CITY AND DISTRICT.

Birds, Caterpillars, Moths and the Like.

To the Editor of THE EVENING STAR:

Within the past four weeks several communications have been made to you, some of which are worthy of notice, in regard to the caterpillars on our shade trees. As the first which I have seen, subsequent to mine, which you published on the 30th of June, is a reply to mine, I will give it the first attention. "S. I. W." in your paper of the 7th is made very angry by my letter, so he says, and will not have his trees rid of caterpillars upon receipt of an official notice. In case a regulation such as the one I suggested were made by Congress or the Commissioners "S. I. W.'s" willingness might safely be left for discussion to the distinguished author and Judge Snell. The facts referred to by this author and others in regard to the relations between insects and insectivorous birds are only of importance in this particular connection so far as they show that the web-worm and tussock-moth are not attacked to any appreciable extent by insectiverous birds, and therefore that the protection of insectiverous birds would not be of any essential service in the warfare against these insects.

Your correspondent "W," in the same paper, takes a more sensible view of the matter, and says he has practised the method I suggested, having in previous years destroyed every nest on every tree around his premises and crushed the life out of every young worm. He properly refers to the circumstance that the work of cutting off the nests was begun by the city authorities too late this year. "W." seems to be, unfortunately, one of those persons who have not yet gotten over the delusion in regard to the English sparrows being of value in ridding trees of vermin.

"Bourgeois" (July 7) pins his faith to the other birds that would return if the sparrows were killed off. With a few exceptions, however, these birds would not disturb the particular insects with which the trees are now infested. These insects are especially protected by their irritant clothing of hair, and can only be coped with effectively by the direct action of man.

I will not attempt to enter here into the broader question of the degree to which the killing of brightly plumaged birds affects the interests of cultivators of the soil in general.

"L. M. M." communicates some interesting observations in your paper of July 17th, upon a very active fly which deposits its eggs upon the body of the caterpillar, and calls upon some of our professional entomologists to tell us all about it,—the manner of development of the egg and the effect on the caterpillar. "L. M. M.," however, hardly needs to call in the help of others in this case, for he has told the most essential facts when he says the fly makes of the caterpillar the "hatching house, nurse and food of its offspring." I am not aware that the particular species of fly which attacks the web-worm has ever been identified, but in all probability it belongs to the extensive family of tachinidæ, or else to the related family of flesh flies, called sarcophagidæ. With the help of these names "L. M. M." can find what the books say about the habits of flies of these families.

The suggestions by "E. E. M." are of the utmost importance. He advises all occupants of houses to examine the interior of their tree-boxes and the under side of their front steps, window sills projecting belt, courses etc, where they will find the cocoons of the caterpillars. "Destroy them with the end of a poker, cane, or stick. Each cocoon destroyed now will be equal to and better than the destruction of two hundred caterpillars of the coming brood, and the foliage of our handsome trees will thus be preserved."

The perfect form or moth of the two principal kinds of insects which are infesting our trees are now coming forth from their cocoons, and have been doing so for some time past, and are laying the eggs for new broods. The web-worm cannot be fought well in the egg state. The cocoons can be crushed, with the insects in them whenever they are found. After the moths have come out they may be crushed, but will not often be seen. They are pure white in color, and not readily confounded with any other kind of moth to be found at this time. These insects must be opposed principally in the caterpillar state, and what I said in my letter of the 30th of June will be applicable again, namely, that they begin their lives as colonies, each upon a single leaf, under which they feed on the green substance of the leaf. They then extend the web to enclose another leaf, and so continue feeding always under shelter. At this time, therefore, they may be destroyed by plucking off the leaf or leaves upon which they are, and burning or crushing them upon this or throwing them into hot water. As the webs increase in extent this process becomes more difficult, and involves a continually greater mutilation of the trees. When the caterpillars are about half-grown they abandon the webs and scatter over the neighboring vegetation, after which they can only be fought individually or by poisoning the vegetation generally.

The Tussock moth can be fought best in the egg state. The female moth never leaves the cocoon in which she has transformed. When she reaches her final form, in which she lays her eggs, she crawls out upon the outside of the cocoon and there deposits two or three hundred eggs, which she covers with a froth-like, brittle secretion that is of a pure white color and makes the mass of eggs very conspicuous. This mass of eggs should be removed from the tree and thrown into the fire. As the females are so closely confined to their individual place of growth each householder may to a great extent prevent the ravages of the caterpillars in the neighborhood of his house by removing the eggs from the trees there.

The caterpillars of both species travel freely in the latter part of their lives, and the moths of both sexes of the web-worm fly freely, but the remedies suggested will be practically efficacious to prevent conspicuous damage.

"Observer," in your paper of July 17th, inquires the name of a bug which sucks the juices of the caterpillars. I have very little doubt she saw the young of the common "wheel-bug" or reduvius novenarius, the habits of which are described in the report of the United States commissioner of agriculture for 1875, pages 128-129, as well as in many earlier and later publications.

Will the writers whom I have mentioned above have the kindness to let me know, by letter or postal card, their full names? I signed my name in full to my former communication, but the editor gave only the initials.

B. PICKMAN MANN.

Extension of the City.

To the Editor of THE EVENING STAR:

Any effort looking to the extension of the city plan over the District of Columbia should be guided by a realizing sense of the splendid achievement of the designer of the original plan of the Federal City. This plan itself indicates that, except for the circumstance of its shore outline and the selection of elevated points for certain public edifices, but little or no attention was given to the natural configuration of the ground. The great broad avenues were caused to sweep over the surface connecting distant points by straight lines, nothwithstanding the occasionally impassable character or condition of the intervening surface. These grand avenues were grouped with singular system. Mr. Ellicott records the fact in these words: "The positions for the different edifices, and for the several squares or areas of different shapes as they are laid down, were first determined on the most advantageous ground, commanding the most extensive prospects, and the better susceptible of such improvements as either use or ornament may hereafter call for.

"Lines or avenues of direct communication have been devised to connect the separate and most distant objects with the principal, and to preserve through the whole a reciprocity of sight at the same time. Attention has been paid to the passing of those leading avenues over the most favorable ground for prospect and convenience.

"North and south lines intersected by others running due east and west make the distribution of the city into streets, squares, &c., and those lines have been so combined as to meet at certain given points with those divergent avenues, so as to form on the spaces *first determined* the different squares or areas."

In the meridian of the Capitol and of the President's House were extended two noble avenues—North Capitol and 16th streets—each supported by two slightly diverging avenues. These two independent groups stand pre-eminent in the plan. From the Eastern river, and parallel to it, to the West end, are seven avenues spanning the city from side to side, practically parallel to each other. Again we find Virginia, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts—three grand avenues—with the Boundary street dividing the city into parallel belts, on its longest or Potomac river diameter. On this system of parallel and diverging lines of avenues depends all the beauty and grandeur of our city's plan. And while many of these avenues may be satisfactorily extended to the District boundary or indefinitely at will, there are others which, having fulfilled their destiny, are under no circumstances susceptible of being so extended. All the other avenues, so named, appear to be merely afterthoughts, brought into play only for the purpose of adding the names of new states.

The most perfect conception of a plan of extension of the city includes several absolute requirements. The entire area of the District should be comprehended in any plan, even though it were admitted that a century might elapse before the extreme limits would be needed for occupation, for only by so doing can breadth and harmony in all the parts be secured, and the risk of continued change—the penalty for neglecting to provide a plan—be avoided. In extending the lines of great avenues of the city, no deviation from straight lines should be allowed, certainly not for any consideration of mere topography or present existing condition of the surface of the land. But if, to preserve parallelism with the present group of large avenues and the Potomac river, it should become necessary to deflect the line of any avenue, then the point of deflection should be selected where a public square or architectural pile can be placed to interrupt the view, as at the Capitol on Pennsylvania avenue.

Each feature of the plan of extension should be in harmony with the present plan of the city, though not necessarily patterned from it, and to insure the growth of liberal and elegant improvement in the way of buildings and embellishment, as well as to invite constant and increasing investment, no allurements of curved lines or other devices to cheapen the graduation of street or avenue should be permitted, however strongly marked or uneven the contour of the land. The idea of permanence should be made paramount, and all other considerations, except that of breadth and grandeur, should be held strictly subordinate, for if the skill and forethought of Washington could devise so broad and comprehensive a plan for the Federal City at that early day, and without the benefit of any previously existing example, should it not now be urged and expected that we, with the forces of our civilization, ought at least to undertake equally bold and far-reaching enterprises of improvement.

J. C. L.

THE POLICEMAN'S LOT.

How It is Made Unhappy by the Night Inspector.

THE WAY THE OFFICERS GET CAUGHT—THE HARDSHIPS OF A POLICEMAN'S LIFE—SLEEPLESS NIGHTS AND FOURTEEN HOURS OF DUTY—WHAT A "HOODLE" IS.

"Look out for and arrest Richard Roe," read the police sergeants at the several police stations at midnight a few nights ago. "Wanted on a charge of horse stealing. He is a one-legged colored man, five feet nine inches high, medium build, and wears a light moustache. If caught lock him up and notify headquarters." The sergeants then tooted on their whistles, and the lines of policemen, first and second-class privates, standing in front of the desks, wheeled about and started out of the stations to their posts to look for a one-legged man. They also looked for a two-legged man, called the night inspector. There are good officers to whom the hobgoblin of the night inspector brings no terrors. There are other officers not so conscientious, whose idea of duty well performed is that he has not let the night inspector or sergeant catch him violating the rules. All the officers patrol their beats well for the first hour, keeping a watch for the night inspector and incidentally looking for the one-legged man, or for any other suspicious character. At the end of the hour the old officer whose conscience has become pretty well worn, takes his new partner, very likely, in the direction of an

"ALL-NIGHT" HOUSE,

where liquor is sold under the cloak of eatables. The officer explains to the new one what he must do to get his "nip," and then puts him on the watch. Presently the officer taps on the door three times, and suddenly a hand appears holding a "stovepipe," and the "old regular" swallows the contents. "Do it again," he whispers to the dispenser of the beverage, and calls the new man to come while he goes to the other corner to watch. The young officer takes his "nip" and they walk off to patrol their beat, without being caught. The bell in the church tower strikes "one," and the officers make their ways to the signal or patrol box to "turn in," their hourly report. As each officer "turns in" he is anxious to know the whereabouts of the night inspector, but as that official has a key to the boxes and might be listening at the telephone in another box, the officer does not mention his name or title through the telephone, but simply inquires of the stationkeeper, "Any news?" or "Anything going on?" If the stationkeeper has any knowledge on the subject he will answer "yes," and give the location. A few more "stovepipes" and the hour of six a. m. approaches, when the officers go off duty for the day.

LOOKING FOR A RESTING PLACE.

While these officers are seeking something to quench their thirst another pair of officers, perhaps, are looking for a resting place. They watch the tree-boxes, and seeing nothing of the night inspector, or "Uncle Isaac," as they sometimes call him, proceed to a secluded part of a park and take possession of a settee. One of them complains of a sore foot and takes off his shoes. Having disposed themselves comfortably, they are suddenly surprised by the form of a man approaching, and the sharp voice of the night inspector asks: "Don't you think you have been there long enough?" The officers think "yes," but say nothing. They get up, and one tells how sore his feet are. They talk awhile, and then each goes his own way. At roll-call the next day the officers are presented with an invitation to be present at the next meeting of the trial board. They are tried by a board of three lieutenants, who have no trouble to render a verdict, but are puzzled as to what they shall recommend as a punishment for the offenders. The matter is held under advisement for some days. Meanwhile the officers anxiously inquire: "Have you heard anything?" Finally the board recommends that they pay a fine, and the officers are very happy because they were not dismissed.

A NEW ONE CAUGHT.

After the young officer successfully drank his "beer" with the old officer, he thinks he is all right, and one night, while on duty with a new officer, he plays the part of "old regular," and attempts to break in his new companion. The schooners are filled and emptied, but the night inspector just then puts in an appearance. "Having a good time?" he asks. The men turn red and apologize, and think the matter will there end. They are, however, presented with a copy of charges, notwithstanding their apology, and a hearing before the trial board takes place. They are convicted of violating the rules of the manual and are fined, with the notice "that a repetition of the offense will work more serious consequences." It sometimes happens that the offense is repeated and they are dismissed. "Our 'hoodle' is bursted to pieces," said a South Washington policeman to a STAR reporter some days ago.

"How so?" inquired the reporter.

"A new man gave us away," he answered. "We had the best hoodle in the city, and were furnished the best beer, but the new man gave the snap away to the night inspector, and now the room is watched so closely that we were forced to abandon it. Chickens, however, will come home to roost, and some day the new man will be sorry for it."

"What will make him sorry?" the reporter asked.

"Well, you see, these young fellows can't stand much when they first come on the force," he answered, "and if we can get him with the right man we'll walk his feet off."

A "Hoodle" is the policeman's term for any secret retreat where they surreptitiously obtain rest or refreshment. The act of resting or refreshing one's self is called "hoodling."

THE HARDSHIPS OF A POLICEMAN'S LIFE.

Policemen average fourteen hours duty out of every twenty-four, nine of which are spent on street duty and five on reserve in the station house. The temptation to "hoodle" is very great. They are divided into two classes. Officers of the first class receive $75 and of the second class $90 per month. The hours of the sergeants are not so long as those of the privates. They serve six hours on the street and five hours on reserve, leaving them an average of thirteen hours to be spent off duty. It often happens that when the midnight roll is called a storm is in progress or is on its way, but the men have to turn out of bed and go out into the storm. They are not only exposed to all kinds of weather, but are liable to get into a row and get badly beaten or killed at any time. When in a struggle with a prisoner the officer's clothing gets torn he is compelled to buy new ones, as darning the old ones will not always answer. While the officers of one platoon are standing in the station ready to face the storm the officers in the other platoon are seeking shelter about the station house ready to step into their quarters when the others step out. During the early hours of the morning while officers on reserve are trying to sleep in the station they are often awakened by the yells of drunken prisoners and frequently a woman locked up in a cell will create such a disturbance as to make it impossible for any one within the station house walls to sleep. Officers who are in the station refreshing themselves preparatory to going on duty are sometimes kept awake all night.

Besides arresting persons for violating the laws of the District, officers are instructed to and are obliged to arrest escaped lunatics and deserters from the army and navy. The former most always show fight, and in many cases injure the officer and ruin his uniform.

Each month the officers are required to contribute one dollar each for the benefit of the policemen's fund, expecting at some future date to derive some benefit from the fund. As the matter now stands, a policeman cannot demand a trial, but may be dismissed at the will of his superiors. For that reason the officers object to contributing to the fund.

The Encore Nuisance.

To the Editor of THE EVENING STAR:

The citizens of Washington are enjoying a feast of good music at prices that bring it within the reach of all. People who scarcely knew what the word opera meant a few years ago are now familiar with the style and themes of all the modern composers. Music, known to them only in its devotional or commonest negro melody phases, now speaks to them a various language, is companion to their daily life, and elevates them by the spirituality its enjoyment demands. This is well; but is it not time to ask of them some slight discrimination in their appreciation of it? I refer to the habit of indiscriminate and senseless encoring that mars every performance of summer opera. Solo, duet or chorus, scena, aria or what not, all must be repeated again and again. Every bellowing he who murders in cold blood a tender air is cheered till he revives its lacerated corpse and tortures it anew. Every bedimpled, smirking female who learned her "notes" in a country singing school forty years ago, and whose voice is like a catbird's, harshened by rough usage, is enthusiastically recalled. Conscientious artists who love their art and seek to elevate it receive the same applause, or scarce so much, as the tyro who leaps from obscurity to the footlights and feebly twinkles in a fatuous attempt to be a "star." Artistic effort is discounted, and all that is necessary to success is: Item, a pair of shapely legs; item, two dimples well rouged and a "fetching" smile. Performances are lengthened till the most pleasing opera becomes a bore, and nature, cheated of her customary hour of liquidation, protests like an overdue bill. Washington is musical, has produced many good musicians, and has hundreds of musical critics. Let a few of these take it in hand to reform the prevailing mode by applauding that which has merit and sternly hissing down every attempt to commend that which is inferior.

SPECTACLE.

July 24, 1886.

Brutal Treatment of Cattle.

To the Editor of THE EVENING STAR:

In a cattle car belonging to the Virginia Midland Railroad company and lying on a Baltimore and Ohio siding at Hyattsville this morning were packed like sardines a number of beef cattle. Under the cattle and between their legs were packed hogs. It was a revolting sight for these days of S. P. C. A. associations. The poor hogs were so covered by the droppings from the cattle as to be scarcely recognizable. One of the beeves had fallen and was lying under two or three of the standing cattle and among the hogs. When the standing cattle would kick at the flies swarming on them the fallen animal would receive the blows of those over him. Surely our officials should find means for preventing such shocking brutality to dumb animals, if only from a desire to afford wholesome food to purchasers. It goes without saying that animals treated as above are not suitable for food.

G.

THE WILTED HOUSE.

The Effect of the Warm Wave Upon the Legislators.

COSTUMES WORN BY MEMBERS—EFFORTS TO KEEP COOL—VESTS VERY GENERALLY TABOOED—PALM LEAF FANS AND THIN COATS—A LANGUID INTEREST IN BUSINESS.

The Congressmen, as a rule, are in no condition to begin the work of repairing fences as soon as they get home. When the very hot wave struck the House in the middle of the week members hung limp in their seats, and not even the excitement of a closing week could arouse in them more than a languid interest. The evolution of Congress through the various periods of a session is interesting to observe. At the beginning of a session they are stiff-backed and energetic,—very anxious,—particularly the new members,—very anxious to do something. When the height of the social season strikes them they begin to think less of legislation, and frequently fall asleep in the daytime. About Easter time they "swear off" and begin to reform, turning their attention to accomplishing something that will please their constituents and secure their renomination.

When hot weather comes upon them with their work still undone they become demoralized and desperate, but their first energetic movement melts their collar and they collapse and become utterly indifferent—ready to accept fate, and pray for an early adjournment.

This indifference first appears in their attitudes and in their dress. During the past week the House reached that stage of utter abandonment. The most fastidious became utterly indifferent as to their personal appearance. Hardly a man could be seen writing at his desk. Half the House had on their cheap office coats, more or less mussed and wrinkled from being lolled in. Black alpaca and striped seersucker coats of cheap quality are most worn, and some of them are so wrinkled that they seem to have been shriveled up by the hot weather. Fans are not usually carried by members, but a few have reached that point when they resort even to this feminine artifice for keeping cool. Burrows, of Michigan, leans back in his seat dressed in a light suit, with a palm-leaf fan in one hand and a handkerchief in the other, first wiping and then fanning. Reed, of Maine, sticks to his thick suit of winter blue, though the coat tails are mussed from being sat upon too much, and after he comes out of a fight with the "democratic party," cools off with a big palm-leaf.

Cutcheon, of Michigan, wears a thick suit and a palm leaf. Most of the other members fan themselves with the *Record*. Mr. Randall seems not to mind the changes of weather, and always appears in the House in a frock coat of black broadcloth. Morrison wears a black alpaca coat. Seersucker coats are seen all over the House, and occasionally the eye rests on a whole suit of that airy material. Gov. Long has a suit in dark stripes, so has Gen. Henderson. Weaver and Brumm, the two greenbackers, try to keep cool in coats of pongee. Sowden and Bayne wear pongee coats. Hall wears a seersucker of pronounced stripes. The coolest looking man in the House is Reid, of North Carolina, who wears black trousers of some thin material and a fine India silk coat and vest, with a slight greenish tinge on yellow. The wind flutters through the coat when he walks, and he is the envy of all his associates. The two Kansas men, Peters and Perkins, wear seersucker. Holman wears a thin brown calico coat. West and Little wear black alpaca coats without vests. Eldridge wears black alpaca with striped seersucker vest. Hiscock, of New York, sticks to thick cloth clothes. Stone, of Massachusetts, wears a striped seersucker suit entire. Vests are generally tabooed, and suspender buckles can generally be seen sticking out from under members' coats.

Some who have enough energy to try to keep up appearances wear thin vests. White vests are quite numerous, and Mr. Hiestand, of Pennsylvania, wears a buff vest with a thin black suit. Burleigh of New York, Forney, of Alabama, Allen, of Massachusetts, Bennett, of North Carolina, Johnson, of North Carolina, Johnson, of Indiana, and Halsell, of Kentucky, are all conspicuous for their white vests. Mr. Frederick takes great comfort in a full suit of seersucker. Mr. Singleton wears the same style coat both winter and summer, varied only by a white vest. It is of heavy blue cloth with black velvet collar. Of all the members, Mr. Baker, of New York, seems to find most difficulty in keeping cool. He is about the heaviest man in the House, smooth face, bald head and much loose flesh about him. He dresses in black alpaca, and sits with his legs spread apart, his sleeves pulled up to the elbow, one handkerchief on his knee, one on his desk and an immense palm leaf in his hand. He seems to suffer, but is good natured.

THE TERROR OF THE DOGS.

A Talk With Poundmaster Einstein—The Tags for This Year.

"What is the style of dog tags this year?" asked a STAR reporter of Poundmaster Einstein, as he was sitting on his dog-cage wagon and about to start out in search of a load of canines.

"Well, they are made of nickel plate, bell shaped, with number on one side, 'D. C. dog tag, 1886,' and with a dog's head in medallion on the other side," said the poundmaster. "This is fastened to the dog's collar."

"Are the dogs more plentiful this year than last?"

"Yes, more so than ever," said Mr. Einstein. "We're running ahead of last year in the sale of tags. The law has not been changed any, but stands as it did—$2 per tag. The old corporation ordinance imposed a tax of $2 per year for each male dog and $5 per year for each female, which had in all cases to be paid on the 1st of January. The law for taking a dog to any market house or allowing a dog to accompany one's self there was $5 fine, and it ought to be so now, as they are a great nuisance in a market house."

"How do you account for their increase over last year?" asked the reporter.

"They come into the city from the country—follow their masters in—get lost and do not find their way home again. There's no other way of accounting for their increase so rapidly."

"When was the pound established?"

"In 1871," said Mr. Einstein. "The number of dogs caught from July 1, 1878, to June 30, 1885, was 22,641, out of which 21,049 were killed, as they were not redeemed by their owners. The law says that dogs shall be kept in the pound two days before being killed, but good dogs are kept much longer, even for weeks, until they find a master who is willing to pay for the tag. When they get too numerous in the pound, I notify Mr. F. N. Draney, the contractor, when I am going to kill; he sends a wagon and driver, carts away the bodies, dumps them on a scow boat and takes them over the river to the neighborhood of Four Mile Run, where the skins are taken off and the carcases go to make up fertilizers for old Virginia.

"How are they killed? I have never changed my manner—it is the best and least cruel. They are shot in the head with a revolver. They die instantly, and are not sensible to pain. They are all carted off at once, and the pound undergoes a cleaning up after each shooting. Four men are employed at the pound as my assistants and live at the pound. Two horses are kept at the pound stables for my use in catching the dogs. The wagon is a heavy one, boarded up on the sides, and with heavy wire net-work on the front and rear portions to keep the dogs secure and afford them ventilation. The net used is about three feet six inches in diameter, with a four-foot pole as a handle. The rim of the net is made of iron. The whole of the city and the county of Washington are patroled every week and all the stray dogs gathered up."

"Are there any other stray quadrupeds which require much attention from your force?"

"No," said the poundmaster, "there are very few cows kept in the city—not one-tenth part as many as there used to be. The cow-stable nuisance is well nigh played out in Washington. Geese and goats are also growing scarce, and the only great source of trouble are dogs, which will always give trouble. The old law of 1871 required dogs to be muzzled from the 15th of June to the 15th of September. This part of the law has been repealed, and never was fully enforced. It was a very cruel law and caused more dogs to go mad than anything else."

"You then have some regard for dogs?" suggested THE STAR reporter.

"I do have a fondness for good dogs and always treat them kindly," said the poundmaster "They are man's best friend and will stick closer to him than any animal on earth and should be well treated. I never like to shoot the dogs, though this lot falls to me."

TYROTOXICON AND DIRT.

A High Sounding Scientific Name Given to a Very Simple Matter.

A correspondent writing to THE EVENING STAR on the subject of tyrotoxicon says: "Whenever a baker or confectioner reads one of those articles that annually appear in the papers regarding alum in the bread, poison in the ice cream, etc., his face generally assumes a broad grin at the wonderful explanations of a very simple matter arrived at by our learned professors and to wonder if the general public are any wiser that they were before. Just now it is poison in the ice cream that mystifies them and it has been dignified with the high sounding name of "Tyrotoxicon" by Prof. Vaughn, of the Michigan university. Not to go into elaborate theories, but as a practical workman knowing the facts by experience as they actually occur on the premises, I will tell you what it is and how it comes. To sum it up in a nutshell, it is 'dirt' transformed into a powerful poison through a careless workman and more careless apprentice boy. All large freezers for machines are made of copper, zinc and tin, and are more or less dangerous in the order named and the amount of poison generated in them. The greasy scum of cream that hangs to the side and bottom of a freezer after using in copper turns to verdigris in about six hours, in zinc to a blue looking paste resembling in taste lead, and in tin a black paste, that seems to act similar to mercury. A teaspoonful 12 hours old in a ten-gallon copper freezer would throw everybody into convulsions eating it. The same quantity from a tin freezer would only make them think they had eaten something that didn't exactly agree with them. Now the cause. It is the duty of the apprentice boy to scald his freezer, then wash it out with hot water, and last to wipe it out thoroughly with a dry towel, and it is the duty of the foreman to see that he does it. Were these precautions always taken ice cream would never be poisoned in making."

OLD-TIME SALARIES.

What Department Clerks were Paid Half a Century Ago.

MR. LAWRENSON'S RECOLLECTIONS ON THE PAY QUESTION—THE DAYS WHEN DEPARTMENT CLERKS USED TO GO OUT TO FEED THEIR HORSES—HOW AN EFFORT TO GET AN INCREASE OF PAY WAS DEFEATED.

"The pay received by clerks when I entered the Post Office department," remarked Mr. James Lawrenson to a STAR reporter, "was, as a rule, $800 per year. Some received more and some less, but that was the pay of the great bulk of the clerks. A salary of $1,400 was considered very large pay, and but few received that."

Mr. Lawrenson, as is well known, is one of the oldest clerks in the service, he having entered the department in 1834. He is now 86 years of age, and when a STAR reporter entered his room in the department he found the old gentleman at work at his desk, where he is as faithful to his duties and as efficient as any clerk in the department. He goes over to Baltimore, where he lives, every day, and returns in the morning and is at his desk promptly at the hour. Mr. Lawrenson is remarkably bright and active for a man of his years, and his memory goes back fifty or sixty years and recalls events and persons with astonishing facility. In addition to his experience as department clerk, he was during the greater part of his early life correspondent for various newspapers, and in that way he came in contact with many public men, about whom he chats in a very entertaining way. His remark about the pay of clerks quoted above was elicited by an inquiry from THE STAR man, who was rather curious to know something about the life of a department clerk in the early years of the government. Continuing, Mr. Lawrenson said: "The appropriation for the pay of clerks was not in specific sums as it is in these days. There were no classes of clerks recognized by law then, and the amount estimated by the head of a department to be necessary to pay the clerks was appropriated in bulk, and the department head determined what each clerk should be paid. Of course $800 a year was a great deal more in those times than it is to-day, but most of the clerks had families, and they had a pretty tight squeeze to make the two ends meet. When one died we generally had to take up a subscription to defray the funeral expenses. Many of the clerks lived out of the city limits, and they would drive into their work every morning. I remember there used to be rows of hitching posts along the square where the Patent office building now stands, and the horses would stand there all day. At noon the clerks would come out of the department and give their horses a bag of corn or oats for their noon-day meal.

"Rather primitive, I suppose you think," observed the old gentleman, as he glanced good naturedly at his listener. "But everything was primitive then. There were but few streets in the city that were discernible to the eye at least, and pavements and sidewalks had not been thought of. The old building which stood on the present site of the Post Office department building was small, and had been built by Mr. Blodgett for a hotel, and seems now, when I call it to mind, a very miserable structure as compared with the noble pile of marble, which now is the department building. The Post Office department had not then become one of the executive departments of the government, but it was merely the general post office. Well, as you may judge, every thing was on a much smaller scale than what we are accustomed to in these days, but I remember that soon after I entered the department I found that the clerks had the opinion that their salaries were too small, and cut their cloth as economically as they could, they found it difficult to make it suit the pattern. Finally they came to the conclusion to try if they could not get an increase. Of course, Congress must be appealed to, and a delegation called on the Postmaster General, Mr. Barry, to know if he would have any objections to their appearing before a committee of Congress. He told them that he had no objections, and said that he hoped they would get all that they asked. Accordingly a delegation went up to the Capitol and were given a hearing by the committee. They were listened to very attentively and treated with great cordiality. The committee after hearing their statement said that they would give it their attention, and added, that in order to act with intelligence, a sub-committee would visit the department and examine into the nature of the work done by the clerks. The delegation returned and made a glowing report of their mission, and there was much rejoicing among the clerks. Sure enough, some two or three days afterwards the sub-committee made its appearance at the department. They asked to be shown to the room where the clerks were at work, which at that time was a large room on the upper floor. It was after ten o'clock in the morning, but when the congressional committee had climbed the stairs and stood at the entrance of the room, they were astonished to find no one there, and instead of the expected scene of a roomful of clerks hard at work at their desks, there was silence and vacancy. Turning to a messenger, who was the only occupant of the room, one of the Congressmen, who was a man of strict habits, asked sternly:

'Where are all the clerks?'

'They have gone to the races, sir,' stammered the messenger.

'Gone to the races,' echoed the disgusted Congressman. 'Has Mr. B——,' mentioning the name of one of the clerks, 'gone to the races? I understand that he is a member of Foundry church.'

'No, sir,' replied the messenger more cheerfully, 'he has not gone to the races; but he never comes to the department on race day, because he knows none of the clerks will be there.'

'Well,' resumed the legislator, who in common with the other members of the committee were beginning to enjoy the ludicrousness of the situation, 'I suppose that Parson ———,' mentioning another clerk who was a Methodist preacher, 'has also gone to the races?'

'Oh! no sir,' protested the messenger earnestly, 'he never comes to the department on race day.'

"The committee went away," resumed Mr. Lawrenson, "and that was the last heard of an increase in the salaries for some time at any rate. A few years later the department was reorganized, and the Postmaster General, from the head of a mere bureau, became a cabinet officer. Then the salaries were increased, although they did not reach the standard which now prevails. I believe that in the year 1853 the present classified service with the various grades of salaries was established. During the war, when the price of everything went up and wages increased, it was thought unjust that the employes of the department should be the only exception. But the burden upon the government was very great, and while the justice of the position taken by the clerks was recognized, yet nothing was done until the year 1865, when an addition of 20 per cent of the salaries for that year of all the government employes was appropriated by Congress."

Unrest.

Written for THE EVENING STAR.

Within my breast a chaos reigns,
Of hopes and doubts, of fears and pains,
Of pleasure, joy and care;
In vain I try to break away
From tireless thought's ne'er ending sway—
For if one thought I drown, behold!
From it rise others, manifold,
And Hydra heads they bear.

In vain I strive my brain to still;
In mockery of my poor will
Its fancies surge anew;
Dreams upon dreams are multiplied,
On tireless fantasies I ride—
Obliterating time and space
Strange medleys I, of ill and grace,
In phantom visions view.

In thought unlimited I soar
To heights that few attained before
By weary work of years;
Again in horror back I shrink
When led by thought unto the brink
Of Misery's pit, where grim Despair
Would cut off hope, and keep us there,
By demon taunts and sneers.

Still through them all does music run,
Cheering, subdued, as evening's sun
After a day of rain;—
A melody sweeter to me
As it enhances sympathy
With mortal woes, and seems to bear
Them up, as if on wings of prayer,
To ease the heart of pain.

Unceasingly they come and go
In rapid, ever changeful, flow—
These thoughts of good and ill.
These thoughts that I cannot control
May be the struggles of the soul
Within its gaol, until 'tis freed
By Him who still doth intercede,
In bidding "Peace! be still."

July 24, 1886. —ARTHUR E. DOWELL.

Watermelons with Fresh Stems.

To the Editor of THE EVENING STAR:

Fair to good watermelons have at length commenced arriving from Georgia, the stems being generally fresh and green, showing that the melons have only recently been pulled from the vines. I think it probable that by the time the market men get rid of their large lots of stale melons they will be looking around for an explanation as to why the stems of the melons that arrived here several weeks ago were invariably withered and dried up, while the stems of those now arriving are fresh and green.

FARMER.

"YOURS HAS BEEN A VERY BUSY LIFE, Mr. Bullion?" inquired the lady reporter. "H'm, yes," said Mr. Bullion; "I began to rustle around midlin' airly." "Will you please tell me of your earliest struggles?" she asked, poising a pencil. The millionaire looked uncertain. "I can't remember much about it myself," he said, "but I reckon my early struggles began when they was puttin' my first shirt on me. I've noticed since that babies—" But she was a real nice, brand new reporter, and was downstairs two flights ahead of the elevator.—*Brooklyn Eagle.*

THE MISERIES OF WEALTH.—A correspondent writing from Newport says: "When one sees the little Astors out walking with their nurses, one sighs to think what jolly, happy times they are missing. No dirt pies, no playing store with bits of broken crockery for 'goods,' and pins for 'money,' no doll's houses down in the orchard, with the kitten for an improvised baby, and infant frogs kept under a purloined glass tumbler, to be fed every five minutes with leaves and berries—no, none of these primitive and childish pastimes for the little millionaires, attired in ravishing costumes that render them as lovely as an artist's dream."

OUT OF THE SNAKE DEN.

Fact and Fiction from the Reptile Room of the Smithsonian.

A STAR reporter searching for authentic information concerning the sea serpent which is reported to have made its appearance at several seaside resorts already this summer traversed the gloomy passage underneath the Smithsonian building leading to the snake room. Within the room sat a distinguished scientist. It was evidently a moment of leisure with him, and THE STAR reporter took advantage of it to broach the subject of sea serpents.

"See serpents," remarked the scientist; "why yes, there are a great many of them if you can only see them;" and he waved his hand about the room towards the myriad jars in which serpents were coiled and the dried and stuffed reptiles hanging on pegs and other protections about the room. With such jokes even distinguished scientists amuse themselves in their hours of relaxation. "We have received a bowling constrictor," continued the scientist, observing that the reporter took in the full meaning of his pun on sea serpents. "Never heard of a bowling constrictor? Why, that's the snake that surrounds an army of other snakes, gets around them, puts his tail in his mouth, swallows his tail and keeps on swallowing it, contracting the ring around the other snakes, you see, until he cuts them in two."

"Have you had any official information on the subject?" inquired THE STAR reporter.

"We would not have believed it if it had not been brought to us by a hoop-snake," said the learned gentleman. "This hoop snake, or horned snake, came with its tail in its mouth. When we took its tail out we found the dispatch on the end of its tail telling us about it. The dispatch was put on the end of the tail, and then the tail in its mouth, so that it would be safe. Dr. Yarrow, you see, offered $100 to anybody who would bring him a live hoop snake with its tail in its mouth. Did he have to pay the $100? No, the doctor was not here when the people brought the snake, and they could not wait for him. Will he have to pay it? No, the trouble is, you see, that this was a jointed snake, and when I went to touch it it fell all to pieces. It is true a person who could blow on it the right way might have brought the pieces together again. It would require some one with lungs like bellows. We have to keep track of these matters, you see, for every little while Congress gets up a snake investigation and expects us to tell all about it.

"There was a copperhead and a blowing viper in a box here, the other day," said the scientist, "and the viper, I think, was pretty well frightened by the copperhead. There was a water moccasin in the box, too, but he hunted for a hole and got out of the way. The viper then blew himself up—his hinder part—and flattened his anterior fourth until he looked just like a big paper cutter with a snake's head on the end, a flat blade and a big round handle. Then he shoved his head into the sand, took on a load of sand and paraded around in that way. The copperhead actually turned pale with fright. The viper went about in that way for two days, with several stories of sand on his head. If the copperhead had bitten him he would have let the wind out of him, just like biting a hole in a toy bellows. I am satisfied that it was nothing but bluster on the part of the viper. Sometimes fright will lead one to bluster around."

"Will the bite of a poisonous snake kill another snake?" asked the reporter.

"Oh, yes, very quickly," said the naturalist. "Snakes that eat poisonous snakes by choice always catch them by the nose, so they cannot open their mouths. Then they swallow them, nose and head first, and the reptile never has a chance to bite. King snakes, the black snakes with white marks, do that way. There is another snake, of a dull lead color, in the West Indies, that does the same way. I found one of them once which had swallowed all it could of a snake much longer than itself. It made a strange sight—looked like a snake with two tails. It had to go around this way until a part of the swallowed snake was digested; then it would take in a little more of it, and so on, until the whole snake had disappeared. I am told that out in Kansas there are snakes that catch hold of the legs of land turtles, or 'tortles,' as they call them here. A snake will swallow the hind leg of the 'tortle,' and, of course, cannot swallow any more. Then the 'tortle' goes tramping about with the snake attached to his leg, and using the snake pretty roughly. The snake cannot let go, for its teeth, which are turned back or inward, are locked fast. It keeps its hold until the leg becomes so decomposed that it drops off. That fact accounts for the great number of lame 'tortles' found in that country. The bowling constrictors are made down in North Carolina, I believe. They are made out of moonshine. I remember a man I met down in that state, a countryman. I asked him if they had any snakes around that country. 'Yes,' he said, 'boa constrictors and anacondas.' 'What,' I asked, 'you do not mean to say you have them wild.' 'Oh, no,' he answered, 'they come here with the shows.' Some people see a good many snakes," continued the scientific gentleman. "Do you remember the story of the boy in the railroad car who had a box with holes in the cover. A nervous old gentleman who sat near him thought he had something alive in the box and felt a little alarmed. Finally, he poked the boy with his umbrella, and said, 'Sonny, what have you in that box?' The boy said, 'It's a mongoose, an animal that kills snakes.' Soon the old gentleman prodded him again with the umbrella and said, 'You don't have so many snakes up your way that you have to keep an animal to kill them, do you?' 'We don't have any,' said the boy, 'at least, I never saw one, and no one else ever saw one, except my brother, who drinks very hard, he sees a good many at times.'"

"Oh, but those are imaginary snakes," said the old gentleman.

'And this is an imaginary mongoose,' said the small boy. The old gentleman then viewed the scenery from the window and did not bother the boy again.

"Have any of our snakes escaped lately?" said the scientist, repeating a question of the reporter. "Now we never really had more than half a dozen copperheads and two or three rattle snakes get away, and that number amounts to little when scattered over a big city like Washington. I never saw one of them after they left here. They know me and I suppose get out of the way when they see me coming. But there are very few of them."

"Might they not propagate and multiply?" inquired the reporter.

"If they found a gate," said the scientist, "they might prop it, but I never saw one in that attitude," and then the scientific gentleman, having used up his leisure time, resumed his study.

Transfers of Real Estate.

Deeds in fee have been filed as follows: C. P. Culver et al. to C. A. James et al., pts. 4 and 5, sq. 352; $2,500. B. Beale to A. C. Clark, lot 9, sq. 864; $2,217.60. District of Columbia to W. L. Bramhall, pt. 9, sq. 268; $—; w. pt. 9, do.; $—. Giles F. Dyer to J. B. Wimer, lot 13, blk. 4, Reno; $45. S. G. Stewart to W. Mayse, sub lot 24, sq. 171; $3,500. J. J. Knox to Albert Cingria, pt. 3, sq. 84; $150. A. C. Clark to T. H. G. Todd, lot 9, sq. 1087; $200. Bertram Zevely to Matilda C. Stevenson, pts. 2, 35 to 37, sq. 241; $—. A. C. Clark to W. Mayse, lot 9, sq. 864; $2,772. Mary A. Brown to Fillmore Beall, sub lot 12, sq. 802; $2,500. Hannah Hunnicutt to Fannie Cordell, lot 170, Chichester; $80. C. C. Glover et al., trustees, to Matilda Rutherford, lot 3, sq. 290; $9,000. Chas. E. Westling to Matilda Rutherford, pt. 9, sq. 290; $—. Georgie D. Todd to A. C. Clark, w. pt. 2, sq. 1027; $—. Henrietta Smith to G. E. Emmons, two parts of Chichester, 10 and 7 acres; $—. D. W. Patterson to C. B. Pearson et al., lot 24, sq. 725. Same to B. H. Warner et al., sub lots 41 to 50, sq. 633; $—. Sarah Turner to Thos. Walker, sub lot 1, sq. n. of 334; $1,380. S. Norment to L. Moeller, sub 139, sq. 623; $4,250. John Appich to J. J. Appich, sub lots 20 and 21, Uniontown; $1,000. Ella N. McGowan to E. Kurtz Johnson, pt. sq. 181; $13,000. D. B. Groff to S. S. Shedd, sub lots 74 and 75, sq. 271; $3,000. J. H. Kengla to L. D. Means, sub lot 22, sq. 622; $—. L. D. Means to Parthenia G. Kengla, same property; $—. S. H. Walker to J. T. S. Loane, part 8, sq. 815; $1,200. Isaac D. Toll to A. C. Clark, lots 7 and 8, square 145; $—. F. J. Hessler to Edith N. Lee Cointe, part subs E and F, sq. 265; $—. D. W. Patterson to Virginia N. Taylor, lot 1, blk. 3, Columbia Heights; $8,284. G. Geisler to H. Ruppert, pt. 8, sq. 450; $10,900. W. S. Ballard to A. Loeffler, sub L, sq. 513; $3,500. Morris Murphy to Mary C. Murphy, part 3, sq. n. of 515; $—. D. M. Goodacre to P. R. Summers, sub 276½, sq. 674; $2,300. F. Stutz to J. W. Merritt, e. ½ 19, Keating's sub; $790. J. B. Wimer to H. Freeman et al., trustees, lot 18, blk. A, Reno; $—. Maria J. Murphy to W. F. Gardner, pt. 7, sq. 426; $—. Heirs of E. Gallant to W. A. Torrey, sub 27, sq. 479; $3,000. T. A. Mitchell et al. to S. D. Webb, lot 94, Long Meadows; $—. S. D. Webb to C. E. Banes, same property; $—. Owen McCabe to W. S. Roose, sub 208, sq. 206; $5,000. Amelia M. Simmons to H. E. Williams, lot 4, blk. 41, north university grounds; $2,600. E. A. McIntire to John Patch, sub 3, sq. 521; $125. J. H. W. Kettler to A. C. Clark, pt. 2, sq. 1027; $200. W. Danenhower to W. Barnum, sub. 94, sq. 194; $3,000. M. J. Keane to C. Killain, sub N, sq. 534; $3,500. Kate U. Moorhead to H. E. Pellen, subs 44 to 46, sq. 182; $20,000. R. W. Fenwick to James F. Barbour, pt. 12, sq. 724; $—. J. F. Barbour to C. R. Newman, same property; $—. J. G. Payne to Anna R. Taylor, pt. 3, sq. 205; $—. Fannie A. Moore to Francis M. Pattengull, lot 6, blk. 4, Le Droit park; $3,700. T. M. Fields et al. to Mary T. Thompson, sub lot 16, sq. 240; $—. D. K. Carter to T. Somerville, subs B. & C., sq. 346; $30,000. B. Burnstine to Mary H. Forrest, lot 12, sq. 1096; $590.54. R. W. Tyler to B. P. Mann, sub 71, sq. 118; $10,500. W. J. Watson to Meyer Loeb, lot 3, sq. S of 1068; $1,200. Thos. J. King to D. T. Donohue, lot 77, sq. 987; $—. W. T. Thompson et al. to Mary T. Thompson, sub lot 16, sq. 240; $5,500. H. T. Eckart to Cecelia J. Griffin, lot 35, sq. 515; $2,500. W. O. Denison et al., trustee to James P. Lewis, lots 93, 94, 107, 108 and 110, D. & L's, sub Mt. Pleasant, &c.; $9,000. W. W. Danenhower to J. T. Arms, sub lots 62 and 63, sq. 206; $2,450. R. D. Ruffin to John Patch, sub lots 138 to 141, sq. 65; $—.

SOUND SENSE.—Chief Engineer Arthur (Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers) said in the course of an address some days ago: "But I say to you all, by whatever name your association is known (of course I don't know you all); I say to you as a working man, as a man who commenced his railway career as a wiper, then a fireman, then an engineer, and have worked and done for myself since I was twelve years of age, that I never gave myself question about whether I worked eight or ten hours a day. Work! Make the best use of the time that God gives you and be honest and true to your fellows; then stand squarely on your feet and feel that you are the peer of every man. And so you are if you behave yourself."

Samuel Quillen, of Akron, Ohio, is accused of outraging his two daughters, aged 13 and 14 years respectively, the latter being married. Quillen has fled to Pennsylvania.

SUNDAY AT ST. ELIZABETH.

Morning Scenes in the Grounds of the Insane Asylum.

PATIENTS OUT FOR AN AIRING—QUEER CHARACTERS AND HOW THEY ACT—AN AMATEUR SIGNAL BUREAU—THE SAD TALE OF AN IRISH PATIENT—THE "PRESIDENT'S" TOUR OF INSPECTION.

Sunday morning a STAR reporter sat in the inviting shade under the trees in the beautiful grounds of the government hospital for the insane. Nature was in one of her loveliest moods and the sunlight shone in patches on the velvety sward, made to put on its most brilliant green by the recent rains. The air was pure and balmy. It was a lovely Sabbath morning, and one could scarcely realize that this was the house of unfortunate creatures bereft of reason, except for the occasional weird cry of some demented being imprisoned behind the bars in one of the wings of the immense building. Under the trees on the male side of the grounds sat groups of inmates, chatting, smoking, and reading the Sunday papers. These comprised the class of patients who are not closely confined to the building. Some were undoubtedly insane, but only occasionally does their malady become apparent to the unpracticed eyes. They have lucid intervals, when they are perfectly reasonable. They are made to feel their imprisonment as little as possible. Some were on the fast road to recovery from their hallucinations, and needed only a little more time before being discharged cured. Others, however, were not insane at all, unless an uncontrollable appetite for liquor can be called insanity. They were probably sent to St. Elizabeth by their relatives and friends whom they disgraced in order that the quiet restraints of that institution might, in time, break the chains of the habit which held them in bondage.

OUT FOR AN AIRING.

On the female side of the building the more tractable patients were out for an airing under the watchful care of their comely attendants. These unfortunates were all neatly dressed and apparently contented. In a few minutes three women came walking along the well-kept path. Two of them were chatting merrily together while the third, with downcast eyes and vacant expression, held fast the hand of the young girl at her side in trustful dependence. It was easy to see that the two bright eyed girls were attendants, and that the third was the daily charge of one of them. Shortly afterwards another couple passed. One was bright and gay looking in a well-fitting white dress, while her companion, clad in black, had a mournful expression and looked steadily upon the ground as she passed slowly along. It was explained to THE STAR man that she believed that she had committed the unpardonable sin. She did not know what it was nor when it was done; but committed it she had, and consequently there was no hope for her. At a little distance could be seen the curls of the garrulous old lady, who was a few years ago a familiar figure at the capitol. She was glibly talking to both attendants and patients. Soon the walks were dotted with the white dresses of the attendants and their tractable charges out for a little walk.

THE PRESIDENT.

Hearing a quick step on the graveled walk behind him the reporter turned his head and saw approaching a neatly dressed middle-aged man. He wore a tall hat a few seasons out of date, and a dark overcoat without any undercoat, which fluttered about as he strode rapidly along. In his hand he carried a cane which he swung jauntily. His air was business-like, and he wasted no time along the way. As he passed the official by the reporter's side hailed him with a cherry "Good morning, Mr. President. Out on inspection this morning?" "How you was, Toctor?" replied the pedestrian, slowing up a little. "I vas yust goin' to look arount a lettle to see dot efery-ting goes right," and with an earnest shake of his head he continued down the road. "The President of the United States," said the official to the reporter. "He believes that he was elected by the census. He never goes out of the building during the week, but every Sunday morning at this hour exactly he emerges, dressed as you see him, and starts in a regular tour of inspection of the place, which he imagines is under his charge. He has a regular route that includes nearly the whole grounds. After finding everything to his satisfaction, he returns to the hospital and is contented for another week."

TRAINING FOR A FOOT RACE.

In walking out to Prospect hill, the portion of the grounds which commands such a magnificent view of the river and city, the reporter noticed a young colored man, in army clothes, trudging along at a fair pace. His clenched hands were swinging at his sides and his face bore a determined expression. He nodded as he passed, but did not let up in his walk. "He is training for an imaginary foot race," said THE STAR man's companion. "He doesn't know who are to be the other contestants, nor when the event is to take place, but he is preparing for it, and is bound to win the championship."

A WANDERER'S RETURN.

An Irishman with his dudeen came strolling leisurely along and seemed to be enjoying himself. He had been a patient at St. Elizabeth once before and had been discharged cured. He was, as it turned out, unfortunate enough to come into possession of a pension with considerable back pay. He returned to Ireland with his pockets full of money. Temptation was too strong for him. He went on a protracted spree, and all his money was either lost or stolen. His weakened intellect again gave way, but in some unknown manner, penniless and friendless he obtained passage across the ocean to New York. From there he walked all the way straight to the gate of St. Elizabeth. He was a pitiable object when he arrived, but was taken in and cared for. Out on the point of land referred to, the reporter saw

A STRANGE SIGHT.

An old soldier was standing on a bench violently gesticulating towards the Navy Yard. He would wave his arms to and fro over his head after the manner of brakemen when signaling to the engineer of a train. By the side of the bench a long pole was sticking in the ground, and from its top fluttered several long rags. Every few moments the old man would turn to his flagpole to see if it was all right, and then renew his gesticulations. Suddenly he clambered down, snatched up his pole and, running some distance, set it firmly in the ground and continued waving his arms. "What are you doing?" asked the reporter, stopping by his side. With a disdainful expression, he replied, "Signaling to the army over there, of course."

"Do they answer your signals?" asked the reporter.

"Why, of course. There! don't you see?" clutching THE STAR man's arm with one hand and pointing with another to a little column of white smoke slowly ascending from a distant chimney, "they have seen my signals and are answering them. Pretty soon they will answer me from the arsenal."

It was learned that the old man does nothing and thinks of nothing but signaling, and can be found at his favorite occupation almost any time of day.

AN OLD SAILOR'S RETREAT.

Down in the woods, back of the hospital, the reporter ran across a queer character. He was a Russian, and had been a sailor during the war. He had found an old deserted shanty in the woods, shortly after coming to the hospital, which he fixed up and surrounded with a fence. He was as harmless as daft, and was from the start unmolested. He took evident pleasure in collecting all sorts of odd things, which he arranged about his little cabin, and he covered the building and grounds with signs, crudely painted, in commemoration of the events which still lingered in his disordered brain. Over in the corner of the ground was "Fort Fisher," while near the door of his cabin was "Port Royal." He spends his time collecting bits of crockery, broken glass, &c., and arranging them in his curiosity shop, and also in whittling out models of ships. He is very incoherent, and all efforts of the reporter to engage him in conversation were fruitless. All through the grounds this Sunday morning were met queer characters, who wandered contentedly but aimlessly about. They were perfectly harmless, but their unbalanced minds prevented their mingling with the busy world outside. It was evident that they could find no home where they would be so well cared for and humored in their delusions as at St. Elizabeth.

900 Miles in Five Days on a Bicycle.

From the St. James' Gazette.

Nothing could be much more pitiful than the story of the gentleman who has ridden from Land's End to John o' Groat's, a distance of 900 miles, in 5 days 1½ hours. The feat was not so much a riding one as a proof that a young man can keep his seat on a bicycle for that length of time without being quite dead at the end of it. Mr. Mills was reduced to such a state that, "besides being unable to sleep, he could not even draw his note book from his pocket." During these five days he slept only six hours. Dr. Richardson used to maintain that cycling deserved encouragement because it was a healthy exercise. Is this sort of thing healthy?

A Sunday Suit of Goodness.

From the Cleveland Plain-Dealer.

In this city not long ago, a bank director asked the cashier: "Is Mr. —— good?" "That depends on whether you inquired in a Godward or manward sense," replied the cashier, "I mean manward, of course," said the director. "In a Godward sense," remarked the cashier, "Mr. —— is very good. A No. 1. No man in the church can pray louder. But in a manward sense I am sorry to say that he is tricky." It is sufficient to say that the note of Mr. —— was not discounted.

AS A MATTER OF GOOD TASTE, the publishing of a long list of wedding presents is questionable; but the list recently published in a country paper is, in one sense, interesting, including, as it did, "From father and mother of the bride, one Jersey calf; from bride to groom, hair wreath made from hair of her entire family, and also six fine shirts; from brother Elias, one book of poems, one dream book, one 'Polite Letter Writer,' and a dog; from Aunt Harriet, six hens and a rooster, also one jar tomato catsup; from cousin Sarah, one poem made up by herself on bride and groom, fifteen verses in all."—*Cleveland Leader.*

Monday afternoon's storm was very severe in Carroll and Washington's counties, Md. Lightning destroyed the barn of Joseph Bishop, near Smoketown, Washington county.

Samuel Fulham's saw and shingle mill at Gowen, Mich., with 40,000,000 feet of lumber and 10,000,000 shingles, was burned Tuesday. Loss $200,000.

BUILDING ACTIVITY.

A Large Number of Houses and Buildings Being Erected.

THE MANUFACTURE OF BRICK IN THIS DISTRICT—THE FLORAL ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MESSRS. SMALL—OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.

Building is going on with great activity in this city, although it is now the season, when as a rule, but little new work is begun. Owing probably to the labor troubles early in the Spring a good deal of the present activity is merely making up for lost time, but even this is more than was predicted, as it was generally concluded that the prospects for the building season were ruined. Even now some who are interested in the building trades state that the season will only be an average one, and that there would have been a great deal more building if the labor troubles had not occurred. It is a noticeable feature of the building now going on that the proportion of large expensive houses as compared with what are known as cheap houses is much greater than last year. While, of course, the erection of small houses continues, yet not to the extent of last year. Many who have invested their money in this class of property are inclined to think that the building of small houses is somewhat overdone, as the disposition is to move out of a old house in order to get into a new house with the result that the old houses are left empty.

HOUSES NOW GOING UP.

Some of the houses now going up in various parts of the city have been noted as follows, in addition to those recently mentioned in THE STAR: Mr. David A. Windsor is building a handsome house on New Hampshire avenue and N street, which will have a large frontage, and will cost some $15,000. In the immediate vicinity, and occupying the whole of one of those small flatiron squares so common in the city, Dr. Guy F. Whiting is completing a large and stately residence, which is built according to the designs of Mr. Poindexter, the architect. Just above N street, on New Hampshire avenue, a pretty home for Mr. Reginald Fendall is nearing completion, and on N street, between 19th and 20th, Prof. Eastman has built a residence. Further along on N street, and just beyond 18th street, Senator Eustis has just begun the erection of an addition to the residence which he recently purchased, and which will be used for the accommodation of his library. On 18th street, just south of Massachusetts avenue, Mrs. Senator Cameron is erecting a house which is attracting a good deal of attention. Across Massachusetts avenue Mr. Maury's house is now gradually rising from the foundation, and will prove to be an attractive feature in that locality. The improvements on 16th street are going on steadily, and adjoining the fine residence which Col. Henry Strong is building at the corner of 16th and L streets, Miss Nina Wright has begun the erection of two fine residences. At the corner of 17th and Corcoran streets Mr. John A. Gray has commenced the erection of two residences which will cost $15,000. Rhode Island avenue is adorned with handsome homes, and one of the recent additions is the elegant house which Mr. James H. McKenney has built just above Scott circle and adjoining the fine residence of Mr. Cranch McIntire. Mr. T. P. Simpson has begun the erection of a residence on Rhode Island avenue and P street which will cost some $14,000. The vicinity of 8th and L streets is to have three attractive houses erected there. Mr. N. T. Haller is to build one on L street to cost $8,000, and Mr. Emmons Smith, of the Boston variety store, two houses on 8th street to cost $16,000. A permit has recently been taken out by Mr. R. A. Golden to erect ten two-story houses at 10th and E streets southwest, and the houses which B. H. Warner & Co. are building near the Capitol park have already been mentioned in THE STAR.

A. LEO KNOTT'S RESIDENCE.

A very handsome residence has been begun by Mr. A. Leo Knott, the Second Assistant Postmaster General, on the north side of K street, just west of 17th street. This house adjoins the one which Mr. Titian J. Coffey is building. The front of the latter will be built of green stone, and the basement of Mr. Knott's house will be of the same material, and the rest of the house will be of brick with stone trimming. There will be winding stone steps to the main entrance, and the front will be broken by an octagonal bay window, which will terminate at the third story in a balcony. The roof will be high pitched and covered with red tile, and will have a gable projection. The design of the interior is well adapted for a city home. There is a central hall of generous proportions separating the parlor from the dining-room, and from this hall the staircase will ascend to the upper floors. On each side of the fireplace in the hall there will be high windows, with stained glass, which will make this part of the house very attractive. The entrance hall and parlor will be finished in cherry, the central hall and staircase in oak, and the dining-room in cherry. The arrangement of the rooms in the upper floors are very convenient. The house will be finished in a very substantial manner. The cost will be $15,000. Mr. Robert I. Fleming is the architect and builder.

THE MAKING OF BRICKS.

The brick industry in the District is growing in extent every year and has assumed such proportions that the capacity of the brick yards is now about 150,000 bricks per day. In addition to the brick yards scattered along the Virginia shore, where entire bricks are made by hand and from which the supply for the city came a few years ago, there are now a number of yards where machines are employed in moulding the bricks, as well as drying them. At least one of these yards has a capacity of eighty or ninety thousand bricks per day, but the average is some thirty or forty thousand. The increase in the introduction of machinery in the manufacture of brick during the last few years has of course added to the annual out put of bricks. But there has been so much building that the demand has been about equal to the supply, although the effect in general has been to gradually force the price down from $10 per 1,000 to $7, which is the current price at present. One or two new companies have recently organized to make brick by machinery, and it is reported that there will be a still further decline in the prices. The brick men, however, are very skeptical as to the ability of any company to make brick at a profit and sell at a less figure than the present prevailing rates. In some instances special terms can even now be had by which bricks can be obtained for less than seven dollars, this matter being regulated to a large extent by the length of the haul. The present prices, however, are very reasonable as compared with what are obtained in other localities, and the quality is said to be first-class. The manufacturers of brick do not confine their attention exclusively to the ordinary grades of brick, but make all fancy designs and colors. In the Hay and Adams houses there are some sixty different patterns of brick used, all of which were made by a brick company in this city from special designs furnished by the architect, the late Mr. Richardson.

A FLORIST'S FINE ESTABLISHMENT.

Workmen have been engaged during the past week in tearing down the old fashioned building, which has stood for so many years at the southeast corner of 14th and G streets, which was one of the first buildings used for a public school in this city. Upon this site J. H. Small & Son, the florists, will erect a fine fire proof building for their own use. The building will be five stories high with a basement, and will have a frontage of 36 feet on 14th street and 86 feet on G street. The ground floor, with spacious show windows on both streets will be the sale room of the florists, and in the rear will be room for the large foliage plants, making a delightful back ground to the view as one enters the store. In the rear will be a large glass conservatory with steps leading up to it from the store. The four upper stories have been leased for a term of twenty years by the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone company, and they will be especially fitted up for this business. There will be an elevator in the building and all the work will be done in the most substantial manner. The architect is B. B. Bradford, and the builders Messrs. Langley & Gettinger. The cost of this improvement will be $40,000. The Messrs. Small will retain their garden on the opposite side of the street.

FOURTEENTH STREET IMPROVEMENTS.

Mr. W. S. Roose, the well-known tobacconist, will shortly begin the erection of four buildings, to be used for business purposes, on the east side of 14th street, between S and T streets. These new buildings will be designed by Mr. W. Bruce Gray, architect, and will take the place of what is known as the Howgate houses, which Mr. Roose recently purchased for $20,000. This improvement will be a notable one in that section of the city.

TWO ARTISTIC HOUSES.

Mr. David R. McKee has erected at Nonquit, Mass., a beautiful cottage, designed by Mr. W. Bruce Gray, which he intends to use as a summer residence. The house is well adapted to this purpose, and many of the features of an old fashioned country house have been introduced, not only with fine effect, from an architectural standpoint, but with added comfort and convenience for living purposes.

Mr. Gray has also designed a very pretty home for Capt. Geo. A. Mushback, of the Virginia legislature, which is located on Washington street, in Alexandria.

A BEEF REFRIGERATOR TO BE ERECTED.

E. C. Swift & Co., the Chicago dressed beef shippers, are going to build here, as they have in most of the principal cities of the country, a large beef refrigerator. It will be located at the corner of Massachusetts and Delaware avenues, having a front of one hundred feet on Massachusetts avenue and a depth of sixty-five, and will be three stories high, built of brick, with fronts of pressed brick. The building will be arranged with the refrigerator proper occupying about half the building; the other half of first floor will be needed for the passage of the teams which will drive in to be loaded for delivery. The railroad tracks extend along the side of the building, and the cars are unloaded and the stock placed into the refrigerator. The building will be begun as soon as the plans are finished, which are being prepared by Mr. T. F. Schneider, the architect.

MRS. CHAS. F. RITTI'S NEW HOUSE.

A fine improvement is to be added to Connecticut avenue, between L and M streets, for Mrs. Chas. F. Ritti, from designs prepared by Mr. T. F. Schneider, architect. The house will occupy a triangular shaped lot; it will have a frontage of seventy feet and will be three stories and basement with slate roof, the skyline of which will be broken by a square and a circular tower. The tower on the left of the entrance starts in the form of a square bay and continues square to the third story, where a balcony is formed, and the tower projection recedes to within eighteen inches of the front and continues through the roof. The tower on the right of the entrance starts square and at the second story a stone base is carved to a circular form, which form is maintained to the finish, which is a conical shaped slate roof. A stone portico with the steps to one side, and extending from tower to tower, with a bold arch overhead having a span of seventeen feet, and forming a balcony at second story, is a handsome feature of the front, which is of pressed bricks, relieved with brown stone where its effect is most pleasing to the eyes or the construction dictates. The entrance is wide and attractive. It has side lights, set with leaded cathedral glass of rich effect, and is finished in quartered oak. The hall occupies the center of the house and contains the staircase. The rooms on either side of the hall and in the rear are all connected by sliding doors. The kitchen, laundry, &c., are in the basement. An elevator or lift for light articles runs from the basement to the third story. The chambers are large and well ventilated; they have large closets, open fireplaces, and handsome mantels will be designed for the rooms throughout. There is a bathroom on each upper story and every convenience that the space affords. The building will be heated by steam. Large coal vaults will be built under the front parking. Mr. N. Eckert is the builder. The cost will be $18,000.

BY CANAL TO THE FALLS.

The Voyage on a Packet to the Great Falls—Scenes on the Way.

To the stranger who pays Washington a flying visit and even to a majority of its residents it never occurs that there might be something worth seeing by following the waters of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal, which lead to the Little and Big, or Great Falls, and the lakes which supply the city with water. During the past few years canal men have improved on the old "mule" system of drawing their boats over the many miles of smooth water, and have placed engines in the boats, giving them the benefit of that portion of the boat formerly used as a stable for the mules. There have also been built several boats for carrying excursionists and now regular trips are made as far up as the Great Falls. Often times these boats take fishing parties as far as Seneca and Point of Rocks. Leaving the banks of the canal at the foot of Congress street the steam packet makes its way towards the Falls. After a run of five minutes the captain shouts

"LOW BRIDGE."

Strangers on the boat who do not notice the bridge ahead, while engaged in conversation, are suddenly surprised by the falling of the awning which covers the boat. "Captain, stop that boat, somebody has lost a hat," shouts one of the excited women. The captain sees the hat, and a stop is made. The hat is fished out and the boat keeps on its course until it reaches the collector's office, when another stop is made and the captain pays his toll. The packet headed for the west then steams off towards the Falls. After a three mile run to the Chain bridge, a stop is made to accommodate fishermen, who intend to try their luck in the rough water on the Virginia side. Usually several young country couples get on board here. In a few minutes the first or Moore's lock is passed. Another mile and the boat passes through the second lock at "Jim Dicks," the headquarters of the Sycamore Island pleasure and fishing club, a famous place for anglers during the pleasant months, and where oyster roasts are given before the water is frozen in the winter. Visitors to Park hotel also get off at "Jim Dicks" and walk up the hill a distance of about a quarter of a mile. The islands about this lock are covered with the

RAREST WILD FLOWERS

about Washington, and are frequented by a number of ladies and children and small picnic parties.

After passing the mills along the canal above Georgetown, and being raised through two locks, there is a mile run to the third lock, above which a stop is made for the passengers who intend spending the day at Cabin John bridge. Leaving the wharf below Cabin John's a run through a region of beautiful scenery is made without interruption until the packet arrives at the first of the seven locks, which are close together. At this lock most of the passengers get out and walk along the towpath until the boat reaches the last of the seven locks, when the passengers again get on board and a start is made on the four-mile level, passing through wide-water to "Jo" West's lock, the first of the six locks, which end in front of Carroll's hotel at the Falls. On this level the speed of the boat is increased, there being no danger of washing away any of the towpath. At wide-water the canal is very wide and the water very deep.

THE ROCKS

which project out of the water are usually covered with frogs and large turtles, which disappear as the boat approaches. On one side of the canal, through wide water, the rocks rise from the level of the water to a height of 75 feet. The faces of the rock are covered with green and gray mosses and running vines. On the river side of the canal the bank slopes down to the river. Upon nearing the falls the view towards the city opens finely. One can look down the Potomac for several miles, the large rocks and islands in the river making most picturesque effects.

VIEW OF THE FALLS.

By crossing the river in a boat to the island near by and climbing the rocks a good view of the falls can be had. During the summer months, when the water is low, the Virginia shore can be reached by walking across the dam above the fish-way.

Many parties who go to get a good view of the falls get off at "Jo" West's lock and cross the river to a large mansion on the bank of the river sufficiently elevated to afford an excellent view of the falls. The return trip is made with a stop at Cabin John, giving the passengers enough time to visit the bridge and get home by dark.

Public Buildings and Grounds.

MONEY NEEDED FOR THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR FOR THEIR CARE AND IMPROVEMENT.

Col. J. M. Wilson, commissioner of public buildings and grounds, in his annual report to the chief of engineers, recommends that the following appropriations be made for carrying on the work under his charge during the fiscal year of 1888: Salaries, $51,100; care, repair, fuel, &c., of Executive Mansion, $28,000; improvement and care of public grounds, $126,000; lighting public grounds and the White House, $14,000; repairs to water pipes, $2,500, and for work on the telegraph lines, $10,000. In explaining the reason for the recommendations, Col. Wilson states that it is desirable to remove the old worn and broken flag pavement and the boundary wall on the Pennsylvania avenue front of the Executive Mansion grounds and lay down a large stone flag pavement similar to the adjoining pavement of the State, War and Navy department building, and to construct a suitable ornamental granite boundary wall with piers and coping stone and a low iron railing. He intends to lay an asphalt pavement in Armory square and Seaton park, between 3d and 7th streets; a similar pavement in front of the Smithsonian Institution, between 7th and 12th streets, and asphalt walks in all the smaller parks, where there are now gravel paths. He recommends that all the overhead wires of the departmental telegraph line be removed and an underground cable be substituted; the construction of watchmen's lodges in all the larger parks where there are none; to raise the causeway of Benning's bridge, so that it will be above high water, at a cost of $10,000; and new flooring for the navy yard bridge and an improved method of hoisting the draw; and the removal of the railroad track through reservation No. 10, south of the Smithsonian, across 7th street, into Maryland avenue, and an appropriation of $3,000 for the improvement of the reservation.

The other recommendations are for the customary necessary work of caring for and improving the public building and grounds.

The whole number of specimens of trees and shrubs in the parks and public grounds is over thirty-two thousand. Col. Wilson does not recommend the immediate removal of all the high iron fences around the parks, but while in favor of that plan he simply recommends the removal of those fences around the smaller reservations at present with walks through them, in order that a trial may be made of allowing the public free access to these breathing spaces.

John Trust's Soul.

AN ALEXANDRIAN SUGGESTS THAT IT MARCHES ON IN THE PERSON OF DR. COUES.

ALEXANDRIA, July 25, 1886.

To the Editor of the THE EVENING STAR:

I wrote THE STAR last November, in calling attention to a mystical MS. which I had published in 1866, that I knew very little about the Brahminical lore called theosophy, and had paid less attention to that part of the MS. which related to the Brahminical art than to that which gave a key to some mysterious occurrences in my native town. I had been led to believe that the Alexandria magician was burned to death last January on an island in the Potomac, near the Point of Rocks, but there is a verisimilitude between portions of the last letter of Dr. Elliott Coues to THE STAR and portions of the mystical MS. that suggests a plausible and peculiar psychomantic possibility that cannot but be of vast interest to theosophists. Dr. Coues, in his letter to THE STAR, says: "In theosophy madness lies in wait for the average human being." John Trust concludes his MS.: "I have done, and still my pen lingers, unwilling to leave the record. * * * As I wrote there has seemed to be a fiend by my side, who, as each page was laid by, chuckled in my ear—*after this, madness!*"

The thought of John Trust in 1817 and of Dr. Elliott Coues in 1886 is identical. What if Dr. Coues and John Trust be the same persons? Who can say that the Alexandria magician has not become reincarnate in the Washington scientist.

With Dr. Coues' thorough capacity for that sort of work, would it not be in the interest of science that he should introspect himself, and see if, in the dim depths of his potentiality, there may not be a reminiscence of his other life when he was John Trust, and thus realize his own identity and introduce himself to himself in the days of his previousness? It would, of course, be better if he would leave the esoteric school with its possibilities of madness, and join the lively exoteric school of which newspaper men are adherents. To be sure one does get very mad in that school when he finds that an amateur adept of the exoteric philosophy has made a "scoop"* on him; but that madness skips away as lightly as the foam from a glass of beer, and all again is lovely. If, however, he is joined to his idols, no better thing can he do than to "project his double" backwards, and see if he is not a new edition of the Alexandria magician.

W. F. C.

*NOTE.—"Scoop" is a mystic word in the esoteric philosophy. It is from the Greek "skopeo," "to look, to observe narrowly," and indicates a capacity in one adept to see that which is invisible to others until it appears in some newspaper.