

HE HAD ONE AMBITION.

IT WAS TO OWN A FINER HOUSE THAN A. T. STEWART'S.

The singular story of a New York merchant who spent a million dollars on a mansion and never lived in it—A Palace which was sold at half price.

Wilhelm Fickhardt died suddenly at Cologne, Germany, the other day, and the New York Sun tells the story of his singular ambition and its failure. Mr. Fickhardt had been a resident of New York for twenty-five years, but for several years past spent much of his time abroad. He was a wholesale dealer in dyes and chemicals, and a member of the firm of William Fickhardt & Kuttroff.

Twenty years ago Mr. Fickhardt brought six lots at the southeast corner of Seventy-fourth street and Fifth avenue, which together include half the block on Fifth avenue, with a frontage of 102 feet and a depth of 150 feet. On this plot he wished to erect a house planned on general ideas of his own and of a quality and design unsurpassed. He threw his scheme open to international competition, and architects of England and Germany as well as of America responded.

The plans of an American were accepted and work begun forthwith. Excavations were made to a depth of forty feet below the curb, and among the extensive subterranean works a well was provided to run a \$50,000 organ in this country. The underground work cost \$100,000. When the foundations were completed Mr. Fickhardt decided to alter his plans, and interrupted the work of erecting the building for a year.

In the meantime the work of quarrying and cutting the brown stone for the superstructure went on in Germany under the supervision of an expert sent over for the purpose. All the stones were cross cut, so that they would not chip. The corner stone was taken from Mr. Fickhardt's native place, Berghausen, Germany.

When the walls of the first story had been built, the massive outer walls being three and a half feet thick, work was suspended again while more changes in the plans were made, after which building went on until three stories were finished. Again Mr. Fickhardt altered the plans, and there was a third interruption. The architect told the owner that to make the alterations suggested it would be necessary to tear down the building. Mr. Fickhardt said they would be made even if he had to personally demolish the building. Then the architect threw up the contract.

Mr. Fickhardt employed a contractor to tear down two stories, and engaged a new architect and a new builder to continue the work under new plans. The builder thus employed was one Knaut, a German. Knaut started off on a vacation, going to Germany, and died while there. Mr. Fickhardt was again delayed in his favorite scheme, but insisted that he would have the house completed according to his own ideas. The latest architect had conformed to the whims of his patron as they manifested themselves from time to time, and finally, in 1889, the house was roofed.

went to Cologne. It was his intention to visit Carlsbad before returning to America. On Monday last a cablegram announcing Mr. Fickhardt's death was received. The message simply announced that Mr. Fickhardt had died suddenly at Cologne that afternoon. The cause of death was not stated. Interment will take place at Berghausen in accordance with the wishes of the family.

CHINA AND ITS OPIUM.

The Use of the Drug in That Country Goes Back to Ancient Times. In a work by Dr. Edkins, a distinguished Chinese scholar, who was, for forty years a missionary in China, recently reprinted as an appendix to the report of the opium commission, the responsibility for the introduction of opium into China is traced on the basis of "information from the Chinese side."

It is the prevalent opinion that British interference forced China to import opium, and that if British pressure were removed China would cease to use it. Premising that it was not till 1637 that the British East India Company established relations with China, and not till 1681 that the company took the opium trade into its own hands. Dr. Edkins proceeds to set forth the facts as stated in Chinese historical documents. The poppy was brought into China, he finds, by Arab traders, between the seventh and eighth centuries, A. D. Its cultivation in China began in the eighth century, and the Imperial Pharmacopoeia of 973 mentions it. The editor of the official Chinese Materia Medica of the eleventh century remarks: "The poppy is found everywhere."

Forbidding the importation of opium into the Chinese ports. Its value is stated in the Chinese tariff of 1589 at "two mace of silver per ten cotties." The Arabs, Portuguese, and Dutch preceded the British East India Company in the opium trade with China. The Canton valuation book of 1687 shows that the board of revenue at Peking sanctioned the importation of the drug at a duty of 6 per cent ad valorem. A native work of the period refers to opium coming from Java and to the practice of opium-smoking in Formosa.

Opium-smoking, according to Chinese histories, had its origin from efforts of a Ming emperor (1628-1644) to suppress tobacco smoking. But the practice of tobacco smoking was established, and the only effect of the interdiction was to cause opium to be used along with tobacco, or instead of it, to take out a diminished supply. Opium-smoking became most common in parts of the empire that had been most given to tobacco-smoking. In 1739 opium-smoking fell under the imperial edict, but the trade in opium continued before, the annual importation being 200 chests. By 1767, the quantity had grown to 1,000 chests, under a tariff rate of 3 taels per chest.

It was received at the custom-houses of Amoy and Canton, and the items in the books show that the duties on opium were considerable. When the East India Company took the opium trade into its hands, in 1871, the drug had been a legal import for from two hundred to three hundred years. The people demanded opium, the people smoked it, and, although the import was forbidden by law at the capital, it was permitted by the constituted authorities on the coast. The net result of Dr. Edkins's reading of Chinese documents is the conclusion that opium was widely grown and used in China before 1637, and opium-smoking was firmly established before 1781, when the East India Company first engaged in the trade. After 1781 the trade was conducted, first, with the concurrence, then, from 1800 to 1822, with the practical consent, of the Chinese port authorities. After 1822 it was conducted under a distinct arrangement, it follows, if the Chinese records are correctly read, that the Anglo-Chinese war of recent date was not the beginning of the opium evil in China, and did not force upon the Chinese and unwanted and undesired article of traffic.—Baltimore Sun.

At Montserrat, a mountain twenty-four miles south-west of Barcelona, in a monastery composed of thirteen hermitages, which are accessible only by steps hewn out of the steep rock. The youngest monks occupy the highest, at an elevation of 3,000 to 4,000 feet. They are supplied with provisions by mules trained for the purpose. They hear the sound of the bells, the music of the organ, and the singing of the choir far below them, but assemble only on festival days for Divine service in the monastic chapel. Many of these hermits have only a small hut; others have also a small garden. Some of their dwellings appear to be suspended in the air, and can be approached only by means of ladders and bridges over terrible precipices. The inmates gradually descend to the lower hermitages as they inhabit a place in the monastery which contains the tombs.

to say that if you like to go now he won't charge you anything for what you have already eaten."

WITH FINE CHISELS.

Thirty Pounds of Stone Broken up by One Pound of Wood. At Bangalore, in southern India, the quarrying of granite slabs by means of wood fire has been brought to such perfection that an account of the method is interesting. The rock forms solid masses untraversed by cracks for several hundreds of feet, and when quarried over an area is treated as follows: A narrow line of wood fire, perhaps seven feet long, is gradually elongated, and at the same time moved forward over the tolerably even surface of solid rock. The burning wood is then pushed forward a few inches and left until the hammer again indicates that the slit has extended.

Thus the fire is moved on, and at the same time the length of the line of fire is increased and made to be convex on the side of the fresh rock, the maximum length of the arc amounting to about 25 feet. It is only on this advancing line of fire that any heating takes place, the portion which has been traversed being left to itself. This latter portion is covered with the ashes left by the wood, and when thin splinters which have been burst off. These splinters are only about one-eighth of an inch in thickness and a few inches across. They are quite independent of the general splitting of the rock, which is all the time going on at a depth of about five inches from the surface. The burning lasts eight hours and the line of fire advances at the average rate of nearly six feet an hour. The area actually passed over by the line of fire is 460 square feet, but as the crack extends about three feet on either side beyond the fire area of the on tire slab which is set free measures about 740 square feet. All this is done with maybe, about 1500-weight of wood. Taking the average thickness of the stone at five inches and its specific gravity at 2.62, the result is 30 pounds of stone quarried with one pound of wood.—Nature.

GOLD STORAGE FOR HUSBANDS.

Boston's Great Scheme to Secure to the Absent Housewife Peace of Mind. The resources of modern civilization are capable of meeting nearly all the demands of the woman who wants to go into the country for the summer with a free mind, absolutely devoid of care for the home and leaves behind her. There are storage warehouses where she may safely bestow all her household furnishings, safe deposit vaults for her valuables, places where her dog, her cat, her parrot, or her canary can enjoy all the comforts of a home. But in one most important and essential point modern civilization fails this woman. For if not the most valued, certainly the most important and frailest object in her urban entourage, the source of her anxiety and care than all the accidents of her environments combined, no place of safe bestowal is provided. To her question, "What shall I do with my husband's?" modern civilization returns no answer. She cannot take him along. In the first place, he doesn't want him. But here is no safe place to put him. She must leave him knocking about, entirely out of view of his lawful guardian angel, the sports of fate and bachelor acquaintances, subject to all the risks against which her presence by his side ordinarily insures him. The result is that many a woman who really needs and deserves a long summer rest abandons her cherished project, and the proprietor of some summer resort loses her patronage.

We please to learn that in Boston, whence all good things com, this want has been recognized, and an effort that promises to be successful has been made to supply it. A cold storage warehouse for husbands has been established by a "refined widow lady" who has agreed to contract with widow ladies who are about to depart for the mountains, to store their husbands during their absence and return them in as good condition as when received, at the end of the season. Her establishment has some slight resemblance, it may be confessed, to the ordinance boarding-house of commerce, but the resemblance is only superficial. The great future of her plan is constant supervision of her charges. Every care will be taken to interest and amuse them, but the strictest discipline will be maintained. No late-coming will be allowed, and efficient corps of stalwart assistants or keepers will be maintained, and, in the terrific and significant language of the prospectus, "no funny business" will be allowed.

If the "refined widow lady" is of sufficient age and hideousness to invite feminine confidence, if she has the record she claims as a stern and uncompromising manager of husbands, the hotel keepers at the resorts frequented by Bostonians may anticipate an unusually profitable summer. There may be some little difficulty in turning a husband into this asylum, but once she has got him there, his wife may depart for her "villagium" with a mind free from anxiety as to his safety. Rochester Paper.

On one occasion when the poet Campbell and his older brother were sleeping together, the poet was even more than usually restless. His brother received a series of vigorous kicks and bore them with surprising good nature. But in the morning he demanded an explanation. "I was not asleep," replied the gifted Thomas, "I was attempting to compose a poem upon grasshoppers, but I was unable to get into the subject, so I was kicking you for a long time. But I think that, with one or two alterations, it will do now." "Indeed!" responded his long-suffering brother, dryly. "Well, Tom, I don't know what share you will claim to this last effort."



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He Know His Fate. He staggered to the door. "Your return," he gasped, "will drive me insane." She laughed mockingly. At the moment she treated her words lightly, but when, upon the following day, she saw him abroad wearing a pink shirt she was startled and bethought her of his fateful remark.

Suitable for the Season. Wife (to her husband, who is arranging his papers.) What have you got here in this parcel? Husband. They are the dear reminiscences of our honeymoon. Wife. Oh, how delightful! Pray, what kind of reminiscences are they? Husband. They are hotel bills!

Was No Acrobat. Mr. Skinner—Now, Patrick, I want you to roll down the lawn, and the children may stay in the yard and watch you. The New Man-of-all-work—I'd hav' ye understand, sir, that I'm no acrobat; an' if it's a circus yez want for the children, ye'll hev to hirj a new mon.

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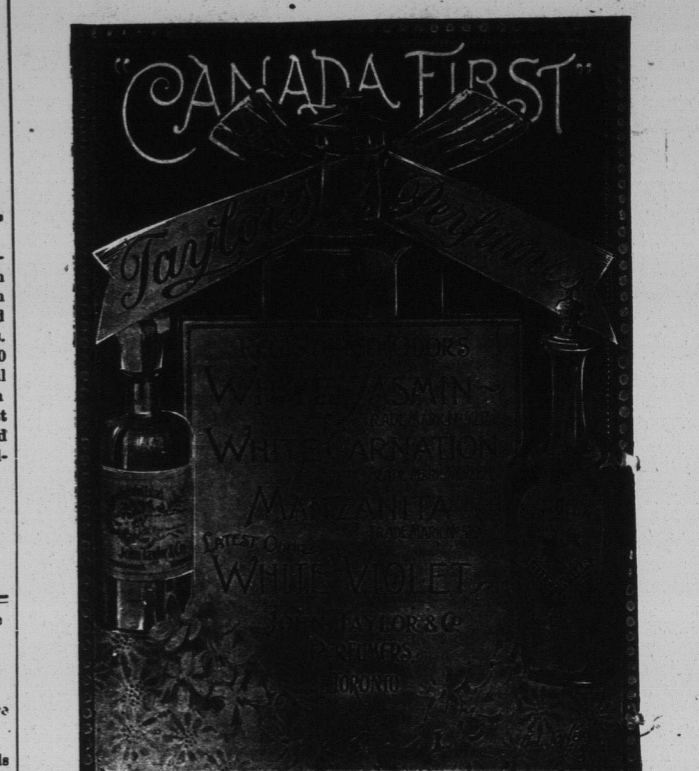
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W. H. THORNE & Co., ED. Market Square, St. John. Special July Sale. OUR MIDSUMMER SALE has commenced and will continue this month during which time we will give a special discount on Refrigerators, Hammocks, Garden Vases, Garden Tools, Flower Pot Brackets, Lawn Mowers, Hanging Wire Baskets: Call early as the Goods are going fast.

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