

joined himself with the fortunes of Isabella's son, Alfonso XII., and made an attempt to form a liberal constitutional party in the interests of the monarchy. From that for six years Sagasta was shuttlecocking about the administration first in high office, then in bitter opposition, but never inactive. In 1881 he again was raised to the head of the council of Spain. Again, in 1888, Sagasta's character seemed to undergo a change. Attired in but slightly restricted power, he became strikingly democratic and swept from office all those who were opposed to or not useful to him. Shortly afterwards his opponents gained the ascendancy again, and again Sagasta was temporarily pushed to the background, but in January, 1890, he again was put in charge of the ministry. Seeing inevitable trouble ahead if Spanish oppression of Cuba and other provinces continued, Sagasta sought home rule for Cuba and forced a law through the cortes giving Cubans comparative freedom. The law was never put in operation because of the state of insurrection existing in the island. Autonomy in Cuba having failed, Sagasta retired gracefully and his opponent, Canovas, was called to the charge of the ministry. In the turbulent times while the Spanish-American war was brooding, Canovas was assassinated, and for a short time a temporary cabinet held sway, but again Sagasta was called."

A HARVEST IS AWAITING THE GOLD BRICK vender in New York and for a time at least even the busiest New Yorker will not turn away from a bit of the shining metal. The reason for this is revealed in a telegram to the Chicago Chronicle under date of New York, January 6, as follows: "The wise ones in Wall street who think they know agold brick when they see it took passing kicks today at a shining bar of metal in lower Broadway. This brick of real twenty-two-karat gold, worth hundreds of dollars, was kicked about the financial district by messenger boys, jocular brokers and knowing financiers for an hour or so, when a stupid youngster who had never heard a joke in his life came along and picked it up. The owners were found to be assayers on John street and the boy was handsomely rewarded."

DIRECTORS OF THE STEEL TRUST MET in New York January 6 and declared a quarterly dividend of 1 per cent on the common and 13-4 per cent on the preferred stocks. A New York dispatch to the Chicago Tribune says that the financial statement was issued showing net earnings for the calendar year, with December estimated, of \$132,662,000. The net earnings for the quarter ending December 31 were \$31,339,613, an increase of \$1,579,700 as compared with the same period of 1901. From the net earnings for the year deductions are made of \$24,528,183 for sinking funds, depreciation, and reserve funds and for a special fund set aside for depreciation and improvements; of \$15,200,000 for interest on bonds; of \$3,040,000 for sinking funds for bonds; and of \$56,052,869 for interest on the stocks. These deductions have undivided profits amounting to \$33,841,565 for the year, applicable to increase, depreciation, and reserve fund accounts, for new construction or surplus. The cash on hand is \$54,724,106.

IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO PRESERVE FLOWERS and plants in their natural state if a process devised by Christopher Ross of Portland, Ore., reaches expectation. Mr. Ross claims that he can pluck blossoms and roses from the bushes, treat them and thus keep them alive forever. He says that one could not tell the difference between growing roses and a plucked rose if the latter had gone through the Ross treatment. Mr. Ross has not revealed the secret of his plan and the public must be content with the statement that it involves "the extraction of an element."

PUBLIC PRINTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD have recently contained many observations relating to the state of Count Tolstoi's health. Tolstoi has recently written a letter to the Russian Gazette protesting against these continually recurring notices. A cablegram from Moscow to the Chicago Inter-Ocean, referring to the Tolstoi letter, says: "He was prompted to write this letter by a motive which would be hard to understand outside of Russia, for the fact is that all Russia, from the official world to the ignorant peasant; and from the church, which hates and has shown that it fears Tolstoi, to the political dreamers who well know the power of his name,

is stirred as hardly any other intelligence could stir them, by any news in regard to the poor condition of Tolstoi's health. It is an open secret that the authorities fear that the day which will bring the news of the death of the great writer will see another of those apparently futile outbreaks, the significance of which is perhaps not always understood outside of Russia. For this the police, the church, the censor, and the whole array of authority have been prepared for more than a year. The most detailed instructions have been given as to what is and what is not to be done, and, above all, what is to be said on the day of Tolstoi's death."

A LOG CARRIER THREE THOUSAND FEET in length was recently completed between Eagle and Chamberlain lakes in northern Maine. The Bangor correspondent of the Chicago Inter-Ocean says that this is the longest log carrier in the world and that it will cause the bringing of many million feet of lumber down the Penobscot river to the sawmills of Maine which under the conditions that have prevailed since lumbering began in Maine would go down the St. Johns river to Brunswick mills although the logs were cut in Maine. The Inter-Ocean correspondent describes this accomplishment in this way: "The log carrier runs over the rising ground that divides the watershed of the Allegash river and the eastern branch of the Penobscot, the Allegash being a tributary of the St. John. The carrier is 3,000 feet long and its cable is 6,000 feet. It is built to last for years, and when running at its regular speed will deliver seven thirty-foot logs a minute, or about 4,000,000 feet a day. It will carry at a time 100 logs of that length. The cable is of steel rope, an inch and a quarter in diameter, and weighs 100 tons. The motive power for operating the plant connected with the carrier consists of a Westinghouse automatic compound engine of 150 horse-power and two sixty horse-power boilers of the locomotive type. The carrier will be in use for the first time when the driving begins next season, that is, about the 1st of May. At the same time its owners will launch into Chamberlain lake a steambot for towing logs which will be a revelation to old-time log drivers. This boat will have a length of seventy feet."

IT IS TO THE CREDIT OF LORD KITCHENER that he counts the construction under his direction of a railway rather than any of his conquests on the battlefield as his greatest achievement. This railway is located in the Soudan and the history of its construction is related in an article printed in the Century and written by Dr. W. G. Irving. Dr. Irving says that "obliged by limited appropriations to conduct all his operations at the least possible expense, Kitchener made use of every remnant of the equipment of Ismail Pasha's unfinished railway, rescuing dismantled engines from ditches, and collecting missing parts from the contents of scrap heaps. Near the Atbara his rails gave out, leaving a break of some distance to a necessary terminus. Every siding which could be spared was taken up, and then, the results being insufficient, the village of Wady Halfa was laid under requisition. Here many of the houses had straw roofs supported by rails from the old line. These were summarily appropriated, and after their removal Halfa presented a spectacle of a mushroom western town after a cyclone. But the line was completed."

THE GREATEST OBSTACLE IN THIS important work, according to Dr. Irving, was the all-important stretch of 230 miles from Halfa to Abu Hamid across the neck of the great bend of the Nile, an unbroken expanse of barren desert. Dr. Irving explains that the leading engineers of Europe declared it impossible to construct a railway across the tract, arguing that the entire carrying capacity of a train would be taken up by the water supply necessary for the locomotive. Nevertheless, assuming the responsibility, the sirdar ordered the work begun, relying on the indomitable pluck and skill of his subordinates in charge and his own habit of success. Near the middle of the course, at points some fifty miles apart, wells were sunk, an operation ridiculed by the natives, and with true Kitchener luck water was struck in both instances, so that the train now accomplishes the distance with only two extra water tanks. But all succeeding attempts to find water along the line—and they have been many—have proved fruitless. It was by means of this railway that the Soudan was conquered. By its construction the long route of nearly 700 miles by way of a river, for long stretches absolutely

unnavigable for ten or eleven months in the year, and even at flood impracticable save for small whale boats, hauled through the rapids at enormous toil and expense, was exchanged for a short, direct, unobstructed highway, its carrying capacity limited only by the shortcomings of a single pair of rails.

AN ISLAND OF SAND FORMED IN THE MISSOURI river opposite St. Joseph is the subject of an interesting litigation. According to the Kansas City Journal, the Buchanan county court caused a survey of this island to be made. Several men undertook to purchase it, offering from \$1.25 to \$25 per acre, but nobody seems able to give a legal title. The Journal says: "The lawyers who have investigated the case say that as it is far out in the river, neither Kansas nor Missouri can claim it, but if the river current ever shifts to the Kansas side the island will be in Missouri, and if it shifts to the Missouri side, it will be in Kansas. Jack Ring, undismayed by legal quibblings, has already taken steps to possess himself of the island. He has built a hut on it, in which he is living, and defies anybody to put him off. He claims it by right of possession, and declares that if the United States government does not vindicate his rights he will fight for them. 'I'll make a kingdom of it, and I'll be the king,' he declares. Ring is the son of an early settler who several years ago laid claim to a sandbar in the river, which afterwards, through the windings of the river, was added to the city and became valuable. He obtained title to it, and it has always been called 'king's island.' It does not belong to his son. How long the new island will exist is doubtful. Ring may wake up some night and find himself in the river. But trees have sent their roots down to bedrock, and it is thought unlikely that he will be swept away without warning."

SECRETARY OF STATE CROCKETT OF TENNESSEE is the great grandson of the famous Davy Crockett. Secretary Crockett has in his possession the rifle which was presented to Davy Crockett by his friends. The Memphis Commercial Appeal describes this relic in this way: "This gun was carried by the grandson of the first owner, the late General 'Bob' Crockett, who brought down much game with it, but now it has been retired with honor and full pay to pass the remainder of its days, or centuries, as a relic of one of the greatest characters this country has ever produced. It is a formidable looking weapon, originally of the flintlock type, with a 40-calibre bore. The barrel was originally forty-six inches long, but some of it has been cut off and it is now only forty and one-half inches. It was presented to David Crockett soon after his second election to congress in 1823, by some of his admiring young whig friends of Philadelphia. It cost \$250 and was made especially for him. The donors raised the money by contributing half a dollar each to the fund. The stock is trimmed in sterling silver, appropriately designed, with figures of the Goddess of Liberty, a raccoon, a deer's head, and other figures. Along the upper part of the barrel are the letters, set into the metal in gold, some of which has worn out: 'Presented by the young men of Philadelphia to the Hon. David Crockett of Tennessee.' In similar letters near the muzzle are the words, 'Go ahead.' It will be remembered that one of Davy Crockett's famous admonitions was, 'Be sure you are right, then go ahead.'"

PRINCESS IRENE OF PRUSSIA WAS BORN during the close of the war of 1866. When peace had been concluded her father, Prince Henry of Hesse, invited the officers and men of the regiments under his command to act as godfathers to his daughter, upon whom he bestowed the name "Irene," meaning peace. This young woman has therefore the distinction of having somewhere in the neighborhood of four thousand godfathers.

THE MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST church are congratulating themselves on the completion of the \$20,000,000 Methodist thank-offering. Of this sum \$8,000,000 will be applied to education. Another \$8,000,000 will be set aside for church indebtedness. Liberal sums will be appropriated for hospitals and provision will be made for retired clergymen. It is announced that this fund was raised by the rank and file of the Methodist church, very few large contributions were made. This enormous fund was raised under the management of Rev. Edmund M. Mills.