The Sun.

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A Misguided Idaho Friend.

Our Idaho friend whose letter we print in another column on this page is the victim of a misunderstanding and misapprehension widely prevalent in the West. He attributes to sectional jealousy and ill will the opposition that has been manifested in certain parts of the country to legislation popular in the Western States. In our opinion his theory is completely unfounded.

The measures which our friend mentions specifically are supported or opposed in the East according to men's sense of justice and their conceptions of right public policy. The thought that money is to be spent here or there is without influence, if it is ever entertained for a moment. And this is the case with regard to other measures which are advocated from time to time, as is made plain by even a casual examination of the various records of public opinion which are available to all. Who has labored more powerfully for the income tax amendment to the Constitution than the junior Senator from New York? And has not the Borah bill already passed the Senate?

Yet in the face of the record and the evidence many Westerners believe as honestly as mistakenly that there is in the East a feeling of sectional antagonism resulting in blind and unreasoning opposition to all proposals originating in or for the supposed benefit of the sunset side of the Mississippi River. Nothing could be further from the fact.

Getting Down to Earth.

Less than a week ago the Hon. CHARLES EVANS HUGHES was moved to the most human act in his whole public career. His statement issued just before the Senate selected a President pro tem. was the vigorous expression of an emotion which was only surprising because it was natural.

By this statement, however, the Governor instantly, thoroughly and permanently demolished a legend of long and laborious construction. Hitherto things practical in politics have been believed to be for him matters beneath notice and outside of a deliberately chosen pathway. Henceforth the precedent of the Hinman letter will stand to give the lie to such unjust suspicion.

Was this step of the Governor's, this interference in the most practical of all political affairs, a quarrel over a job, an accident, or a beginning? Was it a temporary but nevertheless fatal deviation from a strongly held principle, or a tardy but hopeful evidence of a change in method?

For half an hour on last Thursday the Hon. CHARLES EVANS HUGHES had a pick and shovel in his hands. No honest citizen will see anything but a cause for rejoicing if the Governor has decided to keep up the digging. What the political highways of this State need is not more guideboards but more shovellers.

France's Wasted Church Property.

It will be a strange twist in politics if the path of the Catholics in France is made smoother by the Socialists. M. JAURÈS, who is an honest man, is disgusted at the shameless corruption with which the confiscated Church property has been administered, and his party, which hates the bourgeoisie at least as strongly as it does the priesthood, will show no mercy to the plunderers of public property. M. CLEMENCEAU preferred to give up office rather than explain the mismanagement and peculation that had impaired the navy, and M. BRIAND, who, popular and masterful as he is, is no stronger than his predecessor, may have to stand aside when the secrets of the Church property administration are revealed.

There may have been some excuse for the ruthlessness with which the Catholic Church in France has been persecuted and the violence with which the Concordat was broken. The militant party in the Church, disregarding Pope Leo's injunctions, was actively opposed to the Republic and constantly intriguing in behalf of pretenders. The corporation which was the immediate cause of the bill against associations, with all the extensions that were evolved out of it, if it was not the agent of a religious and political conspiracy had all the appearance of one. It certainly justified the measure that M. WALDECK-ROUSSEAU put through. It gave some faint color of excuse to the strained and arbitrary constructions put on it by M. COMBES and his successors, which were ratified by the country in subsequent elections. With the desire for the separation of State and Church was joined the impression that it could only be brought about by forcible means. That imagined necessity made Frenchmen put up with the loss of many beneficial organizations within the Church; the parish schools, the Sisters of Charity and their work in the hospitals, the relief of the poor, and even the conduct of worship to which the vast majority of the population is accustomed.

There was no effective resistance even to the seizure of the Church property, though the Frenchman is more sensitive to the infringement of property rights than to personal or political oppression. It was taken for granted that with some inevitable loss the Church buildings and the Church endowments would be taken over by the State, which in a modified way would observe the conditions attached to many of these. The appraisal of the property seized at $200,000,000 must seem extremely moderate. Although more than half of it has been administered already, only $1,000,000, it is stated, has been turned into the State treasury. A confiscation only comparable to that of the Church lands at the time of the Revolution or of the monasteries under the TUDORS has not benefited the State at all, but has been filched by subordinate officials, if the trial now going on in Paris is a fair example.

With his socialistic ideas of what the State should do for the individual, M. JAURÈS is naturally indignant that great sums which might help on old age pensions, schools and other forms of relief should have been squandered on the bourgeois vices of petty bureaucrats. The defalcations and the failure to prevent or detect them are a blot on the Republic, and particularly on its policy of secularization of the Church and of government without religion.

The Discovery of Ollioules.

Ollioules has been discovered. The glare and glory of four full pages in the *Consular and Trade Reports* have rescued it permanently from obscurity. It is true that Paris, London, and even the locally despised Berlin, have long known the winter blossom of this village of the Var. The flower train that daily traverses the Côte d'Azur stays longest at Sanary, the station of Ollioules. From Toulon and from the diminutive ports of Sanary and Bandol its bulbs have been shipped to remote America, but Ollioules itself has remained beside its tiny Reppe, undiscovered and resigned.

In most guide books Ollioules is a place unnoticed. To Baedeker it is a place of gorges. It is only when one reaches the *Guide Joanne* that Ollioules achieves its deserved distinction, now also attained in the *Trade Reports*. It is not poverty of resource that has extinguished the fame of Ollioules. Its gorges, a labyrinth of winding chasms, a thousand feet below the summit of the Gros Cerveau, dark always except at high noon, dominated by modern forts and overshadowed by hills crowned with rock hewn villages that were once the protection of the unfortunate inhabitants whom Saracen pirates pillaged, have their own invitation to visitors. In the days when the diligence joined Marseilles to Toulon and Italy the hundred caves in the chalk white limestone cliffs were the resorts of bandits who prospered mightily.

Ollioules itself has charms not without note. At the place where the hills suddenly halt and the Marseilles road, the "route nationale," breaks suddenly forth into daylight and the plain and the traveller sees the purple water of Toulon harbor with Cape Cépet beyond, on the very last ridge of the Gros Cerveau, there stands a castle not unworthy of attention. Looking up five hundred feet from the road along the sheer face of a cliff to the tower and battlements the wayfarer sees a semblance of inexpugnable strength that carries conviction. It is only from the western vantage point that the heap of fallen stones testifies to the success of an ultimate siege which destroyed a gateway of Provence.

Under the shadow of the castle, its Place de la République on the edge of the turbulent Reppe, newly come from the cascades of the gorges, Ollioules stands, built about a church of ten centuries. The old quarter suggests Algiers; its diminutive alleys wind in and out under arches supporting houses and pierced with windows once designed for archery practice upon the passers. Under the arches it is dark and damp, and the doorways that open off the alleys are as forbidding as those that bar the way to the native houses in North Africa. Once the arch is passed, a mediæval world becomes a reality in a republican commune accessible by tram.

If Ollioules has its charms not lightly to be resisted, its countryside has equal claims. From January to June its hillsides, at other times barren and sunburned, are colored and fragrant with the flowers that the Northerner knows only in the hothouse and at the florist shops. Every foot of soil supports its bulbs and blossoms, and the stone walls are used as covers to protect the tenderest of the plants. At morning and at night the roads leading from Ollioules are thronged with the peasants marching to or from their remote hectares.

Le Castelet, the suburb of Ollioules beyond the Cerveau range, a tiny town diminished now to a couple of hundred people within its walls, surpasses Ollioules itself in charm. Set six hundred feet above a broad plain, surrounded, like Ronda or Constantine, almost completely by chasms, Le Castelet is one of the most attractive and yet unknown corners of Provence. From its battlements, still intact, one sees the Mediterranean from towers where in ancient days the watchers waited for the sign of a Moorish sail, while its dismantled château, now the property of the Republic, once sheltered LOUIS XIV. Northward Sainte Baume, the one mountain of the region, rises out of a wild and seemingly endless expanse of forest land, the white limestone of its bare summit resembling an Alpine snow cap.

Such is the kingdom of Ollioules, fronting the sea, not at Toulon, not even at Sanary, known for twenty kilometers about for its carnivals, but at Bandol, where two forts of VAUBAN defend a harbor safer than any between Marseilles and Toulon. Bandol too has its hotels, both grand, its villas and its winter colony, sometimes reaching to a score in number. At Bandol the sun shines, even when it rains at Nice and Mentone, and when the Mistral blows the Spanish, French and Italian sailing boats lie behind the breakwater, and their crews play at *boule* on the avenue of palm trees before the mairie.

Of all that was once Provence and is now the Riviera, the little fraction from Bandol to Sanary has perhaps preserved its ancient character most perfectly. Here one bids you good morning without thought of gratuity, and walks a mile to show you the road to Ollioules out of sheer courtesy. In a charming country Ollioules is rightfully capital.

Prince Henry's Want of Tact.

The sincerity of Prince HENRY of Prussia as a propagandist of peace and amity between the people of England and his own countrymen is unimpeachable, but he does not always show tact as an apostle of peace. A case in point was his appeal to the East Asiatic Society on Sunday, after calling upon all Germans to reciprocate the good will which he found in England on his last visit, to give its support to the plan of building an airship dock at Hamburg and making that city the first port of departure for oversea airship travel. There is no German enterprise that excites more concern and suspicion in the breast of the average Englishman than the development of the dirigible balloon. The same newspapers in London that printed a synopsis of Prince HENRY'S speech in which he said he could count on the friendliness of German naval officers for the English Government and people but found the merchants suspicious and hostile also printed a description of a great airship designed by ANTON BORDER, the engineer, which is to have a speed of forty-five miles an hour and to carry sixty passengers. To be launched this spring, it is predicted that the monster, driven by five motors developing 480 horse-power, will actually "conquer the air" and fly easily and swiftly over seas.

It was breath wasted for Prince HENRY to assure Germans that Great Britain offered them "an honorable and sincere friendship" and that the idea of aggressive action was absent from the minds of British statesmen if Englishmen were to learn that he was "promoting" an airship dock at Hamburg for the departure to other lands of the creations of ZEPPELIN and BORDER. In the London papers Prince HENRY'S appeal for common sense and concord will make the usual impression of official good form, but all England will talk about Hamburg as an airship port and the claims for the new leviathan of the clouds with its capacity for carrying soldiers and explosives. Owing to the activity of the Admiralty in new construction the British people are beginning to laugh at their fears of German naval rivalry, but German superiority in airships has taken its place as a nightmare.

British statesmen will be wise to encourage inventors and aeronauts with promises of prizes and subsidies in the hope that the jingoes will be silenced by the early appearance of a marvellous fleet of the air flying the British flag and prepared to repel invaders.

Spring Is Here.

Spring is here. We have looked with suspicion at the swelling buds on the trees. Our neighbor's triumphant announcement that his tulips were above ground left us unconvinced. Even the sight of boys playing marbles—and playing a most degenerate game, we regret to say—did not make us believe. Yesterday all doubts were dissipated:

"Thomas Berdil and John Heier were held yesterday in the Manhattan avenue police court in $500 bail on a charge of disorderly conduct. They were arrested late on Saturday night on the Knickerbocker avenue station of the Myrtle avenue elevated railroad while terrorizing women and children who were awaiting a train. There were half a dozen rowdies in the party and they threatened to throw many of those waiting to the street. The screams of women and children caused the ticket agent to blow the police whistle, and by the time two policemen got up to the platform four of the rowdies had escaped by jumping to the track and sliding down the iron uprights to the street."

The car rowdy has made his vernal appearance. The police are in their annual state of complete unpreparedness. The Sunday patrons of the transportation companies may expect the delights of obscene and profane language, broken heads, gross insults. Decent persons are once more to suffer from the horseplay and rough antics of "high spirited young men." The civilized part of the community fortunately small is again to be exposed to the assaults of our carefully selected and nourished ruffians.

We repeat that spring has come, when the New York young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of thumping the heads of inoffensive passengers in surface, elevated and subway cars. A pleasant season is in prospect.

By a vote so close that it left no room for comfort the Republican members of the Assembly after an all night session at Albany early yesterday morning gave the caucus nomination for the Senate leadership to GEORGE H. COSS of Watertown. *Elmira Advertiser.*

Further proof of the amazing grasp the Hon. J. SLOAT FASSETT has upon the Albany situation.

The Post Office Department of the United States Government might be in much better business than changing the honest name of Tottenville to the affected, silly and meaningless "Bentley Manor."

Representative HENRY W. PALMER of Pennsylvania continues to make the shortest speeches in the House at Washington. On March 11 he achieved his masterpiece, ejaculating "Lots!" when the Hon. CHAMP CLARK asked during consideration of the legislative, executive and judicial appropriation bill what the counsellor for the Department of State (a new office with salary of $7,500) was going to do. Mr. PALMER did not amplify. He never insults the imagination of the House by unnecessary explanations.

From a Bill of Fare in The Bronx.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The bills of fare of a popular and widely known German restaurant in The Bronx had yesterday evening attached thereto a written list of extra dishes ending with the announcement, "Shaving dish service, twenty-five cents extra."

ADOLFE OPPENHEIMER.

NEW YORK, March 13.

"FROM WHATEVER SOURCE DERIVED."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* A concurrent resolution was presented last week in each House to ratify the income tax amendment of the Constitution proposed by Congress. Each member of the Legislature must, unless the resolution is laid aside without voting thereon, decide for himself and his constituents whether or not the proposed amendment is unfit to become a part of the Federal Constitution because ambiguous, equivocal, obscure, unintelligible and uncertain in its language. The amendment reads:

Article XVI.—The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States and without regard to any census or enumeration.

The Governor of the State sent to both houses of the Legislature on January 5 a formal and official special message that the proposed amendment will, to use the language of Senator Root:

Confer upon the national Government the power to tax incomes derived from bonds issued by the States or under the authority of the States and will place the borrowing capacity of the State and its governmental agencies at the mercy of the Federal taxing power.

After more than six weeks deliberation Senator Root on January 27 wrote from the Senate chamber in Washington to Senator Davenport in the Senate chamber in this city a letter giving at great length the reasons why, much as he affirmed that he respected "the opinion of the Governor of the State," he cannot concur in his interpretation of the proposed amendment.

The disagreement and dispute between the two combatants turn on the interpretation and meaning of the words "from whatever source derived."

The difference between them is essential, radical, intrinsic and complete. The two construings, renderings, expoundings, explainings, elucidatings, interpretings, by whatever name described, cannot stand together. One is right and the other is wrong. One is true and the other is false.

The high official and professional standing of both disputants, the large experience and great eminence of both as members of the bar of New York, and the fact that they are members of the same political party in the State and, for the present, of the same group of that party give to their opinions respecting the proposed amendment a predominance and importance which their opinions would not have if one or both were second rate lawyers or no lawyers at all, or if one was a Republican and the other not, or if one was "insurgent" and disobedient, in Republican partisan nomenclature, and the other submissive and obedient, or if one were and the other were not susceptible to "tips" in official service.

The disagreement between these eminent officials over the words "from whatever source derived" directly concerns taxation in New York and the price at which the State, its cities, counties and towns can sell stocks or bonds in the markets of the world. The proposed amendment influenced very likely the high rate which in its new bonds Greater New York has recently been compelled to offer for the use of needed money. It was the official duty of the Governor to declare his opinion and warning to the Legislature in so vital a matter as taxation by Congress of the "instrumentalities" of the State.

A member of the Legislature may side with the Governor, or with the Senator, in respect to the true meaning of "from whatever source derived." He may think that the words "whatever source" speak for themselves and do not need interpretation. He may come to the conclusion for himself that the ordinary meaning of the phrase, if the amendment shall be ratified, will be changed into a special meaning and controlled by other clauses in the Constitution, or by something the Supreme Court decided, under the Constitution as it was, regarding taxation. All that will not obliterate the fact that the proposed amendment is so ambiguous and equivocal that Mr. Hughes and Mr. Root cannot agree as to its meaning.

It is improbable and even incredible that the Legislature of New York will, after such a warning from two such men, vote to put an amendment, so faulty in language and obscure in meaning, a cause of endless dispute hereafter, into a document whose matchless wording and style had the revision of Gouverneur Morris.

It is felt here that it can but be that the thing will be returned to the Washington oven whence it came, and returned to be rebaked and better baked out of better paste, if ever reproduced.

ALBANY, March 14. D.

Chivalry in Georgia.

From the Savannah Morning News.

A placard in an Atlanta office building's elevator says that men passengers in the elevator need not pull off their hats because women are present. "Men of Atlanta," shouts the *Georgian* in holy horror, "shall a foolish placard . . . sound the death knell of a custom which has been for three full centuries one of the distinguishing traits of the gentle South?" We fear that undue excitement has got the *Georgian* a little mixed as to its facts. We do not believe that it has been the custom in the South "for three full centuries" for men to pull off their hats in elevators when women were present. "Three full centuries" would take us back to the year 1610, and we are satisfied that at that time no man, in the South or elsewhere, ever took off his hat in an elevator.

We'll go further and risk the assertion that George Washington himself never took off his hat in an elevator because there were women passengers, and he was certainly a typical Southern gentleman. We might venture to risk deducting two full centuries from the *Georgian's* figures and assert that even at that time it was not the custom of Southern gentlemen to uncover their heads in elevators for the very simple and sufficient reason that there were no elevators. "Atlanta sets the pace for the South," says the *Georgian*. If that were true one might well say, "Then God help the South!" Atlanta is the least Southern city in the South. It has less of Southern manners and customs and courtesy than any of its neighbors. No Southern city takes its manners from Atlanta. Each of them has just as good manners of its own.

The Living World.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Referring to the letter of Charles Fritzsche in to-day's SUN about the Messina earthquake, I beg leave to say that I believe his ingenious argument would be of considerably more scientific value if he had not evidently overlooked the important geological fact that the earth is a vital animate organism. Wherefore the principles of mechanical physics which he so learnedly adduces would seem hardly applicable in the premises.

NEW YORK, March 11. C. M. JONES.

St. Patrick's Day Postals.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I think that certain of the Irish would consult their dignity more if instead of passing resolutions condemning scurrilous St. Patrick's day postal cards they were to treat them as they deserve; that is, with silent contempt. They (the postals) reflect more on the originators of them than they do on the Irish. They certainly show malice, bigotry and ignorance, things not to be proud of.

NEW YORK, March 14. CIVIS AMERICANUS.

Something to Be Thankful For.

From the Sylvania Telephone.

It's pretty tough to be poor, not to use a stronger expression; but when one reads of the many accidents by land and sea in which so many are sent to sudden death a man ought to feel thankful sometimes that he is out in the country pulling the bell line over old Balaam.

EAST AGAINST WEST.

A Clear Statement of a Highly Unfortunate Misapprehension.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* In its newspapers the East is continually manifesting a very unkind feeling toward every proposal of national legislation especially bearing on local Western conditions. I have in mind now the opposition of Eastern journals to the Borah bill which has just passed the Senate for a loan of $30,000,000 wherewith to complete our great irrigation schemes.

In passing it is well to say that while the land to be reclaimed by the loan is in the West, that while the water to be used is taken from Western lakes and rivers and that while the work will be performed by men of the West, the far reaching benefits make the enterprise essentially national. If providing homes in the West for the people of your overcrowded cities, if increasing the area of lands whereon the grain you consume and the fruit and meat which sustains you of the Atlantic coast are produced do not nationalize this legislation, then I confess I do not know what would. As these millions of acres of semi-arid lands are made available for cultivation wealth is added to the nation and to each State of the nation just as by the deepening and improving of the harbor of New York, which is rightfully an undertaking to be conducted by the Government for the national welfare.

Then again I have in mind at this time the unreasonable opposition you of the East are raising against the income tax law. You do not come out boldly and say the real ground of your opposition is that the West would gain some slight advantage over the East under the law, but you hoist the danger flag of unconstitutionality. The West is in favor of this income tax law because it seems fair and equitable and not because it would confer some advantage on this section not enjoyed by the East. That is a mere incident in the Western conception of an income tax law.

Does it ever occur to you that at least three-fourths of this particular State, for instance, is of little more use to the people of the State than if the great stretches of our timber were situated in India? The national forestry bureau has taken this resource from us and keeps it from our rightful and legal occupation. I have never read a protest by any Eastern journal against this sort of thing. We do not complain nearly as much as we have a right to complain. We grin and bear it.

While I am writing this, let me give you a little personal reminiscence: I came to Idaho from the East about twenty years ago. Mr. Hill had just completed his railroad across the upper section of the State. A few years before a grant of the best of north Idaho lands had been made to the Northern Pacific Railroad. To avoid the payment of the ordinary State taxes nearly all these lands from the day we started to build our town until very recently were kept unsurveyed and exempt by reason thereof from these annual charges. We got our town started, a few stores were opened, a post office installed, when the railroad made demands on the town settlers for compensation for that portion of the townsite overlapping on their section. We thought our location was wholly on Government land. We paid the sums demanded and thought our title was clear. Less than a year after a gentleman who had never been in Idaho, sitting at his mahogany desk in the Indian Department at Washington, D. C., proceeded to allot lands to the Indians of this section. He gave that section of land on which stood our town, now having reached a population of 1,000 people, to a pappoose. We tried to have the allotment annulled, but failed; the pappoose, we were told, must be cared for. By a special dispensation we were allowed for a good round sum to buy the pappoose off and free our homes from this encumbrance.

We now thought surely our trials and tribulations as a pioneer settlement were ended. But not so. No sooner had we satisfied the Indian claimant than along comes Mr. Gifford Pinchot and puts us bodily in a forest reserve. To get out of this we struggled for years, and not until recently were the lines of the reserve changed, just lifting them across the corporate limits. Although we have acres and acres of adjacent public lands covered with fallen and decaying trees fit for domestic fuel, we are paying $5 and $6 a cord for wood brought to us by rail.

In this list of hardships I have not spoken of the visits every few years from high water from an adjacent river, nor the great snowfalls of winter and innumerable other drawbacks to human comfort. Because of these things I invoke your charitable solicitude and support of the measures in Congress you are now combating for no other reason, it seems to me, than because their beneficence is not likely to be felt by you as sensibly as it is by us. You ought to know what we go through in building up the West. You should not forget the patriotic words of Senator Root in his letter to Mr. Davenport on the income tax:

The incomes of New York are in a great measure derived from the country at large. * * * We [New York] have the wealth because behind the city stands the country.

This little north Idaho town is but one of thousands which daily add to your wealth and contribute to the ease and luxury of your life. You should at least be grateful.

B. S.

BONNER'S FERRY, Idaho, March 10.

Public Coal Lands in 1909.

The United States Geological Survey reports that coal land withdrawals were made covering 1,675,000 acres not previously withdrawn, and the form of withdrawal affecting an additional 9,000,000 acres was changed to cover all forms of entry instead of coal entry alone. The new regulations of April 10, 1909, for the classification and valuation of coal lands materially increased the sale price of these lands and fixed more definitely the standards of coal classification. Thus, for example, under the old regulations in eight widely separated townships classed as coal land was 66,320 acres and the sale price was fixed at $2,088,800, whereas under the new regulations the coal land area in the same eight townships is 126,663 acres and the sale price is $13,727,668, an increase in area of over 100 per cent. and in price of over 600 per cent.

Under the old regulations the maximum price per acre for coal land was fixed at $75; under the new regulations it is, so far, $465. The single township valuation was $949,600, while now it is $3,205,894. Of the total area classed during 1909, amounting to 17,200,000 acres, much the larger part, or about 14,000,000 acres, has been classed as non coal land. The sale price of the 3,436,000 acres classed as coal land is now $191,490,000. The same land if sold at the old minimum price would have yielded only $62,477,000. In that way the United States has gained $129,000,000.

A Two Headed Snake.

From the Branwell People.

We saw with our own sober eyes on Wednesday of last week the double headed young rattlesnake caught a couple of weeks ago on an island in Buck Creek swamp by Messrs. Hair and Hartzog. It was a sure enough rattlesnake, some six or seven inches long, about the size at the largest part of the body of a pipestem, and beautifully marked. One head was a little larger than the other, but both were fully developed. There was a little button on the tail showing that its age was about a year. For a sight of this great curiosity we thank W. R. Lard.

Old Cannons Found Near Venice.

From the London Globe.

A Rome correspondent informs us that some very interesting discoveries have been made in the course of excavation work around the island of Lido at Venice, where a number of ancient pieces of artillery have been found beneath six feet of mud. The cannon are all in a state of excellent preservation, though it is clear from their construction that they must date back to a period almost immediately after the discovery of gunpowder; and it is believed that they will prove of very great artistic and historic value.

Icelandic Wayside Poetry.

From the Athenæum.

Mr. N. F. Fenwick, Jr., notices a curious custom in Iceland of depositing written verses on a cairn, to be found by the next passerby. He translates one so found by himself as follows: "I am sitting here late and early; hungry and cold I linger. Sincere friend, will you not warm the old one?" The reference is to an old crone supposed to inhabit the cairn.

IN THE JURY ROOM.

Some Strange Verdicts and Odd Occurrences Recalled by a Business Man.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* What was said in an editorial article in THE SUN of March 9 about the foolish verdicts rendered by juries is all true. It would take a whole page of THE SUN to relate the ridiculous and curious things I have experienced in thirty years of service on juries, grand and petit, Federal and State. I've been ashamed of the verdicts I've had to concur in in civil cases rather than have a disagreement that would be dreaded by both parties.

I remember a case where a servant sued the administrators of an estate for a large sum in lieu of support for life, which she claimed had always been promised her by the deceased. To me and to three or four others of the jury it was plain that the whole thing was concocted by the woman's attorney, and when we retired we compromised on a $5,000 award to the woman. The defendant's attorney assured us afterward that while it was an absolutely cold steal they'd rather pay that sum than have the suit hang over with all it implied to the estate.

In another case a smart lawyer had bought up the claims of a dead and gone company of some kind down South and came North to try and collect from some of the original stockholders. He sued a well known gentleman of standing in the United States court before Judge Lacombe, and the defendant employed Mr. Choate to represent him. The whole thing was so preposterous that Mr. Choate said but little, and the jury was sent out. To the surprise of eleven of us there was on the first ballot one vote for the plaintiff. We began to discuss the matter and one of the jurymen, who sat quietly filling his pipe, said: "Gentlemen, it's no use discussing this matter. That was my ballot, and if we stay here a year you will never get me to vote in favor of that blankety blank blank [naming the defendant]. I'm employed in the Custom House, and some time ago when that fellow was returning from Europe he treated me as if I were dirt under his feet, and here is where I get square with him, damn him." We of course had to report a disagreement, and at the same time gave a statement of the matter to Judge Lacombe.

I remember a humorous incident occurred in Judge Peckham's court. A tedious case had dragged along, and on Friday the Judge told us that court would sit on Saturday. Several of us business men didn't want to come to court on Saturday, and during lunch time we arranged with one of our number, a Hebrew, to remonstrate against serving on his Sabbath and get us discharged until Monday. Well, when court reconvened we pushed our little man up to the front, and as soon as he spoke to the Judge we saw there'd be something doing. The Judge called up the counsel, one of whom was General Tracy, and there was quite a confab, resulting in the Judge informing us that with consent of counsel he was going to withdraw a juror and go on with the case on Saturday with eleven jurymen. Our little game had been entirely successful for the Hebrew.

If there were space to spare I could give innumerable instances of both the sad and the humorous side of jury trials. Think of being on a jury for a year in the "Emma Mine case" and losing your business and becoming a bankrupt through it, as some men did. Think of a Federal court sitting five days with twelve jurymen and such counsel as the late Leon Abbett and Edwards Pierrepont to decide on the loss of a sloop load of potatoes frozen on their way from Nova Scotia. I'll bet Judge Wallace remembers it.

D.

RIVERSIDE, Conn., March 13.

RUSSIA'S EXHIBITION SHIP.

A Voyage in the Near East to Display Goods and Extend Her Trade.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Russia, whose commercial importance has been ignored in the past, is making great efforts to develop her commerce and industries. She has specially equipped a steamer to exhibit her products and a tour is being made of the seaports in the eastern part of the Mediterranean. The idea is quite novel. Such a scheme of advertising would be beneficial to the United States, for its products are not as well known in the Near East as they ought to be.

The Russian exhibition ship arrived at Beirut, Syria, on January 31. Tickets were prepared and distributed to the merchants and business men of the city and also to the public. The "Empereur Nicolas II." stayed four days at Beirut. On the first day a reception was held on board for the local Government officials and the Consuls of the different nations. Tea and refreshments were served and the ship's band furnished music. The second day was devoted to the merchants. On the third and fourth days the public was received, and the ship was crowded all the time.

The products of 150 firms and factories were displayed in the exhibition. Among them were cotton and woollen goods, minerals, coal, iron, cutleries, wood, rubber, leather, furniture, cereals, flour, fish, preserves, glass and china wares, perfumeries, church ornaments, candy, tea, liquors, &c. The majority of the exhibiting firms were represented by salesmen (six by women), who were at their posts in front of the display to give explanations and hand out pamphlets and catalogues. Most of the clerks were Greeks and Jews and they spoke Russian, French, Greek or German, and in some instances Turkish. The prices were considered high except for the furniture and in many instances the articles could be had cheaper in Beirut. The currency used was French and Turkish money. The ship is said to have done a big business in Constantinople and Alexandria, but in Beirut, the most important city in Syria, the business was comparatively small, owing mainly to the high prices asked. On Thursday evening, February 3, the exhibition steamship left for Tripoli, whence it went to Smyrna and afterward to Odessa. The round trip will take three months.

ELIAS THOMAS GELAT.

BEIRUT, February 28.

AMERICANS IN NICARAGUA.

Soldiers of Fortune Who Threaten the Peace of the United States.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Only a few months ago the State Department was thrown into warlike excitement on account of the overstrenuous efforts of Secretary Knox to wreak vengeance on the already disturbed nation of Nicaragua for the putting to death of two American citizens who had conspired with other revolutionists to overthrow the Government of Nicaragua. Warships were hastily despatched to the scene of conflict, while national efforts were planned for the chastisement of President Zelaya. President Zelaya was forced to resign and seek refuge in a foreign country, while another took the reigns of government.

President Madriz, the newly chosen, not being entirely in accord with the programme of the United States, finds himself now confronted with a rebellion in which American citizens openly engage. Thus does the United States lend inspiration to the conflict.

What results are likely to follow such a course? The execution of other American citizens, direct war between the United States and Nicaragua, and, worst of all, a general distrust throughout all the South American republics of all Americans and of the American Government's policies, and this augmented by a general boycott of American goods.

Thus will the relations created and riveted through the statesmanlike diplomacy of Mr. Roof and recently clinched through the official visit of President Taft to the mighty Diaz become a byword.

Then what becomes the duty of the United States Government during the present condition of affairs in Nicaragua? Evidently to warn all American citizens to withdraw immediately from taking part in any rebellion or conspiracy directed against the Government of Nicaragua, or in the event of their wishing to continue in the conflict let it be known that they do so with the definite understanding that their home Government will not be responsible for whatever fate they may suffer.

BOSTON, March 13. H. GILBERT.

Berlin an Idler's Haven.

Berlin correspondence Westminster Gazette.

The finances of Berlin are in an even worse state than those of the empire and of Prussia. One reason for the enormously increased expenditure is the reckless way in which Berlin supports all sorts of victims of misfortune or of idleness. More than a fifth of the children living in the orphan asylums have both parents living; the town shelters support thousands who have no claim upon the town; vagabonds in all parts of the empire hear of Berlin's reputation for indiscriminate charity and crowd thither.

Happy Days in the Palmetto State.

From the Florence Times.

The average South Carolinian will be happy this summer no matter what the cost of living or the price of cotton is; it is election year and plenty of candidates.

FAMOUS DUELS IN ENGLAND.

Four Prime Ministers Sought or Gave Satisfaction on the Field of Honor.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* At least four of England's Prime Ministers entered the "field of honor." The Duke of Wellington challenged the Earl of Winchelsea in consequence of the Earl's remarks on the Catholic question. They met in Battersea Fields. Lord Winchelsea received the Duke's fire and then fired in the air.

The Right Hon. William Pitt was challenged by George Tierney, president of the Board of Control, on account of certain objectionable remarks made in the House of Commons. They met on Putney Common. Two shots were exchanged, and Pitt fired the third time in the air, when a reconciliation was effected.

George Canning met Lord Castlereagh on Putney Common. They fought in sight of the windows of the house in which Pitt died. Both missed. At the next exchange Castlereagh's ball entered Mr. Canning's thigh, inflicting a slight wound. The two statesmen assumed their places for a third shot, when the seconds, seeing the blood streaming from Mr. Canning's wound, put an end to the combat.

Benjamin Disraeli having likened Daniel O'Connell to the impenitent thief on the cross, O'Connell also used language which was not parliamentary, and Disraeli offered to castigate the Irishman. O'Connell declined to meet him. Disraeli then challenged Morgan O'Connell, the accuser's son, but Morgan O'Connell also declined to meet a Jew on a "field of honor."

Curran, the Irish orator, fought four duels. The first was with Capt. St. Ledger, who had insulted an Irish Roman Catholic priest. The Captain fired, but Curran did not. "It was not necessary for me to fire at him," the Irish wit afterward wrote: "the gallant Captain died three weeks after the duel of the report of his own pistol."

The next affair was with the Attorney-General for Ireland, Mr. Fitzgibbon. The parties were to fire at pleasure. Curran fired first, and then Fitzgibbon took aim for nearly a minute. On its proving ineffectual Curran remarked: "It was not your fault, Mr. Attorney; you were deliberate enough!" The third duel was with John Egan, an Irish barrister who had the nickname of Bully. Egan was of "of immense size, as brawny and almost as black as a coal porter." Curran was facetious on the subject of Egan's size, and they left the field reconciled. Egan became Curran's second in Curran's fourth and last duel, with Lord Buckinghamshire.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan fought Mr. Matthews, "a gentleman of fashion," at Bath in order to vindicate the reputation of Miss Linley. It was done in theatrical style. They fought with swords, and great courage and skill were displayed on both sides. Sheridan disarmed his adversary and compelled him to sign a formal declaration. Mr. Matthews again challenged Mr. Sheridan. The parties met on King's Down. The battle was desperately contested. After a discharge of pistols they fought with swords. Both were wounded and fell to the ground, where they continued to fight until the seconds separated them. It was found that Matthews's sword was actually broken off in Sheridan's ear.

A STUDENT OF THE CODE.

BROOKLYN, March 14.

A FRANKLIN PRIMER.

Burlesque Literature and Art for Boston Infants.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The little story reprinted in yesterday's SUN from the Boston *Record* about the definition of window, "an orifice of an edifice," makes me think that the witness in question must have taken it from the "Benjamin Franklin Primer," a small paper covered book published more than thirty years ago by a concern in Bromfield street, Boston, that dealt in school supplies. It was a burlesque on the child's primer, which was then about going out, and contained some very interesting reading.

An illustrated lesson adorned each page that was not given up to advice to the teacher. I remember that one of the first was a picture of a youth clinging to the top of a dead tree in the middle of a swamp, with several open mouthed alligators clustered at the foot waiting for him to let go. His hair stood straight up on end and the expression of horror on his face was something wonderful in so crude a woodcut. Beneath this was the lesson, about like this:

See James and his pets.
His pets are fond of him.
James will soon feed his pets.

The one where the definition comes in was a picture of two cats on a ridgepole of a house, with a nightshirted man looking from a dormer window, a bootjack in hand and an expression of great pain on the face. Below the lesson:

See the cat and the kit.
Can the man hear the cat and the kit?
Oh, yes, the man can hear the cat and the kit.]
The cat is the dam of the kit.
Dam the cat and the kit.

On the opposite page the picture was explained to the teacher and advice given as to the best way to impart the knowledge conveyed. It was suggested that the pupils be asked to define some part of it, for instance, window. Let the definition be clear and concise, somewhat as follows: "Window, an orifice in an edifice for the admission of luminous particles of atmospheric molecules."

I owned the book for many years and had many good chuckles over it, but alas! it is lost, and it is out of print.

CHARLES G. MACUNDA.

NEW YORK, March 14.

Johnsonian.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* It seems to me that Boston is taking to herself more credit than she deserves for her definition of a window. I quote from "Leaves From My Autobiography," by the Rev. Charles Rogers: "Eight years before my father's enrolment (1781) as a student Dr. Johnson had visited St. Andrews. The event continued to supply material for debate, and among the students were two parties, one of whom supported Dr. Johnson, while the other took the side