

HE IS GREATLY LOVED

HUGH McCURDY A PIONEER OF MICHIGAN.

He Became Distinguished As a Mason Thirty Years Ago—A Lawyer and a Politician of Great Ability—Age Beginning to Tell.

HUGH McCURDY of Corunna, Michigan, has won distinction as a Mason, until he is known throughout the country. In Michigan he is not only a leader of the Masonic fraternity, but is well known as plain Hugh McCurdy, citizen. He has been more than a Mason. He has been a cooper, farmer, banker, lawyer—and politician to a limited degree. For almost half a century he has been inside Masonic ranks. He was given his introduction to the goat in Birmingham lodge No. 44, August 5, 1850. Ten days later he was a Master Mason. From that time he constantly clambered up the rungs of the ladder, until, in 1893, at Denver, he reached the top. He was elected most eminent grand master of the grand encampment of the Knights Templar of America. Mr. McCurdy started a Masonic lodge in Corunna in 1857. Six times he was chosen its master. He received his chapter degrees in Flint, Mich., and in February, 1864, he became a Royal Arch Mason. In 1873 he was unanimously elected grand master of the grand lodge of Michigan.



HON. HUGH McCURDY.

Since 1865 he has attended every meeting of the grand lodge, except in 1868, when a funeral kept him away. As head of the order in the state, he laid the corner-stone of the state capital at Lansing, October 2, 1873. In 1875 he was grand generalissimo of the grand commandery of Michigan. Two years later he was right eminent grand commander. In 1873 he had become a thirty-third degree Mason and an honorary member of the supreme council of the A. A. S. R. Masons for the northern Masonic jurisdiction of the United States.

Mr. McCurdy had become known as one of the leaders of the country. In 1883 he was chosen grand captain-general of the grand encampment of Knights Templar at San Francisco. Three years later they made him grand generalissimo at St. Louis. And then, on August 11, 1893, came his elevation to the highest office in the gift of the Knights Templar. People have not yet forgotten the trip to Boston in 1895, in which Mr. McCurdy was escorted by Detroit Commandery, and praises of the appearance of Michigan's Knights have not quite ceased to this day.

Mr. McCurdy is 68 years old. He was born in Scotland, and came to Birmingham, Mich., when he was but 8 years old. He was apprenticed to the cooper's trade, but someone got him interested in law and he became a lawyer. He bought his original law library of S. Dow Elwood, now president of the Wayne County Savings bank, who let him have it "on tick." Mr. McCurdy went at once to Corunna and hung out his shingle. It is still out, though his legal work is narrowed by the indisposition of advancing age. In 1854 he became prosecuting attorney of Shiawassee county, was re-elected and at the expiration of his term was chosen judge of probate, though he was the only successful democrat on the ticket. His people were so well suited with his services that in 1864 they sent him to the state senate, where his political career ended, though always since actively interested in politics as a staunch democrat. He supported Bryan with great vigor.

In Corunna Mr. McCurdy has a beautiful country seat of thirty acres, called Woodlawn. It is kept close to nature and no despoiling hand ever is allowed to introduce the niceties of art.

The Editor Has a Hammer.
Mrs. Sarah Roberts of this place last week handed us a shoemaker's hammer which, she says, is 180 years old. It was used by the great-great-grandfather of the senior editor of the Messenger and has been handed down from generation to generation until it has at last fallen into our hands. It was forged by hand and is not as neat as the hammers made in recent years by machinery, but it bears the impress of much use. We prize it highly, and while we cannot use it in making shoes, we will carefully guard it and hand it down to future generations.—Indiana Messenger.

Apple sauce seems to have been the source of all man's troubles.

DISCOVERIES IN LEAP CASTLE.

Eleventh Century Staircase Found in an Early English Structure.

From the Leeds Mercury: A Birr correspondent writes that a series of interesting "finds," just discovered in the historic Leap castle, have been shown to a number of visitors. The first and most important was an eleventh century stone spiral staircase springing from the first floor level and terminating at the summit of the great tower, 100 feet high. This relic of a remote past is in a splendid state of preservation. The finely cut stone steps are laid with mathematical accuracy and are large, like the passage itself. The O'Carrolls, princes of Ely, whose chief stronghold this castle was, were all big men—in fact, a race of giants—as the few relics of them extant attest. Hence the reason why everything about the castle is large. The second "find" is an entrance to the guardroom cut out of the rock, and which was up to the present believed to be a mass of solid masonry. Here numerous bones, coins of the reign of Edward the Confessor and other relics were found. Human bones in large quantities, flints and spear heads were also found in the extensive range of dungeons which have been brought to light beneath the castle, these curious prison-houses being rock-hewn, and their existence having been previously unknown to the owner of the castle and lord of the soil, Jonathan C. Darby. This gentleman is the descendant of the royal house of O'Carrolls of Ely, whose family have remained in uninterrupted possession of the Leap for many centuries. The present owner, aided by Mrs. Darby, has put into a complete state of preservation the ancient chapel, an apartment twenty-five feet square and high, which is on top of the tower, and here has been discovered a very large and fine early English window, which from its great elevation commands a view embracing eight counties. A little below this is a remarkable room, which none of the servants will enter after nightfall. It was the state bedroom of one of the princesses of Ely, who was murdered six centuries ago by her lord, and the solid oak floor retains the bloodstains of the royal victim. This part of the building is reputed to be haunted, and Mr. and Mrs. Darby, who do not believe in ghosts, admit that they cannot account for the extraordinary noises that occasionally come from the death chamber of the murdered princess, and which make it nearly impossible for them to retain their female servants in their employment. The manifestations are reputed to take the form of shrieks, which resound and reverberate through the building and set all the dogs in the kennels whining and barking.

ODD ARCHITECTURE.

Every village in Burmah has two or three pagodas. These are placed on a hill where such site is available.

A remarkable and probable unique site for an edifice, sacred or otherwise, is shown in the picture, which represents the pagoda near Shwegyin, in lower Burmah. The large spherical mass of rock on which the pagoda stands is about thirty feet in diameter and perched on the edge of a precipitous cliff, over which it seems about to fall every moment. The pagoda itself is of solid brick-work, about twelve feet high and surmount-



PAGODA IN BURMAH, ed by a small gilt htee, or sacred umbrella.

A Harrowing Custom.

"It is strange that with the common sense ideas that are being developed in so many of our customs," said a woman the other day, "the custom of going to the grave should not be given up by the mourners at a funeral. It is a harrowing experience. The associations are all unpleasant, and the sight of the earth around the newly dug grave gives us the feeling that we are cut off from our friends forever. Every creak of the cords as the coffin is lowered is like a stab wound. The only comfort is that we feel that we are going as far as possible with our dear ones. In the west they have a pleasant custom of lining the grave with flowers, or, at least, with vines, evergreens, or something of that kind. To see our friends laid away in beds of flowers is not so horribly significant."—New York Times.

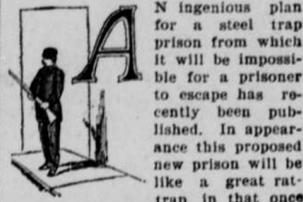
New Method of Constructing Conduits.

A very curious method of making an underground conduit or pipe is reported from France. A trench is dug, and cement or concrete placed in the bottom. On this an inflated canvas-covered rubber tube is laid, and more cement is added until the tube is covered. When the cement has set, the tube is allowed to collapse, and is withdrawn, leaving a concrete or cement conduit.

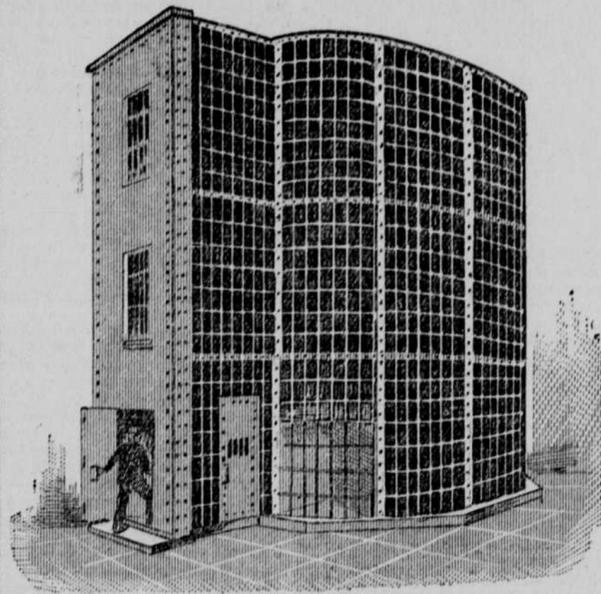
A ROTARY PRISON.

IT HAS JUST BEEN INTRODUCED IN ENGLAND.

And Is Called the Convicts' New Terror—A Prison of Steel Which Is as Intricate as a Maze, Defying the Most Vicious to Escape.



An ingenious plan for a steel trap prison from which it will be impossible for a prisoner to escape has recently been published. In appearance this proposed new prison will be like a great rattrap, in that once inside the prisoner cannot get out by any irregular way, but must be released by the man in charge, and is also like a squirrel-cage, inasmuch as it is rotary. A prison of this sort is composed of three principal parts, the building consisting of four walls and a roof, in which it is contained, and the center revolving cylinder of cells. Every part of this cylinder is made of the best iron obtainable, and the whole is mounted on ball-bearings in such a way that it may revolve at the will of the official in charge. So accurate is the cylinder balanced and so well are the bearings adjusted, that it is quite easy to move it by means of a hand crank, though in actual practice the power of a motor, either water or electric, is generally used. In shape each cell exactly resembles a hollow wedge, the big end of which is formed by a segment of the cylinder's outside shell, while the smaller end touches the cylinder's core. The roof, floor and sides of each cell are made of chilled boiler iron, so hard that the finest tempered chisel or the keenest file would hardly make an impression upon it. None of these cells has a door, though each one has an opening for going in and out. This opening, however, cannot be used for



THE ROTARY PRISON.

this purpose, except when it is exactly opposite a corresponding opening in the entrance, and no two cells on the same tier or story may be entered at the same time. Outside the cylinder of cells, but entirely disconnected with it, is the wire cage, and this looks somewhat like a gigantic stationary squirrel cage wheel set on end. It is made of thick steel bars, chilled to a hardness fully equal to that of the cylinder, but separated from the cylinder and cells just enough to be out of reach, even should a prisoner get possession of tools for cutting his way out. Connecting with it are the cage-like entrance galleries, one for each tier, each containing a double set of floors. When the prisoners are to be taken out for exercise, or to enter upon their duties in the shops, they must pass out singly, the cage being revolved just far enough, as each leaves his cell, to bring the opening of the next cell into line with the entrance cage, and they must enter in similar fashion. When the last prisoner has gone in, the doors of the entrance cage are locked by one movement of the hand, while a second movement fastens the cage in place, so that it cannot be shifted.

The building inclosing such a prison need be only a mere shell of brick or stone, and the prisoners may be watched in their cells at all times from galleries or balconies on the inside of the shell's walls. While this form of jail may not be adapted to great penal establishments, it possesses undoubted advantages for jails in which only a few prisoners are to be confined. It is an English idea.

A Dog On Two Legs.

A correspondent of Nature tells a remarkable story of a dog, which having, through an accident, lost both legs on the right-hand side, has learned to walk and to run on its two remaining legs. Enough remains of the right fore leg to serve as an occasional prop, but when running the dog touches the ground only with the two left legs. With these it hops rapidly along, and having been a trained sheep dog before the accident, it manages to herd its flock as it did when it had all its legs.

JAMAICA'S OPPORTUNITIES.

The Possibilities of Winter Vegetable Growing.

When I lived in the island of Jamaica, a British possession, I was greatly impressed with the commercial possibilities of the winter vegetable growing industry, says Collier's Weekly. During those months when winter fruit and vegetables are practically an impossibility in the markets of our northern and semi-northern cities, they flourish best in Jamaica—and, of course, in the other islands of the archipelago as well. Jamaica is about 140 miles long and from twenty to fifty miles wide; its surface is mountainous, with many valleys and few plains of moderate extent. Oranges and coffee are the chief products of the mountainous parts, sugar and bananas of the lower levels and valleys. Vegetables are scarcely cultivated at all; the negro population, numbering over 700,000, is lazy and worthless, and can not be depended upon as laborers; they grow a few yams on their little clearings, and are then content to lie in the shade of their cocoas and mangoes and let the year go by. The coffee industry languishes; there is hardly any sugar making worth talking of now going on; there is not on the whole island a single orange grove, recognizable as such by an American cultivator; all Jamaica oranges are practically wild, and of numerous varieties, some poor, some of the best in the world, but all alike jumbled together for export; so that Jamaica oranges have a bad name. There is an American company in control of the banana trade, and the export is as large as the consumption warrants; but no vegetables are exported at all. The steady work on the plantations is done by coolies brought under contract from India, and regarded with disfavor by the negroes. Now, if 10,000 acres only were set apart for the cultivation of vegetables during the months from December to April, and the produce placed for sale in our seaboard cities, the profits over and above all expenses and accidents would be so enormous that I shall not state them; the balance sheet has been

WAS A BORN LEADER.

EARLY DAYS OF THE LATE THADDEUS STEVENS.

George Alfred Townsend (Gath) Reveals Some Heretofore Unwritten History—Stevens and Buchanan Prior to the War Period.



THIRTY years ago the master of Pennsylvania politics was in the house as now its master is in the senate. Thaddeus Stevens seldom fished, and never fished south. His home in Gettysburg is now a doctor's office and drug store on the best street, a well-built brick house, which the owner has courteously shown me. It is a pity it does not hold a tablet in the wall, for, if ever there was a coincidence, it was that Stevens' little town should have become the battle spot of Gettysburg.

I saw Buchanan in his office at Wheatlands June 4, 1868, writes Gath. He died of rheumatic gout at the age of 78. He was born one year before Stevens, in the same month of April. When Buchanan, in 1821, took his seat in congress as a Federalist, Stevens was an obscure lawyer at Gettysburg. He had been refused admission to the bar at York, the next county town east, and went over into Maryland to be admitted by the Archers at Belair, whence he shook the dust of York from his feet to settle on the site of the great battle he portended forty-

seven years later. At Belair, six years later, a fugitive actor settled in the woods, J. B. Booth, there to begot John Wilkes Booth. The representative of the man who admitted Stevens to the bar was lately an inmate of the Maryland penitentiary, Stevenson Archer.

The bar at York, which passed a resolution that no man should be admitted to the bar who while a student followed any other business, afterwards luxuriated in the possession of Jerry Black and his son, Chauncey, critics of Lincoln and Stanton. At Gettysburg, Stevens, avoided, poor, with his mother's brood dependent upon him, known as the club-footed attorney, had a practice poor and unprofitable but rich in human nature for clients, till, poorest of all, a negro murderer was thrown at him to defend. A hopeless case, but his effort to do mercy and not justice astonished the boorish county, and he stepped into the best business, and began to manufacture iron and open railroads to the Potomac. He defended fugitive slaves and allied himself with the John Quincy Adams men, and when Andrew Jackson's physical popularity in Pennsylvania threw him back into the minority he took hold of anti-Masonry as the lever to break the Southern thrall, and stood beside Seward at the Baltimore convention of 1831, which nominated William Wirt, of Maryland. The convention was astonished at his eloquence.

In 1833 he went to the state legislature from Gettysburg, and took up the championship of the newly made and already imperiled public schools. Instructed to vote for their repeal, he defied his constituency. A born leader, he faced General Patterson, who afterwards led the first army down the valley in a struggle against troops for the legislature, and expelled, he was elected from Gettysburg, and sat till 1841, when he moved to the rich town of Lancaster, and became the greatest jury lawyer there, and in 1848 the Whigs sent him to congress, where he opened the attack on slavery, with Howell Cobb in the chair. He was rich, unwedded, fearless—a rich man not afraid of his property. "I honor the courageous South," he cried. "All her sons are faithful to human bondage because it is their cause. Do you believe that the North, tame as she is, when so often trodden upon, will never turn? And if the issue be made, the result cannot be doubtful. You will never vindicate yourselves by a separate confederacy." Such was the voice from Gettysburg in 1850.

Buchanan, from Lancaster, had been in the cabinet and senate when Stevens withdrew from congress for six years, and reappeared there in 1859, sixty-seven years old, but the leader. Buchanan in the White House was his constituent; they never spoke as they passed by.

"It is a libel on Pennsylvania," he cried in the most opposite spirit to his townsmen president, "to say that she will purchase peace by unprincipled concessions to armed insurgents. If I thought such was her character I would expatriate myself. I would leave the land where I have spent my life from early manhood to declining age and would seek some spot unvisited by the coward breath of servility and meanness. To her pleasant valleys I would prefer the rugged, bold state of

my nativity; nay, any spot in the most barren Arctic region, amid whose pericicles dwells manly freedom." Val-laningham told me that when he came back to Washington from the South he refused the hand of Colfax and pressed to take that of Stevens. At the head of the ways and means committee he raised the revenue which beat Davis, Lee, and the other Stephens. "No truce with the rebels," was his stern speech, "except to bury the dead." December 2, 1861, he introduced the bill to emancipate the slaves, nearly a year before Lincoln acted. He was the greatest revolutionary leader after John Adams and the Continental Congress of 1776.

DUNS DELINQUENTS.

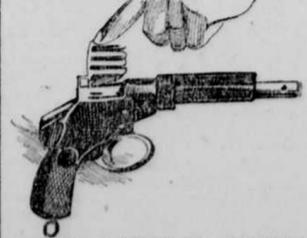
Silent Monitor Used by a Methodist Church in Oregon.

After careful consideration the Centenary Methodist church of Portland, Ore., has decided upon a novel plan for raising funds necessary in conducting the affairs of the congregation. It was suggested by the pastor, Rev. J. J. Waters, who has determined to run his church as a democracy, giving everybody opportunity and inducement to contribute. At a meeting of influential members he explained his plan. He showed a large roster with all the members of the church on it. Opposite each name are fifty-two spaces for credit marks. The roster is placed in the vestibule of the church, where it remains, and is in plain view of everyone entering the church. At the close of every month the roster is taken down and all who have contributed anything to the current expenses of the church are checked up in the spaces opposite the names. The amount paid is not given, but the check indicates that something, however small, has been paid toward the support of the church. The contributions come into the hands of the club by means of envelopes, and the amount and name are obtained in this way. The roster will show just who has paid anything and who has not. It is claimed for the system that the delinquents get tired after a while seeing the row of blanks after names and begin to pay something in order to fill up the blank spaces. It is a sort of ever-present dunning board. It looks down with significant silence on every member who enters the church door. The delinquent cannot escape its all-seeing eye. Whether present or absent, he knows it is there, and the blank spaces seem constantly to say "Pay something." The meeting adopted the plan unanimously.

A NEW RAPID-FIRE PISTOL.

The new Mannlicher rapid-fire pistol has recently been brought to this country for the purpose of exhibiting it to the authorities at Washington and seeking to have it adopted for use in the United States army. As the name of the new weapon implies it is not a revolver, but it can discharge five cartridges in rapid succession, five cartridges being an ordinary load, and it can be reloaded with that number of cartridges in much less time than it takes to load a revolver. As the empty shell is thrown out every time a cartridge is fired the weapon is ready to be reloaded as soon as the last of the five is discharged. The chief importance of the weapon, however, rests in the fact that it uses the smokeless powder cartridges, which would blow an ordinary revolver to pieces, and it thus becomes a most formidable weapon for army use. Its action is much like that of the Mannlicher rifle, which is well known to military men. The bullets fired from it have so much initial velocity that at a distance of twenty feet from the pistol they go through twenty-eight sheets of iron, each 12-1,000ths of an inch thick.

The weapon is loaded by bringing to



SHOWING METHOD OF LOADING.

a full cock, pushing forward the barrel by the aid of the middle sight, placing the cartridge charger in the special groove of the magazine aperture and loading the five cartridges into the magazine by a single pressure of the finger. The magazine may also be loaded by inserting, one after the other, five cartridges into the slot and pressing them home. To extract the cartridges it is sufficient to push the barrel forward, as before, as far as possible; and each operation will eject one cartridge.

All They Could Do.

There is a good old story of a general whose death was announced in a newspaper by mistake—a circumstance which annoyed him very much. He called on the editor and demanded that a contradiction should be inserted in the next issue. "That, general," was the editor's reply, "is quite out of the question. We never apologize and we never withdraw a statement; but I tell you what we'll do for you. We'll put you in the 'births' next week."

An Electric Pen.

Among the many curious inventions in which electricity plays the principal role is mentioned a pen, provided near the point with a minute incandescent lamp intended to illumine a small space on the paper, and prevented from shining into the eyes of the writer by a little reflector placed just above it.