

INFORMATION ABOUT ALASKA.

An exchange furnishes the following interesting facts with respect to our newly acquired northern territory. Alaska lies between latitudes fifty-four degrees forty minutes and seventy-one degrees twenty minutes north. It is in its most southern reach distant four hundred miles north of our Pacific territory, a line eleven hundred miles from the pole. It contains an area of five hundred and sixteen thousand square miles. Sir John Richardson, in his "Arctic Searching Expedition for Sir John Franklin," tells of pine trees which he saw at Sitka with a diameter of seven feet, and towering up one hundred and sixty feet, and he adds that "the climate of Sitka is very much milder than that of Europe in the same latitude." Now it is well known that the climate of Europe is very much milder than that of America on the Atlantic coast in the same latitude. In the North Pacific ocean the water circulates from tropical to polar latitudes, and the warm waters of the Pacific bathe the northwestern shores of Europe. The consequence is that Alaska is as habitable as the British Islands and Norway. Baron Wrangell observed the thermometer carefully at Sitka from 1833 to 1842, and the averages for the winter he recorded at 35 degrees, one degree warmer than at Washington city. An observatory was formed there by the Russian Government in the latter year, and from a careful summary of the series of observations it appears that the winter temperature of the place is thirty-three degrees, or almost exactly the same as that of Philadelphia.

"A SINGULAR FACT.—The peach was originally a poisonous almond. Its fleshy parts were used to poison arrows, and the fruit for this purpose was introduced into Persia. The transportation and cultivation, however, not only removed its poisonous qualities, but produced the delicious fruit we now enjoy."

We take the above from the *Waverly Magazine* of the 20th of January, 1899. We have often heard it said that the planting of a peach stone on this island would produce the almond, such as may be seen in the custom-house grounds on this island, and in several of the yards occupied by the citizens. We are willing to be qualified on oath that some eighteen months ago we planted two peach stones as an experiment for raising the almond on this island. We now have in lieu of the peach the coarse, hard-stone, almond, similar to those above mentioned. We are not aware of any poisonous qualities of this almond, though we have heard of children having died from the effects of having eaten them, which might have occurred from eating almost any other fruit in excess. We have eaten the fruit ourselves without having been poisoned. Can any of our friends throw light upon this subject.—*Key West Dispatch.*

There died recently at Paris a man who had a certain amount of celebrity under the empire for his devotion to Napoleon the First. He was called La Chaise, and had been a page of the Emperor. They tell a very singular anecdote of something which happened during his youth. The page, though but fifteen, was shaped like the Emperor, and his motions were very similar. On account of this resemblance his comrades called him the "Emperor," whose gestures and walk he often amused himself by imitating to the great pleasure of his companions. One day, during Napoleon's absence, he took his clothes, put them on, went to the page's chamber, and gave them so perfect a representation that they were enraptured. But suddenly the mock Emperor felt some one pulling his ear sharply. He turned around with all the fury of majesty, and it was the Emperor himself, who told him in his sternest voice to pack up and rejoin the Second Regiment of the line, in which he was a Second Lieutenant. "There is a gentleman," said the Emperor, "you must imitate me." The page departed, and the Emperor laughed outrageously and declared that the young fellow imitated him so well that he had to feel himself, as Amphitryon did to make sure that he really was himself.

The London Orchestra says: "John Brahm—the Jupiter of English tenors—when at the height of his glory, and in possession of his magnificent organ, returned his annual income at seven thousand pounds. He was a Jew—always isolated and alone in whatever capital in Europe, in whatever society, artistic or literary, or otherwise. Richard Wagner, who had said of him that he was a bad singer, but Richard would not have denied the individual supremacy of a Brahm. The Jew in all things pertaining to vocal art. In the days of John Brahm, the making of seven thousand pounds in one year by singing alone was an unheard-of achievement in musical life; and it is said that in no year of his marvelous career did the beautiful and accomplished singer gather unto herself such a harvest, so golden a demonstration of her power of doing great things, and her mastery over the delicate art of human nature. After Brahm, Malbran was the first vocalist who, with heart and intention set about the realization of this great income, and she lived to equal Brahm—receiving over seven thousand pounds in professional fees during the last year of her life. In these days the personal powers of our foremost vocalists have led to almost doubling the money powers of John Brahm, and Russia has paid Madame Patti an annual salary that puts the Jewish returns altogether in the shade. The fees of Field Marshals, Lord Chancellors, Ambassadors—these all fall in equalling those thrust on Adeline Patti, and it is only in the church that we can find a parallel. Patti receives the income of an Archbishop, and if reports be true, Christine Nilsson is running rather ahead of the Patti. And these enormous sums are willingly and lovingly given in return for the delights and consolation created within us by the breath of the personal song of great artists. It is no human power; it is as old as the human race, and will endure as long as the heart continues to beat. There will ever be Brahms and Richard Wagner and Malbran, Patti and Nilsson, revealing their own experiences of the art of the soul, and no lack of audience sympathizing with the power of this higher life."

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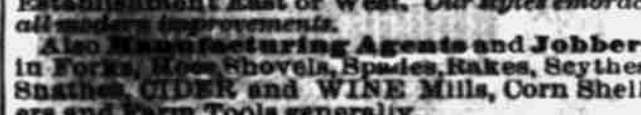
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