furnished by the Treasury Department, very recently made up. They appear to show, on the contrary, that the four present American Territories are a large source of profit to the Government, and they show, too, that the newer territories are more profitable than the older ones. There are now, exclusive of Hawaii and Porto Rico, four Territories of the United States, the oldest of which, in point of establishment, is New Mexico, which was organized as a Territory in September, 1850. Much of the country is arid and the financial operations of the Federal Government in New Mexico are not of an elaborate kind. These are the returns of last year:

Collected in New Mexico	$154,606
Returned by United States Government	59,400
Profit	$95,206

In other words, after paying the necessary expenses of the Territorial Government, the United States had a surplus of over $95,000 for the year's operations in New Mexico. Arizona, a neighboring Territory, was originally a part of New Mexico, and was separated from it in 1863. It is a newer Territory by thirteen years, therefore, but the returns from it indicate that it is an even greater source of public revenue to Uncle Sam than is its older and eastern neighbor. These are the figures for Arizona for last year:

Collected in Arizona	$221,653
Returned by United States Government	49,650
Profit	$172,003

This is a comfortable profit from the Territory, a large part of which is a sand desert, but the figures of profit do not seem large when contrasted with those of Alaska, which was purchased from the Russian Government in May, 1867, for a sum more than one-third as large as the United States paid for the Philippine Islands to Spain. Alaska remained under direct Government control as a military district until 1884 when a Territorial government was established there. Since that time its material interests have improved rapidly, and the benefits to the United States Treasury have been considerable. These are the figures for Alaska last year:

Collected in Alaska	$1,190,282
Returned by United States Government	263,150
Profit	$927,132

A profit of nearly $1,000,000 from Alaska in one year is what may be described as a satisfactory financial showing, and in the present great rush of prospectors into Alaska and the corresponding increase in public revenues from the development of its mineral wealth these seem likely to be further exceeded this year.

Oklahoma is the newest of the American Territories prior to the events growing from the Spanish War. It was admitted as a Territory by Congress in May, 1890, and these were the returns of the Government last year—a larger proportionate profit on the collections than any of the other Territories:

Collected in Oklahoma	$587,461
Returned by United States Government	44,150
Profit	$543,311

The deduction from these figures is that from out of every $5 collected by Uncle Sam in the four Territories named less than $1 goes back to be expended in those Territories. In other words, 80 per cent. of the money collected by the United States in the Territories is expended for the general purposes of the Union itself. In internal revenue collections, Oklahoma is included with Kansas, Alaska with Washington and Arizona and New Mexico constitute one district. A profit of $1,750,000 from Government operations in four Territories is a favorable showing. This year the returns will probably exceed $2,000,000.

THE PANIC AT PRETORIA.

Scenes After the Government Fled From the Transvaal Capital.

From THE SUN'S Correspondent at Pretoria.

PRETORIA, May 31.—This has indeed been a morning of excitement, confusion and national demoralization. Never before did Pretoria witness such scenes; never do I wish to see a city's population so panic-stricken as the people here were up to noon to-day.

Early this morning it became known that Johannesburg would be surrendered on conditions made by the acting special commandant, D. Fritz Krause, who though appointed only a couple of weeks ago has shown the greatest energy and discretion in his difficult office. The terms were that no troops should enter the city, that all private property should be respected and that women and children, receiving rations from the Transvaal Government, should continue to be fed from these supplies, which should not be used for the troops. To all these terms Lord Roberts agreed, and he has by this first official act of his in Republican territory justified the great confidence which neutral residents have had in him and the respect which the non-combatant burghers have felt in the famous Field Marshal.

Fierce fighting had proceeded around Johannesburg and along the Rand-Pretoria Railway line since Monday, heavy casualities occurring on both sides, and more especially on the British. The fighting area, reaching from Krügersdorp to Boksburg, and practically along the whole Witwatersrand reef, was so extensive and scattered that detailed reports have not as yet come in, as we are cut off from telegraphic centres. The new Commandant, Gen. Louis Botha, and Gens. Lukas Meyer, Delarey, Lodewich, Pretorius of the artillery, Lemmer and DeWet have come up to the finest traditions of the Afrikander Boers of both republics and amid a general panic have done many marvellous acts to rally the commandos and resist the advance of the British. The Commandant-General was here last night for a few hours' rest after being in the saddle from Sunday morning to Wednesday midnight without sleep. He said:

"Our men who are fighting are doing wonders; our artillery have behaved as heroes to the last powder monkey. I have personally kicked and whipped hundreds of cowards who were anxious to retire from the field. But the overwhelming numbers and repeated fresh assaults of the troops have worn our fighting men out after three days of incessant battling. Last night, with 300 men, I rode right into a British force near Elsburg. An officer called out, 'What regiment do you belong to?' We replied, 'Hands up!' Tableau! We took five prisoners in the twinkling of an eye and with a yell dashed through their lines out into the darkness. Two hundred of my men were with me when we reached safe ground. The others, I believe, also got away in safety."

It was a sad, a shameful spectacle we witnessed here this morning at 10 A. M. Women and foreigners broke open the huge Government stores opposite the late Gen. Joubert's residence, and for three hours looting proceeded. Every low-class resident of the Transvaal capital including natives, turned up with the most wonderful vehicles, wagons, carriages, spiders, wheelbarrows. Everything and anything on wheels was utilized to carry away foodstuffs stored by the Government. Coffee, meal, sugar, rice and canned meats, blankets and cooking pots were taken. Some sharp individuals proposed to raid the bank for gold coins, but before many minutes had passed strong bodies of armed burgher townsmen formed themselves into guards for the threatened institutions and with their Mausers and filled bandoliers looked like ugly customers to tackle. It was not the Government's cash that was in danger. That to the tune of one and a half millions sterling had been removed two nights before to the rugged mountain fastnesses of the Lydenburg district, an action which would not have been criticised at all had the Government checks for salaries for the current month to the army of local officials not been dishonored on the following morning by the Government's own bank, the National. The consequence is that most deep and intense anger toward the Government has been aroused here among some of its most loyal and trusted officials and employees.

This morning at 11 an immense dust cloud on the main road from Johannesburg created a panic. Men, women, Kaffirs ran screaming through the streets: "The English are coming." "Save yourselves." The column emerging from the red dust cloud turned out to be the Ermelo horse commando, retreating toward Middelburg and its own district to guard the Delagoa Railway line—the only one still uninterrupted, which connects us with the outside world.

Suddenly twenty armed artillery orderlies and burghers dashed up near us from the telegraph office, followed by the burgomaster and remaining Government Commissioner, Piet Polgieter, who, standing up in his carriage, read out in clear tones a stringent order received from Commandant-General Botha that all looting of supplies must be instantly stopped; otherwise the mob would be fired upon. No notice being taken of this order the patrol fired a blank volley over the crowd, which action produced a panic. Some Kaffirs still continuing to take away stores were promptly shot. A retreat of the looters then set in and 400 special policemen with cocked rifles were ordered to guard the great stores, which in early morning held more than £200,000 worth of goods. Other bodies of special police searched all houses in the lower parts of the town to recapture the plunder.

TWO JERSEY SNAKES.

One of Them Killed for Trying to Revenge the Other's Murder.

To the fund of snake stories that has been accumulating from the suburban region since the hot weather has fired men's brains and lured the cold-blooded serpent forth from his subterranean den, the town of Glen Ridge, N. J., adds a singular instance of reptilian revenge. Some days ago the little daughter of George A. Zabriskie, cashier of the People's Bank of New York, who lives in Linden avenue, Glen Ridge, was walking in the garden munching a stick of striped candy when she became aware of a large blacksnake approaching her with head raised and mouth watering. Little Miss Zabriskie fled to the cellar shrieking, not that she is particularly afraid of snakes, but she suspected that this one was after her candy. Her screams summoned Mr. Zabriskie, who put an end to the snake; put two ends to it, in fact, as he cut the reptile in half with an axe.

Blacksnakes are not rare in that part of New Jersey, and the incident was almost forgotten when an occurrence which took place a few days afterward recalled it. As Mr. Zabriskie was walking in his garden at the spot where his daughter had encountered the candy-seeking snake, he saw a four-foot blacksnake come gliding out of the shrubbery. It came for him as straight as an arrow and not much slower. Mr. Zabriskie had just time to catch up a heavy stake when the snake made a lunge at him. He jumped to one side and struck with all his strength, but the creature saw the blow coming and dropped its head so that the swing went above it. Instead of being alarmed and making its escape, as Mr. Zabriskie confidently expected, the blacksnake whirled around so fast that it got wound up in concentric circles. It wasn't wound so tight, however, but that it speedily straightened out and made a second desperate leap at the man. Its head struck just above his knee and the reptile, instantly winding its length around his leg, began to writhe upward.

Shortening his club, Mr. Zabriskie made a well-meant whack at the snake that almost put his kneecap out of commission. A second blow was more accurate, and the snake began to uncurl. The third stroke sent it to the ground, where Mr. Zabriskie pounded it so enthusiastically that its nearest relative wouldn't have been able to identify the remains. Then he went into the house and applied soothing lotions to the collection of bruises which he had amassed upon the leg which the snake had shinned. The blacksnake was as big around as a broom-handle and had an exceptionally large head for this species. Mr. Zabriskie is sure that it was the mate of the candy-seeking snake which he had killed to save his daughter's candy, and that it attacked him out of revenge for its dead mate.