

"I left the Shenandoah valley June, 1854, to come to Louisville to work. The drouth in that famed valley had already caused much apprehension, on account of the growing corn crop. I came to Wheeling, and there being no railroad crossing the state of Ohio at that time, I took passage on a small sternwheel boat (the river being very low), and by that was brought to Cincinnati, where I was put on the Alvin Adams, a fine steamer of those days, and on that arrived at Louisville. I noticed the wharf was very deep with dust, and was told there has been no rain for a month or more. From that day, June 30, 1854, until August 27, 1854, I saw little or no rain. Sunday, August 27, was the date of the storm that carried down the Presbyterian church, corner Thirteenth and Walnut, killing about thirty persons, and that storm ended the drouth. That drouth was during the spring and summer unlike the present one, which is a fall drouth. The first one caused great loss of crops, and many persons thereafter thought its effects helped to bring on the great panic of 1857, which was a tornado compared to the storms of 1873 and 1893. No doubt this drouth will cause much loss to the farmer, by the seed wheat failing to germinate, and loss of stock and pasturage, but I can't think it will entail the loss the former one did."

TWO hundred years have elapsed since the capture of the Rock of Gibraltar by the British. A writer in "The Nineteenth Century and After," says that the capture of this fortress was an accident and that it became a British possession in the first instance because at a time when we happened to be at war with one of the rival claimants to the Spanish throne our admiral in the Mediterranean happened to have no particular objective in view, and, having failed in his only enterprise of that year, was unwilling to return home with a fine fleet that had done nothing for the honor of the flag. So he thought he might as well make an attack on Gibraltar as do anything else. Nevertheless, his action has to be reckoned among the notable "deeds that won the empire," and one that on its vi-centenary deserves to be had in remembrance.

THIS writer also says: "The fact that throughout the eighteenth century when so many conquests in both hemispheres changed hands backward and forward in successive wars and under successive treaties, Gibraltar remained permanently in the keeping of England might seem to prove that British sentiment with regard to it was from the first the same as it is today. But this is far from having been the cause. For, although at the end of two hundred years of our possession of the fortress, at a time when the imperial instinct of Englishmen has become more consciously developed and more deeply ingrained than ever before, and at the same time more intelligently appreciative of the true meaning of sea power and alive to the strategical requirements of its maintenance, the retention of the key of the Mediterranean has become an essential article of our political creed, it was a considerable time before the immense value of the acquisition was fully realized by British statesmen."

MME. JANAUSCHEK, the tragedienne, who died recently in New York, had a wide personal acquaintance in the United States. She was at one time associated with John McCullough, Edwin Booth and other tragedians. A writer in the Kansas City Journal, referring to Mme. Janauschek, says: "Her art was so broad and penetrating, her sweep so grand and wide, her force so intense and emphatic, and her character so cracked and careened that she demanded all the favors and forced the great stars to side step, as it were, or bring out their best qualities, or else be dominated by the feminine role. Actors, male and female, can not tolerate this, and therefore these great alliances did not cohere long. Among the most notable performances of Janauschek were 'Deborah,' which Augustin Daly produced, and the dual roles of Hortense, the French maid, and Lady Dedlock, in a dramatization of Dickens' 'Bleak House.' Just before retiring, twenty years ago, she portrayed Meg Merrilles, an astonishing performance, which, singularly, was her last part on the mimic stage. Some years ago Janauschek came out of the obscurity of solitude and, for a brief space, flashed across the theatrical horizon. It was a sad sight, this, of an old woman, once the tragic queen of two continents, playing before small audiences, many of those present ignorant of who she was. 'Meg Merrilles' was the vehicle which she rode in this farewell tour. On this

final tour, which bankrupted the famous actress, the real tragedy of her life was enacted. One could not help contrasting it with the farewells of Garrick, Macready, Cushman and a score of other eminent bay-crowned actors. Janauschek was enfeebled; her voice was weak; her movements slow."

INTERESTING reference is made by the Journal writer to the conditions under which other great actors died. This writer says: "Garrick retired gracefully and with well-stored larder, the pride of his friends and the pet of his nation. Edmund Kean ended his meteoric career by sudden death in the limelight, and in his beloved son's arms. Charlotte Cushman died in plenty, but in pain. Others enjoyed the fruits of their labor until transported to Elysian fields. But not so Janauschek, as great as any of these. Homeless, in a foreign land, the poorhouse awaited her. One of her creditors proposed to sell her wardrobe and jewelry. She said: 'That man will not sell my costumes and jewels; because he can not. I would like to see him do so without authority from me. He has no such authority, and will not get it. I suppose he thinks he will get the few dollars I owe him if he sells the tatters of Meg Merrilles, or the nightdress of Lady Macbeth, or the royal robes of Marie Stuart or Marie Antoinette.' To the last clinging to the tatters and nightdress and royal robes of her mimic kingdom. This is the irony of existence; this the foible of an unnatural life."

A ST. PAUL, Minn., dispatch, under date of November 29, and printed in the Louisville Courier-Journal, says: "A woman inmate of one of the state insane hospitals has won a prize offered by a Boston magazine for the solving of a rebus and a short essay on an assigned topic. The prize was a trip abroad or \$250. She has applied to the state board of control for permission to make the trip, but the board does not deem it safe to allow her to go. The board, however, will endeavor to secure the \$250 for her."

AN INTERESTING analysis of the annual report of the American Federation of Labor is given by a writer in the Wall Street Journal, from which the following extract is taken: "The total membership of the American Federation this year is 1,676,200, which makes it one of the most important organizations in the United States. This is 2 per cent of the entire population of the country. It is 8 per cent of the entire number of males of voting age in 1900. It is nearly 6 per cent of the number of persons, male and female, engaged in gainful occupations in 1900. The vote for President Franklin Pierce, who swept the country in 1852 was less than the present membership of this great industrial organization. The vote for Abraham Lincoln in 1860 was only slightly greater. Not only is the membership immense but the growth in membership has been nothing less than marvelous. Since 1901 it has increased 113 per cent and since 1897 it has increased nearly 540 per cent. It is safe to say that no other organization in the country has had so rapid a growth as that."

THE following table gives by years the "voting strength" of the affiliated unions, the total membership, and the annual percentage of increase since 1896:

	Voting Strength.	Total Membership.	P. Ct. of Increase.
1896.....	2,806	272,315	....
1897.....	2,747	264,825	*2.7
1898.....	2,881	278,016	5.0
1899.....	3,632	349,422	25.5
1900.....	5,737	548,321	56.7
1901.....	8,240	787,557	43.6
1902.....	10,705	1,024,399	30.0
1903.....	15,238	1,465,800	43.1
1904.....	17,363	1,676,200	14.5

\*Decrease.

IT IS pointed out by the Journal writer that in only one year, from 1896 to 1897, was there a decrease. The most notable growth was from 1899 to 1900—over 56 per cent. From 1902 to 1903 the increase was 43 per cent; while in the past year the percentage of increase was only 14.5 per cent, yet actually 210,000 new members were obtained.

THERE are more than 140 national and international affiliated unions in the American Federation. The Journal writer says: "These

subordinate organizations are composed of hundreds of local unions," and it is added: "Financially the American Federation is strong. Its income in 1904 was \$220,495 and its expenditures \$203,991, and its balance on hand with the treasurer is \$103,017. There are ninety-nine organizers, to whom \$83,242 was paid during the year. The defense fund for local trade and federal labor unions is \$81,146. It is notable that the different organizations belonging to the Federation paid in the past year in death benefits \$782,382; in sick benefits, \$756,762; in traveling benefits, \$73,441; in tool insurance, \$5,872, and in unemployed benefits, \$78,073."

WRITING in "The Engineering Magazine" for December, F. W. Haskell discusses railroad accidents. Referring to this article the New York Tribune says: "At the outset Mr. Haskell notices a peculiar anomaly. He says that the worst accidents happen on the roads which have the best equipment for preventing them, and where the rules for running trains are practically perfect. His explanation of the circumstance is that engineers often run by block-signals knowingly, trusting to luck to escape harm. From experience they learn that the train whose presence in the block ahead is indicated by the signal will probably be out of the way before the following one can overtake it. Having a realizing sense of the need of keeping on time, they take chances. It is further asserted that the higher officials of the railway companies are familiar with the practice and do not discourage it sternly. Mr. Haskell declares that a violation of the rules is not always punished, and that thus a certain demoralization among railway employes results. The chief responsibility, therefore, is placed on the 'men higher up.'"

MABEL VILLAS, a little Massachusetts girl, has recovered her power of speech in a most astonishing manner. The New York World, describing her case, says: "By hiding her playthings and teasing her almost into desperation, a nurse in the North Adams (Mass.) hospital has restored to Mabel Villas the power of speech. The little girl at last cried out in her rage, 'I know where it is!' and the nurse had done what doctors had despaired of doing. The little girl fell from a piazza and fractured her skull from ear to ear. For weeks her recovery was considered impossible. The surgeons removed much of the skull and slowly the child began to mend and showed every indication of returning mental faculties—but she was voiceless. Lip language was practiced and articulation of words was tried daily without result. The surgeons were about to discharge her as a mute for life when the nurse tried her experiment. When her voice was restored the child showed that she had been cognizant of everything that had been going on about her. She knew the names of the nurses and the surgeon, and astonished the house doctor by bidding him good morning when he arrived."

THE X-ray will soon have a close rival in a "fluorescible solution," discovered by Dr. William James Morton of St. Louis. Speaking of this new light a writer in the New York American says: "To turn a spot light upon the liver, lungs or any other organ of the human body and illuminate it so clearly that a physician can examine it as easily as though it were removed and placed upon the operating table is believed to be one of the possibilities of the use of the fluorescible solutions now being introduced into medical practice by Dr. William James Morton of St. Louis. Dr. Morton's most recent achievements have made possible the illumination of those recesses of the human body never before brought to light except under the operating knife of the surgeon or the anatomical demonstrator at the side of the dissecting table. Not only do these fluorescible solutions cause a glow of violent light to emanate from the interior of the body, but they are said to exercise the same curative effect that has been observed in a greater degree in the use of radium. The fluorescible solutions which set up the fluorescent glow within the body may be introduced in several ways. Quinine swallowed in solution and then subjected to exterior excitation by means of radium sets up a glow which is very intense and of a deep violet color. Under this treatment the stomach gleams like an opal, and the man who has become the subject of this experiment looks for the time as though he had swallowed a handful of fireflies."