

SIX DIE AT POSTS

FATAL EXPLOSION ON U. S. KEARSARGE

Powder in Forward Turret of Battleship Ignites During Target Practice—One Officer and Five Killed—Another Officer May Be Dead.

Guantanamo, (Cuba) April 14.—The United States battleship Kearsarge has arrived here. The casualties resulting from the explosion on board the vessel off Culebra Island, Friday, are reported to be as follows:

Two officers and five men killed and fourteen injured, eight of them seriously.

The bodies of the men killed will be buried in the naval cemetery here tomorrow.

Washington, April 14.—Two years ago to a day later than the fatal Missouri disaster, as every sailor immediately recalled, on a Friday and the thirteenth of the month, six men were done to death in the forward turret of the battleship Kearsarge by one of those accidents which acquire additional terror for sailors because of their obscure origin and almost impossibility of prevention.

The Atlantic fleet had been for weeks engaged in most severe drills in the waters of the Caribbean Sea, culminating in the quarterly target practice. This practice was just about concluding with most satisfactory results, up to yesterday, and it was confidently expected at the department upon the basis of preliminary reports received, that all records would be broken in the matter of rapidity or fire and efficiency of the gunners. But today, just at the close of the week's work at the department, came a cablegram from Rear-Admiral Evans, commanding the Atlantic fleet, telling of a dreadful accident on one of his best ships, the Kearsarge. The news came from Caimanera, a little cable station at the mouth of Guantanamo Bay, indicating that the Kearsarge itself had arrived at the place. A slight telegraphic error, requiring the consumption of some time to effect the deciphering of the message added to the anxiety of the officials as soon as they had made out the fact that a serious accident had occurred. When the message was finally reduced to form, it read as follows:

EVANS'S MESSAGE.

"CAIMANERA, April 14, 1906.—Secretary Navy, Washington. On April 13, about 3:15 p. m., shortly after completion target practice of Kearsarge, in forward turret while the powder was going below, three sections of a 13-inch charge of powder were ignited. Charge of powder in other lift just below and one section 13-inch remained intact. Cause unknown. Matter is being investigated. Lieut. Joseph M. Graeme, gun umpire, has been sent to the Maryland in very critical state, about 9 p. m. The following have since died:

- Lieut. John M. Hodgins, turret officer.
- Peter Norberg, gunner's mate.
- Theodore Nogell, seaman.
- Anton G. Thorsen, seaman.
- Julius E. Koester, turret captain first class.
- Ellis H. Athy, seaman.
- W. King, ordinary seaman, was dangerously injured by accident, recovery doubtful.
- Willbury dead at Guantanamo.
- Vessel uninjured."

APPLE HAS A LONG DESCENT.

Traced Back to the Cave Dwellers of Swiss Lakes.

Among the fruits of the rose family are apples, pears, peaches, plums, cherries and quinces, as well as strawberries and blackberries. The apple is a fruit of long descent. Among the ruins of the Swiss lake dwellers are found remains of small seed apples which show the seed valves and the grains of flesh. The crab apple is a native of Britain and was the stock on which were grafted the choicest varieties when brought from Europe, chiefly France. Apples of some sort were abundant before the conquest and had been introduced probably by the Romans. Yet often as Saxon manuscripts speak of apples and cider there is no mention of named varieties before the thirteenth century. The one may read of the pearmain and the costard, Chaucer's "mellow costard."

In the roll of household expenses of Eleanor, wife of Simon De Montfort, apples and pears are entered. In the year 1286 the royal fruiterer to Edward I. presents a bill for apples, pears, quinces, medlars and nuts. Pippins, believed to be seedlings, hence called from the pips or seeds, are said not to have been grown in England before 1525. The exact Drayton, writing of the orchards of Kent at that period, can name only the apple, the orange, the russeau, the sweeting, the paze water and the reinette.

John Winthrop is usually held responsible for the introduction of the apple into the New World. But as a matter of fact when Winthrop anchored off Cape Cod the reclus Blackstone already had apple trees growing about his cabin at Shawmut Neck. Some of the best of American apples were brought over by the Huguenots, who settled in Flushing, L. I. in 1630, and planted there, among others, the pomme royale or spice apple.

Protected.

Miss Wellon—The impudent thing told me by my face that I was getting old and wrinkled!

Miss Tartun—I wouldn't mind it. She didn't say to you your real face, you know. She couldn't see that.

THE AWAKENING OF VAST NEVADA

TWENTY YEARS' SLEEP OF RIP VAN WINKLE STATE IS BROKEN AT LONG LAST

Old and New Mining Camps Contrasted—Railroad and Automobile Regate Stage Coach and Burro to Limbo of the Past—Opening of New Districts Bring Prosperity to Entire State.

Nevada, the Rip Van Winkle of States, has awakened from a twenty-years' sleep. The silence of her vast deserts has been broken by the shrill whistle of the locomotive, calling men of brain and brawn to lead the industrial army that shall invade the arid wilderness and wrest from the clenched hand of dead nature the key of her treasure house. The call has been heard and heeded. The advance guard is on the march, following the dim trails over burning sands made by the bronzed, sun-dried, silent pioneers, who for years have plodded in grim loneliness through the land of utter desolation, led by the lure of gold, sometimes to wealth that mocked them as it glittered in hands that were too weak to bear it away, more often to despair and death in waterless wastes.

For half a century, the Great American Desert, once a vast blank space on the maps, extending from the Rocky Mountains to the Sierra Nevada, has been shrinking rapidly before the advancing wave of population and reclamation, but the great basin west of the Colorado and south of the Union Pacific has remained a veritable desert, a waste of saline sinks, volcanic debris and upheaved masses of barren rock. There are oases in the desert, dots of vivid green gleaming in measureless stretches of ashen gray, where water was found and appropriated by wandering Mormons years ago. But these green dots are few and widely separated, and serve to accentuate the forbidding grimness of the land.

The desert finds its final expression, the climax of its horrors, in a deep depression near its western frontier, a sink far below sea level, from which the imprisoned saline water evaporated long ago, leaving a bed of fine sea sand and deposits of various mineral salts. This is the ill-famed Death Valley, the graveyard of adventurous immigrants, dotted with the bleached bones of many a daring gold seeker. In the mountains walling in Death Valley and containing the sources of its poison springs—the Funeral Range and other fantastic upheavals of the earth's crust bearing equally grisly names—are stores of metallic wealth of unknown extent, magnified to fabulous proportions by the difficulty of access and the somber mystery enveloping them. Many a desert prospector has braved the horrors of Death Valley alone to find the mysterious treasure of the Funeral Range, and returned to the haunts of men, wrecked in body and mind, to babble of ledges glittering with virgin gold, sometimes bringing bits of ore of marvelous richness, but unable to tell where he found the treasure or to retrace his road.

Be the hidden wealth of Death Valley what it may, it is known now that the desert ranges of Southern Nevada are seamed with ledges and veins of metal—gold, silver and the lesser ores—and the opening up of the arid land by railroads is making it practicable to work mines that have been sealed heretofore by the prohibitive cost of transportation.

Invasion of the desert by gasoline motor wagons is a unique feature of the reawakening of the Silver State. It is a new thing to go prospecting in an automobile instead of plodding painfully over the desert behind a burro staggering under a deck-load of grub, blankets and picks.

In no way does the mining town of the new era resemble the tough towns that sprang up along the lines of the transcontinental railroads—the Dodge and Hays cities and the like. There is nothing of the wild "hurrah" camp about it. It is busy, active and full of the western spirit in the better sense, but there are no cavorting cowboys stampeding through the streets, no howling dance halls or dives, no swaggering gun lighters, belted and armed, infesting the saloons and looking for trouble with a bad man invested with constabulary authority.

Goldfield, Tonopah, Searchlight, Bullfrog and Manhattan are typical mining camps of the new period. Crude and rough as are the new camps, there is but little in them to remind one of the conditions that were characteristic of mining excitement of earlier days. Mining, as carried on today, is a business, not an adventure, and there are no more Tombstones, Leadvilles or Cripple Creeks, reeking with lawlessness and echoing with the rattle of the ready revolver. The bad man is an anachronism, and "shooting up the camp, is no longer tolerated as a humorous diversion of exuberant roustabouts. Cartridge belts and six-shooters form no part of the equipment of the Nevada miner in these days. They are as rare in the desert towns as plug hats, and one may travel the whole length of the Salt Lake railroad without seeing an armed man.

Sleeping in a gulch in the side of a mountain, 6000 feet above the sea and thirty miles from the railroad, lies the remnant of Old Pioche, dreaming of the days when it was the wildest, most tumultuous mining camp of the West, and hopefully looking for return of prosperity under new and better conditions.

It is the record of Old Pioche that seventy-two graves were filled in the burying ground on the slope below the mouth of the gulch before there was one death from natural causes in the camp. Rows of unmarked mounds bear silent testimony to the truth of the ghastly tale today, and they are corroborated by the documentary evidence of the files of the local paper. The editor faithfully chronicled the slightly shootings and stabbings and the weekly stage robberies, but he was a proponent of law and order, and he drew the line at sordid crime. "The practice of robbing strangers on the streets," he declares with editorial indignation, "is disgraceful and should be stopped." Later illusions to the organization of a Vigilance Committee by the citizens of Pioche indicate that the editorial thunder was not without due effect.

The silver mines of Pioche were opened in 1871, and their richness attracted no less than 10,000 men to the camp in a few months. The Raymond & Ely was the principal mine, producing more than \$2,000,000 the first year and paying, during the full term of its operation, no less than \$25,000,000 in dividends. Ownership of the mine was disputed early in its history, and there were fights and lawsuits without end, resulting in many murders, the bribing of judges and jurors, the ruin of some reputations and the smirching of many. There were battles in the drifts and fights on the streets, and during the stage of most active hostilities men handy with guns were in demand on both sides at wages of \$20 an hour.

Litigation, demonetization of silver, and a change in the nature of the ore as depth was attained, conspired to put the silver mines of Pioche out of business, and for more than twenty years the costly machinery of the Raymond & Ely and its old-time rival, the Meadow Valley, has been rusting in ruined shaft-houses. In the Raymond & Ely shaft is a Cornish pump that cost \$250,000, and lying on the scattered parts of its mate, which were hauled from Palisade at ten cents a pound freightage, and never assembled.

Pioche's population has dwindled from 10,000 to 150. Her streets are lined with abandoned stores and empty houses. Brick buildings that cost more than \$100,000 to erect in the flush days are unoccupied. The colored globes of a drug store shining dimly in the sunlight that struggles through dust and cobwebs. A big wooden boot projecting from a decayed awning tells where the shoemaker once plied busy awl and hammer. He disappeared one day, some years ago, and a search of all the open shafts and prospect holes on the mountain side failed to solve the mystery of his going. There is neither druggist nor doctor in Old Pioche, and therefore the sick get well, if any one ever does fall ill.

Pioche is the county seat of Lincoln and still does a little in the way of official business. When court is in session there are signs of life in the main street, and the saloons and decrepit farm banks are centers of social revivals dimly reminiscent of old times, but sadly lacking in the strenuousness and exuberance that characterized the old silver camp. The principal merchant of the town closed his store, containing a large stock of general merchandise and jewelry fifteen years ago, and the goods are accumulating dust on the shelves because he refuses to sell anything at a cent below the price which he marked at mining camp profits when he stocked the store. From a same, well-dressed man of business, the merchant has degenerated to the state of a marvelously dirty old cynic, railing at his fellows and their beliefs and proclaiming that his only god is gold.

One Fourth of July the roof of the old store caught fire from a rocket, and when the citizens who put out the blaze searched the place for the missing proprietor, they found him in the cellar, frantically digging up his hoard, and they affirm seriously that when they came upon him he had a five-gallon oil can filled with gold. Yet so peaceful and law-abiding is the one-time roaring camp of Old Pioche that the miser's treasure is as safe in his cellar as if it were in the vaults of the Nevada Bank.

The faithful hundred and fifty who have stayed by the silver wreck see the dawn of hope for Old Pioche in the great revival of mining enterprise in Nevada. Their mines never were worked out, but were closed by the drop in the price of silver and by the prohibitive cost of working rebellious ores. Cheaper transportation and the advance in metallurgy in the past few years have solved the problem, and the old mines are being reopened by new owners. Keen, hard-headed business men from the East have discovered that the refractory ores found in the lower levels of the abandoned mines are the most valuable, and they are taking out the costly but obsolete machinery and putting in electric hoists and new pumps, and getting things ready for the resumption of work that will follow the construction of a branch railroad from Caliente on the line that was graded many years ago, when the Salt Lake, Sevier Valley and Pioche railway was a promising project.

In the file of the Pioche Record of 1872, between the report of a murder trial and an account of the latest stage hold-up, I found an interesting statistical item relating to Nevada's wealth. The figures show that the bullion product of Pioche in 1871 was \$4,000,000; of the Comstock Lode, \$11,000,000; of the whole State, \$25,000,000, or \$536 for every man, woman and child then living in Nevada. The population of the State, includ-

ing Indians, is less by a few thousands than it was in 1871, but it is increasing under the stimulus of railroad development, and the boom that will follow the opening of richer mineral fields than ever were known in early days and the reclamation of arid lands by the government storage system of irrigation, promises to make Nevada a populous and prosperous State.

ENGINE RUN BY AIR

Coals Not Needed For New Invention Completed By An Englishman.

London, April 7.—Arrangements now are being made to test a new type of engine, which, if it proves successful, may cause industrial revolution than that which resulted from the discovery of the steam engine or application of electricity to motive power.

The patents, a Lancashire man, already has achieved some success as an inventor. This new production he describes as a triple economic air engine. If the inventor can justify all his claims the business of the coal miner practically will be gone so far as industrial requirements are concerned.

The summarized claims for the new engine are that it will save the use of coal and all the cost of fuel. It will take the place of steam, which will not be required to keep the pressure of air constant; it will drive a locomotive, propel a steamship, work a mill, forge, etc., without using either gas, water, coal, electricity or oil. It will prevent smoke.

The economic cylinder will be more powerful than any other type of cylinder of equal diameter. It will save the use of large boilers, and not more than two will be required for the large works. With two or more boilers filled with compressed air up to the pressure required in each boiler the economic cylinder will keep up the pressure of air. If set to work in steam boilers, where the wear is considerable, caused by fires and the use of dirty water, the constant changing of temperature and pressure all having a tendency to pull them to pieces, this war and tear will be avoided by the use of the air engine.

Irrigation Tests For Imperial Valley.

Among those who will be engaged actively in conducting experiments in the Imperial valley for irrigation purposes this summer are Dr. Elwood Mead, chief of irrigation and drainage investigations in the department of agriculture; Prof. S. Fortier, irrigation engineer in charge of the work in California, and C. E. Tait, irrigation engineer in charge of the work at Imperial. Experiment stations will be established at Imperial, Calexico, Brawley, Heber, Holtville and other points.

California Items of Interest.

Visalia now has a population of over 4,000.

There is a land boom northwest of Lindsay, Tulare county.

Our wheat farmers say that the stand of grain this year at this time is in better condition than during any years since 1884.—Lindsay Gazette.

A Fresno dispatch says: There is a prospect of a big shortage in the peach crop. In the San Joaquin valley the ravages of the blight are expected to reduce the yield one-third.

The condition of the fruit crop around Marysville is in doubt. Most of the orchardists report that almonds are all gone, apricots nearly so and peaches more than half destroyed.

What at first seemed to be a very promising season now looks like one of poor crops, and the only consolation at hand is in the hope that the price will be greater on account of the shortage.

It is believed by many that the present year will be the greatest in the history of California for the citrus industry. It is confidently believed that growers will bank from \$18,000,000 to \$20,000,000 after all expenses of freight and icing charges are paid.

The deciduous fruit growers of the Eastern states are threatened with a light crop this season. The warm weather in February started the buds and the stretch of March winter froze them off.

A hundred cars of oranges blocked by the slide on the S. P. between the Tehachapi and Bakersfield had to be shipped back to Los Angeles last week, re-iced, and sent north again over the Coast line.

At a meeting of Dinuba raisin growers, held last week, a pool of one thousand tons of fruit was sold under three-year contract at 34 cents to packers. This is the first contract, it is claimed, for a large amount made by packers for over a year and indicates the activity that characterizes the market and the prospects for still higher figures.

The most serious pest in California is the potato worm. The damage to the potato crop in California, as estimated on a basis of opinions obtained from a large number of growers and dealers, aggregates in some years fully 25 per cent. In one section where some of the finest potatoes are grown, the Salinas valley, the dealers estimate that at times the loss has gone as high as 40,000 sacks in a single year.—Cal. Cultivator.

Quieting Suspicion.

"Mr. Blank seemed rather uneasy when I told him you were going to apply for the position of typewriter."

"He was, but I soon got him over his alarm."

"What did you say to him?"

"Told him I had no matrimonial designs whatever; that I merely wanted to be assister to him."—Baltimore American.

Evidence at Hand.

"Death often changes aversion into love," remarked the man who has a mania for handing out quotations.

"That's right," rejoined the ordinary mortal. "I have an antipathy for hogs, but I dearly love sausages."

CAN SAVE THE NATION IN TIME OF WAR

Letters to, from and in care of Senator Perkins indicate the probability of a new honor for California, distinction no less than that of acting as backbone for the nation in time of war.

Heretofore the United States has had to depend on Chile for its supply of niter in the manufacture of gun powder, and the fact has not brought joy to the government at Washington. Not only has this dependence on another country been deplored, but kept as secret as possible, nothing being published even concerning appropriations for the purchase of niter. Now great beds of niter have been discovered in Death Valley, and State Mineralogist Aubrey has called the attention of Senator Perkins to the discovery and correspondence between the state, the senator and Director Walcott of the government geological survey has followed. Aubrey has made an investigation limited by small appropriation, and Walcott has considered the field but done nothing for the same reason, and both state and government have been handicapped by lack of railroad facilities. Now that the Santa Fe's Tonopah and Tidewater branch has progressed to Soda Lake and the junction of the Salt Lake railroad, the chief obstacle is disappearing and Director Walcott says he believes the government will be able to make a survey, although the expense still will be heavy; not only will it necessitate the services of a geologist, but a chemist with an outfit for field determination of the composition of the different salts and nitrates. An examination of the nitrate deposits is promised by the government this year.

IN FIELD OF HUSBANDRY

OF INTEREST TO FARMERS AND ORCHARDISTS

Nine Million Plows At Work—Best Soil For the Garden—Cantaloupe Culture—Farm Truck Pays—Heavy Agricultural Exports—How to Keep Boys On the Farm.

Nine Million Plows At Work.

It's plowing time, says an interesting and authoritative article in Farming for March. Two hundred million acres of land will be plowed this year in the United States, and about 9,000,000 plows are on the farms to do the work. The capital invested in plows alone represents \$80,000,000. Such a multitude of types of plows and plowers can be found on this old continent that we can but name a few. In the great Southwest, the Mo-have with his three or four squaws starts for the planting ground. Each woman carries her digging stick, the most primitive of all plows, and the man stands guard all day while the dig the land and plant their gourd seeds. In Canada, but for the interference of the government, we might see the Doukhobor women drawing the plow in exactly the same way that they have done for centuries. In New England the oxen are being yoked, and in the Middle West the four horse teams are ready. In the South the negro sits on his plow still to watch the train go by.

In other parts of the country we find traction engines at work, plowing forty or more acres a day and requiring but two or three men to do it. The plow stands for civilization, and all civilized nations plow. No savage ever thought of plowing as we understand it, because it involves forethought and a preparation for the future.

Best Soil for the Garden.

While all the land used for the market garden and the strawberry bed ought to be smooth enough and sufficiently clear of stones to permit the use of the most improved labor-saving tools and implements, both horse and hand, the market must, to a great extent, influence the selection of soil. If the market requires the production of early vegetables, it is evident that a cold clay soil would be unsuitable, but that a light, sandy loam would be needed; while, again, if the market can most profitably be supplied with later varieties in their most perfect development, a good strong soil, clay or heavy loam, would be best. That gardener, who with a steady market, can combine these two soils in his land purchased for his garden, would naturally have the best equipment.—American Cultivator.

Cantaloupe Culture.

It is said that Coachella will grow about 120 acres of cantaloupes this season, an income of over 20 per cent since last year. There are now about 50,000 acres devoted to cantaloupes in the United States, the output running as high as 7000 carloads. Colorado has heretofore been the leading factor in this product, having originated the famous Rocky Ford variety. The Southwest will soon be the greatest competitor of the Centennial State. Arizona is beginning to produce cantaloupes in large quantities, and our own Imperial Valley is adding to the supplies at an increased rate. It was thought that the planting of early grapes in the "desert" sections of Southern California would decrease the acreage of these localities, but the reports seem to indicate that new fields will offset the vineyard acreage.—L. A. Times.

Farm Truck Pays.

The first object in planning the truck crops should be to grow the family supply, then as much more for market as can be profitably disposed of. No part of the farm and no labor thereon brings so large returns as do the truck patches. I have grown \$150 worth of onions from the seed on a little more than half an acre of land, and Lima beans, tomatoes, sweet potatoes and melons at a rate of better than \$100 to the acre. The truck grounds should be near the house, in the richest soil. Annual applications of well-composted manure, ashes or commercial fertilizers should be made and the ground ought to be plowed. The work of preparing the ground and planting and cultivating the crops, can be largely done at odd times when the other farm work is not pressing. The great point of success in truck

farming as well as in general farming is to do the work well and at the right time. Shallow and frequent cultivations should be given all crops, using horse cultivators where practicable and wheel tools where horses cannot be used. The hoe, however, should be the main reliance, and should be used continuously till the crops are made.

Onion seed should be in the ground in March if possible. Drill in rows fifteen inches apart on new land or land rich in humus. Ashes are a good fertilizer for this crop. Tomatoes should be set out as soon as danger of frost is past. Put well-rooted manure under each plant. Select a light, sandy soil for the sweet potato patch and top dress liberally with ashes. Make light ridges about three feet apart, and set plants fifteen inches apart in the rows. Plant Lima beans in checks the same as corn, and stake two rows together in squares. Melons do best on stony soil planted over well-rotted manure. Cabbage set in rows just far enough apart that the heads will about touch when mature. In all truck crops earliness pays. The farmer who will hustle and who will give trucking the same study and attention necessary to success in any other department of farm work, will find it both pleasant and profitable.—Orange Judd Farmer.

Heavy Agricultural Exports.

Washington.—According to a bulletin issued by the department of commerce and labor, the total value of agricultural products exported from the United States for eight months of the fiscal year 1906, ending with February, 1906, was \$700,000,000, as against \$668,000,000, in the same period of 1905.

How to Keep Boys on the Farm.

The question of how to keep boys on the farm is as perplexing as it is important. The Rural New Yorker publishes the following article, which may give an idea as to a possible solution of the question:

"Many years ago I was talking with Gen. Sheridan in Chicago. He told me that when he was a major of cavalry in Arizona he was in charge, on behalf of the government, of a tribe of Indians, the Colorados, and his duty was to confine them to their reservation. His principal difficulty was on account of their nomadic character; no matter what effort he made to make their homes comfortable for them, still they would leave them and travel away, and had to be brought back by the cavalry at short intervals. He finally decided that if he could give them some interest in the way of live stock it might be an anchoring influence, so he succeeded in having the government give them a stock of horses. That, however did not answer the purpose, for they drove the horses and continued to travel with the horses and mares and colts as they had before. Then he tried the experiment of giving them cattle, but after the cows had produced calves in the spring of the year the Indians traveled, and the stock traveled with them. Finally he hit upon the idea of giving them a stock of poultry, and the squaws promptly realized the value of the product of the hens in the domestic economy, became attached to the eggs and attached to the chickens, and when the bucks proposed that they should make their summer migration, the squaws said "No." The result of the poultry experiment was that for the first time he was enabled to anchor these Indians to the place where the government desired to keep them.

There are many boys on the farm today who could be anchored to the old home if they could be interested in a good hen."

Modern Dairy Barn.

The Dairy Division of the Bureau of Animal Industry, Department of Agriculture at Washington, has just issued a small circular entitled "Suggestions for Construction of Modern Dairy Barn." The plan of the barn shows that the structure embodies the best ideas in scientific and sanitary construction that are consistent with practicability and cheapness. We advise all interested in such a publication to send to the Secretary of Agriculture at Washington for a copy of it.

Horse Breeding.

Horse breeding is one of the most important industries in the United States. The reports in the Year Book of the Department of Agriculture show large increase in the prices of the best grades from \$10 to \$25 during 1904, 1905 inclusive. Draft horses show the greatest increase for that period occasioned by the scarcity. January 1, 1905, there were 363,329 horses in California valued at \$24,518,741. The increase in draft horses for breeding purposes, of the character of the Perchon, Clydesdale and other strains, is adding many thousands of dollars to California's animal assets annually.—Cal. Cultivator.