

BEST TO AVOID MUSHROOMS

Really Have Little Value as Sustenance and There is Always Danger of Poison.

There are in this country more than one hundred edible species of mushrooms. The popular distinction between mushroom and toadstool is one of name only.

The more we learn of mushrooms the more it becomes apparent that they are scarcely different as regards dietary virtues from the general run of the green vegetables which have never achieved the distinction of any unique or superior nutritive properties.

HONEYED WORDS IN TUBES

How the Modern Spanish Swain Finds a Way to Overcome Serious Obstacles.

In Spain, as is well-known, a vigorous etiquette governs the business of love-making. A young man cannot interview his sweetheart without her parents' consent, and, indeed, all conversation openly carried on between the couple must be in the presence of the fair one's mother.

Many subterfuges are adopted by the lovers to overcome this difficulty, and the "reja"—the ornamental iron-work on the windows of Spanish houses—has become one of the favorite trysting places. Modern life, however, has imposed fresh barriers.

In this, as in other spheres of life, necessity is the mother of invention. London Answers remarks, and some ardent lovers have brought speaking tubes to their assistance. The seniors, at the appointed hour, lowers this to her lover, and they are thus able to carry on their love affairs with the assurance that they are not overheard by the people on the intervening flats, as would be the case if the conversation were carried on without such aid.

Joy Bell.

A deaf woman used to tell this story on herself: At a reunion of Confederate veterans where she was officiating as hostess a man was brought up to her and reintroduced as a Mr. Blank, a former resident of her town, and one whom she had not seen for fifty years.

Ungrateful Brute.

It was a very hot day and a picnic had been arranged by the United Society of Lady Vegetarians.

They were comfortably seated, and waiting for the kettle to boil, when, horror of horrors! a savage bull appeared on the scene.

Hippopotamus Described.

Johnny, who had been to the circus, says the Youngtown Telegram, was telling his teacher about the wonderful things he had seen.

Most Southerly Industry.

What is probably the most southerly industry of the world, writes Consul Henry D. Baker of Hobart, Tasmania, is being carried on at Macquarie Island, about half way between Tasmania and the Antarctic continent.

AUNT'S WAY PROBABLY BEST

Runaway Boy, Spared Chastisement, Never Likely to Transgress in That Way Again.

He was being brought up by an aunt and an uncle, who cared for him more tenderly than some mothers and fathers care for their own children. Nevertheless, when he was eleven years old he decided to run away from home.

However, some of the relatives were not satisfied that the aunt's loving welcome was salutary for the boy. He would not, they argued, be duly impressed with the enormity of his offense and might repeat it.

GREAT NEED FOR TOLERANCE

"Judge Not!" Should Be Looked Upon as a Command in This World of Varieties.

The unexpected life is a proverb. Nevertheless, every one of us creates in his or her own mind the spectacle of an ordered world. No two of these are alike—the cynic's world, the world of the man of business, and the charity worker's world, for instance, are hardly recognizable, each by the other.

But there are so many realities—all real. Theory, no matter how vast and various, never catches up with the procession of the actual. Doctrine, however hard and fast, never quite covers all true spiritual experiences, as students of the mystic know.

Time Limit to Sermons.

The proper length of a sermon is coming up anew for discussion because of complaint of the hearers that it is too long, and complaint of the preachers that they are not allowed time enough.

One commentator passes the observation that thirty minutes is not long to listen to a man who is worth listening to at all, and that if the sermon is cut down to twenty-five or twenty minutes it is apt to lose its most important functions of guidance, instruction and inspiration.

All of which resolves itself into the proposition that a preacher, like every one else who has a message to deliver, either by voice or pen, must conform to the conditions confronting him. If he really has something to say he can take all the time required and have no fear that his congregation will go to sleep on him; while if he is simply pounding the air or serving out sawdust pudding it is better for him to quit before beginning.

Why Gamblers Went to Church.

Gamblers are generally superstitious with regard to numbers. At Monte Carlo many players lay their stake on the number of their cloak-room tickets. The date of a birthday, the sum total of the number on a watch, and the figures on the top coin of a pile are also said to be considered lucky by many players, and the clergymen of the English church at Monte Carlo at one time never gave out any hymn under thirty-six, as he discovered that some of his congregation had made a practice of noting down the numbers with a view of backing them at roulette.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PIANO

Centuries of Invention Have Been Needed to Bring It to Present State of Perfection.

Have you ever thought, when playing some melodious sonata upon your piano, that the instrument, as it is today, is the perfection of centuries of invention?

In the beginning it was a harp-shaped piece of wood, having two or three strings. From time to time more strings were added until the cithara was invented. This was an instrument in the shape of a capital P, with ten strings stretched across the open space.

During Queen Elizabeth's time it was called a virginal, and then a spinet, because the hammers were covered with the spines of quills, which struck and caught the strings and produced the sound.

SUDDEN ENDING OF ROMANCE

Task Set for Reformed Tramp Was Just a Little More Than He Could Stand.

"Oh, yes, we have romances in our lives," said the tramp, "but there is always something to spoil 'em. I had my last one last fall. I was pegging along a Rhode Island highway, thinking more of good feed than romance, when a couple of wearies ahead of me turned into a farm house. I turned in as well when I came along up, and I walked into the kitchen just as they had locked a girl up in a closet and were about to go through the house. They invited me to take a hand in their game, but I took two in my own. They made it interesting for me for three or four minutes, but the average weary is no boxer. He depends upon wild swings instead of straight punches. I had 'em both down when the farmer came up from the field, and the girl was released and the fellows sent off to jail.

"Well, currant jam, big red apples and mince pies were none too good for me for the next week. The daughter was a school m'arm, about twenty years of age, and I had won her romantic heart here three days had passed. I think the old man would have sanctioned the match, but he didn't take me right. On the fourth day of my stay he took me out and showed me a ten-acre lot of the stoniest ground I ever saw in my life, and intimated that I might start in plowing next morning. It was too much. That night I left the house by way of a window, and daylight found me seven miles away. I would have helped gather apples or husked corn, but when it came to plowing among bowlders as big as barrels, romance fled, and I followed close at her heels."

Hindu's Agonizing Penance.

An extraordinary scene was witnessed in Calcutta recently when a small trolley, studded with rows of iron spikes, on which a Hindu was lying at full length, was being pulled through the streets. A large crowd was following. Inquiries elicited the information that the man was doing penance, and was on his way to the temple of the Goddess Kali at Kalgahat. The Hindu had been several days on the journey, and was in a terrible condition. The spikes, which numbered about 150 were quite sharp, and the man wore only a loin-cloth. He must have been suffering acute pain from the fact that his body was bruised and lacerated all over as a result of lying on the sharp nails. Neither the police nor any passer-by made any attempt to stop the self-imposed torture.

Chinese Oysters.

A New York Chinese laundryman is helping out his daily breakfast with native Chinese oysters on the half shell. The shells he brought along with him from China. The oysters he receives from China in the half barrel, dried and smoked.

As they come they resemble somewhat dried apples or peaches. The laundryman places a mess over night, each oyster in a shell full of sea water, and the next morning they have the plump and juicy attractiveness of freshly opened oysters, and if they did not have so much the taste of canvased ham one might perhaps detect an oyster flavor about them.

NEW USE FOR SAND GLASS

German Surgeons, Before Operation, Must Wash Their Hands Until the Grains Have All Fallen.

The whistling egg boiler and other patent inventions have threatened the existence of the old-fashioned sand glass as part of the kitchen paraphernalia, and it seemed likely that the children of a later generation would be quite ignorant of the use of what, with the scythe, so often stands as the symbol of time.

A German surgeon, like many Germans a strong disciplinarian, has, however, found a new use for the sand glass, and under his directions one of the larger Berlin hospitals has just placed an order for a score of sand glasses, which, however, are not timed for the boiling of an egg, but for rather longer—for five minutes.

For five minutes the surgeon washes his hands with soap and warm water and then cleans his finger nails. Another turn of the sand glass, and five minutes more of hand washing with soap and warm water is to follow. The third turn keeps time for a third wash, this time in alcohol, and the fourth is for the process of sterilization with a wash of corrosive sublimate. Over all these operations the sand glass stands as arbiter to decide when each has been thoroughly carried out.

PECULIAR CHARM OF FRANCE

More Restful Than Other Countries. Is the Reason Given by Distinguished Writers.

It is impossible for anyone who knows France, and has felt the charm of the country and its people—and who has not—to approach French problems in a severely critical spirit. The beautiful cities, the broad stretches of wonderful Corot landscape threaded by marvelous roads, form the playground of travelers from other lands. No matter what is sought, there it can be found. The gay life of the streets, the opportunity for the spending of money for beautiful things, the charm of art and music, are offered to the guest of Paris. Those who seek the quiet and freedom of plain or forest have not far to go, and a thousand places, each seeming more attractive than the other, make their appeal for a longer stay than the visitor can afford.

The greatness of France is of so recent a date that one forgets it is not more distant. The whole country gives the impression of a quiet backwater where one can put in for rest and enjoyment, and without discomfort take the turgid stream of life in other lands as it rushes by. No other country suggests this feeling in such a compelling way; yet in these pushing times of modern material progress it is all counted as against her success in the international struggle for the trade of the world, that prize which costs annually more blood and money than did the final political dismemberment of Europe.—James Davison Whelpley in the Century.

Castleman Farmer.

The farmer who once welcomed the lightning rod operator as a friend of mankind is moving to town now, and languidly supervising the tilling of his acres from an automobile. One of these vicious husbandmen, established in an Indiana county seat, found it difficult to employ his newly acquired leisure. The automobile had not proved itself a toy of unalloyed delight and the feet that had followed unwearied the hayrake and plow faltered upon the treads of the mechanical piano. He began to alternate motor fights with more deliberate drives behind a handsome team of blacks. The eyes of the towns undertaker fell in mortal envy upon that team and he sought to buy it. The tired husbandman felt that here, in a gentlemanly occupation, while at the same time enjoying the felicitous of urban life, so he consented to the use of his horse, but with the distinct understanding that he should be permitted to drive the horse.—Meredith Nicholson in the Atlantic.

Old London Cries in Peril.

This is a daring age. Somebody has actually dared to criticize the vocal efforts of the itinerant vendor. It was "Sweet lavender; buy my sweet lavender" that established the immortality of the most cry from cavillera. There is no doubt that the "sweet lavender" business had, we trust—a good deal of pleasure. Och, yells from the gutter got in on it, too. You would hear a hoarse howl and begin to examine it, and then stop . . . stop! It was it not much "old London cry" but too much "old London cry" has of late pricked the bubble. A complaint at Highgate police court in London, referring to this cry as "disturbing between the hours of a night and the fall of a day." "Och-to-moo" may be the next to succumb—London Globe.

COMMON FAULT OF HUMANITY

Probably Condition of Absolute Satisfaction Never Yet Has Been Absolutely Arrived At.

Man is a curious animal. He is never satisfied. When we say "man," we mean men and women—the same that God created in his own image.

The school becomes irksome to the boy and it requires all the pressure of the parent to keep him at his studies. He thinks he knows better than father or mother. They point out the need of an education if he would succeed. He replies that he has two hands and a brain and that he can make his own living in his own way. Sometimes he tries it. When he fails, in the bitterness of his soul he recalls with repentance his refusal to his parents.

The girl, willful and headstrong, accepts questionable company. She neglects the church for the Sunday picnic and gives up the Bible for the sensational, silly and romantic novel. She wants a change. She must have it. She will have it. Finally she has it and perhaps repents in tears and unspoken anguish.

The patient who does not immediately recover wants to try another physician, other remedies or a change of climate. The doctor may warn against the danger they invite, but the restless soul cries out for a change. It takes the chances of life and death, and with the latter comes the greatest of all changes in the stillness of the grave.—John A. Sleicher, in Leslie's Weekly.

GOOD PUZZLE TO WORK OUT

Occupation in Enforced Idleness Is Good Test of One's Knowledge of the Bible.

Evidently the matter of occupation when one is confined indoors is a problem to the Swiss as well as to other people. The Bonne Revue comes forward with an answer to the question: "What are we to do indoors?" Instead of bemoaning the inclement weather it says people should solve the following problem:

Divide the number of Job's camels before they were captured by the Chaldeans by the number of men sent to take Jeremiah out of the dungeon; add to the quotient the number of lords entertained at Balthazar's feast. Subtract from the sum the number of just persons who could have saved Sodom. Multiply by David's age when he commenced to reign. Divide by the number of Philistines that Samson slew with the ass's jawbone. Subtract the number of Solomon's songs; multiply by the number of days during which Job did not speak to his friends. Subtract the number of fish taken in the miracle of Jesus fishing. Add to the result the number of prophets hidden by Abdias. Subtract the number of ungrateful lepers healed by Jesus, and you will have a mysterious figure contained in the Apocalypse.

Logic of Phocion.

Why tell me that a man is a fine speaker if it is not the truth that he is speaking? Phocion, who did not speak at all, was a great deal nearer hitting the mark than Demosthenes. He used to tell the Athenians—"You can't fight Philip. You have not the slightest chance with him. He is a man who holds his tongue; he has great disciplined armies; he can brag anybody you like in your cities; and he is going on steadily with an unvarying aim toward his object; and he will infallibly beat any kind of men such as you, going on raging from shore to shore with all that rampant nonsense."

Original Confidence Man.

A story is told of old New York and of how the expression "confidence man" meant a man in whom one could not place confidence at all. It is said that some years ago a very well-dressed man with a courteous address was wont to walk up and down the principal streets of the city.

Whenever he met a stranger who looked hopeful to him he would approach the man and with the most delightfully frank manner he would ask: "My dear sir, have you confidence enough in me, an entire stranger to you, to lend me \$5 for an hour or two?"

Salaries of Naval Officers.

The pay of commissioned officers in the navy varies with rank and length of service, and there are numerous other factors which must be taken into account. The amount received in individual cases may be worked out by a study of the regulations contained in the Navy Register, which is obtainable in any well-equipped public library. The commander of a vessel of the naval auxiliary service would not be correctly called a "captain," but "master." The rates of pay of this class of officers are not set forth in the Navy Register, since they are not regularly commissioned officers of the navy.

RUSSIA'S REAL YELLOW PERIL

Drifting Sands Make Desert of 1,000 Acres of Fertile Farm Lands Every Year.

"The great enemy comes from the east. Our yellow peril does not appear in human shape. It comes in a much more dangerous and insinuating form than Mongol invasion. Slowly but surely it is advancing upon us and its vanguard has already reached the gates of Kiev."

Thus spoke some years ago, Vladimir Solovitch, the well-known Russian scientist, who foresaw the danger to Russian agriculture of the drifting masses of sand which are being steadily blown across some of the most fertile parts of Southern Russia.

The urgent nature of the danger is once more emphasized by General Mitchenko, the commander-in-chief of the Don Cossacks, who has made a report to the St. Petersburg government in which he points out that every year 1,000 square miles of fertile land in the Don Province and 1,500 square miles in the government of Astrakhan are being swallowed up by the invader and rendered unfit for cultivation.

During the past year, the drifting masses have done the greatest damage within living memory. One large agricultural colony in the Don region has had to emigrate in a westward direction for the fourth time in fifty years. General Mitchenko urgently advocates afforestation as the only way to stem the spread of the sand plague. The cost, it is figured, would only amount to a fraction of the \$750,000 which is now lost every year to Russian agriculture.—New York Sun.

BECAME A DISGRACE TO KIN

Scotch Collies Reverted to Wild State When Imported into Patagonia and Argentina.

Some years ago the shepherds of Patagonia and Argentina imported a large number of Scotch collies into those countries to help herd the sheep. But imagination seemed to spoil the companionable, affectionate and intelligent dog from the Highlands. In two or three years his entire nature changed and he became independent, snappish, sly and disobedient. Bad treatment may have had something to do with it, but by twos and threes the collies rapidly deserted the flocks and took to the woods, where they soon became wild dogs.

They have increased so fast and become so fierce in both countries that not only do they carry off small animals and fowls, but have grown so bold that they do not hesitate to attack travelers even in broad daylight. They travel in packs, and when hunted scatter to hiding places in the rocks. The Patagonian and Argentine governments have offered bounties for every wild dog's brush, and while the war of extermination may deplete both national treasuries the only effect it has had on the collies has been to make them keep to cover during the day. Every shepherd goes armed and keeps a constant lookout, but shooting has not decreased their numbers, and poison has been tried without success, as they are too shrewd to eat anything set for them.

Conflict Bismarck Forgot.

The smallest of Europe's sovereign states, Liechtenstein, which is preparing to celebrate the second century of its independence, has a monarch and an army, the Westminster Gazette states. Its finances are provided by its Prince John II, who in return nominates three of its fifteen M. P.'s. At the time of the Austro-Prussian war the principality sided with Austria and mobilized an army of 100 of all ranks to share in the fighting. But Liechtenstein's army never melted fire and Liechtenstein itself was quite overlooked in the peace negotiations at the end of the war. Fifteen years later Bismarck discovered that his country was still technically at war with this miniature state, and in strict accordance with the etiquette of such things pourparlers took place and a formal treaty of peace was signed between the two countries.

Cosmopolitan London.

A man with nothing useful to do took a walk on Aldwych and Kingsway the other day and counted noses. As a result he writes to a newspaper exploiting the cosmopolitanism of London.

He says that in 15 minutes he encountered: One Arab in flowing burnous and white turban, two Turks in frock coats and turbouches, seven obvious Americans and probably more who were not obvious, a couple of Danes wearing Alexandra Day noses and talking volubly in their native tongue; a lacour; two Indian students with gold spectacles; an alert Japanese.—New York Sun.

Food for Reflection.

In Los Angeles the other day a shop-girl was hurrying to her work when her hat blew off and an automobile ran over it. She got permission from her employer to go back, and on the way met three men, one of whom was carrying the wrecked hat. As he returned it he gave the girl a \$20 bill. The other man "chipped in" \$15 apiece. Thereupon the girl went at once and bought a \$50 hat. "I've always wanted one like that," she said, with a smile, "but I never dreamed I should have one." There are several aspects of the incident that are worth thinking about.