

# Branching Out

The American Agent Is Active In the Old Country---British Manufacturers Warned.

Yankees Capture the Iron Markets—Uncle Sam Selling Steel Rails to Russia—Retirement of the "Hanging Judge"—Britain and the Nicaragua Canal—Curious Request Credited to the Queen—Christmas Pantomime.

London, Dec. 26.—It is no exaggeration to assert that the foremost topic compelling attention in Europe in general and in Great Britain in particular, overshadowing the dreary broils of domestic politics, is the remarkable, aggressive commercial prosperity which the United States is manifesting. Hardly a newspaper review or a public speaker during the past month has failed to notice with what giant strides America is coming into the first place in the alignment of the powers. It is certainly the chief object of conversation on Lombard street and on the continental bourses.

**NEW YORK FORGING AHEAD.**  
The manager of one of the greatest London banks recently drew an American business man into his private office and said in awestruck tones: "This is the first time in the history of finance that New York has been in a position to dictate money rates to London, Berlin and Paris."

The bank manager added that London's purchases of American securities were the heaviest-weight compared with the balances of trade in New York's favor.

**MR. BRYCE GIVES WARNING.**  
Mr. James Bryce, in a speech before the Leicester Chamber of Commerce, sounded a warning to British manufacturers. He pointed out that the business of the United States was developing along many important lines which Great Britain, he added, should have held against all competitors. Mr. Bryce unhesitatingly asserted that the United States could produce raw materials cheaper than Great Britain, and said he saw no possibility of opening new markets except in China.

**CAPTURED THE IRON MARKETS.**  
Great Britain seems to have become reconciled to the capture of the iron markets by the United States. American firms are uniformly successful in bidding against the British firms. The Carnegie Company and the Illinois Steel Company have opened extensive offices in London, and are making inroads upon the British preserves.

**UNCLE SAM HUSTLING.**  
A dispatch from Berlin says it is a fact that the Russian Government has ordered 80,000 tons of American rails, and the prospect of American competition for the contracts in connection with Russia's extensive railroad plans has alarmed manufacturers there and elsewhere. Consuls assert that all Europe is swarming as never before with the agents of American manufacturers of steel, street railroads, electrical apparatus and all kinds of machinery, who are leading the commercial invasion.

**A RUSSIAN LOAN.**  
The reports of attempts to float a Russian loan in New York have been received skeptically here.

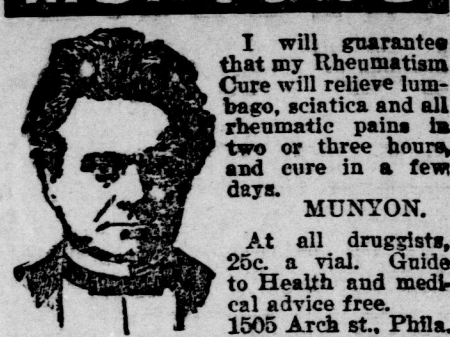
Several financiers have told representatives of the Associated Press that Russia tried to raise money in London, Paris, Berlin and Amsterdam, and that she seems to have turned to the United States as a forlorn hope, possibly with the hope of reaping incidental political advantages. But it is admitted that it is a question of a short time when capitalists will have to reckon with New York as a competitor in high finance.

The Daily Chronicle comments upon the fact that American capitalists "have the courage of their financial opinions if they think they know the European situation better than the capitalists of the old world."

**THE HANGING JUDGE.**  
Judge Hawkins, a ruddy, keen-eyed old gentleman of sporting proclivities, is the largest personage in the public eye, since the announcement of his retirement from the bench on Dec. 19. The newspapers and clubs teem with anecdotes of his sharp temper, kind heart and quick wit. His departure from the bench was as eccentric as his care upon it. It has been said that he adjourned court after recording the verdict in his last case, and walked out, cutting off the attorney's attempts at the customary valedictory laudations with the remark, "No speeches." His popularity was greater with the public than with the profession, the people believing that in spite of his irascibility and his habit of violently taking sides, he seasoned his judgments with the sense of common sense. The

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a tax on the profession or trade in which they are engaged will be entitled to vote. Judges of a class, which considers commercial interests to be elected during December and women will be allowed to vote for them, an Roubais, although there are several hundred women entitled to suffrage, adds Mr. Atwell, it is a remarkable fact that not one has yet inscribed her name.

The women of Turcoing, an adjoining town, seem to be more progressive, as twenty have complied with the necessary formalities. French women as a rule are not enthusiastic concerning the right of suffrage.

**8-9 COMMENT.** **ATJ—J—J—**  
**TOOK A HINT FROM WILLIAM.**  
Berlin, Dec. 25.—The result of the trial of Frank Knaak, of New York, who was acquitted of the charge of referring to Emperor William as a "blockhead," on the ground that he was in no position to realize his offense, came as a great surprise, even to counsel for the defense, as the testimony was precisely similar to that of the majority of such cases which have ended in conviction. The president judge, Herr Denso, convicted Knaak, the American horseman charged with "ringing" the mare Bethel on the German turf, and sentenced him to nine months' imprisonment and to a fine of 1,000 marks. Judge Denso is considered to be very severe and learned, and in the view of the very best authority for saying that the acquittal and unusual leniency shown Mr. Knaak were due to a hint from Emperor William that his acquittal, if legally possible, would be appreciated by his majesty and by the German Government.

**GERMAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS.**  
The officials of the United States embassy generally express the opinion that the German Government sincerely desires to improve its relations with the United States, and sees indications pointing to a successful issue of these efforts, though the bills simultaneously introduced in the House of Representatives and in the Senate at Washington, foreshadowing retaliation, have been prevented in spite of the indignation by the governmental press, while the Liberal, and especially the commercial papers, have unanimously expressed fears that the legislative action of both sides will result in a regular tariff war.

The Vorwarts says: "The greed of the agrarians has disturbed our relations with America for years past. Under the pretext of protecting the health of the German people, the importation of American products has been prevented in spite of the treaties." Continuing, the Vorwarts demonstrates that German exports of sugar, textiles and wines to the United States are worth 18,000,000 marks, and says: "As the financially weaker of the two, Germany will undoubtedly be the loser. The agrarians ignore this. Provided the enhanced food prices flow into their pockets, they snap their fingers at the hungry masses."

The Boersens Courier, a leading commercial organ, says: "It is evident that the United States are preparing for a commercial war with Germany, which the German agrarians seem to regard as a trifling matter. We hope the Berlin and Washington Governments are more conscious of their responsibility. We fear the German export trade will have to pay the score the federation of husbandry has run up."

The agrarians are jubilant at the prospect of a tariff war, which has been their dearest aim for years. A number of insulting articles have been published in their newspapers deriding the

**CIGARMAKERS IN HAVANA**  
Are a Very Independent Class of Men.

**Have No Unions, but Manage to Bring the Bosses to Time Easily.**  
Havana, Dec. 25.—There are 18,000 cigarmakers in Havana. They have no union, and are not affiliated with any organization. Once upon a time they organized a union, but it died young. Although not organized they earn good wages, and they will strike as quickly as any organized workmen in the United States if things in the shops are not going to suit them. What is more, they can bring the bosses to their terms. There is no question about it, for they have done so in the past. The fact that they can do it without a union is, however, no argument against a union. There are reasons why it is not.

**SPANISH STEADFAST WORKERS.**  
While the whole number in the city is 18,000, probably not more than half that number are steady workers. The rest are men who work irregularly. Some of them have not the skill to make fine cigars. Others cannot be depended upon to work only when the factories are rushed with orders, and there are no more steady hands to hire. In point of skill there is no difference between the Spanish and the Cuban cigarmakers. The Spanish cigarmaker is, however, said as a rule to work more days in a year than the Cuban.

Most of the shop foremen are Spaniards. A reason probably why there are so many Spanish foremen is that before English and German syndicates bought up most of the large cigar factories in Havana, the owners were Spaniards. They not unreasonably gave positions of responsibility in their factories to their own countrymen. The Spanish foremen and the Cuban cigarmakers have generally gotten on very well.

Inasmuch as the finest cigars in the world are made in Havana, the best cigarmakers in the universe work here.

He must be an artist at his trade who can roll cigars that will suit kings and princes and other royal smokers. Persons of Europe—or even cigars that sell for \$1 each in the United States. The cigarmaker who can roll these kinds of cigars never has to hunt for a situation. He can take a vacation any time he pleases and when he feels like settling down to work again he can find an opening in any big factory. He commands a centen a day, or \$5 30 in Spanish gold, and his board.

**ONLY GOLD GOES FOR PAY.**  
All factories pay their cigarmakers in Spanish gold. If they united to pay in silver there would be a strike right away. The bosses tried it once this year. During the four months of the blockade mighty little gold was to be had. The cigar manufacturers notified their men that they would have to shut down unless silver was accepted for wages. The men agreed to take silver. When the blockade was raised the bosses gave notice that they were going to continue paying wages in silver. The men in most of the factories said they would strike. They had been living on half-fare during the blockade, half-starving, and they would stand it a while longer. The bosses gave in. They are paying wages still in Spanish gold.

**HAVANA'S DIRTY KITCHENS.**  
It may strike American cigarmakers as odd that manufacturers should board their cigarmakers. They do it in many factories here. Not all the men, however, are boarded in any factory. Only the most unskilled at a rule are boarded and provided with sleeping quarters. It does not hurt the sanitary condition of a factory, because workmen eat and sleep in it. One Havana cigar manufacturer, who is worth several million dollars, lives with his family in a part of the building where he has his factory. It can be said for Havana's cigar factories that they are by far the cleanest buildings in the city.

There are cigars in Havana with marble floors and glass chandeliers, and where everything that is expected to meet the eyes of guests is very expensive. The guest will be wise who doesn't peep into the kitchen. It is one of the singular things of the country that public conveniences, which in hotels or cafes in the United States are placed in the basement or some such place, are here invariably located as near as possible to the kitchen. An American, after a tour of a Havana cigar factory, will enjoy a Havana cigar better than ever before, for the notion will be gone—if he ever had it—that Havana cigars are made by dirty workmen and in the midst of filthy surroundings.

**PRETTY EXPENSIVE SMOKES.**  
By \$1 cigars are meant cigars that cost dealers in the United States \$1,000 per 1,000. The cost of making them is about \$110 per 1,000. That is what the cigarmaker gets. He may make 50 or 70 in a day. He makes 50 if it isn't a bad day's work. Cigars that have a very large size in the United States are made by men who get \$32 per 1,000. Prices of fine grades run from that figure up, but some grades are made cheaper. The men who pack the fine grades of cigars, and who can distinguish shades where the ordinary eye could see no difference, gets as high as \$35 a week, while men who select the tobacco for the cigarmakers get from \$15 to \$24 a week. \$24 on the whole. Havana cigarmakers are pretty well paid. They live and dress well.

With the reputation for excellency that Havana cigars have the world over, manufacturers find it to their interest to hold the goodwill of the cigarmakers. They get enough for their cigars so they can afford to pay good wages. Every cigar is hand-made. No molds are made. There are no restrictions as to the number of cigars a man can employ in a shop. Few manufacturers try to keep down their pay roll by hiring more than the proportionate number of boys that work in shops in the northern states.

**POINTERS FOR CIGARMAKERS.**  
Now that so many eyes in the United States are turned towards Cuba many American cigarmakers who learned their trade in American shops may be thinking of coming down here and seeking employment in Havana shops. There are a few things they must bear in mind. Havana cigars are all made in what is known as Spanish styles. A first-class United States cigarmaker could not enter a Havana shop and do himself justice. They make cigars here without binders, and they roll them differently than in American shops. A bright American cigarmaker might, however, after some weeks of practice and observation in Havana shops, catch on to the style.

There are a small number of cigarmakers who learned their trade in either Germany or the United States. They have learned the Spanish style. Cigarmakers can individually determine for themselves whether they can change the style of making cigars that they learned in American factories, and that they have always followed. As for the chances for learning the Spanish method—well they might find some and then again they might not. If a man has worked 10 or 15 years making cigars a certain way he can determine for himself whether he can change to a new way.

During Gen. Weyler's rule some of the Havana cigar manufacturers combined to reduce wages. The men began to talk strike. Gen. Weyler heard of their talk. He notified the manufacturers that he had trouble enough on his hands without having an army of striking cigarmakers loose on the town. If the manufacturers didn't head off the strike he would soak them with a new and increased rate of taxation. The manufacturers concluded to continue the old rate of wages. There was no strike.

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