

AN AGE OF RAILWAYS

SUPERIORITY OF THE AMERICAN SYSTEMS.

In What Respects They Are Invaluable Aids to the Life and Extension of Commercial Activity—Used as Models by Other Countries.

In making an address before the International Commercial Congress recently, George H. Daniels, General Passenger Agent of the New York Central and Hudson River Railway and president of the American Association of General Passenger Agents, said: "One of our great writers has said of this closing period of the nineteenth century, that it is an age of transportation. Transportation underlies material prosperity in every department of commerce. Without transportation commerce would be impossible. Those States and nations are rich, powerful and enlightened whose transportation facilities are best and most extended. The dying nations are those with little or no transportation facilities."

Mr. Mulhall, the British statistician, in his work on "The Wealth of Nations," said of the United States in 1895: "If we take a survey of mankind, in ancient or modern times, as regards the physical, mechanical and intellectual force of nations, we find nothing to compare with the United States."

Mr. Mulhall proved by his statistics that the working power of a single person in the United States was twice that of a German or Frenchman, more than three times that of an Austrian and five times that of an Italian. He said the United States was then the richest country in the world, its wealth exceeding that of Great Britain by 35 per cent, and added that in the history of the human race no nation ever before possessed forty-one millions of instructed citizens.

In an address before the New York Press Association, four years ago, I referred to the future of our export trade, as follows: "One of the inevitable results of the war between Japan and China will be the opening to the commerce of the world of fields heretofore unknown, perhaps the richest on the globe." and urged the members of the New York Press Association to do everything in their power to assist in securing to the United States a portion of the great commerce to be developed between the western nations and those two old countries of the world.

At that time we had no idea that a war between one of the old nations of the earth and our young republic would be fought; at that time we had no idea that American manufacturers would be furnishing locomotives to the English railroads as well as to those of nearly every other country on the globe. No one thought four years ago that American bridge builders would go into the open market and successfully compete for the building of a great steel bridge in Egypt; nor that in so brief a time American engineers would be building railroads into the interior of China from her most important sea-ports.

At that time no one supposed that the Trans-Siberian Railway would be laid with steel rails made in Pennsylvania, upon cross-ties from the forests of Oregon, and that its trains would be hauled by American locomotives; nor that this great railway which is to stretch from St. Petersburg to Vladivostok and Fort Arthur, a distance of more than 6,000 miles, would be completed two years in advance of the original expectation, as a result of the use of American construction tools and machinery.

In a letter from a friend in Tokio, Japan, written only a short time ago, there was this significant sentence: "You will be interested in knowing that I have hanging on the wall of my office a framed picture of your 'Empire State Express,' and we expect in the near future to be hauling a Japanese 'Empire Express' with an American locomotive." They have now in Japan more than one hundred locomotives that were built in the United States. In Russia they have nearly one thousand American locomotives, and practically every railway in Great Britain has ordered locomotives from this country since the beginning of the war with Spain.

But it is not alone our locomotives that have attracted the attention of foreigners who have visited our shores, our railway equipment generally has commanded admiration and is now receiving the highest compliment, namely, imitation by many of our sister nations. Prince Michael Hilko, Imperial Minister of Railways of Russia, has since his visit to the United States a few years ago, constructed a train on much the same lines as the "Limited Trains" of the New York Central and Pennsylvania.

SMOKELESS POWDER COSTLY.

Half a Million Dollars' Worth Proved to Be Worthless.

The vastly increased expense of a military establishment under the more scientific methods now employed is sharply illustrated in the discovery that about half a million dollars' worth of smokeless powder for sea-coast guns turns out to be worthless, through an unexpected deterioration in its quality. Military experts have supposed

that the smokeless powder manufactured for the United States army was the best ever made, says the New York Post and a contract was not long ago signed which involved the expenditure of about \$1,000,000 for a supply of it. But it is stated that recent experiments at Sandy Hook showed that the smokeless powder now on hand is worse than valueless. A ten-inch gun was being fired with charges from a supply that had been stored for about two years and a delayed detonation occurred, which burst the gun, a new one, valued at \$30,000. An examination of the powder revealed the fact that it had undergone chemical changes of some sort and all of the supply on hand is supposed to be equally affected. Experts will now try to discover the cause of the deterioration, so as to make the needed change in the formula. Meanwhile the contracts for manufacture must be suspended, and if a war should break out it might be necessary to use the old variety of black powder. Apparently large charges to the profit and loss account must be allowed for in estimating the cost of keeping up with the times in warfare.



Hawaii is said to have more telephones in use in proportion to the population than any other locality in the world.

A newspaper printed on the excursion steamer Ophir published one number in 80 degrees 2 minutes north latitude. It claims to be the paper published farthest north of any on record.

A series of experiments made by Benno Erdmann and Raymond Dodge show that in normal reading the letters are not spelled out separately, and one after the other, but that a short word of not more than four letters can be read off in less time than a single letter.

The Pike's Peak Power Company proposes to develop 3,200-horse-power for distribution for mines in the neighborhood of Cripple Creek, Colo. The source of the water supply is Beaver canyon, and a steel and rock dam will be built having a storage capacity of 150,000,000 cubic feet.

On the principle of the sounding-board, which repeats a sound at so short an interval that the original and the repeated waves impress the ear in unison, a device called the polyphone has recently been applied to the phonograph for the purpose of doubling the volume of sound issuing from that instrument. A phonograph with the polyphone attachment has two horns, each provided with a diaphragm and stylus. Not only is the sound made louder, but its quality is improved.

Lake Superior appears to exercise a greater effect upon the annual amount of precipitation of rain and snow near its shores than any other of the Great Lakes. The average precipitation in a year is about eight inches greater on the southern than on the northern side of Lake Superior. Lakes Erie and Ontario also show more precipitation on their southern than on their northern shores, but the difference is only three inches annually. In the case of Lakes Huron and Michigan, it is the eastern shores as compared with the western which get the largest precipitation, but the difference is not great.

The distances over which birds migrate vary between wide limits, and are often surprisingly great. The bobolinks, which rear their young on the shores of Lake Winnebago, Canada, and go to Cuba and Porto Rico to spend the winter, twice traverse a distance exceeding 2,800 miles, or more than a fifth of the circumference of our earth, each year. The kingbird lays its eggs as far north as the fifty-seventh degree of latitude, and is found in the winter in South America. The biennial pilgrimages of the little redstart exceed three thousand miles and the tiny humming bird two thousand.

Madame Ceraski, of Moscow, has discovered in the constellation Cygnus a star of between the eighth and ninth magnitude which undergoes wonderful variations in its light. It belongs to the same type of variable stars as the celebrated Algol, but its variation is larger. Its period is four days thirteen hours and forty-five minutes. When at a minimum it is three magnitudes fainter than when at a maximum; in other words, it periodically loses and then regains so much light that at one time it is sixteen times brighter than at another. In stars of this type the changes of light are supposed to be caused by a dark body revolving around the star, and producing eclipses as it comes within our line of sight.

When some people give parties, it is not so much to entertain their friends as for the satisfaction of not inviting their enemies.

There is nothing so trying as a hard day's work once a week. If you work every day, you get used to it.

The real test of a good country is one where worthless men do well.

CORN IS KING.

Interesting Facts Concerning the Great American Staple.

The word maize is derived from the Greek word zea. It is not definitely known where the plant had its origin. Humboldt asserts that it is American. Other writers claim that it originated in Asia, whence it was brought into America by the Spanish explorers. There is nothing so far discovered in the records of ruins of Egypt to indicate that the early dwellers along the Nile ever knew of the grain. In an ancient Chinese book, however, to be found in the French library at Paris, corn is mentioned. In Chile corn has long been grown, and it is called zea curauca. There is an old Javanese legendary poem, "Manek Maya," which likens the grain of corn to a maiden's tooth, and to-day, in certain parts of the middle West, there is a variety known as "horse tooth."

Most of the South American Indians know of corn. Some make a sort of beer from it. A Quicha legend says that Con, son of the Sun and Moon, gave maize to man. The Iroquois say that corn was given by the Spirit of the South. One of the snake legends of the Moqui Indians tells of six bachelors, Red Corn, Blue Corn, Yellow Corn, Green Corn, Spotted Corn and Black Corn.

It is not alone with the Indians that myth and legend endure. To-day farmers of New England, and, in fact, in the newer West, have their manifold "signs" for the planting of corn. Go through the agricultural regions and you will hear them talk of planting "in the full of the moon," and the like. Among the German settlers, in certain localities, it is believed that in selecting seed-corn for the next year's crop all the stalks and refuse must be taken into the highways and instantly destroyed, but not by burning, as that would insure the presence of the black fungi, or "smut," as it is provincially termed.

Corn is the great staple of the United States. It is the most important product of the American continent, be it grains or the output of mines or factories. More acres are devoted to the raising of corn than in the annual yield of oats, wheat, barley, rye, buckwheat and cotton combined. Corn provides more employment for laborers, provides more work for distributors and makes basis for more industries and activities than any other American commodity. In the past thirty-seven years the value of the corn output has been \$15,900,000,000.

Last year (1898) a corn farm of 6,000 acres in Iowa yielded a net profit of \$50,000. About 3,800 acres of corn were actually planted. Thirty-one planters were used to put the seed in the ground, seventy-six cultivators did the "tending" and seventy-five wagons hauled the crop from field to cribs. To hold the corn cribs twelve feet wide, sixteen feet high and half a mile long were required. The corn yield of the United States for 1898 is estimated at 2,050,720,000 bushels, the number of acres planted being 81,550,000. Corn is king.—John L. Wright, in Leslie's Weekly.

The Stage.

The stage continues to form the mirror of fashion. One need scarcely take in a fashion paper if one pays constant visits to the theater. Here one can study all the varieties of la mode and the latest and newest designs. Each play seems to have its own specialty in dress, its favorite color and its favorite dressmaker.

Possibly spectators never give a thought to the fact that these constant changes of costume form no inconsiderable portion of the fatigue incurred by an actress in a long and heavy part. Dress cannot be slurred over now. Gowns must be laced and buttoned up, gloves, shoes, hats, petticoats be worn to match. It was different in the good old days, when actresses shuffled one gown over another and fastened them lightly with a button. The Japanese costume is one of the most intricate. The real Japanese lady wears three gowns, one over the other, a small portion of each showing at the neck, the gowns being artistically shaded, say, from pale pink to deepest rose, or from violet to sky blue. The chemise, too, must match, and a special touch of deep contrastive color is given by the waistband.

Nutritious Foods.

Prof. Atwater, who has devoted himself to the study for a number of years, declares that there is no single perfect food, the nearest approach to it being milk. No food, however, contains the essential constituents in right proportions, and thus we have to get what we want by combining our foods. It will be a shock to many thrifty housewives to learn that beef and eggs are among the greatest of all economical mistakes. A single dollar spent in wheat-flour will yield as much nutriment as \$30 spent on sirloin of beef. Sugar ranks next to wheat-flour as an economical food, for a dollar's worth of sugar contains as much nutriment as \$40 worth of milk, \$12 worth of eggs, or \$40 worth of oysters. In proportion to their cost oysters are almost the least nutritious of all foods. Beans and potatoes run a close race for the third place among valuable and cheap foods, and the fourth place is shared between fat, salt pork and cheese made from skimmed milk.



OVER and over again John Marsden had been told that his nocturnal rambles would bring him into contact with unpleasant citizens. If he had contented himself with walking upon the main highway that ran past his suburban home, his midnight walk, which he said was absolutely necessary to his getting sleep when he went to bed, would have been safe enough. But there were byways in that neighborhood, some of them narrow, many of them with evil reputations, all of them very dark and entirely deserted by honest citizens at a quarter to 1 in the morning—which was John's favorite hour for a solitary stroll—and these queer byways were his favorite strolling paths. Again, if he had had nothing about him to tempt a footpad his friends would not have been so solicitous, but, for a man in which there was no suspicion of foppery, John Marsden carried a remarkable collection of valuable jewelry about his person. There was his watch, with a circle of brilliants and a remarkable enameled miniature set in the back, presented to him as a souvenir by a famous foreign actress whose life he had saved in a railroad wreck; there was also a wonderful old intaglio bloodstone, an heirloom, which he wore in a huge signet ring, and lastly, there was, as a general



A HAND FLEW STRAIGHT AT HIS THROAT thing, the Moma diamond, which ought to have been kept in a museum or a safety vault, but which John Marsden persisted in wearing constantly as a cravat pin.

He said he wore the Moma diamond for luck, but no one who knew him believed that the man had even one superstition. It would have been worth the while of any footpad to engage professional assistance just to get possession of the Moma diamond, and hundreds of persons connected with that profession knew that Mr. Marsden always wore that stone in his cravat. It was a wonderful stone, not by any means as large as a pigeon's egg, or even a sparrow's, it is true, only about the size of the point of a man's index finger, in fact, but of a luster so dazzling and so peculiar that the jewelers and lapidaries of Amsterdam, who still remember it from the days before it crossed the Atlantic, say it is unmatched in all the world.

And at last the warnings of John Marsden's friends were justified. He was walking on a dark, autumn night along one of his favorite byways, with a row of blank, windowless brick walls on his right, and on his left a ditch and rail fence, when there was a sudden leap of something from the ditch, and a hand flew straight at his throat.

Instantly—as if he had been expecting to meet the attack just at that spot—John Marsden's left fist darted out and up, and there was a sound like the word "Chow," followed by another like the fall of a bale of hay on the earth. Then he leaned forward cautiously, and the next moment he was glad of his caution. The man leaped to his feet almost as soon, it seemed, as he had touched the ground, and then, instead of drawing knife or pistol, he went at John in the most approved pugilistic fashion.

Very likely, if the fight had been in a twelve-foot ring, by daylight, begun in regular form, the other man might have won the Moma diamond—supposing it to have been the prize. As it was the footpad had been taken by surprise, and, still worse, Marsden's very bonny fist had fitted itself snugly into the delicate space between the triangle of the lower jaw and the Adam's apple. The mere fact that his antagonist had recovered himself so quickly after such a blow assured Marsden that he had no ordinary fighter to deal with. Still, that first blow placed the other man at a disadvantage, and the fistfuls did not last long. In less than two minutes Marsden's assailant was back in the ditch from which he had sprung, only now he lay kicking convulsively and

coughing in a way that meant, as Marsden knew, internal hemorrhage.

Now, when you have been assaulted on a lonely road in the small hours, and the assault has been with the evident intention of stealing your valuables, you are generally inclined rather to go your way rejoicing, and leave well enough alone, if you have been as fortunate as to knock the intending thief silly. That is what most people would do. But Marsden was in many ways unlike most people. He sat on the edge of the roadside ditch, lifted the man's head, and fanned his face until, in the darkness, he could detect signs of recovery.

"Feeling better now?" he said. The only answer was a struggle to sit up, which ended in the beaten man sinking back exhausted. Then there was another pause, and Marsden began to be really alarmed. He had almost made up his mind to go and look for water when the patient suddenly made one more violent effort, succeeded in sitting up, and stared at him.

"Who are you?" were the first words that came, in a hoarse, half-strangled whisper. "You're not a policeman?" "Oh, no," said Marsden. "I'm not a policeman. Hope I haven't hurt you badly. Now, look here, young fellow, a man that can box like you isn't a common thief. That's sure. If you had been a common thief, you would have come at me with a pistol or something."

The prostrate man said nothing. "See here," Marsden went on. "I can easily hand you over to the police, you know. Oh, you needn't try to get up and run. I could give five yard's start and catch you in 100, as you are now. I'll let you go. I'll take you to my house and fix you up ship shape, if you'll do one thing. Tell me why you have turned highway robber just to get the Moma diamond?"

At that question the man seemed to start. Marsden waited a few seconds and then repeated, "Tell me about it." "Where did you get it?" was at first the only answer vouchsafed him, and that in a vehement, angry whisper. Then the man in the ditch went on: "You're right. I didn't want your watch. The diamond is mine." "Aha!" said Marsden. "I thought so. I knew there was something wrong about that blessed diamond. Did you see me wearing it?"

"No." "Did some one tell you I wore it as a scarf-pin?" "Yes."

"Well, you can't go on talking in the condition you are in. Come to my house and let me give you a drink. It isn't far." There must have been something very frank and convincingly honest in the ring of Marsden's voice, for the man actually did consent to go with him, even leaning on his arm for support on the way.

They entered the house together, stealthily, for everyone else was in bed, and the lights all out. Marsden struck a match and lighted his highwayman friend to his own den, where he soon found means to stimulate his powers. "I am a stranger to you, you see," said the guest, recovering after a mouthful of diluted brandy.

It was not the face of a thief, certainly. It was rather the face of a well-bred, if not intellectual, man, but it was unshaven, and suggested that its owner had fallen upon hard luck. Otherwise, it was not at all an uncommon face.

"You have treated me fairly," he said, "so far, at least. Tell me where you got my diamond, and I'll tell you how I lost it."

"Your diamond—if it is yours," said Marsden, "was won by me at a game of cards. I staked \$1,000 in American money against it. The game was played in the smoking-room of an ocean steamer."

"Was it an elderly man you were playing with?" "Yes. A Brazilian, I believe—wore the stone in a ring."

"The impudent scoundrel! Anything peculiar about his eyebrow?" "One eyebrow had a cut across it that gave it a peculiar tilt."

"That's right—the left eyebrow. And the gentleman always spoke as if his mouth was full, didn't he?" "He did. You have described him perfectly. He was a Brazilian."

"I beg your pardon. He was my maternal uncle, Charles August Froeham. My father borrowed money from him to buy shares in his confounded bogus enterprise, and gave him mortgages on everything we possessed. It was understood, when the mortgage was drawn on our household effects, that my mother's jewelry was not included. At my father's death the rogue put in a legal claim for the Moma diamond, because, he said, it was set in a ring which my father wore and not my mother's. The lawyer advised my mother to let it go, for fear of the expense and uncertainty of litigation. In that

way the scoundrel got possession of a jewel worth as much as three times all the money he had lent my father. When his stock-watering tricks were found out he had to leave England. That was five years ago."

"That was when I met him," said Marsden.

"And now at last I have been obliged to come to this country and try to earn a living as a car conductor. I can't complain of that; I was always an idle, good-for-nothing fellow."

"H'm," said Marsden. "And your uncle—I mean the Brazilian gentleman—said this stone was called the Moma diamond from the name of the negro who found it in Brazil. Was that correct?"

"Perfectly."

"Now, please give me your own address and—is your mother still living?"



"I AM A STRANGER TO YOU."

The would-be highwayman gave both. That night he slept in Marsden's house. A month later he sailed for England, a steamer passenger, but rich, for the eccentric Marsden had made him a present of the Moma diamond.—Pittsburg Press.

A Witty Peasant.

A thunder-storm overtook the Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria, when out shooting in 1873 with old Emperor William of Germany and Victor Emmanuel. The three monarchs got separated from their party and lost their way. They were drenched to the skin, and, in search of shelter, hailed a peasant driving a covered cart drawn by oxen along the high road. The peasant took up the royal trio and drove on.

"And what may you be, for you are a stranger in these parts?" he asked after awhile of Emperor William.

"I am the Emperor of Germany," replied his Teutonic majesty.

"Ha, very good," said the peasant, and then addressing Victor Emmanuel, "And you my friend?"

"Why, I am the King of Italy," came the prompt reply.

"Ha, ha, very good indeed! And who are you?" addressing Francis Joseph.

"I am the Emperor of Austria," said the latter.

The peasant then scratched his head, and said with a knowing wink, "Very good, and who do you suppose I am?"

Their majesties replied they would like very much to know.

"Why I am His Holiness the Pope."

Big Ben's Tone.

Whatever complaints may be made against the tone of Big Ben, the famous London clock, and musicians say it is a terribly bad "E," at any rate, every one will acknowledge that the clock in the House of Commons tower is a wonderful timekeeper, not varying a second in time all the year through. The mechanism for setting in motion the massive hammer which brings out the tone of Big Ben's sixteen-ton bell is very interesting. The striking machinery is driven by weights of about a ton and a half, which hang on a shaft 174 feet deep; and it is so arranged that after the chimes are over the hammer falls on the big bell within one second of Greenwich mean time.

Timothy's Mistake.

Timothy Knockdown, the auctioneer, took his wife for a seaside trip to Margate.

On the second day of their visit Mr. K. evinced a strong desire to return home. "And pray for what reason, Timothy?" angrily inquired his better half.

"Simply because everybody knows my business down here. To-day, for instance, I have been confronted by at least forty grinning boatman who reminded me that it is "a nice day for a sale,"" sadly responded the unhappy auctioneer.—Answers.

The Dewey Plant.

A blooming plant, with clusters of blood-red tassels depending from its glossy leaves, is to be seen not far from Broad and Chestnut streets. It is labeled "The Dewey Plant" in conspicuous letters. Six months ago the duplicate was seen in another part of town, with an inscription declaring it was "Admiral Dewey's favorite flower." The plant is a native of the Philippines islands.—Philadelphia Record.

Some people are willing to let a good excuse answer for good conduct.

A Port Jervis (N. Y.) bank has failed. Sol Smith Russell, the actor, is ill in Chicago.

Martin has again been elected senator from Virginia.

Hanna gave Christmas gifts to men who recently refused to strike at Cleveland.

Thomas Jones planned to death from a railroad trestle at Spokane Wednesday.

Powerful factors on Wall street prevented a panic recently. Ten to twenty mil-

lions were turned loose to bolster the market.

A big fire at Florence, S. C., destroyed a hotel, city hall, bank and other buildings.

Dr. E. Benjamin Andrews of Chicago, may lose his job for taking sides with the British.

Thousands of men are rushing to volunteer in England, eager to avenge the recent defeats.

Sampson's pay has been cut down, as he must hold a grade before the salary attaches to the position.

Corporal Shivering of the Northwest mounted police and two comrades are missing on the Edmonton trail.

The Illinois supreme court has held the anti-department law, passed by the last legislature, to be unconstitutional.

Brig. Gen. Edward S. Kellogg, recently promoted from colonel of the Sixth in-

fantry, has been placed on the retired list.

A member of the Universal Netherlands union has arrived in this country with an appeal to end the war between England and Transvaal.

The transports Hancock and City of Puebla have arrived at Manila with the Forty-fourth and a portion of the Forty-third infantry aboard.

Plans on an elaborate scale are being made for the big convention of live stock

raisers and dealers, to be held in Fort Worth, Tex., early next month.

Robbers recently went through a Pullman coach in Missouri and forced their victims, under threats of shooting, to surrender their watches and money. When the train slowed up the thugs escaped.

Hugo Hunfalvy, a lawyer of New York, says there is no possible question that two electricians in Chicago, E. P. and C. S. Karoly, are heirs to an estate in Hungary

worth 9,000,000 florins, or about \$4,320,000.

Sanford White of Dunbar, Pa., was shot and killed by David Pierce, a colored employe. Pierce immediately ran, with more than 200 persons in pursuit. He was chased for two miles, when his pursuers came within shooting distance, and he fell, riddled by bullets, and died in a short time.