

Use For Ex-Presidents.

What to do with our ex-presidents has been a problem demanding the most serious consideration, but Grover Cleveland has suggested, without intending it, a solution of the dilemma.

Mr. Cleveland has written an article on duck hunting. It is shorter than one of his former annual messages to congress and longer than one of his pension vetoes, but the writer has bestowed upon it the same painstaking care which characterized his state papers. Every possible point in duck hunting he has touched upon, shedding the serene luster of his accumulated wisdom and lifelong experience upon the topic, until it shines with such brilliance that there is no longer any dark side to ducking, not even that sort of "ducking" which embraces the upsetting of the skiff.

The ex-president, with superb scorn, excoriates the unsportsmanlike duck hunters who duck for revenue only; calls them mere assassins of the waddling innocent; and he coins such phrases as "bloody activity," "sordid and sanguinary behavior" and "the zone of danger," which recall the coinages of the old Cleveland days.

Hereafter the Honorable Order of Serene Duck Hunters, as Mr. Cleveland, the Nestor thereof, himself phrases it, will have a higher standing in the serious estimation of the world's plain livers and high thinkers.

And this brings us to the usefulness of Mr. Cleveland's article as suggesting a disposition of ex-presidents. Why can we not constitute our ex-presidents a sort of Advisory Board of Pure and Unadulterated Sports?

Mr. Roosevelt, for instance, after retiring from office, might fill the chair of professor in mountain lioning. True, his lectures would smack more of strenuousness than of serenity, and the "sordid and sanguinary behavior" condemned by Mr. Cleveland in ducking probably would not be discounted in the slaughter of lions, where snickersneezes at times stand the scientific investigator in good stead and "bloody activity" is an essential element. All that would depend upon "the zone of danger."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

The Public Debt.

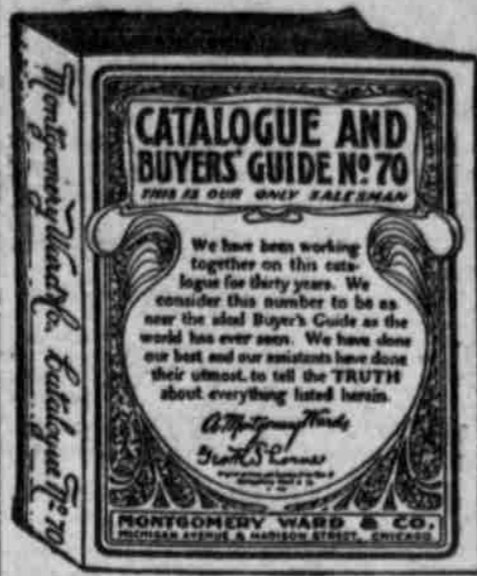
A subscriber to The Commoner asks for information concerning the public debt. He wants to know what the interest-bearing debt was June 30, 1901, and how money to pay the interest is raised. The interest-bearing debt on June 30, 1901, was \$987,141,040. It is provided by section 3694 of the Revised Statutes that moneys received from duties on imports shall be used for the payment of interest on the public debt. The interest on the public debt during 1901 amounted to \$32,342,979.04. The following statement of the debt of the United States on April 30, 1902, may be of interest:

Interest-bearing debt...	\$931,070,750.00
Debt on which interest has ceased	1,302,080.26
Debt bearing no interest	395,483,129.63
Total	\$1,327,855,959.89

Certificates and treasury notes to the amount of \$830,202,089.00 are outstanding and offset by an equal amount of cash in the treasury. The aggregate of the national debt, including the certificates and treasury notes, was, on April 30, 1902, \$2,158,058,048.89.

Paying a High Price.

Osceola (Mo.) Democrat: The reading of the Declaration of Independence is prohibited in the Philippine islands. Our slaves might be imbued with love of liberty, and that would be sad. The law against polygamy should be also barred, for we are paying \$250 per month to keep up the harem of the Sultan of Sulu.



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THE NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The bill to admit Oklahoma, Arizona and New Mexico into the union as states was passed by the house on May 9.

Rumors of the near approach of peace in South Africa are yet prevalent, but no official notice to that effect has yet been issued.

All previous records in that line were broken during the past week, when 25,120 immigrants reached New York city from European ports.

At the general federation of women's clubs in session at Los Angeles, Cal., Mrs. D. T. Denison of New York was chosen president for the next term.

The sum of \$6,000 for the fighting Boers in South Africa has been raised by the state of Iowa. This make a total of \$13,000 raised by the Iowa committee.

On May 4, Mr. Potter Palmer died at Chicago, at the age of seventy-six years. For nearly half a century he has been one of Chicago's most prominent business men.

The corner stone of the Ohio McKinley Memorial College of Government of the American university at Washington, D. C., will be laid on May 14 by President Roosevelt.

Bret Harte, the American author, died in London on May 6, at the age of sixty-three years. For many years he has been celebrated as the author of stories of western frontier life.

The republicans of Illinois held their state convention at Springfield, Ill., on May 8, and nominated Albert J. Hopkins of Aurora for United States senator to succeed William E. Mason.

Archbishop Corrigan died in New York city on May 5. He has been very prominent in religious circles for many years, having been archbishop since 1880. He was sixty-two years of age.

A dispatch from Madrid, under date of May 3, reports serious demonstrations of hostility in Portugal. The financial difficulties of the government have aroused the people, and a revolution is greatly feared.

Congressman Peter J. Otey of the Sixth Virginia district died at his home in Lynchburg on May 4. He has been a member of the house of representatives since 1894, and, at the time of his death, was sixty-two years of age.

An Associated press report from Guatemala, in Central America, announces the prevalence of severe earthquake shocks, and hundreds of people have lost their lives. Many cities are entirely ruined and 50,000 persons are left homeless.

A dispatch from St. Thomas, Danish West Indies, under date of May 6, reports that a flow of lava from a volcano on the island of Martinique, completely destroyed the Guerin factories on that island, and 150 persons have disappeared.

Judge George W. Ambrose, formerly of Omaha, but later of Chicago, died in that city on May 5, in his sixty-third year. For four years he served on the judicial bench of a prominent district of Nebraska, and was well known throughout the state.

The Iowa school for the deaf near the city of Council Bluffs was burned to the ground on the evening of May 9, entailing a loss of \$200,000 on buildings, and \$50,000 on furniture and other contents. No loss of life occurred, though many narrowly escaped.

It is announced that, beginning with this month, the Brule Sioux Indians in South Dakota are to be provided with labor at the rate of \$1.25 per day of eight hours, in lieu of the ration system formerly used. This applies to all able-bodied male Indians over eighteen years of age.

Another death among the members of the house of representatives is reported on May 6, when Representative J. S. Salmon of the Fourth district of New Jersey died at his home at Boonton, that state. Mr. Salmon was sixty-six years of age and was serving his second term in congress as a democrat.

On May 8 the volcano that has been in a state of more or less activity on the island of Martinique for the past few days exploded and the city of St. Pierre, with all but a few of its 25,000 inhabitants, was destroyed. Cables to the island have been entirely destroyed, but every effort is being made to open up communication with the people.

The inquiry by the Missouri state authorities into the workings of the beef trust was begun on May 6. On the advice of their lawyers, none of the packers appeared in court. The corporations are determined to test

the validity of the anti-trust law, and declare that the proceedings in Missouri are unfair. The evidence produced shows that the packers are violating the law.

On May 5, J. J. Hill and other officers of the Northern Securities company, proceedings against which have been brought by United States Attorney General Knox at St. Paul, Minn., filed their answers in defense of the merger. The company was described as an enterprise which will compete for interstate and international business, and it was denied that a consolidation was intended.

A dispatch from London to the New York Evening Post, asserts that some of the large American railroads are to be the principal owners in the steamship combine. It is planned to make the ocean lines feeders to the largest transportation companies of the United States, so that it will be possible to control rates from the principal interior points of this country, to leading European cities.

On May 8, Paul Leicester Ford, the novelist, was killed by his brother, who afterwards took his own life. The tragedy took place in New York at Mr. Ford's home, and was the outgrowth of enmity over their father's will. Mr. Paul L. Ford was thirty-seven years old and an author of much note, "Janice Meredith" being perhaps his best known work.

Rear Admiral William T. Sampson died at his home in Washington, D. C., May 6. Admiral Sampson was born in 1840, graduated at the head of his class at the United States naval academy in 1860, took an active part in the naval operations of the civil war, and commanded the North Atlantic squadron during the recent Spanish-American war. He was perhaps one of the best known naval commanders of the United States.

The great question that is agitating the senate and house of representatives now is, "What has it cost the United States government to hold the Philippine islands?" Information on this subject is sought by all, but the administration seems disposed to discourage all attempts to ascertain the truth. But, according to the latest

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