

THE LATE FRANCIS PALMS.

The Romantic Family History of Detroit's Dead Millionaire.

The pontifical high mass of requiem which was recently celebrated in the old cathedral of Detroit marked the close of the career of Francis Palms. It was notable from the fact that 1,500 employes attended the service as a tribute to their late master, while numerous insurance, banking and mercantile institutions in which he was interested when alive also sent representatives, for the dead man had been a millionaire merchant prince of Michigan. Little did the public know of the old man's private life, for he seldom spoke of it, but the romance of his son's life throws a little light on that of his father's.

The father of Francis Palms was a secretary of Napoleon I, and when Waterloo came it brought disaster to him as well as the French emperor. He came to America and tried Detroit, but not finding the city of his



FRANCIS PALMS.
[Photo by Stevenson.]

strait to his liking, he moved to and settled in New Orleans, leaving a son, Francis, in Detroit, to grow up with the place. Francis married and a son was the result of the union, the mother dying at his birth. Later Francis Palms married again, to the discomfiture of his little son, Francis, who found that his stepmother was averse to children. The temperature under the paternal roof being decidedly chilly for young Francis, with the possibility of a gold wave and a "freeze out," he sought a warmer climate in the care of his grandfather, at New Orleans. Here he was educated and brought up in total ignorance of his father, as there was no correspondence between the two families. When a young man he started out on a tour north. With a vague knowledge that he was born in Detroit, curiosity led him to visit the city of his birth and inquire if his father was yet in the land of the living. On making inquiries he found that his father was regarded as the wealthiest man in the state of Michigan. A spirit of pride and family independence, which he inherited, prevented him from calling at his father's house. He learned that it was the habit of the elder Palms to visit the hotel reading room every evening at 8 o'clock to read his letters, look at the papers, and occasionally do a little business with people from out of town. That night the son was on hand, and, punctually at 8 o'clock, a short man with a little stoop to his shoulders came into the office. There was a smile on his kindly face as he nodded good evening to the people he knew, and then made his way to a sofa in the reading room. The son possessed his soul in patience until he saw his father tear open his last letter, glance through it, and then turn to take up a paper. Sauntering up to the elderly gentleman, the young man, with the ease of a southerner, began the conversation. Gradually he drew from Mr. Palms the admission that he had relatives in New Orleans. "I have a father there and brothers, too," said the elderly man. "Indeed," said the younger, in apparent surprise; "and what is the name?" "Palms is my name." "And mine, too," said the young man, coolly. "Perhaps you and I are related?" "My father's name is Augé Palms," admitted the elderly one. "And he is my grandfather," was the young fellow's response.

There was no scene. In few words the father told the son that he was glad to see him again, and then gave him to understand that the hotel would prove more comfortable quarters than the big brick house up the avenue.

The son thanked him for his kind interest and acknowledged that the hotel life agreed with him.

Without asking any favors from his father the son returned south. At the outbreak of the war he left the plantation he owned to enter the army. War proved a Waterloo for him, as it did for his grandfather, and he went back to New Orleans to begin life anew. Family influence obtained him a clerical position in the United States courts, and he settled down to a quiet life. At the outbreak of the war he had been engaged to a lovely girl of Scotch parentage, but the struggle had separated them, and when the war ended each heard that the other had married. By chance they learned of their mistake in time to enjoy a short period of domestic happiness before her death. He afterward married a second time and his wife is still living.

In the course of time the stepmother died, and on returning from his wife's funeral Mr. Palms sat down and wrote to his son to come north. He pointed out to him that before many years he must come into a large property distributed among pine lands, iron mines, business blocks, railroad enterprises, manufacturing and bank stocks and the like.

The son came and settled near the little brick office in the rear of the paternal residence. There he has lived quietly, making few friends and spending the greater part of his leisure with his wife and his eight children. He now inherits one-half of his father's millions, his only sister, Clothilde, receiving the other half. This sister—Miss Clothilde Palms—was, it was said, last winter the object of the attentions of Senator Jones, of Florida.

It was always a lucky day for anybody who could do a favor for President Arthur. He was a patient and polite listener. I never heard that he ever interrupted a narrator or cut off another's story. Once in awhile he was a little impatient with his clerks, but only for a moment. Then he would find a way to show them, without acknowledging it, that he was sorry. No man ever saw him annoyed or irritated or heard him say a careless word in public. He controlled himself wonderfully at times. He was not what may be called a hard worker, like Mr. Cleveland. He was a clear and quick thinker and saw what was to be seen at once. He made others do his work. If he wanted to write a letter to a person or an association wherein he wanted to give his views, he merely gave his views to his secretary and the letter prepared the letter, which the president revised and signed. To newspaper men he was ever considerate, and so were those about him. Sometimes the local reporters and the correspondents were not given what they wanted, but they were always cordially treated.—Washington Cor. Philadelphia Press.

Information concerning lands, lots, and business chances in Griggs County, can be obtained from the COURIER office.



COOPERSTOWN.

In the above engraving of Cooperstown it will be seen, that the waving wheat fields, encroach upon the village green—that the suburban villas, are not as yet in *casu*—that the city is immersed in an illimitable sea of pure air, resting upon a basis of vegetable loam, of unparalleled extent, and fertility—that air and earth are shimmering continually in a proxysm of mutual admiration. But for the necessary curtailment of the horizon in the illustration the honest farmers might be seen to approach the great rural trading point, from the Mouse river, on the north, to the main line of the Northern Pacific,

on the south; from the United States on the east, to where the foot hills of the great western watershed commence to pitch and roll—

- Some in rags,
- And some in tags,
- And some in velvet gowns.

With a population of less than 1,000 souls, draining the trade of 1,600 square miles of richness, populated by an honest, industrious and thrifty people, it is not to be wondered at that its churches, banks, elevators, stores, hotels, newspapers, horse markets, lumber yards, coal and wood depots, architects, ministers, lawyers, doctors, milliners, dress-makers, blacksmiths, machine warehouses, are the best in the world.

In 1885 *Nine Thousand Tons* of wheat was marketed at this point at such a price that had the receipts been equally distributed to the people of the county, \$160 in cash would have been given to every man, woman and child. So rich and vast is the country that centres at this point, if one-half of the arable land should be cultivated to wheat, the yield at 20 bushels per acre, by close mathematical calculation would be in excess of 175,000 tons.

In addition to the cultivation of cereals, the surrounding farmers are raising horses, cattle, pigs and poultry for which they find a ready market. As a grazing country the only draw back is the exceeding fertility of the soil, for it requires moral courage in the husbandman

to graze land that by tickling with a plow will "laugh with a harvest" and that breaks a cast iron binder all up the first season. Cattle fatten at the straw stack, while barley in sixty days converts the lean "razor back" into a shapeless ball of lard. The finest breeds of Percheron and Clydesdale horses are carefully cultivated, and thrive upon the native grasses better than the best timothy or red top.

The horse, cattle and hog market of Cooperstown is a revelation to easterners.

The very best of land can be had at \$5 per acre in the vicinity of Cooperstown, while the city offers the best inducements to enterprising business men.

An improved farm of 520 acres within sight of three elevators will be sold very cheap. Every acre is first-class wheat land, except some excellent meadow. An improved farm of 320 acres—all good wheat land—cheap for cash. A magnificent improved tract of 520 acres adjoining a live town can be had a bargain.

F. H. ADAMS.