

FAVORS A RETIREMENT LAW.

"If there were a retirement law for the clerks employed by Uncle Sam in the various departments at Washington, the civil service would not be cluttered up by a small army of aged and inefficient clerks," said W. R. Hayes, former congressman from Nebraska, the other day.

"As it is now, no head of a department or bureau chief will discharge a man or woman who has been a faithful worker for 30 years or more, because old age has impaired the usefulness of the employe. As a result, there are hundreds, if not thousands, who are kept on the rolls merely as a matter of humanity. If dismissed they would in many instances be thrown upon the charity of the world, for it is utterly out of the question that private employment could be obtained for them.

The stupidity of the clerks themselves has been one of the chief reasons why a liberal retirement law has failed of passage for all these years. The clerks can never agree on any policy among themselves. Many of them obstinately contend that the government has no right to withhold a dollar of their salaries to go into a pension fund for retired clerks, ignoring the recognized improvidence of that large per cent of employes who never save a penny of their salaries. It would be an act of beneficence to ward this class if a portion of their wages was regularly retained.

MICROBE LOST HOPE.

A lonely microbe, disheartened and ready to die because the public health service is rapidly putting all his ilk where they can do humanity no harm, peeked over the edge of Assistant Surgeon General George Rucker's desk the other day and heard the doctor humming a ditty that went like this: "A fly and a flea, a mosquito and a louse, all lived together in a very dirty house. The flea spread the plague and the skooter spread the chills. All louse spread typhus, too. Folks in bills. The fly spread typhoid and the louse spread typhus, too. Folks in that house were a mighty sickly crew. Along came a man and he cleaned up the house. He screened out the skooters and swatted the louse. The fly and the flea he cracked on the wall. Now the people in that house are never sick at all."

"Well," piped up the microbe, "that's all right as far as it goes, but it strikes me you've been a bit partial in this thing. How about the bedbug? Where does he get off?"

"He's going to get off pretty quick," returned the doctor. "So far the bedbug has been able to prove an alibi, but I've put the sanitary detective on his trail and I'll get him yet."

11,221,824,064 CIGARETTES.

If cigarette smoking is as deadly as some of the aunts make out, this country will soon be inhabited exclusively by imbeciles.

LIGHT HOUSEKEEPING DISCON- CONTINUED.

Secretary Franklin MacVeagh will not permit any more chafing dish parties in the Treasury building. The Monday parties, the daily teas and dainty hot luncheons have been discontinued. For many years clerks of the treasury have made merry over the chafing dish at noon, but there will be no more of that and everybody will have to go out to get lunch. The sanitary committee of the department recommended that the secretary have the little eating parties discontinued and all cooking utensils removed.

Light housekeeping in Uncle Sam's money chest is a thing of the past.

Driving an Alligator.

Using a child's toy wagon and allowing himself to be drawn about by an alligator, is one of the queer methods adopted by a German sportsman to win a wager, says Popular Mechanics. He claimed in a conversation with a friend that there were no less than 10,000 methods of locomotion, and in the dispute that followed he wagered that he could prove it. The bet was taken up by the friend and a trip around the world was undertaken to try out all the various kinds of transportation, and incidentally to devise some new ones. The alligator stunt was carried out at the alligator farm at Los Angeles, Cal.

Worry and Work. Wigg—Worry kills more people than work. Wagg—Quite natural; there are more people worrying than working.

ROAD EXPERTS NEEDED.

A practical effort to bring the supply of expert highway engineers to the point where they will be numerous enough to meet the demand for their services is to be made at the American Road Congress, to be held on the Million-Dollar Pier, in Atlantic City, September 30 to October 5. At the present time, with the people of the United States spending more than \$200,000,000 a year for the improvement of highways, the demand for expert highway engineers exceeds the supply. There is to be a conference of educational institutions at the American Road Congress, to be directed by the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education, and through this conference efforts are to be made to induce the leading universities to establish specific and practical courses for the instruction of highway engineers.

At the present time there are about 22 universities devoting some attention to highway engineering. The instruction in this branch of engineering, however, is, in most cases, merely a part of the general training of engineers, so that there will be a sufficient number of trained men to handle the great problem that has been thrust upon the United States by the widespread agitation for a better system of public highways that will reduce the cost of hauling crops and permit shipments by farmers at all seasons of the year.

Prof. Henry H. Norris of Cornell University is secretary of the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education, which is composed of officials of the leading educational institutions having engineering departments. Professor Norris has just sent letters to all the institutions which are represented in their society asking them to appoint delegates to represent them at the convention, which will be part of the American Road Congress at Atlantic City. Prof. William T. Magruder, of the Ohio state university, is president of the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education, while the vice-presidents are Prof. L. S. Marks of Harvard and Prof. F. W. Sperr of the Michigan College of Mines. They believe that if the universities will supply well-equipped engineers it will be a long step towards doing away with the careless supervision of the construction and maintenance of public roads, that now results in the loss of a large percent of the money invested in roads.

MUST ANSWER QUESTIONS.

In the future, when a person calls at the general delivery window of any postoffice will have to answer these questions put by the clerk before he gets his mail:

"Are you twenty-one years of age?"

"Have you a permanent home in the city?"

"Are you using a fictitious name?"

"Is this correspondence illegal?"

An order issued to postmasters by Dr. C. P. Grandfield, first assistant postmaster general, reads in part:

"The attention of postmasters at offices having city carrier service is called to paragraph 2, section 713, postal laws and regulations, compliance with which should prevent the improper use of the general delivery by residents. Postmasters at such offices, may require all persons supposed to be residents to furnish in writing their names and addresses and statements of their reasons for preferring to be served at the general delivery. Minors calling at such offices may be requested to furnish the information indicated above, and also the names of their parents, in order that the parents may be notified and have an opportunity to control the delivery of the mail to the extent authorized by section 643, postal laws and regulations. Postmasters at offices not having city carrier service may notify the parents of minors in all instances where it appears that the minors are calling at the general delivery for mail under objectionable circumstances."

TIME "VIA WIRELESS."

The new wireless station at Arlington which will be completed in about a month will act as a clock regulator for thousands of jewelers all over the country.

The right time as recorded at the naval observatory will be flashed all along the coast and as far west as the system will reach. The towers are expected to communicate with vessels three thousand miles at sea, but the exact distance they will command over land has not been calculated to a nicety. It is believed that messages will be recorded at least 1,500 miles inland.

Many large jewelry stores have notified the navy department that they intend to install wireless receivers so they can get the right time regularly "via wireless."

TO MODIFY BROOK TROUT.

Uncle Sam is going to try to produce a trout that can live and prosper in the warm water of the sluggish streams of the southern states. An experimental fish station will be established near Washington for that purpose. Congress has provided the money for the work.

The fighting brook trout is to be modified, domesticated and made to furnish more food and less sport for the human family. The experts of the bureau of fisheries hope to succeed in getting a trout that will fill the bill, but they recall the fact that many years ago fifty million Pacific coast salmon were planted in the Mississippi river and perished.

HERCULES STEALS BIG SAFE

Porch Climber Tosses Strongbox From Window of Residence in Chicago.

Chicago.—Wilmette was visited by a "Hercules porch climber," who entered the home of Albert Bersbach, treasurer of the Mann Engraving company, at 530 Washington street, Wilmette, and with apparently little effort seized a small safe and threw it from the window to the ground. The strong-armed robber was accompanied by a medium-sized companion, who was armed with a revolver to make up for what he lacked in physical make-up. The latter stood guard at the foot of a stolen painter's ladder, while "Hercules" entered the residence.

"The robbers, one of whom was the strongest and largest man that ever visited this suburb, stole a ladder in the neighborhood and entered the second story of my residence at about 6:15 o'clock last evening," said Mr. Bersbach today. "The robbers are evidently the same men who entered my house less than two weeks ago and stole jewelry valued at a couple of hundred dollars. The strength of the man who entered the house was amazing. He took up the safe, which weighs about 150 or 200 pounds, and threw it to the lawn as if it were a toy."

"My son-in-law, David F. Anderson, was at home with my wife and daughter, and they thought they heard some one upstairs. Mr. Anderson started upstairs, and on the steps assured himself some one was in the house. He went down to inform some neighbors, and as he left the house he was covered by a revolver held by the man on watch, who raised his overcoat to his face to hide his features. An automobile was awaiting them near by, and they made their escape in it. The robber that entered the house was a very daring fellow. He turned on the lights while he worked and disregarded the fuss made by our dog. The safe did not contain anything of value to them, but I think they were prompted upon their last visit to return and take the safe."

WOOD STUDIED IN PRINTERY

Conqueror of Giants Once a "Devil" and of Course is at Home With Battery Work.

San Francisco, Cal.—Holding a post mortem on the Red Sox-Giants series, a citizen here made this statement:

"It's hard to say which is the better team, but Editor Hulaniski, of the Richmond Record-Herald, has settled any dispute as to who is the best pitcher. He says 'Smoky Joe' Wood used to be his 'devil' in a Colorado print shop and could set type well enough when there was no ball game in town. When there was Joseph's case went dark. Since Joseph is a printer the question of preiership is settled. He's it."

"All regularly ordained printers are baseball bugs. The finest games I ever heard played were pulled off while the players were throwing in their cases afterwards. No one was ever known to make anything less than a three bagger. Sometimes we used to lay down our handbills and 'jeff' to decide who really was the best liar."

"We made a few records hard to beat. I played with an aggregation of printers once against some lowly clerks, and those counterhoppers made a score of 63 runs in four innings. "The Red Sox never did anything like that."

CHIMPANZEE SUIT BEGINS

Owner of Animal He Declares Killed by Railroad Company Wants \$200,000 Damages.

Portland, Ore.—Trial of a damage suit wherein \$200,000 is asked of the Northern Pacific railroad company in compensation for the death of an educated chimpanzee began here in the United States District court.

The chimpanzee, described in the complaint as being able to dress and undress, possessing perfect table manners, including the smoking of after-dinner cigarettes, was dead when the box in which it was shipped arrived here from Seattle, Wash.

The owner, Charles Judge, alleged the animal was cooked to death by steam escaping from a pipe in the baggage car of the train.

The railroad company sets up the defense that the animal was dead when shipped.

RIDES 100 YARDS ON ENGINE

Driver of a Louisville Autibus Has a Remarkable Escape From Death.

Louisville, Ky.—William Lackey, driver of an autibus, had a remarkable escape here when he fell on the pilot of a freight engine which had struck his autibus and knocked him several feet into the air. The engine ran more than a hundred yards with the man on the pilot before the engineer was able to bring it to a halt. Lackey was not seriously injured. The autibus was demolished.

Hippo Pines for Goat Friend. Philadelphia, Pa.—The superintendent of the zoological garden wants a young female goat as companion to Katrina, the hippopotamus. The beast was brought to this country from Hamburg, where she was a member of a trained animal troupe and had a female goat as a constant companion. She has been pining for the goat ever since her arrival.

SHIPS TO GATHER

Uncle Sam's Warships Soon to Be Mobilized.

New York Will Witness on October 14 and 15 Greatest Fleet of Fighting Craft Ever Assembled in American Waters.

Washington.—New York city will witness on Oct. 14 and 15 the mobilization of the greatest fleet of warships ever assembled in American waters. The navy department issued preparatory orders for the mobilization a few days ago. At the same time the warships of the Atlantic fleet and Atlantic reserve fleet gather in the harbor of New York city the Pacific fleet will mobilize at San Francisco and the Asiatic fleet at Manila. In the mobilization in New York waters will be 120 ships, including the new 26,000-ton dreadnaughts Wyoming and Arkansas. There will be 43 ships assembled at San Francisco and 30 at Manila. Rear Admiral Hugo Osterhaus, commander-in-chief of the Atlantic fleet, will command the mobilization in New York; Rear Admiral Southerland the fleet at San Francisco and Rear Admiral R. R. Nicholson the Manila mobilization.

President Taft and Secretary of the Navy Meyer, accompanied by foreign naval attaches and members of both houses of congress will be aboard the new battleship Arkansas on the day of the review, which will probably be on the last day of the mobilization, Oct. 15.

The ships will begin assembling in the Hudson river on or about Oct. 12. The last of the arrivals, the torpedo flotilla of the reserve fleet, will arrive on the night of Oct. 13.

The line of battleships will consist of the Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kearsarge, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

The armored cruisers Montana, North Carolina, Tennessee and Washington.

The scout cruisers Birmingham, Chester and Salem.

Destroyers Ammen, Burrows, Drayton, Flusher, Lamson, McCall, McDonough, Mayrant, Monaghan, Patterson, Paulding, Perkins, Preston, Reid, Roe, Smith, Sterett, Terry, Trippe, Walke, Warrington, Whipple and Worden.

Torpedo boats Bagley, Bailey, Barney, Biddle, Blakely, Cushing, Dahlgren, Davis, De Long, Du Pont, Ericson, McKee, Mackenzie, Manly, Morris, Porter, Stockton, Stringham, Thornton, Tingley and Wilkes.

The submarine flotilla and colliers and tenders.

ENTERTAINMENTS FOR FARMERS.

Free entertainments are given to rural communities in some counties in Alabama as part of a campaign to induce the people to stay on the land instead of abandoning their farms for city life. This information has been received by the United States bureau of education from E. M. Shackelford, principal of the state normal school at Troy, Pike county, Alabama, who is at the head of the movement. Mr. Shackelford writes:

"In my opinion, the exodus of the younger generation from the country to the town is at present the most serious menace to our general welfare. Good roads, motor cars, the telephone and rural mail delivery are improving rural conditions greatly, but rural social life does not yet afford the opportunities for the commerce of ideas that an active, reading, thinking public demands. Hence the tendency to congregate in the centers of population, and hence this effort of ours to afford a few social opportunities through a course of free entertainments."

The entertainments consist mainly of lectures, "lantern shows," and sections on the Victrola. Some of the lectures are given at night, and some in the afternoon. Occasionally dinner is provided at the school and an all-day session is held.

While this movement was started by the Troy State Normal school, the co-operation of the Alabama state health and medical departments and the various state institutions has been enlisted for supplying speakers, entertainment clubs and other attractions. Most of the entertainers give their services without charge, and transportation is furnished by the owners of automobiles. Friends of the new movement anticipate that it will be a powerful factor wherever introduced in adding to the pleasures of rural life by furnishing additional opportunities to the country folk for recreation, culture and social intercourse.

Practical W Not Poetic.

W. D. Howells, at a luncheon at Kittery Point, said of a certain popular novelist:

"There is about as much poetry in him as there is in McMaisters."

"McMaisters, you know, was walking with a beautiful girl in a wild New England wood."

"What is your favorite flower, Mr. McMaisters?" the girl asked softly. "McMaisters thought a moment, then cleared his throat and answered: "Well, I believe I like the whole wheat best."—Washington Star.

NO PLACE FOR AGED MAN

Uncle Ranny Ramsey, Who is Palsied, Must Be Kept Away From All Auctions.

"In the morning of our existence," philosophically remarked the Erratic Thinker, "when life stretches away and away ahead of us, and we scamper on supple, care-free legs through flowery dells, and all that, how little we reckon that the first thing we know we will be in the midst of golden noon when the shadows fall neither to the right nor to the left. And afternoon, with weary, stiffened limbs and defective hearing, we'll set out to promenade on the railroad track three minutes before train time. Then, let us be considerate of the aged and not let them know how much smarter we are than they were at our age, and—but you have no idea how much engineering it takes on my part to keep my old Uncle Ranny Ramsey from attending every blamed auction he hears of, since his palsied go bad. You see, he sits there and bobs his poor old head and then sharp auctioneers knock down to him everything they can't sell to anybody else, claiming he bid on it. And it kind o' flatters the old man to think he is back in the booraw of business life again, and so they make it stick."

WATER PORTERS OF QUITO

They Carry Big Earthen Jars on Their Backs and Bowing, Create a Cataract.

Around a fountain in one of the principal squares of Quito assemble every morning the city's aguadores. These water porters differ from the less energetic ones of some South American cities in carrying their jars upon their backs instead of on the backs of mules. Their earthen jars are deep, have a wide mouth, and hold about 40 liters.

The porter carries it on his shoulder fastened with leather straps. He never detaches himself from his jar either to fill it or to transfer its contents to that of his customer.

He turns his back to the fountain so that the jar comes under one of the jets of water, listens to the sound of the water in the jar, and his ear is so well trained that he always walks away at the exact moment when it is filled to the brim.

Arriving at the house of a customer, he goes to the household jar, makes a deep bow, and disappears behind a torrent of water. Foreigners can never receive, without laughing, the visit of their aguador, the respectful little man who bows to one behind a cataract of water.

Resourceful.

In the club they were comparing the resourcefulness of their wives in difficult social situations. The man who lives in a Harlem flat had been a good listener, but he finally found an opening.

"Yes," said he, "my wife isn't bad at that sort of thing. We were having some people to luncheon one Sunday last spring, and just at an hour when all the delicatessens were closed she discovered that she needed some mustard and didn't have a grain of it in the kitchen. And she isn't the sort that will borrow from people next door that she doesn't know. It was a bad fix, all right. But she got mustard enough."

"Went to the delicatessen man's house and routed him out, I suppose?" suggested a member from the Bronx.

"Not much. Just went to the medicine closet, got down a box of ready-made mustard plasters, put 'em to soak, and squeezed enough of the hot stuff off."

"Good night," said the man from the Bronx.—New York Globe.

Bonaparte as Schoolboy.

The following is a copy of the certificate given to the great Napoleon on leaving school. It was handed to him for presentation to the king of France by the Inspector of the College of Brienne:

"M. de Bonaparte (Napoleon), born the 15th of August, 1769. Height, four feet ten inches ten lines (five feet six and one-half inches); has finished his fourth degree.

"Of good constitution, excellent health, a character docile, frank and graceful; and strictly regular in conduct; has always distinguished himself by his application to mathematics; he is tolerably conversant with history and geography; rather deficient in polite accomplishments as well as Latin, having only finished his fourth course. Would make an excellent marine.

"Deserves to pass to the school at Paris."

Astrology.

It would be futile to attempt to determine the time and place of the origin of astrology. It is as ancient as history itself. When we first hear of human society we find along with it the "excellent foppery of the world," as Shakespeare called astrology. Astrology was cultivated by the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and all other ancient peoples. So strong was the art, or science, that it refused to go down in the general smash-up at the close of the old Roman rule, but held on and was powerful all through the middle ages. It was only with the advent of modern science and enlightenment as to nature's laws that the old science of the stars and fates declined.

Fostering Canal Traffic.

In order to take care of the traffic on the New York state barge canal, which will be completed in 1915, an expenditure of \$18,800,000 has been authorized for canal terminals in New York city and other cities along the canal. In New York city there will be 14 canal terminals costing altogether \$8,740,000. The remainder of the money will be spent in building terminals at 21 different cities and towns.

TOLD BY PASSPORTS

Cards Signified Much to Those Initiated.

French Minister of Foreign Affairs Under Louis XVI Devised Ingenious System, Described by a Writer in the Century.

The mysterious cards employed by the Count de Vergennes, who was minister for foreign affairs under Louis XVI, in his relations with the diplomatic agents of France exhibit great ingenuity in their arrangement and show what the political condition of Europe must have been at that time to require such precautions, writes John H. Haswell, who, in Century, describes many forms of "secret writing." The count was a great friend of America, and it was largely through his influence that the treaties of amity and commerce and of alliance of 1778 were concluded. These cards were used in letters of recommendation or passports which were given to strangers about to enter or depart from France; they were intended to furnish information without the knowledge of the bearers. This was the system: The cards given to a man contained only a few words, such as "Alphonse D'Angeha Recommende a Monsieur le Comte de Vergennes, par le Marquis de Puysegur. Ambassadeur de France a la Cour de Lisbonne."

The card told more tales than the words written on it. Its color indicated the nation of the stranger. Yellow showed him to be English; red, Spanish; white, Portuguese; green, Dutch; red and white, Italian; red and green, Swiss; green and white, Russian, etc. The person's age was expressed by the shape of the card. If it was circular, he was under 25; oval, between 25 and 30; octagonal, between 30 and 45; hexagonal, between 45 and 60; square, between 60 and 65; an oblong showed that he was over 60. Two lines placed below the name of the bearer indicated his build. If he was tall and lean, the lines were wavy and parallel; tall and stout, they converged; and so on.

The expression of his face was shown by a flower on the border. A rose designated an open and amiable countenance, while a tulip marked a pensive and aristocratic appearance. A fillet round the border, according to its length, told whether the man was bachelor, married or widower. Dots gave information as to his position and fortune. A full stop after his name showed that he was a catholic; a semicolon, that he was a Lutheran; a comma, that he was a Calvinist; a dash that he was a Jew; no stop indicated him as an atheist. So also his morals and character were pointed out by a pattern in the angles of the card. So, at one glance the minister could tell all about his man, whether he was a gamester or a duellist; what was his purpose in visiting France; whether in search of a wife or to claim a legacy; what was his profession—that of a physician, lawyer or man of letters; whether he was to be put under surveillance or allowed to go his way unmolested.

Reduced Mortality From Cancer.

"Cancer has at last, by a steady and uniform increase year after year, reached a mortality of eight thousand," a recent bulletin of the New York state department of health reports. "Cancer as a disease has increased more rapidly than tuberculosis. The comparison with tuberculosis shows that in the preceding 20 years there have been 270,000 deaths from that cause and 100,000 from cancer." The bulletin adds: "Comparing cancer with the almost stationary mortality of consumption, it would appear that within another 20 years there will be more deaths from cancer than from consumption."

Machine to Write Music.

A German musician has invented a machine which, he states, automatically registers the notes emitted by the piano. The new machine, Harper's Weekly states, has the same object as one invented by an Italian and used by Mascagni in writing his operas, but it is a larger instrument and is operated by electricity. Into the machine is inserted a roll of paper and the composer seats himself before the piano and executes the composition that he desires to give to the public. The machine faithfully registers every note produced, so that the musician does not have to depend upon his memory.

Novels and Plays.

An English writer describing the difficulties that lie in the way of a successful novelist becoming effective as a playwright notes that a novelist is free while the playwright is limited by the stage, and adds: "In a play it all has to take place in somebody's chambers and all the women of the play have to be got there somehow. The method mostly adopted is to take away their characters because then you can put them where you like."