BILTMORE HOUSE OPENED.

FAMILY PARTY AT GEORGE W. VANDERBILT'S COUNTRY MANSION.

His Great Estate in North Carolina a Scene of Merry Making—A Christmas Tree for All the Employees—The Members of the Party from the North—Extent of the Preserve—A Huge Pleasure Ground.

ASHEVILLE, N. C., Dec. 25.—George W. Vanderbilt formally opened his country home near Asheville to-day. All the immediate members of the Vanderbilt family now in this country are guests at "Biltmore House." Among them are Mrs. William H. Vanderbilt, mother of the owner of Biltmore; Mrs. Bromley, his aunt; Mrs. Kissam, Miss Kissam, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Vanderbilt, Mr. and Mrs. W. Seward Webb, daughter and son; Cornelius Vanderbilt and family, W. K. Vanderbilt, W. D. Sloane and family, and others. All came here in private cars, and brought with them an army of servants.

For two weeks George W. Vanderbilt has personally directed corps of carvers, joiners, decorators, and florists in giving the finishing touches to the great mansion, and it doubtless stands to-day, with its surrounding park and outlying hunting and fishing preserves, the most valuable, as well as the most extensive, private property in America. The house tract contains 9,000 acres, upon which seventy-five miles of driveways have already been laid out. The hunting preserves embrace 87,000 acres, in which is included Mount Pisgah, said to be the highest peak east of the Rocky Mountains.

Biltmore House stands upon a terrace overlooking the French Broad and Swananoa valleys, and from its turrets are to be seen not less than fifty mountain peaks with an altitude of 5,000 feet. Every conceivable modern adornment and convenience are found within its walls. Driveways have been constructed at an enormous expense, and wind over rustic bridges, besides artificial lakes and natural water courses. On either hand mountain sides, attractive in their native ruggedness, have been aided by the art of the landscape artists and enriched in foliage from the arboretum until they give many beautiful surprises.

For two weeks provisions of all kinds have been arriving in car loads, confections in hundred-pound packages, game, fish, fowls of all sorts, frozen meats in car loads. To-day at 11 o'clock a Christmas tree was given to all the employees on the estate, numbering between three and five hundred. Barrels of mistletoe and wagon loads of holly and cart loads of packages were used. After the Christmas tree a dinner was spread.

Although the company now at Biltmore is made up exclusively of members of the Vanderbilt family, festivities will broaden toward the close of the week, when a large company of Mr. Vanderbilt's New York friends will be his guests, for perhaps ten days. The time will be spent in coaching parties, hunting, fox chasing, quail shooting, and fishing.

There was something more than a Christmas celebration in the festivities at Biltmore. It was the first real reunion of the Vanderbilt family since the death of William H. Vanderbilt, and even in that respect it was not a complete success, for absence in Europe prevented the attendance of Mrs. Elliott F. Shepard and her children, and the serious illness of a daughter of H. McK. Twombly, caused the absence of that branch of the family. The reunion was, however, more complete than it could have been made on any former occasion, for there has been no time when so many of the family could be gathered at one place since the father of the present Vanderbilts died.

None but members of the family were invited. These included Mrs. William H. Vanderbilt, Mrs. Vanderbilt's brother, Samuel Kissam, and family, and her sister, Mrs. Bromley, Cornelius Vanderbilt and family, William K. Vanderbilt, Frederick W. Vanderbilt and wife, William D. Sloane and family, Dr. W. Seward Webb and family, H. McK. Twombly and family, Mrs. Elliott F. Shepard and family, Clarence Barker, and Walter Rathbun Bacon and wife.

Mrs. William H. Vanderbilt and Mr. and Mrs. Fred Vanderbilt left for Biltmore on last Saturday. Cornelius and his family and William K. went on Monday. Others of the invited guests left on Sunday and Monday. Mrs. Shepard and her children are in Egypt. The Twombly's and the Bacons were detained in the city because of illness. All the others named were present.

George Vanderbilt has been unsparing in his expenditure of money to push his mountain palace to completion so that he might have a Christmas celebration and a family reunion for the housewarming. Although the magnificent home of this millionaire bachelor is practically completed and furnished, and his guests may not see that there is anything else to be done, many months must be spent by an army of artisans before the decorative features planned by the owner will be completed. He has still employed a hundred wood carvers in a factory on his estate who are engaged in decorative work for the mansion. Brick and tile makers are still busy for the same purpose, and the private railway from Biltmore, three miles away, is still operated to convey the freight—building material and furnishings—which this student, art-loving millionaire demands before his chosen home will meet every requirement of his fancy. This private railroad might have been pressed into service to convey his Christmas guests to his door, but it was never intended for passenger service, and the guests preferred the delightful drive of three miles over the perfect Telford-Macadam roads which Mr. Vanderbilt has caused to be constructed to his palace. There are thirty miles of these perfect roads running through his estate of 9,000 acres, and a part of the pleasure of the day for the New York visitors consisted of drives over them, through the beautiful grounds laid out by Frederick Law Olmsted, and among the trees, shrubs, and plants from almost every quarter of the globe, which have been transplanted there under the direction of the forestry expert, Gifford Pinchot. One thousand acres are devoted to the grounds and lawn of the mansion and the other 8,000 acres are laid out in forest and farms. Of these latter there is a sheep ranch, a dairy farm, another for the raising of cereals, and another devoted to scientific gardening. Each is practically perfect of its kind, and Mr. Vanderbilt's guests are to see and inspect all of them, play golf or tennis, which are seasonable games at Biltmore even at Christmas-tide, and indulge in other pleasures which would hardly be thought of as adjuncts of a Christmas celebration in this climate.

It was said in New York yesterday that the *piece de résistance* of the Biltmore Christmas dinner was to be a wild boar killed on the estate. A man who has been there said yesterday, when told of this, that he doubted this very much, as there were no wild boars there to be killed.

The New York guests are expected to return to the city by Monday next.

THE FLOODS SUBSIDING.

Reports Confirmed of the Great Losses Sustained by Farmers.

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo., Dec. 25.—The news from the Gasconade and Osage rivers to-day is more encouraging. At Bagnell a fall of twenty-one inches in the Osage is reported, while the Gasconade is falling rapidly. The reports to-day confirm the earlier despatches of farmers rendered destitute by the flood. The condition of some is deplorable in the extreme. Many lost not only their crops and cattle, but were stripped of household goods and provisions as well. There is no way of estimating the loss, but it is very heavy.

The tie and timber men have suffered severely. One contractor near Linn Creek is reported to have lost about 100,000 ties. Along the Moreau River, through this county, the bottoms were swept clean. An estimate places the corn lost in the Osage at about $2,000,000.

Death Follows the Pulling of a Tooth.

ARCADE, N. Y., Dec. 25.—Mrs. Elida Dawley Beebe of Sandusky, N. Y., died this morning from exhaustion due to a hemorrhage that followed the extracting of a tooth.

Mrs. Beebe had been troubled for several days with a severe toothache. On Wednesday afternoon Dr. Merrill pulled the tooth and an artery was ruptured in the operation, causing a hemorrhage, which resulted in her death.

Last Amenities.

"On two occasions within a few years," said a citizen, "when I have attended funerals, I have observed at the cemetery methods that were quite new to me, although one of them at least has obtained for some years; that one is the lining of the graves with white muslin, so that the earth is not visible. The other method that was new to me was the spreading upon the ground, immediately around the grave, of evergreen boughs, so arranged as to cover the freshly thrown-out earth from view, while the tips projected slightly over the edge of the grave. The opening of the grave was, of course, plainly visible among these green boughs, but not the aisles. The modern burial casket in form and finish is as unlike the old-fashioned coffin as it is possible for it to be, and these newer methods pertaining to the actual interment seem, in some measure at least, to rob even the grave of its terror."

THE NEW FORTY-SECOND STREET.

Emphasis Given to the Transformation for So Long Prophesied.

The transformation of Forty-second street, long prophesied, is emphasized by the seemingly sudden appearance of a fifteen-story hotel at the corner of Madison avenue. The transformation will soon have further emphasis in the extension westward of the Grand Central Station. The new hotel is merely the most notable recent structure in Forty-second street. There are half a dozen other notable buildings, most of them erected within the last ten years, several of them within the last five years. Thus far, however, the transformers of Forty-second street have mainly contented themselves with altering old structures and fitting them to new uses. The appearance of the first new towering structure is significant of the near future, when the whole street from the Grand Central Station to Broadway shall be a succession of great business buildings. When the picturesque, or perhaps, more properly speaking, impressive old reservoir at the corner of Fifth avenue shall have given way to some fitting structure, the scenic value of Bryant Park will be trebled, and the increased value of the land opposite will necessitate improved buildings upon it.

Meanwhile the business transformation of Forty-second street has far outstripped the slower structural transformation. It is not many years since the chief business concerns of the street were like those that now cluster about the Grand Central Station and address themselves especially to the travelling public. Forty-second street has long been a familiar thoroughfare to commuters and other travellers, but it has at length become known to New Yorkers. Women have taken it into their affections, which means that it has come to be a recognized shopping street. Appearances seem to point to a time when it shall be, if not the shopping street, at least a famous thoroughfare for several lines of the retail trade. Already it has several notable shops beloved of women, the sort of shops that women linger about and whither they go to spend money when they have it to spend. It is becoming a street for banks and for theatres.

It would be easy to pick out the buildings that are doomed, the corners that are soon to bear great structures. Perhaps the worst enemy to the development of the street is its multiplicity of slow and shabby horse car lines. Something new in the way of public vehicles must come sooner or later for Forty-second street, and when it comes the transformation of the street will be hastened. The street has already abundant interest and variety. It will have in the future stateliness and splendor, though perhaps not beauty, unless, indeed, this may be conferred by Bryant Park and the structure that shall worthily occupy the reservoir site.

A MORNING ON RIVERSIDE DRIVE.

Views that Bring Peace to the Soul and Rest to the Eye.

Riverside Drive on a busy morning, when comparatively few persons have time to avail themselves of its charm, is worth an idler's visit. A few truant boys are clambering on the steps that lead up and down the steep slopes of the park beside the drive. There are always half a dozen bicyclists in sight, men and women in almost equal numbers, since many men have housed their wheels for the winter. A family carriage rolls by now and then, bearing the women and the small children of the household, and hired coaches, laden with country visitors bound for Grant's tomb and a glimpse of the view beyond, help to fill up the straggling procession. Much of the time the smooth highway stretches vacant, like a great braid, seemingly swung into a wide loop where it dips to a hollow and rises again to the hill beyond grassy slopes, and great stone houses face the drive on the east, while to the west lies the crude strip of park slowly taking shape, with the railway at its foot and beyond the river.

Midway the drive one sees southward its own smooth curves, northward the white face of the rising monument. Eastward the numbered streets descend steep to the drive. Everything in sight bespeaks the airy spaciousness of the upper city. It looks as if the drive were wide enough itself to carry half the street traffic of the town, so that the toiling bicyclist mounting a distant slope seems a mere speck upon the smooth broad surface of the roadway. Well down the slope to the west workmen are digging and hauling great stones and dumping earth, in the effort to bring that drastic strip of park into unison with the well-kept drive and its eastward bordering lawns. Still further down railway trains are making their way back and forth.

Beyond lies the river, unsoiled and beautiful, half hidden in soft diaphonous white mist, its further shore robbed by this soft medium of all vulgarity, and altogether beautiful. The schooner tacking in the near channel seems almost under the hand of the observer, so that he might toss the traditional biscuit upon her deck. Her broad sails confess all their soil and patches, but there is fascination in the sight, and the looker-on feels the charm of a maritime park. Out of the white bosom of the mist emerge from the north and south other craft driven by wind or steam, and from the dim place of the opposite shore, plumed with steam jets, come the softened sounds of business, low-toned hoots and calls from the river craft, the dull, subterranean boom of giant powder, factory bells, the rumble of railway trains, and all the din of a busy suburb.

PELHAM BAY PARK.

Its Rural Beauties and Its Great Stretches of Varied Scenery.

No more extensive and striking view of Pelham Bay Park is to be obtained anywhere than that seen from the junction of the Old Boston road with the southeastern extension of Eleventh avenue, Williamsbridge. The extentension, set down on the maps as Carsa avenue, leads into West Chester village, and southeastward from the junction with the Boston road it is a well-made macadamized highway. The point of intersection lies near the crest of the slope, overlooking a wide area of marsh and upland, water and woodland. Nearly everything in sight save the Long Island shore and the intervening Sound lies within the limits of the city, although it is all thoroughly rural in aspect, and much of the land and water lies within the park. To see these many hundred acres of thinly peopled country and to know that it is part of New York city helps the observer to realize that nine-tenths of the city's population occupies probably one-sixth of its area.

The view of the park from the junction of the two roads, at a point about 100 feet above tide-water, is on fine days a most charming one. The extent and variety of this, the greatest of the city's pleasure places, are clearly brought home to the observer. Central Park and all the other parks, save Bronx and Van Cortlandt, probably could be put inside the area of Pelham Bay Park in sight, and there remains unseen sufficient area to take in nearly all of Bronx Park. East Chester Creek or Hutchinson River, which cuts the park in two, is visible for a mile or more of its course along with its wide mouth and the bridge that connects the upper and lower divisions of the park. Part of Pelham Bay, with its several coves, appears at half a dozen points, intensely blue, the more so by contrast with the brown of the marsh grass and the dense etching of the park's winter woodlands. Hunter's Island lane, on the northeastern horizon, marks the northern limit of the portion of the park in view. Southward the southern boundary of the park is in view. The park lies revealed as on a map, roads, streams, and all points of interest recognizable by any one familiar with the ground. It is a noble stretch of upland and marsh, with here a bit of woodland, there a homestead with its garden, orchard, and well-kept lawns, and ever recurring as the life and soul of the landscape the deep blue of the salt water. It is difficult to find from any point so nearly complete a view of any other of the city's parks.

ITALY'S CAMPAIGN.

10,000 Men Ready Next Week to March Against the Abyssinians.

ROME, Dec. 25.—A despatch from Massowah says that two battalions of Italian troops arrived there to-day. All the reënforcements will be in the field by Jan. 4. An expedition comprising 10,000 men will then be ready to start.

The Abyssinian forces are advancing slowly. They seem to have given up the siege of Makalle. Some of Ras Mangascia's troops have been seen near Adua. Gen. Baratieri, the Italian commander, is still at Adigrat.

MR. TERRELL BACK FROM SMYRNA.

His Mission There Was to Secure the Protection of Americans.

LONDON, Dec. 25.—The United Press correspondent at Constantinople telegraphs that United States Minister Terrell has returned from Smyrna. His mission there was to secure protection for American residents.

ROME, Dec. 25.—The Pope is about to prepare an encyclical letter on the situation in Armenia.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25.—The Turkish Legation received from the Sublime Porte the following telegram under to-day's date: "An Armenian priest, belonging to the revolutionary committee, was arrested at Marash. His whole correspondence with the chief of the Zeitun insurgents was found on him."

Austria and the Vatican.

ROME, Dec. 25.—The relations between the Vatican and Austria have been harmonized. The Pope will recall Nuncio Agliardi, and the Austrian Ambassador to the Vatican, Count Revertera-Salandra, will return to Rome at the end of the present month.

NEED NOT FEAR ENGLAND.

A DISTINGUISHED GERMAN'S VIEW OF THE SITUATION.

Prof. Cronau Says that in the Event of War England Will Not Have the Support of Any European Nation—She is Strong and Aggressive Only Against Weak Nations.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25.—Prof. Rudolph Cronau, the distinguished German geographer and historian, is in Washington as the American representative of the *Cologne Gazette*. In answer to the question: "In case war should result between England and the United States, would Germany or any other European power support England?" he said:

"Most certainly not. There is a difference between a feeling of sympathy and furnishing soldiers to fight England's battles in this particular case. Germany now shows sympathy with England because it takes all its information about the English-Venezuelan frontier question from English sources only. As soon as Germany is aware that England was guilty of foul play with Venezuela, I trust to the German love of justice to bring national sympathy wholly on the side of Venezuela. According to its present understanding, Germany has no interest in the Monroe doctrine. Germany has no colonies in America and never will have. But Germany has very extensive commercial interests in America, and will not risk them to support England and pull chestnuts out of the fire for that selfish nation. I hardly believe that England will gain the support of any European nation. Austria, Italy, Denmark, Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Portugal have no interest to give such support. Spain is too weak, France, the old enemy of England, will not do it, and Russia would be only too glad to see England in trouble, because then might arise the chance for Russia to force a way to the Bosporus and India. England, through her selfish policy, has to-day no friends in Europe and is practically isolated.

"I think there will be no war. England will be wise and back down, because she cannot risk a war with the United States. England is not so strong as she always boasts to be. Her soldiers are not such heroes as the London *News* and *Graphic* depict them on paper. England is strong and aggressive only against weak nations. Her soldiers are victorious only against poor barbarians, who are not in possession of Maxim and Gatling guns. A nation with a powerful army would never have given up Nubia and Gen. Gordon so shamefully as England did a few years ago. That English soldiers ever could fight a good drilled army like that of Prussia I never could believe, because the English soldiers back drill at every parade. I have travelled through Canada, where I visited the fortress of Quebec. I was really astonished at the dude appearance of the English soldiers there, having no weapons, but swinging a tiny walking stick in the air and balancing a monkey cap on one side of the head. I also wondered about the exceedingly small number of English soldiers in Canada and the neglected condition of the fortress at Quebec. There are lots of cannon on the citadel and walls of Quebec, but if some American boys want to make some night a good joke they can spike all those cannon without being disturbed. At the citadel the corporal showed me with great pride two very small cannon of the calibre used in German country villages to announce a Schützenfest. Nevertheless, these playthings had a proud inscription, announcing that they were captured by English soldiers from the United States at Bunker Hill.

"No," concluded Mr. Cronau, "the United States need not fear England. As soon as war is declared England would have its hands full everywhere. Her enemies would rise in America, in Europe, in Africa and Asia; her fleet would be engaged all over the world, and England could not bring up soldiers enough to defend herself and her colonies. If England was not powerful enough to vanquish the poorly peopled United States in the Revolutionary war, and in 1814, how can she expect to be victorious over a people of seventy millions, who can raise in time of need from eight to ten million soldiers, all devoted to saving their country or to die? Where could England now find soldiers enough since the days have passed when she could buy them from German princes? As far as I know the spirit of the American people, they will defend their country to the last drop of blood, and convert every yacht and every schooner into a vessel of war, as they did a hundred years ago. I think England knows too well the risk of such a fearful war, which might, perhaps, result in her destruction. England is too smart to commit suicide, and therefore I do not believe that there will be war."

AFFAIRS OF THE ARMY.

Various Measures Pending in Congress—Exchanges of Station.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25.—The present session of Congress ought to be fruitful in legislation for increasing the efficiency of the army, but there is no telling exactly what can be counted upon. The simplest and most moderate plan for the addition of enlisted men is the one outlined by Secretary Lamont, and this would also give the desired three-battalion system for the infantry and strengthen the artillery for the coast forts. It also has the advantage of having been for some time under consideration, so that it would require but little study for its improvement and for the striking out of any features that might interfere with its enactment as a whole.

A statistical table, showing the distribution of regiments of the army during the last thirty years, indicates, among other things, that exchanges of station are apt to come with greater frequency than formerly. There are still some regiments, however, that have served a long time without such a change, notably the Ninth Cavalry, colored, now over ten and a half years in Nebraska and Wyoming, and the First, Second and Fourth Infantry, in California, in Nebraska, and in Idaho and Washington respectively. The question of transfers is largely governed by the state of the transportation funds.

Mr. Sewell's bill in the Senate provides that all regular officers, active or retired, shall have a brevet in the regular army equal to the highest brevet they have received in the volunteers; the date of any brevet commission so issued being that of the corresponding regular army brevet.

Mr. Carter's bill, also introduced into the Senate, provides for the establishment in the War Department of a bureau of military education, and seeks to promote the adoption of uniform military drill in the public schools of the several States and Territories.

There are many retirement projects before Congress. One of them is the House bill of Mr. Spalding to retire, on certain conditions, with an advance of one grade, army officers not above the grade of captain who served either in the regulars or volunteers at any time between April 14, 1861, and April 9, 1865. The retired list is increased to provide for this addition. But any officer who, having served for thirty years, is less than 64 years old, and fitted for active service, may, at his own request, be continued on the active list.

The new year will see distributed various useful staff handbooks. Gen. Flagler will have one ready for ordnance officers; Gen. Morgan one for the Commissary Department, prepared by Col. Cushing; Gen. Stanton one for the Pay Corps, Gen. Batchelder one for the Quartermaster's Department, Gen. Sternberg one for the Medical Corps, Gen. Lieber one for the Judge Advocates. This is the result of taking some staff details out of the Army Regulations in the recent revision of them.

It is pleasant in these days to know that the three pneumatic guns at San Francisco gave so complete satisfaction as the New York Gatling had previously done. Throwing 200 pounds of dynamite a distance of about two miles, as the report says, and exploding 500-pound shells exactly on time, and even beneath the surface of the water, showed that they would be good auxiliaries of the long-range, high-power guns and mortars, though on the latter the chief dependence must be placed.

The bill offering the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Park as a field for military manœuvres for the army and the State troops may attract more attention from its authorization of the Secretary of War to assemble forces there for instruction. This might possibly lead, to a notable extent, to that joint camping of regulars and national guardsmen which has often been advocated, and which is occasionally carried out on a small scale by sending detachments of regulars to State camps.

From a Boy, at Christmas.

"Something new in Christmas gifts, so far as my knowledge goes," said a father, "was one that my wife received from our youngest son, who attends a public school. It was a Christmas card with an appropriate inscription, to which were attached, cut to size to match the card, sections from the boy's lesson papers at school, showing his most creditable work in writing and figuring; a graphic and pleasing illustration of the youngster's progress, prepared by his teacher."

Where Yesterday's Fires Were.

A. M.—1:32, 2,702 Eighth avenue, damage $10; 3:20, 55 Hester street, Sol. Sunstein, damage slight; 4:00, 300 East Seventieth street, Bernard Boomester, damage slight; 7:15, 114 Roosevelt street, damage $5; 7:30, 16 Spring street, damage slight.

P. M.—5:00, 301 West Sixty-seventh street, Charles Forms, damage $15; 5:45, 507 Madison avenue, J. W. Amborn, no damage; 5:52, 17 Second avenue, Fred Ohl, damage $500; 7:00, 310 East 111th street, Joseph Camille, no damage; 10:05, 618 Washington street, Patrick J. Ryan, damage slight; 11:20, 5 Rutgers place, David Kaplan, damage $1,000; 11:30, 34 Pine street, Imperial Fire Insurance Company, damage $10.

We have no old stock. We don't mean to let any accumulate.

We have, therefore, decided on a

Clearance Sale of Suits

—suits to be sold below cost. Remember, not last year's, but this season's.

Suits formerly sold at $15, $16, $18,

To be sold at $10.

Suits formerly sold at $20, $22, $25,

To be sold at $15.

Not every size in each lot, but all sizes from 32 to 46. Every garment reliable, well made, and in the latest fashion.

Money cheerfully refunded.

GEORGE G. BENJAMIN,
BROADWAY, COR. 26TH ST.

OBITUARY.

Reuben Sharis, an Indian who in early life was a member of the Mohawk tribe, died of pneumonia on Tuesday night at his home, 78 North Seventh street, Williamsburgh. He was 34 years old, and was for several years employed in the Hecla Iron Works in Williamsburgh. Seven years ago he married a woman of Irish birth, and four children were born to them. One of the children died a year ago, and two others died of diphtheria within a day of each other two weeks ago. Then Mrs. Sharis became ill, and her husband's mind became unbalanced. An attack of cold developed into fatal pneumonia.

Mrs. Hannah Lovett, said to be the oldest person in New Hampshire, died yesterday. She was born in Kilmore, county Kerry, Ireland, on June 17, 1789, and therefore had completed nearly 107 years. She came to this country a widow forty-seven years ago. She lived in Boston up to two years ago last 4th of July. Mrs. Lovett was the mother of twelve children, but only one survives. Her family have been remarkable for longevity. One brother, Matthew, died a few years since aged 105, and her ten brothers and one sister, with a single exception, all lived to be more than 90.

Mrs. Mary Morey, the oldest resident of Plymouth, Mass., died yesterday at the age of 101 years and four months. Mrs. Morey had a distinct recollection of the war of 1812, her husband being one of those who, under Capt. Henry Whiting's command, guarded the coast against British invasion.

Jeremiah J. Maher, a Justice of the Peace, died suddenly yesterday at his home in Cottage street, Jersey City. Mr. Maher was once Under Sheriff. He was 48 years old, and leaves a widow. His death was caused by the rupture of a blood vessel in his head.

J. A. Bigelow, marshal at the United States Consulate in Constantinople, died yesterday.

KNABE PIANOS.

New Artistic Styles in Rare Fancy Woods,

Also fine assortment of slightly used KNABE Grands, Uprights and Squares, fully warranted, at a liberal reduction from original price, and second-hand pianos of other makes, at all prices, for cash, or on monthly installments.

148 Fifth Avenue.

JOINING THE REBELS.

SOME SOLDIERS AND MANY CITIZENS GO OVER TO THE PATRIOTS.

The Insurgents Are Keeping Things Lively in East Cuba—Interfering with the Sugar Harvest—Ravages of Yellow Fever at Santiago—Many Spaniards Dying.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Dec. 14, via Key West, Dec. 25.—On the morning of the 10th inst. the whole garrison of Dos Caminos town joined the rebels. Col. Tejéda's battalion of guerrillas was in a great state of excitement yesterday, as the time of their engagement was up, and the Government wanted them to reënlist. They refused to do so because they are not paid regularly, and besides that, the chief and officers treat them very badly. In consequence of this forty guerrilleros joined the rebels with their arms and ammunition. It is said here that owing to this the Government is trying to dissolve the battalion of guerrillas.

The village of Venta de Casanova, near Remangangua, defended by a Spanish garrison, has been taken by Leader Rabi. The garrison surrendered with arms and ammunition.

On the 9th inst. Commander Lopez, with a large column, met a rebel party of 200 men in Piedra del Caiman (Guantanamo), led by the expeditionary Leaders Martinez and Aguirre, who were on their way to join Periquito Perez. The Spaniards avoided an engagement, retreating to La Luz, where they remained.

This morning two battalions left this city for Cobre, which is threatened with attack by the insurgents, who are encamped near that place in great numbers. At this moment (10 A. M.) the sound of heavy firing is heard, and it is said that the Spaniards and rebels are fighting in La Loma de le Cruz, between this city and Cobre.

It is reported here that two expeditions have entered the island lately—one in Boca de Dos Rios, between this port and Asserradero, and the other near Baracoa. The Spanish gunboat Nueva Espana came into this port yesterday with her propeller broken. On the 12th inst. the gunboat was sailing near land, off Baracoa, when she received several cannon shots, one of which broke her propeller. It is said that this was done by the expeditionaries, who had a cannon with them.

On the 9th inst. Commander Prats, with a large column, had an engagement with Col. Cartegena and his rebel party near Sagua de Tanamo. The Spaniards had five killed and nineteen wounded, and the insurgents seven wounded.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Dec. 17, 1895, via Key West, Dec. 25.—The arrival of Gen. Pando in this city has produced a shock almost as great as if a bombshell had been cast among the people, for he is well known and hated here for his bloody and brutal instincts. Men leave the city to join the insurgents daily by the hundreds, and soon Santiago will be left almost entirely to women and children.

The concentration of large Cuban forces in this district is expected by the end of the present month, when it is probable that many bloody battles will be fought.

Several sugar estates in this jurisdiction are preparing to grind their sugar cane, but it is very much doubted here that they will be allowed to do so by the rebels. The iron mining companies are working steadily, and have many laborers working for them who refuse to work for the sugar estates because of want of security both of their persons and their wages.

Fearing the use of dynamite by the insurgents the Government does not now send the soldiers by railroad to the interior, but compels them to make long and tedious marches to the places where they are stationed, for the same reason would-be passengers do not use the trains.

Francisco Dieguez, who has been serving as guide of the Spanish column of Col. Sandoval since the beginning of the war, went to join the rebels a few days ago, taking with him twenty-eight Spanish soldiers. Miguel Cuesta, Gen. Linares's guide, has also gone over to the insurgents with a number of men living in San Luis.

Yellow fever is raging here fearfully in spite of the winter season. The death rate among the officers is something dreadful. In one battalion the commander, four Captains, and two Lieutenants have died of the disease. In the Military Hospital of this city there are more than 1,000 sick soldiers, of whom from ten to fifteen die every day. The Government has forbidden the publication of news about the death rate of yellow fever.

News has just come of an engagement near Songo between a Spanish column, 400 strong, and Pancho Sanchez with 250 men. It is said that the Spanish loss was twenty killed, besides used machetes, which always strike terror among the Spanish soldiers.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Dec. 18, via Tampa, Fla., Dec. 25.—The new gunboats Pizarro, Hernan Cortez, and Vasco Nunezde Balboa, arrived here on Dec. 17 from Porto Rico. They were accompanied by the first-class cruiser Marques de la Ensenada. These vessels will at once be placed on the active list, and be sent to their several posts on the Cuban coast. At the evening after the arrival of these vessels, a banquet was given to the naval officers now here, a considerable fleet being anchored in this harbor.

HAVANA, Dec. 18, via Tampa, Fla., Dec. 25.—Madrid advices of Dec. 17 say that the Duke of Tetuan, Minister of Foreign Affairs, has sent an official note to the Spanish press, announcing that the Government is satisfied with the attitude of the United States Congress regarding belligerency for the Cuban rebels.

On Dec. 14 Señor Castellanos, Colonial Minister, asked the Bank of Spain for a loan of $10,000,000, secured by Cuban bonds. A part of the money, which is a war loan, is now en route to Cuba.

The political situation in Madrid is uncertain. The Republicans wish to have the Cortes meet early in January, and the Liberals are in accord with the Republicans as to the necessity for its meeting. Señor Castellanos is certain that the Cortes will be dissolved by a royal decree.

Now that the disturbances have begun, if the Premier Canovas del Castillo will support the plans of Gen. Martinez Campos, the entire Spanish Cabinet, Señores Romero y Robledo, and Bosch, have resigned. Premier Canovas del Castillo will support the plans of Gen. Martinez Campos.

ADVANCE OF THE CUBANS.

Senor Dupuy de Lome Laughs at the Idea that They Will Reach Havana.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25.—Señor Dupuy de Lome, the Spanish Minister, believes that the insurgent forces reported approaching Havana are in great danger of being completely routed.

He has not, as yet, received any untoward news from official sources that Havana is in danger, and laughs at the idea that the city will probably be besieged.

His confidence in the success of the Spanish army is increased by a cablegram he received to-night from Madrid, which is a confirmation of the message he received yesterday from Gen. Arderius, acting Governor-General of Cuba. The despatch says:

"The bands of Gomez and Maceo are mounted, and are riding about burning plantations. Commander-in-Chief Martinez Campos met the most important of the bands under Gomez near Cimarrones, defeating and dispersing them with great losses."

Señor de Lome says it is ridiculous to suppose that Maceo and Gomez will attack Havana. It is reported that the insurgents have a force of 12,000 men to do this hazardous work, but according to Minister de Lome's inside information, the number is less than 6,000 men.

Havana, he says, has a militia or volunteer force of 30,000 men, who, in most cases, have seen active service, as from time to time impressments are made from their number for a month's service with the Spanish army.

It is the Minister's opinion that the insurgents have ventured too far into the Government lines, and will have a great deal more difficulty in retreating than they have had in advancing.

Declines a Call to a New York Church.

BUFFALO, Dec. 25.—The Rev. F. A. Kaehler, pastor of the Trinity Lutheran Church of this city, has declined the call extended to him to become pastor of the leadidg English Lutheran Church in New York City, as successor of the Rev. G. F. Krotel, LL.D.

Minister Ransom at Home.

RALEIGH, N. C., Dec. 25.—M. W. Ransom, Minister of the United States to Mexico, spent Christmas at his home in Northampton county. He says he is not as well as he would like be, but much better than he had been earlier in the year. His son, Robert Ransom, returned from Mexico with him. Minister Ransom has thirty days' leave.

Negro Recruiting Troops for Cuba.

CHICAGO, Dec. 25.—William Campbell, colored, and until last year a student in the law school at the University of Michigan, is recruiting soldiers in Chicago for the Cuban insurgents. The departure of fifty men in the last two weeks ostensibly for Mexico, but in reality for some port on the Gulf coast, from which they will be taken to Cuba, is said to be a result of the young man's work. Another batch is expected to leave this week.

BROOKLYN.

Sixteen-year-old Thomas Plunkett of 726 Douglas street was arrested yesterday while in the act of placing a large stone on the track of the Brighton Beach Railroad near the Butler street station.

Dennis Considine, a saloon keeper at 1,070 Atlantic avenue, has been arrested on a charge of renting out the upper portion of the house as a pool room.

During a drunken fight between Italians at 115 Union street yesterday Louis Spenneti, John Mustio, and William Mussin received cuts on the arms and hands.

Mrs. Kelly of 595 Third avenue went to visit some friends yesterday at 912 Fourth avenue, and while there her 7-months-old daughter Mamie died in her arms.

JOTTINGS ABOUT TOWN.

Mary Allen, who was burned on Sunday in her rooms on the top floor of 20 Chrystie street, in a fire which followed the explosion of a lamp, died in Bellevue Hospital yesterday afternoon. George Allen, her husband, who, with her, was burned at the time, died the same day.

Lena Kunzelman, the young wife of Andrew Kunzelman, a barber, tried to commit suicide on Tuesday night at her home at 630 East Eleventh street by taking Paris green. She suffered greatly from neuralgia.

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A SOLID VERMONT TRUST.

Steps to Consolidate All the Granite Quarries of the State.

The craze for consolidation has reached Vermont, and arrangements are making to form a big stock company for the purchase of all the leading granite quarries in the Green Mountain State. Options have been secured already on many of the quarries, but it is understood that the syndicate will not be formed unless some quarry owners take stock in the proposed company. It is not intended to take the cutting plants, but only the quarrying business.

The plan is looked upon with favor by leading granite men here. It is estimated that $1,000,000 will be required to carry the deal into effect. According to the returns of the last census there were in the State of Vermont fifty-three granite quarries with an annual output of 1,000,000 cubic feet of the value of about $600,000 a year. The competition between the quarries, or rather between the owners of the quarries, has reduced the profits of the operators, and they have had, too, to contend with the increasing popularity of other materials for building purposes, particularly iron and sandstone, semi-vitrified brick, and terra cotta. The effect of this competition, coupled with the more general use of marble, has been to reduce the commercial demands for granite for building purposes. Nor is this diminished demand limited to the city of New York, for the same rules of building have found favor in other cities where the demand for granite was formerly considerable. Granite buildings in New York were chiefly those constructed many years ago, and among builders the change in favor of the materials now in use is generally supposed to date back to the Chicago fire in 1871. That wholesale conflagration put to the test of a crucible the building materials then in use. Under the scorching heat of that fire, the iron fronts, regarded as massive and substantial, warped and curled, and granite was shown to be so poor a resistant of heat that under the action of the flames it lost its cohesiveness, and limestone scaled and flaked. But brick—plain, ordinary, simple baked brick—withstood the action of the flames. It was due to this that the popularity of brick for building material increased, and since that time its utility has been further enhanced by improved methods of manufacture, which have given the more modern bricks in use their hard and glossy appearance. The effort, and if possible forestall, the present competition in the granite line that the quarry owners have in view the establishment of a trust. At present the plan of consolidation includes only the Vermont quarries, but, if successful, it may be expected to extend to others, besides. Rhode Island has thirty-seven granite quarries, and the output in a single year has been as high as 3,000,000 tons. Massachusetts has 150 quarries, the annual product of which is $2,500,000. Maine has 153 quarries, with an annual product about the same as that of Massachusetts, and New Hampshire long has been distinguished for its granite quarries, which have given it the name of the Granite State. The granite quarries of New Hampshire number seventy-eight, and the amount of stone quarried in a year is nearly 3,000,000 cubic feet.

STEPNIAK, THE NIHILIST.

Reminiscences of the Lecture Tour of the Russian Revolutionist Here.

Stepniak, the Nihilist, whose death by accident is just announced, lectured a few years ago in this country. He opened his course at the Metropolitan Opera House to a small audience, and delivered in all about sixty lectures in various parts of the country, but with no great pecuniary success. He was an extremely foreign-looking man, with wiry dark hair that stood out all round his head as if electrified. His English was execrably pronounced, but he confided to an acquaintance that Americans found it difficult to understand because of his strong British accent. He had perfect confidence in the face of an audience and never hesitated for a word, though many words were almost unrecognizable to English-speaking hearers. He wrote English with fluency and precision. His style, indeed, was excellent, and he was accustomed to carry pencil and paper while travelling and to write his review articles in English under difficult conditions. Articles thus written in a foreign tongue he sent to conspicuous reviews without revision.

Stepniak maintained a persistent reserve as to his past, and refused either to affirm or to deny stories that associated him with nihilistic crimes. Even his true name was unknown, that of Stepniak being merely taken to ind