

PROGRESS.

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RAILWAYS AND EMPIRE.

The recent official announcement that the great Trans Siberian Railway has been 'practically completed' by the laying of the last rail of the Northern Manchurian Division must be accepted with a reservation. There is still some 'mending and bridge-building to be done, and the system of rail communication is still interrupted by the necessity of crossing Lake Baikal by water. Moreover, it is generally believed that a considerable part of the line will have to be rebuilt in stronger fashion and relaid with heavier rails before it will sustain regular traffic.

Nevertheless, the Russian Minister of Finance was justified in his announcement that with the laying of the last rail in northern Manchuria on the anniversary of the tsar's accession, temporary traffic was possible along the whole system.

Ten years ago last May the tsar turned the first sod of this railway, at Vladivostok. The construction of more than five thousand miles of railway in this period, in view of the engineering and other difficulties in the way, is a remarkable achievement. It hardly would have been possible if it had not been pressed toward completion by the resources of a great empire.

It has opened the vast and previously almost inaccessible regions of Siberia to immigration. It binds East and West in commercial relations which otherwise would have been impossible. In connection with the acquisition of Port Arthur, it gives Russia a long coveted southern port. Its political importance in future Asiatic adjustments can hardly be overestimated.

Railway-making and empire building are likely to be more than ever closely associated in the future. Russia has built railways to the very extremity of its territory towards Herat, in order to be ready for whatever may take place in Afghanistan. Recently it has begun railway construction in northern Persia, as an aid to extending its political control over that country. Other nations are pursuing a similar policy. Germany has important railway projects in the East. In China, in Sudan, and wherever else Europe's civilization is seeking a foothold in unpeopled or partially occupied regions, the railway precedes or attends the march of empire.

GREAT GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES.

Congress now finds itself confronted with the question which almost every household must consider: How much money can we afford to spend? The decision as to a score or more of projects will really constitute a partial answer.

Doubtless the appropriations made at this session will be very large. A handsome surplus lies in the Treasury. The country is prosperous, growing rapidly, and at a stage in its development when many new things seem called for, most of which everybody regards as meritorious, but they all cost money, and there is some dispute as to which the country can best afford.

The proposed canal across the isthmus would naturally be a source of great expense, even if distributed over many years. On account of the failure of the river and harbor bill at the last Congress, larger one than ever seems inevitable. It is possible that an appropriation for general irrigation will be made, and that would embark the government upon far-reaching improvements.

A Pacific cable may absorb a few million dollars more. Rural free delivery is gaining in popularity, and its friends desire an appropriation twice as large as that of last

year. Many people believe that the most effective way of restoring our merchant shipping on the seas is by the payment of subsidies from the Treasury. Unusually large naval estimates are recommended. All along the line there is a call for generous appropriations.

Although government taxes are small compared with those which the individual pays to the city where he lives, and to the state government, all of these levies, national state and municipal, should be taken into account in considering how much can properly be expended. On the one hand extravagance, waste, misappropriation of the public money and the promotion of selfish schemes should be avoided; and on the other hand a niggardly policy would be most unwise on the part of a great and growing country with a vast wealth of resources yet to be developed.

To Reduce Your Bad Measure One Size. Isn't half as hard neither is it as painful as before the introduction of Putnam's Painless Corn and Wart Extractor. In twenty four hours the corn is removed, Pretty and small feet are well assured on everybody, but it can't be done unless you use Putnam's—others are not nearly so good. Putnam's is the best. At druggists.

The never failing medicine Holloway's Corn Cure removes all kinds of corns, warts, etc., even the most difficult to remove cannot withstand this wonderful remedy.

The Old-Age Habit.

'For why would I look old, darling? Answer me that, now!' Mrs. Mullaly demanded. She had been Honora Costigan formerly, Mrs. Morris's loving and faithful house-girl; but that was twenty years earlier. Mistress and maid had been at opposite ends of the earth in the meantime, and the mistress who, had noticeably aged, felt almost a shock of resentment at sight of the plump and buxom Nora she used to know.

'Sure, I've had me bad times and me good times like the rest of the world,' Mrs. Mullaly went on reflectively. 'But, glory be! before the bad times quite finished me the good times always came again—me always leaving the door ajar to let them in, d'ye mind?'

'I am older; I feel it sometimes in me poor back; but I'm not old. Whisper, darling, it ain't the years that go over; it's the heart that's inside that changes the faces of us.'

'Twas a cousin of mine that teaches me the truth of it, this long ago. She brings

to be old the day she was born, did Katie, and when she was fourteen, looking and acting twenty, 'twas a great help to her. But when she was twenty, 'I'm getting on!' says she. When she was twenty-five, 'No, says she to Johnny Walsh, that came a courting, 'I'm too old and settled in me habits to be marrying. Then she was thirty nothing would do her but to get wid the old women and talk of the times when she and they was young.

'So the heart of her went into the face of her. It did so! I mind when she was thirty about me over twenty, we went together one day to a big new hotel to get work. A good worker was Katie. But the boss he looked us up and looked us down and asked his questions, and then says he, 'I'll give you a trial, my girl,' says he to me. 'But as for you,' he says to Katie, it's young, strong, lively women we want,' says he, and I'm thinking you're after mistaking this for the Old Ladies' Home, which, says he, is in the next block.

'O ho!' says I, to meself at that. 'Am I going out to hunt for wrinkles and rheumatism before me own mother gets grey in her hair? No,' says I, and 'twas then I be gun to toss me birthdays over me shoulder as fast as they came. They're all behind me, glory be! where I can't fall over them. 'Whisper, darling,' Mrs. Mullaly added, impressively, 'old age is a bad habit, like drinking, and if ye give way to it ye won't so easy break it off. Sure, there's a new year every twelve months, but that can't make ye an old woman—never, darling until ye're willin' to be!'

A Cure for Rheumatism.—The intrusion of uric acid into the blood vessels is a frequent cause of rheumatic pains. This irregularly is owing to a deranged and unhealthy condition of the liver. An acute subject to this ailment will find a remedy in Parmele's Vegetable Pills. Their action on the kidneys is pronounced and most beneficial and by resuming healthy action they correct impurities in the blood.

'Is Mrs. Brimfield Baker the daughter of a judge?'

'Yes. Why do you ask?'

'Because I just now met her and she said she was burying down to ask her father to grant her an injunction to prevent her husband from beginning divorce proceedings—'

An Opportunity Gift. A good natured easy going German living in Chicago asked the American wife to

pick out some little present for his sister in the old country. He had squandered his fortune, says the Record Herald, but his sister still had hers, and with careful tuition she had swelled it to a comfortable sum.

The American wife knew nothing of her sister in law, and she appreciated the limitations of her own finances as well as the difficulty of choosing a gift for a stranger. But she went to a repository for woman's work and discovered there a dainty bag of shamois leather embroidered with wreaths of forget me nots and emblazoned with the one word 'money,' to indicate its use as a secret purse to be worn about the neck in travelling.

It seemed an innocent little gift, but Fritz danced with delight when he saw it. Ah, the very thing! he cried. I would not write and ask her—no! but money and forget me nots, ah, it is the most beautiful reminder!

His wife, who had not thought of the matter in that light, protested and would have fain withheld the present, but Fritz was firm. It was sent to Germany at Christmas.

A few weeks later a substantial check check came in acknowledgement. The sister had indeed appreciated the situation.

Assisting the Memory.

Grandma Hollis pushed her spectacles far down on her nose, and looked over their tops with mild reproof.

'Now, Robert,' she said, convincingly, to her grandson, 'I don't like to hear you say you can't remember dates, because it's an easy thing to do if only you set about it the right way. Now when anybody asks me about the date of anything I just use my simple method, and it never fails; and I'm sure nobody could have a worse memory than I have, dear child.'

'What's your method, grandma?' asked the boy, ready for any suggestion which might help him in his weakest spot.

'Why, it's like this,' said Grandma Hollis, cheerfully. 'There's the Declaration of Independence. I should never be sure of the year that occurred if it weren't for my method; but I think of your mother's marriage—that was in 1889. I remember that because the date is on the little ring your father gave me, and I look at it two or three times a day.'

'Then I know she was twenty-one when she was married, because it was the same as that I was when I was married so that carries her back to—twenty-one from

eighty-nine leaves sixty eight. And she was eight years old at the time of the Centennial in Philadelphia. I know that, because I got her a twisted-wire figure-eight pin at the exposition—and she lost it.'

'Then you see eight added to sixty-eight makes seventy-six. That's 1876. Of course centennial means subtract a hundred, and there you have 1776, with no trouble at all, Robert!'

Grandma Hollis beamed with the joy of one who imparts rare wisdom, but Robert, although respectful, seemed depressed.

From the Church Tower.

Many characteristic customs prevail at Christmas in different parts of Europe, but nowhere is there a prettier one than that obtaining in the west coast town of Christiansand in Norway. There, at the stroke of seven on Juleaften, the waiting city hears from its cathedral spire the first notes of the Christmas chimes. Then every house door opens, and the people in awed silence, go out into the streets to listen to the music of the bells. After these sweet sounds there is a pause, while the crowds stand quiet under the starlit sky, waiting for something the touching effect of which can be appreciated only by one who knows the strong emotional influence of the place and time. This is the playing of the three Christmas hymns, by wind instruments, from the high church tower. As the notes ring out into the night many an upturned face shines with unconscious tears, while impulsively hand goes out to hand.

Juleaften supper is served at the usual hour, eight o'clock, and immemorial usage ordains that every true Norseman must that night eat risengrynsgrod, or rice pudding. After supper every house in the kingdom produces its Christmas tree. Decked simply with candles and cards, and with pretty or grotesque cakes in bright colored paper baskets, both of home make, these trees would hardly win the approval of American young people. Nor would the presents help matters much. Very unpretentious, as a rule, are these gifts, and their exchange is limited almost entirely to near relatives. A young girl rarely gives anything save some trifle of her own handiwork.

Nearly all ailments are more or less subject to diarrhoea and such complaints while feeding and as the period of their lives is the most delicate, mothers should not be without a bottle of Dr. J. D. Kellogg's Dysentery / Cholera. This medicine is a specific for such complaints and is highly spoken of by those who have used it. The proprietors claim it will cure any case of cholera or diarrhoea complaint.

Don't Make Fancy Things.

A southern woman says that it is difficult to have fairs in the south because the women have nothing to sell in them. Fancy articles make up the bulk of the goods sold in a fair, and the southern women are not given to this form of needle work.

'I don't know why it is,' says the woman, 'whether our houses are so much in the north that we don't need such things, but I know we don't make them, and I am very glad, for it seems to me a great waste of time.'

Its Power Grows With Age.—How many medicines fondly blazoned as panaceas for all human ills have come and gone since Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil was put on the market? Yet it remains, doing more good to humanity than any preparation more highly valued and extending its usefulness wider and wider and in a larger circle every year. It is the medicine of the masses.

Tess—I wouldn't make Bess my confidante if I were you. She told me that secret of yours.

Jess—But Jennie was my confidante. Bess must have been Jennie's confidante, or her confidante's confidante.

Tom's manager—Another was like this and we'd be stranded.

The Star—That is, if we don't have a hort run we'll have a long wait.

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Little Pouts.