The Sun.

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"Public Works."

Enforcement of the Eight Hour law is a duty which the Federal Government has no desire to avoid, President GOMPERS of the American Federation of Labor to the contrary notwithstanding. The intent of the law is a question about which the Government may honestly differ with Mr. GOMPERS, whose purpose is to extend its application to every contract in which the Government is interested, though it be a contract for supplies made by workmen not employed by the Government in any sense. The case might be entitled Union Labor *vs.* the United States. Advocate GOMPERS cares less about a fair construction of the statute than about the success of his propaganda by hook or by crook.

There can be no doubt that workmen employed upon a building which is the property of the United States, or upon a dock or a fortification for the use or defence of the Government, or upon any other such "public work," are covered by the law; that is to say, their day's labor cannot lawfully be extended one moment over the prescribed eight hours. The controversy begins when an attempt is made to extend the meaning of the term "public works" in the statute to the manufacture of materials or of any product or article ordered by the Government from contractors or dealers. The Government has need of a thousand and one things which it does not make in its own shops or yards. Private capital on a large scale is invested in the manufacture of these things, for the delivery of which the Government makes contracts. Do they come under the head of "public works"? Yes, says President GOMPERS; no, says the Government.

It happens that the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of New York has just handed down an opinion in a case which illuminates the question in dispute. Suit was brought by WILLIAM BELL and CHARLES BELL in the name of the United States under an act of Congress passed August 13, 1894, "For the protection of persons furnishing materials and labor for the construction of public works," which provided that any person or firm entering into a contract with the United States for the construction of any public work should be required to furnish a bond to secure payment to all persons supplying the contractor with labor and materials. In the year 1903 the Marine Construction and Dry Dock Company of New York made a contract with the United States Government to supply it with fifteen self-righting and self-bailing lifeboats, payment to be made as each boat was completed to the satisfaction of the Government inspectors. The Empire State Surety Company furnished for the contractor the bond required by the act of 1894. Failing to complete the contract for the delivery of the lifeboats, the Marine Construction and Dry Dock Company went into the hands of a receiver, and WILLIAM and CHARLES BELL, who as sub-contractors had supplied materials, sued on the bond in the name of the United States, as provided in the statute. The question for the court to determine was whether the building of the lifeboats was a public work within its meaning. Judgment was rendered against the sub-contractors. In his opinion Justice HIRSCHBERG said:

"The plaintiffs were not engaged in a public work in any other sense than the owner of a factory would be who was making stationery for a customer who chanced to have a contract with the Government to supply it with stationery. Had a contractor agreed to furnish the Government with arms, it could hardly be claimed that the law protected the wages of the operatives in the arsenal where the weapons might be manufactured. It is obvious that if the construction of the statute for which the plaintiffs contend is to prevail, then it covers every kind of contract which the Government can make for any purpose, and the words of the title, 'furnishing materials and labor for the construction of public works,' have no significance or restrictive meaning. The object of the act is fully subserved by construing it to relate to the construction of public buildings and the prosecution and completion of public works, in the sense that they belong to and are the property of the public, and to repairs thereof."

The opinion of the New York court upon the meaning to be given to the term "public work" used in a United States statute is helpful but not decisive. An appeal lies in the last resort to the Supreme Court of the United States, and in due time we shall have a final decision which should settle the controversy between Mr. GOMPERS and the other branches of the Government.

The Pan-American Congress and Arbitration.

One of the most important matters that will be discussed in the Pan-American Congress, which opened on July 23 at Rio de Janeiro, is the proposal that all independent American States shall enter into an agreement to refer al controversies between one another to arbitration. There is some misconception current regarding the effect which the conclusion of such an agreement would have on the relations of European Powers to the countries of the New World. Some of the newspapers seem to think that the adoption of such a covenant would make superfluous the assertion of the Calvo and Drago Doctrine, which forbids the enforcement of contractual obligations by violence; or of the Roosevelt deduction from the Monroe Doctrine, which Mr. ROOT has gone to Brazil to advocate. This is not the case.

It is by no means certain that unanimous assent can be secured even to such an application of the principle of arbitration as would be confined to the disputes of American republics between themselves. The efforts made in that direction by the last Pan-American Congress were unsuccessful. At that time Chile and Argentina had a boundary controversy which they seemed disposed to settle by war. Fortunately that source of trouble no longer exists, and so far as Argentina is concerned no resistance to an arbitration pact is at present expected. It is also true that of the five Central American States, three, Guatemala, Salvador and Honduras, are now committed to the principle involved, having lately entered into a treaty pledging themselves in perpetuity to submit all differences between one another to the joint arbitration of the United States and Mexico. At first sight, therefore, the prospect of putting an end to warfare in the Western Hemisphere seems decidedly brighter than it was some years ago. There remains one obstacle, however, which, it may be feared, will prove insurmountable. It was not so much her boundary controversy with Argentina that caused Chile some years ago to show herself recalcitrant to the advocates of arbitration as her long standing and bitter quarrel with Peru regarding the provinces of Tacna and Arica, formerly belonging to Peru. As this question is still a burning one, we can see but little ground for hope that a unanimous agreement for arbitration will be reached at Rio de Janeiro.

Even if a unanimous agreement were attainable between American republics, their decision would not be binding on European Powers. Great Britain might again refuse, as she refused for decades before 1896, to submit to arbitrators the delimitation of the boundary between British Guiana and Venezuela; France, as the owner of Cayenne, and Germany, as the possible inheritor or assignee of Dutch Guiana, might show themselves equally refractory at the expense of Brazil. It is true that a Pan-American arbitration compact would have some chance of obtaining indorsement at The Hague if the Peace Congress were made to understand that the United States and all Latin American commonwealths would combine to protect one of their number against an attempt of a European Power to collect by force an unarbitrated claim. The United States, however, could not with any show of consistency take such a position. The State Department has always recognized that for insults and injuries a European Power has the right, without waiting for arbitration, to exact redress. Since 1902 we are definitely committed to a similar view of a European creditor's right with respect to contractual obligations also.

It is a mistake, then, to assume that the unanimous adoption of an arbitration agreement at Rio de Janeiro would render superfluous the attempt, earnestly advocated by Argentina, to secure from the Peace Congress at The Hague acquiescence in the Calvo and Drago Doctrine. That proposal, which is no doubt of signal import to Latin American republics, would remain precisely where it is to-day, namely, confronted by inflexible opposition on the part of Great Britain, Germany and Italy, if not also of France. So long as Great Britain retains control of Egypt, and so long as she, Germany and Italy pocket the proceeds of a third of the customs revenues of La Guayra and Puerto Cabello, those Powers must needs repudiate the principle that contractual obligations must not be enforced by military and naval pressure. Neither can the United States become a convert to the Calvo Doctrine without condemning the position repeatedly affirmed in word and deed by President ROOSEVELT and his two Secretaries of State, that in order to avoid the inconvenience resulting from the prolonged sequestration by European Powers of customs revenues needed by American republics, the United States would be willing to interpose temporarily between creditor and debtor for the purpose of acting as collector and apportioner of customs income.

The question of Pan-American arbitration is important, but scarcely more so than that of accepting or rejecting the Roosevelt corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.

A Strange Career.

It will surprise no one who knew LAFCADIO HEARN at all well to hear that a negro woman in Cincinnati now claims recognition as his widow and seeks to obtain, as such, a share of the American royalties on his remarkable literary work. HEARN spent several years in the Ohio city, and it is sufficiently notorious that in his purely private and domestic relations he consorted with colored people only. Notwithstanding his extraordinary literary attainments, his profound and varied scholarship, and his brilliant and poetic intellectual equipment, LAFCADIO HEARN admitted no member of his own race to genuine intimacy. Among his fellow workers—he was then engaged in journalism—he was regarded with good will, though never with understanding or affection. Of his real and inner life none had the merest inkling. In Cincinnati, as in New Orleans subsequently, he was a mystery. He had no social life of which any white person was even remotely aware.

In New Orleans, a truly cosmopolitan city and always in close touch with Paris, it soon became known that HEARN, whatever motives may have actuated him in Cincinnati, had a perfectly definite and more or less intelligible purpose so far as concerned his chosen associations there. He had attracted the attention of the French writers of his day by translations of "LOTI," MAUPASSANT, GAUTIER and others. His felicitous reproduction of the essence and the aroma of the original persuaded the litterateurs of Paris that a miracle had been vouchsafed to man. When finally he published, not the translation, but the English equivalent of THÉOPHILE GAUTIER'S "Une Nuit de Cléopâtre," the attitude of the French group was transformed from complacent indulgence to honest and enthusiastic wonder. The whole literary and intellectual world realized the presence of a special and peculiar luminary.

All this time, however, HEARN was living in the downtown river front quarter of New Orleans with negroes—not the ordinary "cornfield" type, but the Congo priestesses and prophetesses, as a matter of fact with no less a personage than MARIE LAVAUX, the "Voudoo Queen." He was studying the Congo superstitions, folklore, songs, music and incantations. It was his passion, the same passion which later took him to the West Indies, to Martinique, to Hayti, Barbados, always in a fruitless quest. For he found that the so-called "African music" previously elaborated by GOTTSCHALK, as in the "Bamboula" and other compositions, was a mere barbaric adaptation of Spanish melodies, translated by the slaves from Santo Domingo, while the nursery croonings of the old bandanna'd blacks in New Orleans—"Le Crocodile," "Deux Canards," &c.—were mutilated French songs brought from Hayti to Louisiana by the refugees.

From the West Indies HEARN went to Japan, where he formed some sort of domestic relation with a native; and he died there in 1904 while occupying an important professorship in the Imperial College at Tokio. He was the son of a British Navy officer and a Greek girl, a native of one of the islands in the Ægean Archipelago. His appearance was forbidding, if not actually repulsive. Only about five feet tall, with one eye totally blind and the other so disabled that he had to hold papers within an inch in order to decipher them; always ill-dressed, unkempt, slovenly; with the face of a weasel and the manners of an oaf; he was nevertheless one of the most brilliant and picturesque writers of his day, a profound, versatile and poetic thinker, one of the greatest masters of occult languages and literature the Christian world has ever known.

That HEARN lived with the Cincinnati negress in an intimate domestic relation is easily imaginable. That he actually went through the form of a legal marriage his acquaintances will believe with difficulty. If throughout his career in the United States he ever paid tribute to any convention whatsoever, the men who came nearest to knowing him have never heard of it.

Submarine Danger Signals.

It appears that the devices for transmitting sound under water are rapidly approaching the stage of practical use. When they are perfected so that all vessels can be fitted with them one of the terrors of the sea will be reduced almost to a mere inconvenience. Ships rarely founder now, and collisions are seldom fatal among the great passenger carrying craft. The ingenuity of builders has found means to minimize such dangers, and the vast size of modern liners adds much to their safety. But the absolute safety point in collision has not yet been reached, and it seems unlikely to be except in the cases of the most costly vessels. There will always be many ships which can be sunk when rammed by others or when run at a high speed against a derelict or an iceberg.

The derelict will remain a menace to the safety of ocean traffic in spite of the introduction of a means of transmitting sound under water. Icebergs and floating ice will not cease to threaten the mariner. No amount of care will make the sailor certain of evading these obstacles in the ocean pathway. Even the time honored practice of taking the temperature of the water is not established on scientific certainty, for often the water is unusually cold when no ice is near. The echo of the steam whistle from the side of a berg is a better guide, but unfortunately sometimes fog itself will give an echo.

In the presence of such conditions it will be a happy thing for mariners when they can confine their attention in time of fog to derelicts and ice alone, and not be compelled to concentrate their minds on ascertaining the distance and bearing of every vessel whose siren or foghorn is heard groaning through the mist. When ships are equipped with apparatus by which they can communicate with each other under water they will be able to locate one another with some certainty and thus to avoid collision. One by one the dangers of the sea disappear. It is safer now than the streets of Manhattan. What may it not be in the future?

Blue Dress Coats.

Under the blue seas the blue news is with sighing sent. "High class" tailors of the West End of London are going to "revolutionize" men's evening dress. They have put forth the command and the samples are ready. If the dream of the lords of the goose come true evening man will wear a blue coat with a velvet collar, trousers "with two rows of braid on the side seam"—insatiate cutter, would not one suffice? Knee breeches are elective, not prescribed. Which is lucky for many legs not up to the Apollonian specifications, legs whose owners hear tingling in their ears that brutal cry of the gallery gods to the old race of "supes": "Pad them shanks!"

The waistcoat must have been lost in transmission. Will it be ultramarine, or crimson, or mauve? Nothing can be too bright or beautiful for the men in blue.

What ever becomes of those gorgeous Tyrian weeds designed by tailors with visions in their eyes? Year after year evening clothes of scarlet and gray and silver and what not are on the easels of artist tailors of whom a cold, Philistine world is not worthy. Ordinary men will not wear them. Brilliancy of dress doesn't appeal to them. They are suspicious. Mere Man is as vain as a peacock, but he is not brave enough to defy ridicule. Besides, the age is democratic. Splendor and multicolor belong mainly to the military, the naval and the "joiner." Gauds for the women folks, solemn simplicity for the men.

But where do the revolutionary evening clothes go? Do BOOTS and BACKYSTOPPER wear them in "gentlemen's gentlemen" clubs? Do they emigrate with the old tall hats to Benin and Timbuctoo and the Andamans?

If Iowa is to be saved the Hon. High Prices SHAW needs to "get" mighty "busy" mighty quick.

The policy of the Home Market Club is to make it easy, rather than difficult, for Republicans to unite and be steadfast. Therefore we cast no reflections upon the last two years.—*Protectionist.*

That is to say, the organ of the Home Market Club is ready to forgive Governor GUILD for writing that panicky letter to the President about the crying need of some tariff revision, and it will forget the pernicious activity of the Massachusetts delegation in Congress if the Hon. SAMUEL W. MCCALL and the other restless braves will come back to the reservation. The organ says: "The eyes of the country are turning this way rather more than usual this year." By November 6 the country no doubt will be wry necked in its endeavor to learn how the stand-patters are coming out in Massachusetts.

The Hon. RICHARD CROKER has not often had sublimer moments of statesmanship than those in which he used to discuss what he was pleased to call the "rasho." He is now "solid for" the apostle of that sacred proportion. It is refreshing to find that Mr. CROKER is as enlightened, perspicuous and confident in his views of national politics as he showed himself to be while still dwelling among the faithful in this town.

TOM JOHNSON defies court. Stuffs injunction into his pocket and tells men to go on tearing up tracks.—*Cleveland despatch to* THE SUN.

If Three Cent TOM doesn't show himself to be a great deal "biger" man than any old Judge, the country will be as much disappointed as grieved. This continual interference of the courts in behalf of corporations, property holders and other disreputable characters is growing tiresome. Thinkers and doers like TOM JOHNSON ought not be hampered by these outworn relics of feudalism. Courts must behave themselves or be abolished.

Among the Representatives on the blacklist of the Federation of Labor and doomed to defeat by that organization are Speaker CANNON and JOHN DALZELL of Pennsylvania. At the last election Mr. CANNON had a plurality of 15,752, and Mr. DALZELL received 17,372 votes, to 3,330 for his Democratic opponent It has been solemnly proposed that if the Democrat nominated in Mr. DALZELL's district is not satisfactory to the Federation a genuine labor man will be put up. That is the practice of the Prohibition and the Socialist parties, which never fear to stand up and be counted; and if the Federation of Labor means business in its new departure, why not follow their example?

A Byzantine Republic.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The American visitor to Westminster Abbey, with Dean Stanley's guide book in hand, visits the grave of Theodore Palæologus, who was in direct descent from the brother of the last Byzantine Emperor and fell at the gate of Constantinople on that memorable morning of May 29, 1453, when Sultan Mohammed, the Moslem conqueror, entered the Cathedral of St. Sophia and stood upon its altar and cried: "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is his prophet!"

For four and a half centuries Christian Europe has suffered the infliction of the unspeakable Turk, who at the present time refuses to receive an ambassador from this country and is fighting in Persia and Arabia and, according to Sir Edward Grey, even threatens the peace of Egypt. Many years ago Mr. Gladstone suggested that the Turk should be sent "bag and baggage to Bagdad," and it is said that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman will follow the foreign policy of the great Liberal statesman.

Is it not time to consider whether some step should be taken to create a great Byzantine republic which shall unite the scattered elements of the Ottoman power in Europe and allow the unspeakable Turk to exploit himself in Asia alone? It is no use to build a palace of peace at The Hague so long as the Sultan of Turkey can every now and again threaten the peace of the world.

BROOKLYN, July 26. ORIENTALIST.

Letters of Washington.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The discovery of a new lot of letters of George Washington is of course an interesting item of news, but why the letters written to Gen. George Clinton and Gen. James Clinton and spoken of by G. H. Richmond in THE SUN yesterday should be called particularly "the lost letters of Washington" I do not clearly understand.

Gen. Washington had many aides during the Revolutionary War, which lasted from 1775 to 1783, and he kept them busy. Great numbers of letters were written to Generals and Colonels and statesmen and personal friends. Many of these letters have found lodgment in the Library of Congress, in other libraries and in historical societies, and many have been used by historians. Others are likely to turn up at any time. In the last fifty years great numbers of them have been found among the papers of Revolutionary patriots, sometimes only two or three and again in bunches. The Clinton letters are nothing unusual.

As to calling W. K. Bixby of St. Louis "the prince of collectors," this is simply laughable.

NEW YORK, July 26. WALTER R. BENJAMIN.

An Old Fashioned Deacon.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* It gives me pleasure to tell you of something in contrast to the story related in your paper to-day in the letter headed "The Wicked Vestryman."

My grandfather was for years a deacon in the Old Broadway Tabernacle on its original site, and it was his duty to take charge of the collections. He always redeemed with good money from his own pocket every bad coin and button, of which there were quantities contributed even in those "good old times." This was a private matter, known only to his immediate family. My father, who is now in his eighty-third year, remembers vividly the religious solemnity with which his parent performed what he considered his proper service as steward of the Lord's property.

NEW YORK, July 25. A. W.

Pegu Ponies.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* In these days of horse shows, plentifulest prosperity and equine pets in consequence, it is a wonder that nobody apparently has yet thought of importing Burmese ponies.

The stubby, stocky little beasts with their hogged manes, gentle as lambs and enduring as donkeys, are great favorites in India for ladies' driving

They couldn't race an automobile or win a steeplechase against an Irish hunter, but Pegu ponies are distinctly the handsomest of all the pony persuasion. MADRASSI.

NEW YORK, July 26.

Bucolic Joy.

From the Canby Tribune.

The people of Canby have one advantage. They don't have to dig up for street car fares and cheap shows.

By the Sad Sea.

From the Washington Star.

Same old summer
As of yore;
Same old breakers
On the shore;
Same old music
By the band;
Same old bathers
On the sand;
Same mosquitoes,
Same old bites;
Same old people
Out o' nights.
Candy, popcorn,
Pressed in slabs;
Lemonade and
Soft shelled crabs;
Same old flavors
In the air:
Same old sameness
Everywhere.

SOUTH AFRICAN DIAMOND MINES.

From the World's Work.

Each of the great mines has its several compounds where the Kaffirs are imprisoned. These are enclosures with walls sufficiently high to prevent escape, and around the walls is a stretch of roofing sufficient to prevent the inmates from tossing diamonds to the outside to be picked up by confederates. In the early days the Kaffirs used to throw diamonds over the walls in tin cans, so that their wives or friends might come and pick them up. When the Kaffirs go to Kimberley from their tribes they agree to submit to imprisonment. The shortest period is three months, but there are many who have never been out of the compounds for two or three years. Those who go underground are, for the most part, drillers. They take a chisel and a hammer and drill holes in the hard, rocky ore, called blueground, in which the diamonds are invariably imbedded. These holes are for blasting the rock and reducing it to a crushed state. Tons of dynamite are used in the mines and the stifling smoke makes it no pleasant task to remain underground after the explosions.

At the Kimberley mine there are 1,500 Kaffirs who work underground; the De Beers mine has 3,000; the Bultfontein mine has 3,000; the Du Toit's Pan mine has 3,000, and the Wesselton mine has 4,000. In addition there are several shifts of white men, some of them miners, some of them engineers, some drillers, and some in charge of moving the ore out of the mines. The work never ceases. It goes on all night and all day Sunday.

The first step in the mining is drilling the holes for the blasting. Then the blasts are touched off, and the crushed blueground is conveyed to the shaft of the mine, which is 1,400 feet away from the tunnels where the mining is actually done. At the foot of the shaft the ore is dumped into a huge bucket, or "skip," and this, fastened to a great cable, is rapidly drawn out of the mine by powerful engines. Such diamonds as have been accidentally found have been washed from placer beds beside some river. The mining process is the modern way of finding diamonds. Thousands of men, mostly negroes, with no higher aim in life than to earn $1.20 a day, are perched upon the blueground rock in the tunnels drilling with a chisel and hammer. The spirit of adventure has been eliminated by the stupendous devices of the mechanical engineer.

The task of separating the diamonds from the blueground requires months. From the shaft the ore is conveyed to what are called the "floors"—great stretches of ground cleaned off like a tennis court. The ore is taken there in trucks or cars, which are fastened ten feet apart to an endless cable, propelled by the power from the engine room. Each floor is four hundred feet square, but their combined territory covers a great area of land, one mine alone having "floors" which extend five miles. These "floors" are nothing more than dumping grounds. Upon their smooth surface is spread the blueground to a depth of about ten inches. Being very susceptible to the action of air and water, the blueground disintegrates after being exposed several months, and in the crumbling such indestructible crystals as diamonds or garnets are released. This is facilitated by harrowing the ore after it has been exposed six months and is beginning to become pulverized. The harrowing is done by steam ploughs drawn back and forth over the "floors" by a cable. Any of the blueground that is not decomposed by the long exposure is taken to the crushing machine, where it is pulverized. All the pulverized blueground is taken to the pulsator, or separating rooms.

The quarters where the separating is done contain large washing apparatus and an inclined plane covered with a coating of a thick, tallowy substance. First, the pulverized blueground is washed thoroughly in huge tubs or tanks. The water dissolves the softer dirt and leaves only the hard pebbles, crystals and coarse sand. This coarse matter is poured over the inclined plane, or pulsator. In descending the plane the dirt and gravel pass on to the lower end, and the diamonds become imbedded in the tallowy coating. From ninety-eight to ninety-nine per cent. of the precious stones are thus entrapped, the diamonds often burying themselves in the soft substance.

The tallowy stuff is scraped off, placed in a caldron and melted. Becoming thin and oily under heat, it is poured off, and the diamonds are found at the bottom of the caldron. The diamonds are sold in the rough. A syndicate of diamond merchants in Europe buys them at about one-third the price a jeweller charges for the finished stones. Taken from the caldron to the general offices of the De Beers company every day, these rough diamonds are separated according to value and size, and are then ready to be sold to the Diamond Syndicate, seventy-five per cent. of whose stock, by the way, is owned by the De Beers Consolidated Mines, Limited.

The following figures show the average output of the mines for a single day:

	Value per karat.	Karats.	Value.
Kimberley	$11 50	1,500	$17,250
De Beers	11 50	3,000	34,500
Du Toit's Pan	17 50	1,830	42,025
Bultfontein	8 50	2,000	20,000
Wesselton	7 75	2,500	19,375
Total		10,830	$133,150

The De Beers Consolidated Mines, Limited, pays in a single year dividends to the amount of $10,875,000. It contributes insurance money for the benefit of its employees amounting to $500,000. It lays aside annually $1,000,000 for further investment, and after all this it has a balance of $3,730,000.

The Kaffir with his chisel and hammer makes $1.20 a day. He is paid at the rate of one shilling for every foot he drills into the hard rock. Sometimes he drills the required five feet in three hours, but oftentimes it takes him the full eight hours of the shift. With this $1.20 he must support himself, for he has to buy his own food, clothing and cabin furnishings. Somewhere he has a wife, or several wives, out on the veldt. A Kaffir is always anxious to have as many wives as he can, for with these Kaffir tribes wives are an evidence of one's wealth. The wives sometimes go to Kimberley while their husbands are in the compounds, and there live in quarters set aside for that purpose; but they are never permitted to enter the compounds. On pay day the wives flock to the gates of the great compounds and clamor for the pay of their husbands. They give their names at the gate to a guard, or the numbers by which their husbands were entered, and send within for the money. The money is sent outside by a guard. Many of the women carry to the gates a child or two strapped to their shoulders.

The risk of life in the mines is great. What is known as a "mud rush" sometimes happens by the inrush of water from the surface. Rain water goes flooding down into the vast craters of the mines. In these craters lie various kinds of clay and other strata. This earth becomes very soft and slippery after a soaking, and it often breaks through underlying beds and goes thundering into the tunnels of the mines.

CONGRESS OF NATIONS.

Proposal of a Court of First Instance in Connection With the Hague Tribunal.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The fourteenth meeting of the peace conference of the Interparliamentary Union has just opened in London. The question of arbitration should therefore prove of more than ordinary interest at this time.

I think it is agreed that absolute universal peace is impracticable, at least for many generations; but the question of a reduction of armaments and of the settlement of many disputes by means of arbitration is now well within the range of practical international politics. The horrible results of the late Russo-Japanese war have disgusted the world and given an increased impetus to arbitration. Then, too, the armaments of the Powers each year bear more heavily upon the people and provoke a growth of Socialism, and what is worse, anarchism.

I should like to suggest, therefore, that in conjunction with the Hague Tribunal there should be established a congress of nations, this congress to meet every year at one of the capitals. It should be composed of the Ambassadors and Ministers Plenipotentiary of the nations at the capital where the meeting is held, as well as of representatives of the Government in that capital.

All important matters and differences that had arisen between the nations during the year should be reviewed by the whole body; a satisfactory settlement being arranged if possible. An appeal from the congress could then lie to the Hague Tribunal, whose decision when made would be final. This would make the congress in the nature of a court of first instance.

Questions could be settled either by a regular trial of the cause, or by means of diplomacy. A great deal of the work could be done in committee. The congress could also sit as a parliamentary deliberative body, and pass resolutions concerning reduction of armaments and international reforms and matters tending to closer international understandings. CHARLES E. T. STUART-LINTON.

NEW YORK, July 26.

Rowdyism in This Town.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The letter entitled "Rowdyism" will be indorsed by thousands and thousands of people in this city. Rowdyism by young men and boys is on the increase. I have lived in this city about thirty years, and I have never known it to be so bad as at the present time; and I believe the whole trouble is due to leniency on the part of the police Magistrates when these young men are brought before them. I have watched this thing for some years. I remember at one time a lady riding in Central Park being badly injured by a stone cutting her face, and the Police Department put men in plain clothes along Central Park West and caught some boys in the act of throwing stones, and they were fined a dollar apiece.

Recently I was travelling with a party in an automobile on St. Nicholas avenue when we were stoned. I stopped a little further on and called a policeman's attention to the matter. He said to me: "We are absolutely unable to do anything with that crowd of rowdies; if we arrest them and take them before a Magistrate they are discharged with a reprimand." The police are doing everything they can to stop rowdyism on the trolley cars, as well as on the elevated roads, on Sunday nights, for instance, and many arrests have been made; but the police Magistrates either discharge them with a reprimand or make the fine so small that it has absolutely no deterrent effect.

NEW YORK, July 26. LAW AND ORDER.

Senator La Follette.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I was interested in your editorial in yesterday's issue on the methods of Senator La Follette. I was surprised, too, that a man should be criticised for stating facts, as he did at the Evansville Chautauqua recently when Senator Hemenway was present. La Follette was frank, I admit; but if one or many of his colleagues cannot bear to hear the truth, the more the pity.

If La Follette is seeking the nomination of the Republican convention of '08 for President, that is a laudable ambition. If he "speaks out in meetin'" and the truth stings his contemporaries, I say woe to them. Suppose La Follette has a rough manner; admit that he is not polished; admit that those he has criticised are polished rascals, whom will the people choose?

Why should THE SUN sneer at a man because he has the courage to do right? THE SUN intimates that La Follette flails every one that disagrees with him. THE SUN seems to be hammering every man in public life who dares have an honest ideal—a desire to be right, to do right.

Hasn't Mr. Roosevelt the habit of hurling the lie at every one who disagrees with him? Yet THE SUN does not criticise him as it does La Follette. EVAN PROBERT.

INDIANAPOLIS, July 23.

Buenos Ayres.

From the Bulletin of the American Geographical Society.

The population of the capital on December 31, 1905, was 1,025,653, an increase of 74,763 in less than fourteen months, showing that the population is still rapidly growing. In territorial extent the city surpasses Berlin and Paris, but is exceeded by London and Vienna, the latter being now the largest city in area on the European mainland, though its density of population is less than in many of the larger cities. There are in Buenos Ayres 81 inhabitants to the hectare (2.47 acres), while Paris has 340, London 145, New York 202, Berlin 286, Vienna 80, Brussels 204 and St. Petersburg 135 inhabitants to the hectare. Over one-third of the residents of Buenos Ayres, or 330,380 persons, were born in the city. Many of the inhabitants since 1895 have moved out of the more crowded districts into the peripheral territory, to which electric tram cars afford cheap transportation, while cheap lands, low rents and purer air are attractive inducements. Persons of foreign birth form a large majority of the employees, foreigners numbering 49,951 and Argentines 29,496.

Two of a Kind.

From the Westminster Review.

The Rev. Mr. Roberson was called upon to attend to two workers who had received fatal injuries in a riot. The reverend gentleman was most anxious that the men should confess who had been their accomplices. One of them died without uttering a word on the subject. As the other lay at the point of death he beckoned Mr. Roberson, who hastened to his side in the full expectation that he was about to learn the fateful tidings. This belief was strengthened by the first words of the sufferer. "Can you keep a secret?" he gasped. "I can," was the eager response of the clergyman. "So can I," said the dying man, and immediately afterward he calmly passed away.

Mellifluous Harmony.

From the Livingston Enterprise.

The concert given by the Gateway City Band at its handsome new pavilion on Second street Tuesday evening was worthy of the attentive and critical hearing it received. The mellifluous harmony of the music was felt and appreciated by every auditor. The beautiful melody of some of the softer strains brought memories of the shyness of a beautiful maiden known and missed. The triumphant crash of the crescendos created energy and fostered high hopes. The tender croon of the saxophones painted pictures of firesides and happy children asleep in loving arms.

First Aid.

From the London Evening Standard.

A ludicrous incident occurred in a London church last Sunday. A young lady accidentally let her handkerchief fall. By repeatedly stooping to reach it furtively she attracted the attention of the gentleman in the pew behind, who thought she was about to faint. With the best of motives he took her gently under the arms and raised her up, greatly to her surprise. As she tried to release herself another gentleman went to her assistance, and before the lady knew what was the matter they were moving her out into the aisle and into the vestibule. The finale can be better imagined than described.

Boston Prefers the Growler.

From the Boston Advertiser.

In the bright lexicon of Boston there is no such word as "can."

The Passion for the Theatre.

Uncle Hiram—Neo York has an acting Mayor.

Aunt Maria—For the land sakes, who'll go on the stage next?

Concise Description.

Stella—What was her bathing suit like?

Bella—It was heard but not seen.

DISINHERITING SONS.

A Suggestion for the Chastening and Improvement of Rich Parents.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The idea occurs to me that one of the laws most urgently needed would make it impossible for a son to inherit even a cent from his parents. Of course the female progeny of a man would have to be excepted from such an arrangement. Such legislation would oblige the indulgent father to give his son a common sense education, cultivate in him a sense of healthy independence. Secondly, the young man who, under the present dispensation, has more money than sense or conception of his ethical obligations to society would find his path less slippery and would have the rough corners of his self-conceit rounded off. Thirdly, parents would find life much easier and would get a chance to cross the Styx in a natural way, not accelerated by the heartache due to the behavior of their children; and fourthly, the proposition would act as a very convenient regulator for the distribution of the national wealth.

Let every man continue making all the money he can—the more the better. He may also spend it in whatever manner he pleases; but after his demise the money he has accumulated should revert to the State, except that part necessary in order to keep the wife of the deceased and the female members of his family in the degree of comfort enjoyed by them during the life of the individual concerned. In the case of the daughters of a man so deceased their share should also revert to the State at the time of their marriage; the benefits of their father's estate, however, should be assured them in case certain conditions should make matrimony an undesirable state. The widow should be subject to the same conditions—remarriage should cause her to forfeit all claims to her former husband's estate. In her case, however, the portion due should be subject to no other conditions. The last named arrangement would prevent a good many of the old man's darling marriages, and would cause a decided decrease in moral iniquity of a very obnoxious character.

This proposition naturally sounds radical enough to be called Spartan, yet such a law, while placing no curb on personal ambition, would rob thousands of misguided parents of the only pleasure they really have—that of slaving for an ungrateful posterity. A suggestion like this could, of course, only come from SANS GALETTE ET SANS FAMILLE.

NEW YORK, July 26.

MEN AND WOMEN.

The Moral and Economic Differences and Relations of the Sexes.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Will you permit me to contribute my mite to the discussion of "the double standard" of morality? "Bachelor Maid's" remarks in this morning's SUN are too much for my gravity. As if any women ever "chose" to remain single because she could not find a man up to her moral standard! A woman marries a man because she loves him, and she does not care what his prematrimonial morals have been. No woman who loves a man really is capable of rejecting him because he has been guilty of moral lapses. Nor is it usually necessary that she should.

To speak from experience: I married with my eyes open a man who would not have married me if my life had been like his. He was a "good fellow," among women as well as men; but I loved him and knew intuitively that he had the making of a good husband in him. For ten years he has been an ideal husband and father. He could not possibly have been a better man after marriage if he had adhered to the strictest moral standard before.

This is not an unusual case. The majority of women know it, and if they have red blood in their veins they do not stop to theorize when they fall in love. They just get married, and the average man of average morals makes the average woman as good a husband as she wishes or deserves.

AN AVERAGE WOMAN.

RICHMOND HILL, L. I., July 25.

Her Proper "Sphere."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Another woman salary earner would like to reply to "Mere Man." In his latest communication he says: "I simply believe that domestic life (not 'drudgery') is woman's natural and proper sphere"; and again, in speaking of bachelors and maids: "The latter in many instances have brought this penalty upon themselves by their own stubbornness and folly."

Who are more likely to know whether domestic life is drudgery or not, women who have learned from experience, or men who don't want the experience? As for the penalty suggested, a deliberate choice is not considered a "penalty" by either men or women bachelors.

As "Bachelor Girl" suggests, the morality of any community is better and its homes are happier if the women are financially free to choose or refuse marriage. There will never be a time in this free country when women will not be found in business; and after all it is the party most concerned who has to decide what her proper sphere is.

BUSINESS WOMAN.

RUTHERFORD, N. J., July 26.

War of the Sexes.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The strife for acknowledgment of superiority which the sexes wage against each other through the medium of the newspapers is rather a pitiable mode of warfare. Since the allegorical account of the beginning of the human race the life of every man and woman has been the direct outcome of one of three things: circumstances, environment, or some personal characteristic. That is to say, life has been individual. There can be, then, no distinct sphere for either man or woman, taking either sex as a whole. Every separate life has its own salvation to work out. Every man and woman has lived in the past, and will live in the future, the life which circumstance, environment or personality points out.

Such contentious letters as those written by "Mere Men," in your issue of Sunday, and the correspondence which called it forth, serve but one purpose in the human economy—viz.: to keep alive a certain feeling of resentment between man and woman as differentiated by sex, a feeling which men and women taken as mankind would gladly consign to the oblivion which it deserves. E. N. B.

NEW YORK, July 26.

Good Advice to Mere Man.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* While neither advocating nor deprecating the presence of women in the labor field, I am impelled by a strong desire to set "Mere Man" right to show him the puerility and futility of his tirades on the question.

"Mere Man" and other men can, if they desire, keep a large number of women out of the labor field if they will recognize the need of providing every human being with a little pocket money. The loss of self-respect entailed on many a wife, daughter and sister by the necessity of begging for every quarter of pocket money allotted to them drives more women into the labor field than any other cause. Every man knows the pleasure he derives from jingling a few dollars in his pockets, but many men well able to do better keep their women on the scantiest allowance. Many a woman has to meet her independent, proper and necessary expenses out of household money, while her lord and master has plenty and to spare. Many a daughter, embittered by stingy doles for apparel and the necessary expenses of her social life, is driven into the labor field.

No woman well cared for at home, of her own free will bars "Mere Man" out of a position.

NEW YORK, July 26. STENOGRAPHER.

The Double Standard.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I have been waiting for some woman to answer "Inquirer's" questions, but as none have done so, I am going to tell him what I think about the dual law and woman's attitude toward transgressing it.

I for one have many times "read the riot act to men," and being an unmarried woman I have found it doesn't pay. The men all consider my serious arguments so many jokes, and assure me if a woman drew the line on men who were not as good as they demand the women to be—why, she would simply know no men.

Being a generous minded person I refuse to accept this sweeping denunciation of men, and still believe there are many good men living clean, upright lives. I am glad to say that not only would I bar out of my acquaintance an acknowledged roué, but so would many of my women friends.

The most exasperating thing about this subject is that the more lax the morals of the man the higher the moral standard he demands of women. Where is the justice of this? As "Inquirer" started this subject himself, I am going to ask him a question: Does he consider it a sensible thing for women to "read this riot act to men"? Does not the discussion tend to depreciate the value of the woman in the mind of the man to whom she talks?

AN INTERESTED WOMAN.

NEW YORK, July 26.

Passionate Cry of a Prohibition Town.

From the Topeka Capital.

The thing Topeka needs worse than anything else is a bartender who can make a good gin rickey.

Eight short stories in *McClure's Magazine* for August are contributed by Rudyard Kipling, Myra Kelly, J. London, O. Henry, Abby M. Roach and others. The serial account of life insurance is continued and a new one is begun on the copper feud in Montana. Carl Schurz's reminiscences are of Rachel, and C. W. Saleeby writes on cancer.