

PROGRESS IN SPAIN.

The Country is Beginning to Manufacture Steel from Its Own Rich Ores.

All Americans are interested in the efforts which Spain is making to develop the country's natural resources and increase its prosperity, says the New York Sun.

For many years Spain has permitted practically all her mineral wealth to be taken abroad for manufacture, a part of it coming back to the country for sale in the finished state. Efforts are now being made to smelt her iron ore at home in the hope that the industry will develop so that Spain will herself produce all the iron and steel her people need.

A Spanish firm of nail makers, which has always purchased the wire required in its factory from foreign countries, is now erecting a large mill and expects to make its own wire. Very large steel works recently completed are now in operation at Badalona and are turning out steel castings of the very best quality.

The equipment is first-class and it is said that the works can turn out 22 different qualities of steel from the softest to the hardest grade, suitable for tools. It is reported that the new works will be able to place steel plates on the market at prices considerably cheaper than anything now offered in spite of the disadvantages of situation, Badalona being far from both the iron and coal-mining districts of Spain.

The leading citizens of the country expect in the next few years important development in the home iron industry and believe that the success of this branch of enterprise will stimulate manufacturing in other directions. The government is expending large sums to secure the fuller utilization of the water supplies for the irrigation of rich lands that need only water to make them very fertile.

The educational system is also being modernized, and it is expected that the school reforms now being introduced after long study as to the most effective means of diminishing the prevalent illiteracy will in the next generation show a marked improvement in the intellectual development of the masses.

Spain no longer has incessant colonial wars to distract her attention and waste her substance. The thought of the leading minds in the country is turned to measures of internal improvement in many directions. The prospect is that the next decade will offer to the general public many advantages which they have not hitherto enjoyed, which will conduce to the moral and material prosperity of the nation.

INSECURE SECURITY.

Widow Gave Mortgage on Her Beloved Cow and the Butcher Killed It.

At a recent meeting of bankers in Clay Center, Kan., F. P. Blake, responding to the toast "Securities," told of a pretty young widow who got into financial straits and borrowed from a bank \$20 on the security of a fine Jersey cow, reports the Kansas City (Mo.) Journal. It nearly broke her heart, she said, to pledge the animal, which was almost as dear to her as her children. Then came a long period in which she renewed the note time after time, sometimes paying interest and sometimes not, and always distressing the bank officers with her sorrowful tale. "One day," proceeds the story, "she showed up in a more sorrowful frame of mind than usual, and with more tears and wretched tears than usual, announced that she had given up the struggle. The cow was dead and she was wearing her life out under the weight of a debt unsecured and which she saw no prospect of ever being able to pay. She wanted it discharged.

"The cashier took to the woods, telling me that it was no use for the bank to monkey longer with that paper; to treat the woman as nicely as I could, making her burden as light as possible, dry up the fountain of tears, then go over to the register of deeds' office with her and have the mortgage released. All of which I did in my smoothest and most gentlemanly way. Just as we were coming out of the courthouse curiosity got the better of me, and more as a space filler than anything else I said:

"Madam, now that this is all settled, when did your cow die and how did it happen?"

"She had wiped her tears away by this time and was radiant and smiling, a poem of contradictions. Turning to me she said:

"My dear boy, you tell that sweet cashier of yours that the butcher killed the cow two years ago."

A Privilege of Brides. It was the privilege of brides during the month of May, in bygone days, to kiss the sovereign if they met him on foot in Edinburgh. King Edward's Stuart predecessor, James IV., however, had little sympathy with the mere privilege, as a certain tradition has it that he paid forfeit to a bride who met him on foot and "would have kissit hyme."—Glasgow Herald.

Increase of Crime. Bishop Cullen of Delaware, has been telling an audience that crime in the United States has increased enormously since 1850. In that year there was one criminal in every 3,442 of population. In 1890, 30 years later, the proportion had increased to one in every 713.—N. Y. Sun.

CHRISTENING A SHIP.

Various Ways Young Women Sponsors Have of Smashing the Baptismal Bottle.

Rear Admiral Bowles, chief constructor of the navy, who was an interested spectator of the recent launch of the armored cruiser Colorado at Philadelphia, has made some interesting comments on the general subject of the methods practised in christening warships by breaking bottles of champagne on their prows. According to his experience, there are three ways of handling the bottle on such occasions, says the Washington Star.

He describes one as the baseball method, in which the bottle is held like a bat and hurled against the side of the ship with a long, sweeping swing, with energy enough for a home run or a three-bagger at least. Another method is described as the tennis blow, in which the bottle is smashed against the prow with a full arm serve. The admiral is quoted as saying that this method was used by the sponsor of the Colorado. The third method is described as the pig-squing style, and is a dainty little smash, sufficiently vicious, however, to shatter the champagne on the hull, and sometimes on the fair operator also.

It is admitted that none of these methods is perfect and that failure is possible in each, through the nervousness or excitement of the operator, who, by a bad aim or lack of sufficient force, may fail to break the bottle and in that way spoil the whole proceedings. A failure of that kind might be disastrous to a ship, at least from a sentimental viewpoint, and, as the sailors say, would "hoodoo" that particular vessel. In one case, the sponsor delayed the blow until the descending ship got beyond her reach; but she was equal to the occasion, and by a well directed throw managed to smash the bottle broadside on.

To avoid the possibility of such accidents, Admiral Bowles suggests the use of a device attached to the ship in such a way that when the young lady releases the bottle it is bound to strike against the prow of the ship with sufficient force to release the contents, and thus give the ship its maiden bath before it reaches its native element.

THE AMERICAN LAUGH.

It is Healthy, Happy and Springs from a Consciousness of Well-Doing.

God's greatest gift to man was the laugh. Without it the human race would have wept itself to death or exterminated itself long ago. Pathos is beautiful. Tragedy is absorbing. But both pathos and tragedy are instantly routed by the laugh, writes a philosopher in the Denver Post.

Laughter has sunshine in it. It is warm. Learned men have searched for the secret of life. What is it but good humor? That's the secret of life being worth living.

What sunshine is to earth good humor is to man. Take the snide and the laugh away and it would be the end of man.

Men can't fight while they enjoy a joke. Death himself recoils from the laugh. The man in a good humor has an enormous advantage over the man who is angry. Anger is dark. Bitterness is filled with shadow. Intolerance is grim and black. Prejudice is blind.

Good humor—with the smile and the laugh is sunshine in which objects are plain and distortion disappears and wherein phantoms become nothing.

One reason for America's greatness is that above all it is a nation that laughs. There have been gay peoples and frivolous nations, but gayety and frivolity are strangely akin to melancholy. That gay Germany whose national happiness is expressed in song is clouded by melancholy. Sadness pervades the temperament of Germania.

And frivolous France, how tragic she becomes—how desperately tragic! The great American laugh is another thing. Investigate the American national laugh, and there's a sound, practical something behind it. It is never a forced laugh. It is healthy, vigorous, spontaneous. Empires and powers have crumbled and gone to pieces in solemn seriousness and gloomy grandeur, while Uncle Sam, with a joke on his lips, forges ahead.

The First Post Office. In 1658, early in the reign of Louis XIV., M. de Velayer established a private penny post. Boxes were set up at the street corners for the reception of letters. Offices were opened in various quarters of Paris; collections were made once a day from the street boxes, followed many hours later by a single delivery, and thus the first post office in the world was established. M. de Velayer was so greatly encouraged by the success of his enterprise that in order to develop it still further he printed certain forms of bills of notes which were intended to cover all the ordinary requirements of business in great towns. These forms contained blanks which were intended to be filled up by the pen with such special matter as might be necessary to complete the writer's object. The idea at once became popular, and the printed forms accompanied the expansion of the postal service throughout the larger cities of France, and it was many years before they fell into disuse. Washington Star.

Asked and Answered. "Do you believe," asked young Dudley, who is only five feet tall, "that brevity is the soul of wit?" "Not in your case," replied Miss Biffington, in a tone replete with acrimony.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL.

"I. A. B. declare my engagement to C. D. spinster of this town, to be at an end by reason of her pawning the engagement ring," is from the personal column of a German newspaper.

The only direct descendant of Robert Burns is a clerk in a Chicago shipping office. He is Robert Burns Hutcheson, and his descent from the poet is unquestioned. His mother, Sarah Burns, was a daughter of Lieut. Col. James Glencairn Burns, the third son of Robert Burns and Jean Armour.

Edison has made but one speech in his life; it was not a brilliant one. He had agreed to lecture on electricity before a girls' seminary and had engaged a friend named Adams to work the apparatus while he talked. But when the inventor arose to address his audience he felt so glibly that he simply said: "Ladies, Mr. Adams will now address you on electricity and I will demonstrate what he says with the apparatus."

A western politician is author of the following story: Mark Hanna once gave a banquet in Ohio to 50 farmers. The desert was to be 25 fuscious Georgia watermelons. The day before the dinner Mr. Hanna had the melons plugged and poured a pint of champagne into each melon, then placed them on ice. After the dinner each farmer got half a melon. They began tasting them, winked at each other, looked wise and before the affair was over every farmer was slipping the seeds into his vest pocket.

In a lecture delivered to students of Columbia university Judge Cox of the United States circuit court, told of a young lawyer who came before the supreme court to argue a case in which he was also defendant. Addressing the court, he referred to the old French adage declaring that he who argues his own case has a fool for a client. After the case had been heard he left for his home in St. Louis, asking a friend to notify him by wire when the decision was handed down. This was the pithy telegram he received: "Old French adage confirmed."

Boys who begin at the foot and work their way to the head are not peculiar to the United States. "William Crooks, M. P." is the present title of a man who began his career in an English workhouse, that is, poorhouse. Necessity drove him there, but at the first opportunity he got his discharge, and began to deliver milk on a regular route. What time he could get he gave to learning the trade of a cooper, and to school. Work and study together made him in time a member of the London county council, chairman of the board of guardians of the very workhouse of which he was once an inmate, and now a member of parliament for the division of Woodwich.

"GOOD LUCK" CROSS.

Popular Symbol That Has a Peculiar Significance to People of Different Races.

The good luck cross, or "Indian Swastika" is a favorite with the young woman who has fallen victim to the pendant craze, and a metropolitan firm is winning the thanks of its patrons, says the Brooklyn Eagle of recent date, by presenting each purchaser of a "good luck cross" with a printed slip containing this data as to its origin and significance:

"What is its significance? Its origin and where it is used and understood?—These questions are asked and answered very often in these days of interest in things Indian. The symbol stares at you from the carvings of the Alaskan, the blankets of the Navajo, the baskets of the Pima and the pottery of the Zuni, in reality nearly universal in its use among the North American Indians. It has a significance to all these people, and each tribe has for it a new use and meaning. To the Navajo it is a symbol of good luck and a calendar, it denoting to him the four seasons. He looks to the north, and in the polar constellation finds his calendar. Four times during the year, at midnight, can be seen the sign that since 4900 B. C. has been the symbol of so many races. The polar star is the center and the constellation of Ursa Major forming the four arms or branches, makes a complete Swastika.

"It is also the primary symbol in every Buddhist shrine, and as the ancients were great astronomers and worshipped the planets, it has great religious significance among the followers of Buddha.

"Whatever the true meaning, there is no doubt about its growing popularity as an ornament, and a pretty little Swastika in beaten silver, gold or even copper makes a charm that surely will bring good luck to the wearer. Much could be written about this symbol and its full meaning still be in doubt.

Moslem Table Etiquette.

All true Moslems when eating must begin with salt and finish with vinegar. If they begin with salt they will escape the contagion of 70 diseases. If they finish with vinegar their worldly prosperity will continue to increase. The host is in etiquette bound to be the first to start eating and the last to leave it. The priests recite certain passages of the Koran before and after lunch and dinner, and also before drinking water at any hour of the day.—N. Y. Sun.

Uncle Remus Says. We look for our fellow-men to be consistent, and that's where we ain consistent ourselves. De best speech I ever deliberated was on de subject of honesty, an' yet I had to go out dat werry evenin' an' steal wood 'nuff to run me ober Sunday.—Detroit Free Press.

NOT A GOVERNMENT RISK.

Methods of the Present as They Will Be Regarded by Farmers Fifty Years Hence.

Some recent Washington dispatches called the attention of the public to the fact that taking the cost of irrigation of those western lands lately designated by the interior department for that purpose as a basis the estimate of \$5 an acre, which was the average quoted at the time the bill was under discussion, is entirely too low and the cost of construction is likely to be double that figure. This, says the Boston Transcript, has called out a rejoinder from the National Irrigation association, through its secretary. He shows, what ought to be self evident to any one taking thought upon the matter, that the cost will vary widely with the conditions. He admits that \$5 an acre would hardly cover the average cost. That estimate was probably based on private irrigation enterprises, which would naturally deal with more favorable conditions.

But whether the work costs much or little does not seriously affect the general proposition; the main point is that, whether this work costs \$5 or \$25 an acre, the farmer or settler who gets the benefit of the thus irrigated and fertilized land must pay and not the government. The secretary of the association estimates that the expense of providing these arid lands with water will range all the way from \$1 to \$50 an acre. Some of the simpler schemes involve merely the digging of a big ditch in order to secure water for thousands of acres, while others necessitate the building of big masonry dams and the construction of expensive canals and head-works. It may be objected that it will be difficult to attract settlers to these more expensively reclaimed tracts, but the cruetest irrigated farms produce annually more than \$15 an acre, while the highly developed farms and orchards are worth from four to a hundred times that amount.

It is possible that the waters of some of the great rivers of the northwest, the Columbia and the Snake, will eventually be partially diverted for this purpose. That will cost a great deal of money, but fruit lands in the Yakima valley of Washington are bringing in as high an annual revenue as \$200 an acre, so a large expenditure would be justified in extending that productive territory. This whatever the cost within reasonable limits, it would be warranted by results that experience has already demonstrated, and, in any event the settlers and not the government incurs the risk.

Of course it would not be good economic policy for the government to multiply these enterprises broadcast without reference to the demand, but that is something that will be done. There must be a demand or the string implication of territory before work is entered upon. Certainly no private company or syndicate would proceed upon a less prudent plan and the government will naturally exercise even greater caution. The farmer of fifty years hence will look back with contempt upon the meager agricultural returns of to-day.

HOW HE DID IT.

Ingenuous Scheme for Making Himself Adopted by a Sleepy-Headed Employer.

The next young man who always reached the office before the doors were opened was much disconcerted when he saw that the young man who was always late had gotten down in time, relates the New York Times.

"Must have started up all right," he remarked, "surely, as the young man who was always late took off his coat."

"Nope," replied he; "went to bed at 10:30."

"Somebody must have dragged you out, then," was the remark.

Then there was a prolonged silence, and the boss came in and conversation was out of the question for the rest of the day. The next morning found the young man who was always late again on time, and the next young man, who always reached the office before the doors were opened, was still more disconcerted.

"Out again all last night?" he said.

"Nope," said the other; "went to bed at 10:30."

The next morning, and the next, and then the next, the same thing happened. The next young man could stand it no longer; for he had held the record as the early comer.

"Say, how do you manage to get down so early," he asked, and asked, pathetically, too.

"Nothing easier," said the other. "I've got the greatest scheme—beats an alarm clock all hollow."

"Tell me," said the next young man. "Nothing easier. Just write myself a postal card every night, mark it important, and the letter carrier wakes me up to give it to me."

The next young man went back to his desk and started adding where he had left off.

Giant Umbrellas.

An African chief's umbrella is of greater importance than many people imagine, apart from its enormous size. Its loss in battle more than equals the loss of a standard of a commander. Some of the umbrellas are of prodigious dimensions, being no less than 25 feet in diameter, with ribs 12 feet 6 inches long. They are made of lancewood, and the covering is of gorgeously colored chintz, in varied sections of crimson, yellow and blue. The opening is performed by means of pulleys and ropes attached to the "runner," this operation requiring the services of three or four men. The pole, or handle, is of birch, and is about 14 or 15 feet high.—London Mail.

A LITTLE NONSENSE.

Tailor—"Well, have your trousers finished by Thursday, sir?" Customer—"If you don't, I'll sue you for breach of promise."—Princeton Tiger.

"You don't mean to tell me he's a pugilist?" "Not at all. I said he was a light-weight boxer." "Well," he's a packer of strawberries."—Philadelphia Press.

Asks Often. "How about the rent of this house of yours, Flitter? Doesn't the landlord ask a good deal for it?" "Yes; he often asks five and six times a month for it."—New Yorker.

No Familiarities. "I suppose you are familiar with John Ruskin, Miss Tooles?" "Indeed, I am not. I never allow myself to become familiar with men, Mr. Pearson. I have not even met the person you refer to."—Kansas City Journal.

One of the Other. "You say he was very eloquent when he proposed to you?" said Miss Cayenne. "Very," said the coqueting young woman. "Don't you think that indicates sincerity?" "Sincerity or experience?"—Washington Star.

Not Superstitious. "I am afraid you are superstitious." "Dead isn't," said Mrs. Erastus Pookley. "Some folks is a skyful of glasses an' all kiff of critters, but as long as I see a rabbit's paw in mah pocket I feel pufkly safe."—Springfield Republican.

"I thought Smithers had given up his horse in favor of automobiles, but I saw him buying a pair of animals to-day." "Oh, they are merely to bring the automobile home, when it breaks down."—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

OUR FIRST STEEL MAGNATE.

Pioneer Manufacturer in the United States Was Cornelius Atherton, of Massachusetts.

While in Afton, N. Y., recently W. M. Atherton, of Chicago, succeeded in securing a contract made by Cornelius Atherton in 1772 to learn and instruct James and Ezra Reed in the art of making steel, after its long sleep of 132 years, says the Chicago Record-Herald. The subject matter of the contract was of great importance to the colored at the time it was written. Our forefathers were entirely dependent upon the mother country and Germany for all the steel they used, and even the German steel could reach them only through a British port and British bottoms. How Cornelius Atherton became possessed of the secret of making steel is not known; that he was the first manufacturer in the United States is a fact well authenticated. This contract was drawn up by Thomas Barlow of Kent, Litchfield county, Conn. He was a brother of Joel Barlow, the author of "The Columbian," who in 1771 was our minister to France. The Reeds were merchants and carried on the Dover iron works adjoining the town of Andover, and the wife, Thomas Deane, was the great uncle of Columbus Deane, then secretary of the interior. The old steel works were built by Cornelius Atherton under this contract.

Cornelius Atherton was born in Cambridge, Mass., A. D. 1758, and the fourth in descent from Gen. Humphrey Atherton of Boston. He came to America in 1782, and became soon after the manager of the Dover iron works. In 1780 he returned to Boston, and in partnership with John and Samuel Adams and John Hancock, commenced the manufacture of firearms and cutlery. Here he made his first successful experiment in steel. At the end of six months the works were burned by an incendiary supposed to be the British soldiers then quartered in Boston. In 1770 he returned to America and built the steel works in the latter part of 1772, and in 1773 went to Plymouth, Pa., with his family. He settled on the land upon which the Shapp's mill was afterward built. Here he made steel in small quantities, and manufactured blacksmiths' anvils and made rifles for the hunters. During his residence there he began to use anthracite coal in his shop. On the 4th of July, 1773, he went to Florida, Georgia county, N. Y., where he remained until 1775, when he returned to Taylorville, Pa. During his residence there he constructed the old Wright forge also the forge of E. & R. Stearns, at Stearns Hollow, now called Seranville, Pa. At this place he made steel in small quantities. He died at South Plainbridge, N. Y. (now Afton), on the 4th of December, 1839. He was the father of Jabez Atherton, killed at the Wyoming, Pa., massacre, and of Cornelius Atherton, Jr., of Afton, N. Y., who died in 1881.

Indian Babies. Babies cry very little in India—they obey spiritual law as a flower. The lotus bud, lying on a stone bench in a dirty room, sucks its toe and seems dreaming of the pranks of baby Krishna, and solving problems of the universe. As it grows older it is very timid and shy in the presence of its elders. It feels the religious awe around it and does not break out into boisterous sport when all seems at prayer. But there is much love in India and these humble households seem very happy. They are all-in-all to each other and seek nothing outside either in society or amusement. Beautiful character comes from obedience to law and not from lawlessness. In India children are the crowning gift of life. It is a horror to be childless.—Edmund Russell, in Everybody's Magazine.

KENTUCKY MOUNTAINEERS.

The Real Character of a Large Class of People Is Much Misunderstood.

Perhaps no characteristic of the Kentucky mountaineer is better known than his fighting propensities and no other trait has so lowered him in the eyes of the outside world, says the Lexington Herald. Yet in forming our conclusions regarding these people it would be well for us to remember the chivalrous ancestry of these people, largely the cavaliers of Virginia and North Carolina. They have been taught for generations to avenge their own wrongs rather than to appeal to the law. An account of poor ways of travel, the administration of justice is attended with more delay and uncertainties than elsewhere. These facts, combined with the spirit of freedom and independence born of their attitude, and also the belligerent spirit kindled by the civil war, force one to see that these people are not guilty of the grossest homicide, but are largely actuated by the spirit of medieval chivalry.

Nor is the making of moonshine whiskey to be reckoned as a flagrant violation of moral law. "The sin which does trouble the mountain conscience is not the evasion of tax, but the making of whiskey at all. The evils of drinking are fully recognized. Several counties might be named where 'moonshine' still exists, but which have 'gone dry' and 'vigorously' exclude the saloon."

The men of money is but slightly felt by these simple-hearted people, since they raise nearly all they consume. The spinning wheel is still in general use and the hand loom forms an adjunct to many homes. Thus men and women are largely clad in "homespun." What money there is among them is received from "logging," teaching school and from pensions. The latter is a source of no small moment to them. The whole mountain section was sold to the union. Jacks county claims to have sent more men into the union army than any other county in the nation. The first union flag planted on Lookout mountain was planted by Capt. John Wilson, and the men of the Eighth Kentucky. With their manner of life, however, little money is needed. The families are supplied from their own "hobby" with abundance of cornmeal, string beans, dried fruit, "hog wasters," (strapp) and hog meat, also flaxseed oil and possibly a little cotton. They buy feathers and "bug" at the storehouse on court day for supplies of coffee, boots and patent medicines.

It need hardly be said that education is not to be found in this section. As an evidence of the extraordinary lack of culture look for a moment at the mountain preachers. Many of them have never been to school, and can neither read nor write. The preachers are often unable to read the Bible, but are dependent upon some more fortunate one present to read to them. This text is often read at length, by the reader and the preacher preaches at random from the text. Frequent mistakes are thus played on the young men who consent to read the text and who are pretending to understand something absurd and ridiculous, from which the unsuspecting preacher speaks. Since illiteracy is so prevalent, there are many many homes in which there are no books, not even a Bible. There are sometimes to be found 200 copies in this vast Appalachian section which cannot boast a single printing press. In truth, the average preacher of the mountains is prone to be suspicious of "book learning," which he has failed to acquire.

LONG LIVES OF PAUPERS.

Total Age of Thirty-Four in Stephenson County, Ill., Is 12,287 Years.

The wonderful old age to which paupers live has been demonstrated by an interesting investigation recently made by James Eells, superintendent of the Stephenson county, Ill., poor farm, reports the Chicago Tribune. Mr. Eells was asked how old a certain one of his inmates was, and this led to an inquiry as to the age of a number of others. He discovered that he had thirty-four people whose ages aggregated 2,877 years.

The ages of one party of seven people footed 600 years, the average being a fraction over 85 years.

Another party numbered seven, and their ages aggregated 327 years, the average being 77. There is still another party of from eighteen to twenty persons, whose ages average between 60 and 70 years, and the average of the whole bunch is over 70 years.

Steph. Keyes, of the Kane county farm, has a large contingent of old people. Some of them are so old that it is impossible to fix their age to a certainty. Some of them move about over the premises, a few being helpless.

There is one colored woman who Mr. Keyes says is at least 125 years of age. She is an inveterate talker and singer, was born a slave, and served different masters in Dixie. She talks continually of plantation days, imagines that she is in a cotton field harvesting this great staple of the south land. From her disconnected talks one is able to take up the threads of some of the most interesting epochs of ante-war days. She is tractable and gives less trouble than many others of lighter color.

Begins with Forty Dollars. The noted English circus manager, George Sanger, began his career as a showman with a trick pony, for which he paid \$40. It is now 75 years of age, and is very rich, and owns a costly circus and menagerie worth over \$2,000,000.