

following: "Mr. and Mrs. M— are spending the month of August, with their darling babe, at the M— homestead in Avondale." "Mrs. C— and children are spending a few weeks in the country." "Miss A. Young, of Indianapolis, will visit Miss M— next week." "Mr. D. C— and Mr. M—, of Covington, are among the agreeable young men who have lately arrived in this city." "Mrs. R. B— and her beautiful accomplished daughter, spent the week with friends in Defiance, Ohio." "Mrs. J. W— entertained a lunch party on Wednesday."

These few extracts, which I have selected at random from amidst pages of such trivialities in an American paper of good standing, show the manner in which our fair and unfair transatlantic cousins advertise themselves. Surely the "agreeable young men" of Covington ought to feel highly gratified at their praises being so openly set forth in the press, or perhaps there are so few "agreeable young men" in the states that these special ones are considered a rara avis. In the future, Americans will, no doubt, read along with their morning news the interesting fact "Miss— of this city sneezed violently three times yesterday morning before breakfast," or "Dr. So-and-so is going to give up taking sugar in his tea." Perhaps we wrong our aspiring journalists across the herring pond, and these are inserted and paid for as a matter of course like the more stale and prosaic notices of births, marriages, and deaths in the newspapers of the "old country;" if so what a splendid "pile" Yankee newspaper proprietors must make. Sweet are the uses of advertisement!

#### SURVEY OF ALASKA.

The United States surveying party which has been in the field for several seasons has just completed the survey of the southeastern boundary of Alaska, and will make its report to the Alaskan boundary commission. This latter body was appointed by the British and United States governments to determine the line between the two countries. The report of the Canadian surveyors also has been made, and as the two parties disagree materially in their conclusions, it is possible that the commissioners also will fail to agree, and the whole matter will become the subject of further diplomatic correspondence.

When the United States purchased Alaska from Russia, there was no dispute as to the czar having sovereignty over what is now known as Southeast Alaska. In fact this was acknowledged by the annual payment of \$12,000 to the Russians, by the Hudson Bay company, for privileges in the district referred to. But that district shuts from the coast a vast extent of British Columbian territory north of latitude 54 deg. 40 min.; and while it is a thin strip of land, yet it includes all the ports, and the only outlet to the Yukon country is through them, to the material benefit of the U. S. treasury, or by an interior journey south to Port Simpson. The Yukon country is rich with gold, and the interior is becoming of considerable commercial importance; as it cannot be developed except by way of Southeast Alaska, it is easily understood why the claim is now put forth by England that Russia did not cede the district to the United States.

The treaty between Russia and this government provides that the Alaskan boundary shall commence

from the southernmost point of the Prince of Wales island, in the parallel of 54 deg. 40 min. north latitude, and along the channel known as the Portland canal until the 56th degree of north latitude is reached; from which point the line of demarcation is to be along the summit of the mountain range situated parallel to the coast, except that when the summit of such mountain range shall be more than ten marine leagues (thirty miles) from the coast, the line of demarcation shall be at the ten marine leagues limit, and follow the coast windings.

There are mountains all along nearer than the ten-league limit, and the English claim that these should be regarded as a mountain chain parallel with the coast. The American surveyors, however, point out that there is no chain of mountains paralleling the seashore, but that the Alaskan mountain peaks follow the trend of the streams, and are more at right angles to the coast than parallel with it. Therefore they claim that the ten-league limit should prevail.

This is the question which the boundary commission is called to decide. If they agree, then the matter will be settled. But the prospect is that they will not. The commercial interests of the English are such as to cause them to insist that a row of mountain peaks running along the coast, though they belong to distinct spurs or chains, are to be regarded as a mountain range in the idea of the treaty, as otherwise there would be no mountain range paralleling the coast if this view were not taken. Obviously the Americans cannot consent to this proposition, as the survey shows there actually is no mountain range in the position described. They point out that the provision in the treaty for the ten-league limit is evidence that the makers did not know whether the mountains formed a range or not; but that if they did they wanted to indicate the summit as a boundary, and if not, then the ten-league limit was to be in force.

The settlement of this question will dispose of southeast Alaska. If it goes the English way, then the indentations on the coast pass through the mountains and give to the British seaports on their own soil. If it does not, then the development of the Yukon country will add more to American than to English revenues. It does not seem probable, however, that the United States members on the commission ever will consent to jumping from one isolated peak to another in order to create an imaginary mountain range parallel with the coast; but that the matter will have to be determined between the two governments direct, and on the ten-league limit line.

#### ARGUMENT AGAINST CREMATION.

The question of how to dispose of the dead so as to insure against danger to the living has of late years been much discussed, and cremation has found many earnest advocates in this country as well as abroad.

Many of the ancient nations are known to have committed their dead to the flames, and especially their heroes, who were cremated with their most valued possessions. In Egypt,

however, the bodies were carefully embalmed. The Jews generally deposited them in vaults, but in times of contagious diseases the bodies in later times were buried in the Valley of Tophet, as were probably also corpses of criminals for which nobody cared. Cremation is still customary among many heathen nations.

Looking at the matter from a purely sanitary point of view and aside from religious considerations, it has always been claimed by those who advocate cremation that cemeteries are a constant menace to the health of the people living in the vicinity. A certain amount of poisonous gas always escapes from places, finding its way into the dwelling houses or contaminating the drinking water. It is claimed that sufferings from diarrhoea, headache and sore throat are general to people who live near grave yards, and also that burial in metallic coffins in vaults is more dangerous than ordinary burial. On this ground cremation is urged as the best method, insuring absolute safety to the living.

At a recent congress of the British Institute of Public Health Sir Francis Seymour delivered an address against cremation and for burial in the earth, meeting the objection referred to squarely and in convincing arguments. He points out, however, that burial is proper only when the corpse is allowed to come in contact with the disinfecting earth.

The law, he says in substance, is that inasmuch as everything that lives dies, and everything that dies returns to the earth, the earth is, and has been since the world began, the daily and hourly recipient of a mass of dead and effete matter. The earth is the sole agent in the disinfection and the chief factor in the resolution of the whole of this enormous and otherwise poisonous mass. This resolution, which is only another name for the re-entry into new and harmless combinations of this vast residuum, is but a necessary step to its revivification and reanimation—a condition precedent, that is to say, to a complete repair of all losses incurred throughout the globe by death and decay; to the maintenance of its populations and of all other forms of life, animal as well as vegetable; to the purification and replenishment of all rivers and springs; to the renewal of the atmosphere itself; and in a word, to the re-formation and re-establishment, in all its luxuriance, healthfulness and beauty of the earth's surface. This law the cremation societies think they can improve upon.

It is a common belief that a buried body becomes part of the clay to which we commit it. This the lecturer denies. He says a properly buried body—buried in such a way that the earth may have access to it—does not remain in the earth but returns to the atmosphere. The earth affects it in no way whatever. The part played by the soil is that of a medium between it and the air above. Through this medium the air filters and, when it reaches the body, oxidizes it—that is to say, resolves it into new and harmless products; and then these new products, passing upward through the same medium, re-enter the atmosphere and become elements of its renewal.