

THE PRESENT SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

BY the time this letter reaches the United States and appears in print just two years will have elapsed since the beginning of hostilities in South Africa. It seems almost twenty to some of us here in Cape Town, deprived as we have been of the opportunity for regaining our properties in the interior from which we were driven, first by the British and then by the Boers, and permanently kept from them since by the exigencies of this protracted war. It may be recalled that on the 19th of October, 1899, the British government received that famous ultimatum from Oom Paul Kruger demanding the recall of British troops stationed near the Boer frontiers and also of all that were then on their way to South Africa. The Boers gave the British scant time for consideration, it must be confessed, for the ultimatum expired on the 11th of October—at 5 p. m. Transvaal time—and the very next day Natal was invaded by the Boers, acting in co-operation with the Orange Free Staters. These facts are matters of history, but there are certain other facts with which the general public is not so familiar, and it is of these that I shall write a few lines.

It behooves me, of course, being in a British colony, to be discreet in my remarks and make out as favorable a showing as I can for the government under which I am now living, but all

belaguered garrisons, took some thousands of Boers who were foolish enough to make a stand against him in the open, and then he capered home to London to receive the plaudits of a grateful nation. They made "Boer" an earl, gave him a grant of half a million dollars and showered all sorts of honors upon him—for what? That is what we out here are asking each other. Those blooming fools of cockneys up in London who are moving to indict Dr. Krause, former special commandant at Johannesburg, for treason, have no better knowledge of what was done here than the troops of Tommies who come out to fight the Boers—without even half an idea what a Boer is anyway! The latter only know that they get a shilling a day and are supposed to be fighting for the king. That is all they know when they set out, but after they have tramped a few thousand miles out on the karroo, have been lam-basted by De Wet and cut to pieces by Delarey or Botha they get another half idea that perhaps things are somewhat mixed. To tell the naked truth, Tommy Atkins is both disgusted and puzzled. He hasn't got more than a small spoonful of brains, to begin with, or he wouldn't be such a fool as to enlist in an army where he is bedeviled and bullrugged all the time. While the

front of them and gave chase. It is a standing order in the army to chase a Boer whenever you see him. This time it was a fatal mistake, however, for the British troopers ran right between two converging lines of Boers, who merely closed in on them and captured the whole lot. Then there was Kritzinger's little dash on Lovat's scouts at Orange river, news of which has just arrived, by which we lost two of our best officers, Colonel Murray and Captain Murray, and more men than we care to admit. As an offset to these reverses two small commandos of some fifty men each have been captured, together with wagon loads of ammunition and several thousand head of cattle.

The most startling news, by the way, is the most recent, and that is that the Boers are overrunning Cape Colony and have penetrated to a point within forty miles of Cape Town. No doubt, if the dispatch is allowed to be published, the alarmist papers of England and the United States are making the most of it and representing our city as in a state of great agitation, if not of actual terror. Well, the news has created a sort of disturbance in our midst. The town guard has been or-

fighting in the field are the very pick and cream of the Boer warriors. They are seasoned veterans, whether old men, young men or boys, and are un-hampered by either women, children or superfluous baggage. They travel light, with led horses, and make lightning-like dashes upon the British at points so wide apart that their enemies are confused and bewildered. They know every nook and corner of the vast territory they traverse, they waste no time in foraging from the country, but when they want food or ammunition pounce upon some unprotected train and take it. It is a fact that the British are really supporting the Boers in the field as well as their own vast army, numbering all told about 200,000 men. No wonder the British taxpayer is grumbling and that England is split into almost hostile parties over the question of continuing the war at this fearful expense of life and treasure. You know from the reports sent in now and then what it has cost England in precious lives, and it is estimated that she has already spent nearly a billion dollars on this war. The Boers say she will have to spend a billion more, and another on top of it, and as for men,

the capture of an important force of their enemies. Kitchener proclaimed that all found in arms after the day mentioned would forfeit all claims to be treated as prisoners of war; that they would be transported for life and lose forever all their rights in the country. It was a paper fulmination and was treated by the Boers with such contempt that they invaded Cape Colony the very day their grace expired and have incited to arms many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of hitherto neutral natives. This is the real significance of the invasion of our colony—that the settlers of Dutch descent, who are racially in sympathy with the Boers in arms, will openly assist them if they perceive them gaining, as seems to be the case at present. They only want a good excuse and to feel sure of immunity from being punished as traitors to the government.

When we consider that Kitchener's large army of 200,000 men has to cover a vast and in the main barren territory, that he has to practically patrol 3,000 miles of railroad and keep his communications open on every side from the seacoast to the far interior, we cannot but admit that he has a difficult problem to solve. There are many thousands here who, like myself, believe the Boers will ultimately suc-

cess precipitated hostilities. On the other hand, we have to admit that we have here a worse than Oom Paul in our high commissioner and commander in chief, Sir Alfred Milner, who, with Joe Chamberlain, did all he could to bring Kruger to issue that very ultimatum so fatal to Boer prosperity and to South African progress. Milner has only just returned from London, where he was honored with another title and foisted upon the British people as the real head and front of progress in this country. But cast a glance over the map of South Africa today and look upon the result of his mistaken policy in the desolated farms, the arrested development of rich mineral regions, the thousands of lives that have been sacrificed in this squabble over a petty question of sovereignty. Half a century of prosperity, should it ever return to our once fair land, will not suffice to heal the wounds which have been inflicted in this unrighteous war and to conceal the scars.

Without assuming to say which was right or blaming one party more than the other, I may declare that this terrible war was unnecessary; that it was conceived in pride and nurtured in corruption. The Boers have suffered more than tongue can tell; the British are now paying the price which Kruger declared at the outset would "stagger humanity."

And after all this outpouring of precious blood and treasure, what is the end in sight or measurably within the purview of the British government. It was not long ago that Lord Roberts was rewarded for "bringing the war to an end" and given an earldom for completing the conquest, yet almost simultaneously with the issue of Lord Kitchener's proclamation announcing a suspension of amenities came the report that De Wet had planned an attack on Cape Town, and that Botha was to capture Durban. In Natal, with 5,000 horse, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," says Oom Paul in his European retreat, and the policy will be acted on and carried out if Kitchener persists in his plans. The mere fact that the Boers are no longer releasing their prisoners and that they are now waging war upon the non-combatants of Cape Colony augurs ill for the British. Repressals will be made, it is probable, and eventually the war, which has hitherto been carried on with some pretense of humanity, may

UNWELCOME GIFTS THAT ROYALTY RECEIVES.

Very curious and often very inconvenient are the presents given to royalty, given in many cases by not always disinterested strangers. About two years ago King Edward VII.—then, of course, Prince of Wales—received a check for \$100,000 from an enormously wealthy merchant who had given up business and who wished to get launched into the world of fashion.

The check, however, was accompanied by a letter, in which the writer mentioned the fact that he had for years been a "humble and silent admirer" of his royal highness.

"I have," said the writer, "heretofore admired your royal highness at a distance. Should your royal highness be pleased to honor me by dining at my house you would indeed be making happy my humble servant, J."

This letter was replied to as follows: "H. R. H. the Prince of Wales is pleased to know that Mr. — has for years admired H. R. H. at a distance and trusts that Mr. — will for years to come still continue to admire him at a distance."

The check, of course, was returned. About six years ago an eccentric Birmingham lady who was passionately fond of cats died, leaving the Princess of Wales the sum of \$116,000, her whole fortune, on the condition that the princess would take charge of the whole of her feline collection—280 cats in all. The money came straight to the princess herself in the shape of Bank of England notes.

"Your royal highness," wrote the old lady, "is so generally beloved by all on account of your kindness of heart that I venture to hope you will be kind to the only friends I ever had during my lifetime." The Princess of Wales very soon decided the matter. "I don't mind the sound of bank notes," remarked the royal highness, "but I object absolutely to the sound of cats' notes." The money, needless to say, was not accepted. Neither were the cats.

Through the death of a Dresden woman a few years ago the Duchess of Cornwall and York came in for a most curious but not altogether welcome legacy. For years this old lady had been an enthusiastic collector of hats and bonnets of every era, every country and every style. Her royal highness suddenly found herself the happy, or unhappy, possessor of nearly 2,000 of these bonnets, many of them, it must be confessed, very costly and very curious.

"You can't possibly keep those frightful things," merrily said the plain spoken Duke of York to the duchess. "Give them to some of the 'friends' you don't wish to see again."

The "headpieces" were, however, distributed among the various "homes" and charitable institutions, and not to "some blind asylum," as the duke smartly suggested.

The Duke of Cambridge is one of the best hearted men in the world. During his lifetime he has certainly done much "good by stealth," never hoping or even wishing for thanks or "fame."

Many years ago a certain army officer well known to the duke died, leaving one child, a son, totally unprovided for. The Duke of Cambridge, unknown to any one, took charge of this boy and sent him to a good private boarding school. His royal highness would frequently write to the little fellow, and every time he did so used to inclose \$5 for spending money.

"Some day, when you are a rich man, you received a parcel from me," he would say, "and I would like to see you send me back, 'once you are a rich man,' the kind hearted duke to the boy. When he had finished at school, his royal highness got some appointment for the youth out in British Guiana and for years and years heard nothing more of him.

Now comes the pretty and somewhat affecting part of the story. Last November the aged duke received a parcel from Australia, in which was found the identical letter written by the duke to the schoolboy years before, and wrapped up in this letter was the sum of \$60, the amount sent by him to the boy he had once befriended.

A few days later the duke was legally informed that a certain rich Australian merchant had died, leaving his royal highness the whole of his wealth—\$135,000 in all. The once little schoolboy had indeed remembered his old benefactor.

THAT TYPEWRITER RIBBON.

A prominent business man who is noted for his close fastidious proclivities a few days ago met the other directors of a company with which he is connected. It happens that there is a very comely maiden who hammers the keys of a typewriter for the company, and this has worried the avaricious gentleman a good deal, as he is of opinion that a woman's place is at home.

At the meeting mentioned the directors were auditing bills, and among them was one that read thus: "Ribbons for typewriter."

When the avaricious gentleman noticed it, he was dumfounded. He could not believe his senses. The idea of the company furnishing the young lady stenographer with ribbon fairly froze him. He was on his feet in an instant, waving his arm like a windmill and demanding of the secretary if the commanding was compelled to board and clothe its employees.

After he had been laughed at for some minutes it was explained to him that the ribbons were for the machine and not for the operator.

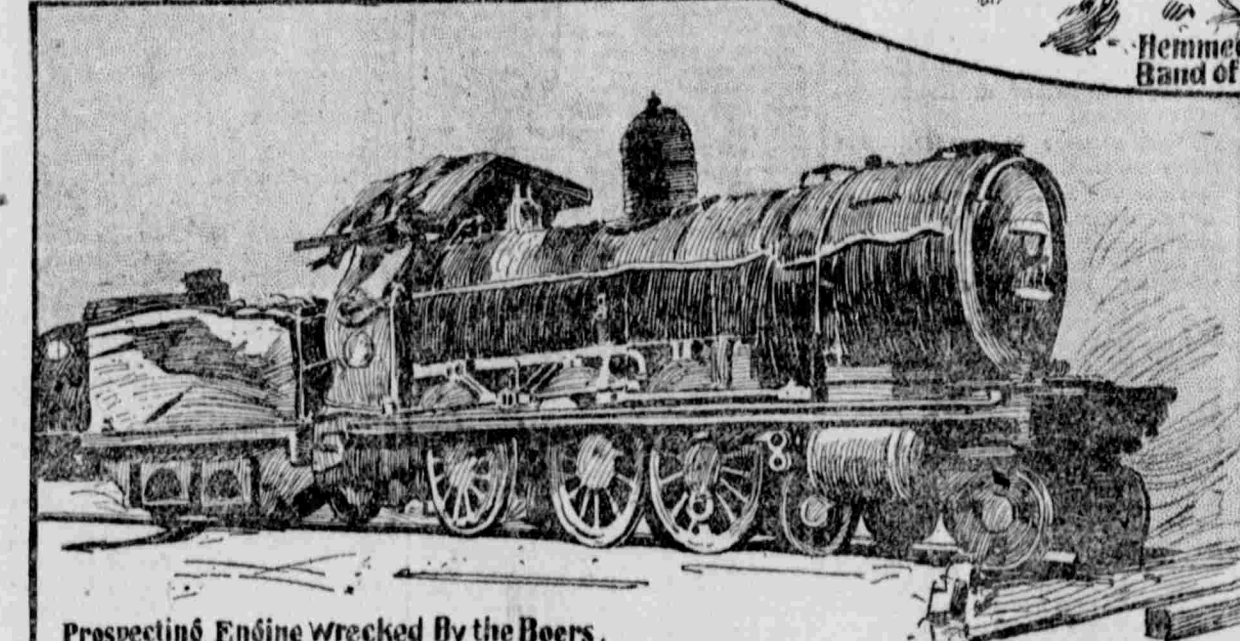
In Paris cabmen are not allowed to smoke while driving.



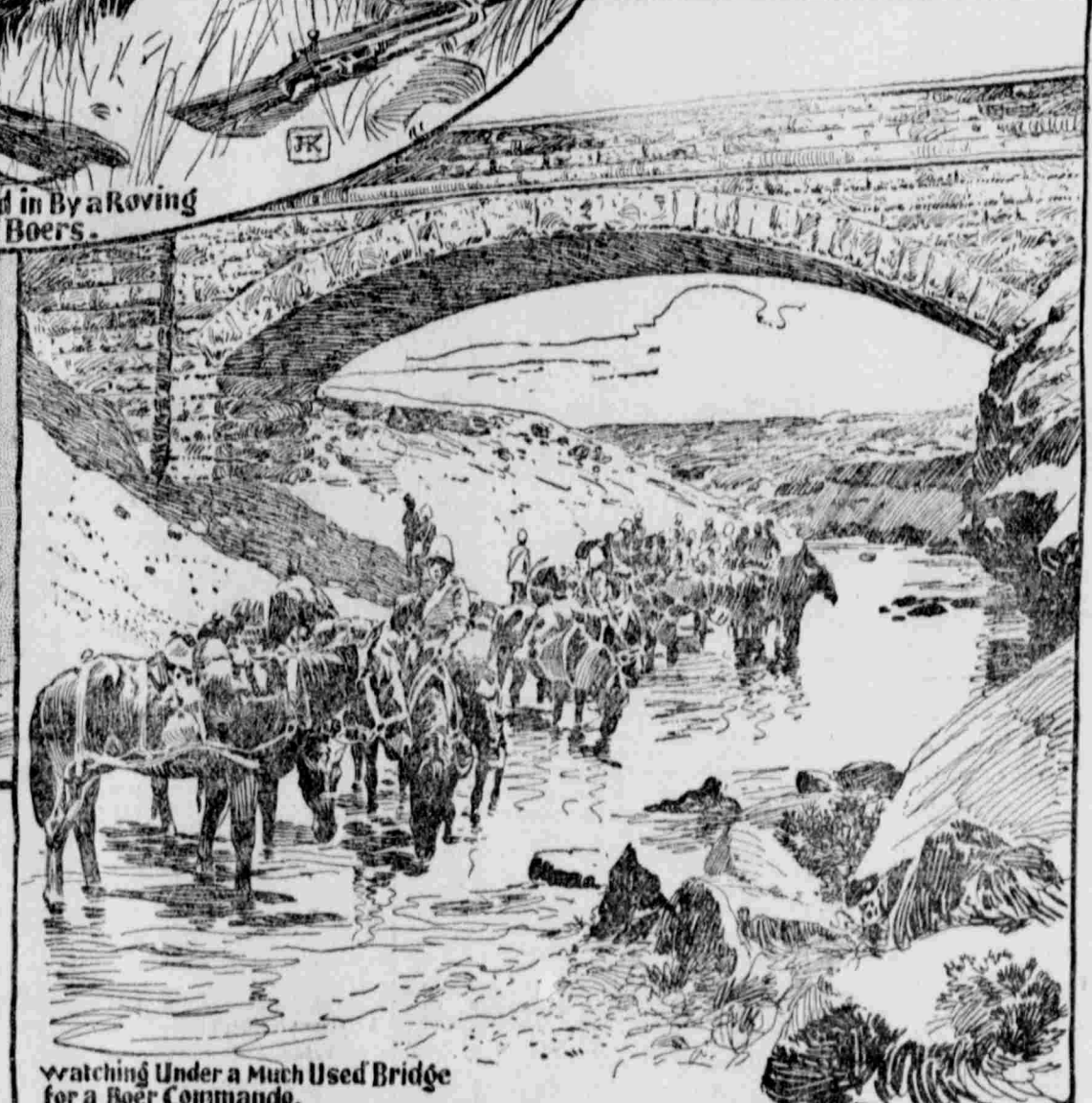
Dr. F. E. T. Krause
Boer Ex-Official
Accused of High Treason.



Hemmed in By a Roving
Band of Boers.



Prospecting Engine Wrecked By the Boers.



Watching Under a Mud Used Bridge
for a Boer Commando.

SCENES ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE KITCHENER CAMPAIGN IN SOUTH AFRICA.

fair minded Britishers here are ready to admit that the Boer-British shield has two sides to it and that the Boer side has been of late rather the shinier of the two. Perhaps the information has already leaked out from Lord Kitchener's dispatches to his government—which are about the only items of news allowed to pass out of the country uncensored—that we have met some severe reverses of late. They were of a trivial character, indeed, when the vast operations covering thousands of miles are considered as a whole; but, again, they were not so trivial after all. The mistake the British have made is in being overconfident ever since Lord Roberts made his march from Cape Town to Pretoria, and then went home, leaving poor Kitchener to wear out the fag ends of the war with the Boers. The truth is the real contest only began after "Boer" took his departure. He relieved several

shindy was exciting, with big guns speaking on all the kopjes and now and then a Boer to snipe from some convenient breastwork. Tommy was happy. But since it has degenerated into a sort of guerrilla warfare, with infinite marching and countermarching during the infernal heat of day and the almost intolerable cold of night, he has become morose and downhearted. He knows now that looking for the lively Boer is something like searching for the ubiquitous flea, with scant prospect of catching him, and no loot for Tommy if perchance he ever is overtaken. On the contrary, it is the Boer who does the looting and sometimes does the chasing. Quite lately, in fact, as you may have read, the Boers have successfully sprung two big ambushes and bagged several hundred British soldiers, including a goodly proportion of officers. Our men saw a body of Boers descending a hill in

dered, as a precaution, to hand in its magazine rifles and take in exchange Martini-Henrys. The reserves have been ordered to be in readiness, and there is a general air of preparation. But it must be considered that this is a big colony and that the Boers are so few in number that they cannot concentrate a large force at any given point. There are, it is believed, about 12,000 Boers in the field, divided into commandos of a few hundred each. These are all that are left of the 50,000 or more fighting men they could boast when the war opened. The British have about 30,000 in captivity in Ceylon, Bermuda and St. Helena, the women and children are in reconcentrated camps, most of them, and there may be 50,000 Boers living here and there on their farms. Most of the farms, however, have been practically destroyed, the houses burned, the owners either killed or captured. But those now left

they say old England has not enough left for the conquest of South Africa. The time limit named in Kitchener's proclamation—Sept. 15—as the last day of grace to be allowed the Boers in arms expired only a few days ago, and the Boers celebrated it, as we know, by

reed, even though we do not love the Boers and would much rather see the British in supreme control. We remember Oom Paul's treatment of the outlanders, his abandonment of his brothers fighting for their lives and his pompous ultimatum which two years

degenerate into a strife that will call for the intervention of the civilized powers of the world in order that the people of South Africa shall not be exterminated.

WALTER MURRAY CHESTON.
Cape Town, South Africa.

SECRET SERVICE VERSUS CIVIL SERVICE.

THE secret service bureau of the United States has its offices in the treasury building at Washington, with John E. Wilkie as chief and W. H. Moran as chief clerk. More than that does not appear in the official congressional directory, and the general public is left in the dark as to its further personnel and the work it performs, except for occasional newspaper and magazine articles, usually "inspired," and the revelations of some ex-chief or former employee.

According to a statement recently published by a former expert of the secret service, this governmental bureau, which has been so often lauded and has existed so long as an adjunct of the treasury department, "is really used for only one thing—chasing counterfeiters." The custom of drawing upon the secret service bureau for men to guard the president is of comparatively recent origin and is not sanctioned by precedent of long standing.

These remarks were called forth by the apparent failures of secret service men in affording protection to the national executives they should have more effectually guarded and the death

by an assassin's bullets of one high in station whom they were supposed to protect, President McKinley.

The fact that the murderer of our beloved president accomplished his purpose notwithstanding that three secret service men had been detailed to guard him is its own commentary upon the inefficiency of that service and opens the way to an investigation which doubtless will be one of the first things ordered by the next congress. It is alleged that the faulty and weakness of the secret service are owing to the fact that it has not been placed under civil service rules and that, in the language of an ex-chief of prominence who is supposed to know whereof he speaks, "the bars have been taken down, and all sorts and conditions of men out of a job have been appointed to places as detectives. There are men in the division who would have to think well before they put their past history in black and white—men whose careers would not look well in cold printer's ink."

This statement is a criticism of the vaunted secret service which had its origin in the dark days of the civil war, forty years ago last June, when Lafayette C. Baker tendered his services to

Secretary Seward as a sort of police agent to gather information of affairs in the Confederacy. The work he initiated was so successful that it was placed under the control of the war department, which directed it until after the death of President Lincoln. After the war was over the reorganized force known as the secret service was directed to use its powers for the suppression of counterfeiting, and congress appropriated \$300,000 for the purpose, the sum of \$100,000 being annually devoted to that end for many years. At present the amount does not much exceed \$60,000 annually, except for special appropriations, and probably not more than fifty men are carried on the pay roll. And yet these men have worked hard for the suppression of counterfeiting and have been a terror to evildoers of certain sorts for many years. Their deeds of valor, their determined hunt for lawless through years of quiet, the quarry was captured, their special information transmitted from one to another through various administrations, have won for them a prestige as wonderful as it is deserved.

But, while the secret service men have proved excellent watchdogs of the treasury, it is now charged that

they have notably failed when on detail for the protection of lives intended to their care. Their perspicacity has suffered deterioration, it is declared, through long suffering in office without personal examination as to their fitness for the important duties to which they were assigned. It is, moreover, stated that there will soon be an overhauling of the service for the public good and that the well known convictions of President Roosevelt will prompt him to enforce more rigidly the civil service rules, which declare for men "appointed for merit and fitness only, ascertained so far as possible by competitive examination." This indeed would seem to be demanded in view of the lamentable happening at Buffalo, when a dangerous anarchist was permitted to approach the president with his hand concealed in a handkerchief after one of his accomplices had also successfully run the sentinel, who was supposed to guard the approaches to the executive presence. This fact alone shows an almost criminal laxity of effort, a sense of security arising from lack of discipline and a false dependence upon an unassailable official position. There is but one remedy, and that cannot be applied too soon. That

is a radical renovating of the system—an establishment of the service upon an entirely new basis.

"Three men were detailed by the secret service head at Washington," says ex-Chief Hazen, "to watch over the safety of the chief executive, the largest plain clothes' bodyguard that any president of this country has ever had. They had their instructions, or should have had, and were responsible for the president's life. Under the discipline as it should have existed they would have taken their orders from no one but their chief and never would have given up their positions of vantage where they could command a view of each person approaching and be near enough to stop any one that looked suspicious."

Instead of being alert and watchful this body of men seems, on the contrary, to have viewed the matter in their charge as of secondary importance to the presenting of an aspect of "republican" or "democratic" simplicity and indifference.

Much as the Americans despise sham and affect contempt for show, they as well as the inhabitants of older countries are the slaves of customs. One of the most pernicious customs that has

fastened itself like an old man of the sea upon the body politic is that of shaking hands with the president. It is a senseless and offensive practice descended from the days of "Jeffersonian simplicity," when the president knew almost every one who called and would have offended his neighbors if he had refused to take their hands at his levees. Today, however, with 75,000,000 people scattered over the United States, the conditions governing presidential receptions are different. Not a thousandth part of the population can take the president by the hand or even look upon his face, and instead of being a condescension on his part to allow a favored few to grasp his hand at a crowded public reception it is rather a discrimination against the many millions that are not so circumstanced as to do so. It is to be hoped that in the future this dangerous custom of indiscriminate receptions and the admission of people without credentials of any sort to the immediate presence of the executive, thus exposing his life to the assaults of dangerous "cranks" and criminals, will be abolished.

Even were the secret service more nearly perfect than it is and its officials more on the alert than they have shown themselves hitherto it would be next to impossible to protect the president upon any well planned attempt upon his life.

JAMES L. WALTINGTON.
Washington.

in the bookshops of Vienna and burned by the police.

A Parisian professor suggests a certain treatment of silk for enhancing its hygienic value. The process consists in combining gannetion with silk or wool by impregnating either of them with a solution of collodion or a solution of celluloid. The material to be treated is made into a roll either of a loose

fibrous material or as a fabric, according to the purpose for which it is designed. This roll is immersed in a cylinder filled with the solution.

The life of Robert Burns is dealt with in over 200 books, and there are no fewer than forty distinct "lives."

To maintain the public schools of the country costs every man, woman and child a little more than \$9 a year.

INTERESTING INFORMATION.

Hubert Herkomer, the English Royal academician, is the son of a Bavarian peasant. A German journalist who recently visited him at his present home in Bushey, England, found his house surrounded by others occupied by his free pupils. The intervals between painting and teaching are given up to

tennis and cricket, while Herkomer himself is doing carpenter's work and improving his house.

The negro population of the United States is not diminishing, as many suppose, but increasing. The percentage of increase since 1880, according to the census of 1900, is 12.73, or more than in

the previous decade. The figures, according to the latest census, are: Colored population, 8,500,000; increase, 1,029,540. This is the largest increase shown by any census since 1790, excepting that of 1850, when the gain was 1,700,794.

It appears that on the fleet of small steamers which ply between the numerous islands that dot the Swedish

coast acetylene has come into quite common use, notwithstanding its explosive character. It is stated that under the beam of an acetylene searchlight objects can be seen very distinctly at a distance of from 1,000 to 1,500 feet. The saloons and cabins of these vessels are also lighted with acetylene.

The telephone has been a government monopoly in France since 1859. The de-

velopment outside of Paris has been slight. There are more telephones in New York than in the whole of France. At the beginning of 1901 Paris, with a population of 2,536,000, had 23,000 telephones, about 50 per cent of the number in France. Only four other cities had more than 1,000 stations.

Six thousand copies of a recent French novel were seized the other day