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HOUSTON, MONDAY, JAN. 1, 1900.

HOW THE MIGHTY IS FALLEN.

When Theodore Roosevelt was in Texas, recruiting his famous regiment of Rough Riders, he smiled his way into the good graces of Texans as commandingly as a cowboy, with a reputation for being handy with his gun, stalks into a herder's camp. More than this, he made a mash, and Texas newspapers patted him on the back and proudly called him "our Teddy." They followed him and his regiment to Cuba and when, at El Caney, he dashed like an unleashed war dog at the bloodthirsty Spaniard, they went the Associated Press several better in telling the country what an incomparable hero "our Teddy" was. Later, when he went up against the Platt machine for the republican nomination for governor of the State of New York, as recklessly as he had gone up against the yawning jaws of bloody death, democratic Texas could not help wishing him well, since they didn't believe New York could elect a democratic governor "no how." Texas wouldn't believe that "our Teddy" was a tax dodger. He was too brave to dodge anything—not even a cyclone. When he was elected and inaugurated Texas smiled and bared its molars just as it had seen Teddy do, and Teddy smiled back at dear old Texas, the mother of his braves.

Time grew apace, and Teddy began to swagger about some. Now, if there is anything on earth that a Texan won't stand it is a swaggerer, and when to swagger is added mountebankism Texas cuts the swashbuckler cold.

Teddy jangled, spurred, lunged and strutted around a mighty bit. Still Texas held on to him. But when last fall he whooped down on the Ohio situation as aid de camp to Mark Hanna, Teddy's reputation for courageous purity in politics took an awful tumble that shook the earth as far west as Texas, and Texas was disenchanted. Teddy was suspected and gravely, with being in with all for corrupt republican push, and his military zeal but cloaked his treachery to boss Americanism.

If anything were lacking to confirm the impression that Teddy, after all, is a grabber a purist in politics, but an office-jobber like all the rest of the machine made the statement vouched for by the New York Herald, that he is spending Christmas holidays in consultation with Boss Platt in order to settle the details of the legislative session, would be sufficient. Discussing this tell-tale statement the Albany Argus says:

"Imagine for a moment Governor Willing Marcy hurrying from Albany to New Yo get the ideas of a party boss concerning State legislation! Conceive, if you can, William H. Seward doing such a thing! sult, if you dare, the memory of the mighty dead like Horatio Seymour and Samuel Tilden by such a supposition! Who ever dreamed of Grover Cleveland or David B. Hi or Roswell P. Flower running down to New York from the executive chamber, like a capitol district messenger boy, to bring back the orders of some party boss?"

We part with you, Teddy, in confessed reluctance. Your company is a trifle too tough even for "wild and woolly" Texas. Good-bye!

THE NEWSES ARE DESPERATE.

The News combine in a recent editorial, of profounder length than argument, seizes on the speech of Mr. Clark Howell, editor of the Atlanta Constitution, delivered before the Atlanta club of Buffalo, New York, to prove that everybody in the South except "young democratic politicians whose minds are not developed, and old democratic politicians whose minds are narrowed in the efforts to get offices," is in favor of imperialism.

Steady, there! Such a garrulous exhibition of temper is rare in the Newses, and can be accounted for on no hypothesis except that the Newses have put on fighting togs and gone a-gunning for everything and every individual that dare oppose an expansion that can not endure without an armed host; and that, if it could endure without this element of burden to the taxpayer, the Newses have not been able to show would benefit the South, for which it has developed so picturesque an affection, to the extent of one single dollar's value.

But, in passing, The Post would like to know of the Newses why, in their exuberant desire to convict Mr. Clark Howell of an adoring the democratic position on the issue of imperialism, they overlooked the following paragraph in his Buffalo speech?

"Personally I have thought, and still think, that had we coupled with the ratification of the peace treaty an assurance in the nature of the declaration made for Cuban independence, there would have been no serious disturbance in the Philippines, and that we would now be in the peaceful possession of the archipelago, as we are in control of Cuba. I believe it is not too late, even now, to make that broad declaration of our policy; assuring domestic control of internal affairs, combined with the guarantee of independence whenever, in the opinion of this government, the Filipinos are able to administer a government which will protect life, secure property, maintain law and order, and meet the demands of civilization.

Has any democratic anti-expansionist ever contended for any other disposition of the Philippine problem than this? And yet the Newses, by garbled extracts from Mr. Howell's speech, attempt to array him, and incidentally his paper, against the leaders of the democratic party, whom they denounce as "undeveloped young politicians and narrow-minded office seekers."

The American Federation of Labor can not be said to be composed of "young democratic politicians nor of narrow-minded old officeseekers." Yet American labor has sounded the alarm and arrayed itself against a policy of territorial expansion that no man, not blind to reason, can deny will expose it to the hurtful competition of cheap labor and put upon his brawn the burden, in large part, of sustaining a tremendous standing army. Who but the American farmer is to sustain the rest of this burden? And when the American farmer comes to see, as he surely will, that the Philippine islands will give him a rival in the production of cotton and other staples, that will crowd his surplus out of the markets of the world, he, too, will stand up alongside of organized labor and strike down the military satrapy on American thought that is spurring this country into the snares of imperialism.

Let these expansionists, who lay unto their own tremendous vanity the pleasing conceit that they alone understand the needs and progress of the Nation, as those things touch the pockets and firesides of the man in the workshops and on the farms, get down to simple figures. Give us something that ordinary minds, not used to the jingle of spurs and the flash of swords, can understand. Put down on one side, if they are able and honest, $125,000,000 a year to maintain a standing army of 100,000 men. Write down the end of insurrections and revolutions of a people that the logic of history tells us will last as long under the new master as they did under the old, who sold them and their country like a chattel mortgage to the United States. Set down, likewise, the immense acreage that will be opened up to the production of 2 cent cotton and last, but not least, give the whole population citizenship in the United States with the privilege of pouring into the Western hemisphere an avalanche of cheap labor. Then go back and get down again to honest accounting, and set down in the opposing column the extent and value of the commerce these new and distant acquisitions will open up to the South and the Western hemisphere. Show that trusts and combines and syndicates will be the beneficiaries and that even Southern cotton mills, obeying the same law of economics that made them quit the barren hills of New England will abandon the South to take up their future abode in the Philippines, from whence to fling their manufactures by cheap labor into the open door of Oriental and Asiatic trade. After you have done this, strike your balance sheet and show if you can that every man who cries halt to the policy of imperialism is a mossback and an ass.

During the week the foundations for the discussion on the financial bill will be laid and it will divulge the plans of both sides. There will be a strenuous effort to pass the bill without amendment by the opposition will insist on votes on innumerable propositions and on some of these they may get the support of some senators known to have pro-silver leanings.

HOUSE FORECAST.

Urgent Deficiency Bill May Come in During the Week.

Washington, December 31.—The coming week in the house does not give promise of much business. The committees have not yet begun active work and there has not been any legislation of pressing importance reported. The appropriations committee has not yet considered the urgent deficiency bill, although the measure has been prepared. This bill may be brought in during the week if there should be a request from the executive departments asking for its early passage. The bill will carry nearly $50,000,000 for the army, most of which is on account of the Philippines. It is quite likely there will be spells of arguable discussion of the Philippine question while the measure is before the house, but it is expected that it will be passed within a few days. The chances are that Mayor Brashear's successor, who will go into office next April, will find the same thing, notwithstanding the enormous amount of money collected for back taxes by the present administration.

The legislature convenes on the 22d, and the fun is guaranteed to be fast and furious.

The Post is very much in hopes that next Christmas Santa Claus will present Houston with a modern, up-to-date passenger station in the shape of well ordered car sheds at the Grand Central. Meantime, if the railroad people think well of the proposition they might turn in and beat old Santa to it.

Now let's get down to business and see what we can do to advance Houston during 1900.

Here's a tip: Put your money in Houston real estate and coast country planting lands. Neither will ever be any cheaper than present prices.

About the only objection that can be urged against the proposed tax on the sleeping car companies is that it is not enough.

A South Texas fair and coast country exposition is the thing. It will develop and people the coast country.

Too Busy with His Balloon.

Chicago Chronicle.

The latest news from the vicinity of Kimberley warrants the belief that Mr. Cecil J. Rhodes is not giving any more dinner parties just about this time.

Not the Same Sort of a Snap.

New York World.

General Kitchener is not going to fight the children of the desert this time.

WHEN THE CENTURY BEGINS.

Camille Flammarion Says January 1, 1901, and Tells Who Will First Greet It.

The century question is as old as the century; that is, since mankind began to adopt a period of 100 years as a cycle in the world's history. Ancient peoples counted by dynasties, generations or by the lives of noted men. Their cycles, closing with the "jubilee" year, were short, as men's views of history in retrospect were narrow. Thus, the ancient Greeks had their Olympiad of four years; the Romans their lustrum of five years, and the Hebrews their Schemitta of forty-nine years; the end of each of these cycles was the jubilee year. It was not till the general adoption of the Gregorian calendar, which was proclaimed by papal bull in 1581, that the century became a period of time by which great events in history were classified.

Since that time the change in the numerals of the century, from 15 to 16, from 16 to 17, and so forth, has always witnessed discussions and disputations about the end of a century, and it is so now, when the 18 is about to be changed to 19. Such authorities as the renowned French astronomer Camille Flammarion have entered the arena of the disputants. The Frenchman comes to the same conclusion as the English Royal Society of Astronomers not long ago, namely, that the twentieth century begins at midnight of December 31, 1900. His essay upon this subject, recently published in the Paris Revue, is so interesting that the salient points will well bear translation at this time. Flammarion says:

"If we look back at the past we will find documents of the year 1799, 1699 and 1599, in which this subject was discussed, and a century hence, in 1999, our descendants will be discussing the same old subject. A century ago the discussions were unusually lively, and extended even to the theater. In 1800 a play appeared with the title, 'Dear God, in What Century Are We Living?' This very question we of today are again asking.

"The discussions at the end of the last century did not convert all people. Victor Hugo, for instance, was born February 26, 1802. On this day our century was thirteen months twenty-five days and some hours old. I scarcely believe that one would accredit two years to a child of this age. Despite this, the great poet, referring to his birth at Besoncon, writes the well-known lines:

"Ce siecle avait deux ans, Rome remplacait Sparte
Deja Napoleon percait sous Bonaparte,
Et du premier consul deja par maint endroit
Le front de l'Empereur brisait le masque etroit.

(This century had two years, Rome replaced Sparta,
Napoleon already became known as Bonaparte,
And the first consul already, by many speeches
Hid the face of the emperor behind a broken mask.)

"Despite all poetical license Victor Hugo would not have written this phrase had he not believed that the nineteenth century began with 1900. Perhaps poets calculate differently from astronomers.

"Francis Sarcey, the renowned critic, calls the year 1900 the dawn of the century.

"No, the dawn of the Twentieth century will not shine in 1900, though we hear every moment that the exposition of 1900 is the dedication of the Twentieth century. The exposition is the end, the gleaming, so to say, of the Nineteenth century, and not the beginning of the Twentieth. The year 1900 is the eve of the coming century. The dawn begins to show after midnight. Upon my desk are several works which appeared in 1699. They are:

"1. Dissertation concerning the beginning of the next century, to see whether 1700 or 1701 is the first year.

"2. The critique of this dissertation.

"3. New dissertation concerning the next century, in which it is proved that 1700 is the first year.

"4. Disputations of writers concerning the beginning of the next century.

"5. Decision of the question concerning the end of the century.

"These five little books were printed in 99 in Paris. They contain mostly lengthy inquisitions, the arguments of which have been taken from all possible sources; for instance, from the Bible, the old dogmas of Roman hierarchs, the big flood, etc. It becomes extraordinarily confused by its reading, despite the fact that some authors, for alleged 'clearness,' use geometrical figures to show how the counting of these many, many numbers may be facilitated.

We also find in 1599 diverging views concerning this point, and even the then time did not give a final decision, but left the problem to the astronomers, who indeed always were but of one opinion, just as there is but arithmetic.

This seemingly difficult problem is really very easy of solution. A dozen consists of twelve units. The number 12 is part of the dozen. One hundred consists of 100 units, and the number 100 is a part thereof. Now, it is clear that there never was a year 0 in Christian chronology. The first year was No. 1, or the first.

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"When Christ was born nobody thought of the importance of this event, nor did anybody think that the religion which He founded would have a place in the history of nations. The year of His birth was given attention neither by Romans nor by Jews, and the first century of the Christian era, like the second, third, fourth and fifth, that is, 500 years, passed by without being noticed in the Christian calendar. It was not until the year 532 that a Christian chronology was proposed by a Roman monk. This monk came from Scythia and was named Dionysius. Inasmuch as he was of very small build he received the nickname 'Dionysius Exignus.'

"Thus it will be seen that the Christian chronology was not introduced until the Sixth century. The monk Dionysius took it for granted that Christ was born December 25 of the year 753 of Roman chronology. Hence the year 754 after the founding of Rome was at the same time the first, or the year 1 after the birth of Christ. This first year, even according to the idea of Dionysius, is not that of the birth of Christ, for it does not begin until seven days after the nativity.

"In this search after historical comparisons the monk made a mistake of four years, which can be proved very readily, because it is known exactly in what year Herod died. Now, according to Roman chronology, Christ was born in 749, not in 753, and he was 36 years old and not 32 when he died. Our Christian chronology is therefore four years too young. But it would be very inconvenient, to say the least, to change it.

"Though this mistake has been known for several centuries, the Christian era as proposed by Dionysius has been kept unchanged. All that was necessary was a mutual understanding, because the entire affair rests upon mutual agreement.

"But whatever year it was that formed the beginning of the Christian era, there was never a year 0. The first year was certainly the year 1, the tenth the year 10, and the one hundredth year of the First century was the year 100.

"If the problem is put in this manner there can not be the shadow of a doubt in the mind of the reader.

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"When the French revolution at the time decreed a new calendar the proceeding was in the same manner. No imaginary year 0 was ever thought of, and the first was the year 1.

"What, perhaps, has led many a one astray has probably been the change in the first two figures of the year, as we see in the case of 1799-1800 or 1899-1900. A similar change, however, is made when 9 becomes 10, or when 99 becomes 100. If any one gives me 100 cents I have a dollar, but the hundredth cent is just as necessary to my first dollar as the ninetith. My hundredth and first cent is the beginning of my second dollar. The hundredth is, in fact, a necessary portion of the dollar. In like manner, the hundredth year belongs to the century which is dying.

"The date of the beginning of the year has been changed several times. Once it was the first day of January, then again December 25 (which would be more logical), and again the year was to begin with Easter. On the other hand, the year 1582 was shortened by ten days to bring it in accord with the astronomical calendar. But all this does not gainsay the fact that the last day of the year 1900 is the end of the Nineteenth century nor that the Twentieth century begins with the first day of January, 1901. Therefore, exactly at midnight of December 31, 1900, does the hourglass of our Nineteenth century run down and the Twentieth century sees the light of the world.

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"Exactly at midnight, yes, but upon which meridian? Will it begin at midnight in Paris, London, New York or Jerusalem? Exactly at midnight in every country is the answer. Yes, but when it is midnight in Paris it is 1 a. m. in Vienna. Will the Austrians, then, begin the century before the French? Certainly. What country will be the first to greet the new century? Here an interesting question crosses our research: Where does the day change its name?

"If we go east and count the hours we find that when it is midnight in Paris, say, in the night from Sunday to Monday, it is 1 a. m. Monday in Vienna; in Sebastopol 2 a. m., in Astrachan 3 a. m., in Bokhara 4 a. m., in Saigon 7 a. m., in Yokohama 9 a. m., and upon the Chatham island in the Pacific ocean 12 meridian.

"If we go west from Paris at midnight Sunday, it is 10 p. m. Sunday in the Azores, 8 p. m. in Buenos Ayres, 7 p. m. in New York, 6 p. m. in New Orleans, 5:15 p. m. in Mexico, nearly 4 p. m. in San Francisco, 1 o'clock p. m. in the Aleute islands, and 12 meridian Sunday upon Chatham island.

"How can this be? Can a man at the same time upon one spot of the earth live to see simultaneously two different days, Sunday and Monday?

"Certainly not.

"But is there a boundary line which one crosses from Sunday to Monday? Monday to the left and Sunday to the right? Where is this line and who has designated it?

"If such a line should cross New York it might have dire consequences. Suppose the line of demarcation were Fifth avenue, then, for instance, the fourth of July celebration would be in full swing on the east side, while the west side would still date July 3. Aye, if there should be two Sundays, one on the east and one on the west side, what incomprehensible confusion would result!

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"Let us state first that at all times each country counted days and hours as it pleased and kept a calendar of its own. The peoples had no opportunity to come to any agreement, for they did not know each other. The tribes of America divided the time according to their fashion; the Chinese thought and acted quite differently. Even the Europeans considered it unnecessary to come to any agreement.

"When the earth was first circumnavigated, when the Europeans brought the different continents into communication, the necessity first arose to have a line of demarcation for fixing the date. The Portuguese and Dutch made the voyage around our planet from west to east by doubling the Cape of Good Hope. The Spaniards, on the other hand, sailed from east to west by way of the Straits of Magellan.

"Inasmuch as each nation naturally continued its own measurements of time aboard ship, the result was as follows: The inhabitants of the Island of Formosa, discovered by the Dutch, received the 'Monday' of European civilization at the same time as the inhabitants of the near by Ladrones, discovered by the Spaniards, received the 'Sunday.'

"Let us now for a moment recapitulate our former conclusions regarding the change of century on December 31, 1900.

"When the clocks in New York indicate that it is midnight on December 31, 1900, it is already 5 o'clock in the morning of January 1, 1901, in Paris, 7 o'clock at the Suez canal, 8 o'clock in Tananarivo and 12 o'clock (noon) of January 1, 1901, on the island of St. Paul, in the Indian ocean.

"If instead of going east we go with lightning speed westward from New York, we shall find it 11 o'clock in the evening in Chicago, 9 o'clock in San Francisco, 6 o'clock in Honolulu, 3:30 in the Philippines and noon of December 31, 1900, on the island of St. Paul. This island, as any one can see by looking at a map, is exactly opposite New York, or, in other words, its distance from the South pole is precisely the same as that of New York from the North pole. Now, if we imagine a straight line from New York directly through the center of the earth, the other end of this line would appear in the Indian ocean, very close to the island of St. Paul. Consequently, the inhabitants of this island are our antipodes, and they are distant from us exactly half a day, or twelve hours. If we have midnight they have noon. Now, is this noon of the next day or of the previous day?

"This is the stumbling block for sailors, for accordingly whether a day was added or detracted from their voyage their wages are for one day more or less. This the captain has to decide according to the line of demarcation. The line of demarcation of the date in reality follows no meridian; it has a rather meandering direction and goes (taking the meridian of Greenwich) east from Kamchatka, west of the Caroline islands and again east from New New Zealand to Chatham Island.

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"After we have asked ourselves when the Twentieth century begins, let us ask where will this new century first appear.

"Those who will have the honor of according the first greeting to the new century for the reason that it will actually begin there before it begins elsewhere are the Russians in Kamchatka, the Japanese in Tokio and of the island of Yeso, the inhabitants of the Philippines, of New Guinea island, of the Solomon islands and of the New Hebrides, the French in New Caledonia and the inhabitants of New Zealand and of the little island of Chatham, in the Pacific ocean.

"The people of this island will be able to greet the new century before anyone else, but it is not probable that a similar privilege will ever again be theirs, for the reason that there is not likely to be a living soul on the island a century hence. A hundred years ago there were 2,000 men there, and in 1830 there were 1,500. Five years later, however, a number of Maoris visited the island and ruthlessly began to destroy the inhabitants. In 1870 there were only 200 persons on the island, and at present there are hardly more than fifty.

"Let everyone, however, remember distinctly that the Twentieth century will begin in every country at midnight of December 31, 1900. The Asiatics will begin to enjoy it before Europeans, and Europeans before Americans. No one, not even the richest man in New York, can obtain the privilege of being the very first to greet it—that is, unless he is willing to travel to the distant island of Chatham and join the handful of inhabitants in singing a paean of welcome to the new cycle."

Thus far, and much more in the same interesting strain, enlarging upon assertions here reproduced in translation, Camille Flammarion.

John Ehlert.

SOME LATE MAGAZINES.

"The Vital Question of Pure Food" is the subject of an article by Mr. Harry B. Mason in the American Monthly Review of Reviews for January. Mr. Mason shows that many of the food adulterations now common in this country have been practically abolished by legislation in England and elsewhere.

There are several good short stories in the American Queen for January, including "Two Old Friends," by Sydney Grier; "Primula Obconica," by Emma Brooke, and "Jose," by Mrs. A. L. Nicholson. Marguerite Merington (author of "Captain Lettarblair," "Love Will Find a Way" and other successful plays), Annie S. Swan, Florence I. Hatch and Emily Crawford each contributes a seasonable article.

In musical language, throughout which the slight flavor of the foreign tongue will perhaps be detected, Zitkala-Sa writes her "Impressions of an Indian Childhood" in the January Atlantic. We are taken into the weather-stained wigwam, hear the weird legends, and learn the mysteries of beadwork and coffee making, and feel the joys, fears, and sorrows of an Indian child. It is told with charming directness and naivete.

A seasonable winter article entitled "The Ice King in the Great Lakes" is the first of the illustrated papers in the January number of the "Self Culture Magazine." Views of ice-bound ships, hull and dog sleds, and ice-yachts will make the reader hug the fire a little closer as he turns the pages of this monthly. Among the illustrated papers are delightful articles on "Sidney Lanier, the Southern Singer, and His Songs;" and on "Carisbrooke Castle," with its pathetic story of the last days of Charles I. (the 250th anniversary of whose execution falls on the 30th of January); a scholarly argument on the subject of the discipleship of Demosthenes, with a fine full-length portrait from the painting by Lecomte du Nouy.

Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly for January starts the new year with a generous literary and artistic menu, including the following: "America at the Paris Exposition," a comprehensive article by the Hon. Ferdinand W. Peck, commissioner general for the United States, thoroughly illustrated from the official plans, with views, portraits, maps, etc.; "England's Free Hand on the Nile," by G. W. Stevens, the world famous correspondent of the London Daily Mail, and author of "With Kitchener to Khartoum," brilliantly illustrated by Warren B. Davis and H. C. Edwards; "Wayside Views of Life in Persia," by that keen and philosophic observer, Robert E. Speer, who brings from the ancient, historic land many up-to-date pictures, photographic as well as mental.

Midnight, December 31, 1900.

Washington Post.

Right there, the nineteenth century ends. It takes 100 years to make a century. Therefore it takes 1900 years to make nineteen centuries. You can not reach the end of a century till you reach the end of the hundredth year. You can not reach the end of nineteen centuries until you reach the end of 1900 years. That will be at midnight of December 31, 1900.

Still, we are receiving letters:

"Editor Post,

"Asheville, N. C., December 22.—You say correctly that 'a century can end only with the completion of a hundred years, and nineteen centuries can end only with the completion of nineteen hundred years,' but you incorrectly conclude from this premize that 'the nineteenth century, therefore, ends with the last day of the year 1900 and the twentieth century can not begin before that time, to wit, January 1, 1901.' Your concise statement makes the real question evident; when we decide when 1900 years are completed we know when the twentieth century begins. Time began on January 1. It was A. D. 1 until the last second of December 31, and then, on January 1, A. D. 2, the second year began, and on January 1, A. D. 1900, the 1900th year began. On January 1, A. D. 1899, the ninety-ninth year began, and on January 1, A. D. 100, the 100th year began, and, of course, it did not end until the last second of December 31, A. D. 100, therefore the 101st year began January 1, A. D. 101; up to the last second of December 31, A. D. 100, time was still in the first century—the second century could not begin until immediately thereafter—January 1, A. D. 101. The nineteenth century by like reasoning begins January 1, A. D. 1901, and finally the twentieth century will begin January 1, A. D. 2001. All of which proves that I am wrong and the Post right. Donald Gillis.

"P. S.—I am still of the opinion that the twentieth century begins January 1, 1900. The above reasoning is clearly wrong."

Really, it seems absurd to consume time in the discussion of this question. Unless we can consume a whole year, blot it out, eliminate it, and thereby find, somewhere, a century with only ninety-nine years to its credit, the controversy must be regarded as childish.

Our Asheville friend, after admitting all our proposition, says he is still of the same opinion, to wit: That the twentieth century begins January 1, 1900. Perhaps he has identified the canceled year—no doubt he has—but he doesn't take us into his confidence, and, therefore, we can not follow him.

Meanwhile, the Post is open to conviction. We are not bigoted or intolerant. If anyone will show us how a century can be completed with less than 100 years, and how nineteen centuries can be completed with less than 1900 years, and how the twentieth century can begin before the nineteenth century ends, we shall joyfully put ashes in our hair and hail him as a wizard. Our time is sadly short on wonders. We are reduced, it seems, to the feeble expedient of tormenting dogs in order to prevent them from becoming delirious. Let someone then, present to us a real miracle, and we pledge ourselves to celebrate him and to deck his large red ears with laurel and scent him like the sacrificial bull.

Strength of Defensive Warfare.

Kansas City Star.

The battles in South Africa have proven the immense advantage which modern implements of war give to the defending party. The British have met all their reverses in attacking intrenched positions of the Boers. Kruger's soldiers have hardly made the slightest attempt to fight anywhere except on ground chosen and fortified by themselves. They have been besieging Ladysmith and Kimberley for weeks without making a serious effort to capture them by a direct attack, though in both places they have greatly outnumbered their opponents. No doubt a Boer onslaught on a British intrenched position would result in a repulse, just as the British have been beaten whenever they have made the attack.

When the war began the general expectation was that the Boers would force the fighting while they were in superior numbers and would win some great victories, only to be driven back and finally conquered when the great British forces from home should be put in the field. Contrary to expectation, the Boer victories have been won against the newly arrived forces, not against those which were in South Africa when the war broke out. The explanation of this anomaly is simple. The British at first had all the advantage of being on the defensive. Now it is the Boers who are fighting behind earthworks and in trenches and the British are attacking.

Piling Up Pension Expenses.

Philadelphia Times.

Congress seems to have gone pension mad. The pension drain upon the treasury under existing laws amounts to $144,000,000 a year. Bills already introduced since the opening of the present session of congress will, if passed, add at least $200,000,000 a year to this sum, leaving entirely out of the account the bill by Representative Curtis removing all limitation upon the payment of arrears of pensions, which is admitted at the pension office to be good for $500,000,000. If the pension grabbers could have their way there would soon be no money in the treasury to pay ordinary expenses of running the government.

Space would fail in which to enumerate all the forms under which the pension raid undertakes to seek justification. Representative Lentz of Ohio has introduced a service pension bill which would swell the pension payments nearly $100,000,000 annually. Senator Cullom has introduced a bill by request which would pension those who still survive of the more than 117,000 men who deserted from the union army during the war of the rebellion. The Lord only knows how much would be required to satisfy the army of bounty-jumping scalawags.

Delay in the Development.

Milwaukee Sentinel.

Cecil Rhodes doubtless realizes now that there are considerable difficulties in the way of his plan for the development of South Africa.

Dead Easy for a Kansan.

Washington Post.

An ordinary Kansas hero would have crossed Modder river and had his story in the hands of his publisher by this time.

And Works It to the Limit.

Chicago Record.

Wall street is not so blind but it recognizes an extra good thing in Secretary Gage.

THE MART METEORITE.

Story of a Big Iron Nugget that Fell from the Skies to Texas Soil.

The fall of a meteorite is, in any locality, an event of rare occurrence. The flight of shooting stars is a common sight, but the descent of one of these heavenly bodies to the surface of the earth is so very exceptional that the finding of one in our own State will arouse general interest. As Baylor university has recently secured one of the few meteorites which have been found in Texas, a brief statement regarding it seems appropriate at this time.

Some two or three years ago Mr. Watts Vaughan, while plowing on a farm near Mart, Texas, found a mass of heavy material which he supposed to be iron. It weighed 15 pounds, 9 1-4 ounces. Efforts to break off a piece were unsuccessful. Last summer Mr. Henry T. Vaughan of Mart sent it to the Smithsonian Institute at Washington for examination. Soon thereafter he transferred the ownership of it to Baylor University, after which the Smithsonian Institute was authorized: 1.—To make a plaster cast of it. 2.—To photograph it. 3.—To cut off and keep a slice of it on condition that they should polish and etch the new cut surface of the principal mass. 4.—To make a chemical analysis of it.

The cast, the principal mass with the newly cut surface etched, and the photograph of the iron before and after cutting have arrived and can now be seen in the museum at Baylor University. In the figure given herewith the size of the iron is indicated by the nine-inch ruler beside it. It shows well the pitted surface so common in meteorites. This pitting is possibly due to burning out of spots more readily combustible or to the inequalities in the pressure of the hot condensed air on the surface. The newly cut and etched surface shows beautifully the lines of crystallization known as "Widmanstattes Figures." These figures are seen in nothing but meteorites and some volcanic iron. Their presence in the mass of iron found remote from volcanic outflow is in general certain proof that it is a meteorite.

I wish very much to learn whether this meteorite was seen during its fall, and shall be glad to have any information helping to fix the date of its fall. During the winter of 1897-8 a meteor said to be "as large as a barrel" was seen by J. W. Wortham and others about 9 p. m. to pass over Patrick in the direction of Mart. After two and one-half minutes a loud explosion was heard. About that time, I think, a very large meteor was reported in the papers from Valley Mills. Could they have been one and the same?

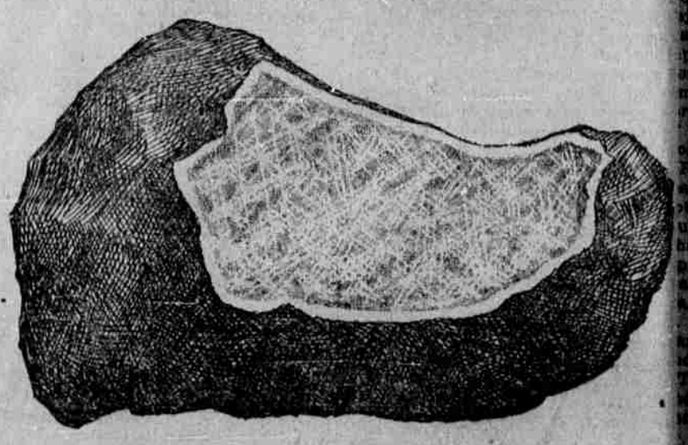
The origin of meteorites has been a subject of prolonged and interesting study. It has been found that the meteors of several periodic star showers are derived from long processions of innumerable small bodies traveling around the sun in elongated orbits identical with those of certain comets. While few or no meteors of these star showers have been known to reach the ground, it is thought that the bodies which do reach the ground have also been revolving about the sun in orbits of their own, and with velocities equal those of the comets or of the earth. The velocity of the earth in its orbit exceeds eighteen miles per second, fifty times that of a modern cannon ball. When one of these meteoric bodies is drawn to the earth, it strikes our atmosphere with a velocity which may even exceed that of the earth. Usually the friction of the air through which it passes, and the resistance of the air condensed in front of it so heats it that it burns rapidly, and is changed to dust and smoke while yet twenty miles or more above the ground. Occasionally one reaches the ground and quite rarely one is seen to strike the ground. Some ten years ago in the day time (1 p. m.) a stone meteorite of about 200 pounds was seen by hundreds of people to fall near Washington, Kansas. It sank into the stiff gumbo soil about six feet. Recently one was seen to fall in Michigan and has been secured by the Smithsonian Institute.

Meteorites may weigh hundreds of pounds, or even several tons. Yale college had, and may now have, one of 1635 pounds, which fell in Texas in 1808. One weighing several tons was brought from Greenland by the Peary relief expedition. It is told of one in Kentucky that a local blacksmith worked it up into horse shoes, and at least one reputable gentleman declares the story to be credible.

The selling value of meteorites varies from a few dollars to several hundred dollars. The Kansas meteorite mentioned was sold by Prof. Cragin to George Kunz of New York for $1200. Several meteorites found on a farm in Southwest Kansas by Professors Snow and Crawford netted the owners of the farm enough to clear it of debt and leave a handsome surplus. In various museums are several hundred meteorites. No year passes without the discovery of several new ones.

C. C. Charlton,
Baylor University.

THE MART METEORITE.



THE METEORITE WITH ONE SIDE CUT AND POLISHED.