

early rising. The completion of the American part of the Paris exposition far in advance of other buildings is an example of the American habit of hurrying, favorably commented upon by the president of the French Republic and by delegates or commissioners from all other nations. Commissioner Peck was surprised at the dilatory, restless habits of the French workmen. By his constant exhortation to them to "hurry," by his own example and that of the few American artisans he took with him, he succeeded in completing the American building in time for the opening day. According to the correspondents it was the only building ready for the exhibits. Painting, music, sculpture and literature are alleviations to the pain of existence. Life would be arid without them but the makers of literature are arrogant. The busy little business man who has made his capital by industry, brains and energy and keeps a great manufactory going by force of will and fertility of resource is disregarded or considered only as a subject for advice and expostulation from literary fellers. But if it were not for the bustle and hurry which has got on the nerves of the Englishman and the literary American there would be no money to pay for the expensive Turkish cigarettes of the writers who produce a page a day of choice English only to revise it next day as being unworthy of their reputation. The after dinner dreams, which they crystallize and sell at a dollar a crystal would be hurried and more frequently interrupted if it were not for the modest workers, whose hurry and preoccupation the men who have time to write out in full their first and second names do not comprehend or appreciate.

Mr. Elliot Gregory in the May number of *The Atlantic*, under the title "A Nation in a Hurry," distresses himself causelessly about the wear and tear of American life, the expenditure of vitality, the nervousness, tension, etc., etc., and the other familiar complaints urged by Dickens, Anthony Trollope and twenty others from their easy chair retreats, soothed and inspired by nicotine and self satisfaction.

America was discovered so late by white men that they have had to hurry ever since to catch up. The bourgeois American haste to accomplish in 408 years what it has taken other nations five or six thousand years to build or develop, shocks literary sensibilities. But as aforesaid, when the habit of energy is contrasted on the same job with Latin grace and indolence, the need of repose in American life does not appear so exigent to Americans as to the few who write books and "articles" disturbed by the noise of active life and strenuous exertion. The man who can make an honest living or accumulate a fortune even at the cost of tired muscles, and though the processes make a racket is entitled to the deference of all cults and even to the literary cult. The supercilious latter is the only one from which he will probably never receive it.

Cultivating the Roads.

Sun-flower and rosin-weed spread from season to season until they take possession of a field once serving mankind by ripening oats, wheat, or corn. The thriftiest farmers, more to drive out the weeds than for the sake of the ground, have planted the wide margins of the roads to oats, millet and corn. If all the farmers cultivate the highways nobody would object, their own arable land would be increased, and every farm within

reach of the wind-blown seeds of thistle, sunflower and rosin-weed would be benefited. Doubtless the first farmer who ploughed and planted the margins of the high way thought only of increasing his acreage. If the custom were universal the weeds might gradually be lessened if not finally destroyed. The little black specks that appear in Nebraska oatmeal after it is cooked and ready for the table are only chopped rosin weed, harmless, but suspiciously black and unhealthy looking.

• • •

Cigarettes.

Hundreds of sickly, red-eyed little boys aetat eight, more of nine, still more of twelve and fifteen years may be met on the street smoking cigarettes. Manufacturers of the poisonous packages insist that they are innocuous and that cigarette smoking is as beneficial to youth as it is profitable to tobacco dealers. So? But what is the cause of the blazzy, old faces, the flabby muscles, the red eye lids, the South American indolence and *laissez faire* of the boys who smoke them? They cannot all be the underfed, poorly bred children of the vicious. And the teachers say the boys whose clothes and breath smell of cigarettes are always inferior scholars. There are no statesmen, no great generals, no successful business men, nobody of any account who smokes cigarettes. This may only be a coincidence. It may also be a coincidence that the Spanish, the South and Central American people, the Turks and the French, all of whom smoke almost exclusively cigarettes, are undersized, of a pale, Chinese yellow, and lag at the tail end of the procession of nations.

In other places there are flourishing anti-cigarette leagues but nobody seems to care about the degenerating, flaccid, narcotized little Nebraska boy, who begins to smoke almost as soon as he doffs dresses and is graduated from the nursery.

• • •

The Pacific Cable.

The Alaskan route proposed by Mr. Harrington Emerson has not yet been seriously considered. The projectors of the southern route, twice as long and twice as expensive, summarily dismissed the proposition of the company who offered to build the northern cable without a subsidy from the government, but with a promise of national patronage. The objection that the ice in the north Pacific would cut the cable and prevent repairs is silly. There is no ice in the north Pacific in the region of the proposed route. The Japan current keeps the waters warm. The thousands of visitors to Alaska in the last twenty years are surprised most of all at the warmth of the climate, the luxurious vegetation of the coast districts, and the balmy, tender air. It is much further north of the Alaskan peninsula, and the chain of islands that the warm Japan current is finally overcome and the region of perpetual snow and ice begins. In this north Atlantic region there are no long stretches of deep sea without islands, but there is a friendly, neighborly chain of islands connecting North America and Asia. The waters are too cool for the coral insects, that pest of the Pacific which has shown an especial greediness for cables.

The Hill bill for a Pacific cable passed the Senate on April 11th. The cable it provides for is a Government line from San Francisco to Honolulu, with a view to extension hereafter to our more distant island possessions. The appropriation is \$3,000,000. The cable is to be laid by the Navy Department. When completed it is to be operated by the Post Office Department.

Revenue in excess of operating expenses to be paid into the treasury.

The House referred this bill to the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, which has reported it back with an amendment wiping out the entire Senate measure and substituting the text of the House bill introduced last December by Congressman Sherman of New York.

The Pacific cable contemplated by the Sherman bill, as afterward amended by the Interstate and Foreign Committee, is a very different enterprise from that which the Senate has approved. The government has nothing to do with its construction or operation except in time of war. The bill authorizes the Postmaster-General to contract with an American cable company for the transmission of official messages to Honolulu, Guam and the Philippines, and further to China and Japan, for twenty years at a rate not exceeding \$300,000 annually. That is, the cable of the House bill is to be a commercial enterprise, subsidized by the Government to the possible extent of \$6,000,000 in twenty years.

The annual deficit in the post office department induces the tax payers to hope that the department will not be given charge of the Pacific cable. The company that offers to lay this one in the north Pacific without subsidy and agreeing besides to lay one to Honolulu is still ignored in favor of the south Pacific plan which will keep the rubber, wire and cable wrapper manufactories busy for a longer period.

• • •

When England Conquers.

The ultimate victory of England in the Transvaal is assured. The brave Boers do not expect anything else themselves unless some other nation intervenes, as England has intervened in the past between them and the Zulus. England has conquered before and has grown wise. It is not likely that the Boers will be disfranchised or punished in any way other than that involved in becoming a part of the British empire. The French Canadians have shown how thoroughly since the sixty-three years of their last rebellion they have become a part of the British Empire. They have sent regiments to the Transvaal and the Roman Catholic Premier at Ottawa has shown himself a devoted servant of the empire. It is not enough for England to conquer by war. The Australian Englishman and the Canadian Englishman, vote and hold office. England to them is just what it is to an Englishman in England, not the little island but a great empire of loyal Englishmen. The Boer will vote and enjoy more freedom, though not as much tyranny after the war as before. A peaceful, loyal citizen is worth more than a rebel with a soldier to guard him. A newer or less experienced nation might overvalue the worth of victory. The problem of the Transvaal is to convince the Boer that he is to be allowed to run his own country, to be admitting settlers to a share in local self government. The French Canadian runs his own affairs. Be sure that it is no make-believe. The turbulent, exacting, excitable French are ready to fight at the drop of the handkerchief. They are as ready in Canada as in France. But for sixty-three years they have found no occasion. There has therefore been no cause for rebellion.

• • •

Millinery Birds.

William Wilson of Wantagh, New York, is the largest dealer in stuffed birds for hats in this country. He

says in *The Sun*. "I probably handle more birds than any other three men in the business." This statement may be only a boastful advertisement. So many men consider their business "the most important and most extensive of any in the United States." However that may be Mr. Wilson says he employs twenty men to skin and stuff birds for the millinery market. He says that nearly all of his birds are purchased in the market, skinned, their wings cut off, and resold to restaurateurs and hotel keepers.

"During the past year I have handled about twenty thousand wild ducks mostly teal, broadbills, mallards and shelldrakes, which were purchased in the markets of Washington, Baltimore and New York. All of these birds were killed for the market and would have been killed just the same even though it were not fashionable for the ladies to wear feathers on their hats. I might add that all of these were resold after being skinned, for table purposes. The same is true of the thousand of snipe and other game birds which are handled in the millinery line; the birds are killed for the market, and will continue to be killed, whether or not fashion calls for the use of feathers in the millinery art. The pigeons, which are used quite extensively, are purchased at the markets and from the sporting clubs, but the principal trade commodity is the wings of ducks and other game birds, which are chopped off by the marketmen and sold to me in large quantities. No song birds are killed for millinery."

Ornithologists, who have been employed to identify birds on the thousands of hats for sale in New York, report that larks, robins, blackbirds, bluebirds, swallows, wrens, hummingbirds, terns and gulls are used. And that the song birds of New England have been appreciably diminished. It is a point to be decided entirely by an examination of the wings and birds that decorate the hats. The statements of a dealer and taxidermist whose business has been affected by the agitation for the protection of song birds needs additional confirmation. Mr. William W. Wilson's address is Wantagh, Nassau County, New York. He keeps a record of all birds handled and offers to furnish any further information about the kind of birds handled in his trade, to any one interested in song birds and their preservation.

• • •

The Spanish Cannon.

"With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and will not interfere." Mr. Whedon quoted the foregoing clause in the Monroe doctrine last Tuesday afternoon to show that in espousing the cause of Cuba which until the Peace of Paris unwillingly belonged to Spain, the United States had broken the provisions and obligations of the Monroe doctrine. Yet Secretary Root quotes the Doctrine as though he still believed in its verbal inspiration and our own unswerving adherence. Mr. Whedon has a lawyer's habit of quoting documents and applying the quotation immediately to the point he is seeking to establish. From the enunciation of the Doctrine to the declaration of war with Spain, the people of America supposed they were keeping, and making an effort to keep the Monroe doctrine. As a matter of fact obedience has been accidental. There has been no temptation to break its provisions, which have been rather a favorite topic of speculation and reference than of any actual service as a guide or a light. The Spanish cannon presented by the government to the city of Lincoln and set upon a pedestal on the university campus is more than a symbol and souvenir of the war with Spain and American victory. It marks the beginning of the time when the east shall be west.