

Sensations of the  
Auction RoomAN ISLAND SOLD FOR LESS THAN  
£10,000.

No doubt the number of large properties now coming under the hammer is one of many indications that we are passing through hard times. But, though a whole town near London has seldom been offered for sale by auction, knights of the rostrum have had many big "deals."

At the Mart have been offered a royal forest of about fifteen hundred acres, Burnham Beeches and Hardinute's Moat, a Roman camp, the Falls of Lodore, and many important industrial undertakings.

A curious lot of this nature was a gasworks plant, because when the auctioneer's hammer fell it struck a spot 9,600 miles distant from the property, which was in Copiapo, Chile.

## Taxes Never Paid.

Over and over again a "kingdom"—Bundy Island, in the Bristol Channel—has been sold by auction in London. Once it was knocked down for £9,780, while some years later it was withdrawn when the bidding reached £19,000.

When it was set up for auction on another occasion, Mr. Aubrey de Vere's grandfather, who had been walking aimlessly in the streets, was attracted by the noise, and entered the room.

"He knows nothing whatever about the island," and Mr. de Vere, "but when the auctioneer proclaimed that it had never paid tax or tithe, that it acknowledged neither King nor Parliament, nor law, civil or ecclesiastical, and that its proprietor was in his own scanty domain at once Pope and Emperor, he made a bid, and the island was knocked down to him. It paid its cost by the sale of rabbits."

Remarkable for another reason was the sale of George IV's wardrobe. That monarch's profusion in articles of dress was, according to a contemporary diarist, "unbounded, because he never paid for them," and, as he remembered every one of them, with the result that his pages were always liable to be called upon to produce some particular coat or uniform, he left at his death an amazing assortment.

The coats he had worn during fifty years, costumes of all the Orders in Europe, every kind of uniform, splendid furs and pelisses, hunting coats and breeches—these and many other personal belongings were exposed to the gaze of an auction-room audience. Still more remarkable, judged by the pecuniary result, was the sale of Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire, the seat of William Beckford, author of "Vathek." Interest in the sale was so great that in a few days 7,200 catalogues were sold at one guinea each, and there was spirited bidding during the thirty-three days it lasted. The Abbey realized about £330,000, and the contents more than £1,000,000.

Numerous lots were such appeal to collectors, who have made many a stand out in the annals of auctioneering. At Sotheby's, in 1907, no less than £13,985 was realized for books in a single day, and a few years later a one-day sale of pictures at Christie's produced £105,845.

There was a sensational sale at the same rooms in 1908 when the Holland pictures fetched £138,118. At that time this was the largest amount realized at any public sale of such works of art, but it has been surpassed since. The Young collection of pictures, sold at Christie's in 1910, brought £154,069.

## Farmers and Labor

Farmers are being used as catspaws to pull labor's chestnuts out of the fire. To the extent that substantial benefits follow La Follette's success, they will go to labor—very little will go to the farmers. Labor is not deeply concerned in paying more than it now pays for the products of our farms, and yet farmers expect their votes to help themselves to prosperity. Will they do so by voting for La Follette, who will be dominated for the militant labor leaders in behalf of organized labor? That is to say, are the aims of the farmers identical with the aims of labor? Labor is exceedingly well paid—farmers are poorly paid, comparatively. If farmers are well paid, will not labor contribute largely to such payment? Will not such payment diminish the purchasing power of the wages of labor—American Economists.

## Queen of the China Sea

Captain W. H. Downman, the owner of the famous old tea-clipper Cutty Sark, is considering whether he will put canvas on the ship and endeavour to break the old sailing record to Australia.

The Cutty Sark has now been practically re-rigged from a barquentine into a full-rigged ship, carrying a main skysail yard. The aim has been to get as near as possible to the ship's rig in 1870, when, under Captain Moodie, she made the quickest voyage from China of all the clipper fleet.

It would, however, take at least two years to complete arrangements for the Australian voyage. The Cutty Sark is at present at Falmouth.

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## St. Clement's Well

Excavations are now in progress to try to discover the site of the old well of St. Clement, which is believed to lie somewhere between the Law Courts in the Strand and St. Clement's Inn.

Even before the Norman Conquest the holy well of St. Clement used to be the scene of many pilgrimages, and these continued until the Reformation. It used to be the favourite resting place for lads and lassies on summer evenings in the time when the Strand was a country road and not the important London thoroughfare it is today.

Within a few yards of the site of the well stands the church of St. Clement, whose bells are framed in nursery rhyme.

Here Dr. Johnson used to have a pew, but there is no record of his ever having visited the well—which was only bricked over when the present law courts were built. The old doctor believed in stronger waters than those of the holy saint as being efficacious in time of illness.

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### Four Men Defy Pacific in Thirty-Two Foot Boat

TACOMA, Wash., Oct. 24 (A.P.)—Aboard a 32-foot boat four men from this city have set out on a cruise across the Pacific, with Honolulu as their destination. The cruise was planned by Karl Rathfon, an experienced navigator of small craft, and his boat is the *Idle Hour*.

The *Idle Hour* has a 10-horsepower motor, a beam of 11 feet and a depth from the deck of six feet. Rathfon declared she could ride any wave the Pacific could raise. She sailed with half a ton of iron filings as ballast, in addition to large supplies of fuel oil and provisions. The men have no radio, but expect passing vessels to report their progress occasionally. They plan to cruise down the coast to San Pedro, Cal., then across to the Hawaiian Islands.

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