

LEADING EVENTS OF 1902

Conspicuous Chapters in the Record of the Century's Second Year.

RAILROAD MERGERS IN THE FOREGROUND

Extraordinary Convulsions of Nature
Wreck Life and Property—Roll of
Distinguished Dead—Political
Events Happenings.

Time in its strenuous round compels another volume. In many important respects it is a decided advance on the annual tomes now crowding the shelves. Events of uncommon moment, affecting the industrial, commercial and political life of the nation, leave their impress upon the record of the year. Combination and consolidation of transportation lines have been completed, and "community of interest" policy succeeds competition on all main lines of railroad. Chief among the railroad mergers, so-called, was the absorption of the Burlington system by the interests controlling the Great Northern and Northern Pacific, and the practical consolidation of the Union and Southern Pacific systems. These lines control the traffic of the western half of the republic.

The community of interest policy and consolidation reached its highest development in many industrial lines hitherto considered beyond the domain of trusts. Some of the necessities of life were involved, producing popular discontent and a widespread demand for national restriction. In response to this demand action was begun in the courts of law of the United States to annul the consolidation of the Great Northern, Northern Pacific and Burlington Roads and to restrain the beef trust.

Labor troubles were many and of far-reaching consequences. There were strikes by freight handlers, teamsters and meat-singers, which kept Chicago in a turmoil for months; strikes by street car men in Rochester, N. Y., Chattanooga and New Orleans, which required military force to maintain order, and the lookout of boiler makers, machinists and blacksmiths on the Union Pacific railroad, which is yet unsettled. The greatest strike in the history of labor in this country, in number directly involved and in cost to the people at large, was the strike of the anthracite coal miners in Pennsylvania. Beginning May 12, it lasted just five months and boosted the price of coal to double and treble its former cost. In eastern cities hard coal is doled out sparingly at \$12 and \$15 a ton, where a year ago it was abundant at \$4, \$5 and \$6 a ton. In Omaha at the present time the price of hard coal is \$6 a ton above the normal, and very little is to be had. Directly and indirectly, the strike reached into the pockets of one-half the people. By extraordinary persuasion on the part of President Roosevelt hostilities were stopped October 15 and the questions at issue submitted to a commission appointed by the president. The commission has not yet completed its task.

Chief among the political events of the year was the launching of the republic of Washington.

Distinguished Visitors.

Prince Henry of Prussia, brother of Emperor William, arrived in New York City February 22, on a special visit to the United States. The ostensible object of the visit was to witness the launching of the yacht Meteor, built by a New York firm for the emperor, but the prince became the guest of the nation, visited various cities of the north and east and everywhere received cordial welcome. In October the crown prince of Siam traveled across the country homeward bound and was the recipient of official attentions. Another visit of international significance occurred in May, when representatives of the French government and of the Rochambeau family, as guests of the nation, participated in the unveiling of the Rochambeau monument at Washington.

Two occasions during the year the nation thrashed with anxiety for the life of President Roosevelt. September 3 a carriage in which the president was driving near Lenox, Mass., was run down by a trolley car and Secret Service Guard William Clegg instantly killed, the president receiving bruises on the face and leg. The latter injury forced the president to abandon his western trip at Indianapolis September 23 and return to Washington for treatment and rest.

Appalling Disasters.

The most appalling disaster, not alone of the year, but of modern times, was the eruption of Mount Pelee, a volcano on the island of Martinique. Evidence of volcanic activity were observed in April, increasing in force until May 8, when a tremendous discharge of ashes and gas engulfed the town of St. Pierre, killing 20,000 people and destroying every building. Subsequent discharges are said to have killed 1,000 people in various parts of the island. The companion volcano, La Soufrière, island of St. Vincent, became active at the same time and destroyed 500 lives. Santa Maria, a volcano in Guatemala, S. A., destroyed a large area of that republic, beginning September 30. Turukima, an island of Japan, was overwhelmed with a volcanic eruption August 15, and all its inhabitants, 1,500 in number, killed. A series of earthquakes in the early days of Canada and the west. Music has lost Philippe Marchal, the Italian opera composer; Camille Urso, the genial humorist; Bret Harte, the gentle satirist and ideal short story writer; Paul Leicester Ford, whose young life closed in fraternal tragedy; George Douglas Browne, the English novelist, who died on the threshold of a promising career; Edward Eggleston, the story writer; Philip J. Bailey, whose poem, "Festus," made him famous; Emile Zola, greatest of contemporary French novelists; George Alfred Henty, beloved of boys; and Mary Hartwell Catherwood, the romance historian of the early days of Canada and the west.

In the same month floods in India swept away twenty-four villages and made homeless 6,000 people. Sixteen persons were killed and fifty-four injured January 8 by a rear-end collision in the Park Avenue tunnel of the New York Central railroad, New York City. An explosion of dynamite in the New York subway January 10 killed seven men, injured 100, and destroyed dead close with the names of Frederick Alfred Krupp, the Essen steel master and gunmaker, and Elisabeth Cady Stanton, champion of the rights of women.

Political Events.

The year witnessed extraordinary convulsions of nature in the volcanic regions of South America and in Russian Asia. The eruption of Mount Pelee rivaled the deadly outbreak of Vesuvius in ancient times and surpassed it in rapidity of execution. Ashes and lava consumed and buried Pompeii and Herculaneum and their inhabitants. Exploding and suffocating gas and heat killed with the speed of a lightning flash the inhabitants of St. Pierre, wrecked every building in the city and partly covered the ruins with ashes. La Soufrière, a companion volcano, added to the death toll. Second only to the St. Pierre disaster was the catastrophe at Adzhian, a town in Russian Turkey. Early in December a succession of earthquakes practically destroyed the town and killed upwards of 5,000 persons. In September the Santa Maria volcano in Guatemala burst forth, ruining a large amount of property and destroying many lives. Storms were starting in their magnitudes and frequency during the year. Snow storms and cold waves of much severity in spots marked the opening months and the closing month. Cloudbursts and water-spouts and downpours of unusual frequency and quantity signaled the spring and summer months. The middle west suffered severely from floods in June and July. Altogether the summer season was uncommonly cool and wet. Disturbed elements were in evidence north and south of the equator and made the most formidable record of disaster in modern times.

Marconi's Triumph.

An event of signal importance to the world at large was Signor Marconi's triumph in wireless telegraphy. On December 16 a dispatch was sent across the Atlantic ocean from Glace Bay, N. S., to Poldhu, Cornwall, England, a distance of 2,360 miles.

One of the forces tending toward international peace and justice was the formal organization of The Hague arbitration

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court, to which many long-pending claims between nations were submitted. In two instances the claims of the United States against Mexico and Russia were sustained.

"The most deliberative legislative body in the world," better known as the United States senate, had its dignity seriously ruffled on several occasions. Senators Tillman and McLaren, both from South Carolina, held a frantic argument in the senate arena, and Senators Bailey of Texas and Sevier of Indiana attempted to settle an affair of state by known arm wrestling. Senator Money of Mississippi cut into the interior development of a Washington street car conductor who collected an extra fare from the senator.

Dishonesty and trickery in public office received two conspicuous rebukes. Fourteen persons, members of a former city council of St. Louis, and two promoters, were tried on charges of hoodwinking. Thirteen of them were convicted and sentenced to terms of imprisonment, varying from three to six years each. In Denver the mayor and city councilmen who violated an injunction against the passage of a franchise ordinance were adjudged guilty of contempt of court and sentenced to imprisonment for six months.

A large load of anxiety was lifted off the British empire by the conclusion of the Boer war in South Africa. Terms of peace were signed at Pretoria May 31.

The old man with the scythe displayed his customary activity and was as upstanding in high places as in low. In the long roll of the dead were placed the honored names of Thomas B. Reed, Cecil Rhodes, Lord Pauncefote, John W. Mackay, Senator James McMillan, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cadby Stanton, Frederick R. Krupp, J. Sterling Morton, Thomas Nast, Archbishop Corrigan and Feehan, Dr. Joseph Parker, minister of the City Temple, London, November 28, Rev. Frederick Temple, archbishop of Canterbury, December 22.

The legal profession lost Chief Justice Daniel Agnew of the supreme court of Pennsylvania, March 9; former Chief Justice David A. Depew of New Jersey, April 3; Horace Gray, retired Justice of the United States supreme court, September 15.

The world of letters suffered the loss of five eminent authors—Bret Harte, May 6; Paul Leicester Ford, May 8; Frank R. Stockton, April 20; Emil Zola, French novelist, September 29; Mary Hartwell Catherwood, December 26.

The profession of arms added to the death roll the names of General J. Willis Hoffman, who opened the battle of Gettysburg, March 5; General Wade Hampton, famous confederate cavalry leader, April 1; General Sir William Oliphant, V. C. of Lucknow fame, May 1; Rear Admiral William T. Sampson, U. S. N., May 6; General Charles H. T. Collis, soldier and lawyer, May 11; General Franz Sigel of civil war fame August 24; General H. H. K. Ulrich, commander-in-chief of the national army of Spanish rebels, Brooklyn, August 25; Major J. W. Powell, first man to explore the Grand canyon of the Colorado, September 23; Rear Admiral Thomas O. Selfridge, U. S. N., oldest naval officer of his rank in the world, October 15; General Wagner Swaine, veteran of the civil war, December 18.

Men of eminence in other walks of life who joined the majority were: Eugene Dupont of powder making fame, January 28; Thomas Sydney Cooper, famous British painter, February 7; Neil Bryant, old-time minstrel, March 6; A. A. McLeod, former president of the Philadelphia & Reading railroad, April 19; Major O. L. Pruden, assistant secretary to every president for thirty-four years, April 19; Sol Smith Russell, noted comedian, April 28; Potter Palmer, Chicago's pioneer merchant, May 4; Lawrence Godkin, former editor of the New York Evening Post, May 21; Prof. Rudolf Virchow of Berlin, inventor of cellular pathology, September 1; William S. Stratton, Colorado millionaire, September 14; Lyndsay A. Pratt, Philadelphia, pioneer in professional baseball, November 16; Nate Salisbury, noted showman and turfman, December 24; George W. Thatcher, Utah pioneer, December 24; John J. Dickey, superintendent fifth district Western Union Telegraph company, December 29.

Literature and the fine arts have lost many eminent representatives. The literary world will miss Frank R. Stockton, the genial humorist; Bret Harte, the gentle satirist and ideal short story writer; Paul Leicester Ford, whose young life closed in fraternal tragedy; George Douglas Browne, the English novelist, who died on the threshold of a promising career; Edward Eggleston, the story writer; Philip J. Bailey, whose poem, "Festus," made him famous; Emile Zola, greatest of contemporary French novelists; George Alfred Henty, beloved of boys; and Mary Hartwell Catherwood, the romance historian of the early days of Canada and the west.

The first half of the taxes for 1902 became delinquent today. In order to get in under the wire quite a number of large payments were made to the city treasurer yesterday afternoon. Arrears paid in full the check which Treasurer Howe received calling for \$9,858.09. The Cudahy Packing company paid half of its taxes, which amounted to \$4,822.15. These were the two largest amounts received by the treasurer. A large number of small property owners called at the city offices and settled and it was the busiest day of the season for Treasurer Howe and his deputies.

One point was noticeable and that was that the big corporations, at least some of them, took advantage of the clause in the charter allowing two payments to be made, while the small property owners paid up in full.

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