NORTH CHINA TRADE

SHANGHAI A CLEARING HOUSE FOR ALL BUSINESS NOW DONE.

Extension of Trade Will Call for New Distribution Points and More Direct Shipments.

Correspondence of the Indianapolis Journal.

SHANGHAI, May 1.—Reports that issue from here of improving conditions of American trade, while in themselves gratifying, reflect impulses that originate elsewhere. American manufacturers are to be classed well down the list in foreign supplies for this immediate field. They pay duty here and constitute an important item in the customs revenues of this port, but the masses who consume the bulk of them are far distant. Should reform in commerce attend political regeneration in China, it may be doubted whether Shanghai will remain the center of interest for American trade, for while the home market may not escape the tolls exacted here on silk and tea, and while it may be for the present indifferent to the charges accumulated here for handling American goods intended for the north, it is not unlikely to object in time to the payment of double brokerage and shipping rates on wool, hides, strawbraids and other products which it buys in increasing quantities every year from the northern region, where 90 per cent. of its own products eventually land. When China trade shall acquire a sound reciprocal basis, and may rid itself of dependence upon trunk line shipping routes, it probably will appear that the course so far followed with consignments for the north would be paralleled in the United States if goods from Europe, intended for New England, were entered at Charleston and were subjected not only to duty, but also to commissions and the cost and risk of transhipment.

Experiments already made disclose a tolerably definite tendency in this direction. Shanghai may deserve to be regarded as the metropolis of the East, a distinction for which it is equipping itself by harbor and other improvements, and by the time it shall fairly earn that title, the American market in China will doubtless have become so enlarged as to contribute its share toward the pre-eminence of the port; but by that time the American goods uppermost in China trade will naturally seek a more direct market than that which they have so far favored, and the trade centering here will no longer comprise nearly everything American that reaches China, as at present, but will rather be an index to expanding trade operations. It may well be that England and Germany will hold the market for cottons in this and more southern latitudes, for so long as American mills can compete only in goods containing the maximum of material and the minimum of labor they can hardly expect to sell their major product except in the north, where already it has leading place, sales being practically assured at upwards of one million dollars per month. But in machinery, in hardware, in provisions, and in general supplies, American opportunity is boundless, and, unless Japan be counted as a worthy commercial foe, it is unrivaled. If there is to be expansion, the agencies at hand will be altogether inadequate to direct it.

IN HANDS OF FOREIGNERS.

American trade here, as elsewhere in China, owes little to American houses. Of the American firms that gave it a start not one remains. The most prominent of them tried to hasten the commercial tide, and beached itself in the effort. Foreigners pieced out the wreckage and turned it to some profit, besides engaging separate equipment of their own in the same line. When consular and other trade reports drew Americans to the field, they found foreign houses in possession of American business. The new American came with much the same view that the Chinese are said to hold who go to America, not for a permanent home, or to apply themselves to the welfare of the country, but to make all the money they could as soon as possible and return to the United States and enjoy it. Consequently the business of most of them, and of most foreigners, is a catch-all. They load themselves with agencies, and are interested in selling for immediate account the goods that the market will take with the least resistance. Observation at other selling points that Americans should be preferred for the sale of American goods holds in respect to Shanghai, but it is equally true that the growth of trade can be best promoted through special agencies, and that some of those already here who take on multifarious lines have little to commend them to American manufacturers, in a choice between themselves and foreigners, except that they are Americans. The field is so accessible and information regarding it so readily to be obtained that interests which seek promotion in it will save themselves time and all manner of uncertainty by employing to that end the same means that they would employ in assigning agencies in the United States, or in Europe, where the field is no more promising than here, and where its proper cultivation requires attention no less careful.

Various manufacturers who have heretofore been in the China field haphazard, have had their own representatives out this season on a visit of inspection. Some of the visitors have found the old agencies satisfactory, and others have decided that new ones should be engaged, or special ones planted; but there can be no doubt that in every instance the visit has been felt to be of advantage to the home office. Agents themselves have welcomed the visitors because from them they have gathered suggestions that may be helpful in broadening their market. Instructive as may be trade reports or private correspondence relating to specialties neither source of information is to be compared in its suggestive value or in practical effect with the results of personal contact and observation. The visitors have had opportunity to learn at first hand what becomes of their goods and how well or ill they are treated on the way to consumers. They have noted the stages at which the goods have accumulated charges additional to their invoice price, and have discovered some instances wherein charges blocked progress to a ready market. The situation has thus passed under review microscopically against a former acquaintance with it which may be likened to an inspection through the wrong end of a telescope. No time better than this could have been selected for visits to show off agencies to advantage. The season started with a rush and continues at full pace.

YEAR BEGINS WITH PROMISE.

Unless signs fail this will be a record year. Native buying in the north, checked by the outbreak and slow to recover while Peking was under foreign military rule, has become confident. The long period of restriction brought stocks very low. If dealers merely buy to satisfy immediate demands the trade will certainly be as large as in any other year. From all appearances they are stocking for more than urgent requirements. When navigation opened in the north the first ships for that region carried 56,239 packages, compared with 38,618 packages in the earliest shipments in 1900, and 51,842 packages in the first shipments of 1899, the last previous year when trade was normal. A package may mean a dry goods case or bale, and usually does, so that this quantity taxes the capacity of a fleet of coasting ships. It represented accumulations for the winter in Shanghai warehouses, to the large profit of warehousemen and not always to the benefit of the cases, which get treatment none too gentle at this stage of their transshipment. Comparisons are not made with last year, because shipments were then insignificant; but it is not unlikely that some of the goods now reaching consumers left the factory with a view to their use last year and kept gathering storage charges until now.

There are agencies here which found themselves so heavily loaded a year ago that fears were entertained for thir ability to keep up, for drafts had accompanied some of the goods, and, with those sent on consignment, the home people were not content to bear the entire burden of a dead season. It is probably as well to forget now some of the stories afloat a few months ago regarding the expedients employed to lighten overstocking, but it may be said that not a little of the industrial panic talk in Germany had its origin in conditions here and that many English and American handlers were nearly if not quite as badly off as German houses from this cause. Failures in the south could be traced directly to it. Possibly no merchant or manufacturer who found a big lump of his capital stock tied up in a Shanghai warehouse for several months last year, or for the season, feels in need of further instructions as to the gauge to be applied to the China market following a period of turbulence, but every commercial visitor here at the opening of the present season in the north will carry back home strong views as to the time of year goods should be shipped, and thus by elimination leave the Shanghai warehousemen in another season with less pressure upon their space and more docility toward their kind in their hearts than occurred at the beginning of the present year of grace.

AMERICAN GOODS THAT LEAD.

American goods led the list to such an extent in first shipments of the season to the north that comparisons with those from other lands seem almost ridiculous. There were 12,675 bales of American sheeting, against 9,300 at the beginning of 1900. England sent 830 bales and Japan 200, the Dutch 230 and India 50. Of American drills, 7,200 bales went north, against 4,300 at the beginning of 1900. England sent 500, Japan 300 and the Dutch 350 bales. Of American jeans there were 1,650 bales, against 905 at the beginning of the season of 1900. England sent 390 and the Dutch 200. These are sample figures which run all through the list of cottons, America leading always except in yarns, of which there are few American imports, and in which India commands the market, as has occurred from the earliest years when cotton was imported for hand looming. Americans have entered the field with gray goods, the English staple. These goods are mainly of light weight and American contributions to the supply cannot be said to imperil English supremacy. In heavy grays, however, American mills have displayed such activity as to have developed a genuine contest for the command of this market. The year happens to be most favorable for trade invasion, because low stocks have stimulated both demand and prices. Dealers agree that if American goods continue to improve in variety, they will regulate this market, even if they may not control it, in lines that Americans neglected in other years. In anticipation of increasing demand, both for established lines and for new varieties, terms have been made with transportation lines for freights from the Southern mills to this port, which are expected to effect economies both in time and cost. Direct shipments would curtail considerably the usefulness of the New York handler; they would remove wholly from calculations the item of freights from the mills to New York and by the employment of a transcontinental route, and thence by the Pacific, deliveries would become possible in two months, as against four months, the time allowed for orders from New York via Suez. A rate on cottons of $1.10 (gold) per 100 pounds has been quoted from the mills to Shanghai. Since goods through New York have heretofore paid in freights from the mills to New York from 40 to 55 cents per hundred, and that charge would be rebated, dealers calculate that freights to Shanghai from the mills would cost them not more than 65 cents per hundred, and possibly less. They pay from New York 25 shillings per ton to Shanghai. That charge added to freights from the mills to New York makes a difference of $3 or so per ton in favor of direct shipments, a difference that might be large enough to turn the scale in favor of American goods should the increase in varieties be sufficient to bring such goods into keen competition with English staples. Improving freights for cotton might easily apply to other American products, especially to hardware, machinery and provisions. American flour, milled on the Pacific coast, tobacco and kerosene already have leading positions in the China market.

CHANCE FOR DYED COTTONS.

The visit of one American agent here this season promises to supplant in one line of goods not merely other foreign manufacturers, but a native industry that extends over the entire empire. He has been looking into dyed cloths. Native practice has always been to buy bleached cotton and to dye by hand. Cost of labor does not count in this process, for while there are dyers devoting themselves to that and nothing else, the work usually falls to those who have nothing else to do or is taken up at leisure. Probably the majority of families either do their own dyeing or arrange to have it done in exchange for return favors, the cost in either case counting as nothing except for the dyeing material. Blue is the dye generally employed. All over China one may see cloths of that color, shading from the palest tint to the deepest indigo, hanging from clothes lines so that the sun and air may dry them. When the color is thus fixed the cloths are taken down and fashioned into garments. In some sections a black dye is used moderately. As may be suposed, the dye is not always well applied, and usually it is far from being fast. Moreover, it is bought in small quantities and at retail prices. The New York firm whose agent has been here handles not only the output of various cotton mills, but it has also a dyeing establishment equipped with modern machinery, and of course conducted on a scale which insures the advantage of the best market for dyes in wholesale quantities. The firm thought well enough of an inspection of this field to send out one of the partners. He has scattered samples of his work among native dealers over a wide territory for the purpose of demonstrating to them that he can put on their shelves goods in which the dyes are more evenly laid than can be done by hand process, and of faster quality, which they may sell at less addition to the cost of bleached goods than consumers pay for the dyes that they buy at retail. By this offer he hopes to overcome the consideration of costless labor for dyeing. Chinese are so tenacious of custom and so suspicious of innovation that although the proposition seems unanswerable, it has not resulted in a rush of orders. Consequently the agent has retained native runners who will distribute samples of his goods among native shops every fortnight, and thus keep the goods continually in view of native merchants and their customers. If it takes some time to convince the Chinese that they may better themselves there is comfort in the reflection that their prejudices are not impenetrable, and if once convinced that they can get a superior article at no greater cost than they pay for an inferior one and possibly cheaper a favorable outcome cannot be endlessly delayed. The agent seems convinced that he will place the goods.

TROUBLE WITH EXCHANGE.

One large order escaped him the other day by reason of a decline in exchange which advanced the silver cost of an intending buyer beyond a figure at which he might have had the goods before exchange fell, and native merchants in various places are clearly impressed that the scheme may have merit. It will be persistently pushed, and should it succeed, as seems probable, the invasion will mark an advance in the China field as promising as can be imagined for the substitution of American sundries for other products heretofore purely native. This has occurred with flour, with kerosene, with cottons, for none of which the Chinese needed to go outside of their own land, and the step now proposed is not a long one. If the United States can furnish China with food, light and clothing, the trade wedge would seem to have been inserted far enough to provide for the entry of almost anything that they can use. It is not possible to predict how far the item of exchange may retard trade. Probably one of the last things that China will abandon will be its silver currency. In dealing with this problem native prejudice is no more an obstacle than foreign greed. Exchange is the primary, if not the sole, function of most of the banks. The conversion of credits into taels, then into Mexican dollars, and often afterward into local silver, a commission shaved with each computation, and separate discounts at every port, as though a bank regarded no one so suspiciously as its own branch at another place, argue more for the permanence of the existing system than native protests, which at best could be helpless. Foreign complaint of the increased cost of living in China is mostly twaddle, in so far as it affects foreigners, for they sell on a gold basis, and prices advance with the decline in silver. The pressure comes on natives whose earning capacity has not kept pace with the advance. Since business is not a moral agency, it may be pleasing to know that English supremacy is to be subjected to American siege, and that American missions need no longer confine their local expectations to what may be spared from meager commissions on dry goods and the like.

FREDERICK W. EDDY.

Little Flossie—Ma, if I ever get married will I get a husband like pa?

Mother—Yes, dear.

L. F.—And if I don't get married will I be an old maid like Aunt Kate?

Mother—Yes, Flossie.

L. F. (reflectively)—It's a tough world for us women, ain't it, ma?

Love and History.

Roses shed their petals
Countless Junes ago,
And those dead Decembers
Brought their snow.

Weary eyes were covered
With their patient lids,
By the yet unbuilded
Pyramids.

Life and Death, like sweethearts,
Hand in hand,
Then, as now, stole over
Sea and land.

Lovers kissed and quarreled,
Eyes were moist and blue,
In the Midian meadows
Moses knew.

Cheeks were wet with weeping,
Brows were hot with fire,
Ere the hand of Homer
Swept the lyre.

And this masque of midnight,
And the moon's white face,
Looked on Nile and Jordan,
Thebes and Thrace.

Must the mint be new, dear,
If the coin is gold?
Though youth dies, Love never
Waxes old.

History means this morning,
Greece is here and now;
Let us drain Time's beaker—
I and Thou!

Press thy lips to mine, dear,
Thus—and thus—and thus;
Space and time shall perish,
Stain by us.

All the lands of wonder—
Years of pain and bliss,
We will taste together
In that kiss!

—Frederic L. Knowles.

AN ASTOUNDING SWINDLE

THE REMARKABLE CASE OF THE CRAWFORD-HUMBERT MILLIONS.

A Purely Mythical Fortune on Which European Banks Were Induced to Advance About $11,000,000.

New York Evening Post.

When the history of the human intellect is written, there will be a special chapter on frauds, and that chapter will contain no more interesting section than the one which records the story of Mme. Humbert, lately of Paris, now of whereabouts unknown. It is less the fact that litigation about a nonexistent fortune occupied the French courts for twenty-five years, that the greatest Parisian banks advanced millions of francs upon the security of an empty safe, that ten persons involved in Mme. Humbert's financial transactions committed suicide without revealing her secret, that an honored leader of the French bar honestly protested her innocence to the last—it is less these sensational accessories of the fraud which lend it distinction than the sheer intellectual adroitness which framed this unique structure of deceit.

Swindling depends for its success, usually, upon the supreme guillibility of the public. The swindler exercises some sort of hypnotic influence, which produces the mood of expectancy, and the rest is simply whatever legerdemain the case requires. The state of mind upon which fraud counts is illustrated in those brokers who deal largely in a quite imaginary security offered as a hoax. Its methods are usually of the most vulgar sort—the submarine gold-extracting machine of the Rev. Mr. Jernigan, periodically "salted" by a diver; or, only the other day, the triumphant display, by a modern alchemist, of a gold nugget in the ashes of an incinerated goldfish—the trick being no more difficult than to put the nugget in the fish. In general the average fraud or financial bubble cannot long survive coolheaded scrutiny. It is successful only with those who are willing to be deceived. Now the interest of the Crawford-Humbert case lies in the fact that the original fraud was eventually so bolstered up by all the guarantees of the law that the victims could hardly have said at any point that Mme. Humbert's position was so much as questionable.

In the early '80s Therese Daurignac, a young peasant girl, living near Toulouse, told her neighbors that, under the last will and testament of Robert Henry Crawford, a wealthy American, she had become sole heir to a fortune of 100,000,000 francs. This legacy, she explained, was an act of gratitude. When Crawford was stricken with illness on a railway train her prompt ministration had saved his life, and she had later nursed him back to health. No caprice of an American millionaire seems improbable in France, and Therese, who had the properly attested will to show, was promptly wooed and won by M. Humbert, whose father had been minister of justice.

ONLY A BEGINNING.

A common adventuress would have rested at the capture of a wealthy and distinguished husband, but Mme. Humbert had only begun. Her legendary fortune was to be accepted far and wide as the equivalent of negotiable securities. To do this it was necessary, first, to obtain legal certification of the existence of the Crawford millions; second, to avert a demand to show the actual securities. At this juncture two nephews of Robert Henry Crawford appeared and opposed to the will which named Therese Daurignac as sole legatee one of the same date and authority which, leaving a small annuity to Therese, divided the fortune equally between themselves, Robert and Henry Crawford, and Therese's younger sister Marie. It was their uncle's dying wish that one of them should marry a Daurignac—either was willing to wed Marie—and thus unite the families of Crawford and Daurignac. Pending this amicable settlement of the dispute, Mme. Humbert and the Crawfords agreed that the 100,000,000 francs in securities should be sealed and deposited in Mme. Humbert's safe not to be opened by her under penalty of forfeiting all claim upon the estate. Accordingly a French notary certified—the law permitting this to be done without inventory—to the depositing under these conditions of 100,000,000 francs in approved securities; so that the Crawford millions gained legal standing and became available as collateral.

For Mme. Humbert, temporarily precluded from her inheritance, was soon obliged to raise loans upon this deposit. Her notes, "payable after the conclusion of my actions at law," were freely accepted by the banks. A Lille banker advanced 7,000,000 francs. She was on the books of a dozen other banks for sums ranging between 1,000,000 and 6,000,000 francs. Of her social successes at Paris, her great country places, her wonderful art collections, her ventures in commerce and finance it would be superfluous to speak. Very few of her notes were ever paid, but the security was unquestionable, for every note was indorsed by her sister Marie, the alternative heir and the prospective bride of one of the wealthy Crawfords. It was, in fact, the activity of the Crawfords that was the most convincing proof that this great fortune existed. The Crawfords were a litigous lot. For upward of fifteen years they fought Mme. Humbert in the courts, accepting compromises only to boggle at the terms of their execution and generally exhausting the law's delays. But the Crawfords were generous, too, in a way; they were ever ardent suitors for Marie Daurignac's hand. Whenever Mme. Humbert's creditors pressed for payment the happy marriage and the opening of the safe became imminent. The Crawfords would also on occasion take up Mme. Humbert's I-O-U's at par from unseasy creditors, thus manifesting their own unobtrusive kindliness and re-establishing her credit.

INGENIOUS METHODS.

So long as the Crawfords continued their losing fight no one could doubt that the 100,000,000 francs actually lay under seal in Mme. Humbert's safe. But soon it was Mme. Humbert herself who, although she won suit after suit, and might at any time have taken out her millions, sought all manner of frivolous delays. The famous advocate, M. Waldeck-Rousseau, now premier of France, pointed out this strange disinclination to enter into possession. He showed, too, that though everybody had heard of the Crawfords—as dining at Mme. Humbert's, as about to marry her sister, as about to testify in person—no living soul in Europe or America, except Mme. Humbert and her intimates, had ever seen them. This doubt as to the existence of the Crawfords and the inferential skepticism as to their uncle's millions Mme. Humbert met by finding a provincial magistrate who swore that he had seen and counted the securities. Something which he took for securities in quantity he undoubtedly saw.

How for five years more she managed to delay the denouement is matter of notoriety. She played upon the political and religious prejudices of a famous lawyer of clerical affiliations, and offered to a doubting world the undoubted probity of Maitre Du Buit. It was his complete confidence in his client—a chance which she had to take—that led to the disclosure of the other day. To terminate the unwarranted scandals which had gathered about Mme. Humbert, he, her lawyer, would open the safe in the presence of her chief creditors. Mme. Humbert's chimney took fire immediately, and she herself left her handsome residence a day or two before the opening of the safe. On the empty jewel case, the copper coin, the brass button and the 5,000 francs in securities it is unnecessary to dwell. These were all that appeared where the Crawford millions should have been; this was the total security for loans of 55,000,000 francs—half the amount of the fortune. The genius who had created the Crawfords was already upon the sea, with an unknown destination.

The clearing up of this extraordinary mystification awaits the arrest of the Humberts. There is no occasion for citing the hackneyed proverb, as la femme is evidently Mme. Humbert. Who were her confederates? M. Humbert, one may assume. But at what point was he enlisted? He apparently married his peasant bride in full confidence that she was the real heirness of an actual fortune. By what process of persuasion did his wife convince him that she could repay him handsomely for her deception out of the nonexistent millions? Then who played the part of the invisible Crawfords, who for a score of years were litigants in the French courts and enjoyed credit at the French banks? These are some of the things that one would wish to know. One must believe that the methods of this great fraud were very simple, and it may well be that most of Mme. Humbert's agents were never in her secret at all. It seems certain, for example, that most of the lawyers who conducted the Crawfords' various suits acted in good faith. How, said one of them pathetically, could one doubt the existence of clients from whom fees came constantly and generously? When Mme. Humbert is put upon the stand we shall know more about these things, and this lends zest to the hope that this gifted woman may be spared the rigors of long and obscure exile from her beloved Paris. Since the Diamond Necklace there has been no more amazing swindle.

FREDERICK HUMBERT AND HIS DAUGHTER.

EVA MARIE HUMBERT.

FREDERICK HUMBERT.

Frederick Humbert is alleged to have been one of the principals in the great Humbert-Crawford fraud at Paris which is alleged to have netted the swindlers twelve million dollars. Eva Marie Humbert was kept in ignorance of her parents' doings, and Parisians are now wondering what will be her future. She was brought up in luxury and had $6,000 a month for pin money.

THE LILAC.

Some Reflections on One of the Beautiful Flowers of the Season.

Boston Transcript.

One of the most delightful among the flower festivals of the year is that of the lilac; it is also one of the earliest. This old favorite, beloved of our grandmothers, has not only lost none of its ancient charm, but in these latter days develops from time to time new abilities for delight, as hitherto little known species are brought forward and new varieties are produced by the hybridizers. The old limits of its flowering period have also been greatly extended by the same means. No other flowering shrub except the rose is such a universal favorite and lies so near to our hearts; it is the flower of rich and poor alike, for it grows stoutly everywhere with only the least encouragement, and is so thoroughly hardy that even in the most severe seasons when many other of our most reliable plants have succumbed to the rigors of our Northern winter, it never fails to cover itself in the flowering season with loads of fragrant bloom.

Though probably of Oriental origin the lilac has had a long history in Enrope. The eminent botanist, Franchet, in an article quoted at length in Garden and Forest from the Revue Horticole, says it was brought into western Europe about the middle of the fifteenth century. Pierre Belon, the interesting old French naturalist, saw it about 1548 in the gardens of Constantinople; the first exact information, however, dates from 1565, when an excellent figure of the plant under the name of lilac appeared in Mattiolus's "Commentaries of Dioscorides," which was made from a painting brought from Constantinople by Busbecq, the ambassador of Ferdinand I, who lived several years in that city. Busbecq is generally supposed to have introduced the lilac into Europe, probably first into Italy. Mattiolus, who had not seen the living plant when the first edition of his commentaries was published, relates in a later one that he had received before 1570 flowering and fruiting branches from the botanical garden of Padua.

The lilac soon thereafter became popular in western and central Europe, and is spoken of in 1601 as common in the gardens of Belgium and Germany, appearing at the same time under the same name in the neighborhood of Paris, though twenty years later it is called in Morin's catalogue siringa corruela lusitania. It is generally supposed that the lilac is of Asiatic origin, and, though found growing naturally in the Danubian region and claimed by some as an indigenous growth there, this seems to be doubted by some careful botanists.

Toussaint Dubois.

Washington Post.

Dubois county, in Indiana, is named in honor of Capt. Toussaint Dubois, grandfather of Senator Dubois, of Idaho. Toussaint Dubois was a great character in the early history of Indiana. He immigrated frome Lowe, Canada, to the then Territory of Indiana in the beginning of the last century and, when, in 1811, Gen. William Henry Harrison went to war against the Indians on the upper Wabash, Toussaint Dubois was given the rank of captain and had charge of the scouts and spies in the Tippecanoe campaign. He guided the army safely through the wilderness to the Indian town, and then went bravely ahead to talk peace to Tecumseh's warriors. The Indians tried to capture him, but Dubois made his escape, afterward participating in the battle of Tippecanoe. He was the first white man to buy land in what is now Dubois county. His will, a quaint document, is still preserved in the courthouse. His death was tragic. He was riding, accompanied by his colored servant. They attempted to swim their horses across a small stream not far from Vincennes. The creek was swollen by heavy rains. Captain Dubois had with him a pair of saddlebags, heavily laden with gold and silver. The weight of the money dragged him and his horse to death.

One of Captain Dubois's sons by his second wife was Jesse Kilgore Dubois, who was Senator Dubois's father. The senator has always had a strong affection for the State which his ancestor helped to settle, and this accounts for the personal friendship which exists between him and the Indiana senators. Senator Fairbanks, who always takes a deep interest in Indiana's early history, frequently talks with Senator Dubois about the stirring times when Toussaint Dubois was General Harrison's chief of scouts.

PINEAPPLE JUICE.

Its Value for Throat Affections—Something About the Fruit.

New York Press.

The best lubricant for the organs of the throat is pineapple juice. It is said that people living in countries where the cone-shaped fruit is grown never suffer from bronchial affections. The noted horseman, Michael F. Dwyer, once dreamed of quitting the turf and turning his talents to the growing of pines along the Indian river, about Rock Ledge, where he owned a hotel with 400 rooms. Perhaps he is sorry now that he did not follow this impulse. It might have saved his fortune and increased it. His idea was to express the juice and sell it to singers.

Strolling along the bulkheads and piers of the lower East Side on Wednesday I met my old tropical fruit friend, J. Roberts, of No. 158 Front street, superintending the disposal of a cargo of pineapples. Three ships of the Ward line were in port, one, the Seneca, having just arrived from Havana with 15,000 barrels of the delicious fruit in her hold. The Mexico and Monterey had unloaded the day before, and the Morro Castle the week preceding, these four vessels bringing in all no less than 70,000 packages of pines from the capital of Cuba. All the ships were handsomely decorated in honor of Cuba libre! Barrels and crates of fruit were piled as high as the housetops on pier and bulkhead, even invading the street almost to the hindrance of traffic. It was a revelation. Those of us who eat an apple occasionally do not realize what there is in the business of handling the product of the tropics.

Dealers do not say "pineapples," but "pines." The art of abbreviation is perfected in America, and no commercial abbreviation is ever misunderstood in the trade. The Morro Castle, then, brought from Havana 23,000 barrels of pines in her cargo, the Seneca 15,000, the Mexico 16,000 and the Monterey 16,000. The contents of a barrel run from 74 to 120, an average of, say, 100, and the pines weigh from 3½ to 12 pounds. Thus we have within less than one week receipts of pineapples amounting to 7,000,000. If they average seven pounds each the total weight is 49,000,000 pounds. The freight is about 70 cents a barrel, which means a revenue of $49,000 for the steamship owners for a week's haul of pines.

The wholesale price of this fruit is just now about 4 to 5 cents each. The pines reach here in a very green state, so they may bear shipment to points in the interior. Mr. Roberts, for instance, supplies the trade as far West as Omaha. Not many years ago when the voyage from Havana required five days the fruit in the warm hold of a ship ripened rapidly, arriving in New York nearly ready for the table. But to-day the voyage is only a three-day one, therefore the greener the pines. Mr. Roberts has an enormous loft at No. 158 Front street, where he ripens pines for the New York market by artificial process. It is heated to 110 degrees, and ordinarily three and a half to four days are required to throughly ripen the fruit. The retail price around town just now is from 10 to 15 cents.

The pineapple season lasts about three months—May, June and July. Dealers and commission men expect that this season the receipts will be not less than 200,000 packages, or something like 20,000,000 pines. They are coming in from Nassau and other points in the Bahamas in large quantities as the season advances. The barrels used are made in the United States. Why should not some enterprising American establish a barrel factory in Cuba? Here is an opening.

Mr. Roberts thinks that the crop this year is below the average in quality and price, and that the growers will not profit to any considerable extent on the season's output. Sightseers should visit the rooms of the Fruit Auction Company at No. ' Jay street any morning at 10:30 on the day of a Havana steamer's arrival. Here the cargoes are put up and sold by auction to the highest bidder, and a rare spectacle it is. The dealers are a pretty solid lot to look at, full of snap, push and go.

Manufacturers of preserves use many pines in the course of a season, and candy makers are heavy consumers, the requirement for glaces alone amounting to 10,000 barrels. A pungent and delicious perfume is made from the pine, and the ripening fruit on a center table will sweeten a whole room. Pineapple rum is a favorite tipple in the tropics, producing a jag that remains at least seven days. There are two particular brands of the fruit—the strawberry and the sugar-loaf. In Cuba the plantation owners say they eat only the sugar-loaf, feeding the strawberries to the hogs and—the Americans!

The war with Spain did several things. Among others this: It made the success of a powerful trust, known as the United Fruit Company. The promoters of this "octopus" (we have almost dropped that term in reference to trusts) saw its sure and early failure until the war came to its relief. Open competition was too heavy to render centralization possible. Suddenly the Cuban fruit business was knocked into a cocked hat. The ports were closed. Bananas and oranges, cocoanuts, etc., were in great demand, with prices soaring. The brains of the United Fruit Company had foreseen this, and with desperate energy purchased every available banana plantation in Jamaica, South and Central America and Porto Rico. Its ships rushed fruits to the markets and cargoes were sold at fabulous prices. The success of the trust was assured. It handles 25,000,000 bunches of bananas and 20,000,000 cocoanuts a year, besides oranges and other fruits. Capital, $20,000,000—a dollar for each cocoanut.

The Chicago Literati.

Roswell Field, in Chicago Evening Post.

Mayor Harrison greatly disappoints us when he somewhat sneeringly dismisses Townsman Gross's candidacy with the remark that "I do not think we want a literary treasurer." Our estimable fellow citizen has shown his ability to acquire and take care of a large fortune, and we fancy that he is abundantly able to do for the public what he has accomplished privately. His "literary talents" have nothing to do with the case, although we are of the opinion that it is about time for Chicago to recognize its literary men in a more substantial way than by permitting them to march in the rear of the County Democracy. When William Allen White returned to Emporia yesterday he was met at the station by a brass band and a large concourse of enthusiastic fellow citizens, but when a Cook county poet or eminent novelist comes home from a jaunt he feels highly flattered if his name gets into the personal column of the newspapers—misspelled, of course. How culture can hum under such discouragement as this we find it impossible to understand.

THERE ARE OTHERS.

He—Went shopping to-day and spent a hundred dollars.

She—What kind of shopping?

He—Bucket shopping.

INSANE THROUGH CHESS

EXPERTS IN THIS GAME WHO HAVE LOST MENTAL POISE.

An Intellectual Strain and Absorption Which Finally Creates Wreck.

New York Mail and Express.

Dead at the chess table, Francis C. Lariviere was loser, in the last game of his life. Dispatches from Melrose, Mass., relate that the old gentleman, though past seventy-one, was still keen at the game, and that, having played chess all his life, he was at length a victim of its fascination. He was playing a game with his wife when he died. Physicians say that his death was due to apoplexy, caused by mental concentration so intense that the blood rushed to his head in a flow too large for the brain's capacity.

The news of this sacrifice to the ancient and honorable game did not interrupt for long the silent battles at the Manhattan Chess Club, when the tidings were carried there by one who was curious to know something about the fatalities of this imperial pastime. Nothing but death or illness can interrupt these games till the checkmate comes.

"Dead at the chess table? Well, that was a good way to die," said one who stood watching a player put a red knight into a position of exquisite peril while he let his fingers get burned by the twenty-eighth match he had used on that one pipe of tobacco. Profound stillness brooded over the room where a score of men, most of them past the middle age, puffed fitful, blue-gray fumes of the herb o' grace, and for hours and hours said not a word. They were beneath the spell—the same spell that has these thousands of years held in still abstraction Hindu princes, Medean priests, Chinese statesmen, Roman soldiers, French philosophers and many a common man, from fire worshiper to Broadway merchant, while their beards grew long, and empires rose and fell, and civilization piled high its monuments around them. A man may honorably take off his hat to the centuries-saturated pawns and immemorial kings and queens that can so engage the attention of a man that even death finds him indifferent.

POE ON CHESS PLAYING.

It was Edgar Allen Poe who, perhaps, best characterized in a few terse sentences that mental quality of the chess player which sometimes develops into insanity and makes possible such singular deaths as that of the old gentleman in Melrose. "The game of chess," wrote Poe in that irresistible, grewsome tale, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," "is greatly misunderstood in its effects upon mental character. * * * The higher powers of the reflective intellect are more decided and more usefully tasked by the unostentatious game of draughts than by all the elaborate frivolity of chess. In this latter * * * the attention is called powerfully into play. If it flag for an instant an oversight is committed resulting in injury or defeat. * * * In nine cases out of ten it is the more concentrative rather than the more acute player who conquers. * * * The best chess player in christendom may be little more than the best player of chess; but proficiency in whist implies capacity for success in those more important undertakings where mind struggles with mind."

All of this the veteran chess player generally will admit, with serene content, to be true. Also he looks with complacency upon the chance he runs of getting into a game and starving to death from sheer forgetfulness, or sitting sanely down to the checkered table and arising from it a fantastic lunatic. The game's the thing, after all.

"I never have heard of a case just like that," said Mr. E. W. Dahl, who is one of the most indefatigable players at the Manhattan Chess Club. "Still, it's easy to believe that death could be caused by too close application. Intense thinking long maintained draws the blood into the brain, and there is perhaps no concentration so deep as that of the successful chess player. The game gets away with some men, just as religion or perpetual motion hurries others into an asylum or the grave. Now and then the mind turns or the man who drives it too hard; something breaks, and the whole machine goes to pieces or moves lamely and incompetently to the end of its course.

STEINITZ WENT MAD.

"There was Steinitz. When he lost his great contest with Lasker in Moscow he showed the first sign of aberration by declaring he was going to send a wireless message to President Cleveland. In his room there was a telephone which was not connected with the system. Steinitz talked his message into the receiver and said he would have an answer in twenty-four hours. The next day, no answer having come, he opened a window and shouted the message into the air. That was enough for his friends, and he was taken to an asylum. A peculiar feature of his madness was that in his rambling talk he never dealt in terms of chess, but raved continually about electricity. He conceived that he was surrounded by a maze of electric currents, and he warned all who came near him not to come into contact with these, lest they suffer injury. Steinitz was brought to America and died insane at Ward's island.

"Look at that picture there," Mr. Dahl said, pointing to a painting on the wall of the clubhouse. It was the portrait of a youthful-looking man, with a fine, dignified face and deep-set, solemn eyes.

"That is a good likeness of Morphy, the greatest chess player of them all. He, too, went insane through too close application to the infinite intricacies of the game. In his disjointed talk he could be got to say nothing about chess, but babbled constantly of erratic things. His father had been a lawyer, and he himself had a fine legal mind and a good training in technical law and controversy. But chess got him, and he died in a New Orleans asylum. You will find other instances like these—all variations upon the one theme."

Mr. Dahl became contemplative, and his steadfast and cold gray eyes swept over the tables and the books containing the chess lore of centuries upon centuries. Opening a ponderous tome, he pointed to a printed page filled with columns of letters and figures in queer combinations that looked like cabalistic keys to some treasure or mystery of the ages. There were six hundred such pages in the volume.

A LIFETIME WORK.

"These are merely the recorded variations of the first move," he went on. "A lifetime of work is there for a man who would learn all these combinations. A vast literature has been built up around the game, which Steinitz used to say is too much a science to be a game, and too much a game to be a science. He took it so serious that he advocated the establishment of chairs in universities to teach the intricate secrets of the game.

"The danger to me is that the fascination of it becomes irresistible, and even though it should not kill or madden all of us it unfits many a man for other vocations and avocations of life. It actually grows into a bad habit like any of the other small and pleasant vices of which Shakspeare says the gods make instruments to scourge us. Blackburn, the Englishman, will not permit his son to learn the game for the reason, as he declares, that a chess player, even though he may not lose his mind, comes soon to be good for little else but chess. It absorbs more and more of the devotee's attention till he is at last rapt in contemplation of the red and white pieces and does not know or care what the world is doing around him. When this gets to be a habit his case is settled."

Mr. Dahl smiled happily, as if to leave no doubt that such golden-chained servitude was a very positive kind of happiness, as it surely may be. In the playing room the smoke still curled from pipes and cigars into inconsequential fabrics; an occasional crackling of a match told of another stage in rumination; the stillness lay heavier upon the bent, bare heads. Apoplexy? Insanity? Who should worry?

The Difference.

Life.

"The difference between my husband's club and mine," said the pretty woman in the turquoise-colored toque, looking at her watch, "is that mine lasts from 2 until 6, and his lasts from 6 until 2."