

Current Topics

Old Fairbanks House.

One must search far and wide to find a more curious and interesting old dwelling than the ancient Fairbanks house in the town of Dedham, a few miles from Boston. This old house was built by one Jonathan Fairbanks in the year 1636, and it has been the Mecca of hundreds of pilgrims interested in the architecture of more than 250 years ago. It is easy to people the house with the ghosts of the men and women who have lived and died beneath its roof. One regrets that so little is known about the history of the old house, but no written history could add to the picturesqueness of its appearance. Generation after generation of the Fairbanks family have occupied the old house. Indeed, it has never been occupied by any one but descendants of its builder.



AN ANCIENT HABITATION.

It came near being destroyed by fire in the spring of the year 1893, when it was struck by a freaky shaft of lightning that killed a dog lying under a bed on which Miss Rebecca Fairbanks was lying. Miss Fairbanks herself received no worse injury than a shock to her nervous system.

New Haven's Fine Old Elms.

New Haven, the "City of Elms," has been so neglectful of her fine old trees that in a few years the best of them will be gone. In violation of law, horses are hitched to them, and they know the bark so that the trees practically are girdled. Insects destroy the leaves and bark, and the pavements coming so close to the trees keep out the moisture which is absolutely necessary to the life of the trees, and keep in the poisonous gases from the gas and sewer pipes. More than 20 per cent of these trees, which have been the pride of New Haven for two centuries, have died in the last fifteen years, or else are so damaged now that their early death is certain. For ten years the subject has been causing serious concern in the city, yet nothing positive has yet been done looking to the certain preservation of these elms.

St. Paul Sails for Repairs.

The American liner St. Paul is now at the Cramps' yard at Philadelphia, for repairs. It will take months to replace her starboard engines and propeller, which were ruined when she struck a submerged derelict in midocean. An examination of the hull by the Cramps at the navy yard dock verified the report of Naval Constructor Bowles that neither the hull nor the rudder had been injured, but the damage to the three engines connected with the starboard propeller was irreparable.



The working parts of the St. Paul's machinery on the starboard were torn apart," said Charles H. Cramp. "Everything has the appearance of having been subjected to a tremendous pressure."

The Butterfly Fad.

The latest fad of women, delicate little paintings on the shoulders when in evening dress, was started by the Gaiety Girls, who now set the London styles. Two of them appeared at a supper party given by a spendthrift young earl at the Lyric club dressed in extreme décolleté gowns, and on each



shoulder was a delicately painted, small but gorgeous hued butterfly. The work was exquisitely done by a prominent water color artist.

Up Goes Pork.

The price of beef, pork and mutton has been put up one cent a pound by the beef trust. This trust controls the price of meats throughout the entire country, and one cent a pound will pay the trust an increase profit of \$15,000,000 on beef alone, \$20,000,000 on pork and \$4,000,000 on mutton, making a total addition to the profits of the trust of \$39,000,000 a year.

Queen Draga Reported Dead.

Queen Draga of Serbia, whose marriage to the young King Alexander a few months ago caused such a sensation, has died of fever. The death of Draga Maschin is regarded by many here as a fitting, if tragic, climax to a strange romance. She was a lady in waiting to Queen Natalie when the young king fell in love with her. Natalie was indignant at the presumption of her waiting woman in receiving the attentions of her son. When Alexander publicly announced his betrothal to Mme. Maschin the ministry resigned, and ex-King Milan threw up his position as commander-in-chief of the army and left the country. Nevertheless the people rejoiced in their king's choice and the nuptials were celebrated by fetes throughout the country. Since their marriage Milan is reported to have plotted to kidnap Alexander and to have him confined in a madhouse. More recently it was reported that King Alexander had declared he was tired of his wife and would divorce her.



Queen Draga.

Crime and Cold Weather.

When cold weather begins street robberies suddenly become frequent. Either there is an influx of hard cases from the country to the city when the life of the tramp becomes chilly and disagreeable, or the shorter days give more hours to footpads in which to work. It so happens that nearly every year there is about this time what is popularly called an "epidemic" or "carnival of crime." Men and women are stopped on the streets and forced by threats of violence to give up their property. The community takes alarm, asserts that there never was so much crime before, and denounces the police force for its inefficiency.

The Alexandrouna Hat.

This bewitchingly pretty hat has been christened in Paris the Alexandrouna, a new French compliment, apparently to the cherished Russian alliance. At all events, this is the style par excellence of the moment, and young women are wearing this shape to the exclusion of all others. The example photographed here is of fashions of roses velvet, faced with masses of close folded cream chiffon, the top overlaid with yellow lace, and there is a mass of yellow and bluish roses under the left brim.



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To Become a Baptist.

Henry C. Smith, the successful congressional candidate in the Second Michigan district, may be credited with having set a new political fashion. Whether it will become a favorite with candidates remains to be seen. Mr. Smith's district is a somewhat close one. This little southern Michigan hamlet has been noted for its piety as well as its politics. Its religion apparently is Baptist. In one of his meetings there Congressman Smith promised his audience that if Woodstock went for him he would join the church by immersion. It is probable he never dreamed that he would be called upon to redeem his promise, as Woodstock was supposed to be hopelessly against his party. When the votes were counted Smith was found to have 37 plurality. Woodstock has unanimously and enthusiastically extended the right hand of fellowship to Brother Smith. A delegation of the villagers has waited upon him and notified him they expect him to keep his promise, and he has informed them he will do so with the single condition that the interesting event shall not take place until warmer weather arrives. In anticipation of his immersion the ladies of the village are making him a handsome baptismal robe, and undoubtedly great numbers of the population of his district will be in attendance to congratulate him when he enters the fold.

Jews and Agriculture.

Max Schoenfeld, a former Philadelphia, but now a resident of Rorschach, Switzerland, has just given \$10,000 to the national farm school at Doylestown, Pa. The money is to be used in the purchase of farms, which are to be rented to graduates of the school. They will thus have an opportunity of demonstrating the value of whatever instruction they have received and the capability of Jewish youth to support himself by means of agriculture.

In the Public Eye

To Aid Humanity.

Daniel Ostris, a Greek millionaire residing in Paris, has instituted a prize on the lines laid down by Mr. Nobel, though his offer is for Frenchmen only, except in a Paris exposition year, when it becomes universal. He has set aside a sum to be awarded every three years in perpetuity to the discoverer, inventor or producer of the most noteworthy idea or object for the benefit of humanity. The prize is to be never less than 100,000 francs and may be double that sum.

May Succeed Pettigrew.

Congressman Robert J. Gamble of Yankton, who it is said will succeed Richard Franklin Pettigrew, in the United States senate, has received, it is understood the pledges of more than



HON. R. H. GAMBLE.

eighty out of the 115 Republicans who were elected to the legislature.

Army Reorganization.

In the plan of army reorganization prepared by Secretary Root congress should recognize what appears to be a final and satisfactory solution of a difficult problem. In brief this plan provides for the establishment of a permanent organization of 50,000 men. This will be the nation's regular army, the nucleus of whatever land force is to be raised in time of war. The president, by the terms of the plan, will hold discretionary authority to increase this army up to a maximum of 100,000, each company of sixty men being recruited up to its full maximum strength of 120.

Wales Likes Kilts.

During the first years of his married life the Prince of Wales spent a portion of each year at Birkhall house, in Scotland, and in those days both the prince and princess made a point of annually visiting the great Scottish chieftains, a splendid welcome being accorded to them at Dunrobin, which at that time was twenty-five miles from the nearest railway station. When in Scotland his royal highness is fond of wearing the kilt, and he also prefers to see those about him so clad.

A Girl Merchant.

The town of Chicago Junction, Ohio, is a little city. It contains about 4,000 people, and to supply their needs a number of large shops are conducted. One of them is owned by Mrs. Streeter & Daughter. This is the firm name. During the last two years Mrs. Streeter has not taken an active part in attending to customers or buying goods. Really, her daughter has been the head of the store. Ethel is nine years old, but does not look over seven. She has to buy and sell cloth for dresses, pins, needles, and other notions, hats, shoes, china, tinware, groceries and a thousand and one things which go to make up what is called in the United States a "general store." She knows the prices of everything on the shelves, the proper quantities to buy, keeps all of the accounts in the little desk in one corner, writes the business letters in a plain, round hand, carries the money to the bank to be deposited and does everything but sign bank checks, which, according to law, she is too young to do. Ethel has two clerks, both of whom are much older than she, to direct.



Ridding Havana of Dogs.

Havana used to be overrun by ownerless dogs almost as badly as Constantinople. The mangey curs were everywhere about the streets. Since the American occupation the work of clearing Havana of these nuisances has been going on, and now the streets are comparatively free. In the last year nearly 6,000 stray dogs have been captured in the streets and killed by the municipal dog catchers.

Paris Fair Closes.

The fifth in the series of international exhibitions held in Paris by the French government, substantially at eleven-year intervals, beginning in 1855, has just closed, having registered an attendance of over 50,000,000, as against 27,539,521 at the exposition in this city in 1893, 25,121,975 in 1889 at Paris, 16,032,725 at the same place in 1878, and 9,910,996 at Philadelphia in 1876.

OUR POPULATION CENTER 1900.

Since 1890 the center of population of the United States has shifted a little to the north and a little to the west. It is still in the state of Indiana, not far from Columbus, the capital of Bartholomew county, in the southern central part of the state. On the old pivotal point arises a monolith monument

In 1840 the pioneers of the west brought it north, and in 1850 it had moved south again. Texas had come into the union. The growth of the great west had switched it back to the north in 1860, and it was near Chillicothe, Ohio. War reduced the population of the south in the decade be-

tween 1860 and 1870, and the center moved north near to Cincinnati. In another decade it had cleared Cincinnati in its westward progress, and in 1870 it had settled in central southern Indiana. The past ten years has carried the center westward about twenty miles,



erected there May 10, 1891, by a Chicago newspaper.

The center of population is the center of gravity of the population of the country, each individual being assumed to have the same weight. The method of determining that center is as follows: The population of the country is first distributed by "square degrees," as the area included between consecutive parallels and meridians is designated. A point is then assumed tentatively as the center, and the corrections in latitude and longitude to this tentative position are computed. In 1890 the center was assumed to be at the intersection of the parallel of 39 degrees, with the meridian of 86 degrees west of Greenwich. This would have made the center of population of the United States just two miles due north of Seymour, in Jackson county, Ind. From this assumed base the verifications were made and the true center was located.

The movement of the center has been steadily westward. On the accompanying map its unwavering march toward the west, with occasional dips to the south and the north, is shown. In 1790 it was east of Baltimore twenty miles. In ten years it had moved forty miles westward. The annexation of Louisiana brought it south and west, and in 1820 it was sixteen miles north of Woodstock, Va.



MONUMENT OF 1890.

A Ghastly Dispatch.

A ghastly dispatch is that from Berlin about the "interesting target practice" going on at the Imperial military grounds, where the experts are testing the capacity of the latest Mauser model. As targets, says the dispatch, "several hundreds of pauper corpses are being used," and it goes on to describe the frightful effect of the bullets upon the bodies. If the correspondent had taken the trouble to inform us how many "hundreds of pauper corpses" constitute the daily supply of Berlin and vicinity, he would have added a little to the verisimilitude of this extraordinary tale. That such an experiment might be made upon one or more dead bodies is conceivable and would be a proper means of ascertaining the actual effect of the bullets. But the "several hundreds" carries the tale into the region of the grotesque. It may be suggested, however, that the German military authorities would not hesitate to carry experiments of this kind to any extent possible. The way in which the German troops in China are described as shooting Mauser bullets into living bodies does not indicate any superfluous tenderness, whether or not a live Chinaman be considered the equivalent of a dead German for experimental purposes.

New York's Divorce Mill.

How divorces can be obtained, "without publicity," has been shown in New York by the arrest of the entire outfit of a well-organized divorce mill. The manager is a lawyer, who undertakes to secure the divorce. He furnishes the lawyer for the opposing side and also the correspondent, or whichever sex is required. He puts in the bill, the other lawyer files the answer, the case goes to a referee and the false witnesses give conclusive testimony of the infidelity of the respondent. The referee reports accordingly and the divorce is granted, without the second party in interest knowing anything about it. The exposure of this divorce mill came about through somebody who identified the fair-correspondent as having occupied the same relation in three several cases. When arrested, she confessed, and the whole gang will probably go to jail. It is a pity that some of their clients might not be included in the haul.

News from Peary.

The arrival of Dr. Kahn, who has been leading a party of scientific explorers in the Arctic regions, brings news of Lieutenant Peary's expedition later than any other, pointing to the belief that his summer's work has been only moderately successful. This is shown by the fact that he is probably wintering at Fort Conger, where he would scarcely be if he had at-

Without a Country.

George W. Smalley, the New York correspondent of the London Times, writes in a sneering vein to that paper upon the American government's attitude toward China. Mr. Smalley is an American by birth, who during a long residence in England developed an affection for English institutions and ideas. He contrived, nevertheless, to make himself so unpopular with Englishmen—who have a way of disliking men who abuse and belittle their own country—that London became uncomfortable as a place of abode. So he came to New York and began publishing his libels on the United States by cable. Ridiculed in his former home and despised in the country of his birth, Smalley is rather to be pitied. He is now a man without a country.

The old home of Stonewall Jackson in Lexington, Va., is now a tenement house, and the dwelling which once sheltered one family comfortably now swarms with a large number of families. The Sunday school in which General Jackson taught the negroes is still flourishing.

tained the Pole during the summer. His surveys, however, had been conducted successfully, and will fill up many vacant spaces in the north polar map.

The shell that killed General Villebois de Mareuil near Boshof has been mounted as a trophy on an ebony base, and is to be presented to Lord Galway and the officers of the Sherwood Rangers, Imperial Yeomanry, to commemorate their first engagement.

Eighteen years ago Sir Frederick

Cavendish was murdered in Phoenix Park, Dublin, by sympathizers with the "force" party in Irish politics. Since that day Lady Frederick Cavendish has never appeared in public save in black. Her thin, careworn face is known by many women who are engaged in charity work, which is now the widow's chief concern.

Vice Admiral Sir Harry Rawson, the new British naval commander on the China station, will proceed to his command on the new battleship Glory, the latest addition to the British fleet.

DEATHS' COINCIDENT.



HENRY VILLARD.

Marcus Daly and Henry Villard both died on the same day. These two men, whose careers had such a similarity, passed away within a few miles of each other, and almost at the same time. Both were born abroad, coming to this country while still boys, and both won fame and wealth in the great Northwest, which they did much to develop. Both were millionaires at the time of their death. Villard, noted as a newspaper man, railroad builder, and financier, was born in Germany, and ran away from home at an early age, coming to Illinois, where his first work was done as a newspaper reporter and correspondent. His career is briefly stated as follows: Reported the Lincoln-Douglas debate. Reported the first Lincoln campaign. War correspondent, the civil war. Foreign correspondent of American newspapers. In 1861 owned New York Evening Post and Nation. In 1875 president Oregon Steamship Company. Receiver of Kansas Pacific Railroad Company. Completed in 1883 the Northern Pacific Railroad. President Northern Pacific Railroad Company. President Edison General

MARCUS DALY.

Electric Company. Chairman in 1889 of the Northern Pacific directory. Daly was a native of Ireland, came to the United States at the age of 13 years, settling in California. His first work was at digging potatoes, and for years he earned his living as a day laborer. When he died his holdings were as follows: Capital represented by him, \$100,000,000. His personal wealth, \$22,000,000. Copper interests represented, \$75,000,000. First price paid for his copper mine, \$35,000. His annual wage roll paid, \$8,000,000. His horses cost \$1,000,000. His work of art cost \$300,000. His private car cost \$40,000. His hotel cost \$200,000. His personal living cost per annum, \$5,000. His annual income was approximately \$2,500,000.

The will of R. H. Eddy, the patent lawyer, leaves \$20,000 to R. H. E. Porter, son of General Porter, and \$30,000 to the City of Portsmouth, N. H., for the erection of an equestrian statue of the general. The bequest became available on the death of Mrs. Eddy, who has just died, and will now go into effect.