

CAMPFIRE SKETCHES.

GOOD SHORT STORIES FOR THE VETERANS.

The Old Soldier's Story—The Confederate Lieutenant Fought the Toughest That Ended His Own Life—A Naked Man—How the Comrades Conquered the Germans.

Play the Game. There's a beautiful bush in the Close to night.

Two to make and the match to win—A bounding pitch and a blinding light. An hour in play and the last man in. And it's not for the sake of a ribboned medal.

On the selfish hope of a season's fame, But his captain's hand on his shoulder smote: "Play up! play up! and play the game!"

The sand of the desert is sudden red—Red with the streak of a square that breaks the galling jammed and the Colonel dead.

And the regiment blind with dust and smoke. The river of death has trimmed his banks, And England's fur, and Honor's a name. But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks:

"Play up! play up! and play the game!"

This is the word that year by year, While in her place the school is set, Every one of her some must hear, And none that hears it dare forget.

They all with a joyful shout, Bear through life a torch in flame, And falling sing to the host behind— "Play up! play up! and play the game!"

From Onward.

The Old Soldier's Story.

"I do not get a pension," said the veteran, who had trotted his first heat at Bull Run, breaking into a wild gallop before he passed under the wire at Washington, and finally stopped to retire from the turf at Appomattox, "nor do I want one, though I suppose if I were not in comfortable circumstances I might try for it; and still I had about as much of the scrap as anybody I know of, for I began early and quit late. Luck is with some people, though, for I came out without a scratch, and I didn't lose a day on account of sickness. But I am flying the track. I think you said you wanted that story about the man who killed himself trying to kill me.

"It was one of those innumerable small fights that were happening in Virginia all the year round, and was so little that it did not even get a name. I was in an infantry regiment, and a detachment of 150 of us had been sent to the front of the skirmish line to feel around and see what we might find that we did not want to find, namely, some part of the enemy's advance. In a clump of trees we found it in the shape of a hundred or so cavalrymen, wearing the gray uniform we had seen a good deal of in that neighborhood. It meant business, of course, and in a very few minutes there was a mixing of contending forces which was, to say the least of it, extremely democratic. The troop of cavalry was composed of hot-headed young Southerners who had no idea of anything but rushing right into the midst of us, yelling and swinging their sabres around their heads as if they were riding in a tournament at one of their county fairs. They seemed to be utterly regardless of our feelings, too, and before we could say 'scat' they had slashed the scalp off of half a dozen of our boys and were cutting up the rest of us like a lot of young butchers out for a picnic. At the same time we were not entirely idle or neglectful of such opportunities as might be presented, and I may say that the general result of the meeting, to the eye of the casual observer, was real 'hot stuff,' if I may use a bit of modern language.

"I had had very little experience in military affairs of any kind, and up to that time Bull Run had been the only real battle in which I had taken an active part, the activity on that occasion not having been of the kind, you may remember, which gives a soldier a wide experience in fighting, notwithstanding there was enough experience in conducting a retreat to last a lifetime. Gee, how we did run that day! It makes me warm to think about it even now," and the veteran smiled at the thought and puffed mildly in reminiscence of his run.

"As I was saying, being inexperienced in fighting, I didn't know just what to do, as is the way with most new soldiers, so I kind of ducked down my head and went into it on the blind luck style, trusting in providence and keeping my powder dry. In such a scramble nobody ever knows what is going on or how best to do the things he has to do. It is slap, bang, about, shoot, slash, jab—a rush and roar, a throngful of nasty sulphur smoke, possibly a bee sting in body or limb, a fall in the leaves or dust or mud, a sense of something one scarcely knows what, and the end has come, either to the fight or to the fighter. I had reached the slap and the bang period and was feeling pretty good, seeing that I had knocked a man or two over and hadn't been knocked over myself, and was getting into the spirit of it in fine fettle when I found myself hand to hand, or musket to sabre, with a young lieutenant about my own age and build. He came straight at me, cutting with intent to kill and I tried to shoot him off of his horse, for I had somehow got a load in my musket and was ready for that kind of business, but he was so close that shooting was out of the question, and I would only use my gun as a guard to keep off the fierce onslaught of his slashes. I made several efforts to swing around so I could shoot, but he saw what I was after and kept it so hot for me that I did not dare to take away my guard long enough to use it on him instead of on myself. I put up the best defense I could, trying to punch him with my bayonet, but the young fellow evidently had some military training, in sword exercise at

least, for he knocked my gun around pretty much as he pleased. Indeed, he had such success that he was wearing me out fast, and I felt that if something didn't happen for my side very soon there would be our more bluecoat grave to dig on the morrow. He saw his advantage, too, and with a yell he came at me again, swinging that big sabre of his so high and strong that it seemed to me to be the sword of Michael or of some other of those picture people I remembered to have seen in my books, and I made up my mind to give him one more poke with my bayonet for luck and let him have my scalp if he wanted it. But he would not give me a chance to do even this much. He lunged that confounded sword around my head until I could only hold my gun up and try to save my face so that my friends would have something to identify me by after the battle was over. He rained his blows so thick that I weakened fast and just as I began to sink from exhaustion he reached around with a terrific blow to settle me once for all. I had sunk down half to my knees with the musket fallen forward, and as he let the sword fall it struck the hammer of the gun instead of the barrel and with a crack that I could distinguish in all the row and the rumpus, my old musket went off with a concussion that threw it clear out of my hands and sent the entire charge square into the face of my foe. Even under the exciting circumstances I realized that something out of the ordinary had happened, though I could not tell what it was, and I cast my eyes up as I stumbled forward. The face of the lieutenant was not there. It had been blown off by the discharge of the gun, so close in the fight we were, and we went down together, both covered with blood—his blood. But only one of us got up again."

Military Incompetence of the Chinese.

Some of the stories of Chinese ignorance and incompetency in military affairs narrated by Lord Charles Bessford are amusing and yet pathetic in a way. The viceroy asked their distinguished British visitor to inspect certain forts and give a candid opinion on them. "In one of these forts there was a heavy battery of sixty-ton muzzle-loading guns, which were loaded by depressing the muzzle into the magazine. I ventured to point out to the general the danger of this proceeding, and the likelihood, through careless sponging, of the magazine being blown up. The general congratulated me on my acumen, and immediately showed me where a magazine had exploded the year before from the same cause, and had been rebuilt for a probable repetition of this accident, which cost no less than forty-two lives. At another fort I asked to see the powder deal in the heavy guns, and was shown some powder of Chinese manufacture. I suggested that such powder was not suitable and might burst the gun. The general in command replied: 'Yes, it does; we have lately blown the breach off two twelve-inch fifty-ton Krupp guns, and killed and wounded thirty men.' Before this conversation I had observed in a fort, some distance off, two twelve-inch Krupp guns fitted with Armstrong breech mechanism, and on inquiring the reason had been informed that the breach had been blown off, owing to the use of Chinese powder as exercise." It seems incredible, but Lord Charles found some of the soldiers still practiced in shooting with bows and arrows at a target. When at Peking, he saw them practicing in an open space near the observatory. Hitting the target is a detail of minor importance; the real merit consists in the position or attitude of the Bowman when discharging his shaft.

A Naked Man.

There died recently in Paris Mme. Coralie Cahen, according to the Jewish Messenger, one of the most noted nurses of the Franco-German war. One story of her work on the field is well worth repeating. The greater part of her nursing was done in Vendome, where, aided by two nurses and seven Christian sisters of mercy, she received thousands of French and German soldiers. When the Prussians occupied Vendome they wished to hold the hospital and plant on it the German flag. But, warned of the enemy's intentions, Mme. Cahen, early one January morning, visited the Prussian general, who, surrounded by his staff, was about to seize the building. "Sir," she exclaimed, "we have received your wounded and nursed them as though they were our own; we will continue to do so, but we will remain in a French ambulance; we will not have it converted into a German ambulance." "Madame," was the reply, "we are masters." "In the town it may be; here, no!" was the answer. "We are protected by the Red Cross and the French flag; you have no right to touch either the one or the other." She conquered, and from that day the utmost admiration was openly evinced for her by the Germans. When, after the signature of peace, the German medical staff were about to quit Vendome, the surgeon-in-chief asked leave to take a public farewell of the French woman. Accompanied by the military doctors placed under his orders, he said: "Madame, we cannot leave France without thanking you, not alone in the name of the German nation, but in the name of humanity. We can never forget that you compelled us to yield in the face both of your patriotism and of your benevolence."

The Bridegroom.

"By Jove, old man, of how little consequence I really am! I don't suppose there is any more insignificant thing on earth than myself at the present moment." His friend: "Well, till you've been married four or five years."—Brooklyn Life.

JUST WHY WE LAUGH.

LEARNED DEDUCTIONS ON THIS IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

Originality of Laugb Meant a Crow of Triumph Over the Fallen Foe—Savages Laugh When They See Pain Inflicted.

Why we laugh is a question that has always puzzled those who are accustomed to think deeply. The laugh, which is now so closely associated with good humor and kindly feeling, originally expressed the exact reverse. It was the crow of triumph over a fallen foe. Such is its nature still among savages, and its unexpected manifestations are occasionally very startling. Dancing on the body of a prostrate enemy is, in fact, to them hilarious fun.

Any new device for torment is a clever jest. The inflicting of a ghastly wound as some poor wretch runs the gauntlet makes them yell with glee. The things that shock or horrify or disgust the civilized man are about the only things worth laughing at from a savage's point of view. With the exception, therefore, of rough practical jokes, which may possibly wrinkle his stolid features with a momentary grin, the barbarian has no appreciation of civilized humor. Even the knowledge that he himself is to be the next victim does not spoil the fun of a cruel spectacle for a barbarian thoroughbred.

Some Siamese who had been engaged in a revolt were captured, rehandcuffed and sentenced to military execution. A company of soldiers had been drawn up with loaded muskets, before whom the doomed men were led out in squads of five or six to be shot, while those who were waiting their turn stood by, under guard, looking on. When the first volley was fired the victims, torn by the storm of bullets, leaped into the air with violent contortions and fell dead. And this to the poor wretches whose turn it was to next go through the same experience seemed so fine a show and so excruciatingly funny that they were fairly convulsed with laughter.

Such is the humor of the uncivilized, and such doubtless were the beginnings of mirth the world over. Strange as it may seem, there are many hints of this barbarous origin in the fun of the most highly civilized. We no longer laugh at really tragic occurrences, it is true, for other and more humane emotions are too strongly excited. But if we chance to see a ridiculous mishap which does not quite rise to the dignity of tragedy—an accident by which some one is greatly inconvenienced and annoyed without being seriously injured—the remnant of the savage breaks loose in us, and we laugh, sometimes until the tears come.

LOST WAGER.

Of \$6,000 Because the Wife He Married Deserted Him.

St. Louis Globe-Democrat: E. H. Lee, the king of tramps, who has obtained a state-wide notoriety because of a peculiar wager which he entered into with a Minneapolis man a year ago, has again come before the public by alleging that it was the inconsistency of woman that caused him to loose the wager. The wager was that Lee should walk 3,000 miles, earn \$500 and marry a wife all within the period of a year. The last proposition presented the greatest difficulty, but Lee started out blithely to accomplish the task. After several romantic adventures, in which young girls showed a strange willingness to wed the royal hobo, Lee managed to marry a girl from Cedar Rapids, who occupied a fairly prominent social position. Her parents were aghast at the proceeding and induced her to go to Dakota where a divorce was recently secured. Lee tried in the short time remaining to win another consort, but the effort was unavailing, and the king of tramps lost his wager, which was for \$6,000.

Beards and Bacilli.

The beard has lately fallen under the suspicion of being the haunt of bacilli, according to the British Medical Journal. It has been hinted that surgeons who wish to keep inviolate the aseptic faith should for conscience sake sacrifice what Paroles calls "valor's excrement." Dr. Schoull of Tunis has long been so convinced of the dangers which lurk in the beard and moustaches of men suffering from tuberculosis that he has made it a rule to insist on the thorough disinfection of these masculine adornments when the wearer will not consent to part with them.

Famous Cameo.

The prize of the Marlborough collection of gems sold during the week, a cameo of Cupid and Psyche, the most famous cameo in the world, was bought for America—it is believed that the Boston museum—in spite of the fact that the treasury gave the British museum £20,000 for the purchase at this sale. A private donor gave the museum \$5,000, but this arrived too late to secure the great cameo.

True Cause of Stage Fright.

An expert has arisen to explain that stage fright comes from a disordered stomach. He argues from this that persons meditating public appearances should be careful of their diet and adhere to regular habits.

Postal Cards Receipts.

Germany's receipts from picture postal cards were increased from 1885 to 1897 by \$90,000.

POISON PROOF.

Took Enough Morphine Daily to Kill One Hundred and Twenty Men.

From a medical standpoint the case of Harry Friedman, recently discharged from the Good Samaritan hospital, is the most unique of its character in the history of medicine. It is only necessary to briefly recapitulate the circumstances which made Friedman a patient. It will be remembered that on June 26 a year ago he was shot by Policeman Bogart in the lumber region of the spine while he was trying to escape arrest. For many days he hovered between life and death at the city hospital, and every surgeon on the staff declared the bullet could not live. The heavy- caliber bullet crushed the spine terribly, and as a result of the injury he was paralyzed from the hips downward, losing all control of the organs below it. The survival of the boy under these circumstances is not the most remarkable feature of the case, but the fact that he is now practically poison proof is a most unique phase. This result occurred through the necessity of keeping him almost constantly under powerful narcotics to relieve him from his terrible sufferings. The start was made with one quarter grain of morphine injected hypodermically, increased daily until it reached the enormous quantity of thirty grains per day. After two weeks there were added doses of chloral, beginning with five grains and ending with twenty, and cocaine, increasing from one-eighth to five grains daily. The computation of the amount of poison taken by Friedman during his stay at the city hospital of 290 days is interesting, as also the comparison of the number of ordinary individuals it would have killed unprepared by the gradual increase of the doses. Thus, allowing twenty days during which he became gradually accustomed to the drugs, he took for 270 days thirty grains of morphine, twenty grains of chloral and five grains of cocaine daily, making a grand total of 8,100 grains of morphine, 5,400 grains of chloral and 850 grains of cocaine. The maximum dose of morphine is one quarter grain, of chloral fifteen grains and cocaine two grains; hence in one day he took enough of morphine to kill 120, of chloral one and cocaine two men. Multiplying these figures by the number of days in which he took the quantity of poison, he absorbed enough to kill as many men as fell in the three days' battle of Chickamauga, namely, 32,210, and this does not include the doses of morphine, chloral and cocaine he swallowed during the twenty days in which his system was preparing for the immunity, and wherein the doses varied. Friedman was discharged from the city hospital on March 14 as incurable, and after a few days at home was transferred to the Good Samaritan, where the drugs were cut off, and he thrived without them. He has no craving such as makes the morphine, chloral or cocaine fiend a pitiable object, and, although his lease on life is precarious and he is a helpless cripple, he is daily gaining in weight.

FRUIT STAINS.

May Easily Be Removed from Linen When Fresh.

Fruit stains may easily be removed from linen when fresh. Put the stained portion over a bowl in a cup shape, so the liquid will readily run through, and pour over it boiling water until the stain disappears. This must be done before it has been in contact with cold water or soap. Fresh tea stains are removable in the same manner. Where stains are dried make a solution of one teaspoonful of oxalic acid and one teaspoonful of soft cold water. Dip the stain in this, rub and at once thoroughly rinse in clear water to prevent the rotting of the fabric. When it is inconvenient to procure oxalic acid, rub the fruit stain with soap, plaster it with wet starch and hang in the sun. Apply these again and again until the linen is bleached. Mildew is usually removable by the same method, or by an application of lemon juice and salt, followed by exposure to the sun. To bleach the worst mildew it may be needful to make a thick paste of half a cupful of soft soap with powdered starch, half as much salt as starch, and the juice of one lemon. Wet both sides of the cloth with this preparation and let it lie on the grass overnight, renewing the paste two or three times.

Where His Courage Failed.

It is the proud boast of Archie Bruce that he is a lineal descendant of the great Scottish hero, and, as becomes a man of his blood, he prides himself on his courage, says the San Francisco News Letter. For several months there has been in his family a servant who has completely terrorized his wife, the latter being the victim and not the commander of her nerves. There was a terrible row between mistress and maid last Saturday, and on Monday morning Mrs. Bruce said to her husband: "Archie, I cannot stand Mary Jane any longer. Won't you please discharge her before you go to business this morning? You know how afraid of her I am." "Certainly," replied Mr. Bruce, with suave courage. "Certainly, the crosscut creature that ever cracked a cup or cleaned a kettle cannot cow me." The valiant Archibald sometimes surprises himself and his friends by floating along on a stream of alliteration. Procuring his hat and coat, he descended to the basement kitchen, and in stentorian tones bravely addressed the servant. "Mary Jane, ahem! I must hurry off now, but, ahem!—Mrs. Bruce asked me to tell you that she wants, ahem!—to speak to you after I have gone to the office."

A Curious Ear.

The catfish uses his lungs as an organ of hearing. The needless lung becomes a closed sac, filled with air, and commonly known as the swim bladder. In the catfish (as in the suckers, eels and most brook fishes) the air bladder is large, and is connected by a slender tube, the remains of the trachea, to the oesophagus. At its front it fits closely to the vertebral column. The anterior vertebrae are much enlarged, twisted together, and through them passes a chain of bones which connect with the hidden cavity of the air. The air bladder therefore assists the ear of the catfish as the tympanum and its bones assist the ear of the higher animals. An ear of this sort can carry little range of variety in sound. It probably gives only the impression of jars or disturbances in the water.—David Jordan in Appleton's "Popular Science Monthly."

Confused by the Philippians.

"Are you writing to Philip?" "Yes; I am just beginning the letter." "Why do you hesitate?" "I'm in a quandary. I've been reading so much about the war out there, and the proper names and all that, that I can't for the life of me remember whether you spell Philip with a 'p' or an 'f'."

ON BUBBLE MAKING.

HOW TO PRODUCE THE ENDURING ONES.

Those Made by a New Process Will Keep for Several Days—Attention as an Important Adds Much to the Beauty of the Spheres.

Nearly all the boys and girls like to blow soap bubbles, but the trouble with those pretty many colored globes is that they burst so easily. These need not be the case if they are blown with the mixture the recipe for which is given here: Cut in a very thin shavings one-fourth of an ounce of castile soap, dissolve this in ten ounces of water, which is kept warm (not hot), and when this soap mixture is cool filter it; put this into a sixteen ounce bottle (a full pint bottle holds sixteen ounces), and add glycerine to it until the bottle is full; put the glycerine in a little at a time, corking the bottle and shaking it as hard as you can after every few drops of glycerine. When the bottle has been filled and thoroughly mixed by shaking as above directed cork it up and set away, where it will not be disturbed for a few days.

In a short time the mixture will become muddy looking, but after a few days a white layer will be found floating on the top, while the rest of it will be clear. This clear part must be drawn out without stirring up the top layer, and this can be done by the use of a siphon. A siphon may be made from any piece of small rubber tubing. The tube must first be filled with water and if it is a small tube it may be pinched near the middle and the water will not run out even when the ends hang down. Lower one end of the tube to the bottom of the bottle and let the other end hang down outside. Be very sure that the outside end hangs lower than the bottom of the bottle. If you have managed this right first the water that was in the tube and then the mixture will begin to run out of the tube and will not stop until the bottle is emptied. Let the water run out of the tube first, then as soon as the mixture begins to come out of the tube catch it in another bottle. As soon as the white layer on the top of the mixture comes down to the bottom of the bottle take the tube out, as you only want the clear part.

Large and beautiful bubbles may be blown with this glycerine mixture and if they are allowed to rest on a bone teething ring or soft woolsen cloth they will keep their shape for three or four hours. If a glass shade is placed over the bubble it will keep for three or four days.

PENNIES.

And the Woes They Cause the Street Car Conductor.

It was in a suburban trolley last Sunday that the question of the conductor's reluctance to receive pennies in change came up again. This penny question is like Banquo's ghost and will not down. A woman passenger had given the conductor a nickel and five pennies for two fares. "I would rather change five dollars for you, madam, than take those pennies," the conductor said, in a grumbling, yet perfectly respectful tone. "Why?" asked the woman. "Because the company will not take them from us. That is the only objection I have to railroading. We must turn in nickels or silver when our work is done." "But why do you not sometimes give those pennies to men?" "You always palm them off on women." "Well, the women always seem to keep them specially for us." Now, if the public could only know what a trial they are to us sometimes they might understand our reluctance to take them. For instance, one of the extras, a man who has been out of work for a long time, after making the number of trips required of him found he had fifteen pennies among his change. He did not have a cent belonging to himself, and there was no money at home, and the pay that was coming to him at the office for his week's work was needed by his wife and children for bread. They would not take the pennies at the office and he could not draw his pay until his fares were accounted for. When, after considerable trouble, he got three nickels for his fifteen pennies, and returned to the company's office it was closed, and he had to go home without his pay.

The First Silk Hat.

In an English newspaper of the date of Jan. 16, 1797, appears the following: "John Hetherington, haberdasher, of the Strand, was arraigned before the lord mayor yesterday on the charge of breach of the peace and inciting a riot, and was required to give bond in the sum of £500. It was in evidence that Mr. Hetherington, who is well connected, appeared upon the public highway, wearing upon his head what he called a silk hat (which was offered in evidence), a tall structure having a shining luster and calculated to frighten timid people. As a matter of fact, the officers of the crown stated that several women fainted at the unusual sight, while children screamed, dogs yelped, and a young son of Cordwainer Thomas, who was returning from a chandler's shop, was thrown down by the crowd which had collected and had his right arm broken. For these reasons the defendant was seized by the guards and taken before the lord mayor. In extenuation of his crime defendant claimed he had not violated any law of the kingdom, but was merely exercising a right to appear in a headdress of his own design—a right not denied to any Englishman."

How to Settle Boundary Disputes.

As a matter of fact the boundary line between the United States and Canada should be located on the north side of Canada by the consent of both nations.—Danville Commercial.

AN INTERRUPTED HONEYMOON.

He "Keeps His Eye Peeled" For This Day.

Even now the old lawyer gnashes teeth and sets things under his breath when he thinks of it, says the Detroit Free Press.

"I followed my father's advice and went west," he tells. "I haven't the least doubt in the world that the old gentleman got his idea from Horace Greeley. I set up my office in a new town, where the crack of a revolver attracted no more attention than a fire alarm in a big city, and had a hand in almost every case that was tried. But I declined to fall into the ways of the community, I denounced lynching as worse than barbarism, called into the authorities as being parties to this class of crimes and even defied public sentiment to the extent of defending horse thieves. I received a good many threatening letters, but stood by my guns. During this exciting experience I fell in love with the loveliest girl on the whole bounding west, and we were married. Then my enemies began the work of fiendish revenge.

"We were actually at the depot and about to start on a long wedding tour through the east when I was summoned as a witness in an important mining suit, about which I knew nothing. In vain I urged this fact, pleaded, denounced and threatened. The officer, who had evidently been coached, declared me a witness trying to escape the jurisdiction of the court and very promptly clapped me in jail. The next day I was fined \$100 for contempt of court and thirty days in jail were added because I talked back. That was my honeymoon, and I was the maddest man within the pale of civilization. Once free I took the flyer for Detroit, and the letter I wrote that judge fairly scorched the envelope. He tried to extradite me, but failed, and then he sent me a challenge. That failed, too, but I have his assurance, written thirty years ago that he would shoot on sight. Do you know I keep my eyes peeled while on the streets, even to this day."

RAILWAY MILEAGE.

The total length of railroad in the world amounted in 1897 to 454,750 miles, and in the five years from 1893 to 1897 the total increase was 34,485 miles, or 8.9 per cent. The same year the total length of railroad in the United States was 182,278 miles, an increase in five years of 3.6 per cent. North and South America and the West India islands are credited with over one-half of the total mileage, or 236,218 miles.

Next to the United States among the great nations is the German empire, with a total of 29,880 miles, and then follows France, with 25,673 miles, Russia with 25,003 miles, although, if we include the transcaucasian district of Russia and Siberia, Russia would come third with a total of 28,302 miles. Following France and Russia are Great Britain and Ireland, 21,396 miles; British India, 21,000 miles; Austria-Hungary, 20,908 miles; British North America, 16,684 miles; Italy, 9,714 miles, and the Argentine Republic, 9,422 miles. Belgium has the largest amount of railroad in comparison with its total area, the amount being 22.2 miles for each square mile of area.

In comparing the countries by the length of railroad compared with the amount of population that they serve, we find that the colony of South Australia stands first with 52.3 miles for each 10,000 people, this result, of course, being due to the comparative sparseness of the population. In the United States there are 26 miles to each 10,000 inhabitants.

In the more densely populated districts of Europe the figures fall considerably, Germany having 5.2 miles for each 10,000 people. The small increase of 3.6 per cent in the total mileage for the United States is due to the fact that the years 1893 and 1897 were among the least active in railroad construction in the history of the country, the previous decade having been one of extraordinary increase, over 12,000 miles, or more than half the present total length of railroads in Great Britain, having been built in a single year.

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