

THE ARGUS. Published daily at 1624 Second avenue, Rock Island, Ill. (Entered at the postoffice as second-class matter.)

BY THE J. W. POTTER CO. TERMS—Ten cents per week by carrier, in Rock Island.

Complaints of delivery service should be made to the circulation department.

SHOP EARLY Buy your Christmas presents EARLY—early in the day, and do it now.

The Cleveland man who has offered to be hanged in place of the Connecticut murderer knows that his offer is perfectly safe.

If Congressmen Underwood and Hobson shall decide to settle their difference in the old-fashioned southern way it is certain that Hobson will choose submarine draughts, catch a catch can, in the murky waters of the Potomac.

FRANCIS JOSEPH'S LONG REIGN. History has no parallel to the record of Francis Joseph of Austria, who has just completed 65 years of his reign.

Queen Victoria reigned less than 64 years. The nominal 72 years of Louis XIV. of France and the 67 years of Pharaoh, of the Scriptures, began when they were young boys in tutelage.

It is the fashion to cite him as a "hapless Hapsburg." Any man, much more any king, who lives 83 years must expect sorrow, and in his family life the old emperor has had his share.

But Austria-Hungary has not done so badly. It was near disruption in 1848, only saved by Prussian troops. No such menace now exists.

It was defeated by Prussia and France; but Prussia, by Bismarck's wise balance, took no toll of territory, and the loss of the discontented Lombards and Venetians was no calamity.

Or if calamity it was, it has been reaped by the addition of the equally rebellious Slavs of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In political freedom the dual monarchy does not long lag far behind Germany. In spite of the wrongs of the southern Slavs and Roumanians and the ragings of the Czechs and the Italian irredentists, in material progress the country has moved with the rest of the world.

Never was the old ruler more popular with his mixed races than he is now. A natural interest in his length of reign helps him as it helped Victoria of England.

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ment covering one year of college work will soon be enforced by the state boards of Connecticut, Kansas, Utah, Vermont, Pennsylvania and California.

An American Cardinal. Statements made by Cardinal Gibbons in a sermon at Baltimore the other day should serve to set at rest fears that the church of which he is a prince meditates assault upon American institutions.

The cardinal further said that whenever any encroachment upon the sacred rights of civil and religious liberty have been made by professing members of the church, "these wrongs, far from being perpetual with her sanction, were committed in palpable violation of her authority."

The dissolution of the concordat in France has stimulated remarkably the growth and influence of the church there and it is in better condition than, perhaps, it ever was before.

Those who sense a design in the church to control this nation and to establish here that intimacy which the Latin countries of the old world are getting away from one by one.

Illinois News Taylorville Official Dies. Taylorville, Ill., Dec. 17.—A. O. Murphy, city treasurer of Taylorville, was found dead in the Eagles' lodge room here. He is thought to have been a victim of heart disease.

Engineer Hurt in Collision. Pana, Ill., Dec. 17.—Illinois Central passenger train No. 125 crashed into a freight engine at Pana.

320 Acres Sold for \$76,000. Keokuk, Ill., Dec. 17.—The largest sale of high-priced farm land made in this part of the state was effected yesterday when A. J. Dickey sold 329 acres to Hugh Hutchinson for \$76,000.

Illinois Pioneer Is Dead. Sycamore, Ill., Dec. 17.—George M. Stewart, a pioneer merchant, died yesterday, aged 78 years.

Killed for Calling Names. Granite City, Ill., Dec. 17.—J. A. Dailey of Alton died yesterday in a local hospital as a result of being beaten by railway section men in a fight begun when he called them names. Five men are prisoners.

Mrs. Flo Jamieson Miller Out. Bloomington, Ill., Dec. 17.—Mrs. Flo Jamieson Miller, 12 years superintendent of the soldiers' widows' home at Wilmington, has resigned, but will hold the place pending the appointment of her successor.

Charged With Farm Swindle. Kansas City, Dec. 17.—Cecil B. Rhodes, a real estate dealer, was arrested by J. E. Morrison, deputy United States marshal, charged with promoting a scheme to defraud. Rhodes was indicted Dec. 11 on a charge of swindling Charles E. Eastin of Macomb, Ill., out of an \$8,000 Missouri farm, trading for it stock in the Kansas City Sash Weight Manufacturing company.

Man and Girl of 14 Sought. Nutwood, Ill., Dec. 17.—Deputy sheriffs are searching for Louis Neuringham of Nutwood on a charge of having eloped with Beattie Ridenbark, 14-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hiram Ridenbark of Nutwood.

We asked the young lady across the way if she were a student of contemporaneous history and she said no to any great extent and it was about all she could do to keep informed about things that were happening in her own lifetime.

Capital Comment BY CLYDE H. TAVENNER Congressman from the Fourteenth District.

(Special Correspondence of The Argus.) Washington, Dec. 15.—Some interesting facts in connection with the operation of the postal savings bank were brought in a recent debate in the house over a postoffice bill.

country in transacting business with Washington and with patrons in connection with the postal bank use a distinctive stamp adopted by the department for this purpose.

The department deposits the postal savings with local banks, charging only 2 1/2 per cent interest.

Having introduced medical inspection in 1872, Elmira, N. Y., claims to have been the first American city to adopt health supervision of school children.

The equivalent of one school year for more than 400 children is lost because of contact with minor contagious diseases, according to figures recently compiled for Pittsburgh.

A shipbuilding ship is maintained in connection with the high school at San Pedro, Cal., where, under the practical instruction of a nautical architect, the students learn how to build a boat, make and place the engine and launch and run the craft.

The woman to Jersey county, where a ceremony was performed, Neuringham was convicted and served a term in prison.

Line to Tap Coal Districts. Rockford, Ill., Dec. 17.—The Illinois Midland Railway company, from the south border of Kankakee county to Rockford, with an incorporated capital stock of \$25,000, is to be launched next year, according to an announce-

"The Young Lady Across the Way"



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The ONLOOKER BY HENRY HOWLAND IN THE COUNTRY IN THE WINTER



I am longing for the pleasures that the fields alone can give.

Where the frost has made the wattles of the troubled rooster blue.

What a joy 'twould be to never have to dodge or skip and jump.

A Resentful Man. "I see that your wife's father and mother are living with you now."

Retired? That's hardly the name for it. He has been kicked out.

An Artistic Triumph. "How did the moving picture of the wedding turn out?"

Profitless Thinking. Many a man who wishes he might be praised as lavishly

So That the World May Know. A good many widows get married merely to show that they can, and not because they have any liking for matrimony.

Courage. "What's the cause of all that yelling across the street?"

Who Rode in the Charlots With Them? History is curiously silent concerning the names of people who made up the committees that were sent out to meet Alexander and Caesar.

They Never Let Up. One reason why men hate to admit that they have been wrong is that other people want them to keep on admitting it over and over again.

The Saddle and the Steed. It is good to keep hoping for better things, but hope is merely a saddle that is to be placed upon the steed which is known as Effort.

Standing Prosperity. Some men are unable to stand prosperity, but women can't stand the prosperity of their neighbors.

Gloating Over the Victim. "Your teeth are in pretty bad condition."

The Daily Story THE BLACKBIRD—BY CLARISSA MACKIE. Copyrighted, 1913, by Associated Literary Bureau.

The manager of the Sloan Detective agency pressed a button as he hung up the telephone receiver.

"Send Birch in," he ordered as a shock headed office boy appeared.

Just instantly the door opened to admit a broad shouldered young man, alert of manner, with keen gray eyes and resolute mouth.

The other nodded. "Sit down there, I say, Bob, there's been another one of those confounded murders. It's Hinman, the banker, this time."

"In just the same manner as Flickinger, the railroad king, and Benson, who was, as you remember, Flickinger's right hand man—stabbed through the heart with a dagger of foreign make."

What a joy 'twould be to never have to dodge or skip and jump.

Sloan knelt down beside him and watched the movement of Birch's fingers as he pointed out the tracks made by the rubber tired landing wheels of an aeroplane.

"It's here, sir"—he looked up with a smiling face—"the tracks of the 'big blackbird.'"

Sloan knelt down beside him and watched the movement of Birch's fingers as he pointed out the tracks made by the rubber tired landing wheels of an aeroplane.

"You remember that the residence of Mr. Flickinger is of this same type—flat roof and so forth?" questioned Birch as they returned to the office.

Once in the office Sloan picked up the afternoon edition of a New York newspaper. Suddenly he uttered sharp exclamation and pointed to a glaring headline on the front page.

"I have not touched a thing, nor has the doctor," ended Blunt tearfully.

Blunt went out and closed the door, and the two detectives were left alone in the room from which Mr. Hinman's body had been removed a short while after their arrival.

"The most important is that I learned that four men who had been discharged by the railroad company had threatened harm to Mr. Flickinger and his secretary."

"I guess he's the man we're after," said Sloan. "What name?"

"Van Benjick."

Yellowed Handkerchiefs. Handkerchiefs which have become yellow can be made snow white by soaking them in pipeclay and water for twenty-four hours.

Dec. 17 in American History.

- 1799—Birth of Clinton, Mass., of Deborah Sampson, heroine of the Revolution; served three years in the colonial army as a soldier.