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Business Notices.

Carl H. Schultz's distilled waters represent years of study and experience. And are the only pure, correct mineral waters manufactured in the Greater N. Y.

This is "Hospital Sunday," when the church offerings are for the sick. Remember this.

Little advertisements of big bargains are found in the narrow columns.

New-York Daily Tribune.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1897.

THE NEWS THIS MORNING.

FOREIGN.—No uneasiness over the possibility of war over the dismemberment of China is felt in London. ==== The German Government has refused the request of the United States for lower duties on animal products. ==== It is said that the relatives of Dr. Thomas W. Evans, the wealthy American dentist who died recently in Paris, will contest his will. ==== A number of persons were killed, including French naval and military officers by a railway collision in France, due to a fog. ==== A Grecian gunboat which attempted to leave the Gulf of Ambracia was fired upon by the Turkish fort at Prevesa; the Greek Ambassador to Turkey has been requested to obtain a friendly explanation.

DOMESTIC.—Nine persons are thought to have perished at the burning of the Coliseum in Chicago; two more bad fires occurred in Chicago, a fire captain receiving fatal injuries at one. ==== Thirty or forty people were terribly injured in Asheville, N. C., by the explosion of a can containing thirty pounds of powder, while a Christmas salute was being fired. ==== A report on the Indian troubles in Colorado by a special agent of the Interior Department exonerates the game wardens. ==== A sleighing party was struck by a train near Little Falls, N. Y.; a girl was killed and five people were seriously injured. ==== The merchants of Portland, Ore., have offered to equip and send a relief expedition to the Klondike. ==== Fifteen thousand window-glass workers in the Indiana gas belt are to return to work, their strike having been settled.

CITY AND SUBURBAN.—Christmas was celebrated in the churches and the various institutions of the city with the old-time gladness and with the usual kindness to the poor and unfortunate. ==== George F. Boulard, chief senior assistant civil engineer of the New-York Central and Hudson River Railroad, disappeared on December 17; since then no trace of him has been found. ==== Herman F. Dale died suddenly in his apartments at No. 34 Gramercy Park, and the police suspected suicide. ==== William H Grace, a well-known Brooklyn politician and real estate dealer, died. ==== "Jimmie" Michael, the midget cyclist, defeated Arthur Chase, the English champion middle distance rider, by about four miles in a thirty-mile race in Madison Square Garden.

THE WEATHER.—Indications for to-day: Rain. Temperature yesterday: Highest, 30 degrees; lowest, 16; average, 23⅞.

THE PARTITION OF CHINA.

News from the Far East is vague and often contradictory—its usual characteristics when wars or other serious movements are impending. Not even Havana itself has been the source of more news that is not news than Shanghai, for example, was throughout the war between China and Japan. Nevertheless, a few facts seem to be well established, and they may serve as bases for a certain amount of not too-reckless speculation. The one fundamental fact is, of course, that the long-contemplated partition of China has now actually begun. It may be dated from the time when Russia, Germany and France combined to oppress and coerce Japan into modifying the treaty of Simonoseki and thus relinquishing her just rights as victor in the Chinese war. For that doubtful service to China, Russia was first to claim reward, in the form of a military occupation and virtual protectorate of Manchuria and Leao-Tong. Germany has followed at no great distance by the seizure of Kiao-Chau. France will come last, but her share of the spoils will probably not be least. That a perfect understanding on the subject exists among the three Powers is unquestionable. It is shown in the facts that neither Russia nor France makes the slightest protest against Germany's action nor even expresses surprise at it, and that Russia, when appealed to by China for protection against Germany, answers merely by enlarging her own share of the partitioned empire and tightening her grip upon it.

Another thing equally clear is that the three Powers have three objects in view. The first is to grab as much as possible of China for themselves. That, of course. The second is to curb the rising power of Japan, to which country they have already demonstrated their hostility. The third, and not least, is to oust Great Britain from the place of paramount influence she has long held in China. For the present this last object is by far the most interesting and significant. It is to be observed that the three Powers are those which have long been accounted the least friendly to Great Britain—have, indeed, each of them on more than one occasion manifested an active desire to baffle her diplomacy and thwart the promotion of her interests. They have, at any rate, taken this action without consulting her, and with full consciousness that it will not prove pleasing to her. More than that, an officially sanctioned utterance on behalf of the chief of them is to the effect that Great Britain is not to be considered in the matter, and that if she insists upon having a hand in the partition of China she will be responsible for whatever breach of the peace may occur. Whether Great Britain will protest against their action, or will herself make compensatory seizures of Chinese territory, and, in either case, how her action will be regarded by the three Powers, are among the most important questions in the whole business.

Japan may be thought of last, but assuredly she is not to be ignored. She is now a great Power. She has the enormous advantage of proximity to the scene of action. She has a more powerful fleet than any other, save two, can put into those waters, and she has a stronger army than any of them can at present send to that quarter of the globe. She has, moreover, already a strong foothold in China, at Wei-Hai-Wei, on the other side of the very peninsula of Shan-Tung which Germany has invaded. She holds that place merely as security for the payment of the war indemnity by China. It is said Russia will now advance the money, so that China can pay off the indemnity at once and thus get rid of the Japanese. But suppose that, after they have got the money, the Japanese decline to go, and make their settlement at Wei-Hai-Wei permanent? They would have as much right to do so as Germany has to seize Kiao-Chau—indeed, more; for Japanese interests in China are far greater than German. Who would undertake to turn the Japanese out? Not the Chinese, we may be sure. They had enough of that in Corea and at Port Arthur. Would one or all of the three partitioning Powers? There is only one of them that could do it, and she is the last that would undertake it. Against either Germany or Russia, or both of them, Japan could hold her own.

Finally, there is the possibility, which daily verges toward the condition of probability, that there will be co-operation between Japan and Great Britain, as, indeed, there ought to be. Their interests are harmonious, their aims the same. Relations between them are friendly. Joint action would be easy. And it is pretty evident that such action would be irresistible. No other combination of Powers could hope to master these two. Their occupation of Wei-Hai-Wei would effectually counterbalance the Russian occupation of Port Arthur and the German occupation of Kiao-Chau, in commanding the approaches to Peking and dominating the Yellow Sea. There is, moreover, Port Hamilton. Great Britain once possessed it, and gave it up only on a pledge that Russia would not occupy Corea. It might be reckoned, and not unjustly, that Russia's occupation of Port Arthur was equivalent to occupation of Corea, at least so far as justifying British reoccupation of Port Hamilton was concerned. These considerations indicate vast possibilities of international complications in that region before the partition of China is completed, in which the Power that ultimately dominated the partitioning of India and of North America may play a leading part.

AT IT AGAIN.

New-York as it is and as it will be on the last day of this present week of grace regards with impartial interest every project for the consolidation of other municipalities. For the moment, and not for the first time by any means, St. Paul and Minneapolis—that is to say, Minneapolis and St. Paul—occupy the field of observation. Last Monday a resolution was laid before the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce expressing the opinion that the right time has now come for a serious movement directed to the organic union of Minnesota's engaging twins, already joined in a superficial manner by a thin line of habitations between their outskirts, and proposing that the Minneapolis Board of Trade be invited to appoint a committee of ten to discuss the proposition with a similar committee of the St. Paul Chamber. Feeling a general concern for the welfare of the whole country, and being peculiarly solicitous for the prosperity and happiness of communities to which the "manifest destiny" argument may be supposed to appeal, we have naturally consulted the leading newspapers of Minneapolis and St. Paul for the purpose of ascertaining their views on the subject of consolidation. To our surprise we have found that they are in substantial agreement as to the main question, though on one side the proposal is examined with evident apprehension and on the other with an approach to levity.

"The St. Paul Pioneer Press" opens the discussion with the remarkable and seemingly inopportune statement that it knows of no good reason for the breaking out of a fresh war between St. Paul and Minneapolis. To the distant observer it will appear that our contemporary has misunderstood the proposition; but this is not the fact, for it goes on to say that a suggestion of municipal union has always been the signal for an outbreak of hostilities, and that the present revival of the project threatens another fierce and sanguinary battle between the two cities, which would be most deplorable, inasmuch as each is now doing a satisfactory business at the old stand, and they are getting along together in an amicable and comfortable manner. "The Pioneer Press" furthermore declares that the more the scheme is discussed the more impracticable it will prove to be; that "their mutual rivalry, so long as it "is confined to the proper limits of interurban "comity, is a help to both rather than a harm "to either"; that socially and politically they are dissimilar organisms, and that "they are in-"capable of being fused into one individual-"ity." It adds that the proposed conference might serve a useful purpose by concerting plans of mutual co-operation for the common benefit, and closes with the expression of a hope that "the flag of peace and union" just hung out "may not prove a portent of an impending fracas." So much for public sentiment in St. Paul, which we assume to be fairly represented by "The Pioneer Press." It should be noted that the tone, though solemn, is friendly, that the withers of Minneapolis are unwrung, and, in fact, that not a word is said which could be tortured into a provocation of the war which is predicted and deplored.

As we have intimated, "The Minneapolis Tribune" approaches the subject in a different spirit. Its mood, if not exactly flippant, is rather airy, and, though it proclaims peace and goodwill, we seem to detect in its remarks a suggestion of conscious superiority. Like its St. Paul neighbor it thinks that present conditions are not favorable to consolidation, and that there is no occasion for haste, but it concedes that consolidation may be practicable and desirable at some time hereafter. All this is quite reasonable and proper, but just here "The Tribune" made the serious mistake of going on instead of stopping. With a reckless disregard of consequences it not only takes up the dangerous problem of a name for the possible city of the future, but lays this train of fire to the powder-house: "Following the example of the Eastern metropo-"lis, we might adopt the name of Greater Min-"neapolis. St. Paul could be organized as the "Borough of St. Paul, and its municipal rela-"tions to the big city carefully defined." Passing over the lamentable condition of ignorance from which proceeds the monstrous error that the name of the second city of the world is to be anything else than New-York, and barely alluding to the fact that Paulopolis is a euphonious combination of two linguistically kindred words, we do not hesitate to say that "The Minneapolis Tribune" abundantly justifies the melancholy apprehensions of "The St. Paul Pioneer Press." The next gale which sweeps from the Northwest will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms.

THE LORDSHIP OF THE NILE.

The upper reaches of the Nile maintain their immemorial reputation. For centuries they were veiled in mystery. Whence did the great river spring? Was it from some fabled Mountain of the Moon, or from the land of the Anthropophagi, or from the home of those whose heads grew beneath their shoulders? Never has the Arctic Pole been sought more pertinaciously or more heroically than have the sources of the Nile. At last they have been found, and, incidentally, some of the seemingly most fanciful of the old classic legends about that land of mystery have been found true. But darkness still enshrouds those remote and inhospitable regions. It takes news a weary while to get thence to civilization. What is actually occurring there is for the time as hopelessly unknown as it was a century ago. The result is contradictory rumors and general uncertainty, even in matters of the highest import.

A striking case in point is furnished in the circumstances narrated in detail on another page of to-day's paper. The principal movement of the present time in Africa is the race for possession of the Upper Nile, which means, as explained, the control of the whole river and the mastery of Egypt's destinies. The rivals in that race are Great Britain and France. The one moves upon the scene from north and south, the other from east and west. Concerning the former's progress, trustworthy information is accessible. Concerning the latter's, it is not. A few days ago, as stated in the article referred to, word came on what seemed the best authority that the French expedition had been destroyed and that the rival governments had come to a friendly agreement, in which the British claims were recognized and affirmed. The next day from another source came word that the French expedition was safe and successful, that it had taken possession of the coveted points and that the British were completely beaten in the race. The former tidings came, however, from by far the more credible source, and until more authoritatively contradicted may be regarded as probably true.

The salient feature of the whole contest is the importance of the Nile and its floods to Egypt. As long as the river furnishes yearly its tribute of water and of fertilizing mud from Abyssinia and the Soudan, Egypt will be one of the most productive agricultural countries in the world. Should that tribute be withheld Egypt would become a desert, barren as that of Barca. And any strong Power occupying the Nile and its tributaries above Abu Hamed would be able to bring the latter state of affairs to pass by diverting the stream to another channel and outlet. It is not to be assumed that France would do so had she possession of that region. Nevertheless, the fact that it would be in her power to do so would be a constant source of disquiet to Egypt and a potent factor for forcing the British to relinquish their hold of that country in France's favor. The outcome of the race will be awaited with greater interest than the settlement of the Transvaal dispute or any other pending controversy in that continent.

A PARK ON GOVERNOR'S ISLAND.

Many years ago the suggestion was made that if the Federal Government were willing to surrender Governor's Island a public park might be established there. A bill has been introduced in Congress with the purpose of carrying out such a plan. It is evident that exceedingly attractive pleasure-grounds might be laid out upon Governor's Island—grounds which all the people of the second city in the world might well be proud of. This island is peculiarly suitable for the recreation of the men, women and children of all the southern and southeastern regions of the Empire State. Surrounded by salt water and set in a convenient and easily accessible place in our magnificent harbor, it could be made a resort for the people which would be of inestimable benefit and value. Central Park, picturesque and admirable as it is, is by no means a cool place on a hot summer day. It is too far from the ocean and from the waters of the Bay to receive the full effects of the breezes which are so refreshing at Governor's Island. As a midsummer park this island would probably become more popular with the masses of the Greater New-York than any other spot within the limits of its spacious territory.

The plan for setting aside the most important stretches of the Palisades for a military reservation might fit in with the scheme for using Governor's Island as a park. Every one knows that Governor's Island is practically useless for the defence of the city. Any hostile fleets and armies in case of war must be kept away from this port by batteries and fortresses and vessels many miles from the City Hall and the Custom House. Why might it not be satisfactory and advantageous to convert this island into a park and to transfer the soldiers who are now there to the proposed new military reservation on the Palisades or to some other military station? There are no costly or massive buildings on Governor's Island, and the Government has never spent much money on improvements there. The advisability of removing the institutions from Blackwell's Island to other sites and the laying out of a park on that island has frequently been considered, but to make that change would involve immense cost for new buildings and for the land on which the buildings would be erected. The National Government could transfer the regular troops at Governor's Island to the Palisades reservation or some other suitable area without vast outlay, and the city of New-York could make one of the finest and loveliest parks in the world out of the island. What overwhelming objections to this plan can be brought forward?

THE STRENGTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

The annual reports of the various religious bodies for the year now closing will doubtless show a substantial gain in numbers and strength over the previous year. And if the various forms of unbelief were compact organizations instead of individualistic units they would also, in all likelihood, give evidences of progress and growth. This is only another way of saying that statistical tables are not in every case conclusive as to the real condition of an organization. The plain man who thinks that two and two always make four is quite likely to find his impression corrected by experience. Human nature is a strange and puzzling fact in the universe, and history shows it often asserting that two and two make three or five. In other words, great systems of belief and rules of conduct have been built up on falsehoods quite as palpable.

But, although statistics in themselves may not settle the question as to the growth of Christianity during the last year, they are not without their value. They reveal a healthful activity in the various Christian Churches, and, taken in connection with other facts less capable of tabulation, they do prove that Christianity in this country has lost none of its vitality and little, if any, of its power over the heart and the conscience of the Nation. It is true that a multitude of adult men and women are outside of the membership of the Churches, and that of these some are living absolutely un-Christian lives, while others are active opponents of the Christian faith. It is also true that many who are nominal Christians ignore wholly the teachings of Christianity, yet, in spite of all this, the vital principles of Christianity continue to impress themselves on the thought and action of the Nation with all their old-time compelling power. In many cases this is as true of those who are outside of Christianity as it is of active Church members. Without intending it, and in some cases without desiring it, they order their life and conduct in accordance with the fundamental teachings of Christ. The phrase Christianity outside the Church has been rather overworked by some highly emotional liberals with a minimum of solid and substantial principles. Yet the existence to-day of Christianity outside the Church must be admitted. It has become a factor in the problem that cannot be ignored. Though the theologian may be sadly puzzled in trying to account for it, good men generally will rejoice that Christianity has been powerful enough to make its influence felt outside of its organized limits. Yet this influence, great as it undoubtedly is, eludes all attempts to array it in tables of statistics, and, in point of fact, is often credited to forces and ideas that are outside of, or hostile to, Christianity.

There is another thing to be borne in mind in estimating the strength of religion to-day. Besides the two great classes of religious and irreligious people into which communities have always been divided, we are now called upon to recognize another class of people—and by no means a small one, either—who may be called unreligious. They are not irreligious, because they are not hostile to religion and do not necessarily frame their lives in opposition to its teachings. But they are unreligious, because they do not feel, and therefore do not recognize, their relation to any higher power than themselves. The theological setting of religion and its recognition of a supernatural origin, together with a belief in a divine revelation, they would reject as puerilities. But while so far they are not religious, a great majority of them are living good, clean, moral and wholesome lives, and they must, therefore, be numbered among those who are helping to advance the cause of righteousness in the world. Nevertheless, it is fair to assume that they owe much of their moral stability to the fact that Christianity is, so to speak, in the very air they breathe, and has left an ineffaceable impress on the whole fabric of modern civilization.

BROTHER P. AND BROTHER Q.

There are Ps and Qs, and all Ps are not the same P. Sometimes the P and Q are in conjunction, and then it is the Platt-Quigg. Sometimes the P and Q are in opposition, and then it is never Platt-Quigg, for Quigg belongs to his "Master" twenty-four hours in the day. Then it is the Payn-Quigg, a concoction much more entertaining and spicy. Just at present the Payn-Quigg is in evidence.

Brother Payn and Brother Quigg do not dwell together in unity. In fact, it has been difficult to get them to go to Mr. Platt's Sunday-school together without shooting beans at each other behind the teacher's back. Sometimes they have shot them before his face, and he has had to tweak them both by the ears and tell them not to disturb the religious calm of the class. The teacher never gave Brother P. a prize but that Brother Q. grew sorrowful at the way bad boys fooled his dear teacher, and Brother Q. never was tickled with a stick of candy but that Brother P. threatened to lick him after school was out. Most of the candy labelled "For a Good Boy" has gone to Brother Q., but it is noted that about all Brother Q. ever got was rather gaudily striped sticks of pretty cheap candy, while the valuable gifts went to the bad Brother P. Just now Brother Q., as becomes a good Sunday-school scholar, is willing to forgive Brother P. in spite of all his wickedness, about which he once told the teacher, but after the manner of the wicked to whom goodness is offensive, Brother P. refuses to be forgiven. In fact, he has taken advantage of a demoralized condition of the school, owing to an epidemic of Low fever in the community, to attack Brother Q. in a rough, not to say brutal, fashion. This is the cause of much sorrow to the rest of the Sunday-school, and the school paper, "The P.-Q.-R.-Sun," urges the brethren—not to develop a Christian spirit, for that is hopeless—but to exercise self-control, for the sake of the class. It quotes one of the other scholars as saying:

Let Brother Payn hate Brother Quigg as much as he pleases, and let Brother Quigg detest Brother Payn as much as he pleases, but there let it rest, and let's all get in line ready for the general fray.

Now this, it seems to us, is impossible. Human nature rules even in a Sunday-school, and we do not see how two such boys can get together "even for a good purpose," as Cornelius N. Bliss says. Each must think the cause disgraced by the other, and feel it a high and religious duty to drive him out of the fold of the elect. Brother Q. thinks that Brother P. is a briber, a lobbyist and a corruptionist. He has several times said as much. On the other hand Brother P. thinks Brother Q. a libeller, a "smart Alec," a "dead duck" and other unpleasant things, some of which are better unmentioned at Christmas time. So each, out of self-respect, must feel obliged to free the Sunday-school of the contaminating influence of the other. It is hard to see how they can get together, however much the Sunday-school may be grieved over the split.

Not content with destroying the seals of Behring Sea, the Canadians are planning to ruin the sealing industry of their Newfoundland neighbors and fellow-subjects of the Queen.

Italy naturally declines to enter into land-grabbing ventures in China, partly, perhaps, because of some understanding with her partners in the Triple Alliance, but chiefly because she has had enough of that sort of thing in Africa to last her for a while longer.

Cardinal Gibbons indorses a measure soon to be brought before the Maryland Legislature for the protection of the songbird, and records himself, as might be expected, in the list of lovers of the feathered aerial choir and a foe of any and all who would do them violence. That is the side on which all gentle-minded persons are naturally to be looked for, and it is no wonder that the Cardinal puts in an early appearance there in full canonicals and pontificals. The birds should greet with their sweetest songs a defender so august and illustrious.

Mr. Leiter wants all the wheat he can get for his business as a "merchant," but it is noticeable that he doesn't take any that he can find an excuse for refusing.

Of the airship for peace and war the world is not likely to hear the last in any period of its history, and no inventor will ever be daunted by the procession of failures in which the line of his predecessors has marched from a time to which the memory of man runneth not. As there were strong men before Agamemnon there were very likely balloonatics before Elijah or the Witch of Atlas striving for the dominion of the air, as their aftertypes are still striving, with hope for their incentive, and, so far, with disappointment for their guerdon. Whether William S. Roberts's aerial warship, plans of which have been sent by request to the War Department, is to be an exception to the common run of failures we shall perhaps know one of these days, and can wait with composure and no particular extravagance of expectation. The poet in his vision

> Saw the heavens fill with commerce,
> Argosies of magic sails,
> Pilots of the purple twilight
> Dropping down with costly bales,
> Heard the heavens fill with shouting
> While there rained a ghastly dew
> From the nations' airy navies,
> Grappling in the central blue.

But although he was quite minute and particular in his description, as if it mirrored an approaching reality, it still remains a picture of the air, notwithstanding all efforts to give it substance, and will probably remain a vision for some time to come.

Who is to give bonds for the Tammany Surety Company which is to give bonds for the Tammany officials? Its risks are extra-hazardous, and to assure public confidence the assurance of its own assurances may become a necessary feature of its business policy.

James Mingle, first-class criminal, of Illinois, under sentence of death and to be speedily executed, wants to be hanged in a dress suit, and has issued an unofficial requisition on the Sheriff to provide him one. No appropriation for such a purpose appears in the prison budget, but the Constitution cheerfully recognizes the principle that the Sheriff may foot such bills appertaining to his administration as are not otherwise provided for, and he will no doubt see that his fastidious inmate is supplied with the suit desired to decorate and lend dignity to his taking off. On such occasions ordinary conventions give way, and it is useless to interpose the criticism that unless his execution took place in the evening the costume he has chosen will be inappropriate to the time and blemish the ceremony with a solecism. There are social and other crises in which it is conceivable that a swallow-tail and white choker may be admissible at 11 a. m. or at a 2 o'clock luncheon party. They are not frequent, to be sure, and require the palliation of a host of mitigating circumstances. But in the case of a hanging all prescriptions, precedents and current customs have and should have no weight in determining appropriateness of attire. James's desire "to be hanged in style" perhaps flows from an impulse of repentance, and his preference of a tail coat on the occasion over a cutaway or Prince Albert need cast no cloud on its sincerity. But it is not a custom to be encouraged unless the costume is to be abandoned for other uses.

PERSONAL.

Governor Powers of Maine says that when he was a young Justice of the Peace he married a couple, later secured them a divorce, married the man to another woman, secured them a divorce, and later remarried the original couple.

W. Bourke Cockran, of this city, will deliver a lecture in Philadelphia on January 31 for the benefit of St. Vincent's Home and Maternity Hospital, of Philadelphia.

"The most intelligent negro I ever knew," says a man quoted by "The Utica Observer," "was the late Adam Blake, of Albany, who was the proprietor of Congress Hall and afterward of the Kenmore. But Adam Blake had less negro blood in his veins than the late Alexandre Dumas, the great French novelist, of whom the following story is told: He was waited on one day by a Parisian dandy, who questioned him concerning himself and family. 'What was your father?' he asked. 'A mulatto,' replied Dumas. 'And your grandfather?' 'A negro.' 'And your great-grandfather?' 'An ape. You see, my family line begins where yours ends.'"

Mrs. Allie M. Day has just been appointed physician and surgeon of the Lake County (Ind.) Asylum and Hospital. She is the first woman in Indiana to be thus recognized.

Governor Atkinson of Georgia and a party of friends will start in a few days for an extensive tour through Mexico.

Mrs. Kate Cabell Currie, of Dallas, Tex., the new president of the National Daughters of the Confederacy, is a daughter of General W. L. Cabell, a Confederate veteran, who is more familiarly known throughout Dixie as "Old Tige." Just at present the daughters are trying to raise a fund of $4,000, which is to be used in marking the graves of the thirty thousand Confederates who died in Union prisons. It is proposed to erect a simple shaft in each one of the thirteen cemeteries of Union prisoners.

When the late Princess Mary of Teck first became stout, says an English journal, she sent for the celebrated Banting. She was surprised to see that he was still extremely bulky, and after a few civil preparatory remarks, she said: "But your system has not made you very thin, Mr. Banting." "Allow me, madam," said Banting—and, proceeding to unbutton his coat, he disclosed a large wire structure over which the garment fitted. Inside was the real Banting, incased in another coat. "This, madam," said he, pointing with pardonable satisfaction to his cage, "was my size before I commenced dieting." He then nimbly disembarrassed himself of his framework, and stood before the royal lady exhibiting his elegant figure! Apparently the interview led to nothing but amusement, for the good Duchess of Teck remained very stout to the end of her days.

THE TALK OF THE DAY.

The thirteenth annual conference of the Associated Academic Principals of the State of New-York will be held in Syracuse to-morrow. The officers of the organization are Oscar D. Robinson, of Albany, president; B. G. Clapp, of Fulton, vice-president, and S. Dwight Arms, of Palmyra, secretary.

Coroner—What was the cause of Diamond Joe's death?
Bronco Pete—Heart disease.
Coroner—Are you sure of that?
Bronco Pete—Sartin. The heart was an ace and he had it up his sleeve.—(Chicago News.

A census recently taken of the domestic servants of the principal cities of Germany discloses that Frankfort has more than any other town in proportion to its size—seventy three to every thousand inhabitants. Berlin has only thirty seven domestics to each thousand of its population.

For a Living—They shuddered.
"And you have stolen for a living?" faltered they.
"I used to steal, but now I murder," replied the man who had been condemned to be hanged fourteen several times, only to be saved in each instance by a writ of supersedeas.
When they had gone he laughed quietly.
"Ha, ha!" he laughed, to be perfectly explicit.—(Detroit Journal.

In a house in Warrenton, Va., is hung the large mirror before which George Washington made his daily toilet. It was bought at the sale of the personal effects of Laurence Washington, a great-nephew of the first President, and has hung in its present place for thirty-five years.

Hattie—What humbugs men are! Harry tells me sometimes that he is suffering for a kiss. The idea!
Carrie—Oh, but one can suffer for a kiss. I have myself.
Hattie—Why, Carrie, what do you mean?
Carrie—Mother saw me kiss Jack Millings, and she wouldn't let me see him again for ever so long.—(Boston Transcript.

A Quebec shoedealer has thought up a clever advertising idea. With every pair of shoes sold he gives a pair of overshoes, on each sole of which is a stamp of his business, with the letters reversed as in type. At each step the wearer takes in the snow the shoedealer's advertisement is visible. It is, therefore, visible all over town.

HIS WATERLOO.

He had worn a colored blazer on the Nile,
He had sported spats in Persia, just for style;
With a necktie quite too utter
In the streets of old Calcutta
He had stirred up quite a flutter for a while.

The maids of Java thronged before his door,
Attracted by the trousers that he wore;
And his vest—a bosom-venter—
Shook Formosa to its centre,
And they hailed him as a mentor by the score.

On his own ground, as a "masher" on the street,
He outdid a Turkish pacha, who stood treat;
He gave Shanghai the jumps,
And their cheeks stuck out like humps
At the patent-leather pumps upon his feet.

But he called upon a 'Peka girl one night,
With a necktie ready made, which wasn't right;
And she looked at him, this maid did,
And he faded, and he faded,
And he faded and he faded out of sight.
—(Kansas City Journal.

Professor Hanson, an agent of the Agricultural Department travelling in Turkestan, has discovered a species of muskmelon which sometimes weighs as much as thirty pounds.

A sign on an office building in a Georgia county reads: "Couples married on short notice. Come one—come all!" And next door there is another sign, as follows: "Couples divorced on easy terms, without gittin' in the newspapers!" A citizen explained the two signs by saying: "Them fellers is brothers. One's a jestice an' t'other's a lawyer. They plays into each other's hands an' divide profits."—(Atlanta Constitution.

Beverly C. Bass, a man of standing and education in Chattanooga, Tenn., has made the following pitiful announcement in a Chattanooga paper: "I hereby acknowledge myself an habitual drunkard, and warn every man connected with the liquor trade that he violates his oath by selling, giving, or allowing me drink. God knows I want to quit, but I can't as long as I can get liquor. I take this method of cutting off the possibility of doing so."

Barber—How would you like your hair cut, sir; with the scissors or clippers?
Customer—Both. Use the scissors on my hair and the clippers on your conversation.—(Chicago Record.

Governor Pingree of Michigan says that the newspapers have doubled the price of the Venezuela asphalt mine which he has been trying to buy. "You see," he explains, "those fellows over there have learned that Governor Pingree of Michigan is trying to secure a big Venezuelan asphalt mine for only $80,000, and very naturally they've doubled the price on us. Why can't the newspapers mind their own business?" But the Governor should remember that in case he does buy the mine, the newspapers may write it up so attractively that he will be able to sell it at a handsome profit.

Grandpa—Don't get scared, Willie, the tiger is about to be fed; that's what makes him jump up and roar so.
Willie (earnestly)—Oh, I ain't afraid of him, grandpa; papa's the same way when his meals aren't ready.—(Tit-Bits.

The Rev. William Dermody, pastor of the Holy Family Church, of Natchez City, Miss., has written a curious letter to the Editor of "The Midland Tribune," of Birr, Ireland. "Thousands of industrious farmers in this country," he says, "are reduced to starvation, and are objects of public charity. First the drouth, and then the overflowing of the Mississippi, which drains half of the United States, and which threatens to end in making the whole of the great region known as the 'Valley of the Father of Waters' an inland sea, caused incalculable injury to life and property. Then came yellow fever. In one place alone, the city of Memphis, the plague reduced the population within the month of September from 56,000 to 12,000! The victims included twenty-five priests. Many populous places have ceased to exist, and are turned into huge graveyards. Several thousand died in New-Orleans." If this letter is genuine, Father Dermody must be the victim of some practical joker who has "stuffed" him.

Incompatible—"Squallinger, what has become of your carriage and span of bays?"
"Had to sell them, Flickinger. I'm keeping a baby carriage and span of twins."—(Chicago Tribune.

A NOVEL CHRISTMAS DINNER.

HOWARD GOULD ENTERTAINS FRIENDS AT THE HOLLAND HOUSE.

Howard Gould gave a dinner in the Gold Room of the Holland House last evening for Mr. and Mrs. John H. Kimble, who have just returned to New-York from their honeymoon trip. Mr. Kimble has been Mr. Gould's intimate friend and one of his most constant companions, and last night's dinner was held to celebrate his return with his bride to take up their home in the city. The other guests were Miss Katherine Clemmons, Mr. and Mrs. V. P. Snyder, Mr. and Mrs. Alden S. Swan, Mr. and Mrs. G. N. Kirkpatrick, Mr. and Mrs. Leroy W. Baldwin, Mr. and Mrs. Elijah Sells, Mrs. Robert Marshall, jr., and Dr. Arthur S. Vosburgh.

The dinner is said to be the finest of its kind ever given at the Holland House. The table decorations had been arranged with great care and made a charming picture in pink. At each of the four corners of the table was a candelabra of five electric lights within pink globes. The flowers were American Beauty roses and white carnations. At the plate of each guest was a row of tiny electric lights wreathed in smilax. A side table bore heaps of California fruit, including strawberries, pomegranates and hothouse grapes.

After dinner the guests went upstairs to the apartments of Miss Clemmons, the parlor of which had been transformed into a veritable fairyland. The principal object in the room was a large Christmas tree, decorated with flowers, tinsel, ornamental figures and toys, and illuminated with electric candles. On each side of this were tables laden with gifts, each of which furnished a good joke for the person for whom it was intended. Dr. Vosburgh, dressed as Santa Claus, made the presentations with appropriate comments. A Punch and Judy show afterward supplied amusement for the guests, and when that was over a phonograph told stories, sang songs and made speeches from an adjoining table.

Added to the palms and usual Christmas decorations in the room were branches of orange and lemon trees, which still bore the fruit and had been brought from California especially for the occasion. On the mantelpiece were great heaps of grapes, and around it were wreaths of the beautiful red pepper plant, covered with berries. The guests were amused and entertained until Christmas was a festival of the past.

QUIET HOLIDAY AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

NO CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES ON ACCOUNT OF THE PRESIDENT'S RECENT BEREAVEMENT.

Washington, Dec. 25.—Christmas Day was the most quiet and peaceful on record at the White House. Owing to the recent bereavement of the President, all official functions were suspended, and throughout the day the doors of the Executive Mansion rarely swung on their hinges. President and Mrs. McKinley early in the day went for a short drive about the city. The weather was perfect, clear, cloudless and crisp. Early in the morning a messenger arrived with a great basket of pink roses, orchids and lilies of the valley, marked simply "For the President." A little later the President's carriage drew up at the door, and Mrs. McKinley came downstairs leaning on the President's arm. Mrs. McKinley seemed as well as at any time since her arrival at the White House, while the President was in excellent health. The only guests in the house were Miss Duncan and Miss Barber, who remained at home during the morning. The Christmas dinner was purely a family affair.

Vice-President and Mrs. Hobart spent the day at their home, in Paterson, N. J. All the members of the Cabinet, with the exception of Secretary Bliss, who is in New-York, and Postmaster-General Gary, who is in Baltimore, spent the day with their families here.

DR. EVANS'S WILL TO BE CONTESTED.

RELATIVES DISSATISFIED WITH THE SMALL SHARE OF THE ESTATE GIVEN TO THEM.

Paris, Dec. 25.—The will of Dr. Thomas W. Evans, the American dentist, which gives the greater part of his large estate to the Thomas W. Evans Museum and Institute of Philadelphia, probably will be contested by relatives who are dissatisfied with its provisions. Dr. Evans made thirty bequests to members of his family, but they aggregate only $250,000, the remainder of his property, estimated to be worth millions of dollars, having been bequeathed to the new museum and institute. A delegation of dissatisfied heirs will arrive at Havre to-morrow, and nothing definite will be known as to the probable contest until Monday or Tuesday.

WILL OF THE PRESIDENT'S MOTHER.

Canton, Ohio, Dec. 5.—President McKinley and his brother Abner are named as executors of the last will of Nancy Allison McKinley. The will was filed in the Probate Court yesterday. It bears date of May 29, 1895. All the property except a small gift to a faithful family servant is bequeathed to Miss Helen McKinley, the daughter who lived with Mrs. McKinley at the old homestead.

THE MURRAY HILL THEATRE.

It was announced in these columns two or three days ago that the Murray Hill Theatre had closed and that it would not be reopened under the management of the former lessee, Frank B. Murtha, unless he could get a new lease from the Goelet estate, which owns the property, on more favorable terms than his old one. He had been paying an annual rental of $25,000, and wished it reduced to $17,000. The managers of the estate have decided that they cannot come to Mr. Murtha's terms, and the theatre will therefore remain closed till a new lessee is found. It is hinted, however, that the estate may yet have to accept Mr. Murtha as the new lessee. Another offer of $14,000 is said to have been received from another manager, but there would be obviously no advantage in rejecting Mr. Murtha's offer to accept this.

MISS JULIA MARLOWE IN TOWN.

Miss Julia Marlowe arrived in town from Cincinnati last evening, apparently in no such desperate state of ill-health as has been represented. She will go to Lakewood soon, and remain there till it is time for her to return to New-York for her engagement at the Knickerbocker Theatre, which is to begin on January 3. There appears to be no reasonable doubt that she will be able to play at that time.

HIS WISH WAS FULFILLED.

Casper Fuchs, eighty years old, who had lived for a long time at Kingsbridge Road and the Southern Boulevard, died yesterday in Fordham Hospital. His wife died on Christmas Day, 1885, and he had often expressed a wish that he might die on the anniversary of her death.

COMMENT ON CURRENT TOPICS.

AMERICAN INTERESTS COMMERCIAL.

From The Troy Times.

The partition of China does not necessarily mean that the trade of that country will be divided among the land-grabbing Powers. With the Germans at Kiao-Chau Bay, the Russians at Port Arthur and the English at whatever point they can gain a footing, American commercial prospects will in reality be improved, for with Europeans in control, even though that control has been gained by unscrupulous means, China will become more civilized and the demand for American products will be increased.

THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA.

From The Baltimore Sun.

The United States are not in the business of pulling chestnuts out of the fire for anybody. Our role is rather to let the European nations pull the chestnuts out and then help to eat them. If, as se