

PEPPERS ARE FOULAR.

Consumption of This Vegetable Is Rapidly Increasing.

In the lobster palaces and fashionable restaurants one sees dozens of persons eating baked, stuffed peppers nowadays, where formerly peppers were not on the bill in any form. "New York uses now," says a produce commission merchant in a recently published interview for the New York Commercial, "20 times as many peppers as it did 20 years ago. The city's consumption of peppers amounts to thousands of barrels annually. Then we get green peppers now from a much wider range of territory than formerly, and we have them practically the year around.

"We get peppers in winter from Cuba, and we get a few from Porto Rico. We naturally think of the pepper as a homely sort of a domestic product, but those early peppers that we get from Cuba come in smaller crates, as carefully packed as peaches would be, and they bring a high price. They go principally to the hotels and restaurants.

"We get early peppers from Florida, too, and later some from Virginia, around Norfolk, and then, as the season advances, we begin to get peppers from New Jersey, which is really the great source of our pepper supply. There are sections of Jersey in which produce farmers make a specialty of peppers, plant them by the acre and raise great crops of them.

"The enormous increased local consumption of peppers in recent years is due in considerable measure to increased demand from packers. Peppers are now more extensively used than ever before in the preparation of condiments and sauces, and there are New York packers of pickles and preserves who would think nothing of buying peppers in hundred-barrel lots. But the great increase in demand comes in still greater measure from the vastly increased foreign population of the city, and from the Italians especially, who, great consumers of all fruits and vegetables, take, with the rest of the green things they buy, quantities of peppers, eating more or less of the green peppers as they would fruit.

"So the homely pepper, once familiar to us in stuffed and pickled form, and known to us as a thing of regular but limited sale, has come to cut quite a figure as an item in the city's wholesale produce trade."

LIFE OF PARIS CAB HORSES.

Can Stand the Wear and Tear Less Than Three Years.

About 45,000 horses pull the cabs of Paris. The average life is a little less than three years. They come up from the country—three-year-olds—from the meadows of Calvados and the fields of Normandy, from Limousin and Finisterre and the Gironde. Chained and strapped into the

thills of breakers' carts, says Outing, they are driven about the city until they are broken to the city sights and sounds—to the horrible steam tram, with its discordant clamor; to the electric tram, that leaves behind it a trail of electric sparks; to passing regiments and processions, and, notably, to the policeman with the white wand. Then, being bit-broke, whip-broke, city-broke and heartbroke, he is ready for the fiacre. He goes on until he breaks his knees—and longer, even—until he has worked out his average of three years. All of which tends to make for melancholy. Cocotte has long been a favorite topic for sentimentalists. Childless women and men who do not smoke have spent, doubtless, too much ink and tears over the Paris cab horse. My interest is on the human side of things. As for Cocotte, her end is useful but ignoble. Last year Paris ate 14,840 horses—just about the annual number of horses used up in the fiacres. (In addition the good Parisians ate 257 asses and 40 mules, but that has nothing to do with the case). I used to wish that I were an honest fellow of four shins, but not in Paris—not in Paris!

INCREASE IN LONGEVITY.

Life Lengthened—Due to Preventive and Curative Medicine.

It is admitted that many lives are now prolonged which under the conditions of a century ago—or even half that period—would have inevitably been lost, says American Medicine. The introduction of vaccination and other forms of preventive and curative inoculation, including the various antitoxins; the discovery of the means and methods of anaesthesia and antiseptic; and the recognition of the importance of cleanliness, personal and circumferential, have in numberless instances accomplished what would formerly have been regarded as scientific miracles in the preservation and prolongation of human life. But in considering the broad question of the actual increase of the length of life, there are several aspects from which it must be examined. Do we mean by increased longevity that a larger proportion of individuals attain centenarian rank, or that the average of age at the time of death has become greater? Are we to understand that each individual lives longer than he would have lived under the conditions of one or more centuries ago?

The death rate has of recent years been decreasing in all the civilized countries. In this connection we must recollect that the mortality in every community varies with age. In infancy it is very high, in childhood very low, from 10 to 15 years of age it is lower than at any other period of life; then it continues low, but with gradual increase, until middle age is passed, after which it rises rapidly in every succeeding decade. We find that, according

to the common consensus of statisticians, the only trustworthy means of conducting this inquiry is by examination of the life tables, by which we come to ascertain the expectation of life at each year of age. Such tables form the basis of all the calculations of insurance companies, and are constructed from the mean population for a series of years at various ages, and the mean annual number of deaths at the corresponding ages. Now, it is known that the contagious, infectious and gastrointestinal diseases, which furnish so large a proportion of fatal cases in infancy and childhood, do not cause even five per cent. of the deaths which occur after the age of 45.

On the other hand, the deaths of persons over 45 from alcoholism, cancer, tuberculosis, diabetes, old age, apoplexy, diseases of the heart and blood vessels, of the respiratory and digestive organs, of the kidneys and bladder, and from violence, constitute about 90 per cent. of all such deaths. In fact, the deaths from some of these causes, in spite of all sanitation, have increased at such a rate as to cause serious misgivings for the future. In the city of New York the death rate from cancer and from diseases of the kidneys (Bright's disease in its various forms) has doubled in 30 years; so that in some respects the saving of life among the young, by the partial suppression of contagious and septic diseases, tends to be counterbalanced by an increasing mortality after middle life from diseases depending more on personal habits than on external causes.

We find that during the past half century the expectation of life for males at birth has increased by nearly four years. But the lowering of the death rate and the increase of the expectation of life do not necessarily imply increased longevity to the race as a whole. The saving of so many fragile young lives has the necessary effect of throwing forward into the later periods of life a large number of weakly persons, and the average stamina of the population is consequently reduced; so that when the decline of life begins and the physical powers decay, this undue proportion of weakly lives tends to increase the mortality at advanced ages.

Durable Wood.

One of the most durable woods is sycamore. A statue made from it, now in the museum of Gizeh, at Cairo, is known to be nearly 6,000 years old. Notwithstanding this great age, it is asserted that the wood itself is entirely sound and natural in appearance.

Glass Globes.

In fitting on gas globes it is a common error to screw them too tightly. Room should be allowed for the expansion of the glass when it has become heated by the gas, for otherwise a breakage is inevitable.

"CANALS" OF MARS.

Lines on Charts May Be Due to Physiological Influences.

Although the planet Mars is not now well placed for direct scrutiny, some of the questions excited by past observations are still provoking discussion. In Knowledge, a periodical founded by the late Richard Proctor, two astronomers give reason for regarding with skepticism most of the talk about "canals." One of the writers is M. Antoniadi, an assistant of M. Flammarion, and the other is E. Walter Maunder, at one time president of the British Astronomical association. While conceding that a limited portion of the linear markings have an objective reality, both of these writers give reasons for thinking that the majority of them, as charted by Schiaparelli and Lowell, are not genuine.

For one of the objections now offered the astronomers are indebted to an English amateur, Mr. Green. He pointed out some time ago that in drawing the vague boundary between two areas of slightly different color, gray and orange, there was a tendency to emphasize unduly the contrast and to make the border darker than it should be. Following up this hint, M. Antoniadi has examined Schiaparelli's charts, and finds that the distinguished Italian has intensified the shading in a large number of such places. He is convinced that fully one-half of the lines which have been introduced into the most reputable drawings of the Martian geography are the product of physiological influences alone.

Mr. Maunder brings to bear on the subject another class of testimony. Experiments have been made with a number of selected school children. Charts which purported to represent the surface of Mars, but which contained no "canals," were hung on a wall to be copied. Almost invariably lines were put into the drawings which had no precedent in the originals. Some of these were introduced as borders to faintly colored and indistinct tracts, thus lending partial confirmation to Mr. Green's theory. Others were drawn between well defined spots. Finally there was a general disposition to connect with straight lines microscopic markings which had been put into the charts with studied irregularity. This last fact derives additional significance when it is learned that at least two "canals," usually represented as absolutely continuous, break up into a series of dots under careful telescopic observation.

Marries to Reform.

A woman seldom marries a man to reform him unless he has money and is miserly.—Chicago Daily News.

His Deduction.

She—I understand his wife speaks six languages.

He—Indeed! All at once?—Yonkers Statesman.