



# EDITORIALS



OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

## The Distressing Abuse of Christmas Presents.

Many people will sympathize with a writer in the Nineteenth Century, who complains that the custom of gift-making has degenerated into a system of barter.

How true this is we all must realize with the approach of Christmas and the shopping it entails. Pretty soon we shall sit down some morning, look over our memoranda, and out who sent us presents last Christmas, remember what was the approximate cost of each, and then start on a tour of the shops to purchase gifts of about the same value. And these we shall send to our creditor friends with a written message of Christian charity and holiday good cheer, but leaving over each parcel a heavy sigh of relief that this is off our minds and we are even.

Nor is that the worst of it, for very often we seriously embarrass our finances by paying our obligations of this sort and many a bill collector has made a man's life miserable for months because of such meaningless tokens of love and affection that generally do not exist.

As a matter of fact, the Christmas present, like the wedding present, has become a nuisance. It had its origin in a sweet sentiment, but that sentiment, except in the cases of families that are closely knit in genuine fondness (and how many are they?) has long since been destroyed by the ever-increasing costliness of gifts. The generous simplicity of the past is gone and ostentation has taken its place.

If you doubt this, just try sending no Christmas gifts next Christmas and the Christmas following, and see what happens. You will find that the man who gives no presents gets none. Even the glowing and philanthropic humanity of the Christmas season takes account of the dollars and cents and insists upon value received.

It is time for a reform of the abuses that have surrounded and spoiled the beautiful custom of celebrating Christ's birthday with evidences of peace on earth and good will toward men. As it is practiced now it is commercial, sordid and destructive of everything but hypocrisy.—Chicago Journal.

## A Land for Felons of All Nations.

What is the logic of keeping criminals at the public expense? Why should the community give a man free board and lodging for his life because he has broken the law? If a man is unfit to be at large in society, then, if self-preservation is the first law of nature, society has the right to eliminate him. This it does, foolishly, at present, by locking him up for a term of years or for life. In a few cases society kills the criminal, and thus gets rid of him irrevocably and cheaply; but this is hard on the criminal who may not be incorrigible. Hence capital punishment would be too severe for crimes less than the most heinous. The maintenance of prisons, however, is a heavy drain upon the taxpayers. Moreover, prisons are not reformatories, but rather colleges for education in the criminal arts and for the formation of the professional criminal character. Therefore, they are menaces as well as burdens to society.

Some nations have made a compromise with logic by establishing colonies, where felons are permitted, in a measure to shift for themselves. But these colonies are only half-way measures. The logical, humane and most effectual solution of the problem would be the setting apart of some great territory—say the heart of Africa or some large island, not too fertile—as a general dumping ground for the criminals of all nations. There the outlaws could set up a society of their own. Necessity would compel them to dig and build for themselves. They would have to work or starve. The frontiers or coasts of the felons' land could be policed by a patrol composed of detachments from the armies and navies of all the nations in order to prevent escapes. Summary death should be, of course, the penalty for breaking bounds. The powers, however, could refuse to take any part in the internal administration

## TRAVEL BY AIR.

Using Collapsible Air-Bag Inside Balloon Proper Meets with Success.

To regulate the height to which a balloon shall rise or fall is one of the interesting problems of aeronautics, and it usually has been solved by throwing ballast overboard or allowing the gas to escape. In balloonets, which have recently been tried in successful experiments, this is accomplished by having collapsible air-bags inside the balloon proper, into which air can be forced or withdrawn. While the idea is old, going back to the time of the first hydrogen balloon in 1783, it has only recently been put into successful application, though in 1884 air-reservoirs were employed to regulate the shape of balloons. During the first year Henry de la Vaulx and Henri Havre have made improvements whereby successful ascents and voyages have been made, and the altitude of the balloon nicely regulated. The balloonet is an annular compartment of lens-shaped section placed around the lower part of the balloon proper and provided with suitable valves. By forcing air in or out of the balloonet the displacement, and consequently the buoyancy, is altered. Thus in the first ascent made by M. de la Vaulx a crossing of the English Channel was made at a height of about 1,000 feet with the balloonet filled. On rising above the clouds the sun's rays would have expanded the gas within the balloon proper and carried the aeronauts to a strata where they would have been driven toward the Arctic Sea by the prevailing southerly winds had they not been able to descend to a lower level by using the balloonet. Thus they were able to proceed in the desired direction on this particular voyage, landing in Yorkshire after a trip of sixteen hours. By regulating the position of

of the territory set up. The criminals could do what they pleased, have anarchy or a communism, a republic or an autocracy, whichever suited them.—San Francisco Bulletin.

## At What Men Work.

A TABLE of the division of labor in different countries, published in the "Industrie Zeitung," of Berlin, presents some interesting facts and offers some profitable suggestions. Occupations are divided into three classes—namely, agriculture, horticulture and forestry; manufactures and mining, and commerce and transportation. It is interesting to observe that in the last named class America leads all the world save only Holland. With that one exception a larger proportion of our people are engaged in commerce and transportation than of any other in the world. That is doubtless because of the enormous development of railroads in America. Our percentage of men thus engaged is 16.3, while Holland's is 17.2, England's is only 13, Germany's is 10.6 and France's 9.4.

In manufactures and mining America has a comparatively low rank, her percentage being only 24.1. Scotland leads all, with 60.4, followed closely by England and Wales with 58.3. Germany has 37.4 and France 33.6. Belgium, Holland and Switzerland also, of course, rank high, each of them having more than one-third of the working population thus engaged. In the first class, of agriculture and allied occupations, America has a percentage of 35.9, while Germany has 37.5, France 44.3, Austria and Hungary, respectively, 58.2 and 58.6, and Italy 59.4. The only nations having smaller proportions in this class than America are Holland, with 30.7; Belgium, with 21.1; Scotland, with 12, and England and Wales, with only 8.

It may be seriously questioned whether it is well for a nation to show so great a disproportion among its occupations as England does, with only 8 per cent agriculturists against 58.3 in manufactures and 33 in commerce; or as Hungary does in the opposite direction, with 53.6 per cent engaged upon the land and only 12.6 in manufactures and 3.3 in commerce. A more even balancing among the classes would seem to be preferable, such as that of the United States, in which the balance is most even of all, with the possible exception of Holland. There is an old warning against carrying all the eggs in one basket, and farmers have long since learned the disadvantage of depending upon a single crop. So it is not well for any nation to devote itself too much to a single department of industry. The more varied and well balanced its occupations are, the more self-contained and independent it will be.—New York Tribune.

## May Test Britain's Strength.

It is evident that in some Continental capitals the idea is cherished that the opportunity for a blow against British sea power is to be expected before the end of the conflict between Japan and Russia. Any Power that is to be drawn into the attempt will be expected to use not only its navy, but as much of its army as can be made available. We think that bold and far-sighted statesmanship might prevent any such combination being brought into existence. But if the possibility exists, it ought to be the basis of all Great Britain's naval and military arrangements. It is such a combination as this which ought to be the hypothesis in every scheme of imperial defense. The people of this country ought to be well aware that a combination against them is possible. They ought to know that this is the one danger against which their preparations should aim at rendering them reasonably secure, and that security against the most dangerous attack would involve greater security against less formidable forms of conflict. Recent ministerial accounts of the ideas of the Committee of Defense hardly carry the conviction that the hypothesis has been worked out. Yet there never was a time when both the political and the strategical vigilance of a British Government were more urgently necessary than at the present moment.—London Morning Post.

## POWERFUL SEARCHLIGHTS AT PORT ARTHUR.



One of the big searchlights used by the Russians at Port Arthur is shown in the illustration. From the forts these projectors were worked incessantly at night, and their intense white rays disclosed whatever movements the Japanese made. The light, when thrown on an advancing enemy, also tends to dazzle and confuse them. In conjunction with the electric projectors the Russians also used star shells, which in exploding brilliantly lighted up the immediate territory.

the balloon with the balloonet is possible to save ballast, so that much longer trips can be taken with favorable winds. Further trips in this balloon were equally successful, and demonstrated the success of the balloonets, and this arrangement should be advantageous in dirigible balloons or on air ships, as they would supply a simple means of regulating the buoyancy of the envelope containing the gas.

## Webster's Lost Opportunity.

The campaign of 1840 had a dramatic and unexpected sequel. Thurlow Weed, before the meeting of the whig convention, sought out Webster and urged him to take second place on the ticket with Harrison, but the suggestion was rejected with scorn. An acceptance of Weed's advice would have made Webster President in little more than a year.

## EVANGELINE BOOTH, NEW LEADER OF THE SALVATION ARMY.

Commander Evangeline Booth, the new head of the Salvation Army in America, is a daughter of General William Booth, and is one of the most able and brilliant platform orators of the present day and is famous as an organizer. For the past fifteen years she has had charge of the active work of the Salvation Army in Great Britain and Canada, and during that time has founded a great public school system in Newfoundland and established



MISS EVA BOOTH.

evangelical camps and libraries among the miners of the Klondike. It was through her personal influence among members of the British House of Commons that the obnoxious by-laws regarding religious meetings on public thoroughfares in England were repealed.

## A PRESIDENT'S STEEL HOUSE.

There are occasions when rulers of South American republics must sigh for "a lodge in some vast wilderness," but Cipriano Castro, President of Venezuela, lives the year round in the most extraordinary dwelling ever inhabited by the head of a state. It stands within a park in the heart of the capital city, Caracas, and, says Tit-Bits, is built entirely of steel.

This remarkable government house is covered on the outside with a kind of soft stone, so that the stranger would think it just an ordinary dwelling, save that it seems rather small to serve as the residence of the first man of the land. Within, the walls are covered with laths and plaster, so that here, too, the visitor sees nothing unusual. Yet the walls, floors and ceilings of the half-dozen rooms composing the house are entirely of steel, and the whole is built upon a foundation of hundreds of tons of Portland cement.

President Castro erected the house at huge expense, designing that it should be earthquake-proof. He and his wife have had good reason to be afraid of earthquakes.

When the little town of Cucuta, a suburb of Caracas, was some years ago shaken from the face of the earth, as a crumb from a table-cloth, Senora Castro was the only member of her family to escape with her life. President Castro himself, who happened to be standing on a hill outside the town, saw his abode crumble like a house of cards upon the heads of those within.

Again, in October two years ago, a midnight earthquake threw President Castro from his bed. Then, in his fright, he jumped through a window to a paved court, and broke his leg. The next day he conceived the idea of the steel house, believing that a house built of that metal upon a very deep, solid foundation of cement would withstand any earthquake, no matter how violent.

Accordingly, he ordered from the United States steel beams for the frame and steel plates for the walls, ceilings and floors, and many months were spent in the construction of the only steel house, so far as known, in the world. As soon as it was finished and furnished the Castros moved in.

As President Castro owns both the house and the park surrounding it, he will probably continue to live in this abode of steel after the expiration of his term of office.

## Not a Favorite Breed.

Lovers of good, plain dogs which have been allowed to grow naturally will appreciate the story of the English peddler who went to a dealer in dogs and thus described what he wanted:

"Hi wants a kind of dog about so 'igh an' so long. Hit's a kind of gry'ound, an' 'it ain't a gry'ound, because 'is tyle is shorter nor any o' these 'ere gry'ounds an' 'is nose is shorter an' 'e ain't so slim round the body. But still 'e's a kind o' gry'ound. Do you keep such dogs?"

"No," replied the dog man. "We drowns 'em."

## Refused to Take Talk from Him.

Broker—What shall I do? My wife won't be dictated to!

Friend—I don't blame her.

Broker—But, man, I married my stenographer!—Princeton Tiger.

When we read of a party now, and the sentence occurs: "Refreshments were served," we shiver.

## BITS FOR BOOKWORMS

George Cary Eggleston's juvenile, "Running the River," has been adopted by the Kansas Pupils' Reading Club.

"Oriental Aphorisms," gems of East Indian philosophy, compiled by Emily Palmer Cape, a 16 mo. packed with condensed wisdom, is among the recent books of the Grafton Press, New York.

A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago, will publish at an early day "Beaconsfield: A Romance of Queen Victoria's Reign," by an Englishman whose identity is not revealed. It is apparently a compound of historical novel, romance, biography and study of society and of politics, and, most of all, a study of that most extraordinary man of the nineteenth century, Benjamin Disraeli, at once statesman, man of the world, sport, romancer, dreamer and prophet.

"A Dictionary of the Drama," a guide to plays, playwrights, players and playhouses in the United States and Great Britain from the earliest times to the present, a two-volume work by W. Davenport Adams, is nearly ready for publication by the J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia. Indeed, the first volume is out. Attention is given to managers, scenic artists, musical composers, critics and writers about the theater, as well as for the theater.

Jack London in appearance suggests rather the sailor than the man of letters, the "Sea Wolf" in his milder moods rather than his assumed biographer. Of medium stature and weight, he is broad shouldered, well muscled, sturdy, and of a sea breezy carriage, with the roll of the mariner in his gait. He is smooth shaven, has a firm, square set chin, keen gray-blue eyes, and a mouth with what a gushing admirer terms "pictured corners." Among his hobbies are kite flying and Socialism. He is fond of sailing, and does much of his writing aboard his sloop yacht in San Francisco Bay.

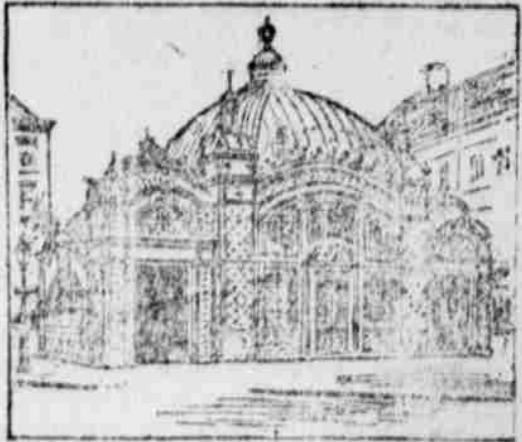
Hall Caine, it is stated, spent three months in Iceland accumulating data and local color for his latest novel, "The Prodigal Son." He then induced an Icelandic to accompany him to Switzerland, Paris and the Riviera, where the other scenes of the story are laid, for the purpose of observing the impressions that these places made on a native of that remote land of ice and snow, and also that he might employ his companion as a sort of peripatetic encyclopedia of information, to whom he could refer when his own memory failed him, or when new points to be settled arose in the planning of the book.

Certain critics of a Sherlock Holmes turn of mind have assumed to detect in Anthony Hope's latest novel, "Double Harness," a reflection of the author's changed views of matrimony since his own marriage a little over a year ago. The married Londoners in the book do not, it is true, find their paired condition in all respects satisfactory, and the volume does not present the usual cleverly cheerful characteristics of most of Mr. Hope's previous work. Unfortunately for the ingenious theories of the literary sleuths, it now is stated that "Double Harness" was written a year before the author's wedding, and was, indeed, begun before he had even met the young woman who is now his wife and who recently presented a little daughter to him.

## A SUBWAY RAILWAY STATION.

One of the Handsome Kiosks Erected at Budapest.

The cut illustrates one of the handsome kiosks erected at stations of the Budapest underground railway. In comparison with these tasteful structures, with their graceful domes and



STATION OF UNDERGROUND ROAD.

crown shaped cupolas, their miniature towers, stained glass windows and artistic colored tiles, the so-called kiosks at the entrances of the New York subway seem especially banal and unprepossessing. Budapest was the first city to adopt the underground trolley, having enjoyed the use of the great traffic convenience for eight years. The line is only two miles in length, but it is a great improvement over anything yet attempted either in America or in England.

When an attorney offers to settle, listen.