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THE COMET
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According to one estimate the total value of the crops of the United States during 1892 was $3,000,000,000, of which the largest item was $750,000,000 worth of hay. The animal products, including meats, dairy products, poultry and eggs and wool, are placed at $965,000,000 more.

The San Francisco Examiner relates how a St. Paul (Minn.) man has had his gold plate attached by a dentist for debt. This not only interferes seriously with his dining, but he cannot even gnash his teeth in disapproval. The only teeth he has have the misfortune to appertain to the gold plate aforesaid.

It may not be generally known that Queen Victoria once had poetic aspirations and carried them so far as to write a book of verses. She sent this to a publisher under a nom de plume and had the pleasure, well known to some humbler folk, of having it promptly "returned with thanks."

"Electric railways will safely convey passengers at the rate of 150 miles an hour at an early day," said Professor William D. Marks, Superintendent of the Edison Electric Light Company, and it now seems, to the Boston Transcript, that his prediction is about to materialize, both in this country and abroad.

The professors in the colleges of Spain are miserably underpaid, often receiving no more than $200 per year. They endeavor to make a small profit out of their textbooks, each requiring his own book to be used. These books are frequently in manuscript, or, if printed, are sold at unusual prices. The students, who are poor, resort in consequence to second-hand shops and the annual fair, where a specialty is made of collegiate textbooks.

France lost a valuable citizen a few days ago, says the New Orleans Picayune, in George Hachette, the publisher, who between 1867 and 1878 brought out 1600 volumes. Every work he believed useful for instruction he published regardless of financial considerations. He had the monopoly of railway station libraries, and exercised over them a supervision which was equivalent to a vigorous censorship, but it was an enlightened censorship, and those who protested against it had little sympathy from men of education.

When John Jacob Astor died in 1848 worth $25,000,000 he left $10,000,000 more than the richest American before him. But in the last ten years at least two men (W. H. Vanderbilt and the second John Jacob Astor) have died with fortunes twice this size, and John D. Rockefeller is ordinarily estimated to be also worth $100,000,000. It is estimated that there are only seven American fortunes of over $30,000,000, Huntington, Sage, William Rockefeller, Stanford, Mrs. Green and William Astor; six over $20,000,000, D. O. Mills, Armour, Searles, Charles Crocker's estate, Henry Hilton and the L. S. Higgins estate. Of fortunes of over $10,000,000 there are seventeen.

Evidently the London Statist approves of us. "The American people," it says, "are descended from economically the most effective race in the world. They settled in the States, taking with them a highly developed civilization and habits of law and order confirmed through many generations. They have half a continent at their command, there is even yet a vast amount of unoccupied soil, there is a diversified climate, there are resources almost limitless, and there is absolutely no enemy they have cause to fear. Except to maintain internal order they are free at this moment to disband their army and their navy, certain that no foreign foe will attack them. The world has never seen such a people so happily circumstanced, with such marvellous opportunities for progress and improvement."

A Liverpool merchant lately gave the university in that city a clock fitted with all the modern improvements, including a chime that strikes the quarters. The generosity of the gift is seen to be less worthy of admiration when it is known that the workhouse hospital, where there are generally a thousand patients, is immediately beneath the clock. An Alderman has found it such a nuisance on his own account (he says nothing about the poor wretches in the workhouse) that he has made a formal complaint to the vestry of the persecution which the gift has brought upon him. He would go to bed at ten o'clock, and he would hear the machine in the tower toll out eleven, twelve, one, two, three, four, and so on, and besides that every quarter of an hour would come the ding-dong of chimes. The Alderman, to say nothing of the workhouse victims, seems to have a case, and the Boston Transcript hopes that he will win.

BUTTERCUP, POPPY, FORGET-ME-NOT.

Buttercup, poppy, forget-me-not—
These three bloomed in a garden spot,
And once, all merry with song and play,
A little one heard three voices say:
"Shine or shadow, summer or spring—
O thou child with the tangled hair,
And laughing eyes—we three shall bring
Each an offering, passing fair!"
The little one did not understand,
But they bent and kissed the dimpled hand.

Buttercup gambolled all day long,
Sharing the little one's mirth and song;
Then, stealing along on misty gleams,
Poppy came, bringing the sweetest dreams,
Playing and dreaming—that was all,
Till once the sleeper would not awake;
Kissing the little face under the pall,
We thought of the words the third flower spake,
And we found, betimes, in a hallowed spot
The solace and peace of forget-me-not.

Buttercup shareth the joy of day,
Glinting with gold the hours of play;
Bringeth the poppy sweet repose,
When the hands would fo'd and the eyes would close.
And after it all—the play and the sleep
Of a little life—what cometh then?
To the hearts that ache and the eyes that weep
A wee flower bringeth God's peace again.
Each one serveth its tender lot—
Buttercup, poppy, forget-me-not.
—[Eugene Field, in Chicago News-Record.

PROF. MORGAN'S ROMANCE.

BY KATE LEE.

Professor Morgan was an antiquarian and archæologist. He loved things that were old and things that had been long dead, and passed all his days among bones and stones and ponderous books. Nothing fresh and living played any part in his life, and he persistently withdrew himself from intercourse with his fellows. His prematurely bald head, his large bumpy forehead and the studious stoop of his shoulders made him appear much older than he really was, and superficial observers imagined him to be as hard and as incapable of emotion as one of his own fossils. It was a rare thing for any one to get a look from the gray eyes half hidden under the prominent brows. To those who by chance did obtain a full, direct glance from them, and who had the wit to read them aright, they were a revelation of the man. They were eyes that spoke, and the intensity of expression concentrated in them gave the lie to his otherwise emotionless aspect. The Professor was, in fact, no fossil. His heart could beat warm and quick, and a romance lay hidden under his outer husk of hardness and reserve.

Ten years ago, Hugh Morgan, solitary, unknown, embittered in spirit and broken of heart, had come from abroad and taken up his residence in a lonely house fronting the sea on the outskirts of a Welsh seacoast village. It seemed a abode as congenial as possibly could be found. The neighborhood for many miles round abounded in antiquarian remains, and the house itself looked out on the Atlantic for three centuries or more. An isolated house and an isolated life. A house with a story to tell, could it but speak, a human life with a hidden untold past. Those were the parallels Hugh Morgan drew between himself and his chosen home, feeling a dreary sort of kinship with it, and half imagining sometimes that it possessed a human soul, a soul that was as sad in its loneliness as he in his. Here year after year he lived in solitude, devoted apparently to science alone, the man to all outward appearances merged in the antiquarian. His tall figure, surmounted by a broad-brimmed hat drawn low over his capacious brow, became well known to all the inhabitants of the village and the neighborhood around. Now and then it would be missed for six months or more at a time, when "The Professor," as he came to be called long before the title was his in reality, had found occasion to return abroad for scientific purposes. But, as a rule, it was to be met with every day, either pacing thoughtfully beside the wide sea, or passing rapidly across the green waste behind the straggling village on the way to the mountains beyond.

The years went by. Professor Morgan became a shining light in the world of archæological science; but each year as it passed seemed to bind him down more and more irrevocably to solitude of heart. The shunning of all companionship, which at first had been but the instinct of a wounded and sensitive spirit, became at length a fixed habit, which he was too shy and reserved to break through. Each year increased the stoop of the Professor's shoulders, the baldness of his head, and the terrific development of his forehead. Each year the sad, shy eyes grew sadder and shyer and were more and more rarely lifted to meet the undiscerning, unperceptive eyes of others. Little did anyone divine what bitter hours of heart loneliness the misanthopic, unsocial Professor passed in the grim, museum-like study of his lonely house, or how painful thoughts, quite unconnected with barrows and cromlechs and Druid circles, were his daily companions.

One August day the Professor made a journey miles away among the mountains for the purpose of taking observations of a famous cromlech. He had been for two years at work upon a history of cromlechs, and was at this time gathering material for a chapter on the differences between British cromlechs and those of the nations of Germanic descent. The journey took him all the morning, and when he came within sight of the village on his return the afternoon sun was blazing at its hottest. About a mile and a half from the village the road passed through a rough field, in the midst of which, on a slight elevation, stood the ruins of an ancient British house.

To any but an antiquary the house had the appearance of being nothing more than a shapeless heap of stones. The Professor had a theory of his own concerning its origin and history, and intended one day writing a magazine article about it by way of recreation from his laborious and exhaustive work on the cromlechs.

As he drew near the ruin to-day he saw coming toward it, from the direction of the village, in the hot glare of the sun, two tiny figures in black dresses and white sun bonnets. Between them they bore a hamper, from which a yellow cat raised its head and gazed around with inquiring eyes. The little faces beneath the sun bonnets were crimson with heat and haste, and, as soon as they reached the foot of the mound on which the ruin stood, the two little travelers put down their burden, and sank beside it, panting with fatigue.

The Professor's interest was transferred from the ruin to the charming picture made by the children and their cat. It was long since he had rested his eyes upon objects so young and fresh, and full of life. His fancy was pleasantly struck with the picture of young life to which it formed a background. His heart stirred, and he stepped nearer to the children, who had been so absorbed in the labor of getting along with their burden that they had not perceived the Professor. Now, as they heard his approaching footsteps, they raised blue, startled eyes toward him, and threw protecting arms across their hamper. The Professor felt irresistibly drawn toward them, and, contrary to his usual custom, spoke.

"I won't hurt your cat," he said.

His voice was gentle, and so were his grey eyes, which were not too shy to meet the innocent blue ones. His broad-brimmed hat was like their father's, the stoop of his shoulders reminded them of their father, too, and his manner invited confidence, so the children accepted his friendly overture and took him at his word.

"Come and look!" cried the younger of the two. She jumped to her feet, and, tripping up to the Professor, took his hand.

At the contact of the little soft confiding fingers a thrill shot through the Professor. He looked down at the child, and catching the sweet look of the innocent round face, it was most strangely borne in upon him that that sweetness of expression, that heavenly blue of the eyes, and that soft fluffiness of the brown hair on the fair forehead were not unfamiliar. As the child's hand drew him along he held it with a gentle pressure, and a musing expression crept into his sad eyes.

The elder child lifted the yellow cat from the hamper.

"There!" she said, "those are Amber's dear little kittens. We brought them here to save their lives because Gwennie said they would all have to be drowned!"

The Professor bent his back and peered into the hamper, where a family of blind, groping, three-days-old kittens lay. The Professor did not find them so charming or so interesting as the children. He looked from the kittens to the child hugging the yellow cat, her blue eyes sparkling under her sun bonnet. Who could those blue-eyed children be? Why should he fancy that they bore a resemblance to a blue-eyed girl whose life had been closely entwined with his own in the hidden past? The Professor put out his disengaged hand, keeping gentle hold of the clinging child with the other, and absently stroked Amber's yellow head. Amber purred approval, and the children's hearts were completely won. They invited the Professor to sit down on the grass with them, and, inwardly amazed and amused at his own unusual proceedings, the Professor did so. The children babbled about their kittens, and he, listening with a rather abstracted smile, turned his eyes ever from one child to the other.

"What is your name, little one?" he asked, abruptly, after a while. The question was addressed to the younger child, who still kept his hand and was leaning confidently against his arm, looking up with curiosity at the bumps on his broad forehead. She was wondering if they had been caused by a tumble down stairs.

"My name is Phyllis," she said, in answer to his question.

The Professor started as if an electric shock had passed through him, and his face burned suddenly red. From Phyllis's face his eyes traveled to her black crape trimmed dress.

"Why do you wear this?" he asked, touching it very softly.

"Because mother has gone away from us," said the child, her lips quivering a little. "She has gone to Heaven, and we shall not see her again until we go there too."

The Professor said no more. He sat silent, looking out with dim eyes across the sunny land. He did not see the fields stretching hot and parched down to the village; he did not see the grand mountains fading away right and left of him into mist. He saw neither the calm sea shimmering out there beyond the village, nor the exquisite sky of turquoise blue smiling like embodied joy above it. He saw a girl named Phyllis, whom in the past he had loved with the intensity of a reserved and yet passionate nature. She had seemed to return his love, and to understand him as few understood the sensitive, reticent student. Assured of her love, convinced by many a token that he was the elect out of many suitors, he had left her one year to join an exploration party in Palestine.

Thither, after a few months' absence, he was followed by news which turned him outwardly to stone and made his inner life an agony of bitterness and grief. The news was conveyed in a cutting from the London *Times*, sent to him anonymously. It contained the announcement of Phyllis Wynne's marriage with a Colonel Llewellyn, who had at one time appeared to be a favored rival of her love, but who had long since ceased to press his suit. A letter in Phyllis' handwriting followed the announcement, but Hugh Morgan tore it to atoms, unread. A second and a third letter shared the same fate. Then the letters ceased. Hugh Morgan remained abroad for a year or two, and on his return buried himself in the obscure corner of Wales in which he had now lived for ten years.

The unmistakable likeness in the faces of these two children, and the fact of one of them bearing the name of his faithless love, set both memory and imagination at work in the mind of the Professor. These were without doubt Phyllis' children. And Phyllis was dead! It was a strange chance that had brought him and Phyllis' children together—strange and sad that from the lips of Phyllis' child he should hear of Phyllis death.

So out there in the August sunshine, at the foot of the old ruin, the Professor read, as he thought, the last page of the romance of his life. But he was mistaken. There was yet another page to be turned.

Unnoticed by the dreaming Professor or by the children, who, seeing their companion's abstraction, had quietly busied themselves plucking the yellow poppies which grew among the grass, there had come along the road from the village a lady in a black dress. She was close upon them before the children perceived her. With outstretched arms and affectionate outcries they flew to meet her, and bending down kissed the little uplifted faces with great tenderness.

"My little Kitty and Phyllis!" she cried; "how you have frightened us! Why did you leave Gwennie? Why did you come all this distance alone?"

The Professor, hearing the voice rose suddenly to his feet. How strangely he was haunted to-day? Surely that was the voice of Phyllis Wynne! And yet Phyllis was dead! His wondering, startled eyes devoured the face of the newcomer, and he held his breath. He saw a woman past her first youth, a woman with blue, sweet eyes, and with brown hair touched too early with gray. In spite of the difference the years had made, in spite of the paleness which had taken the place of the peachblossom of old, and the smoothness of the hair which once had curled so softly about the brow, Hugh Morgan could not but recognize her. This was certainly Phyllis. And yet the children said she was dead!

"Phyllis!" he cried aloud, unable to contain himself, and his voice broke as he spoke the name which had not passed his lips for more than ten years.

At the sound of that name, spoken by that voice, the lady started as the Professor had started when the child Phyllis had pronounced it, and a crimson tide of color rushed over her pale face. She loosened the clinging arms of the children, and, taking a step toward the Professor, stood with strained eyes staring at him.

"Hugh!" she cried.

Bluntly and confusedly he stammered: "But the child said you were dead!"

The immobility of his face was all broken up with the strength of the conflicting emotions that possessed him, his gray eyes glowed under the prominent brows and his strong hands trembled. Phyllis was scarcely less moved herself, but, woman like, seeing his excessive and almost overmastering agitation, she came to the rescue by controlling herself into calmness of voice and manner.

"The children's mother is dead," she said, gently.

"They are not your children?" said the Professor, passing a hand over his brow, as if to sweep away the mist of bewilderment that obscured his understanding.

"They are my brother's children," said Phyllis Wynne. "He has just been appointed minister at a Presbyterian Church at C——," She named a large town some miles distant. "I have taken care of the children since their mother died a few months ago, and we have come here for a holiday."

"And you—you are widowed, then?" blundered on the Professor.

Phyllis Wynne looked at him strangely.

"I have never been married," she said, simply, and the crimson color again dyed her delicate face.

The Professor stared at her a moment in horrified amazement, scarcely able to seize the import of her words. Then he broke out in a passionate way, his voice loud and stern:

"Then what fiend sent me that false notice of your marriage—your marriage with Colonel Llewellyn?"

"Oh, Hugh! Hugh!" cried Phyllis Wynne, swiftly, her voice sharp with pain. Through her quick woman's mind there had flashed the explanation of all that had been so incomprehensible, the realization of all that Hugh, as well as she herself had suffered, and with it a contrasting vision of what might have been. "Oh, Hugh! what an awful mistake! My cousin of the same name, Phyllis Wynne, married Colonel Llewellyn?"

"My God!" cried the Professor, "what a fool I was! What a fool!"

A dead silence fell between them. No detailed explanation was necessary just then. Each understood that their lives had been kept apart through the mistake of some officious meddler, or through the deliberate villainy of some rival of Hugh Morgan's, and that the best years of life, each embittered by the thought of the other's faithlessness. They stood side by side, looking gravely at the gleaming sea. Their hearts were beating with the same momentous thought, but neither yet dared to give expression to it. The children, gathering their yellow poppies and twining them about their hamper, looked up curiously now and again at their aunt and their new friend, and wondered why their faces were so serious and yet so excited, and why, after talking so seriously, they had now fallen into complete silence.

The silence could not long be maintained unbroken. It grew too pregnant with strong, struggling emotion. The Professor suddenly turned to the woman by his side.

"Have we met again too late, Phyllis?" he cried. "Is it too late?"

As the question passed his lips his face grew very white, and his gray eyes flashed with an intense and painful eagerness. Phyllis kept him in no suspense. Her answer came at once, in a broken cry of love.

"Oh, Hugh! it is not too late—it could never have been too late!" And, her blue eyes shining through tears, she stretched out her hands to him.

The wonderful children, pausing in their work, saw their Aunt Phyllis gathered to their new friend's heart. She was held there closely, while soft whispered words passed from lip to lip, and a radiance of unspeakable happiness dawned over both faces. The years of suffering and separation seemed compensated for in that one moment of exquisite and perfect joy.

The stones of the old ruin blazing in the August sunshine gazed at the Professor in amazed reproach. But he paid no heed. The archæologist was lost in the lover.—[Strand Magazine.

Alpine clubs for ascending the peaks of the Himalayas are to be formed in India.

JAMES G. BLAINE

His Public Career From Manhood to Old Age.

TRIUMPHS AND REVERSES.

His Early Life as a School Teacher and a Journalist.

Beginning of His Political Career—Speaker, Senator, Secretary of State, Presidential Candidate and Historian—His Bereavements and Ill-Fated House in Washington—The Blaine Household.

JAMES G. BLAINE—FROM HIS LAST PHOTOGRAPH, TAKEN IN 1892.

James Gillespie Blaine was born on the 31st of January, 1830, at West Brownsville, Penn., in a house built by his great-grandfather before the War of the Revolution, which still stands. The Gillespies and Blaines were people of standing before the Revolution. Colonel Blaine, who was commissary-general of the Northern Department of Washington's army during the Revolution, was James G. Blaine's great-grandfather. When eleven years old, he went to live with his uncle, Thomas Ewing, in Ohio, where his mother's father, Neal Gillespie, an accomplished scholar, directed his studies. Later he attended Washington College, at Washington, Penn., graduating at the age of seventeen.

After leaving college he taught school at Blue Lick Springs, Ky. It was as a professor in the military school there that he made the acquaintance of the lady—a school teacher from Maine—who afterward became his wife. Later he went to Philadelphia, where he taught school and studied law. But after two years he abandoned law studies, went to Maine, and became proprietor and editor of the Kennebec Journal.

At the birth of the Republican Party he was a delegate to the Philadelphia Convention in 1856, which nominated Fremont. After serving as Speaker of the Maine Legislature, he was sent to Congress and began his National career in 1862, with the outbreak of the war. During the Forty-first Forty-second and Forty-third Congresses he was Speaker of the House.

Mr. Blaine's administration of the Speakership is commonly regarded as one of the most brilliant and successful in the annals of the House. He had rare aptitude and equipment for the duties of presiding officer, and his complete mastery of Parliamentary law, his dexterity and physical endurance, his rapid dispatch of business, and his firm and impartial spirit were recognized on all sides. It was during his occupancy of the Speaker's chair in 1874 that he took the floor and succeeded in defeating the passage of the original "Force bill."

The political revulsion of 1874 placed the Democrats in control of the House, and Mr. Blaine became the leader of the minority. The session preceding the Presidential contest of 1876 was a period of stormy and vehement contention. On the 24 of May a resolution was adopted in the House to investigate an alleged purchase by the Union Pacific Railroad Company of certain bonds of the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad Company. It soon became evident that the investigation was aimed at Mr. Blaine. An extended business correspondence on his part with Warren Fisher, of Boston, running through years and relating to various transactions, had fallen into the hands of a clerk named Mulligan, and it was alleged that the production of this correspondence would confirm the imputation against Mr. Blaine. When Mulligan was summoned to Washington Mr. Blaine possessed himself of the letters, together with memorandum that contained a full index and abstract. On the 5th of June, 1876, he rose to a personal explanation, and after denying the power of the House to compel the production of his private papers, and his willingness to go to any extremity in defense of his rights, he declared that he proposed to reserve nothing. Holding up the letters he exclaimed:

"Thank God, I am not ashamed to show them. There is the very orignal package. And with some sense of humiliation, with a mortification I do not attempt to conceal, with a sense of outrage which I think any man in my position would feel, I invite the confidence of 40,000,000 of my countrymen while I read these letters from my desk." The demonstration closed with a dramatic scene. Josiah Caldwell, one of the originators of the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad, who had full knowledge of the whole transaction, was traveling in Europe and both sides were seeking to communicate with him. After finishing the reading of the letters Mr. Blaine turned to the Chairman of the Committee and demanded to know whether he had received any dispatch from Mr. Caldwell. Receiving an evasive answer Mr Blaine asserted, as within his own knowledge, that the Chairman had received such a dispatch "completely and absolutely exonerating me from this charge and you have suppressed it."

MR. BLAINE'S RESIDENCE IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

In 1875 Mr. Blaine was appointed to the Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Senator Morrill, and the next winter was elected by the Legislature to the succeeding term. His career in the Senate was both brilliant and distinguished, as it had been in the House. He was called from the Senate to enter President Garfield's Cabinet as Secretary of State. It was while passing through the railroad depot leaning on Mr. Blaine's arm and pleasantly chatting with him about his coming holiday that Garfield received the assassin's fatal bullet. The death of Mr. Garfield led to Mr. Blaine's retirement from the Cabinet, in December, 1882. From that date until he entered Mr. Harrison's Cabinet as Secretary of State, he was in private life except during his campaign for the Presidency in 1884.

During his retirement Mr. Blaine wrote his "Twenty Years in Congress," a work of great historical value. It was in accordance with his original suggestion and due to his earnest efforts that provision was made in the McKinley bill for the reciprocity treaties which formed such prominent features of National policy. The Samoan difficulties, the complications arising out of the lynching of Italians at New Orleans, and the

MRS. JAMES G. BLAINE.

killing of American seamen at Valparaiso were also disposed of while Mr. Blaine was at the head of the State Department. The events preceding and attending the recent Minneapolis Convention are too recent almost to need recounting. Mr. Blaine was induced to permit his name to be used as a candidate, and resigned his place in the Cabinet. Whether in public position or in private life, he always remained a central figure in National affairs.

BLAINE'S LIFE IN WASHINGTON.

For nearly thirty years Mr. Blaine has been a resident of Washington. While he never gave up his home and home life in Maine, where he had a town residence in Augusta and a summer residence at Bar Harbor, yet he also had a home in Washington. It was only a few years after going there as a Member of Congress that he bought the residence, 821 Fifteenth street,

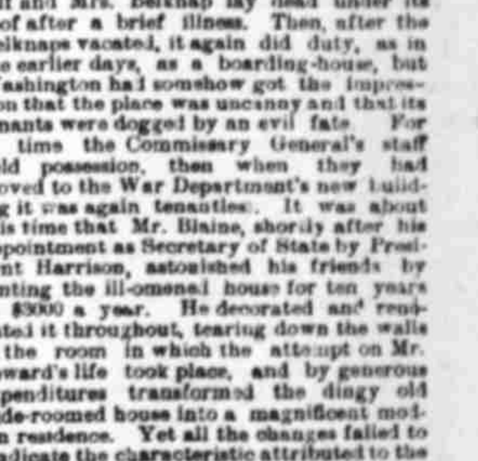
MR. BLAINE'S BIRTHPLACE NEAR WASHINGTON, PENN.

where he lived so many years. This was about the year 1869, when he was elected Speaker of the House for the first time. The house he bought was one of a row which had just been built and was regarded at that time as one of the chief architectural features of the city.

He made his home at 821 Fifteenth street for over ten years, and then having built the fine residence fronting on Dupont Circle, he sold the old house and took possession of the new one. The death of Garfield and Mr. Blaine's retirement from public life caused a change in his plans and he leased his Dupont Circle house to Mr. Leiter. He was absent from the city for several years, although he spent a portion of one or two winters there and occupied the house on Lafayette square adjoining General Beale's residence, which is owned by the daughter of the late Representative Scott, of Pennsylvania, Mrs. Scott Townsend.

About the beginning of his administration he purchased his late home, which is on the opposite side of Lafayette square, and is known as the Seward House. The old place had been unoccupied for some years and was in a dilapidated condition. It was considered notoriously unlucky, two tragedies having occurred within its portals. During Buchanan's administration it was occupied as a clubhouse. One day Philip Barton Key, the young and handsome District Attorney of the District of Columbia, had just left the clubhouse when he was shot down by Congressman Sickles, of New York. Mr. Key was carried back to the clubhouse. An intrigue which Key had been carrying on with Sickles's wife was the cause of the encounter.

Two years after this occurrence the house, which was for a time unoccupied, was taken by the then Secretary of State, William H. Seward, and he moved into it with his family.



BLAINE'S AUGUSTA RESIDENCE.

On the night of April 14, 1865, while Mr. Seward lay sick in bed in one of the upper rooms, a big, oak complexioned, broad shouldered man rang the door bell and told the servant who admitted him that he had a package of medicine which the Secretary's physician had ordered to be delivered to him personally. The servant refused to allow him to go upstairs and the Secretary's son, Frederick W. Seward, also opposed him; but the stranger, making a feint of departure, suddenly sprang at Frederick and felled him to the floor with the butt of a revolver, almost on the same instant slashing the servant with a knife. He then darted forward and reached the sick chamber where Secretary Seward was sitting up in bed. The knife gleamed again and Mr. Seward, weak and helpless, was stabbed in the face and neck, but the bandages that swathed his neck saved him from a mortal wound. As the murderous intruder retreated he was again intercepted, this time by Major Augustus H. Seward and an attendant, but he shook them off, and running down stairs, leaped on his horse and rode off. He was captured a few days later, and being fully identified as Lewis Payne, one of the men implicated in President Lincoln's death, was tried, condemned and executed with his fellow-conspirators.

Secretary of War Belknap was the next tenant of the house of misfortune, and for a time the sober old edifice became gay with the life of the Grant regime. Before a twelvemonth its evil genius had again asserted itself and Mrs. Belknap lay dead under its roof after a brief illness. Then, after the Belknaps vacated, it again did duty, as in the earlier days, as a boarding-house, but Washington had somehow got the impression that the place was uncanny and that its tenants were dogged by an evil fate. For a time the Commissary General's staff held possession, then when they had moved to the War Department's new building it was again tenantless. It was about this time that Mr. Blaine, shortly after his appointment as Secretary of State by President Harrison, astonished his friends by renting the ill-omened house for ten years at $3000 a year. He decorated and renovated it throughout, tearing down the walls of the room in which the attempt on Mr. Seward's life took place, and by generous expenditures transformed the dingy old wide-roomed house into a magnificent modern residence. Yet all the changes failed to eradicate the characteristic attributed to the mansion by the superstitious Washingtonians. Becoming its tenant, Mr. Blaine has encountered the greatest reverses to his ambitions, and experienced the keenest sorrows of his life.

MR. BLAINE'S HOUSEHOLD.

Of Mr. Blaine's six children, three—two sons and a daughter—were suddenly stricken down by death after reaching maturity. His eldest son, Walker, a young man of fine parts, who had given evidence of rare abilities and was apparently destined to a brilliant future, died two years ago. Emmons, his second son, a bright business man, in manner and character closely resembling his father, also died suddenly in the heyday of youth and prosperity. A third and crushing bereavement was the death of the eldest daughter, Alice, who was married to Lieutenant Colonel John J. Coppinger. It followed closely on the death of her brother, Walker Blaine, whose funeral she was attending when seized by the fatal illness. Of the three surviving children, the son, James G., made an unfortunate marriage, the results of which embittered the latter years of his father's life. One of the daughters, Miss Margaret, is married to Mr. Walter Damrosch, the famous New York musical director, and the other, Miss Harriet, is unmarried. Mrs.

BLAINE'S COTTAGE AT BAR HARBOR.

Blaine is still an active and brilliant lady. She has been a devoted wife to the great statesman, whom she married forty-one years ago when both were school teachers in a country district with but little to indicate the prominent place they were destined to fill in the highest circles of the Nation.