

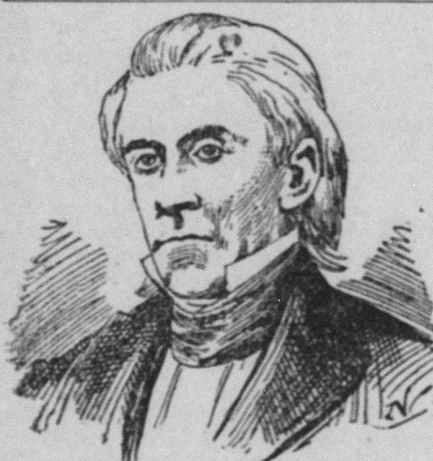
CAN IT BE SAVED?

THE FAMOUS POLK PLACE AT NASHVILLE AND ITS CONTENTS.

Provisions of James K. Polk's Will to be Carried Out to the Letter--A Reproduction of the White House on a Smaller Scale.

Special Nashville (Tenn.) Letter. The old homestead of James K. Polk, the eleventh President of the United States, is at this time, as it has been for some time past, an object of particular interest, owing to the fact that in the will of this distinguished statesman the necessary division of the estate among the thirty-two heirs requires demolition.

This mansion presents two facades, with great Corinthian columns supporting verandas, and has approaches from each of the four streets forming the square it crosses, in the very heart of the city of Nashville, Tenn.

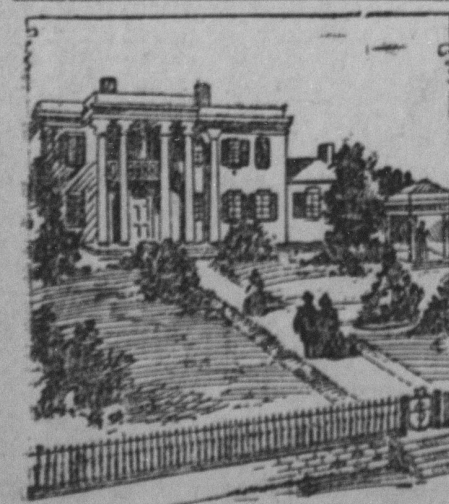


PRESIDENT JAMES A. POLK.

The Vine street approach, however, has always been the preferred approach of the family and pedestrian visitors. A graveled walk, bordered with heavy twining shrubbery, lends an attractiveness to the entrance that is the secret of its popularity.

It is doubtful if there is a more imposing family mansion in the whole south than Polk place, even in the latter's decline. The exterior design and the interior arrangements were all planned to make the change from the white house less noticeable to Mrs. Polk, and the great white house of the nation's capital is the model after which the Polk mansion was built.

In the southeast corner of the house, on the upper floor, is the room used by the president as his office during the short time allotted him to live in the new home after he surrendered the presidential chair March 4, 1849.



POLK PLACE, NASHVILLE, TENN.

husband, in which he spent so much time in reading, study and writing, along the line of his earnest literary pursuits. The room was held sacred from curious intrusion for nearly half a century, and in it to-day are the desk and furnishings as they were during the occupancy and use of the eminent owner.

The upper south hall leading to this room is shelved from floor to ceiling to accommodate the extensive collection of books which compose a library complete alike for statesman and litterateur.

Every nook of the great house, in

the rooms and halls, abounds in choice statuary and other articles of vertu. Rare pictures and hangings adorn the walls. Babels, inscriptions of office and public men, historical memorials, the gifts of patriots and foreigners, are arranged in their abundance with a harmonious taste that lends to the interior of the old mansion an air of elegance and imparts to it a charm irresistible and a value not measurable in silver or gold.



MRS. SARAH C. POLK.

The family tomb, which contained the remains of husband and wife until they were removed to the state capitol grounds, stands on the east side of the grounds to the right of the walk alluded to above as the favorite entrance of the family and the convenient approach for visitors.

For forty-two years the remains of the ex-president lay in sacred seclusion, and when Mrs. Polk died her remains, in compliance with her last request, were wrapped in a plain white silk winding sheet and quietly placed beside those of her husband.

Two years later the remains of both were borne thence, and with much impressiveness and military pomp, reinterred in the capitol grounds a few hundred yards away. And now within a short time the heirs will give the estate, real and personal, over to private and public auction, and Polk place, which, for so many years has stood as a public attraction in Nashville, will become only a beautiful memory.

As it stands, stately and solemn and deserted, it is an august monument to two illustrious lives, and the people of Nashville, 'the Athens of the South,' will see with sad hearts the rending asunder of which have so long been an inspiration to many lofty sentiments and deeds to those who have daily been accustomed to contemplate its hallowed site.

GEORGE S. McDOWELL.

EARTH'S OLDEST REPUBLIC.

A Singular Little State, Jealous of Its Independence.

San Marino has just attracted the attention of the other nations by opening with great ceremony a splendid government palace which it has built for itself.

San Marino is the oldest republic in the world. According to the legend, its founders, Marino and Leo, hailed from Dalmatia. They founded the republic on the Titan Mountain, which was presented to Marino by St. Felice, and Leo became bishop of the diocese.

Though its people are Italian, and geographically it forms part of Italy, it is quite independent of the Italian Government. Moreover, of all the powers that have ruled over Italy none has ever attempted to deprive the tiny State of its liberty. It was respected even by the all-conquering Napoleon. True, in 1797, he offered to supply the republic with cannon, doubtless with ulterior aims upon it, but his offer was declined with thanks.

The country, though it possesses a nobility, is governed on truly socialistic principles. The land is divided among the citizens, who all earn their own living. They pay no rates nor taxes and have no army. They are completely out of the world. They know little, and care less of what goes on in Italy, just below them, and separated from their territory only by a small bridge, or of the world around them. They live for their family, and the blind forces of angry nature are their only foes. They seldom, if ever, leave their rock, and never allow a stranger to remain on their territory longer than a week. Finally, they are extremely virtuous. A few years ago the Monte Carlo Casino Company offered the company an enormous sum if they would allow rouge et noir and roulette to be established in their midst,

but the offer was peremptorily and indignantly refused. So averse are they to innovations, that until quite recently there was only one clock in the whole State.

The republic is governed by two Councils, called Regents, elected, one by the patricians and the other by the citizens and country people. The Council consists of sixty members, elected for life, and comprising 20 nobles, 20 citizens and 20 agriculturists. This Council takes the place of the ancient Arringo, an assembly composed of the chiefs of every family. There are also a Council of Twelve, a Governing Congress of nine citizens, and another Congress for Foreign Affairs.

The republic is represented by Consuls in most of the chief cities of Europe.

A Body Guard of Dogs.

An exciting scene has been witnessed in Paris at the arrest of a female swindler in the Rue des Couronnes, says a correspondent. It was at a nicely situated house standing in its own grounds, that has been for some time in the occupation of a man and woman who made a business of striking up an acquaintance with wealthy strangers, and entrapping them to the place in order to rob them. The last victim was an American, who had a pocketbook containing 30,000 francs (\$6,000) stolen from him.

The matter was thought important enough to merit special attention of M. Cochefert, the head of the Paris detective police, who went to arrest the incriminated persons. He was accompanied by several policemen. On arriving at the house he rang the bell for some time, but got no answer. He then sent for a locksmith, who was proceeding to force open the door when alarming growls were heard from the inside. It was then found that there were six enormous house dogs in the passage. M. Cochefert, however, was not to be balked. He sent for some sheep's heads, which were thrown to the dogs to keep them quiet, and an entrance was then effected. The woman was arrested, but the man had flown. The house was full of the proceeds of different robberies. [New York Advertiser.]

Terrible Torture in Morocco.

A charge has been laid at Mulai Omar's door--that of having ordered the music of the drums and fifes to cease on the occasion of the announcement of Mulai Abdul Aziz's accession to the throne. On the players refusing, his Highness sent a slave, who enforced silence by splitting up the drums with a dagger. For this act of treason he was afterward punished by having the flesh of his hand sliced, the wound filled with salt, and the whole hand sewn up in leather.

It is a common belief that this punishment causes mortification to set in, and that the hand decomposes; but such is not the case, for by the time the leather wears off the wound is healed, the result being that the hand is rendered useless, and remains closed forever. It is a punishment not often in use, but is sometimes done in cases of murder or constant theft, as, without in any way injuring the health of the man, it prevents his committing the crime a second time, or for the hundredth time, as the case may be. It is a punishment that cannot be applied except by the Sultan's orders. [Blackwood's Magazine.]

Centenary of the Chrysanthemum.

The chrysanthemum first bloomed in England in 1795; next year, therefore, will be the centenary of the actual flower. But it was long neglected by floriculturists, and its serious cultivation only dates back about twenty-five years, when John Newton, gardener to the Honorable Society of the Inner Temple, took it in hand. Now the chrysanthemum is all the rage. Yet in all these years the efforts of floriculturists have failed to evolve a satisfactory specimen with hues approaching red.

Horse Breeding in France.

In the National Haras of France there are twenty-three stallion depots, containing 2,678 stires. Of these 195 are thoroughbreds, 87 are Arabs, 207 are Anglo-Arabs (a cross between the two others), 1,806 are hackney and other half-breeds, and 373 are heavy draught stallions. The Government breeding establishments have been in existence fourteen years, and the number of horses exported from France has been increased through their influence from 9,628 to 24,121. Half of the export of last year went to Belgium and the remainder to Germany and Switzerland. [New York World.]

The Fearful Moxa.

Moxa is described as a counter irritant, used especially in cases of gout, rheumatism and nervous disorders. It has been in use in Japan, where it originated, many centuries. The finer woolly parts of the young leaves of wormwood are applied to the skin in the form of small cones, and are set on fire by means of a magnifying glass. They burn very slowly, and leave a blister, which afterward breaks and discharges. The operation is painful, but not severely so. Among the lower classes its use is said to be almost universal. [New York Dispatch.]

NAVAL SIGNALS.

COURSE OF INSTRUCTION AT THE TRAINING SCHOOL.

Different Systems of Electrical Signalling in Use on Board War Ships. Work of the Signal Class.

At the training station at Newport, R. I., where boys are fitted for a seafaring life, a dozen of the most advanced boys are taken apart and put in what is called the signal class. When in this class they are excused from all routine drill, and their time taken up almost entirely with signal drills.

There are at present about six signal codes which the apprentices have to learn. The first and most used of these is the Myer code, commonly known as the Wig-wag. The letters are formed in this code by waving the flag across the body from right to left. To the right represents the number one, the left two, downward in front of the body three.

The alphabet is made up of combinations of the figures 1 and 2. For instance, A is 2 2, B is 2 1 1 2, C is 1 2 1, and so on. By waving the flag twice to the left the letter A is made. Dropping the flag in front of the body once signifies "end of word," twice, "end of sentence," three times, "end of message."

With this code messages can be exchanged between ships two miles apart.

In the International Code the letters are designated by flags of different colors or combinations of colors, which are run up to the yardarm or masthead, representing one word at a time. This mode of signalling is necessarily very slow, but this code is the connecting link between all the ships of the world, and a message sent with this code is as readily interpreted in Nagasaki or Hong Kong as it is at the station at Sandy Hook.

But little need be said of the Navy Code. It is on the same principle as the International and is the private code of the service. The book which holds the key to the Navy Code is kept constantly in the Captain's cabin. It is made with covers of lead, and when an American ship is captured the first duty of the signal officer is to throw the signal book overboard.

It has been only in the last two years that improvements have been made in the night signal systems of the navy. The code in use during the late war is employed still on some of the older ships. That code consisted of a set of rockets or Roman candles, which when fired in the air, gave out combinations of colored flame and formed the message. This manner of signalling was very imperfect. No messages could be sent with it, except very short ones, such as "Danger" and "Breakers ahead." That code was employed principally in making known the names of ships as they entered or left port. With the advent of our new navy it was thought necessary to have a new night signal code. Several were proposed, found to be imperfect and rejected until the Ardois code was tried.

This consists of a series of electric lamps which are suspended from the masthead. The lamps are ten in number, five red and five white. They are arranged alternately. The wires which carry the current for lamps run to a keyboard, not unlike the keyboard of a typewriter, which is placed in the chart house or in some place where the operator can have an unobstructed view of the surroundings. The person signalling, by pressing the key at the letter A, could cause a red, white and a red signal light to flash for an instant in the lamps. This would be repeated on the ship to which the signal was sent. The person sending the message then makes next letter and goes on with the message, waiting after each word to have the word repeated.

That system has been supplied to all of our modern cruisers. The navies of Great Britain and France have already adopted this code. There is, of course, a difference in the alphabets of the different navies, but the principle is the same.

Another code which is being tested in the navy is the system of search light signals. These signals are made by flashing the light upon the sky at intervals of five and ten seconds. A five-second flash standing for the figure one and a ten-second flash for two. The arrangement of the alphabet in this code is exactly the same as in the Myer code. The flash light code has never been put to any practical use as yet, but the officers of the new ships are experimenting with it, and in time it is supposed that ships at sea will be able to communicate at a distance of thirty miles on the darkest night.

The boys who do this signalling on the ships are prepared for it by a long and careful course of study at the training station at Newport. They are taken in the navy between the ages of 13 and 17, at the various receiving ships on the Atlantic coast. After getting an outfit of clothing they are sent on to Newport to the training station, where their instruction begins.

The boys are divided into companies of eighteen, called gun crews. After a week's drill a crew of the brightest boys is selected, to be known as the signal class. They are then turned over to a quartermaster, whose duty it is to instruct them in all branches of signalling.

Their first instruction is in the Myer code or Wig-wag. Each one receives a card with the signal letters upon it; this they must study until it is learned by heart. Then two boys will take flags, and, standing at opposite ends of the gymnasium,

will signal to each other, slowly at first, and gradually increasing their speed as they grow accustomed to catching the messages.

At the end of a week the boys are generally so expert with the flag that they can receive a message as fast as it is possible to wave the flag. When a boy thinks he is capable of catching any message in this code he reports to the Quartermaster in charge. The Quartermaster will then take the flag and send a message to the boy. If the boy receives the message correctly he will be marked "qualified" and passed to a higher class, where he is taught the Naval and International codes. Here he will receive a book containing pictures of the flags of the different codes. He studies this until he knows the color of every letter in both codes.

Then comes the perfection drill. The apprentice is taken to a chest containing the flags of both codes, and told to find a certain letter in the International code. He is told to find one and another until he knows every letter beyond chance of mistake. Then comes the reading of messages. Signals will be run up to the top of the flag pole by one party of boys, and another party will be stationed to translate and answer the messages. When they have learned this branch of signalling the boys' course is over. They are then sent to the training ships, where the practice which they get in a cruise fits them the course. [New York Sun.]

ADEPT AT LOCKPICKING.

Larcener of a Man Whom No Cell Has Restrained.

To the student of crime most interesting material is found in the life history of Charles Kroekel, an eighteen-year-old mute, confined at present in the Camden City Jail, pending trial on a charge of burglary.

Kroekel is the son of a highly respectable family once residing in Southern New Jersey. He was born afflicted, and though trained from childhood in the proper conduct of life, his criminal instincts manifested themselves at a very early age in small thefts. Every effort was made to reform him, apparently without the slightest result. It seemed that his criminal tendencies were born with him.

With the years of early youth his operations assumed a larger scope. When detected, his youth and his unfortunate condition aroused such sympathy that the hand of the law was laid kindly on him, more to direct and admonish than to chastise.

Repeated offenses led to judicial punishment, and Kroekel was confined to various reformatories. Without exception he escaped; how no one was able to tell. Subsequently he was confined in the jails at May's Landing and other institutions. No cell was able to hold him, and, though he did not always succeed in escaping from the jail he was always able to pick the lock of the cell door. Among the police officials of New Jersey he acquired the reputation of being able to pick any lock ever made. For a long time no clue to his methods could be obtained by the police, but the discovery of false soles in his shoes gave the suggestion that possibly he carried saws or skeleton keys in them.

Kroekel was last confined in the Trenton jail, but as his cell was constantly watched his escape was impossible. When arrested in Camden he wore a suit such as is presented to inmates of the prison upon their discharge. In the pockets he had matches and a candle, towel, soap, copper nails, and a memorandum book, containing various addresses in Camden and this city, supposed to be the places which he intended to visit professionally. When asked in writing for some account of himself by a reporter he merely wrote "Charles Kroekel, eighteen years of age, Philadelphia," and then the name and address of a sister residing in this city. [Philadelphia Press.]

A Chinese Love Letter.

The "Ostasiatischer Lloyd," an authority on Chinese matter, in a recent article on the manner of love-making in the flowery kingdom, publishes the following letter from a man who desired the daughter of a neighbor as a wife for his son:

"On my knees I beg you not to despise this cold and common request, but to listen to the words of the matrimonial agent and give your honorable daughter to my slave of a son, so that the pair, bound by silken threads, may have the greatest joy. In the beautiful spring time I shall offer wedding presents and give a couple of geese. And let us hope for long and continuous fortune and look forward through endless generations to the fulfillments of genuine love. May they sing of plenty and have every joy. On my knees I beg you to consider my proposal favorably and throw the mirror-like glance of your eyes on these lines." To this letter the father of the bride replied that he would attend to the portion of his poor and poverty-stricken daughter, that she might not be without bedclothes, cotton clothing, hairpins and earrings. Therefore it was to be hoped that the couple would have constant fortune. [Chicago Tribune.]

A Lightning Liner.

There is a miniature vessel in the model room of the United States navy department which has eighteen propellers ranged along its sides and propelled by electricity. The inventors claim that a large ship built after this model will cross the Atlantic in three days. [Atlanta Constitution.]

THE JOKER'S BUDGET.

JESTS AND YARNS BY FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

Among the 400--Evidence--True to Her Promise--A Deep Man--Both Wicked--Sizing Them Up, Etc., Etc.

AMONG THE 400. Ten Brok (wistfully)--Why don't you devote some of your immense wealth to charity? Miss Milyun--I intend to. I am about to erect a home for my rejected suitors if I can find a large enough plot of unoccupied land in the city. [Truth.]

TRUE TO HER PROMISE. "Hear me out," he implored. "Certainly," she answered. In the struggle that ensued between the youth and her old man she did not forget her promise. She listened until she distinctly heard her suitor strike the sidewalk. Then she knew he was out. [Detroit Tribune.]

A DEEP MAN. "Venger was right in declaring he'd make old Gotrox take water after refusing him his daughter." "How'd he do it?" "Bought out the man Gotrox buys his milk from." [Buffalo Courier.]

BOTH WICKED. "My husband," said the large, fleshy lady, "has a habit of marking paragraphs in the paper that say mean things about women." "So you will not fail to see them, eh? Still, that is not as mean a trick as mine plays. He cuts them all out. Then I have to get another paper only to find that I have been fooled again." [Indianapolis Journal.]

SIZING THEM UP. Boy (on a visit)--Haven't you any schools here? Aunt--We have several. Boy--That's queer. I have been all over town and I haven't seen a building that looks ugly enough to be a schoolhouse. [Good News.]

ACCIDENTAL, BUT SWEET, REVENGE. The youth offended the maid one day. But she got revenge for that. For she sat in front of him at the play. When she wore her highest hat. [New York Press.]

A PROMISE OF SUCCESS. "Is everything prepared for the sewing circle?" "Yes; the tea is all ready to be made and Sophy has just gone down for the gum." [Judge.]

HOW IT WILL BE. "So you want to marry my son," said the stern mamma to the emancipated woman. "I do." "Can you support him in the manner in which he has been accustomed?" "I can." "Then take him and be happy." [Life.]

THE DOWN-TRODDEN SEX. Mrs. Highbury (wearily)--Woman's work is never done. Mrs. Wayupp (drearly)--Too true. A man may get rich and retire from business, but a woman must go on making and receiving calls to the day of her death. [New York Weekly.]

IMPORTANT INFORMATION. Pedestrian Pete (reading from a paper)--The difference between canvasback and redhead duck is so slight in taste and quality that even experts are deceived.

Itinerant Ike--Is that so? Then we'll have to be very careful when we take cold vittles from people to see that they don't palm off redhead duck on us fer canvasback. [New York Press.]

PLAYED WITH BOOTH. "You wouldn't think, sir, that I once played with Booth in England?" "Dear me!" exclaimed the benevolent old gentleman, as he handed the wretched mendicant a quarter; "what did you play?" "The bass drum, sir," answered the mendicant meekly; "but this Salvation Army biz is played out fer me." [Puck.]

SUGGESTING ANOTHER REFORM. Mrs. Thusiasm--I have called, my dear Mrs. Hardfax, in the interest of humanity, to ask you to join with hundreds of our best women in signing this pledge not to wear another sealskin garment of any sort. Mrs. Hardfax--I shall be delighted to sign it. Oh, what lovely stuffed birds those are on your hat! Where did you get them? [Chicago Tribune.]

HE WASN'T PARTICULAR. "Sir," remarked the rich father to the suitor, "after the investigations I have made into your character I cannot give you my daughter. Emma." "All right," answered the persistent suitor; "then how about one of the others?" [Fliegende Blaetter.]

REPARTÉE. Mr. A.--Just look at that doit of a man. What a charming wife he has. How true it is that the biggest fools always marry the prettiest girls. Mrs. A.--O, you flatterer. [Boston Bulletin.]