

Secular News

DOMESTIC.

Springfield Riot Leader Acquitted.—

After sixteen hours' deliberation the jury in the case of Abe Raymer, alleged mob leader at Springfield, Ill., charged with destruction of property during the recent riots, returned a verdict of not guilty. Raymer previously had been acquitted of murder in connection with the lynching of W. K. Donnigan, an aged negro. Evidence was submitted that Raymer was with the mob. The instructions of the court were that if the evidence showed Raymer was with the mob he should be found guilty. This acquittal is taken to mean that convictions cannot be obtained in the remaining riot cases. There are scores of cases, involving 115 indictments; yet to be tried.

A Chinese-American Arbitration Treaty was signed recently. It provides for the settlement by arbitration of all questions excepting those involving national honor, private interests or third parties. It is to remain in force for five years. This country recently executed a similar treaty with Japan.

The Preliminary Cotton Report of the Census Bureau for the year ending August 31, 1908, showed that during the period covered, the mills of the South consumed 2,256,613 bales, against 2,410,993 bales in 1906-'07, or a falling off of only 154,380 bales (6.4 per cent.) whereas, in the same interval, Northern establishments exhibited a decline of 255,118 bales (9.9 per cent.).

Prohibition in Florida.—Several recent county elections in Florida leave thirty-seven of its forty-six counties in the dry column. There are now only fifteen saloon towns and cities in that State. Most of these are on the coast, and all but a few of them can only be relieved of the saloon by State prohibition.

Patents in the United States.—The 900,000th patent from the United States Patent Office was issued on October 10. The patent is an improvement on traveling stairs, such as are used in hotels and other large buildings. The Patent Commissioner estimates that the one-millionth patent will be reached in 1911. He calls attention to the fact that, notwithstanding this is among the newest of nations, and is only one among many, the total of patents issued by the United States is not far below the total for all other countries for all time.

The Bering Sea Fleet.—The work of the Bering Sea fleet this year has been exceptional. Besides guarding the seal islands and territorial waters and preventing raids, it has done much other work of both scientific and humanitarian character. The fleet consists of the five revenue cutters, "Thetis," "Bear," "Perry," "McCulloch" and "Rush." The "Perry" has completed an important investigation of the condition of the natives along the Aleutian island chain as far west as Attu; the "McCulloch" went to the relief of vessels caught in the ice in the neighborhood of Nome; and the "Rush" made an important survey of the Bogoslof volcano. In the Arctic the "Thetis" has done valuable scientific work. The combined fleet has cruised more than sixty thousand miles, boarded twenty-seven of the twenty-eight Japanese sealers engaged in poaching in American territorial waters, rendered assistance to distressed vessels and supplied many native villages with food, clothing and medical and surgical treatment and supplies.

Reward Offered for Night-Riders.—Governor Willson on October 12, offered \$500 for the arrest and conviction of any member of the mob that massacred the negro family at Hickman, Ky., a few weeks ago. In his proclamation the Governor said that such crimes threaten "what we have left of civilization."

New Stamp Issue.—The Bureau of Engraving and Printing has completed designs suggested by Postmaster General Meyer for a new issue of United States postage stamps. The new stamps will be of the following denominations: One, two, three, four, five, six, eight, ten, fifteen, and fifty cents and \$1. The \$2 and \$5 denominations now in use will not be reprinted. The two-cent stamp will be first distributed some time in November. The new issue has been designed with the object of obtaining the greatest simplicity commensurate with artistic results. The profile has been taken in each instance instead of a full view,

giving a bas-relief effect. All the stamps are of a similar design, containing a head in an ellipse, the only decoration being laurel leaves on either side of the ellipse.

Governor Haskell Sues Hearst.—After a dramatic scene on a railway train at Omaha, Nebraska, on October 16, in which the door of his stateroom was burst open by a Deputy Sheriff, William Randolph Hearst, the millionaire editor, was served with papers notifying him that suit for \$600,000 had been brought against him for slander and libel by Gov. Charles N. Haskell, of Oklahoma. The sheriff was refused admittance by Mrs. Hearst, who stated that her husband had gone to send a telegram. The sheriff broke open the door with his shoulder and found Mr. Hearst within.

Train Wrecked in Michigan.—Fifteen people lost their lives on October 16, in the burning of the Detroit and Mackinaw relief train, which was carrying the inhabitants of the little village of Metz, twenty-three miles north of Alpena, Mich., to safety from the forest fires which were sweeping away their homes. The train was ditched by spreading rails a few miles south of Metz, and the terrified refugees were forced to abandon the cars and rush for safety either down the track, with burning forests on either side, or into the plowed fields near the siding. Eleven of the victims were women and children who were unable to escape from the wreckage before the flames overpowered them. Two of the men victims were members of the train crew.

American Balloon Explodes.—The American Balloon "Conqueror," which started on October 11, at Berlin, in the third international balloon race for the James Gordon Bennett cup exploded a few minutes after the start. When the silk bag split and released the gas the balloon was 4,000 feet above the earth. For half the distance the car and its two occupants fell with terrific speed and a horrible death seemed to await them in sight of 80,000 persons who had gathered. The bag, however, suddenly filled with air and acted as a parachute, let them down to earth with slight injuries. They were hurled as they landed through an open window of a house, greatly surprising the occupant. Twenty-three balloons participated in the race, representing Great Britain, France, Germany, the United States, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium and Spain. The official award has not yet been made, but the English balloon "Banshee" is regarded as winner. The French balloon "Condor" is second and the Belgian "Belgica" third.

Facts About Fire.—The eighth annual fire report of the State of Ohio gives the number of fires in that State for 1907 as 4,534—a decrease of 2,477 from 1901. The daily fire waste for the past year has been \$19,387. Only about one in six of the buildings fired was destroyed. The causes are enumerated as "Adjoining fire," "Ashes against wood," "Burning rubbish," "Chimney soot burning," "Defective flue," "Electric wire," "Overheated stove," "Sparks," and "Lightning." The author of the report calls attention to the fact that of the annual fire waste, now about seven million dollars, nearly all is preventable. He insists that the parlor-match should be outlawed, and points, for justification, to the loss of 534 buildings and the death of thirty children from this cause alone. He recommends that the "safety" match, which can be lighted only by scratching it on the box in which it comes, be adopted everywhere.

Torpedo Boat Destroyers for U. S.—The United States Government is receiving bids for the construction of the ten torpedo boat destroyers. Every one of these boats is to be at least four knots faster than the "Lusitania." They are to be equipped with apparatus for

burning oil as well as coal. These vessels are to cost \$800,000 each, and for every knot that the vessels lose on any of their trial trips under the contract speed the builders will have to forfeit \$50,000 of the contract price to the Government.