

UNCLE SAM'S GREAT NAVY.

From One of the Poorest to Fifth Place Among the Powers of the World.

AMERICANS BORN FIGHTERS ON THE SEA.

Wonders of Our New Guns and Modern Powder—Speed of the Projectiles—Follies in Naval Appointments—Chat with Secretary Herbert.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 19.—[Correspondence of The Bee.]—In a big room on the second floor of the east side of the largest granite building in the world, surrounded by the models of ships, at a big desk, sits a big man, holding his big brain over some of the biggest questions of the United States. I refer to Secretary Hilary A. Herbert, the head of our great Navy department. Ten years ago we had one of the poorest navies of the world. Now we have one of the best and the Navy department is the most wide awake and progressive of our government establishments. It has vast foundries and manufactories under its control. It spends millions upon millions of dollars upon ships and armor every year. It is buying the best brain the United States can give and it is its agents in every part of the world inventing and studying how to make new guns and other instruments of destruction. It is the most wonderful establishment in the United States government, and the matters it deals with reach to the ends of the earth. Already some of the biggest gunboats are on their way to China. Only a few months ago we were on the verge of war with China. What we are to do with the Sandwich Islands is still a live question, and the excitement of the troubles in Rio Janeiro has scarcely died away. The importance of the American navy increases every day, and the personality and views of the man who presides over it are full of interest.

The Secretary's First Naval Studies.

I spent an hour with him this week at the department, and continued my conversation during an evening which he took me at his home. I know but little about war and fighting, and at his request the secretary kindly avoided technical terms, and explained matters in such a way that I believe the talk will be of great interest to the average reader. He is a charming conversationalist. He has for years been making a study of naval matters, and when I asked him how it came that the man who had been brought up in the interior of the country, miles away from the sea coast, became such a specialist in naval affairs, he replied: "I think my first interest in the navy was aroused by a book which I read when I was a boy. It was entitled 'The Naval Battles of the Revolution and 1812,' and it made such an impression upon my mind that for a time I wanted to go to sea. From that time to this I have studied everything I could find in connection with the navy, and when I was first elected to congress, about seven years ago, I remember that I came here with the idea that the navy ought to be improved. Richard Thompson of Indiana was naval secretary, and I remember that I had a conversation with a green congressman, called upon him and told him that I wanted to know something as to the condition of the navy, and that I thought our cities along the coast were in an unprotected state, and that we ought to have better ships and better guns. Secretary Thompson, who had probably been bothered by young congressmen before, listened to my statement. As I finished he rather pompously, but confidently, told me that I might rest easy about the matter. And that our torpedoes had then reached such a state of perfection that if the torpedoes of the world could come at once within the range of those we had planted along the sea coast we could blow them out of the water. I remember that I went away from the department with my mind considerably relieved. I did not know as much about torpedoes then as I do now, or could undoubtedly have given opinion."

"I continued my interest in the navy, however, and I was connected with the committee on naval affairs, and I was, you know, chairman of that committee during three congresses, including the last one."

America Against the World.

"How does our navy now compare with the other great navies of the world?"

"Very well, indeed," replied the secretary, "or it will do so soon as we have finished the ships we are now building. We stand fifth or sixth among the great navies of the world. The greatest naval power on earth is Great Britain. She has nearly half as many navy vessels as we have. Next to her total naval service includes about 100,000. She has 275 ships in commission and she is making others. Next to her are the United States, which has about 423 effective ships afloat. Her colonies are such that the very existence of her government depends upon a great navy, and the new ships which she is now building will cost, it is said, more than \$100,000,000. Next to England as a great naval power, France, who has one of the biggest gunboats and best armored ships of the world. Her naval service includes vast numbers of men, and the same is true of Italy and Russia. Next to these powers comes the United States or Germany. It is a question as to whether Germany or the United States stand fifth in rank among the great navies of the world in some respects we are superior to Germany and in some they are ahead of us. We are rapidly advancing, and our navy will increase our interests demand protection, and we may eventually become the greatest naval power of the world."

Our Naval History.

"As to our naval ability in this respect," Secretary Herbert went on to look at history. At the beginning of the revolution England was mistress of the seas. During the first two years of the war our navy made up of what we could buy, build or borrow, captured more than 267 English ships, and acquired for itself a reputation as one of the naval powers of the time. In the war of 1812 we started out with about a dozen and a half ships of war to fight England, who then had more than 800 ships, of which a large number were iron-clad cruisers. There were all told fourteen dozen between single ships in that war, and in ten of the battles the Americans were victorious. In two of the remainder the honors were nearly even, and in only two out of the fourteen were the British the victors. At the beginning of the late civil war the government had only ninety vessels afloat. At its close the navy contained 770 ships, and it stood out as one of the greatest naval powers of the world. Its battles changed the navies of the world, and some of the greatest naval inventions have sprung from American brains."

The Age of Steel in Naval Matters.

"What was so with the fight of the Monitor and the Merrimack, is it not?"

"Yes," replied Secretary Herbert. "That battle struck the death blow to the ships of that day. With it the age of wooden war vessels passed away, and that of iron and steel began. Every civilized nation at once put its ship yards to work to build new fleets, and human ingenuity busied itself to construct better guns. Guns then began to be made of heavier steel, and in order that they might carry still heavier charges they were made longer and longer, and slow-burning powder was invented. The powder we now use is nothing like that

used at the time of the last war. It is the color of chocolate, and it is loaded into grains as big as a baby's fist. It burns from the time it is ignited until the charge leaves the gun, and it steadily pushes, as it were, on the charge from powder bed to muzzle."

Our Wonderful Guns.

"Is it much more effective than the powder of the past?" I asked.

"Yes," replied the secretary. "I can hardly describe its power. Some of the projectiles we now use weigh as high as 1,100 pounds, or half a ton, and the guns which shoot these great masses of steel and balls are forty feet long, and weigh more than sixty tons each. It takes 500 pounds of this powder for a single charge of one of these guns, and then it is half ton of chilled steel files from the muzzle of the gun at the rate of 3,100 feet per second and goes thirteen miles before it stops. Take your pencil and estimate what those figures mean. A ton is a good load for a team of horses. Four charges of powder for one of those guns would be as much as the horses would be able to pull. Two of those projectiles would be a wagon load, and to carry off the gun itself, were it loaded upon wheels, 130 horses would have to be hitched to it. Twenty-one hundred feet per second is the rate of almost a mile in two and a half seconds. If that velocity could continue the projectile would go on at the rate of about twenty-three miles a minute. It would cross the Atlantic in less than two hours and a half, and it would go around the world in less than a day. These guns are called the thirteen-inch guns. Four of them are to be placed on each of the battleships of the navy, and they form the main armament of the Indiana, the Oregon and the Massachusetts."

"Can we make as good guns as the Europeans?" I asked.

"There is no doubt of it," was the reply. "Experiments show that we are doing so. The gun manufactory of the navy yard here is one of the finest in the world, and a man from one of the big establishments of Europe when he visited it the other day said he had never seen anything equal to it. We can turn out guns very rapidly, and since its opening we have completed a large number of fine guns, ranging from four to thirteen inches in size, and weighing from 3,400 pounds to 135,000 pounds each. We have now 108 guns afloat, 326 completed and 1,400 more in the shop. We are now making armor piercing shells for our six and eight-inch guns, and will eventually make shells for our largest guns weighing 1,100 pounds. These big shells will go forth from the gun at a velocity of from 2,000 to 2,600 feet per minute."

Our Gun Works and Torpedo Factories.

"Are our naval factories such that we are now practically independent of any other nation in the making and equipment of our naval vessels?"

"Yes," replied the secretary. "We can make any kind of a gun that may be needed, and we are doing so. Some of the works now have at Bethlehem and at the Carnegie works near Pittsburgh we are in position to create as great a navy as the world can demand. What we now need is more battle ships. We need plenty of good torpedo boats to defend our harbors, and my idea of the navy is that it should be large enough to command peace and protect American citizens in their rights the world over. We have lately established a factory in this country for the making of torpedoes, and we are making some of the best armor of the world. The armor which binds the naval vessels today is of rolled or hammered iron, and we have added about 3 per cent of nickel, with such success that our plate is superior to any other armor plate of the world. It is the torpedo which has the most value in the naval warfare of today." I asked.

A Word About Torpedoes.

"I think there is no doubt of that," replied the secretary. "All of the great nations are adding torpedoes to their navies. Great Britain has nearly 300 and is building twenty-five more. France has 150 and is building forty. Russia has 150 and is building more. Germany has 109, and the other powers are well equipped. At a test of torpedo boats last week they destroyed four torpedo boats, and a squad of cruisers and gun boats. The result was that after seven days' trial these had destroyed one battle ship and six cruisers, and eighteen out of the twenty-four torpedo boats were destroyed. Of course, there was no question of the vessels being sunk, but the torpedoes were so fixed with collapsible heads that no real damage was done. It was, in fact, like the firing of a blank cartridge, but the effect was so terrifically estimated from the torpedoes having struck the ships. The result of the trial was as I have stated, and the estimate was that the battle ship and six cruisers destroyed amounted to about \$9,000,000, including 2,050 men. The value of the eighteen torpedo boats was about \$1,000,000, and the amount destroyed would have been only \$300. In other words, the torpedoes did about five times as much damage in proportion to their cost as the battle ships and six cruisers. The vessels which are now being built abroad are fast, and they range in size from 700 to 1,000 tons. They will go from twenty to twenty knots per hour. The torpedo boats are from 100 to 300 tons in size, and they will go from twenty-three to twenty-five knots per hour. They are armed with torpedoes, and they are about thirty-two miles, and these boats fly through the water at the speed of the average railroad train. They are armed with torpedoes, and they are about eleven feet long with a diameter of seven inches. They are so fixed that they can be sent as straight through the water as a ball from a gun. They are fired by powder or compressed air, and compressed air is the motive power which runs the engines in the torpedo and propels it by means of the propeller. They are so fixed that they can be sent at the rate of about thirty miles per hour, and they run by the air power contained within them a half a mile with accuracy."

"This is the Whitehead torpedo. The Howell torpedo is propelled by the gyration motion of a wheel which is attached to the spinning before the torpedo leaves the ship."

"How about electricity in the use of torpedoes?"

"The Simms-Edison torpedo is worked by electricity. Some of these are stationed off the coast of the United States, and they are exploded by electricity. The power comes from a machine on shore or on a ship. We have not found them as efficient as the Whitehead torpedo, and it is with the Whitehead and the Howell that our best experiments have been conducted."

"How about the dynamite cruiser?"

"You refer to the Vesuvius. This is a boat of 900 tons. It was finished in 1890 and it is armed with three dynamite guns, each of which is fifty-five feet long. These guns throw shells of dynamite weighing as much as 500 pounds each, and each gun can be discharged in three seconds. The boat has two engines, each of which has nearly 4,000-horse power, and in addition to these are two auxiliary engines. The boat is armed with three 3-pounders. It has a speed of twenty-two knots per hour and carries between sixty and seventy men."

Our Big Battle Ships.

"Can you give me some idea of our big battle ships?"

"We have three battle ships building of the first class, each of which is 10,300 tons in displacement. The first is the Indiana, which is 1,320 tons. We have also the Texas and the Maine, which range between 6,000 and 6,500 tons in displacement. The Iowa is 11,300 tons and is one of the largest ships in the world. With its full coal supply it will have a displacement of over 12,000 tons, and it is to be armed with three 13-inch guns. In order to give you some idea of one of these battle ships, this vast vessel is plated with Harvey's nickel steel, fourteen inches thick, with a wood lining twelve inches thick. She has turrets which are armored with 14-inch plates, and she will be equipped with four 13-inch guns, together with a number of 8-inch and twenty-eight rapid firing and machine guns. She will have 11,000-horse power, and she will have cost when she is completed about \$10,000,000. The Indiana has 13,250-horse power, while the Indiana and Massachusetts have each 9,000-horse power. The armor on these two last vessels is eighteen inches thick and they are to cost not more than \$4,000,000 apiece."

We Need Battle Ships and Torpedo Boats.

"Are we not spending a great deal on the navy?"

"Yes," replied Secretary Herbert, "but the amount we are spending now is considerably less in proportion to our population than that which we spent just before the war. I think expenditures ought to go on until we have a much better navy. We ought to have seven or eight more battle

ships and some torpedo cruisers and some torpedo boats."

The Monitors.

"How about the monitors?"

"They are especially valuable as far as the strength of our sea coast is concerned. We have five of them, the Oregon, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Terror and the Amphitrite. These ships are protected by armor ranging from nine to sixteen inches in thickness. They have revolving turrets and each of them has a speed of over ten knots an hour. They are so armed that they will shoot the great masses of steel and balls are developed on the basis of the old Monitor, and they are the most powerful ships of their kind in the world. They are especially adapted for the protection of our Atlantic coast because they can be navigated in water inaccessible to the deep draught ships of other powers and choose their own position."

"How about our cruisers?"

"We are building some of the best in the world. Take the New York. It is one of the strongest and swiftest commerce destroyers ever made, and any nation with a large commerce afloat will thank us before it makes war with us if we have many such ships. It is the same with other cruisers, and we are fast bringing ourselves into such shape that they could maintain the pace of any of the other great naval powers."

The Speed of Modern War Ships.

"How about speed?"

"The modern war ship is rapidly increasing its speed," replied Secretary Herbert. "We now go from seventeen to twenty-two miles per hour in naval vessels, and the time was when twelve knots per hour was considered fast. In considering the speed of a ship you must remember that a number of things come in question. The amount of fuel, the weight of the armor, the amount of gun, together with the amount of ammunition, form important items. If the ship is heavily freighted with armor it becomes so loaded that it cannot make the same speed on the same amount of coal if its armor were lighter. These things all have to be taken into consideration in the building up of these great ships, and it is no question of getting out of the way and of long marches at sea is quite as important as that of defense and attack."

Civil Service in the Navy.

"How about politics in the navy? Do they enter into the consideration of appointments?"

"As much as in other departments of the government," replied Secretary Herbert. "Civil service rules govern very largely in the administration of the department, and the navy yard, and it is no doubt true that in our navy yards more skillful and efficient work is done now than at any period in the past."

ASSOCIATIONS.

The Dark Continent.

"The Dark Continent," which will be by the Boyd for four nights, commencing Thursday evening, is a comedy-drama of exceptional originality and strength. That distinguished novelist, Hilar Hagard, has adapted the literary world with his wonderful tales of the heart of Africa and it was left to Messrs. Morrell and Moutillot to follow in dramatic sequence with "The Dark Continent." If the fact that the piece has enjoyed a successful run and is still being played by several companies in the English provinces is any criterion, it is probably the best play of the kind which has been written here since their work well. To the romance and adventure associated with diamond digging, the lifelike scene pictures of daily life in the mines of Kimberly, they have added scientific interest in a plot which portrays the vivid reality of the possibilities of the mysterious power of hypnotism. This is a comparatively unknown factor in dramatic construction, and it is this which has claimed the attention of the scientific world to an interesting extent, though to the common people it is still a supernatural rather than a logical force. There have been cases well authenticated in the United States scarcely less wonderful than those depicted by Hilar Hagard in the play. It is likely that for the two Sunday performances "The Plunger" will be played.

Old theater-goers, accustomed to the ordinary excellence of plays which come highly recommended by the critics of the larger cities, will be pleased to find that "The Old Homestead," to be presented at Boyd's this week. The most careful attention has been given by its author, by the ready detail stage craft, Denman Thompson did not know how well he would be judged in the world this beautiful play. He aims to present a carefully portraying a class fast becoming extinct—a simple, honest-minded countryman. So natural did he make his creation that the actor who played the part of the granter characterized in the Swaney farmer, and paid it the tribute of greatness.

This (Sunday) evening the Seabrook Opera company will present the effervescent "The Tale of Champagne," for the last time at Boyd's theater.

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

Alexander Salvini was married recently to Maceline Dixon, a lady in his company. The name of the very newest play is the alluring title of "A Pretzel."

Waldemar Malme, composer and teacher, for a number of years resident in St. Louis, has settled in Chicago.

Rubinstein's Vienna, "Moos," will be produced in Vienna December 3 by the Society of Friends of the Arts.

Kyrie Bellow and Mrs. James Brown Potter are now in Calcutta, India, giving readings from Shakespeare.

Tommaso Salvini, the great actor, quietly arrived in this country five days since, and will visit Chicago. He has not made up his mind whether he will appear on the stage.

Miss Agnes Hamilton will appear in New York early next week, in the play "The Work of Angiers." The scenes of the drama are laid in Virginia. Miss Hamilton's native state.

On and after November 1 ladies will not be admitted to the orchestra stalls in the Paris opera unless they remove their hats.

Tragicom Thomas W. Keene thinks there ought to be a national theater in this country. He proposes that one be instituted and endowed by the government and managed by a board of control composed of representative actors and actresses.

Joseph Jefferson, who is now said to be enjoying perfect health, will begin his short tour of the Walnut street theater, Philadelphia, early next week, and will act only in "Tip Van Winkle" this season.

Henri Marteau is to play a violin concerto by Dvorak upon the occasion of his reappearance before a New York audience. There is a possibility that Dvorak may conduct his work in person.

Silvinski, the Polish pianist, who makes his first appearance in this city at the Grand concert hall November 28 and 30, will play at the first concert Beethoven's concertos in G major and E flat, and at the second Chopin's D minor concerto and that of Schumann in A minor.

Conductor Sousa has under way the formation of a concert band of an international character, he is creating what is a Berlin syndicate to perfect the organization, and a representative of the syndicate is enroute from Berlin to complete the work.

The public has approved only one of the several attempts to impersonate Abraham Lincoln on the stage. This exception is in the play of "The Emancipator," which is presented at the Grand. The great war president appears but for a moment and has only one line to speak, but the situation is such that his appearance is most dramatic and impressive.

Four remarkable women are doing a very wonderful acrobatic performance in New York. They are called the Nelson sisters, and their names are Lillian, Lillian, Lillian, and Lillian. They are all 152 pounds, Lillian 154, Annie 154, and Katie 152. Their aggregate weight, therefore, is 622 pounds.

The managers of a recent national concert at Cleveland, O., had themselves \$10,000 on the wrong side of the ledger. They had hoped to dispose of the temporary auditorium, which cost over \$90,000, at a figure that would cover the deficit, but the financial stringency has made that impossible at the present time. The hall is in excellent condition, and a project is on foot to secure it for an exposition. The German singing societies will attempt to raise the larger part of the debt by a concert, which will be given at the Grand, and which the prima donna, Rita Elendi, has volunteered her services.

DeWitt's Witch Hazel Salve cures burns.

DOINGS IN THE MUSIC WORLD.

Death of Charles Francois Gounod and an Estimate of His Great Ability.

MME. PATTI'S NEW ONE-ACT OPERA.

Minor Mention of the Men and Women Who Ornament the Stage of Today—Plays in Store for Theater-Goers—During the Present Season.

The death of Charles Francois Gounod last week in Paris at a ripe old age, having been born in 1818, removes from the musical world one of its three greatest masters. Probably Gounod was not a genius in the sense that the great masters have been, and now and then he flashed out with a brilliancy and force that showed he was possessed of the "divine spark."

He was one of the greatest of the writers of sacred music, his requiems, masses, sacred songs and oratorios showing a deep reverence for the sacred things of life. Of his oratorios, "The Redemption" and "Mors et Vita" are the most ambitious. Gounod wrote many graceful orchestral compositions, among them the "Funeral March of a Marionette," which Dambrosch played so exquisitely first in Omaha last season; "Salsotto," and the "Meditation" of Bach's first prelude, which are great favorites with the public and deservedly so. His music is so good that it would write a first class and, and two of these, "Nazareth" and "There is a Green Hill," certainly will ever remain as parts of the great legacy of pleasure he has left to the world.

"Faust," however, deservedly ranks as the greatest of his works, having had its first presentation in 1839, since which time it has been in the repertoire of every legitimate opera organization and has been sung in all countries where opera is cultivated. With the single exception of the "Soldiers' March," the composition bears the imprint of rare poetical genius, the keerness and the garden scene, which has been surpassed in modern operas—the one for its picturesque variety, the other for its poetical loveliness. But the great masterpiece was adapted in the master who has passed out from the stage is the fact that, amid many powerful influences, he preserved his individuality and his style absolutely as his own.

The death of Gounod recalls the compliment he paid the great lyric artists of our times, Mme. Adelina Patti, when the latter sang in Paris not so very long ago. After the concert Gounod spoke forty or fifty words of praise to her, and then, in his sweet, gentle manner, which was so marked a characteristic of his, he said to her: "You are a great artist, and you cannot be replaced. You are Mme. Patti, which he hoped she would do him the honor to sing as often as possible. It was an artistic wish, in which to express the joy he felt over Patti's singing."

Mme. Patti, who returns to America next month, under the management of Marcus Daly, for a season in concert, was probably the greatest singer of her time. Her one-act opera written for the famous songstress by Emilio Pizzi and entitled "Gabriella," which she sang in Omaha last season, according to a letter from Craig-Nos, the soprano heroine (Gabriella de Merve) having for companions a contralto (Queen Anna of Austria), a bass (King of the Mountains), and a tenor (King of the Mountains). Mme. Patti-Nicolini are exceedingly well spoken of by those who have visited her in her native land, and she is a Welsh home of the songstress has been crowded with clever people all summer long. Mme. Patti, it is understood, is in excellent health and is looking forward with much interest to her approaching engagements in the provinces and states. According to arrangements made by Craig-Nos she will leave for Manchester in Sheffield, Glasgow and Edinburgh on subsequent dates. Having fulfilled these engagements she will return to the east on October 24, when she will leave for Manchester to sing at a concert there on the 26th inst. Liverpool, on the 27th, sailing for New York on the 28th to commence a six months tour.

During the latter part of August Mme. Patti-Nicolini was visited by the wealthy Russian prince, Mr. Kousnetzoff, who arrived in Swansea August 25, in his magnificent yacht, Foros, which cost between 200,000 and 470,000. During the brief stay of Mr. Kousnetzoff, the Russian merchant prince, he entertained the Patti-Nicolini party, and in the course of the afternoon's proceedings the princely couple, accompanied by the Patti-Nicolini party, were taken to the yacht club, where they were entertained with much interest to her approaching engagements in the provinces and states. According to arrangements made by Craig-Nos she will leave for Manchester in Sheffield, Glasgow and Edinburgh on subsequent dates. Having fulfilled these engagements she will return to the east on October 24, when she will leave for Manchester to sing at a concert there on the 26th inst. Liverpool, on the 27th, sailing for New York on the 28th to commence a six months tour.

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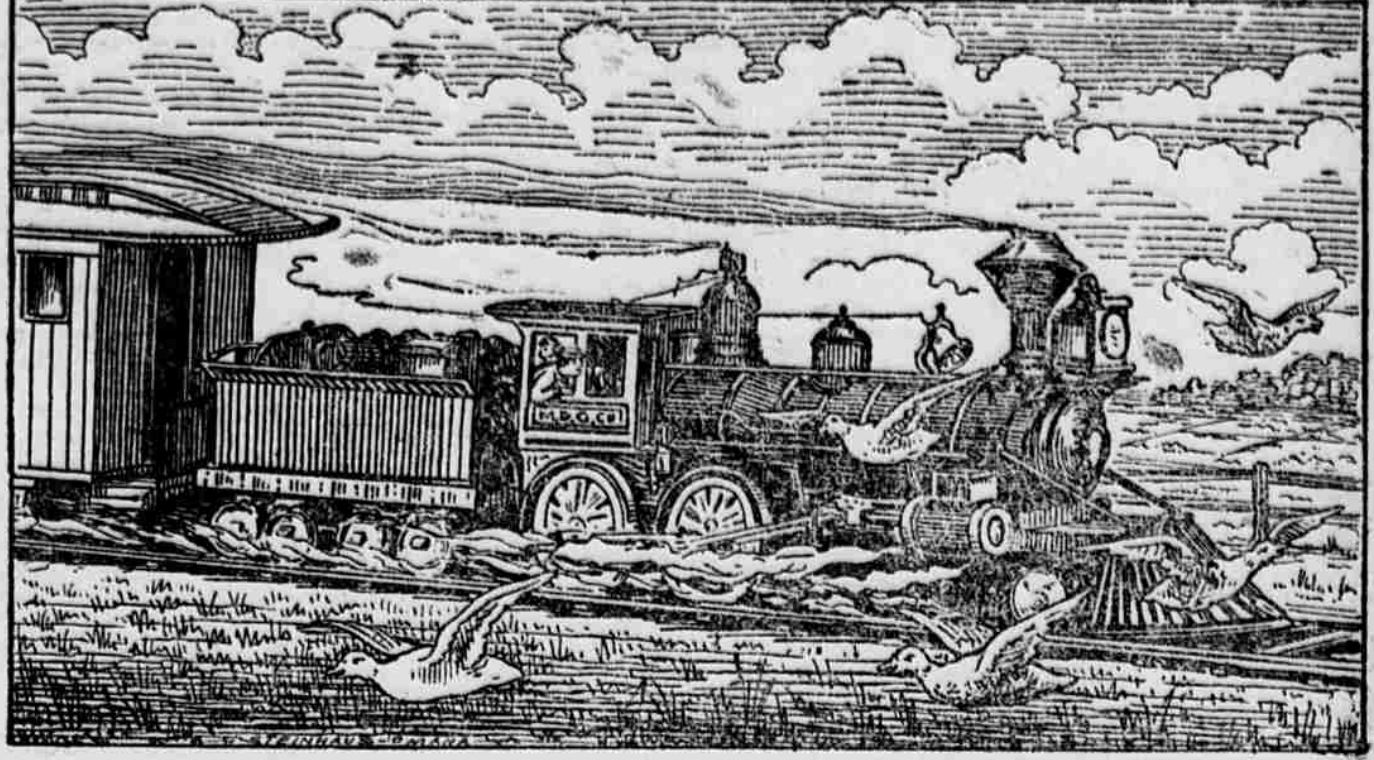
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Pulling the Throttle Wide Open!

The Valves of Our Commercial Engine Wide Open



And We Are Still Crowding on All the Steam. Yes, It Was a Big Day Saturday.

In spite of the warm October sun we were crowded all day, everybody eager to secure some of the phenomenal bargains we had on sale. Monday we continue the sale with unabated zeal, and Tuesday night will end it. You can't begin to realize what