

Disasters to American Cities Recalled by San Francisco's

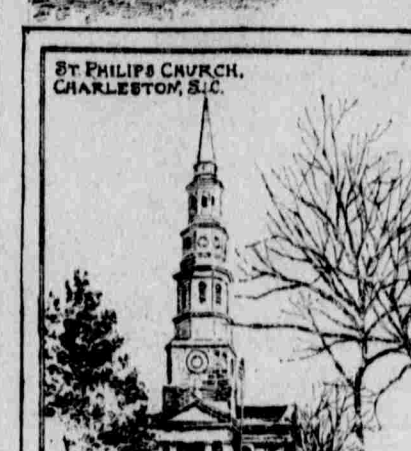
Comparisons of ordinary things are odious, but comparisons of horrible things are well nigh criminal. The oldest inhabitant, however, always remembers something worse than the present catastrophe and proceeds to add to our troubles by digging out other troubles out of the graves of the past. That is where the San Francisco holocaust had the best of the oldest inhabitant. He could not invent anything worse and could not remember anything half so bad. This horror had him bound, gagged and helpless. Thus he felt that it had doubly injured him. He not only suffered from it all that others suffered, but, in addition, it robbed him of his cherished privilege of saying, "Yes, this is pretty bad, but back in 1858"—or, "This ain't a circumstance to"—etc. These ain't a circumstance to Pompeii and Jerusalem, but they were a trifle too ancient even for the memory of the oldest inhabitant. So he could only sit in a sort of dazed but resentful silence.

From the standpoint of magnitude the San Francisco disaster is the worst in American history. The Chicago fire of 1871, which so long held the gruesome primacy, is surpassed. All other fires are in the "also burned" class. As for other American earthquakes, they were only little tremors compared to this. In other words, they were "no great shakes." As for loss of life, it is not accurately known even yet how many died as a result of the double calamity that overtook the Golden Gate City. Perhaps it never will be exactly determined. We have had one recent horror which overtopped that of San Francisco in the matter of mortality, though not even remotely approaching it in the loss of property. That was the Galveston flood of September, 1900. It is believed that nearly 6,000 people perished in the tidal wave that overwhelmed the Texas city, while the property loss was at least \$17,000,000. In the San Francisco horror General Greely estimates that about 300 persons lost their lives, while the destruction and damage to property will probably reach \$250,000,000. The great Chicago fire of 1871 resulted in less than \$200,000,000 property loss and fewer than 300 deaths. The two other great American fires are Boston, 1872, and Baltimore, 1904. The loss of property at Boston was in the neighborhood of \$80,000,000 and that at Baltimore perhaps \$10,000,000 less. Loss of life at both of these conflagrations was comparatively trifling. Almost every city in the land has had more or less disastrous fires, but none to approach those mentioned. In the early history of the country the most severe ones were those at New York in 1835. Here the property destroyed amounted to at least \$15,000,000. Since that day the metropolis has escaped with comparatively small disasters.

San Francisco's only considerable conflagration prior to the present one was in 1851, when property was consumed to the amount of about \$10,000,000. Of earthquakes she has had many, one of the worst having been in 1868. This one shook some fun out of Mark Twain. The quivers in the western metropolis have been so frequent, in fact, that the inhabitants ceased to be disturbed very much by their advent. None of them did any very great damage.

Prior to the San Francisco disaster the greatest earthquake in American history was that at Charleston, S. C., twenty years ago. It occurred on Aug. 31, shook down hundreds of buildings, rendered three-fourths of the city uninhabitable, killed scores of people and destroyed property to the extent of at least \$8,000,000. To add to the horrors of the homeless people, tremors continued for months afterward. Among the buildings injured were two famous churches, the French Protestant, said

to be the only Huguenot church in America, and St. Philip's, the only lighthouse church in the world. St. Philip's is one of the oldest churches in America and is known as the "Westminster abbey of South Carolina" for the reason that some of the most famous sons of the Palmetto State among them John C. Calhoun, lie buried there. It was pretty well demolished by the earthquake, but has been completely restored. It did not gain the distinction of being the lighthouse church till 1894, when a powerful lantern was placed in its tall steeple as a guide to mariners making the harbor. The French Protestant church also suffered severely, but has been rebuilt. It was founded by the Huguenots who were driven from France as the result of the revocation of the edict of Nantes.



HUGUENOT CHURCH, CHARLESTON, S.C.

ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH, CHARLESTON, S.C.

In the Charleston earthquake the shock was felt from Florida to Maine and as far west as Iowa. The damage from cyclones has been widespread, especially in the Mississippi valley, but no single disaster has even remotely approached the greatest ones of fire, earthquake and flood. One of the worst cyclones in our history was that which visited St. Louis in the early summer of 1896. One may even yet detect all over the Missouri city jagged patches of newer brick and stone in place of that which was blown down by the cyclone. The same phenomenon is also present in many other cities and towns that have been visited by twisters. The wind still blows where it listeth, and sometimes it picks up a town and sprinkles it over the prairie. When a breeze gets going in a circle it is time for people to make a straight line for a hole in the ground. The Galveston flood, by the way, was caused by a terrific wind sweeping in from the Gulf of Mexico.

There have been many minor inundations, scarcely any part of the country escaping. The Ohio valley has been visited many times, as have also the Mississippi and Missouri valleys. Topeka, Kan., suffered quite severely from

a flood a few years since. Many cities on the Atlantic watershed have also been inundated, a notable instance among them being Paterson, N. J. Severe as some of these floods were, however, none of them came within speaking distance of the Galveston horror. The city is located on a low lying island. On Sept. 8, 1900, culminated a tempest that had been raging for near-

ly twenty-four hours. An hour before they were blown away the instruments of the weather department recorded the wind moving at a velocity of eighty-four miles an hour. How much greater speed was finally attained will never be known. The result was that the city was entirely overwhelmed by the waters of the Gulf. When they receded, practically the whole town was wrecked, one-fourth of the population drowned, sections of the city had been swept clean of houses, telegraph and telephone communications were destroyed, the waterworks demolished and the wells and cisterns filled with salt water. The most vigorous efforts were required to avert a water famine. To prevent future disasters of the kind a sea wall has been built around the Gulf side of the city of Galveston.

It is made of concrete, is nearly three feet thick at the bottom and five feet at the top, is seven feet higher than the top water mark prior to the disastrous flood and over one foot higher than that unprecedented record. To back this great wall the grade of the city has been considerably raised.

The last of the great fires prior to

top spreading and unrolling like some gigantic tree of gloomy omen. For a moment it hung, much as the black doom is described to have hovered over Mount Vesuvius.

Some conception of the extent of the ensuing conflagration may be gained from the fact that the fire insurance companies actually paid in losses over \$39,000,000.

Not only did Boston respond to the cry of the Lake City, but from all over

the city, had consumed property to the amount approximately of \$187,000,000 and had killed at least 275 people. The insurance companies paid \$45,000,000, as a result of which many of them went into liquidation. That time is still remembered by the older people as one of the blackest in the country's history. Yet Chicago was not daunted by the blow. The "burned outers," as they called themselves, went immediately to work. Temporary business booths were erected along the ruin lined streets, and the Queen City's motto, "It will," was immediately in evidence. Nearly 100,000 people were made homeless by that devastation, but there was little repining. Never, except in war times, had the fortitude and pluck of the American character been shown to better advantage.

It was during the Chicago fire that the story was told of the man who burned his fingers by fishing out a hot brick. When asked what he was doing, he replied:

"Just trying to see when these things will be cool enough to be laid down again."

Not only did Boston respond to the cry of the Lake City, but from all over

this country and Europe flowed in a constant stream of donations. Messages were received from New York merchants reading something like this: "Suppose you are burned out; order from us what goods you wish; pay for them when you can."

The Chicago spirit was nowhere shown to better advantage than by the citizen who stood among her smoking ruins and predicted that by 1900 she would contain 1,000,000 inhabitants, which was three times what she had then. The prophecy was more than made good.

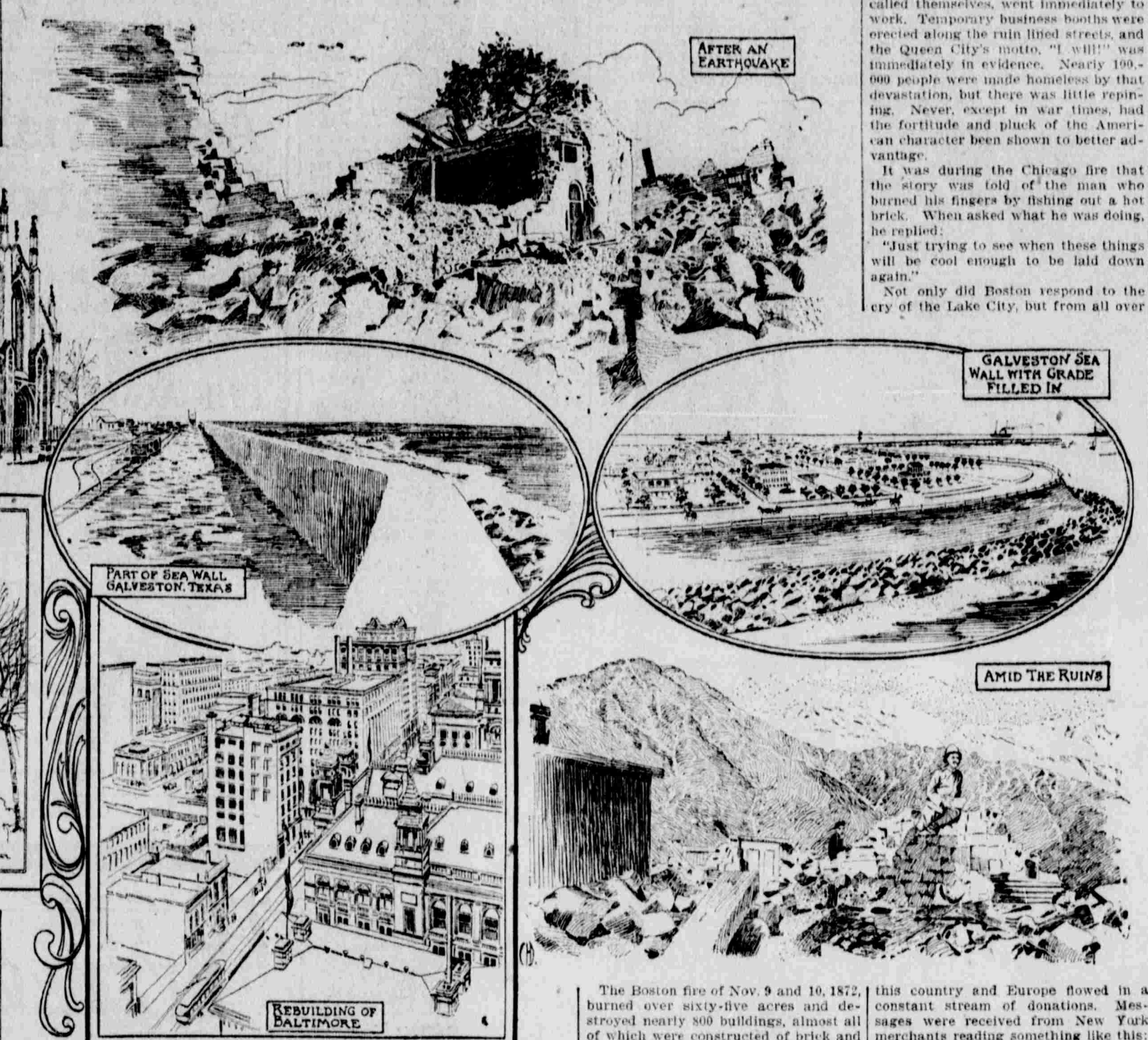
All of these cities were quickly repaired and in two years' time were in better condition than before. The fires gave Boston and Baltimore a chance to straighten out and widen their streets. Chicago's disaster only added to her determination and gave her a spirit that has made her the second city in the land. Charleston has almost forgotten that she had an earthquake. Galveston has fortified herself against her enemy, the sea, while substantial St.

Louis hardly paused to notice the assault of the cyclone. The rapidity with which these communities overcame disaster has the overworked "Phoenix" rising from her ashes' feeling arising from the block and dodging into a back alley.

To realize the magnitude of the San Francisco loss it need only be stated that the territory burned over in the Pacific city amounts to seven and one-half square miles, or more than twice that burned over in Chicago. At least three times as many people were rendered homeless in San Francisco as in the Lake City. There was probably more than three times the loss of life in the Golden Gate metropolis, nearly twice the loss of property and a more absolute suspension of business. Moreover, the buildings left standing in San Francisco suffered from earthquake, to say nothing of the suburbs and smaller towns that were shattered and burned roundabout. At the time of the fire of 1871 Chicago had only about 334,000 population, while the estimated population of the Pacific metropolis at the time of her destruction was in the neighborhood of 450,000. Taken as a whole, the destruction that has overtaken the Golden Gate City is at least twice that which befell the Queen City of the West. This makes it far and away the greatest single disaster in American history, outside of war, and one of the greatest in the history of the world.

But, while the destruction has surpassed that of all previous catastrophes, the response of the people has more than kept pace. Already about \$20,000,000 has been raised in cash alone to say nothing of the immense donations of clothing, food, tents, free transportation and other supplies. This is nearly twice as much as was raised for Chicago even in three months after her disaster. New York alone has contributed \$3,000,000 to the relief of San Francisco, and other cities and smaller communities have kept pace. In addition, the insurance losses paid to the Pacific metropolis will be the greatest ever given in a single fire. Companies will not suspend or default, as they did in the case of Chicago.

J. A. EDGERTON.



AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE

GALVESTON SEA WALL WITH GRADE FILLED IN

AMID THE RUINS

REBUILDING OF BALTIMORE

PART OF SEA WALL, GALVESTON, TEXAS

REBUILDING OF BALTIMORE

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The New Head of the Division of the Pacific

At the moment of San Francisco's lamentable visitation General Adolphus W. Greely, head of the military division of the Pacific, was not at the Presidio. He was on his way across the continent to be present at the marriage of his daughter. As soon as he heard the sickening news he faced westward with the dispatch and unquestioning fidelity of the trained soldier and made his way back to his post. It was an abrupt and shocking interruption of what had promised to be one of the most agreeable episodes in the life of a man who had encountered much of sorrow and disaster, but never before such as awaited him on his return to headquarters.

He had need of all the fortitude that his long years of training had put at his command. Never before had he been projected, as it were, into a position so difficult and so problematical. He was new to the office, having been transferred but recently from the national signal service to the Pacific coast. He was comparatively a stranger in a strange country. As yet he had not had the time and the opportunity to establish himself firmly. General Funston, his subordinate, whom he had left in command during his absence, had won the approval of the national authorities and the general public by his vigorous and efficient administration.

All this was difficult, but there was worse, far worse. For reasons which have to do only with the unwritten but exceedingly arbitrary ethics of army life, General Greely was not persona grata at the war department. There was no question of his merit as a soldier or of the justice of his promotion. It was something entirely removed from that—a sort of inharmonious adjustment between this veteran of the civil war who had won his way to preferment without the aid of a West Point training and the younger school of military men who are potential at Washington.

This lack of sympathy in high quarters showed itself once in various irritating ways and added largely to General Greely's burden. He threw

himself with all the enthusiasm of a man of action into the business of adapting his command to the public benefit. On the ground and in full possession of the facts, he made his plans and called on the war lords at the national capital to help him out. They



GENERAL ADOLPHUS W. GREELY.

could not avoid the responsibility of doing this, but they had it in their power to make it unpleasant for General Greely, and they seem to have improved the opportunity by a knotting of official tape and a splitting of hairs that would have been farcical if attended with less serious consequences.

In the absence of the chief of the war department that dignitary's officious and hypocritical subordinates made the old general's task an onerous one. His request for more men was criticised sharply, and he was informed that there was no law for sending them. He was



AS A SIGNAL OFFICER.

he had completed the course in the high school of that town, at the age of sixteen, he enlisted as a private in the volunteer army. He served with gallantry during the civil war, being wounded three and promoted to major. At the close of the war he was appointed second lieutenant in

American army has been more subject to impertinent criticism. As national "clerk of the weather" he has probably been the inspiration of more indiscriminate fault finding than any other military man in history. Although goaded to the verge of distraction by these



AS A SIGNAL OFFICER.

gratuitous insults of the underlings of the war department, he forgot them in the presence of the greater need and proceeded manfully to do his utmost to bring some sort of order out of the chaos which prevailed in the stricken city.

Adolphus Washington Greely is one

of America's most remarkable men in point of achievement. There is no other man in the army who has been a participant in so much adventure. He is now in his sixty-third year and has been a soldier for forty-five. He was born at Newburyport, Mass., and when



AS A SIGNAL OFFICER.

the regular army and was soon detailed on signal corps duty.

Between 1876 and 1879 young Greely proved himself to be one of the most untiring workers in the army. During that period he constructed 2,000 miles of military telegraph in Texas, Montana and Dakota. This unprecedented feat made him a marked man in American military circles. In 1881, in pursuance of the recommendation of the Hamburg international geographical congress, he was given command of the United States expedition to establish one of a chain of thirteen circum-polar stations. This party of twenty-five men penetrated farther north than any previous explorers, discovered new land north of Greenland and crossed Grinnell Land on sledges to the polar sea.

For many weary months these venturesome men were cast about by the uncertainties of the arctic and were believed to be lost. Two relief expeditions sent in search of them failed to reach them. They retreated south as far as Cape Sabine, but could get no farther. Here all but seven perished from starvation. These survivors were rescued by a third expedition under the command of Captain Winfield S. Schley. On his return Lieutenant Greely was promoted to captain and on the death of General Hasen was made chief signal officer of the United States army. This promotion gave him the rank of brigadier general in the regular army, the first private soldier of the civil war to reach that distinction.

During and after the Spanish war General Greely had a further opportunity to show his great ability as a builder of telegraph lines. Under his immediate direction there were built and operated 1,000 miles in Porto Rico, 3,500 miles in Cuba, 250 miles in China during the Boxer outbreak and 10,500 miles of lines and cables in the Philippines. He afterward installed a system of 3,500 miles of telegraph lines, submarine cables and wireless in Alaska, one of these lines being the first wireless system to be put to commercial use.

Perhaps General Greely's most brilliant achievement was the reorganization on its present efficient basis of the national weather bureau. Previous to his incumbency the service was remarkable only on account of its untrustworthiness. It had been conducted in such a haphazard and unscientific

fashion that it had become the laughingstock of the world. General Greely revolutionized the service completely. He began at once to gather meteorological data from every reliable source, and in the course of time he was able to arrive at something definite. He established a complete system of weather stations in various parts of the continental military circles. In 1881, in pursuance of the recommendation of the Hamburg international geographical congress, he was given command of the United States expedition to establish one of a chain of thirteen circum-polar stations. This party of twenty-five men penetrated farther north than any previous explorers, discovered new land north of Greenland and crossed Grinnell Land on sledges to the polar sea.

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BRIEF AND NEW.

In a Berlin music hall the other night a conjurer was pretending to catch heavy iron balls on his face. But his assistant forgot to change one of the balls exhibited for a light globe, and after the conjurer had received the ball in his face he had to be taken to a hospital.

Canada's foreign trade for the seven months ending Jan. 31 was nearly \$2,000,000 greater than in the correspond-

ing period of last year. The exports totaled \$4,722,369.

Australia's flour exports to England have more than doubled since 1900, when they were valued at \$2,095,000.

The net imports of gold into Germany in 1905 amounted to \$44,885,000 as against \$97,205,000 in 1904.

During the late war the Japanese lost only 15,000 men from sickness as compared with 57,000 from wounds, a pro-

portion without parallel in the records of war.

At the smaller German universities it is usually much easier to get a degree than at the larger ones.

Attempts have been made to separate the "Bohemian twins," Misses Rosa and Joseph Blazew, but it has been found impossible because of the nature of the connecting growth.

A London druggist had to pay \$18, including cost of litigation, for selling water that was dirty and full of moldy

growths to a man who had asked for distilled water. The druggist's defense was that he thought the man wanted the water for the purposes of photography.

A recent census of Winnipeg, Man., made by a directory company, places its population at 78,357 and the number of habitations at 11,935.

Russia's trade in 1904 was considerably influenced by the war. Still, the figures are far from being unfavorable compared with other years as might

have been expected. Its total trade, imports and exports by way of the European border in 1904 were \$792,379,000 against \$799,434,500 in 1903 and \$696,795,000 in 1902.

The ostrich feather trade in the Sudan seems doomed owing to the success of the South African ostrich farmers.

One of the ratters worn by Garibaldi when he was wounded in the battle of Aspromonte, Aug. 28, 1862, has been presented to the mayor of Rome.

The consumption of spirituous liquors in Canada last year was less by \$799,000 than in 1904.

A French explorer has found in the interior of Borneo a singular and gruesome wedding gift. It was the skull of a Negro-Papuan, carved by the Dayaks.

The Paris Academy of Medicine offers a prize every year for the discovery of an absolute cure for tuberculosis. So far no one has won it.

A wagonette containing a wedding party was upset by a motor car in Paris.

The bridegroom thrashed the motor car driver and then took him to the police station.

Large orders for materials for railways, which have hitherto been almost exclusively supplied by British manufacturers, have been received in Germany from Japan.

The milksop of Japan is a good hunter and fisherman and an excellent shot with a rifle. His devotion to lawn tennis is marked, and he is an excellent wielder of a racket.