

Current Topics

The World's National Debts.

A comparative study of the debts of all nations, contributed to the August North American Review by O. P. Austin, shows that the national debts of the world now aggregate \$31,800,000,000, or ten times the sum owed by the nations a century ago. The major part of this startling increase has been incurred in the last half century. Wars and the maintenance of great armies and navies have been chiefly responsible for this increase, but in some cases the debts represent investments in railways and other public utilities. Germany owns most of its railways. Two-thirds of the railways of Russia



O. P. AUSTIN.

are owned by the government. The debt of Australia represents only public utilities. Great Britain's debts which is \$5.06 per capita represents war and speculations in other countries. Our debt represents war alone.

France has the greatest national debt in the world, amounting to more than \$5,800,000,000. Every man, woman, and child in France pays \$6.28 every year for interest on this debt. Australasia, with its annual per capita interest payment of \$10.14, is the only country that surpasses France on this score. In the United States the per capita cost of the national debt is only 44 cents annually.

We could purchase all the railroads in the country and run them through the national government and still have less per capita debt than France or Great Britain.

Though the debts of the nations are ten times as great as they were a century ago, the increase rests on a fairly solid basis. The century has expanded the wealth of the nations fully tenfold, while the great increase in instruments of exchange probably has produced a corresponding expansion in the circulating medium. The lower interest rates of today also are an important element. Most of the national debts now draw only from 2 to 3 1/2 per cent, while a hundred years ago the rates were double those figures. In 1865 the United States was paying 7.3 per cent, where it now pays 2 per cent, the lowest rate on any national debt in the world. If all the nations showed as strong a determination to pay their obligations as does the United States there would be no need of the world's national indebtedness.

Mrs. Ruffin Uncertain.

Mrs. Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, the Boston colored woman who was re-



MRS. RUFFIN.

fused a seat at the biennial convention of the National Federation of Women's Clubs in Milwaukee last year, has not yet decided whether she will try again at California next year. The Northeastern Federation of Colored Women's Clubs at the closing session of its convention in Springfield last week, voted to send Mrs. Ruffin again. She herself, however, did not know of this action until yesterday.

"The matter will require a great deal of thought," said she when asked about it. "I have other organizations to consult before taking any action. The convention is a whole year off, and there is plenty of time in which to decide."

Anti-American Newspapers.

A bombshell will be thrown into the office of several metropolitan newspapers in December when a certain senator of the United States introduces a resolution asking for an inquiry into the ownership of certain newspapers that are advocating anti-American ideas in this country. It will be charged that fifteen of the leading papers are owned abroad and a remedy will be sought. It is quite likely that no further remedy than a thorough exposure of the black sheep will be necessary.—Journalist.

News and Views

A Wife's Privilege.

In New York city recently a husband had his wife arrested on the charge of going through his pockets while he slept and taking from them \$57 and a lot of valuable papers. The magistrate before whom the case was tried held that the wife was guilty of theft, and, although he dealt leniently with her, he permitted it to be understood that she could have been indicted, tried, and found guilty of larceny. For the defense, as was quite natural, it was held that a wife could not possibly pick her husband's pockets, because, man and wife being one, his pockets were to all intents and purposes her pockets, and their contents to all intents and purposes were as much her property as his. One cannot rob one's self, and how, therefore, could this woman be found guilty of theft for taking what belonged to her husband—that is to say, what belonged to herself? For the prosecution it was held that the husband and wife are one in theory only, not in fact. The law recognizes this, it was contended, when it deals with husbands and wives as individuals. The law treats the wife as a separate person, it was held, when it grants her certain distinctive rights and protects her in the enjoyment of them, when she is permitted to hold property in her own name, and when she is privileged to do many things which her husband cannot legally prevent her from doing. The magistrate was influenced by the arguments for the prosecution to hold that, whatever a wife's privileges may be, she has no business to ransack her husband's pockets or to take anything from them without his consent. There is little danger that the New York case will establish a precedent, or that husbands in general will have their wives arrested for going through their pockets. When the average man of good sense, good behavior, and small means considers how often and how painfully his wife is disappointed as she goes through his pockets he will not think of depriving her of the privilege.

Healed by a Pardon.

Some time ago Judson Arkell who had been convicted of embezzling



JUDSON ARKELL.

funds from a national bank in Rutland, Vt., was let out of the penitentiary by a pardon. It was granted because it was represented that the cashier was fatally ill and could not live but a few days. The petitioners for his release said it would be an act of mercy to let him out so that he might not die in a prison cell. Last week this moribund cashier set off, in perfect health, for a long hunting trip in the Adirondacks. It is admitted now that he never was sick at all and that he was "Shamming Abraham" all the time he was in the prison hospital. He got a pardon under false pretenses, but it is an irrevocable pardon. Deception pays sometimes, even when detected. This cashier is not the first man who has been let out of prison to die and has recovered his health at once, nor will he be the last, so long as prison doctors are gullible and presidents and governors are merciful. Therefore it may not be inexpedient to substitute for the unconditional pardons which it has been customary to give to those who are about to die release from imprisonment for a purpose only, the convict to be taken back to prison the day that he shows any symptoms of recovery.

Goes to Education.

Mary Carroll of Boston, whose father, who when he died, left the income of the estate, valued at about \$400,000, to her for life and then to the Uni-



MARY CARROLL.

versity of Virginia, has arranged that the income of the entire estate, less \$5,000 reserved for herself, shall be transferred to the University of Virginia after April 1, 1902.

SAYINGS and DOINGS

Was True to Lost Cause.

Judge William Cecil Price, United States treasurer under President Buchanan, died in Chicago last week at the age of 86 years. Judge Price had lived with his daughter for the last three years, going to Chicago from Springfield, Mo., where he had practiced law after the war. Before the war Judge Price was prominent in national affairs. He refused to continue in office when President Lincoln was



WILLIAM CECIL PRICE.

elected because of his sympathy with the southern cause. He was born in Russell county, Virginia, April 1, 1816, and was graduated from Knox college at Nashville in 1835. A year later he moved to Springfield, Mo., and practiced law. In 1845 he was appointed United States deputy surveyor of lands under General Conway. Two years later he was elected probate judge of Green county, Missouri. His election to the state senate followed in 1854 and three years later he resigned from the senate to accept the position of judge of the circuit court of Missouri. In 1859 he was made commissioner of western lands and a year later, when Judge Casey, United States treasurer, died he was appointed by President Buchanan to fill the unexpired term. When Buchanan was succeeded by Lincoln the latter proffered the same place to Judge Price. The judge went to Jefferson Davis and offered his services and the confederate president offered him a place in his cabinet. This Price refused, wishing a more active field. He was appointed major of cavalry and joined the army led by his cousin, General Sterling Price, and fought against the union troops. At the battle of Pea Ridge, Ark., he was captured. For eight months he was held prisoner at Alton, Ill. When his exchange occurred he rejoined the army and fought until the conclusion of the war. At the end of the war he went to St. Louis and thence to his old home at Springfield, Mo.

Constitution's Skipper.

Captain Urias Rhodes, who commands the yacht Constitution, the new cup defender, comes from a long line of sailing masters. He is a son of that famous south shore of Long Island which has been the cradle of most of the captains of the cup defenders. His father, a white old veteran of 73, was a famous sailor man in his day and he gave the present Captain his first lessons in sailing a racing boat. Since he was 12 years old Urias Rhodes has



CAPT. RHODES.

practically lived on the water. He first commanded an oyster schooner. That was when he was but 16 years old. Later he was the skipper of an excursion yacht, in which capacity his skill attracted the attention of a member of the New York Yacht club, who gave Captain Rhodes his first command of a racing boat. He piloted the famous Lasca to many victories and took it to Europe in 1894, making the trip across the Atlantic in fifteen and one-half days. Captain Rhodes is 49 years old, in the prime of his strength and skill.

Crowded with Work.

It is said by a good authority that the American shipyards, where steel vessels are built, have orders which will keep all of them busy for the next twelve months, and some of them for a longer time. This applies to the yards on the great lakes as well as to those on the seaboard. Some of the vessels under construction are battleships or cruisers for the American navy. Others are to be used in the coasting trade. A few are to be employed in overseas commerce under the American flag. Six large freight boats are being built for the Atlantic transport line. Two steamers of about the same dimensions as the immense Celtic of the White Star line are being built to ply on the Pacific in connection with the Great Northern railway. Two large vessels for the Pacific Mail Steamship company are nearly finished.

SHAFFER LABOR, COLOSSUS.

Should the steel workers' strike assume the worst form that it possibly could nearly one million men would quit earning wages. When one comes to a full realization of what such a condition might bring about the prospect is nothing less than appalling. Suppose that a million men should take it into their heads to reopen the mills on their own account, it might be a long time before they could be disposed of. Or suppose they should organize into an army. As a Chicago paper says, the result "might stagger humanity." Thus a difference between capital and labor that is trivial in its intrinsic merits as related to the masses of the people in general, in the absence of compulsory arbitration machinery, might lead to conditions so far-reaching that all would suffer from its effects.

Master of Men.

Men called out at first..... 70,000
Men called out by second order 330,000
Federation of Labor (may join)..... 2,000,000

The army of workers..... 2,400,000

Master of Money.

Stock of steel trust..... \$1,100,000,000
Underwriting fund..... 25,000,000
Other available money..... 50,000,000

Total trust fund..... \$1,175,000,000

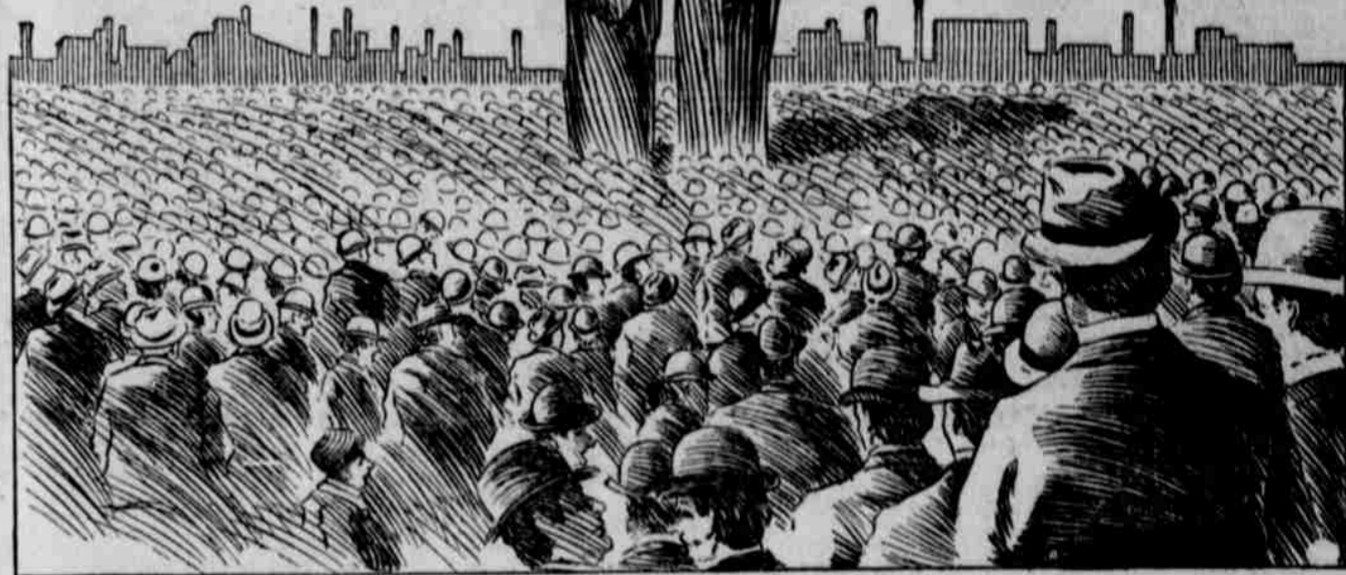


President Shaffer of the Amalgamated association says that the question to be settled is "whether unionism is to stand or fall." To the extent that that is the issue in the present contest it is one of his own making.

It is alleged by him and by other members of the organization at the head of which he is, that the men who control the great steel companies have long been determined to undermine and finally destroy the Amalgamated association, and that the demands made by that association were in the nature of self-defense. Those who make these statements presumably believe them to be true, but they have presented no evidence to show that they are true. They have called attention to the fact that in dull times union mills are closed while non-union mills are kept running. This has been complained of as discrimination. It so happens that the non-union mills were the better equipped ones and goods could be made more cheaply in them.—Chicago Tribune.

In Hongkong there are only 409 women, and in Hawaii 533 women, to every 1,000 men.

About 15,000,000 pounds of foreign macaroni are imported to this country yearly.

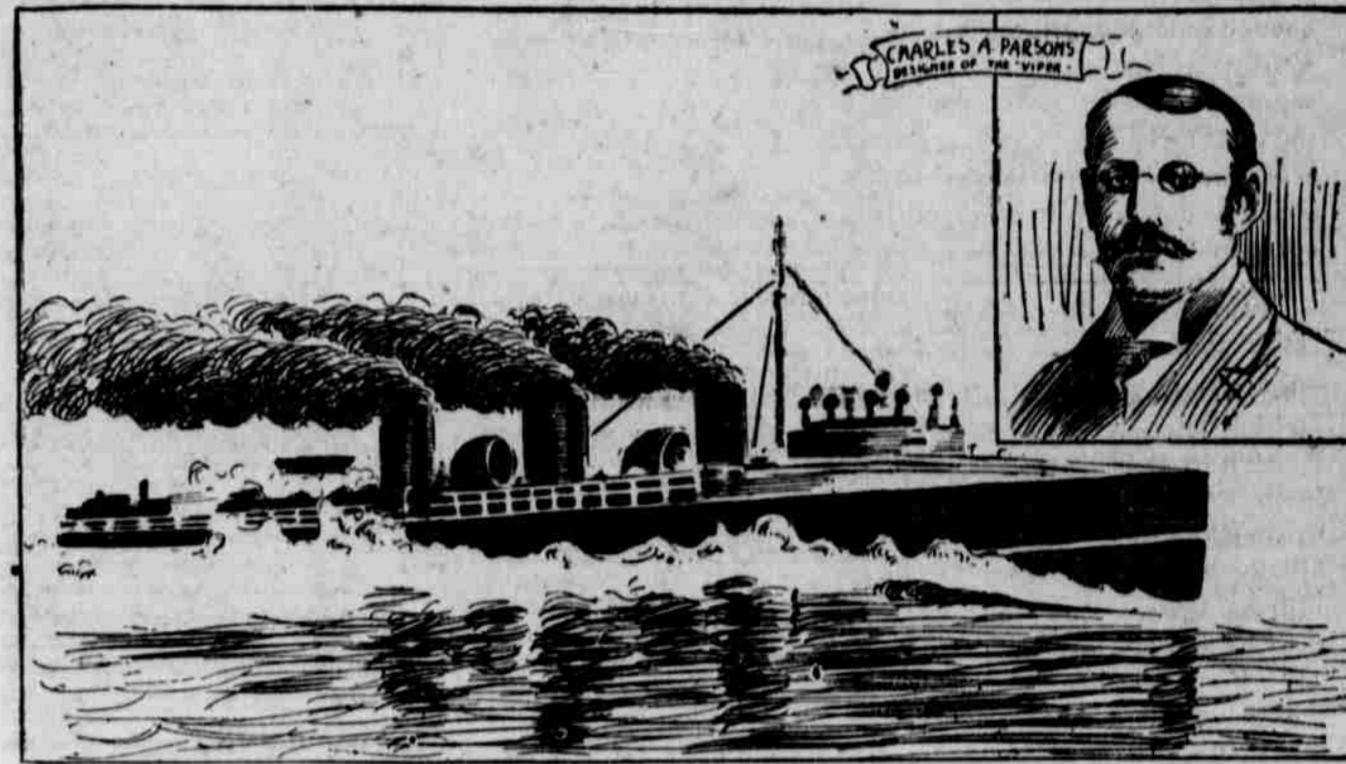


Destruction of the Destroyer "Viper."

The British torpedo boat destroyer Viper, which was wrecked on the rocks off Alderney island, in many respects was the most remarkable boat afloat. She was the first vessel to be fitted with the famous steam turbine engines invented by C. A. Parsons, younger brother of the Earl of Rose and fellow of the Royal Society. She was also the fastest ship in the world. On her trial trip about one year ago she steamed at the rate of 43 miles an hour. Those who saw the trial said that the ship passed them with a roar grand to behold. The Viper was built for the British government. She was

fitted with engines especially designed for speed by Mr. Parsons. Her length was 210 feet, her beam 21 feet and her displacement 350 tons. Her horsepower was 11,000. The hull was driven through the water at extraordinary speed by four screw shafts entirely independent of one another. Two shafts on one side were driven by one high and one low pressure turbine respectively. Her great speed and her compound engines made the Viper interesting as a suggestion of the possible ocean passenger ship of the future. In 1884 Mr. Parsons constructed the first compound steam turbine directly coupled to a dynamo. It ran at 18,000

revolutions per minute and its simplicity, speed of revolution and perfect steadiness made a great impression on the engineering world. The discussion which followed brought out the prediction that the time would soon come when ocean ships of the first class would travel at the rate of 50 to 60 miles an hour. The only drawback to the use of these peculiar engines is the difficulty of reversing their action. Since going into commission the Viper had been the object of great curiosity among naval architects generally. As a torpedo boat destroyer she was of course considered the most efficient vessel of that kind in the world.



The Katipunan Secret Society.

Colonel Kennon of the United States army contributes to the North American Review the most complete account of the Katipunan thus far published. His article makes it easy to understand the important part this murderous secret society played in the recent insurrection in the Philippines. The Katipunan sprang into existence at Manila nine years ago and spread rapidly through the Tagal provinces, taking its membership chiefly from the most ignorant classes. Its avowed object was to agitate for reforms, and it soon incurred the hostility of the Spanish government. Colonel Kennon says Aguinaldo and other prominent members of the Katipunan suddenly began the insurrection of 1896 in order to escape arrest. By the time the Americans arrived in 1898 the society had become a powerful instrument for evil in the hands of its leaders, says the Chicago Tribune.

The secret initiations of the Katipunan are of a terrifying nature and include the signing of the candidate's name with his own blood. Every device is used to impress credulous members with the fact that they must obey the orders of their Katipunan chiefs on pain of death. When Aguinaldo and his fellow-leaders decided to assume control of the islands they began by declaring all Filipino members of the Katipunan, and his alleged republic was made practically identical with

this secret society. The people were forbidden, under pain of death, to accept any office under the Americans. Disobedience of the secret orders of the Katipunan was followed by secret or open murder.

Colonel Kennon gives a startling list of authenticated cases in which men and women were put to death in cruel and shocking ways by this pitiless society. Neither sex nor age was spared, and the natives dreaded the secret, swift, and sure vengeance of the Katipunan more than they feared the American soldiers. The reign of blood and terror maintained in the last two years, and only now ceasing, surpasses that of the Ku Klux in their worst days. Colonel Kennon says the victims murdered by the Katipunan in the last two years number hundreds, if not thousands.

The effect of such a reign of terror upon the ignorant and timorous natives was to give the insurrection an apparent vitality which it never really possessed. From time immemorial the Filipino people has obeyed the authority which he feared most. In this case he obeyed the Katipunan, and, even when he was robbed or his relatives were murdered he dared not denounce the perpetrators of the crimes to the American authorities. This was the power by which Aguinaldo pressed many of his recruits into service and forced supplies and money from every village visited by his agents. His own

collapse is, in part, a reaction from that reign of blood.

Canada Waking Up.

Home rule in Canada is so far accomplished that a coinage system will be established and a mint will issue the new money. Heretofore Canadian coins have been minted in London under imperial supervision. Decimal coins have been issued, but they were of imperial weight and fineness. The new coins of Canada are to have a name entirely unknown heretofore in the vocabulary of finance. They are to be called "beavers," that animal being an emblem on the Canadian flag. A "beaver" will be the same as an American eagle, \$10; half "beavers," \$5, and "double beavers," \$20, like our double eagles, also will be coined. The Spanish decimal system will be maintained in the silver coinage. As four-fifths of the travelers in Canada are Americans, they must study with interest the new Canadian coinage. It is peculiar, but not unintelligible.

Last year the markets of New York paid as revenue into the city treasury \$258,000 from rents, exclusive of \$48,000 collected from stalls and privileges in Wallabout market, Brooklyn, and \$3,000 from market cellar rents, a total of more than \$300,000.

Venice has a cafe which has been opened day and night for 150 years.