

Maine packed about 600,000 cases of sardines this season. Possibly a few small herring may have got in among them here and there.

A new manufacturing company of New Jersey announces that it is going to manufacture a preparation which a man can put on his face and remove his beard without the aid of a razor. The company is capitalized for \$200,000.

A rule has been adopted in New York forbidding the employment of married women as teachers in the public schools. The married women may be able to stand such a discrimination, but the blow will fall heavily upon some of the married men.

A Canadian paper has a cartoon on the "unwonted activity" of England just now. Uncle Sam, smoking a "Manilla" cigar, says to John Bull, striding along in sailor clothes, with a gun on his shoulder: "Whar you goin' a gunnin', John?" and John answers: "Blest if I quite knows yet, Sammy. Maybe h'over to Frawnce, h'eagle huntin' and then h'again may be h'over to Roosher, hear 'natin' y'know."

A student of Spanish annals has scolded an interesting chapter to the history of prices by revealing from the archives of the Escorial what it cost to discover the New World. The stipends of the discoverers, at all events, did not amount to much. The pay of an able seaman was only, it seems, \$2 a month, while a captain drew only \$16 a month. As for Christopher Columbus himself, his earnings were at the rate of \$320 per annum. Even in Spain salaries have risen since those days.

The United States of Central America—Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras—start business as a federated republic with the usual grandiose anticipations and performances. We wish them well, says the Philadelphia Record. Under the managing hand of a man like President Diaz of Mexico, who is practically a king masquerading as an elective official, the new states might be glued together by something more substantial than written agreements. But there is nothing in the past history of the Central American states to justify hopes for the future of settled government.

How much reverence have we? Some years ago at an auction in Edinburgh two bones announced to have formed a part of Robert Bruce's anatomy, fetched \$20, and one of the vertebrae of William the Conqueror sold for \$22.50. What is called "a most interesting relic" was put under the hammer at London. It was a man's garment made of blue silk and stained with blood. To this gory raiment there was a document attached, duly certified, which declared that it was worn by Charles I when on the scaffold, and became the property of Dr. Juxon, who attended the king during his last moments. The history of this garment is then traced through its numerous possessors up to today.

The London Times says: "A good story of the 'things one would rather have expressed differently' type is being whispered about Gloucester. Some 'crank' has been writing to the local papers complaining that during the festival he is not admitted to the cathedral free, that being a place of worship. The 'crank' turned up at the cathedral the other day and was told he could not be admitted without a ticket. 'Do you mean to tell me,' he excitedly argued, 'that I shall require a ticket to enter the kingdom of heaven?' 'Well, no,' explained the polite steward, 'but you won't hear Mme Albani in heaven.' And then, when the enormity of his remark dawned upon him, that steward turned and fled."

One of the latest inventions is said to be a fog dispeller, an apparatus consisting of a horizontal outlool-pipe, some eight feet in length and eight feet in diameter, into which enters a tube from below, connecting with a blower deep down in a steamship's interior. This blower sends a powerful stream of air into the tube, the current of air, so to speak, boring a hole through the fog, and inducing a cone of clear atmosphere with its apex at the mouth of the tube. By the aid of this apparatus a pilot who stands with his eyes at the glass at the rear of the tube, can, it is claimed, pick up his buoys and look out for other vessels ahead. The inventor hopes eventually to make the fog-dispeller effective at a range of a thousand feet. Certainly any apparatus or agency capable of dissipating fog at sea or on land, whether the mist be physical, mental, or spiritual, would be a boon to mankind.



It was the day before Christmas, and the snow was falling thick and fast. Among the people who hastened along the streets of a large Western city, was a lady, accompanied by two little girls, apparently twins. All were poorly clad, and shivered, as the cold wintry wind rushed down the deserted street. "Oh! mamma dear," cried one of the little girls, as they were approaching a large shop, where many lovely holiday toys were displayed, "this must be one of Santa Claus' shops."

"Let's go in," pleaded the other little girl. "I do so want to see all the nice things." "My dear children," said the mother, sadly, "I can get none of the pretty books or toys for you; I wish I could, but you know, we are very, very poor." "Well we could just look at 'em, if we can't have 'em," they cried. "Well, my dears, you shall see them," said their mother, gently. "Oh! mamma," one of them exclaimed, "I just wish I could have a nice dolly, just like this one, that the lady has just laid down here; why, do you know, mamma, it shut its eyes just as tight as I do when I go to sleep." "Ah! Bessie, my dear child," said her mother, "I am afraid you will only be disappointed when you get home." "No, no, I'm—only just wishing," said little Bessie.

All this time a young girl had been standing near, watching the children and writing in a note-book. "Come, children," said the mother at last, "we must be going now, it is nearly four o'clock." The little group passed out, and the young girl followed them. "Mamma," said Jessie, "what would you like to have for a Christmas present?" Molly Dean, the young girl who had watched the children in the shop, was closely following them; she hastened her steps that she might hear the mother's answer. The mother sighed as she answered her little daughter's question: "Ah! my dear, if I could have your papa back again, I would be satisfied. But the sea seldom gives back its dead, as it is herself. 'Not my will, dear Lord, but Thine.'"

Molly followed them into an alleyway. The street was dirty, and the houses were poor. The children and their mother entered one of the smallest houses. Molly looked about her curiously; she had never been in such a place before, although she was nearly sixteen. Soon she turned and hastened back to the shop. She handed her note-book to a clerk, telling him to have the articles, she had written down, all ready when she returned for them, which, she said, would be in the evening. She also told him she would send some other purchases there, which she would call for at the same time. "Dear me," she thought, as she hastened homeward, "I wish I could give that lady her husband. I can give the children all they wished for, but her wish I am powerless to grant." She entered a handsome stone house in the most aristocratic part of the city, and rushed into the library, where a gentleman sat reading. "Oh, Uncle Dick!" she cried, eagerly, "I've got some work for you to do." "What is it, my huckleberry?" asked her uncle in a teasing tone, as he pulled her onto his knee. He was a tall man, whose naturally sad face always brightened when he was speaking to her; for she was his favorite niece. And she thought there never was an uncle like him. "Well," said Molly, "I want you to put on your big white fur coat (when it's nice and dark). And then you'd better wear a fur cap and some false

whiskers, some great long, white ones, and take a nice big sack, and then we'll—but I guess I won't tell you the rest just now." "Oh! ho! I guess I see! You're going to make a Santa Claus of me." "Don't ask any questions, but just do as I tell you to," said Molly. When it was quite dark, Molly and her uncle started out to make their visit. "What a splendid Santa Claus he does make," thought Molly, as they walked along. They went to "The Star," and Mr. Dixon (Molly's uncle) got a vehicle to take himself and Molly, with their many packages, to the poor little house in the alley. After Bessie and Jessie had helped their mother wash the supper dishes that evening, they got ready for bed, and then hung up their stockings. Then their mother called them to her for the little evening talk. They talked of the father, whom the children could not remember. He had

### UNDER THE MISTLETOE.



been a sailor. And one day he had sailed from port, leaving behind his wife and babies; he had never returned, and, in a few months, news came that the Lady Gray, the vessel upon which he had sailed, had been wrecked. A few months later the mother moved to another town. She supported her children by taking in sewing. She resided there about four years, then she went to this Western city.

While the three were busily talking there came a knock at the door. The mother opened it; as she stood gazing out, a man came into the room. He had snowy hair, and a long white beard. He was dressed in fur from head to foot. "Santa Claus! Santa Claus!" cried both children. When Mr. Dixon saw the face of the woman before him he started toward her, then stopped and looked at the children. "Are there any good children here?" he asked, in a gruff voice. "Oh! we tried to be good," said Bessie. "Then," said their visitor, "just tell me your names." "My name is Bessie, and here is Jessie, and we're twins. Please, is your name Santa Claus?"



THE ENCHANTED LAND. But Santa Claus did not answer. He threw down the great sack he carried, and began to take out the things.

First, the provisions, then the toys, and last the clothing and some peanuts and candy. The little girls were shouting and laughing, happy as could be.

Santa Claus, as the children called him, turned at last to the mother, who stood amazed. "Madam," he said, "your wish was, I believe, that your husband might come back to you again." The lady looked amazed. "How do you know my wish," she asked. "Because I am that Christmas present," he cried, as he tore off the false whiskers and wig. Mrs. Dixon only cried, "Dick." Just then Molly came in. She had been waiting at the door. "Molly," said her uncle, "this is your Aunt Lucy."

Molly kissed her aunt, then she hugged and kissed the twins. "Oh! to think you are my cousins, and I never knew it." Mr. Dixon took his little girls upon his knees, and Molly and Mrs. Dixon sat, one on each side of him. Then Mr. Dixon told them the story of the past few years. He had grasped a floating spar when the vessel sank, and for days he had floated upon the water. Finally a vessel bound for the Indies picked him up. He was carried from home, instead of toward it, and it was two years before he again stood upon his native shore. Then Mrs. Dixon related the story of her trials and sorrow. They sat for a long time talking of the strange events. "To think," cried Molly, "how we've lived right in the same city all this time, and within a half mile of each other." "Let us thank God," said Mr. Dixon,

### CHRISTMAS IN OTHER LANDS



HE children in America anxiously wait for Christmas Eve to come, that they may begin the important ceremony of hanging up their stockings. In vain mamma reiterates that "Santa Claus can't come until it gets darker." Willie and Sue and Kittie and Tom can't curb their impatience, and are deaf to reason. Santa Claus's reindeer may

### THE CUSTOM IN GERMANY.

be yet far in the distance, but their part of the programme shall not be delayed another instant. Up go the stockings! A row swings upon the mantel-shelf in many a home. The baby's in the middle, and the older children's at the ends. The mantel-shelf must be cleared, as well as the floor around it. Santa Claus's generosity must not be restricted by lack of space to deposit his gifts. The little German children care more for Christmas trees than stockings to hold their gifts. Santa Claus does not come down the chimney for them. But the window of the Christmas-tree room is opened, that "Knecht Ruprecht" may have a chance to adorn their trees.

And not only have they the large Christmas tree, but at each one's plate on Christmas morning is a tiny tree, a perfect miniature copy of the large one, with a "Christmas box" under it. These little trees make the table look like a garden, and are pretty enough to give a hint worth copying. Little Gretchen and Hans do not hang their stockings, though sometimes they stand their wooden shoes in convenient spots, that the Christ-child may fill them. The Christmas tree is favored throughout all the Northern countries of Europe. Norway and Sweden, Prussia and Poland alike delight in elaborately dressed trees covered with gifts for young and old. A pretty Swedish custom is to provide a Christmas dinner as a Christmas tree for the birds, whose dinners are scarce in winter in that snow-covered region. A sheaf of wheat or corn is tied to the top of a high pole erected in front of the house for the birds' convenience. Be sure it is soon surrounded by the clattering thankful recipients. The birds' Christmas tree is a kind as well as a pretty thought. The little Italian boys and girls do not hear as pretty a legend as Santa Claus and his reindeer. Nurse tells them often of Old Befana, who comes riding along on her broomstick, and who will leave presents for good children, but who just as surely carries a rod for bad ones.

In England, Christmas Eve is ushered in with the ringing of bells and singing of carols, the singers going from house to house, collecting Christmas gifts at each. Where old-fashioned customs are kept up the Yule log is pulled in and lit with much ceremony and rejoicing. Christmas trees and gifts are common there as elsewhere, and our custom of Christmas decoration with greens is carried to much greater extent. The holly has always been sacred to Christmas. A sprig of it is a talisman to conjure up a long procession of Christmas days and Christmas feasting. The story of Christmas, in both its sacred and its merry meaning, is told in a thousand ways and a thousand tongues to bright-eyed, listening babies. But of all the marvelous legends told, Santa Claus and his reindeer still seems the quaintest and prettiest.

Just Fore Christmas. For Christmas, with its lots and lots of candies, cakes and toys, Was made, they say, for proper kids, an' not for naughty boys; So wash your faces, brush your hair, and mind your p's and q's. And don't bust out yer pantaloon, and don't wear out your shoes; Say "Yessum" to the ladies, an' "Yessur" to the men, An' when they's company, don't pass your plate for pie again; But thinkin' of the things yer'd like to see upon that tree, Just fore Christmas be as good as yer kin be! —Eugene Field.



Working on Santa's Sympathy. When Santa Claus sees that layout, We'll surely be touched. The mignonette is the national dorer of Spain.

### KEYSTONE STATE NEWS CONDENSED

#### BOY ABDUCTED.

While on His Way to School He is Seized and Placed in a Covered Wagon—Police Are Investigating.

Penn Broad, aged 9, who resides with Jeremiah Maxwell, at hotelkeeper at Sands Eddy, Northampton county, was abducted; while on his way to school a few days ago, by a man who placed him in a covered wagon and drove off. The police have made an investigation and are of the opinion that the boy was taken by his father, Frank Broad, of Troy, N. Y., who formerly resided here and at Wilkesbarre. The following pensions were granted last week: Philander Churchill, Hillsdale, Indiana, \$8; Samuel B. Templeton, Tyrone, \$10; Henry A. Greenfield, Conneautville, \$8; Christopher A. Kendall (dead), Titusville, \$12; Frank Kauer, New Castle, \$6; Alfred F. Baker, Wells Tannery, Fulton, \$6; Morris W. Powell, Pittsburgh, \$10; Emanuel Rummel, Belknap, Armstrong, \$8 to \$10; Edward O. Eustis, Austin, Porter, \$12; Mary A. Eskin, Beaver Falls, \$8; Mary A. Brady, Washington, \$8; John C. Casner, Mont Alto, Franklin, \$8; Res Thomas, Oil City, \$8; James F. McGuire, Homestead, \$6; John W. Bennett, Kelly Station, Armstrong, \$6; Wm. Ewing, Wampeter, \$10 to \$12; Seth Degarmo, New Castle, \$6 to \$8; Elliott M. Lydick, Cookport, Indiana, \$8 to \$12; Melvin Z. Sherman, East Springfield, Erie, \$6 to \$14; Jacob Hano, North Freedom, Armstrong, \$6 to \$8; James Carnahan, South Burgettstown, \$6 to \$8; Wm. E. Dales, Balsam, Tioga, \$14 to \$17; Eli Hilty, Edri, Indiana, \$8 to \$10; Malinda S. Hovers, Port Royal, Juniata, \$8; Roelle S. Ropes, Williamsport, \$8; Robert H. Zundel, Jannettown, \$8; William C. Beckwell, Bradford, \$8; Moses A. Sunst, \$6; George Boggs, Fayetteville, \$6 to \$10; John L. Gray, Blairsville, \$4 to \$10; Simon L. Lakes, Mansfield, \$8 to \$14; William P. Berlin, dead, Rochester Hills, Indiana, \$8 to \$12; James Benford, Johnston, \$12; Wm. J. Denmore, Fairchance, \$8 to \$10; John W. Swayer, South Williamsport, \$6 to \$8; Lewis Ross, Derry Station, \$12 to \$14; Porter C. Montgomery, Bradford, \$10 to \$12; William Partington, Soldiers' home, \$8 to \$12; Andrew Dougherty, Monongahela, \$8 to \$12; Theophilus J. Nichols, Mahanata, Juniata, \$6 to \$8; John G. Chase, Edinboro, \$8 to \$12; Samuel S. Kelly, Derry Station, \$6 to \$10; John Howard, Edinboro, \$17 to \$24; John G. Fields, Gettysburg, Center, \$6 to \$8; Anna S. Smith, Reddsville, Mifflin, \$8; Julia A. Hoyt, Guyville, Crawford, \$12; Jennie McCready, Duncanville, Blair, \$12.

Judge Simonon rendered a decision last week in favor of the trustees of the State Insane Hospital at Northampton and against the county of Philadelphia for \$50,000.71. The trustees brought an action against the county some time ago to recover a claim of \$7,026 for board, clothing and medical treatment furnished by the hospital to certain indigent insane persons from Philadelphia. The case was heard by the Court by the agreement without a jury, and a verdict was rendered in favor of the hospital trustees for \$46,323.30, with six per cent interest from April 19, 1897, or \$50,000.71.

On their way home from Selinsgrove to Sunbury, William Fenton and Stephen Templin drove across a high canal bridge at Shamokin Dam and just as they emerged from it their heavy wagon plunged down an embankment on the ice below. Hotel guests who saw the accident hurried to the spot and found both men unconscious. Fenton being pinned under the heavy wagon. They recovered. A 13-year-old son of Henry Lythe, manager of the Fort Pitt glass works, at Greensburg, arose Tuesday apparently in the best of health, went to the school house and joined his companions in play. Shortly after entering the school room he was convulsed as if in severe pain, uttered a groan and fell lifeless. A physician was summoned, but the boy was beyond help.

Harry Kuntz, of Beaver Falls, while trying to raise the gates at the race in the lower part of town recently, slipped and fell in. The water jammed his legs up against the sides of the gates so firmly that he could not move, and he would have drowned had not George Cochehour sprung in and held him up until the race filled, thus liberating him. By the premature explosion of a blast at Greensburg the other evening, Chas. and Jacob Stutchell were very seriously injured. Charles had one eye knocked out, and the other injured, so that he will lose its sight. Otto Klein, a miner below Jacob Creek, was caught by a fall of slate and badly crushed that he cannot recover.

William Harrison, aged 64 years, was found half frozen the other night about two miles from his home at Greenville, lying in the snow. He had started to walk from New Wilmington to his home early in the evening and fell and broke his leg. He was unable to move, and lay until found by a friend.

William Boyer, a well-known business man, of Greenville, died a few days ago under peculiar circumstances. He was pretending to be asleep, and when they went to awaken him from his supposed slumber he was dead. He was 58 years of age.

A mortgage for \$2,500,000 upon the property of the Allegheny & Western railroad to the Guaranty Trust Company, of New York, was left for record at Butler. The internal revenue stamps on the documents amount to \$1,250.

The 5-year-old son of William Haines, of Greenville, the other day placed his tongue against an iron water hydrant. The member froze fast, and in releasing it a portion of his tongue was torn off.

In drawing city water from the spigot at her home in Beaver Falls, Mrs. Stroick found a very handsome pearl and Mrs. Thompson later got a solid gold bracelet padlock key through the spigot.

In a runaway accident at Lilly, Cambria county, the other day, Peter Robine, a miner, aged 55 years, was instantly killed, and his companion, Dennis Bradley, a farmer, probably fatally injured.

Thomas, the 7-year-old son of William Clendenning of Black Diamond, near Monongahela, died a few days ago of acute alcoholic poisoning, which resulted from whisky procured at the house of a neighbor.

In the breach of promise case of Mary E. Hullings vs. Robert Orr, at Clarion, the jury rendered a verdict of \$525 for the plaintiff. A Grand Jury at Lebanon refused to indict for murder Jacob Wetzel and Laura Goodman, who were charged with killing a child. Fifteen young men at Johnstown have enlisted in the regular army and started for the South to join regiments there.

The wife of Dr. James McKellar, of Hazelton, fell on the stairs and sustained injuries from which she died last week. Franklin will sell \$15,000 school bonds to pay for property on which to erect a new high school building.