

## THE PINE KNOT.

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B. A. GOODRIDGE, - Editor.

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The annual losses by fire in the United States amount to \$120,000,000, and the consumption of cigars, cigarettes and smoking tobacco amounts to \$200,000,000. Total destruction by fire, \$326,000,000.

The Minneapolis *Tribune* tells of a new feature in Baptist merrymakings: The young men distinguished themselves by the preparation of a supper at the church parlors, including ices, ice cream and charlotte russe. It was incumbent upon each young man to make with his own hands a cake, and as a result nearly thirty specimens of these culinary triumphs were set out before the throng in attendance. They were in all shapes and sizes, and some of them were tear-stained and bore evidence of many weary hours of deep thought and anxiety. The men danced attendance as waiters at the tables and wore colors corresponding—orange-yellow, pink and blue.

The latest "lions" of Paris are nine negro chiefs with unpronounceable names. They have been brought from the African coast by an enterprising contractor. The object is to show them the sights of the French capital, and then to get them to sign an agreement with M. de Lesseps to engage their tribes to work on the Panama Canal. They are all horribly tattooed and wear ivory bracelets. They speak English. Some of the friends of the Panama Canal, by the way, fear that it will go to meet the ghost of Captain Ead's ship railway. Already over \$300,000,000 has been expended on this gorgeous ditch, and a very despondent critic writes that before it is finished it will cost France as much as the Franco-Prussian war.

The New York *Times* says that the deluded persons who have been led to believe that a fortune of \$75,000,000 awaits in England the pleasure of the Sands family in this country may be interested in a letter sent by Mr. Henry White, Secretary of the United States Legation in London, to Mrs. Sarah M. Caswell, of Aurora, Ill., one of the "heirs," who had taken the precaution to ask him for information. Secretary White says: "I beg to inform you that there is no such 'estate' as the one you mention. Vast numbers of people in our country are deceived and defrauded by designing persons, who represent that great estates are awaiting American claimants here, whereas, there are none such. One of these rascals has recently been sentenced to five years' penal servitude for robbing Americans in this way." This, the *Times* adds, should be conclusive as to the existence of the great Sands or Sandys estate in England. It does not, however, prove that there is no such estate in the moon, but the "heirs" will not care to retain lawyers for the prosecution of claims in that luminary.

### FACTS FOR THE CURIOUS.

Hawkers and peddlers were first licensed in England in 1698.

The founder of the Grand Army of the Republic was General Stevenson, of Illinois.

On twelve bells, a current writer on the subject calculates, there can be rung 497,001,600 changes.

Slavery once existed in Nebraska. The first official census, taken in 1854, showed a return of thirteen slaves.

The first Methodist Bishop in the United States was Thomas Coke, sent over by Wesley and arriving in New York in 1748.

In March, 1624, Edward Winslow, returning from England, brought with him a few cattle, the first to be introduced into England.

Clearing-houses were established in the United States about 1853 for the convenience and economy of banking institutions in large cities.

The great wall of China is said to have been erected about 300 B. C. In 1879 it was reported to be 1,728 miles long, eighteen feet wide, fifteen feet thick at the top.

In the Middle Ages the giving of a glove was a ceremony of investiture in bestowing lands and dignities. In England, in the reign of Edward II., the dispensation of gloves was a ceremony of degradation.

A singular bet is reported from Belzig, Prussia, where a hotel-keeper has engaged to copy within two years the whole text of the Bible, punctuation and all, without a single mistake, in consideration of the sum of 2,000 marks. The conditions of the bet are drawn up in legal form before a notary.

John Finley, an Indian trader, was the first white man to cross the mountains west of North Carolina and enter Kentucky. This was in 1767, and it was the glowing account given by him on his return that induced Daniel Boone and four others to accompany him on a trip of exploration.

What is known in history as the Field of the Cloth of Gold is a plain near Calais in France, on which Henry VIII. of England met Francis I. of France in 1520. The magnificent display made by the nobility of both kingdoms upon that occasion gave to the place of meeting the name associated with it in history.

The great seal of the United States, at present in use, was adopted by Congress June 30, 1782. The device was submitted to Congress by Charles Thomson, then Secretary of that body, and was largely suggested by the eminent English antiquary, Sir John Priestwich, to John Adams. The motto: "E Pluribus Unum," is said to have been suggested by its appearance on the title-page of the *London Gentleman's Magazine*.

### English and American Hands.

Mrs. John Sherwood says that the American hand is smaller than the English hand, but the nails are not as handsome. "The English nails are almost universally rosy and shell-like, and cut to a rounded, slightly tapering point, kept always scrupulously clean. The skin at the base is pushed back to show the onyx, a little white half-moon. This onyx is carefully cultivated and polished by the Creoles of New Orleans, to show that they have no black blood in their veins. No matter how fair the complexion, the valuable insignia of pure blood is wanting to the octoroon if the onyx is clouded. With persons who employ a manicure the onyx develops every day more and more. With those who are careless of this precious gem of a beautiful hand, the onyx is sometimes completely hidden."

### Tommy Knew.

Mother—"Tommy, how are you coming on at school?"

Tommy—"First rate, ma."

Mother—"Mention the names of some of the domestic animals."

Tommy—"The horse, the dog, the pig."

Mother—"Mention some more, Tommy."

Tommy—"The goose, the hen, and the duck."

Mother—"Yes, I was thinking of four-legged animals. What animal is that which lives mostly in the house, but which often makes a dreadful noise so that people cannot sleep?"

Tommy—"Four-legged animal?"

Mother—"Yes."

Tommy—"Don't let people sleep?"

Mother—"Yes."

Tommy (triumphantly)—"The piano."

—Texas *Sittings*.

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### HISTORICAL.

THE summit of Mont Blanc was first reached by Sanssure, Aug. 2, 1787.

THE laws of Massachusetts were first collected, codified and printed in 1648.

THE public records in England began to be regularly preserved in 1100, by order of Henry I.

THE first copyright bill passed by Congress in the interest of American authors became a law in 1790.

WHAT is now Annapolis, Md., was originally named Ann Arundel Town. The present name dates from 1695.

THE invention of pumps is ascribed to Danans, at Linden, 1485, but they were in use in England fifty years before.

MIRRORS in ancient times were but burnished metals. Mirrors or looking-glasses were made in Venice, A. D. 1300, and in England, 1673.

THE nickname of John Bull, given to Englishmen, is said to have been derived from Dr. Arbuthnot's satire, "John Bull," published in 1712.

NEEDLES originally came from Spain. The method of making them was introduced into England by a German named Cowes, during the reign of Elizabeth.

THE micrometer, an astronomical instrument used to measure minor distances and objects in the heavens, was invented by William Gascoigne, who was killed at the battle of Marston Moor, July 2, 1644.

THE establishment of county courts in America dates back to 1622, when they were created in Virginia, the number of settlements and distance between the same making it inconvenient to transact all the business of the colony at Jamestown.

UP to June 1 there had been redeemed nearly 7,000,000 trade dollars, which is the sum estimated by the mint director as the probable maximum of these coins outstanding. After September 1 no more trade dollars can be redeemed under the existing law.

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