

HE HAD ONE AMBITION.

IT WAS TO OWN A FINER HOUSE THAN A. T. STEWART.

The Singular Story of a New York Merchant—Spent a Million Dollars on a Mansion and Never Lived in It—A Palace Which Was Sold at Half Price.

Wilhelm Pickhardt died suddenly at Cologne, Germany, the other day, and the New York Sun tells the story of his singular ambition and its failure. Mr. Pickhardt 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 Pickhardt & Kuttroff. For a number of years Mr. Pickhardt resided with his family at the Buckingham Hotel, Fifth avenue and Fiftieth street. He was prosperous and had decided to build a home that would surpass in magnificence the marble palace, as it was called, built on Fifth avenue by A. T. Stewart.

Twenty years ago Mr. Pickhardt 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 an 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 which Mr. Pickhardt imported, and which was, he believed, the finest in private use in this country. The underground work cost \$100,000. When the foundations were completed Mr. Pickhardt 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. Pickhardt'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. Pickhardt 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. Pickhardt said they would be made even if he had to personally demolish the building. Then the architect threw up the contract.

Mr. Pickhardt 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. Pickhardt 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.

Mr. Pickhardt then said the house was not as he intended it to be, and that he would never sleep a night in it, or live in it a day, although it had cost him over a million dollars. Storm boards were placed before the entrance to the big four-story structure, and the fence and coping and carved balustrades were covered. Temporary windows were put in the great frames, which supplied light to the 18-foot stories and to the big rooms, one of which, that designed for the owner's bedroom, was 40x25 feet. The \$50,000 organ is still lying in a storage warehouse. A stable on a scale commensurate with that of the mansion was built on Seventy-fifth street, between Fourth and Lexington avenues, on a plot 125x102 feet. It has a frontage of eighty feet and includes a riding ring. The building is two stories high, and gorgeous quarters were planned for the coachmen and stablemen.

The big house and stable stood for six years untenanted, save by a watchman and his dog. Finally Mr. Pickhardt instructed his agent to sell both house and stable and went to Europe, not wishing, he said, to be in New York at the time of the sale.

On Feb. 6 of this year the house was put up at auction. The terms of the sale were ten per cent. down and the remainder in thirty days, and property was sold subject to a \$100,000 mortgage. The bidding started at \$300,000 and went by \$25,000 advances to \$450,000, then to \$460,000, and then by \$2,500 jumps to \$472,500, at which figure it was sold to A. H. Matthews who acted for a trio of wealthy speculators. The stable was sold a few days later at private sale.

Mr. Pickhardt came back from Europe when the sale was over, but he continued to talk of the house, and the failure of his hobby seemed to worry him greatly. Early in May, accompanied by his valet, Mr. Pickhardt sailed for Europe. He visited his native place, Berghausen, where he owned nearly the entire town, and then

went to Cologne. It was his intention to visit Carlsbad before returning to America.

On Monday last a cablegram announcing Mr. Pickhardt's death was received. The message simply announced that Mr. Pickhardt 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.

Wilhelm Pickhardt's estate is estimated at from eight to ten million dollars, and includes large tracts of land in the Adirondacks, with considerable property at Schroon Lake. He also owned a great deal of real estate in New York.

He was 61 years old, and leaves a wife, four sons and a daughter.

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." In the fourteenth century, says Barbosa, the Portuguese trader in opium at 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 Perkin sanctioned the importation of the drugs 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 eke out a diminished supply. Opium-smoking became most common in parts of the empire that had been most given to tobacco-smoking. In 1729 opium-smoking fell under the imperial edict, but the trade in opium continued as 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 proceeds of the tariff on opium were remitted to Peking. 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' 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 unwonted and undesired article of traffic.—Baltimore Sun.

According to Their Years.

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 the tenants below them die off, until they inhabit a place in the monastery which contains the tombs.

Would Come Cheaper.

Some years ago a regiment of Volunteers was encamped on the outskirts of a country town. Among those whose curiosity led them to the encampment were three hardy yokels.

As the three were strolling round the camp they came across a large tent over which was written the following notice: "Dinners—as much as you like for a shilling." Being hungry, the three went in to dine.

They began their meal, and after five other parties had come in, dined and left again, they were still busy eating! Presently a young man, evidently one of the attendants, came up, and tapping one of them lightly on the shoulder, said in a low voice:

"Here! you chaps, my governor sent me

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 uninterrupted 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 entire 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.

COLD 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 she leaves behind her. There are storage warehouses where she may safely bestow all her household's 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 women. For if not the most valued, certainly the most important and frailest object in her urban entourage, the source of more 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?" modern civilization returns no answer. She cannot take him along. In the first place, he won't go; in the second place she 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 sport 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 are pleased to learn that in Boston, whence all good things come, 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 offers to contract with wives about to depart for the seashore or 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 must be confessed, to the ordinary boarding house of commerce, but the resemblance is only superficial. The great future of her plan is constant supervisions of her charges. Every care will be taken to interest and amuse them, but the strictest discipline will be maintained. No lathekeys will be allowed, an efficient corps of stalwart assistants or keepers will be maintained, and, in the terse and significant language of the prospectus, "no tummy business" will be allowed.

If the "refined widow lady" is of sufficient age and hielessness 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 luring a husband into this asylum, but once she has got him there, his wife may depart for her "villegiatura" with a mind free from anxiety as to his safety. Rochester Paper.

His Share.

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 gitted Thomas, wearily. "I was attempting to compose a poem upon grandeur, but I was unable to get the lines to please me at all 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 effusion."

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ion, but I am quite sure that I had all the bold strokes of it!"

He Knew His Fate.

He staggered to the door. "Your refusal," he gasped, "will drive me insane."

She laughed mockingly. At the moment she treated his 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.

Write (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' it's a circus ye wants for the children, ye'll hev to hire a new man.

Sparkling White Crystals.

Which dissolve readily and will not cake. That is what the Windsor Salt is. Ask your grocer for it. Purest and best.

Lait Virginal (Bath Liquid).

Orange flower water, eight ounces; and tincture of benzoin two drachms. The former is added very slowly to the latter during constant trituration, so as to produce an opalescent, milky fluid.

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