

KEYSTONE STATE NEWS CONDENSED.

JUDGE MILLER'S LIBEL SUIT.

Editor Robbins, of Greenville, Held for Trial.

A. H. Robbins, editor of the Greenville Independent, a weekly paper, who is under arrest for criminal libel against Samuel H. Miller, judge of Mercer county, was given a hearing. The alleged libelous article appeared in the issue of October 23, 1906, and read to the effect that P. J. McFarland, who was then under indictment, had attempted to bribe the judge by presenting him with a blooded calf. The evidence was heard before Squire Lounsbury, who bound the defendant over to court under \$600 bail.

The Minister Resigned.

Rev. R. Leighton Gearhart has resigned the pastorate of the Reformed church of Bellefonte. Christmas evening, after delivering a talk at an entertainment for the Sunday school, the pastor, with his two daughters and son, attended a select dance given in the armory. The congregation at once put in circulation a petition calling for their pastor's resignation, but the latter yielded in his resignation voluntarily.

Burglars affected an entrance into the Methodist Episcopal parsonage at Beaver Falls, and ransacked the lower story at their leisure. The family of Rev. C. A. Holmes, D. D., who occupy the parsonage, were not aware that a call had been made by nocturnal visitors until they came down stairs next morning. The burglars lighted a lamp which they left burning, and had gone through the house systematically. They also helped themselves to a cake and other eatables. Three fine suits, three good overcoats and \$6 in money were missing.

Three old residents of Mercer county have died within the past few days. Mrs. Anna Kani, aged 90 years, passed away at the home of her son, Peter Glasen, Fronts corners. David S. Bestress, of Findley township, died at his home after a short illness, aged 79 years. He was a dentist for over 30 years, practicing most of his time in Mercer. The death of S. Bowman Alexander occurred at his home in Fairview township. Deceased was 67 years of age and was ex-treasurer of Mercer county.

The soft coal miners of Robertsdale and Woolvale, Hamilton county, numbering about 600 struck and the mines are idle. The Robertsdale men quit work because one of their number was assigned to a different mine team, and Woolvale miners struck through sympathy. The strike occurred just as the men began working on a new order, which would have kept them steadily employed.

The largest number of applicants for liquor licenses ever recorded in Washington county appeared at the clerk of court's office and filed their papers. There were six applicants from the town of Washington and forty-two from other sections of the county. These applications will be contested. Washington has not had a saloon for years.

Fire at DuBois did damage to the extent of \$15,000. The blaze started in Mrs. Moore's millinery store, and destroyed the grocery stock of A. Melick, the meat market of Hoffman Bros. and the grocery stock of Edward Daugherty. All had some insurance.

The congregation of the Reynoldsville Baptist church has issued a call to Rev. J. V. Cole, of Van Eton, N. Y., to preach for them for one year. Rev. Cole will take charge of the congregation about February 1.

The West Branch fishing and hunting club, of Lock Haven, has leased 15,000 acres of land containing many mountain streams, and 250,000 eggs have been secured to make experiments in hatching trout.

William Walter, 55 years of age, fell from a roof upon which he was working, in Liberty township, Westmoreland county, a distance of 30 feet, and was fatally injured.

The pupils of the high school at Clayville, who were suspended for refusing to take music lessons, have been reinstated after agreeing to obey the directors.

Charles Kearns, in jail at Monongahela, confessed to stealing a horse and other articles from William Lusk.

St. Mark's Episcopal church at Johnstown, has elected Rev. Francis H. Smith, of Pittsburgh, as pastor.

The postoffice at Bryn Mawr, was robbed of \$2,000 in cash and \$75 in stamps Saturday night.

The Stewart Iron company's furnace at Sharon, resume, giving employment to 150 men.

Twenty shops of the McKee & Bros. glass factory at Johnette, have started up.

John McDonnell's barn, near New Castle, was burned. Loss, \$1,000.

CONGRESSIONAL.

Important Measures Under Consideration in Both Houses.

SIXTEENTH DAY.

The vote in the House on the motion to order a third reading and engrossment of the Pacific funding bill, was 167 against to 103 for. This is equivalent to a direct vote and vote to the bill.

On motion of Mr. Horr (Rep., Mass.), the house bill to establish uniform law on the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States, was made the special order for Monday January 23.

Mr. Mills began his speech on the Cuban matter at 1:30 p. m., with thirteen Democratic senators and six Republicans in their seats.

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The homestead bill was further debated but a vote was not reached. Mr. Vilas attacked it as a measure giving \$35,000,000 of governmental money. Mr. Nelson, Rep., Minn., Mr. Allen and Mr. Peffer, Rep., Kan., spoke for the bill. Mr. Hill, Dem., N. Y., who has not often addressed the senate of late, spoke in favor of a law fixing four years as the term of fourth class postmasters.

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At a very dull day, devoted to passing bills of minor importance, the house plunged into a warm controversy over a bill to make oleomargarine and other imitations of dairy products subject to the laws of the states into which they are transported.

The senate today passed the measure known as the homestead bill. The effect of the bill is to open to settlement all public lands acquired from Indians, free of any payment to the government beyond the minor office fees, and to release from payment those who have heretofore settled on these lands. The number of acres involved, according to an estimate made by the commissioner of the general land office, is 32,222,541, which would have yielded the government, at the prices heretofore established, \$23,000,000.

It is brought out during the debate that the lands were mainly arid, and that those who had settled upon them were unable to make payment by reason of the scanty products of the soil.

The house by a vote of 125 to 96 passed the Great bill, subjecting oleomargarine and other imitation dairy products to the laws of the states into which they are transported.

The senate was not in session. In the House an interesting fight developed over a Senate bill granting a pension of \$100 per month to Mrs. Fannie Gibbon, widow of the late General Gibbon. Mr. Tracey, Republican, Missouri, offered an amendment reducing the amount to \$50 per month. This was warmly opposed by Mr. Curtis, Republican, New York, who made eulogistic references to the services of General Gibbon. Mr. Grosvenor, Republican, Ohio, was also against the reduction. He said in answer to Mr. Willis, Republican, Delaware, who had protested against discrimination in favor of the widows of distinguished officers, that 29 out of every 100 privates of the late war would vote to give Mrs. Gibbons the full amount. Mr. Wood, Republican, Illinois, opposed granting special rates of pension through the medium of private bills, on the ground that it was contrary to general law. The bill was passed.

A House bill to increase the pension of Clara L. Nichols, postmistress at Fort Lavenworth, and widow of Brevet Maj. Gen. W. A. Nichols, developed some slight opposition. In committee of the whole the House had reduced the amount of the increase to \$29, but on motion of Mr. Dalzell, Republican, Pennsylvania, the House, after listening to a eulogy of Gen. Nichols by that gentleman, made the amount \$75 and then passed the measure. A House bill granting a pension to Sarah A. Comly, widow of Major Clifton Comly, was also passed.

IN THE HOUSE ON SATURDAY. Eulogies were delivered on the late ex-Speaker Crisp. Among the speakers were Messrs. Dalzell, of Pennsylvania; Turner, of Georgia; Henderson, of Iowa, and DeArmond of Missouri.

Congressman Harvey introduced in the House a bill to break up the business of railway ticket brokerage by requiring that agents shall be provided with authority from the Interstate Commerce commission to sell tickets, and that unused portions of tickets must be redeemed by the roads issuing them.

The Labor World.

Mexico has women street cleaners. Samuel Gompers was born in London. In Mexico miners get fifty cents a day. Detroit (Mich.) servant girls will organize. Organization has increased wages in Japan. Some New York gold beaters got \$7.53 a week.

Michigan vehicle makers average \$1.30 a day. Washington City has a union of colored bottlers.

In four years there has not been a labor organization that has not lost members except the cigarmakers.

English coal miners will demand ten per cent advance.

There are over 2000 enrolled members of the new American Longshoremen's Union.

The International Union of Ship Dock and River Workers has a membership of 150,000.

The Kansas City (Mo.) Council has ordered the eight-hour day to be introduced in city work.

Minneapolis (Minn.) waiters have inaugurated a series of open social and educational meetings.

The last day of the past year saw over 150,000 wage earners out of work in New York City.

The Building Trades Council of Cleveland, Ohio, has decided to demand an eight-hour day for all trades connected with that organization on and after April 1.

An eight-hour agitation meeting of gigantic proportions is to be held in Boston on Washington's Birthday.

There are over 10,000 brass workers in New York City, and fully one-half of them wear the greater part of the last year.

The Detroit Railway employes have adopted a rule that in future promotional work be made on the basis of age in the service.

Among the active soldiers and the officers of the State railways in India insubordination is reported, and a railway strike has been begun in India.

AN OSTRICH CAMP.

ONE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S LITTLE-KNOWN INDUSTRIES.

Rearing the Ungainly Birds For Their Beautiful Feathers—They Are Quite Savage at Times—Clipping an Ostrich.

THE rearing of ostriches for the sake of their beautiful feathers is an industry of which little is known. An attempt has lately been made to import the birds into the United States for breeding purposes, but it has not yet seriously interfered with the industry in South Africa, where the ostrich is at home.

Let me give you some sort of an idea of the country in which the ostrich lives. It is a country unlike any other on the globe. The general character is flat and sandy, relieved only by long, low, rocky sierras. These mountain ranges are the salvation of the landscape. Their craggy outlines are carved into a thousand abrupt and striking forms, their heads are constantly haunted by low lying clouds of vapor, which the contending sun and wind draw together and disperse. Their sides are hollowed into ravines, or "kloofs," and painted by the clear distance into a perfect jigsaw of changing hues. The apparently parched and sandy flats are covered by different varieties of dwarf bush, which are nibbled at by the sheep.

A dry and arid prospect, and it is hard to conceive every inch of it is loaded below with vegetable life ready to shoot after the rains of spring into a wealth of verdant grasses. Here and there dotted about on these flats can be seen the white farm-buildings nesting among the trees—an oasis in the desert, in fact. These green spots can be seen for miles away, with the white-washed buildings glittering in the sun. Foliage is only to be seen around the homesteads and occasionally at an isolated fountain. The velvet all round is cheerless and naked, without so much as a rag of vegetation to cover it, and the eye hungers for a tree; the bones or stones stick painfully out, a sight for the geologist, not the artist.

You arrive at the homestead, a square, red-brick building, with a sign of relief, and glad to be out of the blinding glare and sandy plain. On every homestead the same familiar sights meet the eye. On the one side of the house stand the kraals; on the other, the shed and wagon-house. In front stands the dam, adjoining the vegetable garden and lands, with farther away the camp. Behind the house are the chaff-house, tramp-floor, and butcher's shop, where the natives are rationed. In the camp run the large stock, cattle, ostriches, and horses; and on the flats and mountains the sheep and goats.

A well fenced and secure inclosure is a luxury in the colony, and is only to be met with on the wealthier farms, the owners of which can afford to keep them in repair, and to place them in stock of the more expensive kinds. Every ostrich farmer has his camp, which varies in size considerably, from 3000 to 8000 acres, and in it he keeps his 300 or 500 birds, as well as a few cattle and horses. A camp is



OSTRICH ON NEST.

always selected as being the best piece of grazing ground on the farm, and capable of holding more stock in proportion than any other part of the farm. Here the bird remain year in and year out, and are only collected and brought together, on the average, once every four months.

These occasions are, let us say, in June, to pluck prime feathers. By these we mean the long whites, numbering from eighteen to twenty in each wing, eight or nine fancy feathers, and a few long blacks, all taken at the same time. Four months later the stumps of these feathers are drawn out, and two months later again—that is, six months after the primes—the short blacks and tail feathers are taken. Of these it is impossible to give any accurate number. As a rule, you pluck as many as possible without inflicting pain on the bird, and at the same time leaving enough to keep out the cold.



AN OSTRICH FARM IN CAPE COLONY.

An ostrich, like most other animals, in its wild state is terribly afraid of man or of any unfamiliar sight, and flees at the appearance of anything new to its ken. When domesticated it becomes docile, and after a time assumes a position of authority and becomes master of the situation. From June up to September, or, in fact, till Christmas, thousands of chicks are reared every year, and thousands meet with death every year from some form of accident. Chicks up to twelve months old die from various maladies, but seldom are they full grown are they the victims of any sickness, death usually resulting from a broken leg, killed

fighting, or from scarcity of food in times of drought. The nest of the ostrich is a very crude affair, consisting simply of a round hollow carved out in the sandy ground. Sometimes the female bird may be seen scratching in the ground preparatory to laying her first egg; but this is not often the case, the hollow generally being made by the con-



A TROOP OF OSTRICHES IN THE "CAMP."

tinuous sitting of the birds on the one spot. One pair of birds will lay from ten to twenty eggs; but, as is often the case, three or four birds will lay in the one nest, thus making the number of eggs up to seventy or eighty. These, of course, have to be weeded out, as a bird cannot comfortably cover more than sixteen eggs, the remainder being thrown on one side and left to decay.

Forty-four days is the recognized time to allow for hatching. When a nest is hatched out the family are taken out of the camp, and brought to the homestead to be tamed, where they come in continual contact with the farm hands, and are housed at night out of the reach of wild animals. During the winter they will do well, but in winter, when food becomes scarcer, must be fed morning and evening on barley or rape.



CLIPPING WITH BAG ON HEAD OF OSTRICH.

It is during the breeding season that the male becomes so savage, and his note of defiance—"brooming," as the Dutch call it—is heard night and day. The bird inflates his neck in a cobra-like fashion and gives utterance to three deep roars. The first two are short, but the third very prolonged. Lion-hunters all agree in asserting that the roar of the king of beasts and the most foolish of birds resemble one another almost exactly. When the birds are properly savage they become a great source of amusement—or, as some think, of danger. Certainly, to be overtaken all on a sudden without time for preparation by a cheery bird is one of the greatest ills flesh is heir to, and might result disastrously to the uninitiated; but old hands are always all there on an emergency.

Undoubtedly the best weapon—barring a wire fence—is a good stout stick or blunt pitchfork. As a rule, if a bird means to have your life or die in the attempt, he charges from about thirty yards, when you receive him at the bayonet's point. He rushes at you with flashing eye, looking the very embodiment of fury. Drawing himself up to a height of ten feet or more, with wings outstretched and hissing like a cobra, he makes four or five strikes. You retreat a pace or two, so as to avoid the fork piercing through his neck, and hold him off at arm's length till he learns that his efforts are useless. Drawing the fork sharply away, you strike him a blow on the neck, rendering him insensible and taking away his breath. This quiets him for a while, till he recovers from his bewilderment and makes a fresh charge, when the fork is again presented.

demeanor is a very mild affair compared to the male's. Collecting birds for plucking is always a great day on the farm. Orders are given overnight to the Kafirs and Hottentots to catch every available riding horse and have them saddled up and ready next morning at sunrise. This is done, and every "boy" on the farm who can find a horse is mounted,



TWO-HEADED SNAKE.

and a regular cavalcade enters the camp, under the superintendence of "De Boss van de Ploaats"—the master of the farm. They split up into parties of two each, and start off in different directions to drive up the birds from the remote spots to which they have wandered. Warfare, of course, is freely indulged in. It is immaterial to an ostrich if there be one or fifty against him, he fights just as merrily.

There exists a traveler's tale at home that, as soon as an ostrich catches sight of a human being, he turns tail and bolts in an opposite direction to hide his head in the sand. Another fallacy, equally devoid of foundation, is the belief that the female leaves her eggs in the sand to be hatched out in the sun. This is not so. The male and female sit alternately for forty-four days: the male at night, the female during the daytime. As an article of food an ostrich egg is, to my taste, the most nauseous of dishes, and far more suitable as an effective weapon in Chinese and political warfare than to grace a breakfast table.

From all one had heard previous to becoming oneself an owner of ostriches, the actual plucking of the birds is very uninteresting and disappointing. The birds are all huddled together in a kraal—when every bird becomes as meek as a lamb—and are caught one by one; a bag or stocking is placed over the head and neck, while two experienced natives clip the feathers. During winter the birds must be attended to and carefully watched, as sometimes the weather is very inclement for weeks together—the thermometer often registering ten degrees of frost—and birds are apt to fall off in condition. If a bird once begins to sink in condition, the greatest difficulty is experienced in getting him right again, and often no amount of extra feeding will pull him through.—Strand Magazine.

Cost of War.

According to the estimates of German and French statisticians the wars of the last forty years have cost the Nations engaged in them, in money alone, the almost inconceivable sum of \$13,000,000,000. Of this amount France has paid nearly \$3,500,000,000 as the cost of her war with Prussia.

The gross debts of Boston at the end of November 1896, footed up to \$39,000,000.

A NEW RAILROAD KING.

The Wealthiest American Woman's Son to Become a Magnate in the Southwest.



E. H. R. Green, President of the Texas Midland Railway, will soon be one of the most important railway magnates in the Southwest. Mr. Green's wealthy mother, Mrs. Betty Green, of New York, is engineering the deal which will add to her son's power. The Midland Road, of which Mr. Green is President, runs from Ennis to Paris, and if the plans which Mrs. Green has under way succeed a consolidation of interests will be effected by which a new trunk line between St. Louis and Galveston will be formed and Mr. Green become a most important factor in Southwestern railroad affairs. Mrs. Green is the wealthiest woman in the United States. She has large railroad interests in the South and other parts of the country, and her fortune is estimated at anywhere from \$25,000,000 to \$40,000,000. E. H. R. Green is her only son.

Projects of a Queer Genius.

Colonel D. W. Hughes is a queer genius who lives in Audrain County, Missouri. He has invented many contrivances of one sort or another in the course of his wandering career, the most important of which is a corn-planting machine. Out of this he made considerable money, but his hopes of a fortune are now founded on an instrument which, by means of X rays, perhaps, will not only reveal the culinary value of egg, but also the gender of their embryonic occupants. Both these things, the colonel says, his invention will do with speed and certainty, and he expects to sell one of the new machines to every raiser of poultry and every dealer in eggs in the country.

Tomb of the First Harrison.

The tomb of General William Henry Harrison near North Bend, on the Ohio River, is soon to be remodeled. The cost of the improvement is estimated at \$5000 and only Indiana marble is to be used. The old tomb, which was built in the latter part of the forties, has for some years been the subject of much comment. It is on the crest of a beautiful knoll commanding a view of the lovely Ohio and the blue Kentucky hills beyond. Nature has invested the spot with romantic charms, and when the tomb is completed it will add a fresh element of interest to the scene.—Atlanta Constitution.

A Freak That Fights With Itself.

A two-headed snake, hog-nosed—Heterodon Simus—has come from Central America into the possession of E. C. Fischer. It is four months old, of a brownish green color, and not yet a foot long.



TWO-HEADED SNAKE.

Each head has apparently a separate will. The heads fight each other. They must be fed with milk, raw beef and blood at one time, or there is war. Often the two heads are friendly and play with each other. The little monstrosity has much strength for its age and size. Its owner keeps it in a glass case. It likes the warmth of the sun, but holds the light in horror.—New York World.

Income of Chinese Gardeners.

Some Chinese gardeners tell with apparent truthfulness of making \$1000 a year apiece out of their business. Vegetables in five and ten cent lots seems small business, but it counts in the course of a year. There are ten or a dozen wagons making regular trips into Tulare, and they gather up a good deal of coin.—Tulare (Cal.) Register.

The Queen of England's descendants either now occupy or will in due course sit upon seven thrones, namely, those of the British Empire, the Russian Empire, the German Empire, the Kingdom of Greece, the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, the Grand Duchy of Hesse and the Duchy of Saxe-Meiningen.