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The New York Sun says that Portugal, insignificant as it is, can give Europe a great deal of trouble.

Philadelphia allow a discount of five per cent. to tenants who pay their rents on the day they fall due.

The 1880 record for British lifeboats shows a saving of 556 lives besides rescuing twenty-seven vessels from destruction.

The latest industry is the manufacture of dynamite, which was brought to light in Egypt by the recent conviction of an ingenious manufacturer.

Rightly or wrongly, England is full of the idea, asserts the New York Times, that Macdonald's death means the loss of Canada to the British Empire.

The Abolition Age, of Cincinnati, announces the reduction to fifty cents a pound, \$950 per ton. It is claimed that the chief causes of the large reduction are the late improved facilities of extracting the metal from the clay and the recent lawsuits now pending in the United States Courts between rival manufacturers.

Wilder, the humorist, says that in appreciating good jokes a crowd of news boys is the quickest and most intelligent he ever met. No point, gesture or shade of inflection escapes these alert little nomads, while on the other hand many fashionable assemblages are chilly and unresponsive until you break the crust of reserve or indifference as if with a silver hammer.

France's stagnation of population has been seriously discussed by the Academy of Medicine for several weeks, with the result of evolving a strong sentiment for adopting various means of resisting epidemics such as the French have not inclined to hitherto, compulsory vaccination, for instance. Professor Tarnier, however, President of the Academy, relied upon a much more directly efficacious measure. He has offered to the parents of his native parish, Arch-sur-Ville, a prize of \$20 for each child born.

The Atlanta Constitution says: A student of prison life at Sing Sing gives it as his deliberate judgment that reformation is impossible, when criminals are crowded together under one roof. In a penitentiary the prisoners sentenced for a term of years for small offenses go out into the world after their release more wicked than before, and plunge still deeper into the black abyss of crime. Another thing has been observed at Sing Sing. While the prisoners do not derive any moral benefit from their association with each other, the officials, whose duty it is to watch them, see a tendency to be affected by the contagious iniquity around them. The reported heavy defecations among some of the recent officials of the prison will make startling reading when the story is given to the public. So it seems that our prison system not only educates the prisoners into malefactors, but tempts their guards to become criminals. If Sing Sing is a fair sample of our penal institutions it is the whole business needs a thorough overhauling.

The New York correspondent of the Chicago Herald writes: "We are certainly going baseball crazy here again. Two years ago the craze was so bad that which overwhelmed the city was six-day walking matches were first established. Thousands of those who could not see the games made their homes wretched because they stayed to watch the bulletin boards long after the dinner hour. At least 100,000 copies daily of the extra editions of the evening newspapers containing the reports of the games were sold. Last year all this was changed, and many thought that the craze had received its death-blow; that was a mistake. Everybody is hurrying. The old throngs gather around the bulletin boards. The extra editions are sold as though they contained reports of a great battle, and Buck Ewing, Tim Keefe and Mickey Welsh are once more popular heroes and, like the celebrated official of Washington, are esteemed by the younger generation as bigger men than Grant. And what a whirligig it is for Frank Sharrott! Two years ago he was a barefooted youngster tossing the ball on the sand lots of Staten Island with no dream of future greatness, and today he is the hero of the hour because he possesses a wonderful 'snapshot' and a dangerous 'drop-ball.' Even clergymen are forgetting the theological controversies in their admiration of young Sharrott and the Hoosier Rosie."

A MYSTERY.

Our baby boy one day
Poked his violet eyes,
And from his waxen clay
His white soul flew away
To far off Paradise.
His little hands so fair,
We crossed upon his breast
And standing by him there
We gave him to the care
Of one who doeth best.
And when to final sleep
We laid him soft and low,
We could not help but heap
Upon him lilies deep
And roses pure as snow.
And then, with courage great,
His mother faced the years;
But oft, when it was late,
Among his toys she sat
And fondled them with tears.
But now another child,
With wondrous violet eyes,
Rests on her bosom mild,
And smiles as he had smiled
To-day in Paradise.
And something seems to say
To her, so sad before,
"The soul that flew away
Is back again to-day."
Sweet mother, weep no more!
—George Horton, in Chicago Herald.

Cleaning Out Pirates.

During the year 1868 no less than three trading vessels fitted out at Singapore for traffic in the Java Sea mysteriously disappeared, and no trace of them could be discovered. Two more were added to the list early in 1869, and about July 1 it was whispered around that a nest of pirates had been discovered on an island off the north coast of Java. If the news was true the chieftain of the gang must be a bold fellow indeed, and needed looking after at once.

The merchants at Singapore were talking of fitting out a ship to investigate when H. M. cruiser The Shark arrived. She was one of the old-fashioned ten-gun brigs once so numerous, and at that time was engaged in a survey of the south coast of Borneo, or about to be. As I was one of her crew I can relate what happened during the next two weeks first-hand.

It seemed that the story of the pirate was accepted as a fact, for we overhauled our armament, took in a lot of ammunition and strengthened our crew by fourteen men before sailing. These men were drafted out of a crew belonging to a man-of-war which had been wrecked on the Malay coast, and all were old hands. The captain got his bearings from some source unknown to us, and when we left Singapore the brig was headed to the east. We jogged along down the coast of Sumatra for a week without finding any unusual incident, and though we spoke a score of crafts none of them had any information about the pirate. The crew had begun to ridicule the idea when something occurred to open our eyes very wide.

One morning, about an hour after daylight, we came up with a Dutch trader, which was taking care of herself. All her sails had been cut away, ropes were flying in every direction and she was so low in the water that we wondered why she didn't go down. When a boat pulled off to her it was to find the captain mortally wounded and his wife and two children dead and horribly mutilated on the deck beside him. We got him off, but had no time to give the bodies burial before the little craft went down. The captain was a man about forty years of age, and though hardly alive when we found him he rallied enough to tell his story.

The trader had been trafficking along the Java coast and had finally completed his cargo and headed for Singapore. Just at sunset on the previous evening he had been overhauled by a native craft carrying about forty men. He was then about ten miles off the coast and about five miles south of an island known as "Queen's Bower." He had no suspicion whatever of the natives, and the first thing he knew they boarded his craft and began to cut and slash. When they had finished the crew they began to plunder and strip the vessel, and were with her until midnight. Before leaving they bored her full of holes, and we had reached her just in time to rescue the captain. The first craft was joined by two others later on, and the three carried at least a hundred desperate fellows. The captain heard and understood enough to satisfy him that they were an organized gang of pirates and that they were also well equipped for their bloody business.

The island mentioned was not over twenty miles away, and as the Java Sea was and is a great highway, it did not seem possible that men would take such

a risk as those pirates had. The trader said that no less than three friendly sails were in sight when he was attacked, but all too far away to signal, even if he had been warned in time to do something. Owing to the shoals surrounding the island our craft could not approach near enough to use her guns and shell the fellows out, and we were not strong enough to land from our boats and deal with them. The sight of an armed vessel nosing around would put pirates on their guard, and so it was resolved to play them a Yankee trick. We ran into a bay on the coast and set to work.

You are probably aware of the fact that an English man-of-war, no matter how large or how small, is a pattern of neatness and regulation, and the cut of her sails will alone establish her identity while her hull is yet below the water line. We had, therefore, to undo and overhaul a great deal. We put everything in seeming confusion aloft, disguised her hull as much as possible, and when we left the bay The Shark had the look of a merchantman which had been through a typhoon and was too short-handed to make repairs. The Dutch captain died on the day after we found him, and his last words were a prayer that we might fall in with and punish the pirates.

It was just at daylight that we appeared off the north coast of the island and anchored on a bank about three miles from the beach. Men were sent aloft as if engaged in repairs, a boat was got down as if to work on the hull, and the bulk of the crew remained in hiding below. No doubt the fellows ashore had a lookout in some trees, and provided with a good glass he could see everything going on aboard. It was hardly sunrise when a small native craft with four men in her came out to within pistol-shot of us to make an investigation. Our captain hailed them and they replied with gestures of signify that they would return to the shore for help. They evidently took us for what we pretended to be, and we were piped to breakfast feeling that our ruse would succeed.

About eight o'clock, with the wind breezing up lively, three native sail-craft put out for us. A man aloft with a glass reported that each craft was crowded with natives, and it was now our plan to weigh anchor and make a little sail and pretend to be standing away from them as if alarmed. The object was to draw them as far away from shore as possible, and we had added a mile or more to the distance when the foremost boat came within hail. She hadn't a gun of any sort in sight, but she had forty-eight desperate-looking villains in plain view, and every one of them had a cutlass and pistol. While her captain was hailing us in a language no one could understand, she was slowly edging along down upon our starboard quarter. At the same time a second craft was drawing ahead on the port side, and the third kept in our wake.

Only seven or eight men were in sight on our decks, and the natives seemed to have no suspicions of a trick. The breeze was a little bit too strong for their manoeuvring at first, but after we were about six miles off shore the two suddenly closed in to board us. Our captain had been closely watching them and waiting for this move, and of a sudden the drum beat to quarters and our decks were alive with men. I was captain of No. 3 gun crew and had the honor of firing the first shot. It was a solid ball, and it struck the craft on her port bow and went clean through her and dropped into the sea beyond. This opened the fight; the natives instantly realized that they had caught a Tartar, and they saw, too, that their only means of escape lay in capturing the ship. Therefore, instead of running away, as we had looked for, each craft bore down on us to board. They were handled as easily as an Indian manoeuvres a canoe, and it wasn't five minutes after the first gun was fired ere they were on our quarters like wolves seeking to hamstring a deer. I fired another solid shot and then loaded with grape, and this last charge was fired right into a mass of natives waiting to clamber up the side. The gun next to me fired a solid shot, which tore through her bottom, and two minutes later she foundered right along side of us. The second craft got near enough to grapple, but the irons were thrown off, and two guns played solid shot into her hull until she went down stern foremost, leaving thirty men struggling in the waves. The third craft had forged ahead, sailing five feet to our one, and would have boarded us at the bows but for the

sudden destruction of the others. Their fate frightened her off, but she had scarcely laid her head for the island than it was brought around as if the crew had made some desperate resolve. Now occurred a curious thing: She had about thirty men on board, and she came down on us with every one of them shouting and screaming and tried to lay us aboard. We could have sunk her with one gun even, or we could have picked off the whole crew with our muskets before they had crossed the rail. Word was passed to give her a full broadside at the word, and when the smoke cleared away she was not to be seen. There were over twenty of the pirates hanging to the wreckage around us, however, and a boat was lowered to pick them up. You can judge of their desperation when I tell you that every one of them fought like a tiger against being picked up, and that we got only five out of the lot. The others we had to kill as they floated about with the sharks snapping at them. Two of the five leaped out of the boat after being pulled in and were seen no more, and the others gave us so much trouble that the captain swung them up to the yard arm. Thus not one single man of the hundred or more who came out to attack us escaped with his life. I was in one of the two boats afterwards sent ashore to see what sort of a fair the pirates had made for themselves. The only human beings ashore were an old native woman, a one-armed Japanese, and a white boy about fourteen years of age. This boy was off an English trader, captured the year before, and had been held prisoner ever since. He said they were 107 men in the gang, and we found enough plunder on the island to load our ship. They had captured about a dozen different vessels, large and small, and in every case had plundered and sunk them. They did not always kill all the crew. Soon after the boy was captured they brought in an American sailor off a spice trader. The boy knew him only by the name of William, but remembered that his home was in Boston. It turned out that they had spared his life to make use of him as a blacksmith, but when they found that he had no knowledge of that work he was put to death. By order of the chief he was hung in chains on a tree about a quarter of a mile away, and was eleven days in dying. The boy went with us and showed us his bones still hanging.

The one-armed man and the old woman, assisted by the boy, were the cooks for the gang. They at first seemed very much alarmed, and protested their innocence of any complicity in the crimes of the pirates, but when they came to understand that all the villains had met their fate, and that we had come ashore to clear the island of its last bale of plunder, they suddenly ran into a rude store-house, blocked up the doorway with boxes, and opened fire on us with pistols. We had two men wounded before we could dislodge them, and they were then hanged to the same limb and their bodies left to the birds. What plunder we could not bring off we burned on the island, and before leaving we set the forest on fire in a dozen places, and the flames did not die out until the whole length and breadth had been swept clean of vegetation.—New York World.

Hamlet as He Was.

Amleth, as it was formally written, was a Prince of Jutland. Medieval writers, however, differ as to the exact century in which he lived. The best authority on this subject, perhaps, is Saxo-Grannassius, the Danish historian, according to whom Amleth lived about 200 B. C. He was a son of Horvendil, himself a Prince of Jutland, and Gerutha, a daughter of the King of what is now Denmark. Amleth's father was murdered by his own brother, Fenzu, who soon married the wife of his victim. Amleth would have been murdered by his uncle at the time of Horvendil's death at his brother's hand, but for the fact that he feigned madness. Soon after his mother's marriage Amleth killed his father's murderer. Various stories are told concerning the final end of Amleth, none of which are authentic, according to modern investigators.

A French "History of Hamlet" was circulated in England about the beginning of the Sixteenth Century, and is supposed to be the foundation of the famous Shakespearean play.—St. Louis Republic.

A boy of ten, and a girl of twelve in one of the public schools at Portland, Me., are subjects of a good deal of curiosity, as both are bald as billiard balls.

THE GERMAN COURT.

PLEASURES GAY ROUND IN EMPEROR WILLIAM'S HOME.

Hunting the Favorite Diversion of the Emperor—The Ceremony of Bestowing Decorations—Presentations to Emperor and Empress.

The season devoted to amusement is rather short in the German metropolis, says a writer in the San Francisco Chronicle. Official court festivities begin January 18th and last till Lent. After the beginning of Lent private parties with dancing are tolerated, but it is more fashionable to have dinners, routs or musicales, and such mild pleasures. After "Mid-lareme" all parties cease, and only theatres and concerts are visited till Easter week brings utter retirement to all those belonging to society.

I shall try to give a short glimpse of the events of the past winter season, which was the first under the reign of William II. without mourning. After the New Year ceremonies the Imperial court lived in retirement, because of the confinement and convalescence of the Empress. Thus the Emperor found leisure for hunting, which is his favorite pleasure. The best sport was found at Königswusterhausen, a small place in the midst of large pine forests, where wild boars abound. Here the Emperor hunted for two days, staying the night at a small hunting lodge where his forefathers used to remain during hunting time.

The bears are driven together by hundreds of drivers, under the guidance of the imperial gamekeepers, and the Emperor and his guests stand at appointed places, and when the animals rush past have the best opportunity to shoot. In seven days 228 animals were killed, some of great size and astonishing weight. The Emperor shoots very well with a gun or rifle, and has been known to kill 300 head of game in one day.

On such hunting expeditions the Emperor always wears forest uniform, dark gray cloth, with green fastenings and silver cords, together with a felt hat. This uniform is only allowed by imperial permission, and is permitted, for instance, to royal relations or personal friends of the Emperor who are good sportsmen. All the game that has been killed is laid out in rows and the Emperor and his guests look them over, and a bugle sounds the halloo. At the little castle dinner is served to the hungry party, and usually some hours after the company returns by train to Berlin.

On the 18th of January the Vederfest, or "Decoration Festival," was celebrated, together with the anniversary of the Prussian Coronation day and the proclamation of the new German empire in 1871. This festival is for all those who received decorations during the past year and of those about to receive orders on this day. The cavaliers of the Veder of the Black Eagle are always present, as well as the cavaliers of the Veder of Johanniter, receiving their gorgeous uniforms, which belong to the Veder, and the grand cloths of red velvet or black silk, which make them look very picturesque. The Emperor wears a red cloak, which is most becoming to him. But there are also some present in plain clothes among the many glittering uniforms, for decorations are given to men of merit of all classes, and worthy laborers, with the "Allgemeine Ehrenreihen," a gold medal, stand near private soldiers, also decorated for acts of courage. A good many ladies are also among the decorated ones. Charity and

work in the cause of the poor are rewarded by the Gusecross, or Verheuered, worn on the left shoulder, a more becoming ornament than fine diamonds or jewels, in the sight of God and man. When all the guests, who numbered 1250 this year, were assembled, the Emperor repaired with them to Castle chapel, where divine service was celebrated, followed by a dinner in the gorgeous halls of the Castle, and at the end of it the Emperor proposes to the health of "all those that have been decorated," thus closing the grand entertainment.

The christening of the sixth son of the Imperial Majesty on the 25th of January, was the next court festival. The baby, born on the 17th of December, received the name of Joachim, and after the christening in one of the imperial rooms, the Empress was churched. The invited company, specially the royal fathers and godmothers from other courts, assembled for a state dinner in the great White Hall. The following day, the 27th of January, was the birth-

day of the Emperor, now 32 years old. It was celebrated in great style by official congratulations and much public cheering whenever the Emperor appeared.

On this day, in a small, cozy dining-room, only royalty assembled, and the whole dinner was served on silver, all the plates beautifully engraved with the Prussian arms. The table ornaments and candelabra were of gold, the cut crystal of exquisite workmanship, and the white damask linen of the finest texture. The hangings of the room were dark red with gold fringes; the furniture of chiseled oak. The lackeys were in stockings, with gorgeous liveries and powdered heads. One of them was stationed behind each chair. The service was as noiseless and quick as possible; in fact, a dinner at court never lasts longer than an hour.

Court balls, soirees and dinners followed quickly one upon the other. At the levee newcomers are introduced to the Emperor and Empress. The ladies appear in court trains of the length of three meters, carried over the left arm and only let down at the time of the introduction, when the introduced lady makes her three deep curtsies before their Majesties, standing on the throne. Those already introduced only walk past the throne with the court reverence, and 2000 persons are often in these processions.

The balls are given in the White Hall and are the occasion for merry dancing and much amusement to the younger members of society. The arrangement of all these festivals is made by the Hofmarschalle and the staff of Kammerherren in their very beautiful uniforms, models of court discipline. Even the smallest details are managed to perfection. The etiquette and order are faultless. The invited guests all belong to the nobility, either of birth and family or merit. Many noblemen with their wives and daughters come every winter to Berlin to attend at court, and many more are in Parliament and also attend. Here are also to be seen men of science, of literary fame, and remarkable artists. The officers of the guard regiments of Berlin and Potsdam are always present, and furnish the partners for the many pretty girls who are renowned for their charms. The ladies' toilets are rich and elegant and very tasteful, though usually made at Berlin, Frankfurt or Vienna.

"Admiral of the Blue."

When we read that the Hon. John Byng, Esq., Admiral of the Blue, was shot on his own quarterdeck by sentence of a court-martial, we think, after the first feeling of pity, that his rank was a queer one—Admiral of the Blue! What did it mean? It was 130 years ago that he was executed. Of course the rank doesn't exist now, and anyway, it was an English rank; history will explain it. But the rank does exist now, and, what is more, it exists in the United States Navy. The senior rear-admiral flies the blue flag with two stars, the next in rank the red, the third the white flag. Admiral Kimberly is rear-admiral of the blue in our Navy. Admiral Gherardi is admiral of the red, and their juniors are admirals of the white. When only junior admirals are together the senior of them flies the blue; but let Admiral Gherardi's ship appear, and down goes the blue, to be succeeded by the red, while Admiral Gherardi's vessel floats the blue. And then let Admiral Kimberly happen along. Down comes the blue and the red, to be succeeded by the red and the white; and behold, it is Admiral Kimberly's craft that displays the white starred blue ensign. Just this happened at the Washington Centennial two years ago, when the junior admiral was first on the ground, and had, unwillingly, it seemed, to go down on his peg every time a senior appeared and broke his ensign at his fore.—Philadelphia Telegraph.

Imitation Thundercloud Phenomena.

The effect of an electrical discharge upon the condensation of steam was shown by Sherford Billwell at the meeting of the Royal Meteorological Society, of London. The usual shadow of a small jet, cast upon a white wall, is of feeble intensity and a neutral tint. But when the steam is electrified, the shadow at once becomes much denser, and takes on a peculiar orange-brown hue. The electrical discharge evidently promotes coalescence of the minute particles of water in the jet, thus forming drops that obstruct the more refrangible rays of light. The experiment may help to explain the intense blackness—often tempered by a lurid yellow glow—of thunderclouds.—Trenton (N. J.) American.