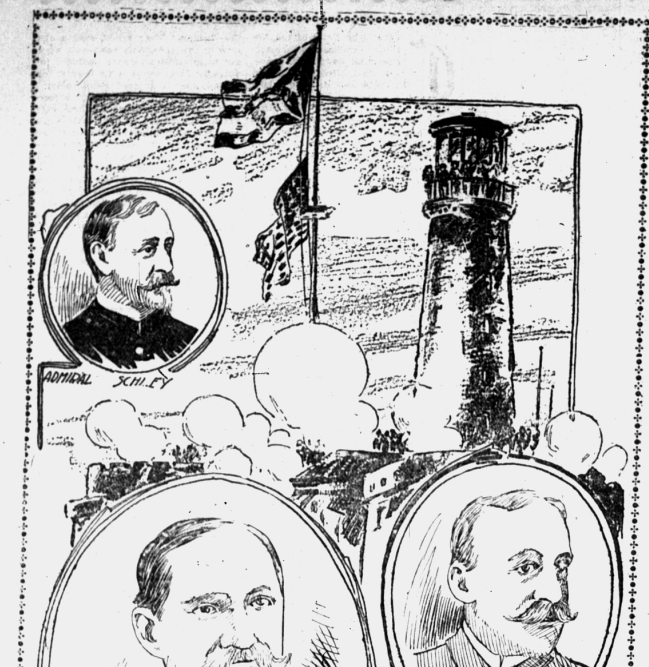
Republic of Cuba Takes Her Place Among Nations



The first President of the new republic and two men who made her a free nation.

The natal day of the republic of Cuba, May 20, found Havana arrayed like a queen to await the coming of her lord. She seemed reinvested for the occasion with the dignity of the prosperous days of her power and wealth.

At noon Senor Palma attached his signature to a document as president of the Cuban republic, after an exchange of congratulations, and the veteran Gen. Gomez ascended to the roof of the palace, where he was accorded a great reception. Gen. Wood personally lowered the American colors, which were saluted, and with his own hands hoisted the Cuban flag, as an act of the United States, Gomez assisting.

Gen. Wood and his staff and the American troops embarked immediately after the hoisting of the Cuban flag and the American ships steamed out of the harbor.

At the time the transfer took place in Havana, Gen. Whiteside at Santiago, turned over his authority to his Cuban successor and sailed away with the American cavalry which had been in garrison there.

Tomas Estrada Palma, the first president of the Republic of Cuba, is a little old man. He wears rusty black clothes. He moves nervously and quickly, winking his blue eyes as he talks. He is lavishly polite, after the manner of the old Spanish school. His chin is more than strong and aggressive, being what country people call jumper-jawed, which means that his chin betrays strength and aggression raised to the highest power.

In 1868, when open war began, he was one of the leaders in the newly-formed legislative body. His home town was the first upon which the Spanish troops descended. The patriots, loving it devotedly as they did, for it was an old and pleasant city of homes, hurried it to the ground, so that the oncoming regiments should find neither food nor shelter there.

During the guerrilla campaigning of the Ten Years' War Palma was elected president of a republic organized by the troops. In 1877 he was captured by the Spaniards, imprisoned for a short time in Havana, and later taken to Spain, where he was confined in an old castle for over a year.

He takes care to give the Spaniards their due, and says he was treated with great kindness and respect by them.

After his release he was postmaster general of Honduras for five years, and then came to the United States, where he established a collegiate school for Cuban and South American boys at Central Valley, N. Y.

During the last struggle for Cuban independence he was the head of the junta which, with headquarters in New York, raised money and carried on a propaganda in behalf of the cause.

He says that his first work as president will be toward extending a free school system throughout the island, and he insists that there shall be neither ostentation nor formality in his conduct of affairs.

CHRONOLOGY OF CUBA LIBRE

1895
Feb. 24—Outbreak of revolution.
1896
Jan. 12—Gen. Gomez arrives in Cuba.
Feb. 15—Battleship Maine blown up in the harbor of Havana, while there on a friendly visit.
Feb. 16—Message sent by President McKinley to congress in regard to blowing up of the Maine.
April 11—Congress passed resolutions recognizing independence of Cuba and demanding that Spain relinquish her authority April 20.
April 20—President issued call for 125,000 volunteers.
April 23—Congress passed resolutions declaring that a state of war existed.
April 24—Dewey destroyed the Spanish fleet in the harbor of Manila.
May 1—Sampson bombarded the fortifications at San Juan.
May 12—Sibley sailed with the flying squadron from Key West.
May 13—Sibley arrived at Santiago de Cuba.
May 27—Army sailed from Key West for Cuba.
June 15—Landing and battle at Las Guasimas.
June 24—Victory of El Caney and San Juan hill.
July 1-2—Gen. Shafter calls for reenforcements.
July 3—Battle of Santiago.
July 3—Shafter demands surrender of Santiago.
July 12—Truce declared.
July 12—Articles of capitulation at Santiago approved.
July 16—Surrender of Santiago.
July 17—Peace protocol signed.
Aug. 12—Peace commissioners sent to Paris.
Oct. 1—Evacuation of Puerto Principe and other provinces.
Dec. 5—Provisional government proclaimed by Gen. Wood.
Oct. 21—Treaty of Paris signed.
Dec. 10, 8:45 p. m.—Gen. Garcia died in Washington.
Dec. 11—Spanish control of Cuba finally relinquished. Last troops left Havana. Tenth infantry, U. S. A., took up quarters in city.
Dec. 21—Provisional government by the United States, work of cleaning, renovating and restoring order.
1900
Julio, and taking census, preparatory to holding elections.
1901
Cuban constitutional convention assembled. January, Congress passed Platt resolutions providing for American guzerality.
March 2—Cuban constitutional convention accepted Platt resolutions.
June 12—Cuban flag promulgated by Gov.-Gen. Wood and elections held.
Dec. 21—Delegates elected at popular elections met and chose Gen. Estrada Palma as first president of the republic of Cuba.
Feb. 24—President began preparation for formally turning over government to Cubans.
March 24—American troops gradually withdrawn.
March 21—May 19—Fiestas and general celebration all over island.
May 20—Final transfer of government to Cubans.
May 29—

THE PROMISE

"That the United States hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island, except for the pacification thereof, and asserts its determination, when this is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people."—Platt-Teller resolutions passed by congress April 20, 1898.

Four years and twenty-two days later the promise is fulfilled.

ONE MAN SQUELCHED MARK TWAIN

Famous American Humorist Tells Good Story on Himself.

Once I was received in private audience by an emperor, says Mark Twain in the North American Review. Last week I was telling a jealous person about it and I could see him wince under it, see it bite, see him suffer, I revealed the whole episode to him with considerable elaboration and nice attention to detail. When I was through he asked me what impressed me most. I said:

"His majesty's delicacy. They told me to be sure and back out from the presence and find the doorknob the best I could; it was not allowable to face around. Now, the emperor knew it would be a difficult ordeal for me, because of lack of practice; and when it was time to part, he turned with exceeding delicacy, and pretended to fumble with things on his desk, so that I could get out in my own way, without his seeing me."

It went home. It was vitriol! I saw the envy and disgruntlement rise in the man's face; he couldn't keep it down. I saw him trying to fix up something in his mind to take the bloom of that distinction. I enjoyed that, for I judged that he had his work cut out for him. He struggled along inwardly for quite a while; then he said, with the manner of a person who has to say something and hasn't anything relevant to say:

"You said he had a handful of special brand cigars lying on the table?"

"Yes, I never saw anything to match them."

I had him again. He had to fumble around in his mind as much as another minute before he could play; then he said in as mean a way as I ever heard a person say anything:

"He could have been counting the cigars, you know."

I cannot endure a man like that. It is nothing to him how unkind he is, so long as he takes the bloom off. It is all he cares for.

WHERE OLIVES ARE CHIEF FOOD

To the Poorer People of Syria the Fruit Is Indispensable.

The fruit of the olive is the mainstay of the people of Syria and is indispensable to the poorer classes. The farmer and the laborer leave their homes in the morning with no other provision than a loaf of bread and a package of pickled olives wrapped up in leaves. That is their daily dinner and it satisfies them. The oil of the olive is a substitute for butter and lard, and is needed for the cooking of almost every dish, while until recently it was the chief illuminating power of the eastern communities. Kerosene is rapidly replacing it, owing to the cheap price at which it is sold. The entire supply of soap used in Syria is made of olive oil.

The tree bears a very slow growth, it bears no berries for seven years, and the crop scarcely pays for the gathering until the tree is ten years old but it will continue to yield abundantly for centuries, to extreme old age, and requires but little care. So long as there is a mere fragment of the trunk remaining green shoots will burst out and yield oily berries. There are knobs or large warts on the body of the trees. If you will cut one of them off, plant it in good soil, give it plenty of water and sunshine, it will strike out roots and grow. Large trees in a good season will yield from which are good for ten or twelve gallons of oil. The oil is made by crushfifteen to twenty bushels of olives, ing the olives under hydraulic pressure.

Says German Soldiers Are Overrated.

A Russian military expert says that the principal qualities of the German soldier are: Boundless arrogance and unlimited confidence in his own prowess. The German soldier is trained to regard himself as superior to any other soldier in the world, a system which produces a dangerous tendency to underestimate the strength of an enemy. He has not many good qualities, but his tenacity of purpose and staying power are weak. He is a fighting machine, utterly without initiative, and would be helpless if required to act on his own judgment in a position of difficulty. He has to be fed and pampered in a continuously luxurious way in order to be kept in fit condition, and it is more than doubtful that he would be able to stand the hardships of a long campaign. The article states, in conclusion, that the German army is absurdly overrated, and it expresses the opinion that Russia can contemplate the possibility of a war with Germany with perfect serenity.

Cheap Electioneering.

Senator-elect McCreary told the following on himself a few years ago:

"When I was in the House one of the towns in a mountain county of my district passed an ordinance that the country people should not tie their horses to the fences in the place. There was a great howl over it.

"The men had so long been used to hitching to the fences they were as mad as hornets, and swore that this action was taken at the instance of a couple of livery stable keepers who wanted to force them to put up their horses at the stables and they would not do it.

"I heard of the row, and what did I do? For the small sum of $18 I had good, strong hitching posts put up on a vacant square in that town and invited every man in the place as my guest. That county had been against me, but the next time I ran for congress I had a walkover. It was the cheapest electioneering I ever did."

Letter Fit Yet.

The letter of apology sent by the Emperor of China to the German emperor is described as an exquisite work of art.

It is painted on a single piece of yellow silk over four yards in length, and is beautifully illuminated with dragons, flowers and arabesques, embroidered in gold thread and silk of various colors. The work is so perfectly executed that at first sight the embroidery is mistaken for enamel.

The latter is inclosed in a yellow silk envelope, which is also elaborately embroidered and fastened by ivory studs of the most ingenious character.

THE DAIRY

Comparative Value of Milk.

Professor Fraser of the Illinois Agricultural College has been making some close computations as to the relative value of milk and beef as food. In this time of high-priced meat, those who are inclined to a milk diet will find much comfort in perusing the figures. A reading of them will increase the respect of the ordinary consumer for skimmilk. The professor takes 25 cents' worth each of steak and milk for comparison. With the sum named he purchases five quarts of whole milk, or eight and nine-tenths quarts of skimmilk, or two pounds of round steak at 12½ cents per pound. In the whole milk he finds 369 pounds of protein, in the skimmilk 657 pounds and in the beef steak 360 pounds. At its market value the skimmilk contains more food value than either the beef steak or the whole milk. It will be noticed that the protein contents of the whole milk and of the beef steak are practically the same. Remember that this comparison is made with round steak, one of the cheap classes of meat and one of the most nutritious. When we get to comparing milk with porterhouse steak the argument is still stronger in favor of the milk, for porterhouse steak is not more nutritious than round steak but is much higher in price. Milk as a diet has, however, one drawback and that is its bulk. The stomach of the adult, is not so constituted that milk can be made a sole diet. It does not hold enough of it. The proper method of utilizing milk is to combine it with bulkier foods.

Varying Quality of Milk.

Milk sold in cities has a surprising lack of uniformity. Figures collected by people connected with Hull House, Chicago, and with Lewis Institute, Chicago, show this. Though the price may be constant, the food value of the milk sold is never that. The legal requirements for milk in Chicago are 9 per cent solids other than fat and 3 per cent fat, total solids, 12 per cent. Yet some of the samples of milk taken fell below 8 per cent total solids, including the fat, while others went as high as 16 per cent solids. One sample of whole milk analyzed 2 per cent fat and 4.24 per cent other solids. Another sample analyzed 8.2 per cent fat and 8.08 per cent of other solids. There were all sorts of variations between these two extremes. In the case of the very poor milk mentioned there is no doubt that water had been added copiously. In the case of the richest milk it is altogether probable that the milk included more than its rightful proportion of cream. Sometimes fraud is the cause of the inequality and sometimes it is accident. It is obvious that if a can of milk is served out from a faucet the cream will continue to rise while the milk is being peddled out. As a result the last customers get an excessively rich milk at the expense of some others.

Passage of the Oleo Bill.

The oleo bill has passed the Senate again, after being sent back to the House, and is now in the hands of the President. The bill contains now much more than it did when sent to the House on its first passage by the assembly. The bill then provided only for the controlling of the oleomargarine product. The Senate amended it to include all renovated and adulterated butters, and raised the annual tax for manufacturers $600. When it got back to the House that body reduced this tax to $50 in the case of renovated butter. The Senate agreed to the amendment, and so the bill passed. It has taken several years of very hard work on the part of the dairymen to get this bill enacted into law. In this provision is perhaps placing these articles of food under police regulation of the various states. So it will be no longer possible to ship in packages of bogus butter under the cloak of the "original package decision." The oleomargarine men assert that the law will be declared unconstitutional, while its friends are equally certain that it will not so be declared, but that it will stand approved by the courts.

Non-Inspection of Milk.

There are in the state of Illinois some hundreds of cities and populous villages. Yet in all of these, with the exception of six, there is no milk inspection. In Chicago and five other cities an effort is made to inspect the milk sold. People are almost completely at the mercy of the milk dealers. It is unfortunate both for the milk buyers and for the milk producers that this is so. There is a premium on dirty methods of milk production and on the use of harmful chemicals in milk. One man who buys milk in a large Illinois city told the writer that he stopped taking milk of a certain milkman because he could leave the milk out of doors for a day and not have the hot sun and it would not sour. Under the circumstances he was probably justified in being suspicious.

Hereford Premiums.

We are in receipt of the preliminary premium list of the three National Hereford shows to be held this fall, and Secretary Thomas informs us that prospective exhibitors should write him at once for same. The classification does not differ materially from that of last year except that there is an additional class for yearling bulls, so that this year there is a class for senior yearling bulls and another for junior yearlings. At the American Royal at Kansas City the Stock Yards Company is giving $500 in prizes for car lots of Herefords, $200 of which is for fat stock and $300 for feeding cattle. This is in addition to last year's premium list. For the International at Chicago the Hereford Association offers $900 in prizes for carload lots of fat Herefords. This amount is in addition to the premiums offered by the International management and should bring out an exceptionally large exhibition of "white-faces" in the pens. Write C. R. Thomas, Sec., 225 West Twelfth St., Kansas City, Mo., for a premium list, which will give full particulars.

A collection that is an extraction cannot be an offering.

FINDS IN THE ELECTRIC GLOBES

Rare Insects Are Occasionally Killed by the Arc Lights.

"We get all kinds of bugs, birds and insects out of the globes," said one of the men who attend to the electric lights. "In cleaning out our globes we find a little collection every time. They are attracted to the light in some way, and are never satisfied until they land in the globe, where, of course, they soon die from heat. When I get hold of a real rare specimen I always find a ready sale for it with some of the bug collectors here in Washington. It is not often, however, that we find anything real rare. Occasionally after a storm or a long dry spell something new will turn up in the globes.

"The changes in the weather are sure to bring about a change in the crop of things which get into the globes. The most valuable bug I ever found I sold to a fellow over there in the agricultural department. He gave me a $2 bill for it, and said it was a bug he had been hunting for for more than a year. He called it by a name which no one but a Dutchman could pronounce. This bug had a head exactly like an elephant, and its legs turned in and out like a frog's. It was nearly as large as a tree frog. I have never been able to find another one like it. These pesky English sparrows keep us busy tearing their nests out of globes during their breeding season. They can build a nest in a day or two, but they don't take any pains to make them nice. They are built of straw, paper, strings, sticks or just any old thing the bird can find without hunting around.—Washington Times.

Exclusive Greenland.

Greenland, with its icy mountains, is not only cool, but very exclusive, for it does not invite visitors, and it even makes it inconvenient for tourists to land on the little bit of occasionally green land that surrounds it, great heart of perpetual ice. Permission must be had from old, conservative Mother Denmark before aliens can visit the not very inviting northern colony.

Denmark is indeed very careful and conservative in the management of Greenland affairs. The trade there is monopolized by the state, and only government vessels are welcomed to Greenland waters. This, says Denmark, is to protect the Greenlands from unscrupulous merchants. And to make sure of the people's welfare the state fixes both the price they shall pay for food and the price they shall sell at.

The quantity sold is also regulated, so that the natives will not leave themselves short of food or clothing. In fact, the Greenlander is under strict guardianship and is allowed to buy no spiritous liquors.

The trade between Greenland and the mother country is, as a rule, carried on by nine vessels belonging to the Greenland Company, and under government direction.

Breaking the Ice.

The youthful hope of the family, aged eight, ran away from home directly after luncheon. At nightfall he was found under a hedge, fast asleep, and brought home by a neighbor.

The father and mother were at dinner when the prodigal returned; but in order to more effectually punish him quite ignored him during the entire progress of the meal. The little one ate his dinner in uneasy silence, eying his parents furtively from time to time. Dinner over, the mother carried the dishes to the kitchen and proceeded to wash them.

The child, who had remained silent since his return, saw he must break the ice, and cast about in his mind for a way that should at once be effectual and carry with it a proper rebuke to his unfeeling parents.

The cat, purring in front of the kitchen stove, gave him an idea, and in the voice and manner of one who has just returned from a journey of many years and many lands, he sighed loudly and said in a reminiscent tone: "Well, I see you have the same old cat."—Stray Stories.

Their Ruling Passion.

"When I was in Florida a few weeks ago," said the Brooklyn man, "I overheard a dispute between two darkies as to the color of the skin of certain biblical personages. I won't attempt to give you their dialect. One declared with much vehemence that the apostles were negroes, and to prove his case told of the geographical position of Palestine as compared with Africa. 'They are all colored persons in Africa,' he said, 'and Africa is right near Palestine. Peter and all the apostles were black men, and I know it.'

"'They were not black men,' replied the other, 'and Peter was as white as that northern gentleman over there.'

"'What makes you so sure that Peter wasn't a colored gentleman?' asked his adversary.

"'Well, if Peter had been a colored gentleman that cock wouldn't have crowed more than once.'

Women as Elevator Conductors.

The newest occupation for women is that of running an elevator. The guests at the reception and commencement exercises of a training school for nurses, held recently, were surprised to see a girl in nurse's costume "at the helm" of the elevator, and a man impulsively tried to stop her as she started the car. She explained that she did it regularly, and he permitted her, but with evident apprehension, to proceed.

Among the guests was John H. Wise, who said in his address: "Woman improves everything she touches, even the elevator moves smoothly and without jerks when she runs it. Woman is naturally an elevating force. Wherever man meets her, in business or elsewhere, he is uplifted and made better."

Valor of Rough Riders.

The King of Siam has an army corps of 500 elephants. "A corps of bull as many American rough riders of the western ranges would make the lumbering beasts pack their trunks and quit the field in one, two, three order.

HORTICULTURE

Spraying Fruit Trees.

Apples at $2.50 to $5 a barrel last fall and twice that this spring are apt to make folks interested in fruit trees. The first requisite is a good spray pump with the necessary rigging. The outfit can be bought of the manufacturer or of the implement dealers, and will cost anywhere from $10 to $200. A first-class outfit costs $15 to $25. Just at this time of the year the spraying needed by the fruit trees is chiefly for the prevention of fungous diseases. For this purpose a plain solution of copper sulphate, one pound in 10 to 20 gallons of water may be used. Bordeaux mixture is equally as good, but it is more bother to make. The first spraying should be given at once, before the blossoms open. A little later, just after the blooms fall, another spraying should be given. This should be Bordeaux mixture in every case. Bordeaux mixture may be made of vaiying proportions and strengths. The standard mixture consists of one and one-half pounds copper sulphate, one pound stone lime, ten gallons water (six pounds sulphate, four pounds lime, one barrel water). Dissolve the sulphate and slack the lime in separate vessels, dilute each with about half of the total water to be used and then pour the sulphate solution into the lime water while stirring vigorously. Continue the stirring for a minute to insure perfect mixture. It deteriorates on standing and should be used soon after made. Keep the mixture clean to avoid clogging of pump and nozzles. Adding the solutions and have a strainer on suction tube of pump. A quick, convenient way to dissolve copper sulphate is to suspend it in a cheesecloth or similar bag just below the surface of the water. A third spraying two weeks later, with Bordeaux mixture, will be a paying investment. Even a fourth and fifth spraying at intervals of two weeks, will sometimes pay handsome dividends. In all sprayings, except the first, some paris green should be used. Add one pound of paris green to 200 gallons of water, or four ounces to a barrel. If there is danger of bud moth the paris green might better be used in the first spraying also.

Trees for Shade.

A communication from the Oklahoma station says: The trees most generally planted have been elm, soft maple, catalpa, black locust and box elder. The elm grows slowly at first and is attacked by borers, but is the best shade tree in the list and should be included in every planting for shade. The soft maple is easily broken by the wind and suffers from drouth and the attacks of borers, but it grows rapidly from the start and makes a pretty tree. The limbs of the catalpa tree are easily broken by the winds, but it grows rapidly, makes a fair shade and is valuable timber for posts. The black locust is not generally regarded as a first-class shade tree and its tendency to sprout from the roots makes it somewhat objectionable on lawns. But it is the fastest grower in the list, will stand more neglect than the others, and the wood is very durable for posts. The box elder is a moderate grower and is not adapted to poor upland soil, though it does well in favored locations. The ash and sycamore are good trees, but are not adapted to as wide a range of soils as the others.

Teaching Floriculture.

While at the Kansas Agricultural College lately the writer had the pleasure of talking with Mr. Baxter, who has charge of the greenhouses there. Mr. Baxter is perhaps the only man in the country who occupies the double position of manager of greenhouses and instructor in floriculture. At the college are 400 young ladies, most of whom are taking the domestic science course. Several times a week classes go to the greenhouses and are there instructed in the science of cultivating and caring for flowers. The future homes of these girls will show the effects of this teaching. Where there are greenhouses under the charge of a competent floriculturists the latter might be used as instructors not only in our colleges, but also in many of our common schools. Probably all advanced educational institutions have greenhouses connected with them, and the options up a large field for demonstration in this art.

Honest Packing.

From Farmers' Review: Would advise all growers of small fruit to put their fruit in honest cases and to be honest in their packing, that is, have fruit run uniform in quality and give good measure. The trade here discriminates against the use of second-hand packages and against short measure. If an article is sound and honest trade is always in the market to buy. We would further suggest that if grower intends to remain in the business it will be to his advantage to use some particular brand for his number one fruit, and by so doing finding that some particular line of fruit gives satisfaction to their trade will in the majority of cases leave standing orders for same, the price under the circumstances being of secondary consideration. An attractive package always helps to sell the fruit.—M. George, (Commission Merchant), Chicago.

Cattle in Porto Rico.

There is no spot on the globe where they raise better milch cows and beef cattle than in Porto Rico. . . . It may not be generally known that Lord Durham took with him to Europe in the eighteenth century a number of Porto Rico cows and bred them to Holstein stock, thus producing the famous Shorthorn Durham, but such is, nevertheless, the case. . . . Feed and water are most plentiful, the cattle need no housing nor care whatsoever and there is plenty of shade for them in most parts of the island—a combination of conditions that foreshadows a bright future for the cattle raising industry in Porto Rico.—*Porto Rico Agricultural Journal.*

Gossips are people who go around stabbing reputations in the back.

Great Polo Player.

One of the handsomest men in New York is George Morgan, to whom more than to any other person is due the popularity of polo in the east. He was "discovered" some twenty-six years ago in California by James Gordon Bennett, who saw him perform some wonderful feats in the saddle. Then and there the millionaire newspaper owner engaged Morgan at a fabulous salary to buy polo ponies for him and go to New York to teach Bennett's friends how to ride in the game. Morgan has been there ever since.

A War-Time Trophy.

Gen. O. B. Wilcox, U. S. A., retired, commanded a Michigan regiment at Bull Run, was about shot to pieces and was captured by confederates. He recently visited the battleground and located the tree under which he lay wounded. He purchased it and had it cut down and part thereof, after it has been appropriately carved, will be sent to Detroit and lodged in the museum there as a trophy of the First Michigan volunteers.

Grave of Barbara Fritchie.

A single white stone, extremely unpretentious and bearing the simple inscription "Barbara Fritchie, died December 18, 1862, aged 96 years," marks the resting place of the woman who flaunted the Stars and Stripes in the face of Stonewall Jackson and his

army of confederate soldiers, thus furnishing one of the most unique of historic anecdotes. The remains of Barbara Fritchie rest in one corner of the old Reformed burying ground at Frederick, Md.

Sues Booth Tarkington.

Booth Tarkington, the author, is made defendant in a suit filed in Indianapolis by Samuel J. Wilson for $2,000 damages, the complainant alleging that Tarkington and Albert U. Dougherty, a baker, are maintaining a nuisance in the form of a doughnut factory at 1024 Broadway. Dougherty is made a codefendant with Tarkington. Wilson alleges that his home, adjoining the doughnut factory, has been damaged to the amount named by smoke and heat from the ovens. Besides, there is a gasoline engine which makes an intolerable noise.

Why They Smiled.

"Joe" Cannon and several colleagues were discussing the right kind of bait for bass when a rather assertive and loud-voiced member laid down this proposition: "The wise man is he who hesitates; only the fool is certain." "Are you sure about that?" asked Mr. Cannon insinuatingly. "I am certain of it," was the dogmatic party's reply, and it was some time before he understood why everybody smiled audibly.