

UNITED STATES GIVES WARNING TO EUROPE.

Germany and Great Britain Will Not Be Allowed to Go Too Far in Their Efforts to Coerce Venezuela.

SITUATION LIKELY TO LEAD TO INTERFERENCE BY THE UNITED STATES.

Notice has been served by the United States on Great Britain and Germany that it "must not be understood as giving its consent to any extension of the international right of a peaceful blockade."

This, in effect, is a notice that the United States will not permit the two European nations to take any action looking to war on Venezuela. In fact, it may be a precursor of interference by the United States to prevent actual hostilities.

The right of all nations to collect their debts is recognized by all gov-

ernments, but the United States does not assent to the proposition that so far as this continent is concerned European nations can proceed to actual hostilities without notice.

Must Not Punish Venezuela.

In other words, this government will not stand by and see Germany and Great Britain punish Venezuela for the nonpayment of its debts, especially when assurances were repeatedly given that the only means resorted to would be a "peaceful blockade." This government will not consent to those two nations going beyond the limits of a peaceful blockade in collecting its claim.

It is now openly acknowledged by officials of the government that the Venezuelan situation has assumed proportions beyond what the United States had expected or been led to expect by England and Germany. It is even admitted that the situation is extremely serious from the view point of this government's concern in the affair. What was considered to be a more trivial incident in the affairs of the world is now regarded with feelings of apprehension in Washington.

The bombardment of the Venezuelan town of Puerto Cabello by the allied British and German fleets began Dec. 14. The British cruiser Charybdis opened fire on the town at 4:30 in the afternoon. The customs house was demolished, and the forts badly battered.

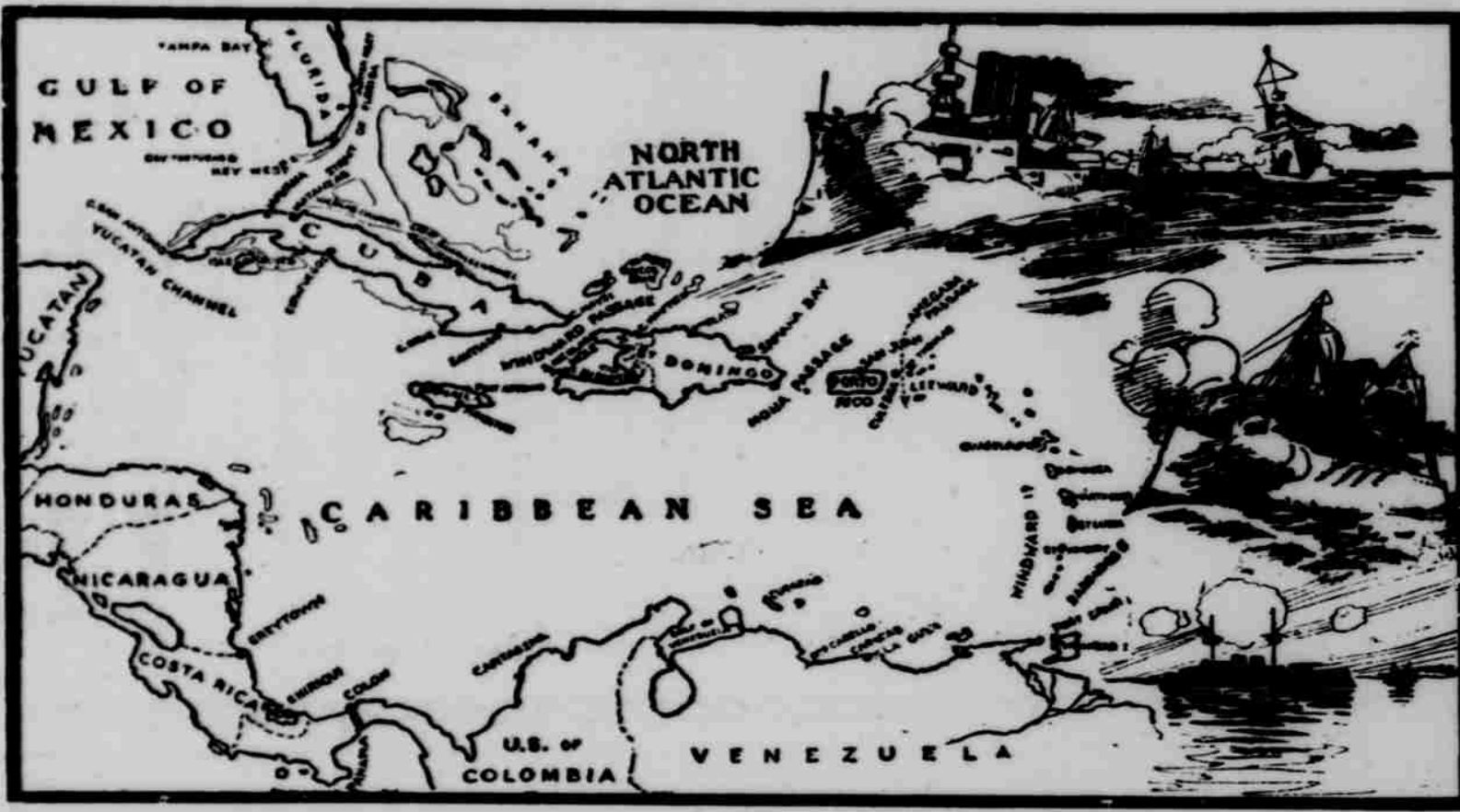
The Venezuelan troops in the forts replied to the British fire all afternoon, and the Charybdis has several large holes through her hull. The forts kept up a steady fire on the British vessels in the harbor. The Charybdis was especially exposed, and the Venezuelan gunners tried hard to sink her.

The shelling was the outcome of a protest filed with British Commodore Montgomerie by the captain of the little merchantman Topaze, which was seized by the Venezuelan authorities. The captain of the Topaze, which was at anchor in the harbor, sent a note to Commodore Montgomerie demanding reparation for the treatment he had received at the hands of the Venezuelans.

Commodore Montgomerie immediately sent a note to the Venezuelan authorities, demanding prompt reparation. He added that, unless immediate satisfaction was given he would begin to bombard the town. He gave the Venezuelan authorities but a short time for reply.

No answer was received to this note, and after a short hesitation Com-

SCENE OF OPERATIONS IN VENEZUELAN WATERS.



modore Montgomerie ordered the British gunners to begin firing. The first shell was directed at the customs house, and very nearly wrecked the building. A few more well-directed shots and the customs house was a mass of ruins. Then the Charybdis directed her attention to the forts above the harbor.

By this time, however, the Venezuelan gunners had succeeded in getting the range, and poured in a hot fire on the Charybdis, hulling her several times. The British reply was so severe that the Venezuelans were

compelled to cease firing. They returned to their guns almost immediately, however.

A number were killed and wounded on both sides but the real extent of the casualties are not known.

The inhabitants at Puerto Cabello were in a state of abject terror. Great numbers had fled before the bombardment began, and hundreds of others left as soon as the first shot was fired. Most of them camped in the hills back of the town.

The Venezuelans at La Guayra made every preparation to defend the town. President Castro regarded this point as one of the most important in the republic and ordered that it be defended desperately. Castro's troops and the citizens worked hard on the fortifications.

A large body of troops under Gen. Ferrer was sent to the heights back of the town to defend the roads to Caracas. Defensive arrangements were made in the strategic points in the mountains.

AMERICAN FLEET IS SENT.

Battleships, Cruisers and Torpedo Boats Ordered to the Scene.

A fleet of American warships has been ordered to Venezuelan waters. It

will be composed of the battleships Kearsarge, Iowa, Massachusetts and Alabama, the cruisers Chicago and Newark and the torpedo boats Scorpion and Eagle. Rear Admiral Higginson will command the squadron of battleships, while Rear Admiral Sumner will have charge of the cruisers and torpedo boats.

The fleet will anchor off the island of Trinidad, and be held in readiness for any emergency which may arise. Trinidad is within easy distance of Venezuela, so that the American vessels can reach any point along the

coast within a few hours' notice. The movements of the British and German squadrons will be carefully watched.

Admiral Dewey and Rear Admirals Higginson and Sumner are anxiously watching the developments of the Venezuelan trouble. They refuse to make any statement regarding the situation.

CASTRO DEFIES THE KAISER.

Contemptuously Rejects the Ultimatum Issued by Germany.

President Castro's reply to the ultimatum of Germany was an expression of complete defiance of the kaiser's government. He rejected the demands made in the German ultimatum and declared that they were absolutely unjustifiable and that he was prepared to defend the position of Venezuela, even if it involved hostilities.

A new complication has arisen. The Italian minister has sent a note to the Venezuelan government demanding the immediate payment of \$63,000, which represents the indemnity due to Italian subjects. The Italian cruiser, which arrived at La Guayra recently, will enforce the demands.

The situation is becoming more critical hourly. President Castro has backed up his defiance of the kaiser by ordering all the Venezuelan consuls

in German and British possessions to leave their posts. The consul at Port of Spain, Trinidad, a British possession, has already been withdrawn. This amounts to the severing of diplomatic relations between Venezuela and the powers. The belief is general in Caracas that this has also made it almost impossible to avert actual declaration of war. It proves conclusively at least that President Castro intends to support the position he has assumed and is willing to go to extreme measures to do so.

Italy Joins Allies.

Signor Reva, the Italian minister to Venezuela, has forwarded to the minister of foreign affairs through the Italian vice consul, Signor Zedazzurelli, a note analogous to those presented by the ministers of Great Britain and Germany. The Italian note demands from Venezuela immediate payment of \$63,000 in settlement of claims which have been recognized as valid by the Italian legation at Caracas.

The note declares that this demand is without prejudice to whatever action may be taken in regard to other claims which have not yet been examined or accepted by the Italian legation.

May Go to the Hague.

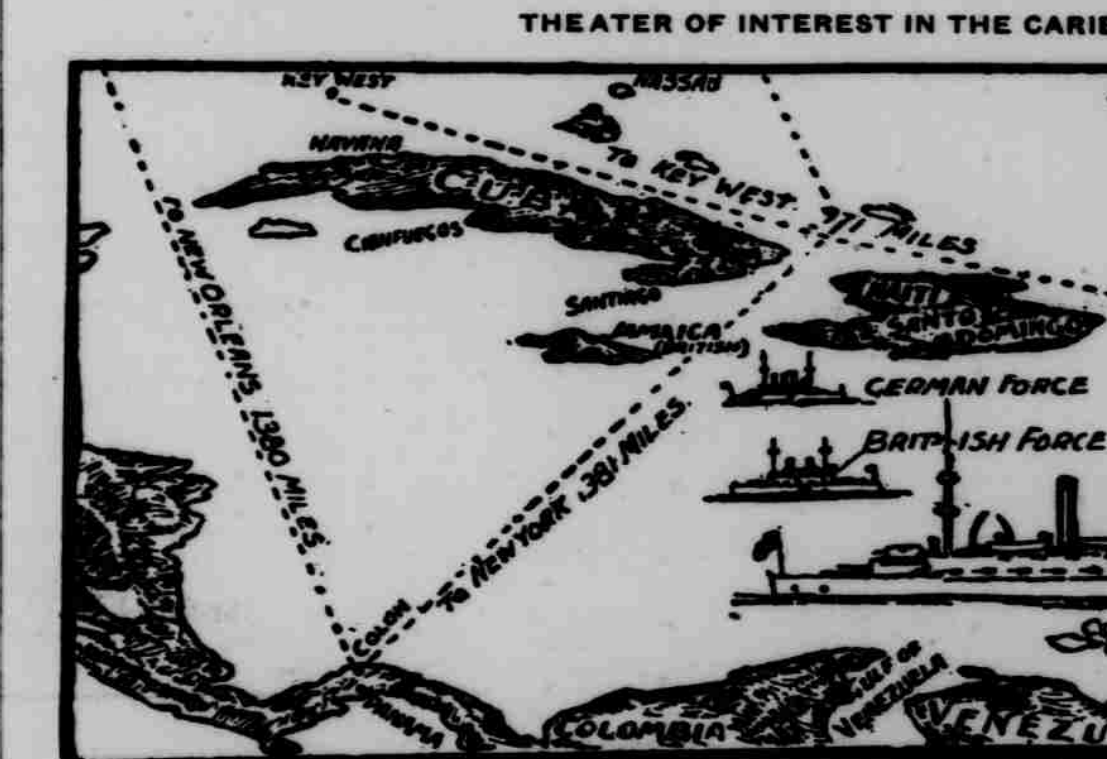
The New York Tribune prints a dispatch from Washington intimating that the Venezuelan affair will yet find its way to the international tribunal at The Hague. The dispatch says:

"Without disclosing the extent of the understanding which has been firmly established between this government and the European nations directly concerned, or the precise nature of the final settlement of the controversy beyond the distinct intimation that there will be an eventual resort to The Hague court, the state department has satisfied members of the foreign affairs committee of both houses of congress that reliance may be implicitly placed in the president's enough safeguarding of American principles."

THEATER OF INTEREST IN THE CARIBBEAN.

between Colon and New Orleans, Colon and New York, San Juan and Key West and San Juan and New York.

The American fleets, now assembled for the winter maneuvers, lie off Cuba to the north, where Dewey and Higginson command thirty vessels, and off Trinidad, in the Gulf of Paria, to the south, where Sumner and Crowninshield, with seven vessels. The English fleet numbers 1,280 fighting men, the German 1,032, and the American 9,768.



The map shows the north coast of Venezuela, with the seaport of La Guayra, and the Gulf of Paria. St. Thomas, where the warships of Germany assembled, and St. Lucia, the rendezvous of the British vessels. The distances in nautical miles are given

Enough Barbecue for Him.

An official of the House has returned to Washington from a trip in the West, and meeting Congressman Bull of Rhode Island, began telling him of his experiences. Among other things the returned traveler told of a barbecue which he attended in Colorado, where they roasted the finest he ever saw. The Rhode Island man, who was badly beaten by his Democratic opponent in November, interrupted: "Don't want to hear about your roast or. You should have been in my district last election day and seen how they roasted Bull to a turn, but not to a return."

Plans Made by Reed.

A few months before Thomas Brackett Reed was attacked by the illness which precipitated his death he concluded that he had made enough money for his family out of his law practice in New York and had about made up his mind to quit active work. It is believed, in view of this fact, that had he lived he might have gone into politics again, but not in New York, for he never liked life in a large city.

No Myrtle for Bleached Brides.

The wearing of myrtle by German brides "with a past" has an energetic opponent in the rector of Eberswald, Dr. Idler.

At a recent wedding Dr. Idler sternly refused to perform the marriage ceremony until the bride removed the few sprigs of that symbol of purity and innocence which she had attached to her wedding dress.

Moreover, when it was found that the myrtle could not be removed without a knife or a pair of scissors, the reverend gentleman stalked into the vestry and returned to the altar again with an open pocketknife in his hand. After the bride had been shorn of the myrtle the service proceeded.

Charities of Lady Rothschild.

Lady Rothschild, whose husband is head of the famous family, does an immense amount of charitable work, but never of a public character. In the vicinity of Tring park, her country home in Buckinghamshire, England, she is known all over the countryside on account of the benefactions conferred at her instigation.

Satire From Thackeray.

Some inquiries as to the meaning of the term "half and half" as applied to a drink result in an anecdote of Thackeray. On hearing of the death of a bibulous friend the satirist observed: "He was a man; take him for half and half, I shall not look upon his like again."

Varying Cost of Soldiers.

The average cost of a British soldier is \$230 a year. The Swiss soldier costs about \$70 a year.

Commoner Comment.

THOMAS B. REED IS DEAD.

The sudden death of Thomas B. Reed removes from the arena of politics one of the most prominent figures in the republican party. No republican of the present generation has surpassed him in ability, or in the impression he made upon contemporaneous history. As a leader of men he was not the equal of Blaine or McKinley, but as a complete master of those immediate associates with him he was their superior. In an extended and logical discussion there were many republicans more able and more impressive. But in short, sharp, epigrammatic, incisive statement he could not be surpassed.

"Reed's Rules," as they were commonly called, changed the house from a deliberative body into a machine for the execution of the will of a few party leaders, and it is too soon yet to fully estimate the influence of this change upon the house of representatives and the country. The first effect has been to increase the relative importance of party men by making it the scene of legislative debate on important questions, and until the senate is elected entirely by the people the change is likely to militate against popular government. The purpose of counting a quorum was not to enable a majority to rule, because a majority could always rule without counting a quorum; but it was to enable a minority to pass laws in spite of a still smaller minority. Whenever a majority of the total membership of congress voted for a bill the bill could be passed in spite of the silence of the minority, but by sending a quorum less than a majority, with the aid of a few silent members, could, according to Reed's rules, legislate on all questions.

In 1896 Mr. Reed was a candidate for the presidency, but was defeated by the joint influence of Mr. McKinley's popularity and Mark Hanna's management.

When the question of imperialism came up for discussion, Mr. Reed differed from his party, and rather than lead a fight against the administration, retired from public life. Some thought that the sudden abandonment of his long cherished ambition to be president embittered him, but he bore his disappointment much more gracefully than some of the great party leaders in the past have done. Since his retirement from office his law practice and literary work have occupied his time and are supposed to have yielded a considerable income.

Of the great republicans who have opposed their party's policy on imperialism the third to die—Sherman and Harrison having preceded him.

He was an ultra-protectionist, and was a defender, rather than a prosecutor of the trusts. His recent article in the North American Review was a skillful and ingenious argument against radical action for the extermination of private monopoly, and was at the same time a plea for the maintenance of a high tariff.

THE HILL BILL.

Strange to say, the gold papers in discussing the recent fall in silver do not seem to consider the effect of the Hill bill in depressing the bullion value of the white metal. That bill has already passed the house, and will probably pass the senate at this session. It authorizes the secretary of the treasury to recoin silver dollars into subsidiary coin at his discretion. The effect of this bill will be two-fold. First, it will take the United States out of the market as a purchaser of silver bullion, for we have enough silver dollars on hand to furnish subsidiary coinage for a century to come. The effect of this will, of course, be felt on the price of silver bullion. Every European nation buys more or less silver bullion for subsidiary coinage, but when the Hill bill becomes a law this nation, the greatest producer of silver, will cease to be a purchaser.

The second effect of the bill will be to permit the secretary of the treasury to recoin all the legal tender silver dollars into subsidiary coin, which is only a limited legal tender. This enables the financiers, acting through their agent in the treasury department, to reduce the volume of real money and thus more easily control the money market.

Circumstances will determine just how fast the financiers will push their money schemes, but it is certain that the Hill bill will have a most important effect on the country will permit. The man in which they pass a law or secure an administrative order and then pause until the indication dies out, sends a quorum less than a majority, with the aid of a few silent members, could, according to Reed's rules, legislate on all questions.

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THE COUNTRY PRESS.

During the campaigns of 1896 and 1900, and the lesser campaigns since that time, the democratic party has found its chief newspaper support among the loyal democratic newspapers so often designated as "the country press." With a few notable exceptions the metropolitan newspapers have deserted the democratic standard and lent their aid to the republican party. But the desertions from the ranks of "the country press" were so few that they were not noticeable. With a loyalty that could not be swerved and an ability that challenged the admiration of the opposition, "the country press" rallied to the democratic standard and performed prodigies of valor. "The country press" has ever been loyal, and because of this every democratic newspaper that is embraced in this designation deserves and should have the hearty support of democrats in its community. A well edited local newspaper exercises an important influence, not always visible to the casual observer, but always apparent when the test comes. Hundreds of such democratic weeklies and small dailies reach the Commoner's exchange table regularly, and they are a constant source of inspiration. The democrats show by their actions that they appreciate the unwavering loyalty and tireless energy of the democratic newspapers that have stood up for the party and its principles in the face of influences that have corrupted so many metropolitan dailies. The local democratic newspapers deserve a great deal more than they usually get. Now let democrats see that their local organs get all they deserve.

BETTING ON FOOTBALL.

A press dispatch from Boston reports that Harvard men lost about \$50,000 on the football game recently won by Yale. It is a well-known fact that thousands of dollars change hands on the results of each important game, and the demoralization resulting must be considered in measuring the influence of football as a college game. It is time that the friends of athletics were entering a protest against the sporting features of college contests; time that the college officials were attempting to cultivate a public opinion that will discourage wagers and bets on the players. The gambling spirit is destructive of sound morality—a morality based upon equivalent exchanges. To cultivate the habit of getting something for nothing unfit a man for the real and serious work of life and puts him in training for the bucket shop and the stock market. Football will be the better for the elimination of betting.

It is a pity that the president belongs to the number of those who think that the glories of a hundred years of history as a republic are to be dimmed by the pomp and show of an empire.

When Mr. Henderson read the message he felt much like kicking himself for taking the wrong view of the future.

Mr. Hanna declares emphatically that he will not resign anything. We understand from this that Mr. Hanna is perfectly resigned.

The president thinks that the republican party was largely instrumental in bringing prosperity, but we have some cause for rejoicing in the fact that he does not go to the length that some of the republican leaders do.

If the "business interests" are not satisfied now, there appears to be no way of inducing them to put up for the next g. o. p. campaign.

The dispatches have failed to record any fatalities among the trusts superinduced by heart failure after reading the message.

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These things are all parts of a well-prepared plan, and the public will be notified of each step either after the step has been taken or so shortly before that no protest will be possible. Then only way to prevent the carrying out of this scheme is to defeat the republican party, for it is today the tool of the financiers.

These Indiana coal miners who struck to enforce their demands that their mine mules be given humane treatment are entitled to praise. If the mine mules would receive about the same kind of consideration that is meted out to the operators.

One of the noticeable things about Mr. Cleveland's prescription for the democracy is that all the republican organs insist upon democracy using it. This solicitude for the welfare of democracy would be touching if it were not something else.

In his message the president admits that there is a tariff on anthracite coal. But he fails to admit that it was "smuggled in," probably because he feared it would bring on an investigation that would result in further disclosures.

The president suggests that there may be "weal and woe" in the events of the last few years, but he is quite sure that we ought not to go out of the game so long as the other players have any money left.

Of course those administration dailies that have so loudly demanded the removal of the tariff on wood pulp and print paper will now admit their mistake and snuggle up to the administration once more.

Those who saw the bloodless imitation of a bull fight given at Kansas City recently will be prepared to witness without a shudder the exhibition contest between the president and the trusts.

It must be admitted that the president came quite as near hitting the trusts as he did shooting a Mississippi bear.

Since reading the message the manufacturers of shacks have not made any haste to increase their working forces.

After reading the message the "captains of industry" did not hustle out and give the command "Repel boarders."

The voice was the voice of Jacob, but the handwriting appears to be the handwriting of the trusts.

The president believes that the banks should furnish all the money needed. They will do it about the same time that mills furnish all the flour needed without regard to the profits required.

The proposition to make Uncle Sam responsible for Venezuela's debts will hang until the trusts get through robbing him. Perhaps Uncle Sam will be looking for help himself.

Congressman Hepburn wants to tax the water in the stock. But the trouble is that they can water it faster than we can tax it.

The Indianapolis Sentinel's animadversions on Noah renew the hope that the Sentinel will at some future time devote itself to the study of all questions of public interest.

It appears that President Roosevelt's idea of reciprocity is to give somebody something they do not want in return for something we need, and must have at the expense of another.

Those who believed that the republican party would remove tariff abuses are mournfully looking at the brass borings from their gold bricks.

LEARNED HIS LESSON.

HOW YOUNG NEW YORKER WAS BROUGHT TO TIME.

"Introduced" to His Mother and Sister. He Decides That Their Acquaintance is Worth Cultivating—Father's Clever Ruse a Success.

"The old gentleman played a queer trick on me the other night," said the young man, as he lit a cigar after dinner. "It was rather awkward for me, but I guess it was a good thing after all."

"You know I used to feel that I had done myself an injustice if I did not go to the theater about five or six nights a week. Maybe it wasn't always the theater, but if it wasn't that it was a star party or a poker game, I needn't explain; you've been with me frequently."

"Well, you also know how I am fixed in the line of business. I work for father, and I have to be at the office at 8:30 in the morning, just as the rest of the family are sitting down to breakfast. In consequence I get my breakfast and leave the house before they are up. But I can't complain of that. I'm doing exactly what the man who had my place before me did, and, between you and me, I think I'm drawing more salary than he did."

"But that's neither here nor there. It's the evenings, I used to finish work about 6, get dinner down town and go to the theater or somewhere else. Been doing it for about six months, and I swear that when I figure back about the only times that I have seen my mother and sister have been at Sunday dinner. Nothing unusual in that, of course; the same is true of hundreds of young men in New York."

"But they haven't fathers like mine. He came to me one afternoon last week and asked me if I had an engagement for that night."

"How about to-morrow night?" he asked.

"Haven't figured that far ahead," I replied.

"Well, I'd like you to go somewhere with me."

"All right," I said. "Where'll I meet you?"

"You see, he leaves the office about an hour before I get through."

"He suggested a hotel at 7:30, and I was there, prepared for the theater and a quiet lecture on late hours. He had combined the two on several previous occasions. But when he appeared as he said he wanted me to call on a lady with him."

"One I knew quite well when I was a young man," he explained.

"We went out and started straight for home."

"She is stopping at the house," he said, when I spoke of it.

"I thought it strange that he should have made the appointment for the hotel under those circumstances, but I said nothing."

"Well, we went in, and I was introduced with all due formality to my mother and my sister."

"The situation struck me as ludicrous, and I started to laugh, but the three even smiled. My mother and my sister shook hands with me, and my mother said she remembered me as a boy, but hadn't seen much of me lately. Then she invited me to be seated."

"It wasn't a bit funny then, although I can laugh over it now. I sat down, and she told me one or two anecdotes of my boyhood, at which we all laughed a little. Then we four played whist for a while. When I finally retired I was courteously invited to call again. I went upstairs feeling pretty small and doing a good deal of thinking."

"And then?" asked my companion.

"Then I made up my mind that my mother was a most entertaining lady and my sister a good and brilliant girl."

"And now?"

"Now I'm going to call again, as I have been doing quite regularly for the last week. I enjoy their company and propose to cultivate their acquaintance."—New York Times.

Occupations and Color of the Hair.

Dr. Beddoe has said that there is a distinct relation between man's pursuit and the color of his hair. An unusual proportion of men with dark straight hair enter the ministry; red-whiskered men are apt to be given to sporting and horseflesh; while the tall, vigorous blonde man, lineal descendant of the Vikings, still contributes a large contingent to travelers and emigrants.

Insurance Against Being Out of Work.

Insurance against non-employment is an accomplished fact in Germany. Working men who have resided two years in the city of Cologne and are over eighteen years of age can join the society. The subscription is six cents a week. If no employment can be procured for a member during the full season sixty cents per day is paid to him if married, thirty-nine cents if single.

Another Method.

A well-known doctor tells of a visit to an old colored man, who was convalescing from a severe illness. After expressing his satisfaction at the progress of his patient, and assuring the old fellow and his wife that his complete recovery depended only on the exercise of a little caution in the matter of diet, he advised, with an eye to their small store, that it would be a good thing if she would buy a chicken and prepare the broth.

The old dandy's face lit up with the memory of happier days, as he eagerly turned and whispered, "It ain't abs'lutely necessary to buy dat chicken."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Feeble-Minded Children.

One in every hundred of the school children of England is classed as feeble-minded, and according to a public statement by Canon Hicks in Manchester recently this gives a total of 70,000 such children. There is an obvious moral to be drawn from the further statement of Dr. H. B. Donkin, a prison commissioner, that 3 per cent of all male convicts belong to the same unhappy class.

Ex-Cabinet Members in Senate.

There are now three ex-secretaries of war in the United States Senate—Mr. Proctor of Vermont, who served from March, 1899, to November, 1891; Mr. Elkins of West Virginia, who succeeded Mr. Proctor and served till the close of the Harrison administration, and Mr. ... of Michigan. Gen. Alger is modest in his movements about the Senate. Most of the time he keeps at his desk. He dresses in dark clothes and looks as trig and neat as a new boy in school. He seems to find it more pleasant listening to the proceedings than in joining the cloakroom groups in front of the glowing grates.

Habits of Blue Foxes.

The blue foxes of the Pribyloff islands are monogamous. An attempt has been made to teach them polygamy by killing only the males and sparing the females, but it has failed.

Electric Railroads in Italy.

Electricity is the motive force employed in 1,000 miles of rail in Italy.