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France and Castro.

The French government has acted in the Venezuelan matter with an eye to the dramatic effect, without which a true Frenchman would be desolated. It has decided upon a course of action against the obstreperous Castro, but it declines to announce its character. Inasmuch as it is agreed on all sides that Castro is one of the most difficult individuals in the world to punish—with the possible exception of the Sultan of Turkey the most difficult, indeed—there will be much curiosity regarding the exact method of procedure to be pursued in this case. France's grievance is partly financial, partly sentimental. The French Cable Company has suffered pecuniarily and its claims are the basis of the whole disagreement. The French government has suffered in feeling through the cavalier treatment of its diplomatic representative by Castro. Therefore, to meet all the requirements of the case, the proceedings against Castro must be both collective and punitive. Castro must be forced to pay and to suffer humiliation. There is already a considerable mortgage upon his revenues, in the name of England, Germany and Italy, the preferred creditors of the joint campaign against him some time ago. Their claims have not been satisfied, and when they are, various other creditors remain, including, indeed, the French government itself on a long-standing account. Thus, from the fiscal point of view a collective expedition will be difficult. As for the humiliation of the wily dictator-president and his administration, that is something no one has ever yet been able to accomplish. He bobs up serenely whenever pressed. He is inflated with an extraordinary sense of his own importance and power. He is cloaked with a consciousness of virtue—Venezuelan virtue, to be sure, but none the less effective for purposes of self-approval. If pushed to the wall physically, he cries out that he is being martyred. If only menaced by a demonstration he roars that his opponent is afraid of him.

If France has found a way to reach this pestiferous president and administer a sound thrashing which will teach him the elements of good manners, and imbue him with the principles of square dealing, and at the same time not trespass upon the prohibited field covered by the Monroe doctrine, the French government will have conferred a boon upon the world, by pointing the way to the abatement of a nuisance which has long been endured without means of correction. The powers not already in the secret will await with keen interest a disclosure of the details of the maneuver which is to bring Castro to book.

Croker and His Citizenship.

Richard Croker is being complimented on his refusal to renounce his American citizenship and stand for parliament. It is creditable to him, and in one way squares with his level-headedness.

Mr. Croker would cut no figure in a legislative body. He has neither the information nor the gift of expression necessary to success there. In his younger days he might have gone to Albany to the state legislature, or have come here to Congress, but he cared for neither billet. It pleased him better to keep his headquarters in Tammany Hall, and his hand on the machine. He made and unmade legislators, state and national, and knew his satellites so intimately that the commissions they held possessed little that was alluring to him. He would have failed at either capital.

Still greater would be his failure in the British parliament, for as a representative of an Irish constituency he would be expected to render John Redmond some notable services. He would be in very capable and eloquent company, and, without the ability either to frame measures, or speak to those framed by others, he could give no account of himself which would justify his presence. As a rich man in private life, interested in Ireland's welfare, he should prove of considerable use to the cause by heading liberal money subscriptions to it.

As for Mr. Croker's retention of his American citizenship, while that may be complimented, there is still his taste not sufficiently accounted for in living abroad. Why is even Ireland, a fair land and the home of his ancestors, more attractive to him than the United States? His own home should be here, where he was brought up, where he has had his political successes and acquired his fortune, and where, despite his more recent political reverses, he still has some loyal friends. There are many old Tammanyites in New York who think the town dull without the old chief, and would rejoice at his return. But he has established himself in a fine mansion in Ireland, and will probably spend the remainder of his days there. A man who thinks so much of American citizenship should live under the stars and stripes and exercise it.

The meat packers in attempting to bribe reporters show a sensitiveness to public opinion of which they were not hitherto suspected.

Judge Deuel may find consolation in the fact that Francis Bacon, although a very able man, got sadly mixed in his financial affairs.

While There's Life There's Hope.

A bill has just been introduced into the Ohio legislature designed to grant legal authorization for putting painlessly to death sufferers from incurable diseases when they have themselves abandoned hope and expressed a desire that their sufferings shall end. A motion, which was at once made in the general assembly to reject the bill, was defeated by a vote of 22 to 78, thus indicating a preponderance of sentiment in at least the lower house in favor of the proposition. Thus does the movement which has been under discussion for years on this subject gain headway toward accomplishment. It has been seriously debated recently, owing to the misquotation of Dr. Osler's remarks some months ago relative to the comparative usefulness of men at various ages, and the later recommendations of a Harvard professor in behalf of the killing by anesthetics of imbeciles and others who have ceased to be of value to society.

This Ohio proposition is hardly admissible as long as science continues to score its remarkable advances in the campaign against disease. Who is to assert today that any human ailment is hopelessly beyond the reach of surgery or medicine? Never before was there so large a degree of truth in the old, old adage, "While there is life there is hope." The record of the past two decades in the lessening of the percentage of danger to life from disease is a continuous succession of marvels, which have greatly stimulated hope that eventually every one of the hitherto stubborn afflictions will become amenable to treatment.

Even in the same range of dispatches with the news of the Ohio proposal comes the announcement of the discovery in the Cornell University laboratories of a serum for the cure of a rare disorder known as "Graves' Disease," and scientifically as exophthalmic goitre, which up to this time has been regarded as practically incurable, save by operation, and rarely then. Unless permanent relief is given by surgery the patient suffers greatly through a swelling of the thyroid gland in the neck and the bulging of the eyeballs. Death finally results from the suffusion through the system of a poison secreted by the gland. The newly discovered treatment consists of the preparation of a serum by the inoculation of small animals with the contents of a diseased thyroid gland. This serum is injected into the patient every other day for about two weeks, when, as far as results have thus far gone, the symptoms of the disease disappear permanently.

In the same run of dispatches comes word from Edinburgh that the famous Scotch surgeon, W. F. Robertson, has announced that experiments conducted by himself and two colleagues since 1902 tend to show that paralysis and its allied disease, tabes dorsalis, are of a specific character, caused by a micro-organism resembling the diphtheria bacillus, which is constantly present in the alimentary and respiratory regions and also in the blood and cerebro-spinal fluid. In the light of past experiences it is not too much to hope that the discovery of the specific organism of paralysis will be followed eventually, perhaps soon, by the discovery of its specific cure.

The hopeless invalid of today may be entirely restored to health five years hence. No man can tell when the limit of the advance against disease is to be reached. Some claim that we are only on the threshold of physiological discoveries and accomplishments, and that another generation will have a stronger hold upon life than any that has preceded it within the range of history.

Belated Justice.

Justice has at last found a way to administer punishment to one of those guilty of the criminal negligence which caused the Slocum horror on the East river eighteen months ago. One attempt after another was made after the first outburst of public indignation had subsided, but without result. It seemed impossible to apply the laws. Certain reforms were worked out in the steamboat inspection service, but the demand of the people that those whose cupidity or incompetence or negligence had contributed to the catastrophe should be brought to book was apparently beyond the powers of the courts to grant.

Now Capt. Van Schaick, who commanded the Slocum, has after a protracted trial been convicted of criminal negligence in failing to have fire drills on the steamer. He was for that offense, clearly a violation of the statutes regarding the duties of the commanders of ships, sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. The jury disagreed on two counts relative to the poor quality of the life preservers on the Slocum. This disagreement may be set down as one of the inexplicable vagaries of petit juries. If there was one fact that stood forth clearly above all others it was that the life preservers on the steamboat were outrageously, criminally untrustworthy and inadequate. Nevertheless, the sentence administered to the convicted man suffices for all moral purposes, whatever may have been the basis of the jury's verdict of guilty. His conviction stands as a vindication of the law, however belated, and however isolated in view of the wide range of others equally responsible with Captain Van Schaick for the bad condition of affairs on the Slocum.

Alfonso as Lover.

King Alfonso is described as an ardent lover. Why, of course. A Spaniard, and twenty years of age, and calculating in the period of courtship? All the world is sure to love this lover. The lady is fair, and he is just starting on a career which all should wish to be illustrious. His country, shorn of distant possessions which she was no longer able to guide, has prospects of good times, and conditions in Europe are favorable to a better position for her than she has for a long time occupied. So that when the young king has taken him a wife, and fully provided for his personal happiness, he will have nothing more to wish for, nor his friends anything more to wish for him. The world should go well with him then, and all men and women be his friends. And may his good fortune last.

Mr. Jerome is one of the prosecutors who do not believe it is always necessary to assume that the accused is a base and guilty wretch.

The scientists who are telling people they ought to live a hundred years or so are much more comforting than these chloroform theorists.

Even an insurance director can see the absurdity of hoping that anybody will ever strike for more work and less pay.

Miss Ida Tarbell has bought a farm. She selected Connecticut, a place where there is very little likelihood of striking oil.

The heads of the Mormon church are as canny in a business way as Alexander Dowie himself.

New York society will be more judicious hereafter in selecting an advertising medium.

The New Regime in Russia.

The managing editor of the St. Petersburg Daily Mail smiled as he read the following letter written by his star reporter from New York:

"I wish you could hear these Americans talk about graft and grafters. Really, to use their own phrase, it is to laugh. Of course, I don't laugh. Having come here to study rings and ringsters I'm on my respectful behavior, and I listen to all that my new acquaintances have to tell me on the subject. But their figures are so pitifully small, and the methods disclosed show so much foxiness and so little boldness. To one acquainted with the history of the old style plundering by officials in Russia, it seems like petty larceny—like sneak-thieving. Why, there was more plunder in one army contract with us, or in a few miles of the construction of the Siberian railroad, than there ever has been in the choicest pickings in this town. Their star performer was a fellow named Tweed, who finally came to grief and died in jail. But when you compare his performances with those of say the Archduke Sergius he looks like an amateur pickpocket.

"It is this phase of the case which is going to give us trouble at home when the new order begins. We shall have rings there, beyond a doubt, and, of course, the Mail will go after them. But it is going to be very difficult to arouse our people to the offenses. They have been educated on such big stealings, and have seen them perpetrated so boldly and unblushingly, that when such figures as I find here, and which raise such a racket in America, are flashed on the Russian public, we may get only a laugh for our pains. That is my present fear.

"Still, it is inspiring to read these newspapers. That chap in Paris did not praise them too highly to you. They talk right out in meeting, and what they say counts. No censor but common sense and propriety. No beating about the bush if you've got the nerve to speak plainly. There is a libel law, but it is drawn on lines that a clean journalist welcomes. I really believe it would pay you to send other members of the staff over here as you may be able to make the arrangements, and give them a look around. But we have the raw material at home for the journalism of the twentieth century, and Russia for me.

"I am leaving for Washington in the morning, to take in Congress and the President, and will write from there.

"BRISKI."

A Problem for a Solomon.

Occasionally a municipal magistrate finds himself taxed beyond his powers and wishes for the wisdom of Solomon to aid him in dispensing justice. Such a case occurred the other day in New York. A patron of a cleaning establishment chanced to see, hanging in a case, a dress which she recognized as the wedding gown of her sister, which had been stolen by a burglar eighteen months before. She called a policeman, who took the dress and filed an information against the woman who had sent it to be cleaned, a vaudeville performer. The latter indignantly denied the theft, but admitted that she had received the gown as a present from an admirer. Rather did she receive from him the pawn-ticket representing it. Incidentally, she paid the loan for which it had been deposited as a pledge. The dress was too large for her and she had it cut down. It was positively identified as the one that had been stolen and the judge thereupon ordered it returned to its rightful owner. Then arose difficulties. First of all, the owner demanded that she be reimbursed to pay for the alteration of the gown, which no longer fitted her. The judge considered the matter and evaded the responsibility of the solution by declaring that his was a criminal and not a civil court. Next came the proprietor of the cleaning establishment, who asked who was to pay her for the work on the gown. She was referred to the actress, who refused to pay on the ground that she had not received the benefit of the work; then to the true owner, who averred that she had not soiled the gown and had not ordered it cleaned. So the case rested, and there are now three indignant women in the metropolis, the owner of the gown, who bewails its curtailment; the actress, who regrets its loss, and the cleaner, who wonders where she comes into the equation. And meanwhile the burglar, who may or may not be at large, is probably chuckling over the chain of embarrassments and problems which he started by his simple act of professional appropriation.

The Ice Crop.

There will be little distress on the score of a possible "failure" of the ice crop this winter owing to the long stretch of mild weather in all parts of the north. So perfect are the means of manufacturing ice, and so well equipped are all cities now with ice plants, that the open winter should not cause any suffering next summer for the lack of the cooling blocks. It is possible, of course, that the ice manufacturers, with their eye always open to the main chance of trade, will take advantage of the lack of natural ice in the wholesale market to push up the price of the "artificial" product a few per cent. Such a maneuver, however, would be altogether unjustifiable. There is no such competition between the two forms of ice, that made by nature and that made by man, as to warrant the fluctuation of the price of the latter according to the scarcity or plenty of the former. The cost of the manufacture of "artificial" ice remains substantially the same from one year to another. The only factor that can cause a rise or a fall is the market variation in the price of ammonia, or such other cooling agents as may be used. The prime element of ice manufacture is water, and that is always cheap.

As for the so-called failure of the ice crop this winter, it comes as a singular successor to the failure of a season or two ago, when it was averred that there had been too much winter for the satisfaction of the ice gatherers. There was so much snow that it was difficult to cut and store the product, and the strange anomaly was proclaimed of a season too severe for a profitable harvesting of the ice crop.

The visiting Chinese officials were greatly interested by the secret service system. But in their own minds they will question whether its secrecy and effectiveness are as great as that of some of the celestial sub rosa societies.

The czar will presently be wondering whether he ought to be sending any messages of cheer and encouragement to the governor of Pennsylvania.

Castro will assuredly refuse to believe in any punishment he has not experienced. As a home of incredulity, Venezuela rivals Missouri.

"Fads and Fancies" may be regarded as a logical development of frenzied journalism.

SHOOTING STARS.

Characters in Fiction.

"What are your favorite characters in fiction?" asked the literary young woman.

"Some of the statesmen, authors and actors I read about in the papers," answered Mr. Cumrox, a little sourly.

Repetition.

Each joke is old and gray;
If you can, somehow, tell
A story in a different way,
You're doing very well.

A Kindly Assurance.

"You talked all through my solo," said the musician a little resentfully.

"Oh, that's all right," said the self-sufficient sage. "I wasn't saying anything you would care about hearing."

"Do you think your boy is smart enough to run for office?"

"Course he is," answered Farmer Corntossel. "I was kind o' hopin' he'd be smart enough not to."

"Don't fall in love wif yoh own conversation, son," said Uncle Eben. "Dar nebber yit was anything important spoiled by not gittin' talked about enough."

Littleness.

Little bit o' sunshine;
Little bit of cloud;
Little bit o' solitude,
Or laughing in a crowd.
Little bit of sighin',
Little bit o' song,
But, somehow or another,
We are boun' to git along.

Little bit o' money,
If your lucky now an' then;
A little time to spend it,
Until Father Time says "When!"
A little bit of hopin'
Our feelin's to exalt;
It's all so little, what's the use
Of findin' any fault?

Not Too Large.

From the St. Joseph Gazette.

Henry Clews declares that the monetary supply is not too large. In this particular instance Mr. Clews has a majority of the people with him.

FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE STAR

Snow and Charity.

Washington was treated to an "old-fashioned" winter at this time half a century ago, one snowstorm following another in such rapid succession that the owners of horses and sleighs were given almost continuous opportunity for enjoyment on the smooth streets. The Star of January 21, 1856, tells of a fall of snow the day before and the stimulation of the sleighing, which had been somewhat set back by a thaw. This snow, however, precipitated a charity problem, which demanded solution by individual efforts. The Star said:

"A fresh call is now made upon the charitable. There are probably 5,000 people in this city depending upon their day labor for support at occupations which are suspended temporarily by the weather. Do not leave the needy to be cared for at this time by the city councils or by charitable associations. What is wanted is discriminating individual charity. Give out all your little jobs, such as washing, sewing, scrubbing, shoveling snow and coal. We saw a man shoveling snow in front of his house this morning who is estimated to be worth some $50,000, while some poor wretches, who looked as though they hadn't had a warm meal for a month, stood shivering on the corner, shovels in hand, waiting for a job. Wasn't this small potatoes?"

* * *

"Merrie Bachelors."

One of the active social organizations of the capital fifty years ago was styled the "Merrie Bachelors," chiefly residents of the southeastern section of the city. In the Star of January 22, 1856, is to be found an advance notice of the second annual ball of this coterie of young men, to be held at Odd Fellows' Hall, Navy Yard. The Star said:

"Judging from their first brilliant entertainment and from the extensive preparations which have been made for the present one, we are confident that of the many gay parties of the season this will be the gayest. It is dangerous, no doubt, for bachelors, especially young ones, to expose themselves so wantonly in open combat with their enemies; and, arguing from past experience; the encounter will be fatal to some of them. Yet they hope for countenance, moral aid and comfort from their fellow-bachelors, asking only fair play and no favors.

"'Thus armed they challenge beauty's glance
And brave the dangers of the dance.'

"In order to vary the evening's entertainment the Bachelors propose to distribute, as prizes to the ladies, three elegant gold rings, the lucky recipients of which may have the privilege, if they choose to exercise it, of selecting from among the Bachelors present, as partners for life, any three who may please their fancy!"

* * *

Theatrical Disappointment.

The theater-going public had been promised a treat in the form of a performance, or rather series of performances—for the usual entertainment consisted then of three, and sometimes of four, plays in one evening—in which Mr. Chanfrau and Miss Albertine, then great favorites, were to participate. One disappointment followed another. First the stars were unable to reach the city in time for the announced engagement, and then, on the substituted date, Mr. Chanfrau was compelled to leave town suddenly, as this paragraph in The Star of January 24 describes:

"The patrons of the National Theater were again doomed to disappointment in not seeing Mr. Chanfrau last night. His father having died yesterday morning, Mr. Chanfrau returned to New York to pay the last tribute of respect due to a deceased parent. The performance went off very well, with Miss Albertine, and nothing was left undone that could promote the kindness of an indulgent audience. We say nothing—but we were greatly mortified to see such an actor as Mr. —— read his part on the stage. He has an excellent reputation in this city, but bids fair to lose it by a repetition of last night's performance, and he should not appear again under similar circumstances. Mr. Burnett last night surpassed any of his former efforts and gave evidence of one of the best stock actors in the country."

* * *

Turbulent Legislators.

President Pierce sent a special message to Congress January 24, on the condition of affairs in Kansas, then in the turmoil of the abolition and slavery contention for supremacy in the organization. Owing to the unsettled state of the House of Representatives, which had not yet succeeded in electing a Speaker, the message failed to receive the respectful attention usually accorded to presidential deliverances. The Star of January 25 said:

"We left the hall at 2 p.m. yesterday, thoroughly disgusted with the melancholy display that had been in progress there for the previous half hour. The President had done his duty in essaying, in obedience to the Constitution, to communicate to Congress information on public affairs of which he deemed it necessary they should be in possession. As his act in so doing tended to fix more strongly than before the attention of the country upon the present reprehensible and unjustifiable state of the House, it was attempted to be repelled as an insult to the dignity of that body which has already entirely lost the confidence and respect of the country, from Maine to Louisiana. The scene in the hall, when the message was announced, baffled all attempts at description. No political meeting after nightfall in the sixth ward of New York—and we have witnessed many of them—ever was more disorderly; nine-tenths of the noise and confusion coming from the demure side (republican side) of the chamber. It told plainer than words could tell their appreciation of the fact that the country cannot fail to comprehend that the House is faithless, utterly faithless, to its trust."

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Winter Poetry.

Not all the admonitions of public-spirited journalists or the threats of prosecution for the maintenance of nuisances availed to persuade or force all the residents or householders of the capital to clean off their walks in snowtime, and some of the resultant incidents were amusing, some painful and some inspirational, as this bit in The Star of January 26 indicates:

"Sidewalk Notes.—The following rhymes, by 'Our Mary Ann,' were suggested by a recent slip-up:

"When sidewalks are but icy slopes
Hemmed in with snowy drifts,
I note the man who at his door
No hand to shovel lifts;
And others there obliged to pass,
At risk of body even,
Will think that man may not fall here,
And yet fall short of Heaven.

"There's not a blessing he receives
'The left' but comes from o'er;
Thus sins, with snows, accumulate
And lie at that man's door.
I trust the horologue of grace
Will scarcely mark eleven
E'er he repents—his sidewalks here
Are walks aside from Heaven."

THE DOWNING OF DOYLE.

From the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Conan Doyle was defeated for parliament. With all his profundity the author of Sherlock Holmes failed to provide himself with an American wife.

From the Chicago Journal.

Conan Doyle was beaten for parliament. His constituents must have been reading his latest novel.

From the Montreal Star.

Parker won, Conan Doyle lost. It serves Doyle right. Instead of bothering about Sherlock Holmes he should have been dramatizing the Chateau Frontenac.

From the Rochester Post-Express.

Conan Doyle was defeated in his campaign for a seat in parliament. Probably the voters in his district are determined that he shall write more Sherlock Holmes stories.

From the Memphis Commercial-Appeal.

Conan Doyle has been defeated for parliament; and it doesn't require a Sherlock Holmes to find out why.

ECUADOR AND VENEZUELA.

Chronic Disturbers.

The Latin-American republics may be divided into three categories. The first, Argentine, Brazil, Chile and Mexico; the second, Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay; the third, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Salvador, Colombia, Santo Domingo and Venezuela. The states of the third category, because of their chronic turbulence, constitute, for the United States and their peaceful and prosperous neighbors and for Europe, a source of care and vexation.

The governments of New Grenada, Ecuador and Venezuela were merged under the name of Colombia in 1819, and Gen. Simon Bolivar was elected president, whom the Venezuelans have likened to Gen. Washington as the father of his country. But Bolivar was accused by the fickle people of aspiring to the dictatorship and he abdicated his power. In 1839 Ecuador elected Gen. Flores president, having organized an independent republic. By the constitution, dated 1884, with modifications in 1887 and 1897, the executive office is vested in a president elected for a term of four years, with a legislative power confided to a congress of two houses; the first consisting of two senators for each province, chosen for two years, and the second of deputies on the basis of one deputy for every 15,000 inhabitants, chosen for two years, both elected by adults who can read and write.

Congress assembles every year on August 10 at Quito, the capital. The election of the president is by a direct vote of the people, and also that of the vice president, whose term of office is likewise for four years, but the latter's election is two years subsequent to that of the president, so that he is a member of two distinct administrations. The vice president may be called upon to occupy the presidential chair, although he is regularly charged with the duty of presiding over the council of state. The president receives a salary of 12,000 sucres a year—equal to about $11,640—and theoretically exercises his functions through a cabinet of five ministers, who, together with himself, may be impeached by congress and who, with seven other members, form a council of state. The president has the power of veto, but if congress insist a bill vetoed may be passed. He may summon an extra session of congress for a specified purpose, but he cannot dissolve the chambers or shorten their sittings. By the terms of the constitution all men are free and equal, but for a fact most of the Indians are in bondage. An edict of 1896 exempted Indians from taxation, and they were admitted nominally to citizenship. The provinces are administered by governors appointed by the state; the subdivisions or cantons by political chiefs and the parishes by political lieutenants. The Galapagos Archipelago is under a local administration.

* * *

Ecuador's History.

Tradition relates that about the seventh century a nation of Indians named the Caras invaded and conquered the coast of Ecuador and subsequently seized and occupied Quito.

In the sixteenth century the country was taken by the Incas. In 1538 Pizarro and his lieutenants took the country and placed it under the authority of the viceroy of Peru, and about that time was founded the cities of Guayaquil, Cuenca and Loja.

An interminable period of internecine strife has marked the history of Ecuador down to the presidency of Garcia Moreno, who introduced many reforms, but who was assassinated in 1875. The struggle between conservatives, liberals and radicals brought about a coalition of the three governments, which united in 1883 and elected Camano president, who was followed by Antonio Flores, 1888-1892, and Alfaro on the 12th of January, 1897.

A dispatch from Guayaquil on January 19 reported that Gen. Alfaro occupied Quito on the 18th instant, and that a junta of notables met and formed a new government, electing Vice President Baguerizo Moreno as president. There was rioting and rifle shots. This was at 3 p.m. on the 18th. At 4 p.m. the people rejected Moreno and elected Gen. Eloy Alfaro (the former president), and in his absence Dr. Emilio Arrevalo was given provisional authority.

On the 22d instant another dispatch stated that Gen. Alfaro had a four hours' fight at the village of Malachi with the government troops under Col. Larrea, resulting in 300 killed and 200 wounded, which shows that the fighting was unusually serious.

This is the second time Gen. Alfaro is president of Ecuador. It appears that he is a man after the heart of Ecuadorians—with him revolution is a business. He has been done almost to death a dozen times by assassins. He was born in Ecuador, but has been involved in all the revolutions in South America. Returning to Quito in 1895, he became dictator in 1896.

The insurrection just closed dates from the month of August last, when Gen. Leonidas Plaza was succeeded by Senor Garcia, who in turn appointed Gen. Plaza minister to the United States.

While writing these lines a third dispatch from Guayaquil announces an uprising at Rio Bamba against Gen. Alfaro's government, headed by Col. Costes, a conservative.

* * *

"Little Venice."

Venezuela was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1498, and the following year it was explored by Ojeda and Americus Vespucius. The name of Little Venice was given because of the lake habitations of the Indians of Maracaibo. In 1527 Juan de Ampuez founded Coro, but Charles the Fifth infeoffed the country for twenty years to the banker Weltsen of Augsbourg, who exploited it to the utmost. In 1547 Juan Perez de Tolosa re-established in Venezuela the authority of the crown. In the seventeenth century the filibuster Olonais ravaged Maracaibo. In the eighteenth century the colony acquired importance due to its commerce in Callao, and was established as a captain generalcy in 1777. In 1810 Venezuela, after many vain attempts, rose against the Spaniards and the captain general resigned his powers to an insurrectional junta, and when the provinces made common cause with the capital in 1811 a congress proclaimed the independence of Venezuela. In 1812 the Spaniards, commanded by Monteverde, again took the offensive and forced the old Gen. Miranda to lay down his arms. In 1813 an army led by Simon Bolivar defeated the Spanish at Valencia and entered Caracas in August. Monteverde, who had fled to Puerto Cabello, came out in 1815 to reconquer the whole country, and on the 10th of May, 1819, congress proclaimed anew the independence of Venezuela, and a few months later it was united with New Grenada under the title of Colombia.

Bolivar, partisan of the federation of the American states, could not cause his ideas to prevail in the congress at Panama (1826), and from 1830 Venezuela separated from New Grenada and was governed by an oligarchy of rich creoles, Paez, Vergas and Soublette, who divided the presidency among themselves from 1830 to 1845. At the expiration of the presidency of Soublette a democratic party was organized by a journalist named Leocadio Guzman, but it fell to a conservative, Tadez Monagas. Disorders followed until 1870, when Guzman Blanco, a man both firm and intelligent, came to power. He gave to Venezuela twenty years of economical prosperity and tranquility. Blanco and Crespo divided the honors until 1895, when the republic was threatened with the loss of the Delta of the Orinoco, claimed by England. The intervention of President Cleveland caused Great Britain to accept the arbitration of Russia.

To Crespo succeeded Gen. Andrade, but the latter was unable to overcome the difficulties which were the consequence of the political faults and economical errors committed before him. In September, 1899, a new revolution carried to the presidency Gen. Cipriano Castro. The arbitration of Russia surrendered the Delta of the Orinoco to Venezuela, but the chaotic policy of the country reached its limits; a terrible panic prevailed over the exportation of coffee and cattle; the service of the debt was suspended and in the meantime a new constitution re-established federalism. Venezuela, torn by civil war, broke with Colombia, while her ports in 1902 were blockaded by several European powers (England, Germany and Italy). On the 13th of February, 1903, the blockade was raised, Venezuela having agreed to pay a small amount in cash and submit the bulk of claims to a mixed commission. A question of preferred rights arose among the claimants, whether such powers who had made a display of force or those which had peacefully negotiated the settlement of their respective claims were entitled to preference. The Hague arbitrators decided in favor of the blockading powers.

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The Monroe Doctrine.

An article in the Monthly Review for January, 1906, entitled "Latin America and the United States," discussing the Monroe doctrine as construed in the past and now, says:

"For the last eighty-two years this doctrine has formed the basis of the policy of the United States concerning relations between European nations and the other transoceanic republics. For better or for worse its existence has not only been understood to be a fact, but its general scope and meaning have been recognized de facto, if not de jure, by European powers. Until recently it ranked purely and simply as an embodiment of the principle of 'America for the Americans,' of a gigantic reservation consisting of the greater part of two continents into which outsiders were not to be allowed to intrude.

"It has remained for President Roosevelt to convert the Monroe doctrine from a mere weapon of defense into—at any rate in theory—a two-edged sword.

"The most salient passage in President Monroe's original doctrine"—cites the English writer, "delivered in 1823, runs as follows:

"'With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not and shall not interfere. But with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have on great consideration and just principles acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them or controlling in any other manner their destiny by any European power in any other light than as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States.'

"Now," says the English writer, "let this be compared with one of the most concise of President Roosevelt's numerous pronouncements on the subject, which occurs in a speech made at Chautauqua on August 11 last:

"'We cannot, however, permanently adhere to the Monroe doctrine unless we succeed in making it evident that we do not intend it as an excuse for the aggrandizement of the United States at the expense of the republics of South America, and that we will not permit it to be used by any of these republics as a shield to protect them from the consequences of their own misdeeds against foreign nations. Inasmuch as America will prevent other nations from interfering on this side of the water, it shall in good faith try to help the sister republics which need such help upward toward peace and order.'

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The Claims of France.

It will be recalled that the French claims, which aggregated $8,000,000, were submitted to the adjudication of an umpire appointed by President Roosevelt, and were reduced by the adjudicator to $685,000. This equitable decision might have placated any other leader save Castro, who, with characteristic vanity, proceeded to annul the concession of the French Cable Company. The French minister at Caracas having been withdrawn, M. Taigny was left as charge d'affaires ad interim. Castro thereupon refused to recognize the charge d'affaires. The last phase of the question is positively comical, and shows that any government which consents to treat with Castro must expect to suffer in its dignity. M. Taigny, in quest of his official dispatches, went on board of a French vessel of war, whereupon Castro refused to permit the return of the French charge d'affaires, alleging that the latter had left his post, quitted the soil of Venezuela without having taken diplomatic leave p. p. c.!

The French government, in view of such a situation, thereupon broke off relations with the government at Caracas and expelled the charge d'affaires of Venezuela at Paris, M. Maubourget, from French territory. M. Maubourget, as his name indicates, is a Frenchman. Henri Rochefort in L'Intransigeant suggests that in place of sending Maubourget across the French frontier he be seized, as a Frenchman, and placed on board of a French cruiser and sent to bombard Caracas. Meanwhile, just what the relations are between our representative and Castro is not clear. The latter is reported to have left Caracas to avoid communication with the United States minister, and has gone to Maracay to rusticate. A word about Castro individually will not be uninteresting.

Cipriano Castro was born in Capacho, near the frontier of Colombia, about 1855. His parents were Spanish mestizos, or mixed Spanish and Indian of the peasant class. He attended school in Capacho, and was active in politics as a liberal. His first military venture was in the so-called "Battle of Capacho," in 1888, against Morales, the representative of the Lopez government. In 1892 he was arrayed in arms against Crespo, whose success obliged Castro to retire across the Colombian frontier, where he bought a plantation, near Cucuta, in the department of Santander, and engaged in cattle raising. When Andrade succeeded to the presidency Castro marched with his followers to the capital. Andrade fled, and Castro declared himself "supreme military leader." The constituent assembly made him provisional president of Venezuela March 30, 1901, and February, 1902, he was elected president for the term of six years. President Castro, it must be confessed, has been making a great deal of history—for himself, at least—and there are still some pages in reserve for him.

CHAILLE LONG.

"EASY MONEY" MANN.

From the Reading Telegram.

Considering the character of the Four Hundred's private life, we must say that Col. Mann let them off easy.

From the Rochester Herald.

We can hardly conceive that James R. Keene was afraid of Town Topics $90,000 worth.

From the Philadelphia Record.

It is interesting to note that the name of Russell Sage does not appear in Col. Mann's list of distinguished patrons.

From the Louisville Courier-Journal.

It was a contemptible blackmailing business carried on by Mann and his Town Topics crew, but the victims—snobs who are willing to buy the favor or disfavor of such a sheet—deserve only the sympathy that is given to mental weaklings. Send the blackmailers to the penitentiary and the blackmailed to the asylum for the feeble-minded.

From the Syracuse Post-Standard.

Col. William D'Alton Mann was a member of the Pullman Company before he became interested in Town Topics. Now we know how the Pullman porters acquired their society manners.

From the Baltimore Herald.

It is evident that if Fads and Fancies had relied upon Baltimore to make it a paying proposition it would have signally failed. All the suckers came from among the slick Yankees of the nation's wonderfully brilliant metropolis.

"QUICK-ACTION" BIGELOW.

From the Kansas City Star.

Also, the Senate committee should ascertain Poultney Bigelow's views on the subject of statehood. Mr. Bigelow came as far west as Kansas City a few years ago, and ought to know all about it.

From the Atlanta Journal.

If he can't be the center of attraction, Mr. Poultney Bigelow's next choice is to be the center of distraction.

From the Newark Advertiser.

Having resigned his lectureship in the Boston University, Prof. Poultney Bigelow may now find time to put in more than twenty-eight hours on the isthmus, but he won't.

From the Charleston News and Courier.

But if Mr. Poultney Bigelow has really been annihilated, what on earth is the use of keeping on shooting at the place where he used to be?

From the Nashville Banner.

It is not surprising that Poultney Bigelow declines to give his sources of alleged information about Panama. For instance, how does he know, as he declares, that a recent rain in Panama "backed the sewage up into the cellars and ruined many houses," when, as Chairman Shonts declares, there are no cellars in Panama?

From the Milwaukee Journal.

Wonder if Poultney Bigelow will hurry to use the dramatic rights to his isthmian impressions?

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

[In this column will be answered all questions of a proper nature submitted to The Star. Inquirers should write on one side of the paper only and address their letters to "Uncle Jasper," Star office. In case of difficult conundrums answers may be delayed for a week or two. Consequently it may be advisable for all questioners to watch this column carefully.]

AMATEUR FARMER: Will you kindly tell me how to shoe a horse? A.: Take a large horse and a small shoe and unite them by nails poked through the feet at irregular intervals. The nails should be bent over at the ends, so that when the animal lifts his feet the shoes will remain connected with his anatomy.

FOOLISH: What would you advise me to call the baby? A.: It depends largely on whether your wife is within hearing distance. If she is, we should advise "little darling." If she isn't, you have a wide field to choose from.

SERIOUS: Is there really such a thing as a fool-killer? A.: Having had several narrow escapes we were once inclined to that belief. The receipt of your letter has reassured us.

HONESTY: A wealthy business acquaintance tried to bribe me the other day, offering me $1,000. I spurned his offer, was I right? A.: We most heartily commend you. Kindly telegraph us the address of your friend.

RURAL: If a hen lays an egg and the egg hatches into a hen, and the hen lays another egg, and so forth, which was here first, the egg or the hen? A.: We were not around when Eve fed the chickens. Perhaps you might ask Henry G. Davis.

INQUIRY: The other day I was in the gallery of the House of Representatives, when the democratic leader made the point of no quorum. There were seventeen men on the floor, but Speaker Cannon, after counting, announced that 211 members, more than a quorum, were present. How was it done? A.: You were fortunate enough to see performed a parliamentary jiu-jitsu movement known as the "Reed twist." You may have noticed that the democratic leader was not surprised.

PROSPECTIVE: Is it true that two can live as cheaply as one? A.: Next Thursday is the first of the month. In our opinion no punishment could be too severe for the man who started that joke on its journey.

HOUSEHOLDER: Kindly give me the recipe of a dainty salad suitable for a Sunday night supper. A.: With pleasure. Take one small head of cabbage minced fine, three chopped apples, a grape fruit, four plums, half a pound of maple sugar, a pint of shelled peanuts, five yams and a huckleberry. Agitate with an egg beater, season with curry powder and sage and serve with individual portions of paregoric.

STRANGER: Is it expensive to keep a servant in Washington? A.: No, not at all. It is merely impossible.

SUBURBAN: Can you give me any information concerning truck gardening? A.: You should have a large truck if the garden is to be of material assistance. Further than that we are not informed. What a migratory existence you must lead, Suburban.

DISTRESSED: The other day, in paying a bill of $1.50, I presented a $5 note and received $18.50 in change. What would you have done in the circumstances? A.: Honestly, we'd be ashamed to tell you in this public way.

ROUNDER: My physician says that when dining out it is injudicious to mix four kinds of wine. Do you think so? A.: The doctor is speaking by the book. We were out at dinner the other night and mixed three varieties. Without going into details we should say that four would be sure death.

AVOIRDUPOIS: Kindly tell me Secretary Taft's exact weight. A.: Scandalous statements are not published in this column. If Bill keeps on banting, however, we may soon be able to comply with your request without seeing libelous.

INCOME: How much does it cost to keep a horse? A.: This depends largely on circumstances. If you keep the animal in the parlor and feed him out of a jardiniere or similar receptacle the enterprise can be made quite inexpensive. A stable comes higher.

DESPERATE: Please tell