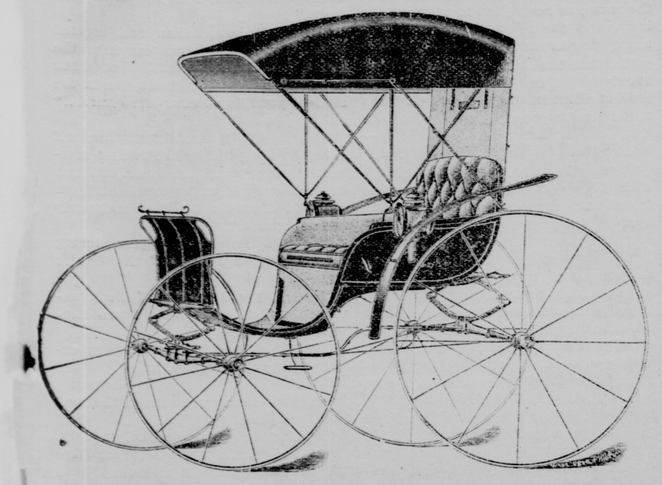
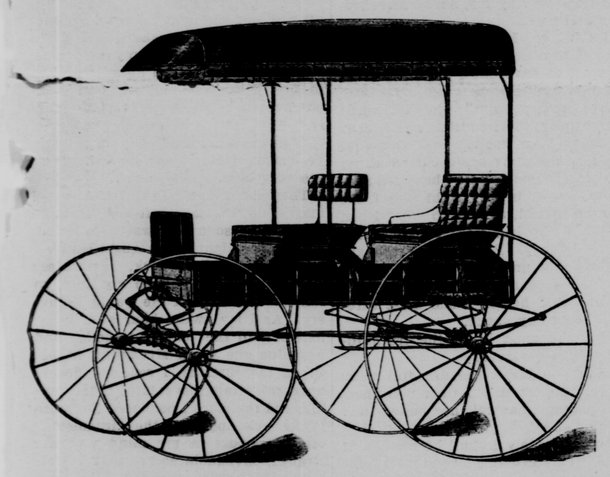
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PORTO RICO'S BRIGANDS.

A Business That Has Been Abolished Since the American Occupation.

The death knell of brigandage in Porto Rico was sounded when the American troops landed at Guanica Up to that time brigands had been active. Now few, if any, remain. Since early last January there has been no indication whatever of their existence and the band that made a manifestation then was believed to be the only one that had not yet quit business. Its experience on that occasion was such as to discourage it. The brigands had no sooner begun operations than word was sent to the military post at Arecibo about them. A squad of sharp shooters was immediately detailed to look after them. The soldiers soon came up with them and opened fire The brigands were far in advance at the time and were mounted on the swift-footed little mountain ponies which Porto Rico produces. They therefore, escaped, but the incident opened their eyes to the fact that American troops have a different and far more unpleasant way of dealing with such things than the old Spanish civil guard.

Prior to this, from the beginning of the American occupation, there had been few and poorly organized raids Indeed, it long ago became evident that the great leaders or captains of the bandits of Porto Rico had forsaken the calling. The overthrow of Spanish sovereignty was sufficient to rid the island of them. At the coming of the American troops they dug up their gold and silver and other valuables and fled from the island. There are holes to be seen in the ground and mounds where holes have been dug and then refilled near some caves in the Ponce district, the former hotbed of Porto Rican brigandage, and the country people say that at these spots was hidden the plunder of these outlaws prior to the American invasion.

They were brigands in every sense of the word, not merely petty malefactors, but robbers, kidnappers, cutthroats and footpads. They waylaid travelers, levied blackmail on planters pillaged homes, killed for pay and even made descents upon villages for booty. Some of them made a specialty of removing hated persons, receiving for their services from $100 to $500 according to the financial ability of the person hiring them and the prominence of the intended victim or his fighting ability. The people of Porto Rico tell to-day with a certain pride that these cut-throats never betrayed a patron. The two most famous leaders in the business up to the time of the American capture of the island were Pan Blanco, or "White Bread," and Aguila Blanca, or "White Eagle." When the city of Ponce fell into the hands of the American troops Pan Blanco fled incontinently. His record was so bad that he could expect no mercy. Aguila Blanca stood his ground and decided to see what the Americanos were like. The result of the scrutiny was favorable, so he came into the city, said he wanted to lead a better life and would reform if the Americans would permit him, and asked for and received a sort of safe conduct.

Aguila Blanca's life is exemplary fully justifying the safe conduct which General Henry gave him When Aguila Blanca asked for it he wrote that he had been a man of the woods out of undying, implacable hatred for Spaniards; and now that they had been driven from the island he had no further incentive to war against authority, and, therefore, he desired to return to civilized life and be a law-abiding citizen of his beloved native island.

Horse Breeding in England.

Some idea of the attention paid in England to the breeding of the useful horse as distinguished from the animal used for racing may be gained from the fact that at the recent London show of the Shire Horse Society the total value of the cash prizes for excellence in this breed alone aggregated £1,227. There were seven classes for stallions, six for mares, and two for geldings, and there were a number of cups and special prizes as well There are also breeders' prizes, thirteen in number, for stallions and mares, and two for geldings, with first prizes of £10 in each. This is certainly an incentive for farmers to raise strong and sound draught horses, and an example that it would be well to follow in this country.

The East Indian Dugong.

A writer in Cosmos, M. Emile Mason argues that the East Indian dugong or lamatin is the natural foundation for the myths of sirens, nereids, and tritons. A female dungong recently captured in the Red Sea has a head and bust which, when seen at some little distance, might be taken for a mermaid. The lamatin has also a vibrant voice, and these two combined make a good base for the theory which the writer has advanced with a good deal of elaboration.

Novel Way to Clean a Chimney.

An easy way to clean a chimney of soot has been discovered by a Maine man. Instead of going to the top of the chimney and probing with rods, he begins at the bottom. There an opening is made, and he fires upward a revolver charged with a blank cartridge The concussion, it is said will clean out the soot. He also claims that the burning of a piece of zinc in a stove will clear the stove and its funnel of soot.

The Compressed-Air Disease.

Dr. Thomas Oliver of England, who has been investigating the cause of the "compressed-air disease," which so frequently affects workers in caissons, has come to the conclusion that it is due to the increased solution in the blood of the gases met with in compressed air, and the liberation of these gases after the person escapes from the compressed atmosphere.

The Columbia has yielded more wealth than any other river in the world. Its vast schools of salmon have enriched thousands of men and given employment to innumerable people.

The turkey was first discovered in America and was taken to England in the early part of the sixteenth century. Since then it has been acclimated in nearly all parts of the world.

A LONG COAST LINE.

That of the United States Extends Sixteen Thousand Miles.

Next to the British empire the United States has the longest coast line of any nation in the world. With the new possessions of Porto Rico and the Philippines, the coast line of the United States will be at least 16,000 miles long, and with Cuba, which must have its coast line taken in charge by the coast survey of this country, there will be nearly 20,000 of coast to be cared for. The coast line of the United States without Alaska amounts to nearly 6,000 miles, divided as follows Two thousand three hundred and forty-nine miles on the Atlantic coast 1,556 miles on the Gulf of Mexico and nearly 2,000 miles on the Pacific coast Alaska, because of the numerous indentations and islands—those Aleutian islands, which stretch westward until they meet the possessions of the "Great White Czar"—has an enormous coast line, amounting up to at least 5,000 miles.

To compute the coast line of the Philippines is at present impossible Spain has no hydrographic office and no coast survey in working order Even the number of islands in the Philippine group is not known. Spain has never taken the trouble to count them.

Since the purchase of Alaska in 1867 the sun has never set on the possessions of the United States. When the morning sun is whitening the bay of Eastport, Me., his last red beams are shining upon the Aleutian islands.

Not the least of the burdens imposed upon the United States by the acquisition of new territory is the surveying of its shores. Although begun in 1807 the work of surveying the coast of the United States proper has never been completed. The Russian charts, which formed the basis of our survey of the Alaskan coast, were imperfect, and it will be years before the survey of that coast is completed.

In the meantime there is the coast of Porto Rico to be taken care of, and also the coasts of Cuba and the Philippines. The charts which are now depended on for Cuba are incomplete and unsatisfactory. England and the United States have done much work on that coast in the way of surveying the principal harbors, but in many cases the old and faulty Spanish charts are depended on. To make a complete survey of the Philippine archipelago is an enormous task, which will require years and the expenditure of lots of money. As the coasts of the United States are all looked after by the coast survey, so the surveys of the coasts of foreign countries are taken care of by the hydrographic office of the navy. This is a purely naval bureau, and the ships employed in making surveys outside of the country are all regularly commissioned men-of -war.

How Fishes Breathe.

Ulrich Dahlgren, who after devoting mush time to the study of the method by which fishes breathe has discovered two membranous valves just inside the teeth, which make possible the following conception of the breathing of teleost fishes, which is given by Mr. Dahlgren in the last issue of the Princeton University Bulletin: "The construction and operation of the fish's apparatus is that of a perfect two-valve pump In such a pump there must be a chamber which possesses two openings each guarded by a valve. The forces necessary to operate such a structure are three (or six) in number: 1. A force so applied as to alternately contract and expand the chamber; 2. A force to alternately shut and open the posterier (exit) valve; 3. A force to alternately shut and open the anterior valve. These valves must be operated in proper sequence to the expansion and contraction of the chamber The valves may be operated either by separate mechanism or by the automatic action of a current passing through the chamber. It is to this latter point that attention is called in the case of the fish. Here we find a chamber (the oral cavity) and two openings, the mouth (anterior opening) and the double gill opening (posterior opening). Muscular force is applied to expand and contract the oral cavity. But no such direct application of muscular force is needed to open and close the the anterior and posterior openings This is done automatically by the branchiostegal valves in the gill opening (or posterior opening) and by the maxmillary and mandibular breathing valves in the mouth opening (or anterior opening.) The fish is thus not required to use separate muscles to close and open the passages, but the loss of energy due to friction and retarded momentum on the valves must be added to that required to expand and contract the oral cavity. It is simply a mechanical economy such as is found in the heart."

Porto Rico's Unknown Flora.

Flora of Porto Rico are next to unknown. The Spaniards never had energy enough to undertake a study of Porto Rico flora, and they distrusted foreign scientists, who, they thought might be harboring revolutionary designs under the guise of the savans Two German botanists, however, by a liberal bribery of the Spanish officials, did succeed in making a limited survey and collection of the flora. One of them was Herr Schwaeneke, who visited Porto Rico in 1820; the other Herr Sinternis, who went partially over the islands about twenty years ago. The studies of these two men comprise about all that is known of Porto Rico flora. It is believed that some of the rarest orchids in the world are growing unknown in the interior of Porto Rico. There are luxuriant tree palms one hundred feet in height rich ferns, gorgeous flowers of all descriptions, banana, orange, lemon and other plants.

Is the Slate Doomed.

The use of slates has been forbidden in the schools of Zurich, Switzerland and pen, ink and paper have been substituted, even in the lowest forms. The reasons given are that the light gray marks of the pencil on the slate cannot be followed without straining the eyes; that the pressure which it is necessary to exert upon the pencil lessens the facility of the hand and renders an easy, flowing handwriting more difficult to attain, and that the use of the slate is not conducive to cleanly work.

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