

HAD GREAT MEMORY

ST. LOUIS' WALKING ENCYCLOPEDIA PASSES AWAY.

"Count" Fred Gerike Solved Many Difficult Questions of Law for Justices—Kept Diary for Forty Years.

St. Louis.—With the passing away of "Count" Fred Gerike, who was asphyxiated in the rear of Justice "Marty" Moore's office on Chestnut street the other day, justices of the peace, lawyers and attaches of courts in St. Louis have lost the services of a walking encyclopedia. For 30 years the "count" has been solving difficult law points which arose in justices' courts and settling questions of history which no one but he seemed able to answer.

When he was not making himself useful in many little ways around the courts the "count" was reading and studying. No one knew where he got his rest and sleep. The light would burn in his room on South Second street until far into the morning and he was always the first man at the bar of the corner saloon when it opened at 5 a. m.

"Count" Gerike was born in St. Louis about 65 years ago. From early boyhood he was a constant reader, studying many languages and especially history. He knew the history of the formation of every government, could tell the names of every ruler of the different countries down to the present time, and could give practically all information about these countries, their people, art, literature and religion.

"Count" Gerike is believed by former Justice "Bobby" Carroll, who was one of his best friends, to have had a right to the title which he assumed, and by which he was known. His grandfather was under sentence to be shot in Germany, where he was a member of the nobility, but he escaped to America. He died in Philadelphia.

During the earlier years of his life the "count" was a student of law and medicine, and for 35 years has been a voluntary attaché of different justice courts in St. Louis. Less than a year ago he was left \$4,000 in the will of Henry Boemler, a lawyer he had known for many years. The legacy was conditioned that the "count" should enter the Lutheran ministry, but would have had to devote considerable more time to study to have qualified himself to preach. He declined the legacy, saying:

"I'm too old for that sort of thing." For many years the "count" had been a hard drinker. His friends say there was never a day that he did not drink. Sometimes it would be only a little, and at other times he would be in a stupor for weeks.

The "count" made a number of temperance speeches, usually while intoxicated. He would tell his friends he was a living example to others.

The "count's" wife died three years ago, and since that time he had been living in two rooms on South Second street. These rooms are filled with books and memoranda. For more than forty years he kept a diary of daily happenings. His rooms contain many manuscripts he had written, mostly essays on history, philosophical and moral subjects. He had at least 10,000 newspaper clippings on a great variety of subjects.

The "count" appeared in Justice Moore's office and asked permission to go into a rear room to sleep. When Justice Moore and former Justice "Bobby" Carroll went to the room to look for him late in the afternoon they found him propped in a chair, dead. The room was filled with gas, which had escaped from a gas stove.

PREFERS FOOTBALL TO RICHES.

Pittsburg Man Hesitates to Join His Father in Business.

Pittsburg.—"Jack" Moorhead of Yale football note, is again under the spotlight. His father, John Moorhead, millionaire steel man, has asked him to come into business with him, to take charge practically of the immense concern which has brought wealth to the Moorhead connection, but the young man hesitates and seeks reelection as coach of the University of Pittsburg football eleven. He does not want to see the Yale style of play done away with at Pittsburg, and he and his friends are fighting the election of Hollenbach, the former Presbyterian fullback, to the position of coach, believing he would introduce the Pennsylvania style of play.

Moorhead some years ago married his mother's French maid. Because of this he became estranged from his family and practically disinherited. He was compelled to go to work to support himself and his wife. For two seasons he has been coach at the University of Pittsburg under small salary. But now his wealthy father has forgiven him and wants to make him head of his great business. The Yale play must be taken care of, however, according to young Moorhead. Already there has been one lively all-night meeting of the athletic committee, which could not choose between Moorhead and Hollenbach.

His Home is a Bee Hive.

Harrisburg, Pa.—Aware that a swarm of bees occupied the framework of his dwelling, Llewellyn S. De Hart of Galesville, Berks county, saw a hole in the upper floor. There he discovered between the ceiling and floor over 100 pounds of honey. This was the product of several years' work on the part of the bees.

IS OLDEST FUNERAL GOER.

Pennsylvania Woman, Now 81, Has Attended 4,007 Obsequies.

Pottstown, Pa.—A peculiar fascination to attend funerals, that seemed to have charmed her when yet a little girl, and which she has been unable to resist in her long life of more than 81 years, has given Mrs. Rebecca Wentzel a reputation far and wide as a mourner for everybody's dead. "Laugh, and the world laughs with you; weep, and you weep alone," does not apply to her, as her record of attending 4,007 funerals attests.

In her carefully kept diary she has noted that of these funerals there were 17 double ones of children, 11 where husband and wife were buried together, and seven where three persons of one family were interred at the same time. In one of the latter cases a mother and two of her children were laid in one grave.

In talking of one of the triple funerals, Mrs. Wentzel recalled a cloud-burst many years ago that resulted in the drowning of three members of one family at Mauger's Mill, near this town. Mrs. Joseph Wentzel, daughter of Jacob Mauger, the proprietor of the mill, had gone from her home here with her five children to help pull flax at the old homestead. A cloud-burst about eventide had swollen the mill-race, but Mrs. Wentzel's brother, Henry Mauger, felt confident he could drive her and her children across in safety, so they could reach home; but the waters engulfed the rig, and three of the children and the horse were drowned. After a thrilling struggle the lives of the other two children, their mother and the driver were saved.

Despite her advanced years and increasing decrepitude, Mrs. Wentzel is still a familiar figure at funerals hereabouts and says that as long as she is able she expects to hear the preacher's solemn "Earth to earth."

PUBLIC PRINTING COST GREAT.

Bill for Year 1905 Over \$7,000,000, According to Report.

Washington.—Constant growth of cost of public printing has increased this item of public expense from \$200,000 in 1840 to more than \$7,000,000 in 1905, according to the report of the printing investigation commission, created four years ago, which recently submitted to congress a report covering its extensive inquiry. The commission consists of the two committees on printing of the two houses of congress, and Senator Platt is its chairman.

The report states that under recent legislation 279,593,837 printed pages, including such expensive publications as the Congressional Record, the publications of the geological survey and the year book of the department of agriculture, were eliminated from the surplus printing which had formerly been piling up in warehouses to be finally condemned and sold as waste. This printing was an undistributed surplus, these copies being equivalent to 559,197 volumes of 500 pages each for the year 1907. These publications had been piling up until there were more than 9,500 tons in storage, enough to fill an ordinary railroad train more than three miles long. Rent for that portion of these publications stored outside of government buildings was more than \$13,500 a year.

INVENTS MOTOR ICEBOAT.

Yankee Hopes to Attain a Speed of a Mile a Minute on Ice.

Springfield, Mass.—A motor iceboat, the invention of Philip E. Taft of Stebbins Place, has been attracting much attention on Watershops pond. The machine has already attained a speed of 30 miles an hour, and Mr. Taft expects to increase this to 40 miles before the winter is over.

Another year he will build a new boat, which he expects to easily travel at a mile a minute clip. The boat he is now experimenting with is about ten feet long and four and one-half feet wide at the bow, tapering to nearly a point at the stern. The highest point is the gasoline tank, which is perched on a frame about three feet above the ice. The entire boat weighs 110 pounds. The power is furnished by a three and one-half horsepower engine taken from a motorcycle. The purchase on the ice is obtained by a wheel filled with iron spokes attached to a hinged lever which rises and falls as the boat glides over the hummocks on the ice.

There are two steel runners in front and a concave crucible steel runner at the stern, which is used for steering. This steering runner is operated by a lever similar to a tiller on a sailboat. Mr. Taft conceived the idea of a motor iceboat by riding his motor over the ice.

New Fish, "Ichthyologist."

Hempstead, L. I.—It is seldom that the fishermen of Great South Bay can be fooled in fish lore or seafaring tales, but when a number of the toilers of the sea came up to Hempstead from the ocean they were struck dumb by the word "ichthyologist" in gold letters on the side of a wagon which had been purchased recently by a local fish and oyster dealer.

He had learned that a competitor had obtained a fancy delivery wagon and brass mounted harness with chains.

The baymen decided that in addition to his stock of oysters and fish the dealer was selling some unknown fish which must be expensive and rare, if the size of its name on the delivery wagon was an indication.

HORSES INCREASING

NOBLE ANIMAL IS NOT BEING DRIVEN INTO OBLIVION.

More Now in United States Than Ever Before and Their Value Also Greater—Average Price \$95.64 Last Year.

Washington.—During the discussion in the senate the other day over an amendment to the deficiency appropriation bill which provided \$12,000 for automobiles for the use of President Taft, Mr. Bailey of Texas made a speech in defense of the horse. He said, with other things, that electric and steam motors were driving horses out of existence.

Such remarks are often made by persons who are not aware of the facts. During the bicycle craze we were frequently warned that horses would soon become useless except for plowing and heavy hauling. When electricity was applied to street car service we heard the same prediction and a great deal of regret was expressed that the noblest and most intelligent of animals should be condemned to pass into oblivion.

But the contrary has been the case. There are more horses in the United States to-day than there ever were before; they are worth more money than they ever were before; they are increasing in numbers and in value notwithstanding the electric street car, the motor wagons and omnibuses, the bicycles, the automobiles and the adoption of steam and electricity as a motor power in farming and in every business and trade that requires locomotion.

The number of horses in the United States January 1, 1908, was 19,992,000, and they were worth a total of \$1,867,530,000, or an average of \$93.41 each. During the succeeding year, ended January 1, 1909, the number of horses had increased to 20,640,000; their value had advanced more to \$1,900,000,000 to the sum of \$1,974,052,000, and the average price was \$95.64, or \$2.23 more than the previous year.

The average price of horses throughout the United States for the ten years previous to 1908 was \$60.25 per head, which shows that they are worth an average of \$35.40 more, notwithstanding the circumstances which senators and others have so mournfully deplored.

Automobiles came into general use more rapidly during the year 1908 than at any previous period, but notwithstanding that fact the number and value of our horses increased more rapidly during that period than ever before. During the calendar year 1907 the horses increased 245,000 in number and \$20,952,000 in value. During the calendar year 1908 they increased 648,000 in number and \$106,522,000 in value.

The same can be said of mules, which should also be taken into consideration, because thousands of mules have lost their jobs because of the introduction of electricity as a motive power. There are now in this country 4,053,000 mules, which are valued at \$47,082,000, or an average of \$107.84 per head, that is about \$12.35 more per mule than horses are worth. This is an increase of 184,000 mules during the year 1908, \$20,143,000 in value and eight cents per head.

The increase in 1907 was 52,000 mules, but in 1908 there was a decrease in the total value of \$11,125,000, or an average falling off of \$4.49 per head.

The number of milk cows in the United States January 1, 1909, was 21,720,000, and they were valued at \$702,945,000, and average of \$32.36 per head. This is an increase of 526,000 during the previous year in numbers and \$52,888,000 in total value, or \$1.69 per head. Ranch cattle show a decrease of 694,000 in numbers, but an increase in value of \$17,816,000, which may be a partial explanation of the present size of your butcher's bills.

WANT NO LOVE IN COTTAGE.

Pennsylvania Girls Prefer Riches with a Mother-in-Law.

Tioga, Pa.—The women and girls of this town do not believe in love in a cottage. They composed the greater part of the audience in St. Paul's Reformed Episcopal church, Broad and Venago streets, the other night, to pass on a debate by the Chatham Literary union on the question: "Resolved, That It Would Be Better for a Young Married Couple to Live Alone in Poverty Than to Live with a Rich Mother-in-Law in Affluence."

By their vote in the negative it was forcibly shown that love with poverty is out of date in Tioga. T. W. Leib and C. Oscar Beasley, who pruned up a masterly poverty couple in a masterly style, got the dead shake when it came to vote, and many young men present who had just got courage to propose lost heart and allowed their sweethearts to walk home unattended. The negative side of the question was handled by Rev. George W. Downey and A. G. Fromuth.

New York Has 4,422,685 People.

New York.—The estimated population of the city of New York is 4,422,685, according to Health Commissioner Thomas Darlington's annual report. The increase during 1908 aggregated 137,280 persons. The total number of deaths during 1908 was 73,072. There were 4,140 more births reported in 1908 than the year before, but there was a decrease of 13,696 in the number of marriages.

LOCOMOTIVES IN TUG-OF-WAR.

Engine Held for Taxes Finally Pulled Away by Two Others.

Arkville, N. Y.—A tug-of-war between locomotives took place at East Branch the other day, when the Delaware & Eastern Railroad Company recovered possession of an engine that had been levied on for taxes. The seized engine stood covered with official notices and fastened to the tracks with big log chains and padlocks.

Superintendent Wagonhorst, with two locomotives and 15 men, went to East Branch to get the engine. The deputy sheriff heard of their coming, and, gathering five men, swore them and prepared for war. The railroad men tied what is known in railroad circles as a three-link chain to the drawhead of the stalled engine and began to pull. The officers, one of whom was a former railroad man, had fire up and so much steam that it was blowing off. As soon as the two engines began to pull the one-time railroad man threw the reverse lever. He had the advantage of the chain that held the engine and a down grade.

For 15 minutes the great machines tugged and strained, but the one engine, chained, held its ground. Suddenly the three-link coupling broke, but the railroad men tied up again. For five minutes more the locomotives puffed and snorted. Then superior force prevailed and the stalled engine was started.

The deputy sheriffs jumped as the three engines sped away. The East Branch sheriff is said to be organizing a posse to recover the locomotive. According to him the end is not yet.

BELL HOP GETS \$32,000 TIP.

Startled by Notice of Remembrance from Man He Rode Ponies For.

San Francisco.—"Any mail for me?" asked Jack Douglas, a bell hop at the Manx hotel, of the mail clerk the other day.

"Here's one from New York," replied the clerk.

He passed out a letter to the "buttons" who surveyed the envelope. "From Willis & Jacobs, lawyers," he mused. "I wonder who those guys are. Here goes, anyway."

The boy opened the letter. "Great jumping kangaroos!" he yelled, "somebody fan me. The letter says that I'm left \$22,000 by the will of old Col. G. H. Warfield, an old man I used to ride polo ponies for. How's that for class?"

"Several years ago I took up polo riding in the east. I was an expert polo player and was very successful. I rode for Col. G. H. Warfield, who had a stable at Sheephead Bay. While riding for the colonel I won the polo pony Derby at Washington park, and that put me in favor with the colonel. It was also while riding with his stable that I met the girl who later became my wife. She was Helen Sutherland a prima donna, who sang with Eller Beach Yaw and who had been in Melba's company. My folks disapproved of the marriage, and my father disinherited me on account of it."

WIDOW BRINGS 900 SUITS.

As Many Land Holders Involved in Action for Dower Rights.

Providence, R. I.—The first of nearly 900 suits brought against as many land owners in Cranston by Harriet Byron Sprague for dower rights has been settled by the Cranston Print Works Company privately.

Mrs. Sprague is widow of Amasa Sprague, who was head of A. & W. Sprague, at one time multi-millionaire manufacturers. William Sprague, the junior member, was war governor of Rhode Island. The claims aggregate fully \$1,000,000.

The Spragues became involved through an over issue of notes in 1867 and assigned. Subsequently trust notes were issued and the issue came into the hands of a trustee. The assets of the Spragues were about \$19,000,000 and liabilities \$8,000,000, yet with this big showing less than 40 cents was paid on the dollar.

The members of the Sprague family joined in the trust deed with the exception of Harriet Byron Sprague, who never signed the release. Six months ago she began her suits for one-third of the value of all the realty the trustee had disposed of. The promptness with which the Cranston print works settled indicates the validity of her claim.

Girl Ate Like an Ostrich.

Chicago.—The ostrich and the goat are mere amateurs in the art of eating indigestible articles compared with a young woman who was described at the recent meeting of the Chicago Homeopathic Medical society. Dr. C. E. Kabile declared that at the last surgical congress in Berlin a case was recorded of a girl of 16 from whose stomach the following miscellaneous collection was removed: About 1,180 nails, 192 small hooks, 124 bent pins, 27 straight pins, 79 bits of wire, six nail heads, four pieces of glass. The operation was entirely successful, and the girl is now alive and well.

17 Grandmas Die in Four Years.

Racine, Wis.—Henry Ellefson, a student at the Racine High school has the state record for writing bogus excuses. In four years he has presented to his teachers 74 excuses, all written by himself. Every conceivable reason was given for absence. In the four years he lost 17 grandmothers. About 40 times she was supposed to be ill. When the discovery was made the student was called in by Principal Blackhurst and admitted his guilt. He has been suspended for 74 days.

TO CAN SUN'S RAYS

BOSTON MAN CONVERTS THEM INTO ELECTRIC ENERGY.

Invents Simple Apparatus with Which He Lights Workshop—Device Entirely Automatic and Cheap to Build.

Boston.—That he has successfully solved the problem of storing up the sun's rays and converting them into electrical energy is the claim made by a Boston inventor.

He is George S. Cove and he demonstrates the success of his invention by lighting his workshop at 485 Somerville avenue, Somerville, with electricity generated from a simple apparatus on the roof.

No electric wires of any sort enter his buildings from outside lighting sources, yet the incandescent globes twinkle merrily day and night and electricians from the Institute of Technology who have watched his experiments with interest have declared themselves enthusiastic over his success.

Cove has demonstrated that his simple mechanical device will store up sufficient electricity for an entire house. He also says the machines, which can be built at a cost of \$100 each, when increased in glass, will last for ten years without repair or alteration.

Cove's invention will be known as the "solar electric generator," and is designed to generate electricity directly from the rays of the sun and to store it for lighting and for small power plants.

It consists of a framework to be placed in an opening where it will receive the direct rays of the sun. Short plugs of a metal composition are set into this frame. The framework is of thin steel divided into squares, each one foot square, containing 16 plugs. The plugs project from the cement in which they are set and come in contact with a thick glass which the sun strikes.

In the whole frame there are 976 plugs. Filled in around these plugs is a body of heat-absorbing material. The plugs are about an inch apart and are connected in series by a strip of metal.

The difference of the temperature of the two ends of the metal plugs, one being in the sun, the other in the open with a circulation of air around it, generates the current of electricity. If the sun goes under a cloud and the voltage drops below that of the storage batteries, an automatic cut-out breaks the circuit between the generator and the batteries. The device is thus entirely automatic. When the sun sets at night it automatically shuts off the storage batteries and begins again with the rising sun in the morning.

This machine generates through a day of sunshine enough electricity to light five lights of 20 candle-power each to last from three to four days of continuous lighting.

In two days of sunshine the device generates and stores up sufficient electricity to last six days. This allows for bad weather. Mr. Cove says adding to the glass in front of the device a heavy glass of a concave surface, the cost of which is very small, will increase the power of the apparatus.

Storage batteries as large as are desired may be used, the additional equipment making greater strength for the lights and giving also greater length of service from the charging. If the expected success comes with this feature one day's sunshine will generate sufficient electricity to light a house a week.

In view of the great waste in coal, timber and oil of which there is so much complaint just at present, Mr. Cove believes that the natural powers of the sun will have to be utilized more and more as the years go on.

ROADS CLEARED BY SNOWBALLS.

Scientific Farmer Utilizes His Knowledge to Good Effect.

Philadelphia.—Ruyll Smith, a scientific farmer, utilized his knowledge in a most practical manner when he cleared his fields of the heavy snow and then generously offered his services to the township supervisors and opened up some badly drifted roads.

"It's all very easy when you know how," modestly commented Mr. Smith when congratulated upon his work. "I merely use the old idea of rolling a huge snowball."

That's precisely what was done. For instance, in opening up the roads, he walked out into the middle of the highway, made a snowball and proceeded to roll it over and over until it reached a diameter of six feet.

He then ordered one of his men to bring down a traction engine. With the motive force he pushed the snowball over and over until it grew to such dimensions that it completely filled the road.

It rolled into a ten-foot drift, and in the easiest manner imaginable picked up every bit of the snow there and made an easy passage for teams. The snowballs were melted with jets of steam from the same traction engine.

Grows Oranges in Missouri.

Whiteside, Mo.—Samuel Smiley, a farmer, fruit grower and bee-keeper, has an orange tree that has more than 50 oranges. This tree is about two feet high, 12 years old and blooms nearly all the year around. Smiley says the cold weather stops the production of the fruit, as it requires the visit of the bees to the blooms in order to get the desired results. Smiley lives on a farm near this place.

PARROT'S EPITHETS RILE BEAR.

Burrows Out of Cage to Fight Bird for Lowdown Insults.

San Francisco.—Goaded beyond endurance by the taunts and gibes of a parrot which made its home in a tree near her den in Golden Gate park, Mary, an Alaskan bear cub, burrowed from the cage the other day and made frantic efforts to reach her tormentor. The parrot, which is a huge bird of the gorgeous variety, has the freedom of the park, most of which it spends in a tree above the bear den yelling "Naughty Mary," and other lowdown gibes at the Alaskan bear cub.

The other day, while the bear was receiving the attention of a host of children, the parrot began its insulting remarks. This was the last straw for the long-suffering bear and, burrowing through the rain-softened earth, she was soon in hot pursuit of the parrot.

John McHenry, caretaker of the children's playgrounds, who was playing with the bird at the time, made a hasty getaway and did not stop until he reached the park lodge where he informed Supt. McLaren.

McLaren and the park policeman, after a council of war, set out in pursuit of the bear, which they found sitting under a limb on which the parrot was perched just out of reach.

The bird was fluttering its wings in the face of the cub and spitting out unspeakable insults when the posse arrived. Park employees who know Mary's weakness tolled her back into the cage with a bucket of bread and milk. The officials hope to make the parrot behave.

CONDITIONS GOOD IN LIBERIA.

State Department Makes Public Letter from a Traveler.

Washington.—From a correspondent in Monrovia, Liberia, the state department received a letter touching affairs in that little republic in which the writer says that he has found general conditions much better than they had been reported to him. The letter says:

Everything here is reminiscent of home, the flags on the houses, the names of the streets. Every college in the country is founded on American benevolence. All its institutions are unique in Africa. Yesterday I wandered through the old cemetery and on nearly every tombstone I read "Virginia," "South Carolina," and so on.

After a painstaking effort to get to the bottom of things I am convinced that the government is to be commended for having kept its head above water in spite of its poverty, and that the future of the country is secure if the Liberians could only have the assurance that the integrity and independence of Liberia is secure. There will be no difficulty about reforms if the threats of partition could be offset by one little assurance that the mother country would see them through as in the case of Cuba and China.

BELL GUIDES SHIP TO PORT.

Blindfolded Pilot Finds Way in Test of Submarine Signals.

New York.—The value of the submarine signal bell in assisting vessels to make port safely in thick weather and in avoiding collisions at sea under similar conditions was demonstrated by experiments of Sandy Hook, between the Ambrose channel lightship and an ocean-going tug.

The submarine bell of the lightship was put in operation and while the sounds were picked up by the receiving apparatus on the tug an engineer stood blindfolded in the wheelhouse and with the telephone receivers at either ear caught the sounds which pointed out to him the position of the bell with such a degree of precision as to enable him to give correct orders to the pilot when three miles distant from the lightship.

The apparatus used in the experiments were the submarine bell with which nearly all the lightships in this country—about 49 in all—are now equipped, and the receiving plant installed on the most important transatlantic liners.

STARVES OFF 75 POUNDS.

Then in Disgust Boy Goes Back to Good Living.

Viroqua, Wis.—Charlie Peters, 19, and the fattest boy in Wisconsin, has just completed a six weeks' diet of milk and crackers in an effort to reduce weight. The experiment succeeded to some degree, but not enough to warrant Charlie's continuance of the fast, and he has once more resorted to three square meals a day.

Charlie weighed 450 pounds before he started his fast, but became disgusted after six weeks, when he lost only 75 pounds and was nearly starved to death, and he has at last become reconciled to his fate. Both his father and his mother are small in stature.

Charlie has no regular business. He attended school until the seals would no longer hold him, as the school board did not have a bench or a chair that would not break under his weight.

Rich, But Stitches to Army.

Portsmouth, N. H.—Through suddenly made independently rich by a legacy of \$45,000, Napoleon Cyres, a soldier in the One Hundred and Fifty-Sixth Company of coast artillery at Fort Constitution, Portsmouth, decides to shake the uniform and purchase his release from the service for \$750. The money and real estate came to him at the death of his uncle, a wealthy farmer in Canton, Me. Napoleon is less than 21 years old and prefers to continue life as a gunner at \$15 a month, and see the army as it is. He says he will re-enlist.