

The French press is fuming gloriously against the United States, and is furious against England, which has blocked, once for all, the chances of a European coalition against the United States.

The Swiss canton of Nenenburg has sanctioned a plan for a universal life insurance in which all the natives over eighteen years old may participate. In case of death, a sum varying from 1000 to 5000 francs is to be paid to the heirs.

The Hong Kong Press tells of a professional beggar who has built quite a fine three-story ten-house just outside the South Gate. As the only three-story building in the city, it is an object of great pride to the natives, whose charity helped so largely in its erection.

A Berlin paper has ascertained that intonation by means of ether has become almost epidemic in Lithuania, owing to the fact that ether is cheaper than brandy and less of it is needed to get drunk on. Many families have been ruined by the habit, which has also found victims even among school children.

Fifty years ago there were few persons employed or gaining a livelihood by the utilization of electric energy. Now in Europe and America there are more than a million—very likely two millions in the world. In 1827 George Stephenson started his first railway train possibly with a dozen employes. Now in the United States there are nearly 800,000 railroad workers.

Amherst, Mass., with a population of 4800 has a public library of 70,000 volumes, which is open to all comers for thirteen hours every day. In addition, the citizens have also access to the college library, of 19,000 volumes, and to two other free libraries, containing 7000 and 2300 volumes respectively. Only ten towns in the State of Massachusetts are now without free public libraries.

Little John Victor Thompson was born under a whole constellation of lucky stars. His first piece of good fortune was in being born in Chicago. He could not have made a wiser choice of a birthplace. His second morsel, or, rather, large mouthful, of good fortune came when he was adopted by the Thursday Club. Thirty-nine young ladies, each of whom has pin money to spare, were looking about for some charitable work to do. They saw young Thompson and adopted him. They will send him to school, perhaps to college, and start him on an honorable career. Thirty-nine mothers! That is a privilege which very few boys enjoy, and John Victor knows it.

According to the Boston Traveler recent events point to the falling back of the Latin races in the march of civilization. Old abuses with them seem to linger, abuses which have been stamped out long since by their sturdier Saxon brethren. France in the Zola trial has shown the world defects in her judicial and administration systems that the English trial by jury would not have permitted even two centuries ago. Spain, in attempting to crush Cuba, shows the same crude methods which disgraced Alva in the Netherlands. In the desire for better observance of international law and freedom of trade, too, our Latin brothers seem to be sadly lacking. If recent events count for anything, they seem to point to the future supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon.

There is a common notion that America is the only country in which there has been a rapid growth of cities. The Americans are so accustomed to consider that their country is in all respects vastly superior to all others that they give very little attention to what is done elsewhere. But the desire of human beings to crowd together in cities is one of the striking peculiarities of the present age, and, as a result, there has been an enormous growth of cities in every country. Take, for instance, the city of Berlin. In 1858 it had about 440,000 population. In 1898 its population is 1,500,000. In 1861 the population of Liverpool, including Birkenhead, on the opposite side of the river Mersey, was about 550,000. In 1889 it was 940,000 and to-day is over one million souls. The city of London is another interesting example. In 1861 the population embraced in the registrar general's district was 2,000,000 and a little over. In the same district, in 1896, the census showed 4,411,000. It would be difficult, even in the United States, to find more rapid growth of the population of cities than that stated above; but it is more the rule than the exception.

FREEDOM.
They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak.
They are slaves who will not choose
Hated, scolding and abuse.
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they need must think;
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

Is true freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake,
And, with leathern hearts, forget
That we owe mankind a debt?
Not true freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And with heart and hand to be
Earnest to make others free.
—James Russell Lowe

A LAWYER'S SECRET.

By G. MANVILLE FENN.

CURIOS cases in my profession? Oh, yes, plenty. I often smile to myself when I find the novelist taking up old family incidents and working them up into stories; and then I think of what plots I could have furnished if they had not been family secrets of a private and thoroughly confidential character.

I remember one case that, changing the names, it will be no particular breach of confidence to mention, and I tell it the more frankly because it is a little against myself, and I must own that I did not act quite upon what is called the square. In fact, I played a part—a negative kind of part—for I did nothing else but hold my tongue. If I had spoken, it would have been fifty thousand pounds or so out of a truly honest man's pocket and into a rogue's; so, somehow, I let my feelings get the better of my professional conscience, and I said not a word.

I was old John Hendricks's solicitor, and looked after his property, for I had known him when he was a struggling man and I was a young lawyer with none too much practice. Then I lost sight of him for twenty years, at the end of which time I was still plodding along respectably, just holding my own and nothing more, when, going into one of the city taverns for my regular daily chop, which I ate at the same table for so many years that I had become one of the institutions of the place, I found myself opposite to a yellow-looking, thin, gray-haired man, who kept on looking up from his plate to stare at me very rudely I thought.

I did not resent his stare at first, but at last it became so unpleasant that I determined to look him down, and I gazed firmly into his eyes. "Why, it is!" he exclaimed. "Dick, old boy, don't you know me?" "That's Jack Hendricks's voice," I exclaimed, nearly upsetting my plate; and the next moment we were sitting there, hand clasped in hand, and with the tears in our eyes, looking very foolish and weak, I dare say, to the other occupants of the room; but that did not trouble us, for we had too much to say to each other.

John Hendricks told me that he had been in the north of India, close to Nepal, for over twenty years. He had gone out as a factor to an indigo grower, and had become a grower himself. "And now," he said, "I have come to look after my dead sister's sons and—to die."

"Well, old fellow," I said, "the first part's right enough, but as to the dying, I think it's as well to leave that alone. It will be all settled for you. The only thing with respect to that, speaking as a professional man, is to make your will, if you have anything to leave, and then make the most of your span."

"Have you made yours, Dick?" he said sharply. "I? No," I said laughing. "I've nothing to leave, Jack; and then we went into mutual confidences; and after I had told him of my own hard-working life, he gave me to understand that he had made a very large fortune in indigo, and spent very little on himself.

"Mine's been too hard-working a life," Dick said, "for me to be much of a spender; but it will be a fine thing for Jenny's two boys if—I like them," he added sharply. And then, with a quiet, subdued look, "Poor Jenny! I should have liked to see her again."

John Hendricks was fifteen years my senior, but we became once more the closest of friends, for he seemed to resume his old protective way over me, but trusting me most fully in every point. It was all done in a quiet, unostentatious way, but from the day of John Hendricks's return the world began to smile on me. I had a great deal of professional business to do for him, and as he had most extensive connections among old indigo planters, I found them coming to me, right and left, by his recommendation; so that very soon, in place of finding it hard work to keep one clerk, I had very hard work for four, and a big balance at my bank.

was that he let me put down two thousand pounds for Sam; but the great property of a hundred and odd thousand pounds, well invested, was left to Phil.

"Now, Dick," said the old fellow chuckling, "those boys will be sure to ask you if you have any will of mine, and I want to humbug them; so we'll deposit this at the banker's, and then if they ask you if you have my will, you can say 'No.'"

Everything was done as he wished, and the will placed at the banker's; and though, during the next five years I tried hard to get the old man to make a fresh one, he grew more obstinate than ever, shutting his eyes blindly to the character of his nephews; and all I could do was to let matters take their course.

It was a bad course for Philip Hensley, who was, in a quiet, secretive way, a regular scamp—his father over again. He was very clever and shrewd as a lawyer, and got on well when he stuck to it, and this pleased the old man, to whom he was devotedly attentive; while poor Sam seemed to become more and more estranged, though a married and truer-hearted fellow never like an angel, who poured out tea for a grim old fellow.

I was often at his snug little home, and after trying in vain to make things better for him with his rich uncle, I came to the conclusion that they would be no happier for the money, so I let matters slide.

"Two thousand would be a nice nest-egg for them," I thought, "so perhaps all is for the best."

As I have said, Phil became a shrewd fellow in the law, and passed his examination pretty well, so that he knew what he was about in legal matters; and one day he proved the truth of his uncle's prophecy by saying to me suddenly.

"My uncle is far from well, Mr. Brown. Have you got his will?"

"No," I said, so shortly that he turned upon his heel and went away. About a month later I was with my old friend, and felt shocked at the change, for it was evident that he was not much longer for this world.

He had sent for me, and I was in hopes that he meant to alter his will, and I was right.

"What a while you have been coming," he said querulously. "I wanted you so badly, Dick."

"I came on directly, old fellow," I said, kindly. "Here, let me put you a little more easy."

"Thank ye, Dick," he said, "but it's all over. That boy has killed me. Did he ask you if you had my will?"

"Yes, about a month since, and I said 'No.'"

"I knew it, Dick; I knew it," he said, pitifully; "and ever since he has been worrying me to let him make my will. Dick, old friend, I've made a big mistake. There, there, don't jump upon me. I—I confess it all. I thought he was his mother's boy, he was so like her; but—but he has his father's spirit and his ways to the very bone."

"I am glad you have awakened to the truth," I said.

"You should have advised me better," he retorted querulously, "Should I, Jack?"

"No, no; you did, Dick. I've only just found out what an old fool I am, my dear boy. We have quarrelled terribly, that boy and I, for I have found him out, in spite of his smooth tongue. He's a scamp, a villain—a gambler, and in debt terribly. He has half killed me, Dick, and—"

I tore at the bell, as the poor old fellow seemed to have a fit, for the terrible emotion he had suffered at what must have been the rooting up of his most cherished belief in his sister's child had proved, in his weak state, to be more than he could bear.

The doctor was sent for, and at the end of an hour John Hendricks was so far recovered that he whispered my name, and I, sitting down beside him, heard him in a whisper say—

"Draw up my will quickly. A just one."

"I don't think he will ever recover sufficiently to sign," said the doctor. "He has driven it too late, Mr. Brown."

The doctor was right, for my poor old friend never recovered his senses, but quietly breathed his last a few hours later.

The funeral followed in due form, and I was there, both as old friend and solicitor, to meet the very small party who went to the grave.

Sam was there, of course, making no inconsiderable show of sorrow, while his brother sobbed aloud over the grave; but he had a good deal recovered when we assembled afterward in the dining-room of my old friend's house, his few friends wondering whether he had remembered them in his will, about which subject I heard a whisper going round that none had been left.

I suppose that it was from a feeling of importance, perhaps more from an unwillingness to wound poor Sam Hensley and his young wife by letting them hear the unjust will, that I did not hurry myself to produce it, though I don't think they anticipated much. But all at once, to my utter astonishment, Philip rose, coughed to clear his husky voice, and said quietly:

"I presume you all know how much I have of late been in my uncle's confidence, so that you will not be surprised that, as I was by his wish a solicitor, he should have entrusted to me the making of his will."

the rascal read out the document that, as a lawyer, he had cleverly forged. I saw it all now. He had asked me if I had his uncle's will, and I had said no. He must have searched the old man's papers and found none, and, feeling that, Philip had forged a will in his own favor, and artfully, too, making one about which there could be no dispute; for he provided legacies to friends, and the residue, which proved to be over a hundred thousand pounds, in equal moieties to his nephews, Samuel and Philip Hensley.

I sat and laughed to myself as I heard him read this piece of forgery, which was all in due form, clever from the man's cunning in contenting himself with half, knowing that if the will were otherwise it might have been disputed, when now it would be taken as perfection; and there, all the time, I sat with the genuine will in my pocket, from which he was cutting himself off by this act, while I rejoiced to think how the villain was being forced as it were by fate to do justice to his brother Sam.

What would you have done—given the scoundrel in a custody as a forger, made a terrible upset, and caused no end of trouble about the property? Perhaps you would. I did not, for I went home, after satisfying myself that the false will was in due form, and destroyed the real one.

Yes, I know what you will say—that it was a felonious act, and that I ought to have been struck off the rolls. Perhaps I ought to have been, but I pondered on the fact that, instead of the whole hundred thousand pounds going to a villain who would stoop to forge, half of it went to a truly deserving man; so I left the punishment to higher powers than those of man, and kept my secret, which is a secret still, for I have only given fictitious names.

SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL.

A bar of soft metal is used on Dresden electric lines instead of the trolley wheel, and is claimed to wear the wire less and to be more convenient.

A remarkable object that "rather resembles some obscuring medium than a nebula," is the unique discovery in the constellation of Perseus lately made by Rev. T. E. Espin.

It has been discovered that the deposits of gilsonite—a species of asphalt—found in Utah will yield a substance which can be used to paint ships' bottoms, and which will protect them from corrosion, seaweed, and barnacles in a remarkable degree.

The Medical Department of the French War Office has just published some medical statistics of the army during the year 1895. The total number of admissions to infirmary and hospital is given as 813,579, answering to a general sickness-rate of 631 per 1000 effectives.

German figures credit various woods with the following heating capacities: Linden, 1; fir, 0.99; elm and pine, 0.98; willow, chestnut and larch, 0.97; maple and spruce, 0.96; black poplar, 0.95; alder and white birch, 0.94; oak, 0.92; locust and white beech, 0.91; and red beech, 0.90. Modern scientific research gives us another surprise in the showing that the soft woods have greater heating power than the hard.

The mud from coal washing is utilized by a Friedrichshafen engineer. He finds the mud to consist of two portions—one being chiefly clay and the other particles of coal—and he separates them by drying and sifting, the clay passing through as fine dust, while the fine coal is retained by the sieve. The coal contains little ash and is adapted for various purposes, while the separated dust has proven not wholly useless.

The new form of incandescent electric lamp recently devised by Professor Nerst, in which magnesium oxide is used instead of a carbon filament, requires that the conductor should first be heated by either a Bunsen flame or the spark from an induction coil. Professor Nerst proposes to embed a certain filament in the rod of magnesium oxide which will afford a path for the current when the rod is cold and communicate heat to the surrounding material so as to raise it to the conducting temperature at which light is emitted.

First Map to Bear "Alaska."

The map of James Cook, 1778, was the first to bear the name "Alaska," which was a corruption of the India Al-shack, or "Endless Land." The United States began to treat with Russia for the acquisition of Alaska under Presidents Polk (1845 to 1849) and Buchanan (1857 to 1861), and the matter was opened again in 1866 by Seward, who was then Secretary of State, and closed the transaction on March 31, 1867, Russia ceding all claim to Alaska for the consideration of \$7,200,000.

A Pupil's Impudent Impromptu.

In a public school of Olympia, Wash., where pupils are asked occasionally for impromptu poetical recitations, one reluctant boy recently ordered to show his ability at rhyming for the benefit of the School Board's visitors astounded all present, and secured punishment for himself later by declaiming:

God, O! God, supreme on high,
Look down on this committee,
Who chose such fools to teach our schools
In this our capital city.

Speaker Reed's Little Joke.

Speaker Reed recently wished to see a political friend on some very important business and telegraphed him to come at once to Washington. The friend took the first train, but a wash-out on the road soon stopped him. Going to a telegraph office he sent this message: "Washout on the line; can't come," to which in due time he received the following reply from the Maine statesman: "Buy a new shirt and come anyway."

An act of Congress in 1872 abolished flogging in the navy.

THE MERRY SIDE OF LIFE.

STORIES THAT ARE TOLD BY THE FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

The Age of Gernu—Outclassed—Most Acute—A Waste of Money—Comforts Cost—Open to Doubt—Unpardonable—Equal to the Occasion—Troof, Etc.

Little Miss Muffet
Sat on a tuffet,
Eating of curds and whey;
A microscope espied her,
And slipped down inside her,
And she had influenza next day.
—Cincinnati Enquirer.

A Woman's Reason.

"Poor Mollie has lost her reason."
"That oughtn't to worry a woman. She can say 'because.'"
—Indianapolis Journal.

Most Acute.

She—"Yes, it is the province of woman to suffer in silence."
He—"In silence? That must be suffering, indeed."
—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Outclassed.

The Rejected One—"I have a rival, then?"
The Girl—"Hardly that. I have promised to marry him."
—Philadelphia North American.

Geography Up to Date.

"Tell the class what an island is, Sammy."
"Yes'm; an island is a body of land surrounded by United States battleships."
—Chicago Record.

Open to Doubt.

Simpkins—"I thought you said Dreezy was wedded to the truth?"
Timkins—"So I always thought."
Simkins—"Well, if he ever was, he's a widower now."
—Tit-Bits.

Comforts Cost.

"Wouldn't you prefer to live in an apartment with an elevator; it raises one so quickly?"
"Yes, but not nearly so quickly as it raises the rent."
—Brooklyn Life.

Impassioned.

First Deaf-Mute—"He wasn't so very angry, was he?"
Second Deaf-Mute—"He was so mad that the words he used almost blistered his fingers."
—Indianapolis Journal.

Imaginary Danger.

Nervous Old Lady (to deck hand)—"Mr. Steamboatman, is there any fear of danger?"
Deck Hand (carelessly)—"Plenty of fear ma'am, but not a bit of danger."
—Harlem Life.

Energy.

Jobson—"Just see how hard Dobson is working at beating that carpet."
Mrs. Jobson—"Yes. Mrs. Dobson sets him at work at something of the kind just after he reads the war news in the paper."
—Brooklyn Life.

Possessed.

Mr. Dukane—"I couldn't sleep a wink last night."
Mr. Gaswell—"You had insomnia, I suppose?"
Mr. Dukane—"No; insomnia had me."
—Pittsburg Chronicle Telegraph.

Proof.

Minnie—"What fronds these beggars are. I met a 'blind' man who said, 'Please give me a penny, beautiful lady.'"
Mamie—"Yes, he said that to make you think he really was blind."
—Indianapolis Journal.

A Waste of Money.

Mrs. Homespun—"What did the doctor say was the matter with you, Silas?"
Silas—"I fergit what he called it."
Mrs. Homespun—"D'ye mean to say you paid him \$2 and didn't get no good out of it?"—Truth.

Unpardonable.

"My wife and her neighbor used to be inseparable, but they don't speak now."
"What's the trouble?"
"She persuaded my wife to buy a silk gown that turned out to be part cotton."
—Detroit Free Press.

Equal to the Occasion.

He—"They say dreams go by contraries. Do you believe it?"
She—"Yes, I think they do."
He—"Alas, I dreamed last night that you had promised to be my wife."
She—"And I dreamed that I had refused you."
—Chicago News.

Woman's Wiles.

"What a hard Maud seems to have on all her rejected suitors."
"Why shouldn't she, the artful thing? She always tells a man, when she refuses him, that she is afraid to marry a handsome man, because she would be so jealous."
—Cincinnati Enquirer.

His Memory Sure to Live.

Beagle—"Old Foxley is dead. He'll be long remembered by the people of this town."
Spits—"Why, did he leave many public bequests?"
Beagle—"He left debts to the amount of \$50,000."
—Boston Transcript.

An Eye to Business.

Optician—"My dear sir, your case is hopeless."
Customer—"And am I doomed to blindness?"
Optician—"It is inevitable. I think you'd better look at my beautiful line of artificial eyes at once."
—Jewelers' Weekly.

Justice Without Mercy.

"Seems to me I've seen your face before," said the Judge, peering through his spectacles.
"Yes, your Honor; you have," replied the prisoner. "I am the professor who gives the young lady next door to you lessons on the piano."
"Seven years!" came from the Judge, quickly.

Clothes More Important Than Beauty.

A strange girl recently came to Atchison as a bride. "Is she good looking?" we asked an Atchison woman who had seen her. "I didn't notice," the woman replied, "but she is well dressed."
—Atchison Globe.

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