BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC.

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As to the torpedo boat Gwin, we hope it will.

No man is modest enough to believe himself overestimated by others.

The wife-murderer probably gets bouquets because he is such a lady-killer.

The word which went forth centuries ago has not been recalled: Blessed are the peacemakers.

Our congress escaped a civil war by a narrow margin, but it was very nearly blown up by an inside explosion.

After living under Spanish rule for 300 years the people of the Philippines will look upon anarchy as the ideal of good government.

A Vienna paper says the niceties of diplomacy are wasted on such people as the Americans. It is such mean remarks as that that make us want to fight to the other fellow's last ditch.

Jewell and James went from the newspaper office to the office of postmaster-general, and during their terms some pains were taken to distribute periodicals as well as letters. A little hint for Charles Emory Smith, who has had much to do with newspapers himself.

The young ladies of the south who shoot men for stepping on their toes are too savage. It is a new kind of lynching, and the natural outcome of the vengeance on black men which has become such a feature of southern life But, really, they ought to let the white young men of the south escape with their lives and confine their murders to the race which is so rapidly becoming used to it.

These days bring up memories of '61. We didn't know much about war then, but there was a sufficiency of information before the surrender at Appomattox. The greater heroes of the civil war were totally unknown at the beginning of it. Who shall win greatness in the struggle now on" We have great expectations in connection with Fitz Lee and Theodore Roosevelt; but the last men may be first and the first last.

May a governor play cricket? The governor of Jamaica has been taken to task for recreating himself by the game. A newspaper of his jurisdiction said the governor "should always be Caesar," and even declared that "a blow in the face from a ball, or a stumble and fall, would spoil the dignity of any governor." It is not usual to think of Caesar at the bat, but who can doubt that he would have made a home run had he tried his hand at base ball? And would he have been any less Caesar? Dignity is very well in its place; but wise men sometimes unbend.

So finely are the scales of nature adjusted that it is probable every defect has its compensation near at hand. Mans part is to find it. In Kansas and Nebraska the rainfall is insufficient to supply the needs of agricultural vegetation. Nevertheless it has recently been ascertained that an inexhaustible deposit of water lies directly below all the arid region; while the wind, nature's agent to lift the water, blows during the whole summer. It was from reglstering one hundred degrees below zero that Hansen, by means of a windmill, wrested the power to light and heat his ice-bound Fram. The Kansas farmers should not be slow to conquer nature as Nansen did.

The National Reform association has followed the lead of the National Prison association by calling for "a reconstruction of the ethical code of lawyers." It is felt that the frightful increase of crime can never be checked so long as attorneys, who are admitted to the bar as the sworn ministers of justice, are willing to sell their services to secure immunity for the worst of criminals, not only by securing the fair trial, which is the right of every accused person, but by using their legal ability for the perversion of law and evidence and the misleading of juries. Is there any possible form of wrong, any dishonest combination for private or public plunder, which does not find able and willing lawyers to dress it up and parade it before the courts in the robes of innocence and virtue? Yet there have been lawyers, like Horace Binney and Abraham Lincoln, who would not thus prostitute their powers; and we would gladly give full credit to the claim made by Hon. Joseph H. Choate for his $0,000 brother lawyers, that "you will look in vain elsewhere for more spotless honor, more absolute devotion, more patient industry, more conscientious fidelity than among these."

The statesmen of Spain order a fight in Cuba and a further sacrifice of life with the idea in view of a graceful descent from their high altitude. When their army gets out of Cuba they will laugh at their acuteness and bury their dead without tears. They remind one of the western sheriff who was proud of the success of his first hanging. "It was beautiful," he said, with a shining face. "Jim went off like a bird." Then his eye fell on the gaunt, haggard face of Jim. "Why, why!" he said, "I wonder what makes Jim look so blamed sorry."

A revolution at Madrid will bring out Don Carlos as a scheme, and a possible king; but if he wins like the throne he will be very sorry for it. This is not a good time for monarchs, and what is going to be left of Spain's credit and value will hardly suffice for the crown.

A long article in the Evening Post shows innumerable reconstruction troubles when Cuba gets her freedom. Isn't the existing situation worth considering, too? Hadn't death by starvation ought to be stopped?

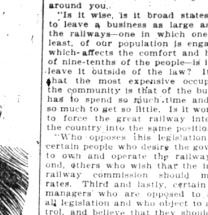
MANAGING RAILROADS

INTERESTING DISCUSSION OF A BIG SUBJECT.

Hon. M. E. Ingalls, President of the Big Four Railroad, Presents Some Important Facts That Will Interest All.

Hon. M. E. Ingalls, one of the greatest authorities on railway matters, read a highly valuable paper at the recent convention of railway commissioners held in Washington, D. C. His wise words will be read with interest by all. The convention was called for the purpose of considering questions of great interest both to the railways and the people of the United States. Members of the Association of American Railway Accounting Officers were also present and were invited to take part in the discussion. Chas. J. Lindley of Illinois, was chairman of the convention. Ohio was represented by Railroad Commissioner R. S. Kahler and Chief Clerk Ed H. Archer. P. A. Hewitt, auditor of the Big Four, was one of the railway accountants present. Mr. Ingalls' address is here given as being a semi-official expression of the views held by railway managers generally, and as being also of general interest to the public at large:

"Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen: I am very much obliged for this opportunity of addressing you. I understand I have in my audience the members of the interstate commerce commission and the gentlemen composing the various railway



HON. M. E. INGALLS, PRESIDENT OF THE "BIG FOUR."

commissions of the different states. It is a body that is supposed to stand as an arbiter between railroads and the people, as a friend of both; a body that ought to and does have great influence, and especially in reference to legislation regarding railroads. If this audience should agree upon any legislation in that respect that was needed, I presume there would be no difficulty in inducing yonder congress to enact it into law, and believing as I do that it is essential to the public interest to secure legislation, I am pleased to have this opportunity of presenting my views and endeavoring to enlist you in the reforms which I think are so vital. We have reached a crisis in railway management when something must be done or if we would avoid disaster, not alone to the railways, but to the material interests of our country.

"For 30 years a contest has been waged in legislatures, in congress, and before the courts, for the protection of one side who believed that railways were public corporations and subject to control by the power that created them; and, on the other hand, by officials of the railways, who did not believe that such control was legal or practicable. Both sides have asserted its right. These rights were contested from one court to another, and decided from time to time always in favor of the people, under certain restrictions. It finally culminated in 1887 in the enactment of the interstate commerce law, and since then there has been hardly a day when some provision of that law was not under consideration by the courts or congress, until now we may state it is as fairly settled by the highest courts in the land that the legislatures of the states have control over railways with reference to their local business, subject to certain conditions, and that the congress of the United States has the power to regulate interstate business. The supreme court of the United States, which is the highest arbiter of these differences, has just decided that such control of the states, or regulation, must be reasonable, and that rates cannot be reduced below a profit where the railroads can earn their expenses and a fair return upon their cost.

"Railway managers had accepted the situation, and were endeavoring to obey the interstate commerce law and adapt their management to it when, in March, 1897, a decision was rendered by the supreme court which produced chaos and destroyed all agreements. It was practically that the Sherman anti-trust law, so-called, which it had not been supposed applied to railways, did apply to them, and under the construction of that law by the court it was practically impossible to make any agreements or arangements for the maintenance of tariffs. In the case brought against the Joint Traffic association in New York, this view has been combated by the railways and it may be modified by the courts.

"It is well, perhaps, that we should look the situation fairly in the face, and while I do not care to be an alarmist, I feel bound to describe plainly to you the condition today, so that you may understand the necessity for action. Never in the history of railways have tariffs been so little respected as today. Private arrangements and understandings are more plentiful than regular rates. The larger shippers, the irresponsible shippers, are obtaining advantages which must sooner or later prove the ruin of the smaller and more conservative traders, and in the end will break up many of the commercial houses in this country and ruin the railways. A madness seems to have seized upon some railway managers, and a large portion of the freights of the country is being carried at prices far below cost. Other than the maintenance of tariffs the condition of the railways is good; their physical condition has been improved; their trains are well managed, and the public is well served. If a way can be found by which tariffs can be maintained and the practice of secret rebates and private contracts discontinued, the future will have great promise for railway investors, railway employes and the public generally. And here I wish to say that this is not a question which concerns railway investors alone. If it was, you might say, let them fight it out. It concerns over and above everyone else, the great public. One-fifth of our people are interested directly in railways, either as employes or employes of manufatories that are engaged in furnishing supplies to the railways. Can any body politic prosper if one-fifth of its number is engaged in a business that is losing money? The railways serve the public in so many ways that their prosperity is closely interwoven with the prosperity and comfort of the ordinary people. One thousand millions of dollars were paid out last year by the railways from their earnings to employes of manufactories in this country; $11,000,000 of passengers were carried; 13,000 millions were carried one mile; 765,000,000 of tons of freight were moved; 8,000 millions of tons were moved one mile. Do you think that any interest performing such immense service as this can be in difficulty and the balance of the country not feel it? Forty millions of dollars were paid out for public taxes. Over three thousand millions of dollars have been invested. In railways have earned no dividend for years. This is not 'water,' as some populist orator will say, but good, honest money. These securities are held all through the land, and their failure to pay any return has brought disgrace upon us abroad and suffering and want in many a family and community at home.

"One of the chief difficulties with the law as it stands today is that the punishment for private contracts and rebates is entirely out of proportion to the offense. The imprisonment clause was put in as an amendment to the interstate commerce law, and I believe the commission and everyone who has watched its workings will agree with me that it has been a failure; more than a failure, that it has caused perhaps more demoralization than anything else. The public has not believed in it; it has been impossible to secure conviction; it has prevented the railway official who desired to be honest from complaining of his competitor whom he thought was dishonest. In fact, it has been what every law is that is not supported by public sentiment—a failure. What, in fact, is the manner of conducting business today? The railway official who desires to be honest and law-abiding sees traffic leave his line and finds the freight that he was carrying hauled to the warehouse of his rival, the earnings of his line decreasing and complaints from the management of loss of earnings, and in the distance he sees looming up the loss of his position. At the same time, the shipper who desires to obey the law sees some rival selling merchandise to his customers at prices he cannot meet, and he knows very well that he is securing concessions from some railway to enable him to do this. The railway agent and the shipper who wish to obey the law sit down together and look it over. What relief is there for them? They can complain of their rivals, possibly convict them under the interstate commerce law and send them to the penitentiary, but such action would bring down upon them the condemnation of the public and would ruin their business; for, as I stated before, the public does not believe in this severe feature of the law, and will not support anyone who enforces it. The result is, these men, in despair, are driven to do just what their opponents are doing—they become lawbreakers themselves. I have drawn no fancy picture; it is what is occurring every day around you.

"Is it wise, is it broad statesmanship, to leave a business as large as that of the railways—one in which one-fifth, at least, of our population is engaged, one which affects the comfort and happiness of nine-tenths of the people—is it wise to leave it outside of the law? It is said that the most expensive occupation to the community is that of the burglar, he has to spend so much time and destroy so much to get so little. Is it worth while to force the great railway interests of the country into the same position?

"Who opposes this legislation? First, certain people who desire the government to own and operate the railways. Second, others who wish that the interstate railway commission should make all rates. Third and lastly, certain railway managers who are opposed to any and all legislation and who object to any control, and believe that they should be left entirely alone.

"As to the first parties I need not spend much time upon them. Very few people in this country are ready to launch the government into the management of 185,000 miles of railway and 1,000,000 men, of a million of men. It would in the end be the destruction of the republic. One wishes the interstate commerce commission to regulate everything; the other wants them to regulate nothing.

"Is it not better, is it not wise, for us to take a medium course? The question of making rates is a most important and most delicate business. The question whether flour, grain from Nebraska, is to be exported to Europe via the Atlantic ports or through the gulf or by way of Canada, the question of what rate will be profitable to make (and this usually depends entirely upon what freight there is to carry back), the protection of different ports, the development of different classes of business, all involve such immense interests that the human mind fails to realized the task would shrink from giving it to one set of men, no matter how wise or experienced they were, and a man who would desire this power would be rash beyond conception.

"Pitted against this view and determined to prevent any legislation is the railway manager who believes that he should be left to sail his own boat, to do his own battle, manage his line as he pleases. This plan was all very well 25 years ago, but the people have decided otherwise, and he who does not change and recognize the present situation is a back number. Regulation by the people has come to stay.

"All of us who have any interest in our country, who desire its prosperity, are interested in the solution of this great question. It is not a time for the demagogue to howl about corporations. It is not a time to talk about the wrongdoings of railway managers. There are always some, in both parties, who will not do right, and there always will be, but the great mass of railway managers to-day, I assure you, are as honestly seeking a solution of this question as are you or any member of the legislative body. I believe I voice the belief of a very large majority of them that the two provisions I have mentioned are necessary and will lead to the settlement of this question. If the body will join and heartily indorse this course and work for it, its accomplishment can be attained. We have unwittingly in this country applied to railway laws that it was never intended should be applied to transportation companies of this nature. We have gone back and taken decisions that were wise a hundred years ago, when civilization was in its infancy and when the masses needed certain protection, and have endeavored to apply these same principles to the great transportation interests of modern times. The courts, unfortunately, have followed in that line. Every business man, every statesman, knows that it is a mistake, that we have here an immense interest such as the world has never seen, and the principles which should govern it must be worked out in harmony with the age and the needs of this country. There should be no friction between the interstate commerce commission and the railways; there should be none between the state commissions and the railways. There has been too much of a feeling with these bodies that the railways were against them. In the contest with railways, in the courts, the commissioners have drifted away somewhat from the ground they ought to stand on; that is, they should be the friends of the railways instead of their enemies, and should aid in securing the proper legislation, and the railways, in turn, should give their support to make such legislation effective. I believe it can be done in no better way than by the true method I have pointed out. First, the charge of the criminal section; second, authority to contract and divide business. Either one of them would be of great advantage, but we ought to have both. There also should be such legislation as will give more force to the recommendations and orders of the interstate commerce commissioners. Instead of trying to break down the commission the railway officials should try to build it up, should make the commission its aid and use it as a bulwark of strength in congress and in the states to back the hills of legislation that is rising continually against them.

SCIENTIFIC TOPICS

CURRENT NOTES OF DISCOVERY AND INVENTION.

The Drudgeries of Life Summed Up—All About the Disease Known as "Hives"—New Toy for the Navy—An Invention for Golfers.

Life's Drudgeries.

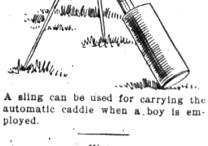
An "honor man" at Harvard a year or two ago summed up his college life as "a study of the rudiments of a dozen kinds of knowledge. When I began to form these alphabets into sentences, college life was over." Men and women who have won reputation by good work in the world have given much the same summary of their lives. "Any man," says Bouddiot, "may be glad, if out of all his work a half-dozen brief sentences last for a generation or two. The rest of his time in the world went to fit him to speak those sentences." George Eliot, in a letter to a friend, stated that the five books by which she is known bore no proportion to the enormous amount of anonymous writings by which she simply earned her livelihood. An eminent American surgeon in an address to a medical school said, "Very few successful men can expect to perform more than one or two great operations in the course of a long practice: The bulk of work ought to be a training for these operations." Honest, intelligent lads often set out in life with the resolve to add something to the happiness or wisdom of the world. Old age comes and they are forced to feel that they have done no work that is recognized, or, so far as they can see, that has been of large benefit to their generation. Their labor has been given to support life. If any readers, old or young, of these lines are inclined to take this disheartening view of their work, they should read Morrell's account of his journey through Upper Canada. "Our way lay across small lakes and through long stretches of forest. We had to carry the canoes over the land in order to cross the water, and so heavy were they that I grumbled much at having to toil hard for two days in order to make progress on the third until I remembered that the trudging under the load brought me to my journey's end as much as the floating on the water." There are a good many "carries" in each human life, days and years of heavy labor which go to earn the means to live. But if our faces are turned toward home, every step under the burden brings us surely nearer to it.

Arizona's Petrified Forests.

The secretary of the interior is considering a proposition to make a government reservation of the petrified forest in Arizona. It is said that the wonderful collection of silicified tree trunks of which the forest consists is being rapidly despoiled for commercial purposes. The petrified forest is in Apache county near Holbrook. Not only stumps and roots, but entire tree trunks of great size are found converted into hard agate, preserving the form of every cell and fiber. Some of the sections, cut across the trunks, are four feet in diameter, so that polished tops for tables are made out of a single piece. Another exhibit, in the most exquisite manner, the grain of the original wood, beautified by a brilliant display of interblending colors. A company has been formed to mine the forest for stone to be used in architectural and decorative work, and the only way to save this wonderful natural curiosity, which, as far as known, has no equal in the world, is said to be by turning it into a forest reserve.

For the Golf Enthusiast.

Every one knows that a "caddie" is an indispensable adjunct of the links, but very often the small boy to serve in this capacity if not available, particularly when one is enjoying the delights of golf on an improvised course, when away in summer or in the country. When the genuine article is not to be had, however, the golf enthusiasts have to content themselves with an automaton caddie. This is a device which, when the lower end is placed on the ground, opens out automatically and folds up when it is lifted for carrying. The contrivance is very light and is provided with a bag to hold balls and a generous allowance of space for the sundry sticks required.



A sling can be used for carrying the automatic caddie when a boy is employed.

Hives.

This most distressing eruption, known medically as urticaria, and popularly also as nettle-rash, hardly needs a description, for there is scarcely any one who has not at some time in his life suffered from it more or less. It consists in the sudden appearance of one or more puffy swellings on the skin, hard, and of a whitish or pinkish color, which itch and burn and sting intolerably.

These wheals may be no larger round than a pea, or they may be of the size of a silver dollar or even larger. They usually last only a few hours or a few minutes, but may persist for a day or more. Sometimes they keep coming out in successive crops on the same or different parts of the body.

The wheals generally disappear as rapidly as they come, and with them disappear every sign of the eruption, except, perhaps, the marks of the finger nails which the sufferer has dug into his skin in the vain effort to quiet the itching.

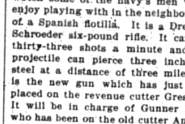
The causes of hives are numerous, but in the greater number of cases they are referable to some error in diet Some people can not eat shel'fish of any kind without paying for their indiscretion by an attack of urticaria; others are particularly affected by some kinds of berries or nuts, or by certain drugs. Irritation of the skin by medicinal applications, such as arnica or iodine, by poisons, such as that of the nettle, or of certain insects, or by the underclothing, as well as the action of a very low temperature, may also produce an eruption of hives.

It is possible to discover the cause and to remove it, the treatment of urticaria becomes a very simple matter. While the eruption lasts the itching and stinging may be relieved somewhat by bathing the parts in a strong solution of bicarbonate of soda, borax, household ammonia, alcohol, or vinegar and water.

A useful application is carbolic acid, one part in thirty parts of water, with a little glycerine. Sometimes an ointment containing carbolic acid borax or boracic acid, zinc or chloroform is very grateful.

New Toy for the Navy.

Here is a toy for the navy—one which some of the navy's men would enjoy playing with in the neighborhood of a Spanish flotilla. It is a Dreggesschroeder six-pound rifle. It can fire thirty-three shots a minute and its projectile can pierce three inches of steel at a distance of three miles. It is the new gun which has just been placed on the revenue cutter Gresham. It will be in charge of Gunner Finn, who has been on the old cutter Andrew Jackson and on the Gresham for twenty-six years. The Gresham has only one six-pounder rifle, but she could easily increase her armament by four or five more. She has a speed of twenty-one miles an hour. But her



chief weapon of defense is her torpedo tube.

A Projectile's Gain of Speed.

Recent experiments with improved instruments for measuring the velocity of projectiles have shown that the speed goes on increasing after the missile has left the mouth of the cannon, leaving the muzzle with a velocity of about 1,474 feet in a second, a projectile has been observed to increase its speed to about 1,689 feet per second within the first six feet. It only after having traveled about twenty-five yards that the projectile's velocity becomes reduced to the speed that it had on leaving the muzzle. This is ascribed to the impulse of the expanding gas being felt for some distance beyond the cannon's mouth.

Is It a Forming Sun.

Remarkable photographs of the "ring nebula" in the constellation Lyra have recently been made at the Meudon observatory, near Paris. These pictures show a great deal of diffused nebulous matter inside the ring, but none outside, while in the center appears the image of a star. This star can also be seen with a telescope. But the drawings of the ring nebula made by Herschel in 1833, by Lord Rosse in 1844, and by Trouvelot in 1873, show no star there, and Monsieur Rabourdan thinks this may indicate that changes are going on in the nebula; such, for instance as the formation of a solar body within the ring.

Distance of the Dog Star.

Dr. David Gill, whose measures of the parallaxes of the stars, by means of which their distances can be calculated, are among the most accurate known, has recently reduced anew the results of his observations of Sirius, the dog star, which is the brightest star in the heavens. He thinks we may now regard its parallax as satisfactorily determined at 0.37 of a second of arc. This makes the distance of Sirius 19 miles 51,000,000,000,000. In other words the dog star is nearly five hundred and fifty thousand times farther from the earth than the sun is.

A Curious Flower Wreath.

Miss Elizabeth Taylor, writing in Popular Science News of the plants and flowers of Iceland, describes a curious sight which she witnessed in the lava fields near Reykjavick. Noticing wreaths of steam issuing from the summit of a small volcano, she climbed up there, and found a band about two feet wide, of beautiful plants, bearing large flowers, encircling the interior line of the crater. The steam warmed the flowers and the rim of rocks protected them from the cold winds without.

What Locusts Will Not Eat.

It is said that the castor oil plant is abhorred by nearly all members of the animal world; that moles may be driven from a lawn by planting a few castor beans in it, and that neither the terrible "army worm," nor the all-destroying locust will eat it.

Hard to Understand.

Puck: "The language of you Americans is very difficult for me to understand," remarked the visiting Englishman.

"In what way?" asked his American friend.

"Well, Mr. Tenspot said that golf made him tired, and I replied that I did not know that he played golf,' and he admitted that he did not. Now, how could golf weary a man who does not play the game?"

True Happiness.

New York Weekly: Mrs. Muggers—"I see a prominent society belle is dead. If there ever was a perfectly blissful existence on earth, she enjoyed it while she lived."

Mr. Muggers—"Because she was a society belle?"

Mrs. Muggers—"No. Because she was engaged twenty-four times and never married."

The Limit.

New York Weekly: Impassioned Lover—"Tell me, my angel, what to do to prove my love. Oh, that I might, like some knight of old, battle for you, die for you."

Sweet Girl—"I wish you would give up smoking."

Impassioned Lover—"Oh, come, now, that's asking too much."

How to Prepare Kneipp Coffee—Take three heaping teaspoons full of ground Kneipp Malt Coffee for one quart of water. Boil the water add the Coffee, then let it boil slowly under cover at least five minutes. Take it off the fire, let it stand a few minutes to settle and pour it through a fine sieve into the coffee pot and it is ready to serve. Use cream and sugar to suit your taste. If milk is used instead of cream, it should be boiled first.

How to Use Kneipp Malt Coffee in addition to other Coffee—For six cups of coffee (2 1-2 pints of water) take two heaping tablespoons full of ground Kneipp Malt Coffee and after boiling the same five minutes as above indicated, add two tablespoons full of ground coffeebeans, let it boil up for a few seconds longer, then let it settle about five minutes. This mixed coffee will settle slower than pure Kneipp Malt Coffee. Use cream and sugar or boiled milk to suit your taste.

Be a Crank AND Get a Camera!

Whitehead & Mitchell have put in for sale at popular prices the

Celebrated Vive Camera for	$ 5.00
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We have all the accessories that you will need to take the the picture, develop it, print it, tone it, mount it and give to your friend. We can sell you a complete outfit, everything you will need for $0.50. Can you beat it?

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