

It is predicted that 250,000 persons will flock to the Klondike region just as soon as spring navigation opens. It is also predicted, by the Chicago Times-Herald that those who can walk home again will do so a few months later.

A Government official reports that of those who have gone to Alaska within the last year only seven per cent. have been able to earn a living. That, however, will not be regarded as particularly important as long as the United States Government undertakes to provide for all needy citizens of the United States—after they have emigrated to Alaska.

Generally speaking the good little boy is scarce, laments the Philadelphia Press. There are 90,000 criminals behind the bars in this country under thirty years of age, and 10,000 in reformatories ranging from seven to seventeen years. There are more children in the House of Refuge and various reformatory institutions in this State than there are criminals in our jails.

According to the last census there are no fewer than 3,454,675 farm laborers or "hired men" on the farms of the United States, or more than one-fifth of the total voting population. The average earnings of this tremendous agricultural army are, independently of board, \$105 a year, and a grand total of \$362,740,665, paid out annually for farm labor of the most primitive kind.

According to recent information which has come to hand showing the total output of the gold and silver mines west of the Mississippi River for the past calendar year, it appears that the gold output of these mines aggregated \$69,830,597 and the silver output \$32,278,290. Distributed among the Western metal-producing States, the showing is as follows:

States.	Gold.	Silver.
California	\$17,621,950	\$ 12,949
Nevada	2,632,910	451,454
Oregon	2,404,797	45,000
Washington	471,949	70,000
Alaska	3,571,000	
Idaho	2,725,000	4,555,600
Montana	4,450,000	9,452,000
Utah	1,662,254	813,743
Colorado	18,326,554	12,869,783
New Mexico	553,678	158,348
Arizona	3,392,921	143,638
Dakota	5,822,275	320,000
Texas	5,000	309,717
Wyoming	27,500	31,000
Brit. Col. & N. W. T.	6,175,900	3,150,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$69,830,597</b>	<b>\$32,278,290</b>

In the production of the yellow metal it appears that Colorado has at last surpassed the Golden State of California, which has headed the list for nearly fifty years past.

The recent decision of Justice Harlan of the Supreme Court, involving the liability of an insurance company upon policies held by a man who in sound mind deliberately commits suicide, is now published in full and is regarded as of the greatest importance, writes William E. Curtis in the Chicago Record. A man by the name of Bunk had policies to the extent of \$315,000 until a short time before his death, when he increased his insurance to \$500,000. He held an important judiciary trust, to which he had been unfaithful, and, being afraid of exposure and the same time remorseful, obtained insurance to an amount sufficient to reimburse those who would suffer by his defalcation and provide for the necessities of his family, whereupon he deliberately took his own life. Some of the insurance companies resisted payment, went into court, and the case was finally appealed to the Supreme Court, which held that if, from anger, pride, jealousy, or a desire to escape from the ills of life, a man intentionally takes his own life, there is no liability on the part of the insurance companies to pay the risks, because such an act is a violation of the condition under which the policy is issued. But when a man's reasoning faculties are so impaired that he is not able to understand his moral obligations and appreciate the consequences of the act he is about to commit, such a death is not a violation of the contract, and the insurance company is liable. In the Bunk case it was perfectly clear that the suicide had a full and accurate apprehension of the character and the consequences of his act, and that it was a wilful attempt to transfer his own obligations to innocent parties. This suicide is compared with the crime of arson, in which a man intentionally sets fire to his own house in order to recover its value from the insurers.

**WE BOAT BUILDERS.**  
**PUTTING THE VESUVIUS IN TRIM.**  
Expected to Be the Most Effective Fighter in the Navy.

**JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (Special).**—It is stated that the Vesuvius will leave shortly for Norfolk for repairs to her loading apparatus, the compressed air apparatus of the big dynamite guns.

Orders were received here to place the vessel in fighting trim. Ten or twelve tons of ammunition are on the way, and Captain Pillsbury was directed to clean ship and make room for this.

It is known also that several six-inch rapid-fire guns will be mounted amidsthip, with heavy armored shields. At present her three-pounders are the only battery she has to supplement her powerful dynamite throwers.

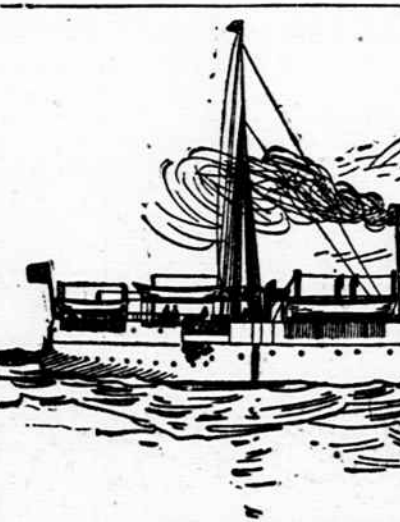
The pneumatic dynamite guns are the main dependence of the Vesuvius, say her officers. As from a three to a five-mile range a light charge can be hurled with great accuracy, while at from one and a half to two miles the aim is certain. No muzzle flash is shown. The vessels of within seventy-five yards of where a dynamite shell fell.

In case of hostilities the officers say the Vesuvius will be the most effective vessel in the navy. She is so low in the water and is so narrow that she would present a very small mark for the enemy.

**AUXILIARY CRUISER BOARD.**  
Vessels Available For War Purposes Considered.

**NEW YORK CITY (Special).**—Sixty-three steamships, the choicest vessels of the American merchant marine, have been placed at the disposal of the United States Government. Representatives of the owners appeared before the special Auxiliary Cruiser Board, which met in this city, and offered their ships. Little desire for pecuniary gain was shown. The vessels offered are capable of carrying nearly 10,000 guns. Members of the special board examined the American liners St. Louis and New York.

A large number of owners of vessels have placed them at the disposal of the Govern-



**THE UNITED STATES STEAMER BANCROFT.**  
(She carries four four-inch rifles, two six-pounders, two three-pounders and other guns. With the Helena she could make things lively for the Spanish flotilla, whose armament has been crippled to make room for stores.)

American cities not yet represented in the naval list. Their displacement is 450 tons, and they carry batteries of six-inch guns. The purchase price of each is supposed to have been between \$1,750,000 and \$2,000,000.

The Almirante Abrouail will not be completed at Eswick, England, for at least two weeks, but the American flag has been hoisted on her at once, in order that no complication shall arise to cause her detention in case of an unexpected declaration of war. The Amazonas is at Newcastle ready to sail, and as soon as Admiral Howell can send a draft of men from Lisbon to her she will fly her new colors.

In addition to strengthening the navy the Administration decided to push at once the work of fortifying the Dry Tortugas as a possible base of naval supplies in case of a rupture with Spain. By order of the President \$500,000 of the emergency fund of \$50,000,000 was set aside for use in putting the Dry Tortugas and Key West in readiness for depot uses. Of this sum \$400,000 will be spent immediately in enlarging the storage facilities at Dry Tortugas, and \$100,000 will be devoted to the port of Key West. It is expected by the naval authorities that an expenditure of \$500,000 will be sufficient to put both stations in a proper state of defense, and so increase their capacity for naval rendezvous purposes that they can serve as a base for a campaign of any duration against the Spanish possessions in the West Indies.

The detachment of the Helena and the Bancroft from the European station, one to reinforce the Key West fleet, and the other to the "Flying squadron" at Hampton Roads, is taken here as a significant development in the naval programme now being worked out under the guidance of the Administration. Neither the Bancroft nor the Helena could be considered powerful enough to be left alone on a distant station, and the need of both to this cruise at the Atlantic must be considered a precautionary measure dictated alike by prudence and forethought. The San Francisco, which remains alone at Lisbon, will also be summoned to reinforce one of the home squadrons at an early date.

President McKinley, it is said, is planning to end the crisis with Spain by diplomacy or force, leaving Spain to choose the alternative—peace or war. The President hopes Congress will speedily adjourn after the Maine Court of Inquiry report is received. The settlement of the entire question would then be left to the Executive. The explanation given is the revival of the proposition to purchase Cuba in a new form. The suggestion now is to have a syndicate of American and European capitalists organized for this purpose. Men who control the finances of the world believe they can end the war in Cuba and prevent a war between Spain and the United States by guaranteeing Cuba's war debt. Former Governor Louis B. Morton, of New York State, is said to be deeply interested in this movement to preserve international peace. He has been in Washington in frequent conference with the President and Sir Julian Pauncefote and has met the Spanish Minister.

**SPAIN'S TORPEDO FLEET SAILS.**  
Boats Leave Cadiz, and the Helena and Bancroft Sail From Lisbon.

**CADIZ, Spain (By Cable).**—The Spanish torpedo squadron has sailed from this port. It is understood the Spanish warships are going to Puerto Rico, where they will await the orders of Captain-General Blanco. Enthusiastic crowds of people gathered at Cadiz to bid farewell to the vessels.

The United States gunboats Helena and Bancroft sailed on the same day from Lisbon, Portugal, going in a southerly direction. This departure of the United States vessels is connected with the simultaneous departure of the Spanish squadron from Cadiz, which is on the southwestern coast of Spain. Rumors have had it that the Bancroft and Helena might follow the Spanish ships across the Atlantic.

The Bancroft was launched at Elizabeth, N. J., in 1892. Like the Helena, she has a steel hull and a four-inch armor plate. Her displacement is only 385 tons. She is 180 feet in length, 32 feet beam and her maximum draught is 11 feet 6 inches. She is of 1213 indicated horsepower, which will drive her at the rate of 14.37 knots an hour. Her armament consists of four 4-inch quick-firing guns, two 6-pounders, two 3-pounders, one 1-pounder, two Maxim guns and two torpedo tubes. Her normal coal supply is 200 tons.

**NO BRITISH SHIPS FOR SALE.**  
LONDON, England (By Cable).—Under-Foreign Secretary Curzon announced in Parliament that Great Britain has not offered her warships to us for use if we go to war with Spain, but he declined to answer Mr. Davitt's further questions asking whether Great Britain desired an Anglo-American alliance.

**Spain's Merchant Navy.**  
**MADRID, Spain (By Cable).**—The Spanish navy, as merchant navy, according to the Marine Minister's figures just given out, consists of 552 steamers and 1125 sailing vessels above fifty tons burden; 373 steamers and 69,697 craft of less than fifty tons, with crews aggregating more than 200,000 men.

**Torpedo Boat Winslow at Key West.**  
**KEY WEST, Fla. (Special).**—The torpedo boat Winslow has arrived from Charleston, having made the longest run ever made by a torpedo boat without touching at a port or calling.

**For Governor of Rhode Island.**  
The Democrats of Rhode Island nominated Daniel L. Church, of Tiverton, for Governor on a local-issue platform.

**HAWAIIAN ANNEXATION.**  
**The Treaty Dropped and a Joint Resolution Introduced.**  
**REPORTED FAVORABLY TO SENATE**

**Washington Items.**  
The order by Secretary Long that all proceedings of the court martial that reflected on the court and convicted Pay Director Billings be stricken from the record of the department, gives great satisfaction to the many friends of Pay Director Billings. The accused officer has been honorably retired.

Major-General Miles, after a searching investigation of the defenses on Long Island Sound, returned to Washington convinced that New York is absolutely secure from attack by foreign war ships.

The House Committee on Naval Affairs voted to build five new drydocks and will probably authorize the construction of several torpedo boats and torpedo boat destroyers.

Pay Director Luther G. Billings has been placed on the retired list of the navy. His sentence of dismissal from the service will be allowed to drop.

Bishop Satterlee deposed from the ministry the Rev. Gilbert F. Williams, pastor of Christ Episcopal Church, on charges of immorality.

New York and New Jersey pilots who are familiar with all parts of the Atlantic coast volunteered their services to the Government.

**Domestic.**  
Joseph Wilkins, of Wilkins & Co., oleomargarine dealers, of Washington, D. C., and Howard Butler, an employe of the firm, who were recently convicted of violating the oleomargarine laws, were sentenced in Philadelphia, Penn. Wilkins to six months and to pay a \$1500 fine and cost of prosecution, and Butler was fined \$500 and sentenced to four months' imprisonment.

Eugene J. Lindsay, formerly a clerk in the prothonotary's office in Philadelphia, and recently convicted of conspiracy with several others in issuing fraudulent naturalization certificates, was sentenced to serve two years' imprisonment and pay a fine of \$2000 and the costs of prosecution. Richard W. Merriek, who pleaded guilty of conspiracy with Lindsay, was sentenced to one year and six months and to pay a fine of \$1000. Henry Casper, who also pleaded guilty of conspiracy in the same case, received a sentence of one year and one month and a fine of \$500.

Alexander Anderson, colored, attempted to assault a school girl, in Granada, Miss., and three hours later was captured by a mob, confessed and was hanged.

The yacht Mayflower, purchased by the Government from the estate of Ogden Govelet, was delivered at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

The Court of Appeals gives Newbold T. Lawrence title to 1500 acres of land which he had in possession of the town of Hempstead, Long Island, one hundred years.

Great damage was reported to California fruit by recent frosts.

City Auditor John S. Fear, of Burlington, Iowa, has fled, leaving a shortage of \$9390, representing money he lost in speculation.

A mail carrier who has arrived at Skagway from Dawson, in the Krukrick, estimates the winter's output of gold at \$3,000,000. Food is plenty and many gold claims have been located.

Two big columns forming the main support to the entrance of the Coliseum Building, in Chicago, Ill., destroyed recently, collapsed without warning, killing E. E. Baker and fatally injuring John Bice. Several others were slightly injured.

Captain William Lee, an army veteran, mortified because he failed to get the appointment of Postmaster in Merchantville, N. J., committed suicide.

Dr. Trumbull W. Cleveland was indicted in New York City for manslaughter in the second degree, charged with causing the death of the infant daughter of John L. Garhart by giving her harmful medicines.

Section two provides that the Commissioners proposed shall be appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

The sum of \$100,000 is appropriated by the third and last section for the purpose of carrying the resolution into effect, and this sum is made immediately available.

The resolution went to the calendar. Senator Davis did not give any notice as to when it would be called up.

**FIRE HAD THEM IN A TRAP.**  
Nearly 400 Persons in a Mad Rush For Their Lives.

Fire was discovered in Chicago at 11 o'clock a. m., in the seven-story structure at 215 Wabash avenue known as the Emerson building. Nearly 400 persons were within its walls. There was a rush for life, and it proved a rush to death for many. Although only four bodies have been identified, fourteen persons are missing, probably dead.

The building is just within the elevated railway loop in the busiest spot on Wabash avenue. An explosion quickly followed the first burst of flames, and this drew thousands into the streets to witness victims jumping from the upper floors. The persons in the building rushed to the windows and doors on every one of the seven stories. They crawled out on the cornices and ran down the fire escapes. They poured out of the exits over one another. Men and women leaped from the windows. Some were caught in the arms of spectators and in blankets, escaping with their lives. Four others fell to their deaths.

**FRENCH NAVY ACTIVE.**  
The Fleet Reported as Prepared to Mobilize.

The French fleet is being prepared for mobilization, the feverish activity prevailing at all the arsenals and shipyards, which are working until 10 o'clock at night.

The French northern squadron at Cherbourg is ready for immediate departure. The ships, it appears, are being swung during the night, at Cherbourg, for the adjustment of their compasses.

Finally, it is asserted that, in order to complete the necessary number of officers, second-year students are to be appointed midshipmen, and all the admirals have been ordered to arrange to reach their positions in twenty-four hours after being summoned.

The mobilization is connected with preparations to support Russia by a naval demonstration in the far East.

**MAINE VICTIMS WITHOUT HEIRS.**  
Only 127 Claimants Found—Sixty-three Foreigners on Board.

Frank H. Morris, Fourth Auditor of the Treasury, is at present in Cleveland. Mr. Morris's department has charge of the work of settling the claims of the heirs of those lost by the Maine disaster.

"We have found on investigation that out of 378 men who were on the boat sixty-three were foreigners," said Mr. Morris. Of the 283 who were killed we have succeeded in getting into correspondence with 127 claimants. It will surprise you to know that less than ten per cent. of this number had families depending on them, and many had no direct heirs."

**The Maine Inquiry.**  
The Maine Court of Inquiry arrived at Key West, Fla., from Havana, and its members consulted with Admiral Sicard; leaves of absence of the surviving officers of the Maine were released, and they left Key West for their respective homes. The Montgomery was withdrawn from Havana Harbor.

**Powderly Nomination Confirmed.**  
The nomination of T. V. Powderly to be Commissioner of Immigration was confirmed by the United States Senate in executive session by a vote of 43 to 20. Senator Chandler was the only Republican to cast his vote against confirmation, while a large number of Democrats voted for Mr. Powderly.

**A Friendly Remonstrance.**  
The Spanish Cabinet has addressed a friendly remonstrance to the State Department against the presence of a great fleet at Key West and other emergency measures taken by the Administration.

**RELATIONS WITH SPAIN.**  
**No Cessation of the Efforts to Get Ready for an Emergency.**  
**FORMING A NEW SQUADRON.**

**Atlantic Seaboard Thought to Be Not Sufficiently Protected—The Massachusetts Ordered to Hampton Roads—To Be Joined by the Minneapolis, the Columbia and the Brooklyn.**

**WASHINGTON, D. C. (Special).**—The President and the Cabinet spent two hours discussing the latest news in the complicated tangle of Spanish relations, but few or no conclusions were reached, and the announcement was made at the close of the meeting that nothing had developed to change the policy or attitude of the Administration in any way.

Secretary Long denies that the battleship Massachusetts and Texas were ordered from Key West because of Spanish protests. Their removal, it is insisted, is part of an improved system of coast defense.

The division of the available fleet in the Atlantic into two squadrons, ordered by the Secretary of the Navy, will be completed in the near future by the completion of a third squadron, composed chiefly of monitors, at Port Royal, S. C. It is held that the establishment of a squadron base at Hampton Roads will furnish effective protection for the harbor of the Northern coast, and will liberate for active sea service the monitors which had been assigned to the defense of the ports of Philadelphia, New York and Norfolk. It is thought that the monitors Puritan, Terror and Miantonomoh and the ram Katabisha will form the additional squadron of Port Royal.

The Spanish Minister of Marine has directed that the fleet of torpedo boats now at the Canary Islands remain there instead of proceeding to Havana. The United States had objected to Spain's action in despatching a fleet of torpedo boats to Cuban waters.

Senator Redfield Proctor disapproves but forcibly arraigned Spain for her mirage of Cuba in a speech before the Senate setting forth the result of his investigations. President McKinley approved of the matter of the Senator's speech, and to this extent the utterance represented his views. The speech was a valuable portrayal of the situation and misery on the island.

Senator Gallinger, who has returned to Washington from Cuba, confirms the statements made by Senator Proctor of the awful suffering of the reconcentrados and the brutal mistreatment of the Spanish Government. He says the Spanish merchants even of Havana are unable to get any goods from the Government for any change which will free them from the domination which means starvation.

Belief supplies are being delivered in such great abundance for the Cuban sufferers that the Department of State has not decided to charter a vessel for months for the express purpose of carrying them to Cuba, as the naval vessels are so suitable for the transportation of 'troops, and the little tender Fern, which is now engaged on that mission, is needed elsewhere.

T. Estrada Palma, the Cuban Republic's delegate to the United States, has issued a proclamation to the American people, saying that nothing but superior force will compel his people to accept anything short of complete independence from the hands of Spain.

Reports to the Acting Secretary of War from the various States of the Union show that there are 111,562 militiamen practically at the immediate disposal of the general Government in case of hostilities.

Representative Hull, Chairman of the House Committee on Military Affairs, introduced a bill, at the request of the Administration, reorganizing the line of the army and authorizing the President, in "time of war, to increase it to 100,000 men.

Congress will place on the order \$17,000,000 for eighteen new vessels of war if the recommendations of the House Naval Committee are carried out. It is proposed to build six sea-going battleships, six torpedo boat destroyers and six torpedo boats.

Nearly \$5,000,000 in addition to previous allotments was pledged for increasing the efficiency of the coast defenses. Senator Allison, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, gave a pledge to General Miles that not less than \$2,000,000 should be appropriated in the Sundry Civil bill for military purposes.

A semi-official statement from Madrid says that, in view of Spanish explanations of the Maine disaster, an indemnity will be paid. Orders have been issued for Spain's torpedo flotilla. Should an attempt be made to move it to Porto Rico, prompt representations demanding its immediate return to the Canaries are to be made. If Spain should refuse to comply with these representations the plan of the United States Government is to dispatch a cruiser to intercept the fleet and destroy it.

The military and naval authorities have exhausted their resourceful energies for the time being in making preparations for an emergency, and no new policies of importance have been put into effect. Nevertheless there has been no cessation of the efforts to buy ships, guns, ammunition, coal and every other needed war commodity. Enlistments of men are being made in the army, the navy and marine corps. Ships are being distributed at places where they are likely to be the most effective, and engineering officers are pushing the work on the new coast defense fortifications. These and many others of a preparatory character are occupying both services to the almost entire exclusion of everything else.

**HOLLAND BOAT DIVES WELL.**  
Will Be Taken to Washington and Exhibited to Authorities.

The torpedo boat Holland made a trial trip under water off Perth Amboy, N. J. The inventor, John P. Holland, was in charge. The tug Salie P. Linderman attended the Holland.

When the conning tower, ordinarily about four feet above the water, was nearly three feet below the surface, the Holland was at a depth of 100 feet. Three times the speed of about nine knots.

The trial was witnessed by about 400 persons, who were on the tug. Mr. Holland was happy as he received the congratulations of his associates in the Holland Torpedo Boat Company and of the many spectators.

After a few more trips the Holland will be taken to Washington, to be exhibited to the authorities. It is said that boats of the same type would cost about \$65,000 apiece.

**Transfer of the Amazonas.**  
The cruiser Amazonas, purchased from Brazil, was formally transferred at Gravesend, England, to Lieutenant Colwell, naval attache in England. Shortly afterward the cruiser San Francisco arrived and Commodore Howard detailed Lieutenant Commander Nazro to bring the new cruiser to this country.

**Eight Killed by Dynamite.**  
A dynamite explosion took place in the Government storehouse, on Montego Bay, Jamaica. Eight men were killed.

**Foreign.**  
The Australasian Colonial Convention has adopted the Federation bill. The bill now goes to the various Legislatures of Australia.

A large party of Dervishes crossed the Nile to Shebalya Island, and were repulsed by the Egyptian troops with the loss of thirty-eight men killed. The only Egyptian casualty was the wounding of Major Sitwell.

The American Medical Mission in the suburbs of Chung-King-Fu, Province of Sze-Chuan, or the Yang-Tze-Kiang, China, has been attacked by a mob. The native medical assistants have been maltreated and one has been murdered.

The tug Underwriter, with the derrick Chief in tow, arrived at Havana to work on the Maine wreck.

War feeling was expressed in the speeches at the banquet of the Chambers of Commerce in London, and sympathy was manifested for Lord Salisbury in his illness.

The French Minister for the Colonies, M. Lebon, has refused the petition of Mme. Dreyfus, wife of the former Captain Dreyfus, to share the latter's imprisonment on Devil's Island.

An outbreak of yellow fever of a mild type is reported from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

At a meeting of the Jamaica Legislature it was estimated that the deficit in the island's revenue for the year ending March 31, 1899, will be \$25,000.