The Sun.

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What Are the Brave Boers Now Fighting For?

The publication of the correspondence between Mr. REITZ, Secretary of the South African Republic, and Mr. STEYN, President of the Orange Free State, reveals the grounds on which the resistance of the Boers is still prolonged. The letters to which we refer were interchanged during the month of May, about the time when Lord KITCHENER permitted Gen. BOTHA to send a cipher message to President KRUGER, then in Holland, and to receive from him an answer. What the substance of that answer was we know, for no sooner had it been received than Gen. BOTHA announced that, unless independence should be conceded to the allied commonwealths, the fighting would go on.

In one of the letters now before us, President STEYN takes the same position. "If we wish to remain a nation," he says, "now is the time to struggle." He adds that "it is ridiculous to think that when flooded with the scum of Europe the Afrikander spirit would remain." That is to say, under the *régime* of a Crown colony wherein Outlanders and Boers would have equal rights, the former element would soon swamp the latter. What possible chance, however, have the Boers of retaining independence under existing conditions? Secretary REITZ's letter points out that the fugitive government of the Transvaal is daily becoming weaker, losing support and becoming disorganized; that the burgher forces are continually dwindling, and that their supply of ammunition is so nearly exhausted that they cannot hope to engage the enemy in another battle on a large scale. REITZ admits that "in the immediate future we shall be unable to feed the commandos." Such was the state of things in May. By this time the number of the Boers in the field has been much diminished, and their stock of food and ammunition still further depleted.

Why, then, do the Boers persist in a struggle which ten weeks ago a man so well informed as Secretary REITZ described as hopeless? Incredible as it may seem, President STEYN's answer shows that even yet he is counting on the intervention of a European Power. He gives no reason for his confidence beyond the fact that President KRUGER and other representatives of the Boer republic remain in Europe. He cannot believe, he says, that they would stay there unless they had assurances that help would be forthcoming. Of course, nobody can prove a negative. Although, so far as we can discern, there is not at present a cloud on the European horizon, it is not inconceivable that some unforeseen incident might suddenly plunge England in war with France or Russia, or with both combined. In that contingency, no doubt, it would be impossible for England to reenforce the troops now operating in South Africa, and it might even be needful to withdraw a part of them. Unless, however, such an improbable diversion shall be made speedily it will come too late to be of any benefit to the Boers. Six months hence, if their losses in killed, wounded and prisoners shall continue at the rate weekly reported by Lord KITCHENER, their capacity of resistance will have been extinguished. There will be nothing left of the Boer population in the allied republics except old men, women and children. They will be in a condition incomparably worse than were the Confederates after LEE's surrender at Appomattox. What STEYN calls their "nation" will have committed suicide.

It is a lamentable spectacle that is presented by the remnant of the Boer forces still in the field. They are chasing a chimera. There is nothing before them but captivity or death. It would be better, a thousand times, to accept the hard terms offered by their enemy, for existence even under the unwelcome *régime* of a Crown colony is better than a prison or a grave.

The Decline of Wool Growing.

Several reports on the decline of the sheep industry have recently been published at home and abroad. There is nothing very new in them, and nothing to warrant the inference that there will ever be a dearth of wool supplies. It is easy to reconcile the fact that there has been a large decline in the number of sheep with the statement that the stocks of wool are enormous and that prices are too low to be profitable to growers. For years, the supply of wool has usually exceeded the demand. The world's wool clip increased 150 per cent. between 1875 and 1898; the price of wool has declined in all markets since 1860. These facts were the natural result of the very great expansion of wool growing due to the opening on a large scale of the vast pasturage of Australasia, Argentina, South Africa and of our own free grazing lands on the Western plains. The world has raised more wool than it needed.

This is one of the reasons why Continental Europe is growing much less wool now than it did ten years ago. Germany, for example, now produces only about four-fifths of its former wool crop, and the home supply has been largely reduced in France. In both those countries, however, as well as in other densely peopled parts of Europe, wool growing has declined not only because it is easy to get cheap wool from foreign plains, but also because the tendency is to increase the area of tilled lands at the expense of pasturage.

Fortuitous circumstances as well as economic reasons have also helped to reduce the number of sheep. Australasia, the greatest of wool regions, produces five-eighths as much wool as the whole of Europe, but the crop of Australia is liable to large fluctuations on account of droughts. In the five years ending in 1898 a succession of seasons of meagre water supply reduced the herds from 109,940,000 to 83,822,000. Sheep rearing is thus rendered precarious in its largest field. The problem of water may be solved to some extent by sinking artesian wells, as at Barcaldine, where the safety of many thousands of sheep is assured by one well yielding 175,000 gallons a day.

Another influence that has tended to some extent to decrease the output of wool is the competition between wool and cotton. It is well known that the various fibres compete with one another in trade, an unusually large consumption of one fibre affecting trade in the others. The main competition, however, is between wool and cotton, the tendency having been in recent years to increase the consumption of cotton at the expense of wool; perhaps Scotland is the latest illustration of growing cotton and declining wool consumption. There is also an increased admixture of cotton in some kinds of woollen fabrics.

Still another factor is decreasing the output of wool, and that is the present world-wide tendency to raise more sheep for mutton and fewer for wool. Even in Spain, the original home of the famous merino, that fine-woolled sheep, which did so much to improve the wool crop of the world, has now been largely replaced by mutton breeds yielding coarser fleeces. It is not many years since sheep were raised in Argentina solely for wool and skins, the meat being thrown away. Refrigeration now saves this enormous waste. Nearly 3,000,000 frozen sheep were shipped from Argentina to Europe last year. The industry, comparatively new in Argentina, of shipping live sheep to Europe, is steadily increasing. The weather being too hot across the tropics to keep the animals in closed pens, about 500,000 of them were transported last year in open pens on deck, and increased facilities for shipments this year were expected to augment the business. Australia did not enter largely into the frozen meat business till five years ago, both Argentina and New Zealand far surpassing her exports. To-day Australia leads the world in the refrigerated mutton trade, her exports of which last year amounted to nearly 4,000,000 animals.

On the whole, the sheep industry is on a very sound basis, for, though the price of wool is smaller than formerly, the market for mutton has been extended, by refrigeration, around the world.

Curious Effects of Holding a Great Fair.

The reaction from the effects of last Summer's exhibition was shown in Paris in two ways, first, by a marked diminution in retail business, and, secondly, by a large increase in the number of highway robberies, garrotings and murders.

The recent Federal census showed that Omaha was the only American city which, having had a population as large as 100,000 in 1890, had decreased during the following ten years. On the 1st of June, 1898, the Trans-Mississippi Exposition was opened in Omaha. It lasted several months, during which there was a large attendance of visitors. After the fair there was an exodus of transient inhabitants.

The Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, held in 1876, temporarily aided the material interests of that city by making better known its commercial advantages, the cheap rents of its stores and dwellings, and its proximity both to the coal supply and to the seaboard. During the months immediately preceding the exhibition in Fairmount Park, there was a large increase of population and a boom for business. Many firms opened Philadelphia branches, and many new lines of industry were systematically developed there, with the result that after the close of the exposition the former ratio of increase in population was arrested and Philadelphia suffered from the reaction. Between 1870 and 1880 the population of Pittsburg, the second large city of Pennsylvania, nearly doubled; the population of Baltimore, Philadelphia's nearest neighbor on the south, increased 50 per cent. Philadelphia's increase, however, was only 25.

The population of Chicago was 500,000 in 1880. In 1890, it was 1,000,000, an increase of 100 per cent. The Chicago Fair opened in the spring of 1893 and the preliminary work for it drew laborers and mechanics to that city. The local census of 1893 gave the population in the summer of that year as 1,500,000. Following the close of the Fair, the Chicago population fell off almost as rapidly as it had increased, and for several years after the Fair, Chicago continued to suffer from the reaction following it. Since then the increase in population has been renewed.

The effect of great expositions or fairs has been almost uniformly the same in the past. The show aids a town or city at first, but retards, through reaction, its development later on. In qualification of this, however, it may be said that the two chief fairs of American progress and industry which have been held in the United States in recent years, the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876 and the Chicago Exposition of 1893, took place during periods of serious financial depression and when the number of the unemployed was unusually large. The projectors of the Buffalo Pan-American Fair, which opened in May, find in this circumstance a reason for believing that the Buffalo Fair will be an exception to the former rule, of which Paris forms a more recent illustration.

London, which had notable expositions in 1851 and 1862, has yielded supremacy to Paris as a city better adapted to such displays. New York has never shown much real favor to such projects.

Gum Shoe Bill and the Allied Third.

The Hon. WILLIAM JOEL STONE, more affectionately known as GUM SHOE BILL, is commonly supposed to be about the "smoothest" and "slickest" Democratic statesman in old Missouri. His noiseless methods are commemorated in his nickname. As Col. BILL PHELPS says, "BILL STONE sucks the eggs, but hides the shells." Last week the Hon. J. H. COOK, chairman of the new Missouri party which bears the mysterious name of the Allied Third, published a letter which contains several observables and remarkables about Mr. STONE. The *St. Louis Republic* had printed a letter, which purported to be written by Mr. STONE "en route to Pittsburg," to the editor of the *Joplin Globe* and to be sent as a special despatch to the *Republic*. In this letter was some criticism of Mr. COOK and the new party. Mr. COOK, who says he is "a warm personal friend" of Mr. STONE's and seems to know him well, asserts that the letter was not written on a train or sent as a special despatch. It was prepared before its author went East and copies were given to both the Joplin and St. Louis papers mentioned. "It is a habit with you," writes the chairman of the Allied Third to Mr. STONE, "to prepare an article and have it sent as a special report of a speech delivered at some point in the State."

Surely a harmless habit, which Mr. STONE supposes to be good for himself and which can't injure Mr. COOK and the other persons who see through it. Once Mr. STONE made a speech at Sarcoxie. Mr. COOK was there and heard it. The next day he read a report of it in the *Republic*. It was so different from the spoken speech that Mr. COOK asked the telegraph operator at Sarcoxie about it and learned that the speech had not been telegraphed to St. Louis. But this may have been the fault of the newspaper rather than of Mr. STONE. That that intrepid foe of monopolies has an ingenious and satisfactory explanation of the efforts which Chairman COOK charges him with making in behalf of a Trust, what good man will wish to doubt?

"I remember reading, last winter, a very able argument of yours, purporting to have been delivered before a committee of the General Assembly, entitled, 'Alum a Poison' in opposition to the repeal of a law which was passed at the previous session, in the interest of the baking powder trust, increasing the price of baking powder to the housekeeper more than 300 per cent., when, as a matter of fact, you did not appear before a committee at all, and hence made no address before one, and it was not your printed argument that persuaded the Senate committee to withhold a report on the bill until the eve of adjournment, when it was too late to pass it.

"You began your address 'Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Committee: I appear before you at the request of the Health Society of Missouri.' You said this society was composed of a number of Missouri people, good people, both men and women, living in different parts of the State, with headquarters at St. Louis. An effort was made to locate this association soon after your address was circulated, and it could not be done and I understand it changed its headquarters to Damfino, a small town near the Frisco railway, about five miles from Sarcoxie.

"We all remember the very learned report made by the chairman of the Senate committee, which was published all over the State and paid for as an advertisement by the baking powder trust, and it has been a question as to when the able chairman of that committee found time to prepare such an elaborate essay on the deleterious effect of alum in baking powder, and which was so strikingly similar to the address which you never delivered before the committee in the early part of the session, and you can conjecture the argument used to prevent a report being made until after the Legislature adjourned."

Probably the Health Society of Damfino is just as real as imperialism and divers other things which Mr. STONE has to talk about in the course of his business as a Democratic politician. And what is a better way of bringing the Trusts to ultimate ruin than to let them have their way, unchecked, for a season?

"If the people of Missouri," continues Mr. COOK, "want to be represented in the United States Senate by a man who on the creeks and crossroads delivers powerful addresses against Trusts and at the same time is their paid agent and attorney, I have no objection." What would be the use of objecting? Most of the Democrats who bellow against Trusts have Trust stock in their pockets. Mr. STONE, however much smoother and slicker than some other Democrats he may be, is in the same box with the rest of them. As a shrewd man of business he must look out for number one and act with prudence and common sense. As a Democrat he must furnish flubdub in quantities to suit.

England's Gibraltar Question.

Attacks upon its Mediterranean naval policy and on its army reorganization scheme have not been the only assaults that the British Government has had to meet; its policy at Gibraltar has caused a vast amount of letter-writing and the asking of a question in the House of Lords regarding the naval works under construction and contemplated at "the Rock." The matter excited much public interest, for Gibraltar is regarded in Great Britain as a palladium second in efficacy only to Magna Charta. The question was framed carefully, so as not even to appear to call for more information than it might be proper for the Government to give—for everything relating to Gibraltar is kept secret; and the answer was worded as carefully.

Gibraltar is a peninsula extending from the southern coast of Spain, at the eastern end of the so-called straits of Gibraltar. Eastward it is directly upon the Mediterranean; on the west the Bay of Gibraltar, about four miles wide, separates it from Spain. Algeciras, across the bay from the Rock, is a fortified town. It may be remarked in passing that the Rock has its back turned to the straits, contrary to the impression given by the usual pictures of the place; that is, its most precipitous side are toward the north and east. The town and the naval and military works are all situated on the west side, on the bay; the east shore is precipitous and practically uninhabited except by fishermen.

The subject was brought into prominence by Mr. THOMAS GIBSON BOWLES, Member of Parliament for King's Lynn, who attacked the Government for spending money on docks and storehouses on the west side where they would be within fire of guns on the Spanish coast, and demanded that the yards and docks planned for the eastern coast be proceeded with. Mr. BOWLES was a member of a commission appointed by the Earl of SELBORNE, First Lord of the Admiralty, to investigate the question of dock construction at Gibraltar. According to him, the committee prepared a unanimous report on many of the questions submitted to it, but before the report was signed "pressure" was applied to three members, who altered their views and made a majority report differing from the original draft. This charge was denied by the Government.

The question asked in the House of Lords referred only to the cessation or continuance of works on the western dockyards while the matter of the eastern yards was under consideration. The Earl of SELBORNE, in reply, said that the work on the western yards had not been stopped; the work having been considered by two previous Cabinets and under way for several years, he had deemed it best to continue operations in the manner planned. One new feature had indeed appeared in the case, Lord SELBORNE said; that was "that the experience gained in South Africa showed that the large and heavy guns by which such works can be successfully attacked are mobile guns, movable from point to point, and were not, as was so long previously accepted, rooted to exact spots." This is an admission that the western docks are not invulnerable; but that fact had been known before.

As regards the proposed eastern dockyards, Lord SELBORNE spoke of the estimates of cost, the lowest of which was £5,320,000, and of the time required, ten years; he dwelt also on the fact that little was known as to the effect of the "Levanters," or east winds, on constructions along the east coast; he did not say what is likewise a fact, that there is not only no good location for docks on that coast, but not even any place safe from guns on the Spanish shore north of the Gibraltar promontory. It was Lord GOSCHEN, a previous First Lord, who admitted this last fact.

The whole question resolved itself, then, into the form, Is it better to finish the docks begun, which the navy needs, than to cease work on them, and wait for ten or twenty years until new docks are finished, which then would be no more invulnerable than those abandoned? Lord SELBORNE said that the Government had preferred to have the docks, even with admitted risks, rather than no docks at all; and the House of Lords agreed with him.

Gibraltar, however, is no worse off now than it has been. To render its position even merely uncomfortable, the *Saturday Review* points out, Spain must be hostile, or must have been conquered by France; then the British artillery fortifying the Rock must have become worthless. The general feeling appears to be that Gibraltar is quite as valuable as it ever was, and that it is the part of wisdom to complete the docks now in hand, meantime ascertaining everything necessary about the conditions on the east side of the Rock. When those are known, it will be time enough to undertake a work covering ten or more years, and costing from ten to twenty millions of pounds. This decision seems sensible.

Old Mohair in the Ozarks.

Out of Ancyra, alias Angora, which asseared MIDAS founded, out of that glory of the Galatians came the goat with hair as silken as JIM HAM LEWIS's matchless growth of pink; came to the United States to be domesticated from Maine to California, to be a delight and a staple. But some great merits of this Asian emigrant weren't appreciated in this country until the other day. His independence of the weather, his skill as a forager, his frugality and his activity as a hustler and a self-supporting institution have been revealed surprisingly in the Ozarks of Missouri. Into that region of rock-ribbed and rock-headed Democracy the Angora goat has been introduced; and there he has just now a brilliant triumph.

The long hot spell has ravaged and burned Missouri. Pretty much all the water in the State has dried up, except the brain of the Hon. CHAMP CLARK. Thermometers have exploded. Ice houses have been sunstruck. Oxen have gone mad and barbecued themselves. A terrible time for man and beast. The pastures have been parched. The springs have disappeared. Cattle, sheep and hogs have suffered greatly and sometimes have been unable to get a drop to drink. But the wanderer from Asia Minor hasn't wilted. He has been left to his own resources and has come out strong. Nobody brings him water. Nobody brings him food. Old Mohair takes care of himself and takes mighty good care. He has got fat among the lean kine and the silly sheep. A despatch sent from Dixon, Mo., to the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* shows the Angora's genius as a diet reformer and a laborer:

"The case is yet to be reported of a goat dropping down from heat and lack of water. It is a question with many farmers whether the goats need any water in dry times. If they do, they find it for themselves. As for feed, the goats are doing very nicely on sprouts, leaves, weeds and what little grass they can find. Occasionally, perhaps, where the scrub oak sprouts have dried up close to the ground, the goat raisers will chop down a few trees so the animals can get at the green tops. That is goat raising in the Ozarks these days. D. A. PALMER, a big stockman of west Camden county, is in the Angora goat business on an extensive scale. He has a herd of nearly five hundred. It is surprising how well they are getting along this dry weather, when all other stock is failing fast. When it comes to clearing land, it is estimated that five goats will do the work of one farmhand, and do it well."

Eats nothing in particular, seldom takes a drink; does one-fifth of the work of a hired man. There's an accomplished animal for you. He is long-headed as well as long-haired. Men, poor weaklings compared with an Angora, may break down in the delirious heat. Ordinary animals may peak and pine. Old Mohair can live on nothing and through everything. No wonder he is "on top in the Ozarks." If the drought "should continue until the corn crop is burnt up," says the Dixon despatch, "then a few goats will be the only farmhands many of the small farmers will be able to afford this winter. Goat meat will supplant beef on the farmhouse table." Why, this is worse than cannibalism. It is a stab at political economy. We can't believe that anybody in the Ozarks is foolish enough to eat one-fifth of a farm laborer.

In another part of to-day's paper we print an article on the gambling at Saratoga and how it has been regulated. They think they have found, at that famous resort, a solution of a problem which has vexed and perplexed the people of most of the cities and many of the small towns throughout the country. It appears that the people of Saratoga determined to rehabilitate their beautiful village in the esteem of decent, law-abiding folk and they have succeeded. The success has come through a more or less lawless endeavor to stop lawlessness, but the point is that vice has been regulated there through the forceful assertion of public sentiment, according to standards of common sense and practicality, and in direct contradiction of the notions and the methods of some "reformers." The citizens of the town started in to regulate gambling and they have done so.

It seems that the town went gambling mad and narrowly escaped bankruptcy. Then the ostentatious reformers took hold, went to the extremes to which ostentatious reformers usually go and the town became bankrupt in fact. Then the people who paid the taxes and had to earn a living in the place took things into their own hands, swept the main thoroughfare of the town clean of gambling resorts and boldly asserted that some gamblers might gamble there and some might not. In this way they have brought about a condition which is evidently satisfactory, alike to the sober citizens of the place and the sports.

St. Paul's Crawling Toward the Thames.

From the Westminster Gazette.

Mr. Somers Clarke, F. S. A., points out that the soil on which the great building is placed was never very good, and Wren took his precautions accordingly. But even then the ground yielded a little under the immense weight of the dome and its supports. Had the subsoil been left undisturbed, it may fairly be supposed that no further movements would have taken place. At the bottom of the sandy stratum and over the clay water is found, and this, no doubt, was soon tapped as the business of the city increased. A source of great danger to the fabric of the Cathedral was thus established. About 100 years ago great ties of iron were put into the walls. The transepts were tied back to the dome piers, and also across their fronts in the direction from east to west. Since that time the south transept has shown strong indications of an inclination to slide southward down the hill-side toward the Thames. And not only is there movement toward the south, but the wall has opened from east to west. This enormous wall, 8 feet to 10 feet thick, 130 feet wide, and of an equal height, is at this moment showing a tendency to move as above stated; and the movements are such that the breakage is evidently caused, not by the thrusting of arches, but by the actual subsidence of the soil beneath. When we reflect that there are now between the church and the river not only deep drains, but the underground railway beneath Queen Victoria street, and the Waterloo and city line beneath that, it is evident that the subsoil on which the ponderous masses of masonry rest has been seriously attacked. The west front, with its heavy towers and bells, has also subsided.

The Political Aspirations of Mr. Back Ake.

From the Louisville Evening Post.

Doubtlessly Mr. W. Back Ake, the newly-risen political luminary of Little Rock, Ark., who is now running for Alderman in that city, was found originally in the lumbar regions.

THE PORT HUDSON FORLORN HOPE.

What Gen. Banks Thought and Said of the Brave Men Who Volunteered to Die.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I have read, with considerable natural interest, the two communications of my comrade and friend, Capt. T. J. Rundell, as also the response of some one who, fearing to "fight in the open," shields himself under a nom de plume, like many whom I recall from the period now nearly forty years ago. My comrade Rundell has stated the status of the claim of the "Forlorn Hope" for the promised medals and his statement needs no reinforcement, as his facts are both forcefully and truthfully set forth. But there are still other points in evidence which, in your well-known love of fair play, you will permit me space to present.

The medals claimed by the Port Hudson Folorn Hope volunteers were as much a portion of the "recognition of a grateful Government for timely and extra hazardous service," as were the "promotions, leave of absence, &c.," that were given to some of the volunteers for the reason that these were in the power of Gen. Banks to give, in fulfilment of a promise made by him during the darkest hour of the terrible siege of Port Hudson. The medals also would have been awarded had it been in his power to give them, as "they were nobly earned." These were his own words, spoken to me on more than one occasion, and are an indication as to his position in the matter. And, more than this: He said to me some years before his intellect gave way, speaking of the details of the surrender, in effect, as follows:

"Gen. Frank Gardner, during the course of our consultation upon the terms of capitulation, said:

"'I am well aware of the organization of your Forlorn Hope and fully conscious of what such a body of picked brave men are binded to do. Knowing this, and considering the nature of my defence, I feel it better to surrender this post and avoid the slaying of so many brave men on both sides, as such a charge must result in.'

"So," said Gen. Banks, "Gen. Gardner conscientiously and wisely yielded to the moral, if not physical force of my brave 'Forlorn Hope.'"

Having a most profound veneration for my old commander and friend, his words naturally made a lasting impression on me and were deeply impressed on my memory. They were spoken during one of my frequent visits to the old homestead in Waltham in presence of Mrs. Banks, who recently joined her well-beloved husband "beyond the shadows."

I asked him why he had not urged our claim during his term of service in Congress, and the question seemed to give him pain.

"I often thought of it, Captain," he said, "and on one occasion arose in my place for the purpose of presenting an order to that end, but a feeling of repugnance and shame came over me to think that the Government for which I had devoted so many years of painful service should thus humiliate me by compelling me to beg a fulfilment of my promise, which should be regarded as a solemn and binding contract."

Tears stood in his eyes as he concluded, and I hastened to change a subject so painful to him. Not for a dozen medals would I have caused a single moment of regret to one already so ground beneath a feeling of injustice.

This much for the manner in which our commander viewed the claim; now as to others.

After waiting more than twenty years for Congress to redeem a promise made under such conditions and finding no indications of such intention a number of the survivors of the "Storming Column" met in Boston and organized for concerted action. A statement of our claim—for it is a claim, not a petition, a right and not a beneficence which we demand—was prepared and forwarded. It met with no opposition in the Senate and was promptly passed. A peculiarity in this case is the fact that Senator Francis Cockrell of Missouri, a brave General of the Confederacy, asked and received permission to assume charge of our bill, and did so. Possessed of inside history, he reenforced his facts from the official record and on the floor of the Senate made for us an eloquent appeal which seemed to augment the interest already inspired by its evident justice. No opposition was offered, and our bill went to the House, where it was killed by the same anonymous weapon that "Subscriber" has borrowed for the occasion, individual irresponsibility. Like Duncan, we were "slain in the house of our friends," the House Military Committee, composed largely of ex-soldiers and Grand Army men. These men, for State reasons, tacked on as a "rider" propositions to also give medals to the Pennsylvania troops who, in April, 1861, went to Washington at the request of President Lincoln, who believed the Capital in danger.

With no intention of disparaging the militiamen of Pennsylvania who went to Washington on that occasion, I fail to see what possible connection there can be between their case and ours. Perhaps "A Subscriber" was one of that expedition—hence his animus. Ours is a claim for payment of a due for services given and acknowledged by the one who asked it. Theirs was a duty to which they were sworn under the Militia law, and in the regular order of service, unarmed and unused, they enjoyed a brief tour which involved no personal peril or discomfort, while ours was entirely different. We offered ourselves as a sacrifice for the rest of the army, enduring all the toils of preparation and the wearing agony of suspense, ready and willing to do all that men can do at the call. And when, at early daybreak on the morning of July 4, 1863, we stood in line ready for the order, and Gen. Banks, at the head of his staff rode up, we expected the order "Column, forward," and would have gone. If "A Subscriber" were a soldier, he would know full well that when the order for action has been given and torturing suspense is ended, the worst is over. The true soldier fears nothing so much as inaction, even though the duty be extra-harzardous, with almost certain death as its finale.

For several years I filled the post of Secretary of the Port Hudson Forlorn Hope Association, and hence was in a position which called for careful examination of facts. And I think I may claim to be moderately well informed upon the merits of the claim we seek to establish. In performance of my duty to the association I made two visits to Washington and somewhat peculiar were my experiences and the conclusions thereby inspired incidentally. I learned something of "the ways that are dark" in politics, and was a victim to "the tricks that are vain" of politicians. "The heathen Chinee" has by no means a monopoly in this direction. Introduced by a friend, an official at the Capitol, I called on the chairman of the House Military Committee, himself a member of the Grand Army. I stated the interest in which I had called and asked him if he would not resurrect our bill from its sepulchre in which it had been so long pigeon-holed, if only to make an adverse report; my object being to get it before the House, in whose loyal good faith I had entire confidence. Without making me any definite reply, he turned to the friend who had introduced me and asked, "How about the damned case?" "Still as it was." "Can't you give it a push?" A shrug of the shoulders and an expressive silence convinced me that "the deal is off," "and like Bernardo del Carpio, I "cast one longing, lingering look behind" and "got" fully alive to the delightful equality of American statesmanship. Had my friend offered the worthy Chinaman any hope of "a swap," the report I asked for would have been heard.

Accept my thanks for this opportunity for saying a word in favor of our most righteous claim and for renewing my acquaintance with my highly prized comrades of the "Port Hudson Forlorn Hope." FRANK N. SCOTT.

DORCHESTER, Mass., July 19.

The Massachusetts Shirt-Waist Judge.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The case of the Massachusetts Judge who appeared on the bench in a shirt waist and minus coat and waistcoat prompts me to quote from Juvenal's Second Satire:

"What may not come to pass?—when Judges dress
In such effrontery of nakedness!
"But 'tis July: I melt:—then strip thee, man:
Offend no longer, be at once insane!
Does that frail tegument, that thing of gauze,
Befit your grave expositor of laws?
What! Must we still be silent and behold
A Magistrate, whom muslin robes enfold?
A Magistrate! Why it might move our spleen
If such attire were on a witness seen!"

NEW YORK, July 19. STROTHMANN.

An Error Corrected.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The inclosed appeal for aid appeared in this morning's SUN. Through some error the name and address of the writer is given as 312 West Fourteenth street. I wish to state that no such person resides here, nor has any occupant of my house the slightest knowledge of the matter.

You will greatly oblige me by publishing this statement, thereby correcting a very serious error and saving me from further annoyance in the matter.

MRS. A. L. TEXTOR.

312 WEST FOURTEENTH ST., July 17.

THE DEPARTMENT OF ALASKA.

For the Second Time It Is to Be Abolished —Its History.

The military Department of Alaska is about to undergo another change by being consolidated with the Department of the Columbia. The department was created originally on Oct. 29, 1867, three weeks after Gen. Lovell H. Rousseau had taken over the newly acquired territory of Alaska from Russia, and assumed military command of the country. On his relief, Gen. Jefferson C. Davis took command, but he was the last chief of the department, which was soon merged in the Department of the Columbia. Headquarters of the old department was at New Archangel or Sitka; and at one time there were two full regiments of infantry and nine troops of cavalry stationed within the departmental limits. Although the department soon lost its identity in that of the Columbia, the troops were retained until June 14, 1877, when the last of them were withdrawn.

In 1892, fifteen years later, the navy sent a detachment of marines into Alaska, under Lieut. Pendleton, who remained the highest military officer for some time.

In February, 1898, Col. Randall of the Eighth Infantry was sent to Alaska with four companies of infantry to preserve peace during the excitement that followed the discovery of gold. He pushed much further north than any of his military predecessors, and located his headquarters at St. Michael's, north of the mouth of the Yukon River. In January, 1900, the second Department of Alaska was created and Gen. Randall, who had been in Cuba, was sent back to command it.

The Board on Geographic Names got in its work about this time, and St. Michael's became Fort St. Michael; the headquarters of the short-lived department remained there. The only posts of the old department seem to have been Sitka and Fort Wrangell, the latter abandoned in 1870; but the department now to be abolished has contained posts at Fort Davis, Fort Liscum, Fort Gibbon, Fort Egbert and Skaguay, beside Fort St. Michael.

Comparatively little exploring work was done by the troops in the old department; but much has been accomplished during the three and a half years since troops were sent back to Alaska. Capt. Glenn, Capt. Abercrombie, Lieut. Lowe and Lieut. Herron, have distinguished themselves in the work of opening the country, and it is probable that the last three years have done more for Alaska than the preceding thirty. It is to be hoped that the consolidation of the department of Alaska with that of the Columbia will not cause a cessation of the explorations. The Geological Survey has worked with the army officers, and probably can get along without the latters' assistance if necessary; but the two organizations working together have accomplished so much that it will be a pity to cripple the operations.

The withdrawal of the troops does not follow the abolition of the department. With a constant inflow of population to the territory the need for soldiers will still exist. There are only a few companies of infantry in Alaska now, and their number is not likely to be reduced to any great extent; but the end of Alaska as a military department has come, probably for all time.

The Secret of Mormon Wives.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Reading in your last Sunday's issue the reason given by Bostonian "why plural wives have not rebelled against polygamy," the writer was surprised that one who knew so little about Mormonism should attempt to write upon it. He thinks it is because Mormons make model husbands and because their wives are in love with the system. This, the writer, after many years' residence in Utah when Mormonism "was in flower," most flatly contradicts. He has conversed with many of these wives, and never yet found one who approved of the system. The more thoughtful of them look upon it as a matter of duty, while the majority, having come from conditions of degradation and vile servitude in Europe, find Mormon bondage less irksome than that from which they have escaped. But no woman who has known anything of the dignity and honor of the christwife can ever find aught of comfort or happiness in plural marriage. Many of these are still in Utah, and they remain there because their homes, their families and their property are there. More than this; should they come back to their friends of earlier years the taint of Mormonism would cling to them, and they would find an impassable gulf between themselves and those with whom they once associated. So they choose to remain where they are, and quietly bear the burden that cunning and deceitful teachers have laid upon them. Sometimes, however, one into whose soul the iron of plural marriage has entered more deeply, speaks out from the bitterness of her grief. Thus a daughter of Brigham Young said: "A religion that breaks women's hearts is of the Devil." NEW YORKER.

FAIR HAVEN, Vt., July 17.

The Shadow of the Raven.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I note that that you "fall down," as it were, in answer to a correspondent who wants to know how you explain Edgar Allan Poe's statement to the effect that the shadow of his raven, which was sitting on the pallid bust of Pallas just above his chamber door, was thrown (by the lamplight o'er him streaming) on the floor.

Pshaw! that's easy. Poe's chamber opened on a hallway having a staircase. There was a transom window "just above his chamber door," and the "pallid bust of Pallas" stood in this window—"the lamplight streaming o'er" came from a hanging lamp in the hall, high up on the stairway, or perhaps the lamp stood on a wall bracket more than half way up the stairs, and the light, falling on the bust of Pallas through the transom window aforesaid, naturally "cast its shadow on the floor," and at the same time "streamed o'er" the poet as he sat at his library table.

It's mean to make poets swear to the truth of their songs, don't you think? At the same time, there's a lot of other things in that pipe dream of Poe's, "The Raven," that I, for one, do not care to try to explain.

NEWARK, July 15. H. R.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Nothing could be simpler. Above the chamber door and behind the bust of Pallas there was a large fan-light, or rather, horizontal mullion or transom. In front of this and somewhat above it in the adjoining hallway hung a lamp, the light of which, streaming through the transom and o'er the raven as he sits upon the bust, throws his shadow upon the floor of the chamber.

To be sure, on this occasion, the poet explains of this hallway "darkness there and nothing more." But the words "and the lamplight o'er him streaming" are to be construed generally with the words "and the raven * * * still is sitting" and mean "when the hall lamp is lit."

What you say of Tycho Brahe would also characterize Poe. He was a genius beyond doubt, but with an admixture of picturesque humbug.

HOWARD M. CANNON.

AVON-BY-THE-SEA, N. J., July 15.

The Book of Ecclesiasticus.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* A few weeks ago one of your correspondents criticised somewhat severely the exclusive healing pretensions of "Mother Eddy" and her disciples, and quoted the following "text," ostensibly from the "38th chapter of Eccles.:"

Honor a physician with the honor due unto him for the uses which ye may have of him, for the Lord hath created him. For of the Most High cometh healing, and he shall receive honor of the King. The skill of the physician shall lift up his head and in the sight of great men shall be in admiration. The Lord hath created medicines out of the earth; and he that is wise will not abhor them. * * * With such doth He heal, and taketh away their pains. Of such doth the apothecary make a confection. * * * My son, in thy sickness be not negligent, but pray unto the Lord and He will make thee whole. * * * Then give place to the physician, for the Lord hath created him; let him not go from thee for thou hast need of him; there is a time when in their hands there is good success.

I have tried to hunt up this text, but have found that there is no "38th chapter" of Ecclesiastes, nor any other in fact, above chapter xii., which closes that book. Neither has any concordance that I have been able to lay my hands on (not even Cruden's), been able to locate a single one of those sentences as quoted by "A Catholic." You would oblige me very much by giving your readers the right book and chapter where they occur. CALCUTTA.

BOSTON, July 19.

If our correspondent had consulted the concordance to "the Books called Apocrypha," appended to "Cruden's Concordance," he would have found a reference to the passage, which is in the xxxviii. chapter of Ecclesiasticus, a book included in the Catholic, but not the Protestant canonical Scriptures, and therefore to be found in the Douay or Catholic version of the Bible.

Very Near the Top.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* It seems to me that January Oats of Palo Alto, Pa., is entitled to a place very near the top of your roll of honor.

C. K. SCHWRAR, Editor the *Chronicle*.

POTTSVILLE, Pa., July 17.

GOVERNMENT SHIPBUILDING PLANT.

Naval Constructor Capps Advocates Equipping One in the Brooklyn Yard.

WASHINGTON, July 20.—Naval Constructor Washington Lee Capps, in charge of the Construction Department of the Brooklyn navy yard, advocates equipping the yard with a complete shipbuilding plant equal to that of the best private shipyard in the United States. Mr. Capps makes this recommendation in his annual report, just received by Rear Admiral Bowles, Chief Naval Constructor. He wants such a plant erected to make the Government independent of private shipbuilding concerns in the event of an emergency. Mr. Capps advocates also a scheme to give more room for berthing ships at Brooklyn. He says that the berthing space is now so limited that at one time recently five ships were tied together at one dock. His plan to obviate the difficulty is to cut away part of the Cob dock and build six piers.

Rear Admiral Barker, commandant of the Brooklyn yard, in forwarding Mr. Capp's report, suggests that a board be appointed to consider his recommendation of a modern Government shipbuilding plant.

OUR TERRITORIAL ACQUISITIONS.

Commission of Experts Recommends Changes in the Accepted Boundaries.

WASHINGTON, July 20.—The Census Bureau to-day issued a report on the boundaries of territorial acquisitions by the United States, including the Louisiana purchase, the Oregon Territory, Texas, the first Mexican cession and the Gadsden purchase. The report is that of a commission consisting of Chief Statistician Willcox of the Census Bureau, Librarian Allen of the State Department, Supt. Tittmann of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, Topographer Gannett of the Geological Survey and P. Lee Philipps of the Library of Congress. The report of the commission recommends various changes in the accepted boundaries of these acquisitions as follows:

"The region between the Mississippi River and Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain to the west and the Perdido River to the east should not be assigned either to the Louisiana purchase or to the Florida purchase, but should be marked with a legend, indicating that title to it between 1803 and 1819 was in dispute.

"The line between the Mississippi and the Lake of the Woods, separating the territory of the United States prior to 1803 from the Louisiana purchase, should be drawn from the most northwestern point of the Lake of the Woods to the nearest point on the Mississippi River in Lake Bemidji.

"The western boundary of the Louisiana purchase, between 49 degrees and 42 degrees north, followed the watershed of the Rocky Mountains, thence it ran east along the parallel of 42 degrees north to a point due north of the source of the Arkansas River and thence south to that source.

"The northwestern boundary of Texas as annexed, extended up the principal stream of the Rio Grande to its source, and thence due north to the parallel of 42 degrees north.

"The southern boundary of the cession of 1848 should be drawn from a point on the Rio Grande eight miles north of Paso, instead of from one about 30 miles further north, as is the usual practice at present, west 3 degrees and thence north to the first branch of the Gila River."

NEW OBSTACLE TO AMERICAN TRADE.

Germans Propose Law to Require Invoices Certified at Point of Manufacture.

WASHINGTON, July 20.—Consul Warner writes to the State Department from Leipzig that it is reported the Reichstag will pass a law to compel American exporters to Germany to make out invoices covering the shipments, these invoices to be authenticated by the German Consul in the United States in whose district the goods were produced. It is alleged that such a course will help the officers in perfecting the statistics of the imports from the United States and will also throw another obstacle in the way of American exports to Germany.

THE HIGH DEGREES OF MASONRY

Repudiated by a Studious Member of the Craft.

From A History of the Introduction of Free Masonry and Its Progress in the United States since 1732, compiled by the Rt. Wor. Bro. Rev. E. M. Myers, P. G. C. Pro. G. L. of Scotland.

Until the year 1767 the American Masons only knew of the three degrees of E. A., F. C. and M. M., which were all that were regarded as genuine Masonry. About this time, however, Stephen Morin, a brother from Paris, arrived with a supply of ribands and stars, and a new rite, called "Sovereign Masonic Princes," and sowed the weeds of the so-called High degrees, which grew up luxuriantly and highly exuberant, and were destined to retard the growth of all good Masonic seed. Before his departure in 1761 Morin had been appointed Grand Deputy Inspector, by the Parisian "Conseils des Empereurs d'Orient et d'Occident," and had been charged especially by this Council, to spread the knowledge of the twenty-five recognized high degrees on the other side of the ocean. His adherents and followers afterward increased the number of his degrees to thirty-three.

This spurious order of Masonry received the name of "Ancient and Accepted Rite," or "Scottish Rite." In the "Extrait du livre d'or du Supreme Conseil du 33me degre en France" (Paris 1808) it was asserted that Frederick II. of Prussia had, in 1786, the higher degrees and the Masonic Constitution of the Ancient Rite revised, and to the twenty-five recognized degrees had caused eight new ones to be added, and appointed a Superior Council of the thirty-three degrees. This fabrication has been and is still echoed by the credulous believers in this Rite, although it is well known by those conversant with the subject that neither then, nor during the last fifteen years of his life, did Frederick the Great take any active interest in Masonry.

Why Are Men Wingless?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Benjamin De Casseres in this morning's issue, in quoting Von Hartmann states: "Birds do not fly because they have wings, but have wings because they wanted to fly."

I do not care what Von Hartmann, Darwin or Spencer said or wrote, but I think that the above quotation is foolish to the extreme. Does any one believe that if elephants wished to fly that by desiring to fly wings would grow capable of sustaining them in the air? Birds fly because it is their nature to fly and having wings they desire to carry out a natural impulse in them to fly.

For thousands of years man has desired to fly. Not having the necessary wings in this life, he has pictured himself having them in another world. This is not all. For ages men have struggled in vain to conquer the air, but it remains yet for man to sail safely, through the upper world.

If desire had anything to do with flying, men would have flown years ago. I do not discredit the theory of evolution, but we must remember it is only a theory and like many other idols of the past may some day be completely shattered. F. M. C.

NEW YORK, July 18.

Summer Schools of Theology.

From the Outlook.

Inviting to some as an alternative and to some as a sequel to the Harvard Summer School of Theology will be the new Summer School of Theology to be held at Fryeburg, Me., from July 30 to Aug. 12. The programme of the school announces in all forty-three lectures in Biblical, theological and practical courses. Each of the four daily lectures will be open to free questioning and discussion. Evening concerts and popular lectures are superadded through the month of August. All the courses are open to women as well as to men.

The summer season of the University of Chicago makes a change this year that will be convenient to many teachers and clergymen. The first term, which opened June 19, will close July 27, and the second term extends to Aug. 31. In addition to the regular courses of all departments, eminent scholars are to give a large number of open lectures.

How to Button a Coat.

From Chat.

The art of properly buttoning a coat—any coat—is, do it the other way.

That is to say that nine out of every ten of us button our coats the wrong way; we commence with the topmost button when we should commence with the bottommost.

The frailest portion of a coat, in respect to shape-retaining qualities—no matter how well made—is the region of collar and lapels. The swagger merchant tailor always cautions his customer to "wear it buttoned a few days so that the collar may set properly."

Then, this admitted, it follows that tugs and strains affecting this part of the garment tend to destroy its symmetry. Drawing the coat together by the top button and buttonhole for the purpose of fastening, exerts a pull all around the shoulders and neck region, which, by repetition, in time will give the smartest coat a hang-dog appearance.