

# FOOLING THE PUBLIC

TRICKS OF THE TRAVELING RETAIL GROCERY AGENTS.

GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR

The Price May Be Small, But the Goods Are Expensive Even at That and Net Big Profits.

You may know something about the modus operandi of the traveling grocer, and how the house after paying him 25 per cent. commission still makes a princely profit. There may be some things, inside affairs that it is well that the people in general may know. It will be found on close investigation that the average Mercantile Supply company, Buyers' association or whatever name is used to gull the unsuspecting farmer, consists of one or two schemers, who have a small office room in some large city, and a back room in the near neighborhood where the "stores" are stored and the re-packing and the mixing done. The re-packing and the mixing are two important parts of the work of the "company." When the "representative" sells John Jones 100 pounds of sugar for \$4.60; 25 cases of canned goods at \$2.40 a case; three boxes of dried fruits at ten cents a pound, a few gallons of extract at a bargain and ten or 15 pounds of spices at a profit of 200 per cent., the order is sent to the "home office." There it is recorded. The grocer is sent down to the wholesale grocery house which generally stands in with the concern, brings back a lot of ordinary bulk dried fruits, the cases of seconds or thirds, in canned goods, and the average run of poor spices. In the packing room the dried fruits are overhauled, washed up if possible as in the case of prunes, and packed in boxes, supposed to contain full 25 pounds, but only run from 18 to 22; branded with some fictitious mark and shipped out with the other supplies. The spices are dumped out, and again run through a mill with a lot of ground nut-shells, bark or other matter, and perhaps some bran or other cheap material is added. The extracts are of the cheapest class, synthetic, and the pure fruit flavors are products of coal-tar, doctored up with coloring matter to look good. The label is the only pure thing about it aside from the glass in the bottle containing it.

In fact, the tricks of the box-car outfits are legion. The teas sold are never up to the samples shown. In one case a schemer traveled over the country carrying with him samples of Ceylon teas that were worth 45 cents a pound wholesale. He agreed to supply this tea at 50 cents. He received large orders. Every order was filled with teas that cost only 20 cents a pound, and the funny thing about it was that there was no kicking, because the farmers knew nothing about teas, and were satisfied as long as they thought that they had a fine Ceylon article. The same way with coffee. If there is anything that even coffee experts know little about it is coffee. It is a wise merchant who knows the classes of coffees he is handling. The box-car man generally shows up a cheap big-berry, tells all about it being a great mountain Mocha and sells three pounds for a dollar, and buys it at 16 or 17 cents a pound. Should the local grocer try to sell the same grade to his customers at such a price, there would go up a roar that would raise the roof of the store. Still the farmer continues to bite at such baits, and doesn't squeal.

**The Drinking Orchid.**  
One of the most remarkable plants known to horticulturists is the drinking orchid, which is found in South America. This orchid takes a drink whenever it feels thirsty, by means of a tube which it lets down into the water. The tube when not in use is coiled upon the top of the plant.

The formation of the orchid is different from others of its species, having sharp leaves, lancehead-shaped, growing round the root and radiating from it. From the center of the plant hangs the tube, about one-eighth of an inch thick and one-fourth of an inch wide. When touched it gradually contracts and rolls itself up in a spiral-like coil. As a rule these orchids are to be found growing directly over the water, or where water has been, and in the latter case it is almost pathetic to see how the tube will work its way over the ground to a pool or river.

**Where the Money Is.**  
More than 40 per cent. of the population of the United States proper lives in less than a dozen eastern states. These states are known as manufacturing states. In the banks of one, New York state, is contained nearly 40 per cent. of the money of the country. New York city alone has in its banks 25 per cent. of the money in circulation. This has been made possible by the conditions that enable the large cities to draw trade from all sections of the country. In fact, great cities must have support of a large territory. But one of the great evils and which injures the masses who are residents of agricultural district is the system of drawing support from local towns and communities to the cities. This system takes from the rural districts the surplus wealth that should be retained to build them up.

**No Need for Pessimism.**  
Plainly, Mrs. Lackwit was troubled as she sought out her husband in his study.  
"George, I'm actually worried about Johnny's future. He has absolutely no head for mathematics; and to-day the principal of the school told me that, much as he disliked to say it, our boy was scarcely able to compose a line of correct English."  
Mr. Lackwit was less disturbed at the news.  
"Let's not get discouraged, Maria," said he. "Johnny may never make much of a bank president or a magazine editor, but his case might be less hopeful. At the worst, he can still become a writer of popular songs."

**Why He Stays Away.**  
Mrs. Jones—Do you feel that when your husband is away from home he is thinking of you?  
Mrs. Smith—Yes. He thinks of me, and that's why he stays away.

# NOT A GOOD SYSTEM.

How the Mail Order Business Injures the Agricultural Sections.

We must admit that the mail order system is a legitimate business if it is carried on legitimately. It is a great American privilege to carry on trade in this way. Yet the principle from an American standpoint or any other standpoint that is consistent with equal rights for all is entirely wrong. Through the mail order system the merchants suffer a direct loss. To them it is an unfair competition. It diverts trade from established channels. The loss of the merchants in the local town means a loss to the town itself, to every resident of the town and the surrounding community. It is the business of the city or town that makes it a live place or a dead one. Dependent upon the activity of a town is to a great extent the value of all farm lands in its trade territory. Thus is the farmer affected by any system that causes a deterioration in his home town. Yet the farmers are the main supporters of the catalogue houses. They assist in feeding the snake that is stealing their eggs and they little realize it. They are as vitally interested in the upbuilding of their home town as the merchant. It is for their benefit as well as for all in the community that the town is there. There is a more vital phase of the question that few farmers realize. That is the evils resulting from the vast capital that is concentrated in the large financial centers. It is this surplus of money that makes it easy to build up trusts and combinations. These trusts affect the affairs and the prosperity of the farmer. He does not stop to think that when he sends his money to the distant concern that he is doing just so much to help along the trusts.

**HELPS FOR TOWN BUILDERS.**  
Some years ago on bill boards and street cars and in the pages of the magazines were run a series of advertising cards the prominent feature of which was "Spotted Town." There can be little doubt as to the whole some lessons taught by this unique advertisement. The town that is not kept in good condition, its walks in good repair, its streets well graded, and all neat and clean, is a reflection upon the residents of the place, and is evidence that the town is already dead or fast dying. Should you make a good impression upon strangers, keep streets clean, business places attractive, and don't forget that the front yards and the general conditions of the residences indicate the character of the people who reside in them.

Residents of agricultural sections who a few years ago looked upon the automobile as a nuisance, are beginning to realize that it is a great factor in road improvement, and has brought about renewed interest in country roads and their betterment, with a corresponding benefit to the farmers. It is as much to the interest of the people of a town that there be good roads leading to it, as it is to the farmers who must use them in hauling their goods to market.

There is a vast difference in the farmers of to-day and the farmers of a quarter of a century ago. It is wonderful how the improvements brought into existence in a single generation will change conditions. Every innovation that makes life in the towns more desirable, also finds a way of conferring a benefit upon the farmers. No longer need for the resident of the farm district to not have all the up-to-date things that can be found in the finest city homes. The telephone and the rural delivery has brought him within a "stone throw" of the city.

**Living for the Children.**  
Froebel's sentiment "Come, let us live for our children" rests on a sound philosophic basis. To live for them is to call out the noblest impulses of parenthood. And we cannot live for them in the truest sense until we become familiar with their needs. It is in the endeavor to meet those needs in the largest way possible that we find our own characters richly recompensed in strong and well-developed parenthood. We practically become what we are by what we have done or left undone, what we are willing or unwilling to do for our children. The principle is universal, and should find its extension and application among children at all times and in all places. Has not the church lost ground in failing to recognize the primary and fundamental place of the child in society? If so, it is obvious how that lost ground may be recovered.—Hornet Review.

**The Guile of the Greeks.**  
At first the more thoughtful ones regarded the gift suspiciously. Then, talking further thought, they said, one to the other:  
"Aw, what's the dif? It's only a near-art horse, anyhow. Now, if it was one of those chug-chug wagons coming in here to break the speed limit laws we wouldn't stand for it for a minute."  
Thus it was, the victim of over-confidence, that Troy fell.—Puck.

**Anticipating Age.**  
Why do people allow themselves to fret about getting old? There are those who anticipate it and fear it as if it were the most melancholy fate that could befall one, and many of them have never been really young in spirit.  
And youth is more a matter of spirit than it is of body. Enthusiasm, interest in everything, warmth of heart and breadth of feeling, are the qualities that stand for youth.  
**Would Have Jewish Youth Go West.**  
Jacob H. Schiff was the principal speaker at the annual dinner of the Jewish benevolent society B'nai B'rith at Tuxedo hall, New York city. Mr. Schiff advised the Jewish youth to go west, saying that greater opportunities and a warmer welcome awaited him there than would be his share on the eastern seaboard.

**Why the Fool Irritates.**  
The most irritating thing about a fool is that he seems to be enjoying

# OUR FASHION LETTER



TWO CHARMING GOWNS

It is impossible to write a letter on the subject of fashions without speaking of the popularity of gray materials, for they are with us, on every side. Some of the most effective summer gowns, of a simple order, which I have yet seen this year were made of cool gray linen, with fine hand-embroideries, on the skirt and bolero, carried out in silk-finished thread. These frocks, when worn with gray linen shoes and gray suede gloves, are quite enchanting in their Quaker-like simplicity, and they invite the collaboration of cloche hats in delicate ivory straw, with puffed net forming the full crown and, at one side, near the front, a cluster of beautiful roses or of waxen water lilies.  
Some of the newest models in voile de soie show perfectly shaped skirts decorated with a number of tucks on the hem of the skirt. Needless to say, these tucks are always stitched by hand, and they are arranged in grad-



Robe of Blue Linen, with Insertions of White Linen Embroidery.

uated widths. At the extreme hem they measure about five inches, and then they are reduced each one-half an inch as they run up towards the knees. For linen dresses a favorite style of trimming is a combination of deep tucks and hand-embroidery, three tucks, a band of embroidery, and so on. For afternoon gowns, voile de soie is exceedingly fashionable, but the material for costumes of this order is Indian gauze, which can be obtained in all the pastel shades, and which gives lovely effects when inset with old yellow lace and adorned with ribbon-work embroideries.  
The walking frocks of this season are very charming, and delightfully unpractical! They are not long, in the sense that they can be held up; and they are not short, in the sense

**SKUNKS EAT GRASSHOPPERS.**  
Hitherto Shunned Animal is Declared to Be the Farmers' Friend.  
Skunks are the farmers' friends, according to the biological survey of the department of agriculture, and deserve to be cultivated rather than destroyed, says the Pittsburg Dispatch.  
The experts of this bureau have found that the skunk, shunned and avoided as it is, is the greatest grasshopper exterminator known. It takes rank ahead of the red-headed woodpecker, barnyard fowls and meadow larks. In the past the skunk has been an animal regarded as worthy only of the price of its pelt or the lard its fat would produce.  
Now the biological survey insists that when a field is overrun with grasshoppers all that is necessary for the farmer to do is to gather together a working force of skunks and turn them loose in the infested area. The skunk will do the rest.  
While skunks are not animals to be handled with impunity, a herd of domesticated skunks might be kept on

# GOOD WEDDING CAKE

HOW TO MIX INGREDIENTS WITH BEST RESULTS.

Rich Materials Need to Be Carefully Handled if Success is Desired—Right Temperature of Oven is Important.

Old-fashioned wedding cake—Fruit for this should be prepared in advance as follows: Six cups of currants, washed dried and picked. Three cups sultana raisins; three cups of citron cut in fine strips, one-half cup candied lemon peel, two cups of almonds, blanched and cut in shreds. In a warm bowl mix four cups of sugar, granulated or confectioner's, beat these together until very light. Break ten eggs into another bowl, but do not beat them. Cover a waiter with a big sheet of paper; sift four pinns flour over this, add the fruit and the following spices; two teaspoons each of nutmeg, mace and cinnamon, one tablespoon each of cloves and allspice. Mix these together and stand aside ready for use. Have ready in a little pitcher one-half pint best brandy. Select a deep cake tin and grease with butter, line it inside and bottom with four or five thicknesses of very coarse wrapping paper, which you must use. Have your oven hot and the fire banked so it will not burn out quickly. New beat the butter and sugar once more, add the eggs two at a time, beating the mixture after each addition. When the eggs are all used, turn in the flour and fruit with brandy, mix thoroughly, pour into the prepared cake tin, cover with several thicknesses of brown paper, and bake eight hours, keeping the oven steady and clear. Remove from the oven and allow it to stand on tin sheet until quite cold. Ice with a thin coat of white icing top and sides and stand in a cool oven to dry, then give it a second coat of thick icing and ornament according to fancy. An icing made of white of egg, a few drops of cold water and confectioner's sugar is the best for the thick icing.  
An excellent white cake for the bride to cut is this: Take the whites of eight eggs stiffly beaten, one pound of flour, one cup of sweet milk, one-half pound of butter (scant), one-half teaspoonful of soda, two teaspoonfuls of cream of tartar. Cream the butter and sugar and add slowly the milk and soda, dissolving the soda in tepid water. Sift the cream of tartar with the flour and add the flour alternately with the whites of eggs. Flavor with vanilla, and bake in a square loaf, or a round tube tin.  
Claret punch. If liquor in mild form is to be served, the following punch will be found most satisfactory: Put in the bottom of your punch bowl six tablespoonfuls of pulverized sugar, juice of six oranges and nine lemons, a half pint of red currant, or some similar liquor, one pint of brandy, six bottles of plain soda and six quarts of claret. Sliced fruit, like pineapple, oranges, strawberries, etc., add to the beauty of the punch and also to the flavor.

**Strawberries in Meringue Shells.**  
These shells are easily made, if the cook understands that a coolish oven is an absolute necessity in cooking the meringue. Beat the whites of six eggs with a pinch of salt to a stiff froth, using an egg whip instead of a patent beater. Add by degrees a pound of powdered sugar. When the sugar is all beaten in, shape the meringue into a dozen oval forms about an inch and a half high. Dredge with sugar and drop in a baking pan lined with paper. Set in a very cool oven where they may rise slowly and become firm in about half an hour. They must not be allowed to color in the least. Cool for half an hour, then dampen the bottom of the meringue shells by gently pressing the soft inside up against the sugary outside. This gives a thin shell of meringue, leaving plenty of space for the berries. Set in the sun or a drying oven until perfectly dry. When ready to serve, fill half the shells with strawberry ice cream and the other half with a lemon or orange water ice. Or fill half the shells with mashed and sweetened berries, and the rest with whipped cream or pistachio cream and put the two together. Serve with a delicate white cake.

**To Clean Choice China.**  
Have made to order at any broom-maker's a set of brooms about ten inches in length and five inches in circumference. These brooms should be made just like a whisk broom, but perfectly round. Hot water can be used, as with a little care in handling dishes it is not necessary to put the hands in the water—the greatest recommendation for the use of the brooms. They will slip inside cups, glasses and pitchers; will rub off stains, and sticky substances easily, and are particularly fine for easy pans and pots. Keep three brooms in use; one for glasses, one for dishes and silver, and one for bottles and frying pans, promoting them from one class to another as they become worn. The old brooms are excellent for cleaning sinks, closets, and garbage pails. After using, pour boiling water over them, shake, and hang up to dry. They will keep sweet and clean longer than any dish mop.

**Shabby Carpets.**  
To clean and brighten a shabby carpet, cut an ounce of yellow soap into small squares, and make into a lather with a pint of boiling water. Add to this a quart of water and one ounce of borax. Place the mixture on the range and bring it to a boil; then remove it, and when quite cold add an ounce each of alcohol and ammonia and half an ounce of glycerin. Wipe over a small portion of the carpet at a time, and rub vigorously with a clean flannel (which should be repeatedly turned as it gets soiled) dipped in the mixture, until all the spots are removed and the color revived. When you have finished you will be delighted to find how nice your once shabby carpet looks.

**Antidote.**  
Rais UH had been solicited to go into variety.  
"It's the spice of life, you know," said the representative of vaudeville.  
"I would like a change of condiment," admitted the bandit chief; "they have been peppering me so much lately."  
Deftly dodging a volley from the Moroccan army, he told the press agent he would see him later.

# Washington Gossip

Interesting Bits of News Picked Up Here and There at the National Capital

## PRESIDENT ORDERS CUT IN CANAL ZONE EXPENSES

WASHINGTON.—By direction of the president there is to be another reorganization of the isthmian canal commission. This time the principal branch of the commission affected will be that in Washington, which has been executing the orders of Chief Engineer Goethals with reference to the dispatch of labor and supplies to the canal zone. Now, however, the president has given imperative instructions that "the most rigid economy consistent with the highest degree of efficiency" shall be the policy. As a result an order has been issued abolishing the auditor's office and placing the work of auditing the accounts of the commission under the auditor for the war department. The purchasing business will be entrusted to an officer of the army.  
Joseph Bucklin Bishop of New York, who has been in charge of the office here since the reorganization some months ago, may proceed to the isthmus and perform the duties of secretary there. The advisability of this action is now under consideration. The president has stated emphatically that Mr. Bishop must be retained at his salary of \$10,000 per annum. David R. Ross, purchasing agent, and Ernest S. Benson, general



auditor, who also received \$10,000 each, have resigned. The former will probably be succeeded by Maj. Hodges of the engineering corps of the army, whose army pay will be increased to \$5,000.  
It is said the president expects criticisms of the canal administration during the next session, both from Democrats and from representatives of that element in his own party which is not in sympathy with his policies generally. As rigid economy is the surest way to avoid just criticism, he has instructed Secretary Taft to cut expenses to the bone, while at the same time seeing to it that the dirt is kept flying.  
Secretary Taft has forwarded to the president reports showing that, exclusive of \$50,000,000 originally paid to the French company for all its rights in the property, there had actually been spent up to last March only about \$34,000,000 out of a total appropriation of \$145,000,000. The total sum appropriated for actual construction is a little over \$74,000,000. Thus the commission has available for purposes of construction about \$40,000,000 with which to operate until congress authorizes the expenditures for the next fiscal year, beginning July 1, 1908.

## CONTROVERSY OVER THE FAIRBANKS' BIRTHPLACE

"Much was made of a picture in the book representing the house in which Mr. Fairbanks was born. As the house was burned a few years after his birth and no picture had been taken of it, Mr. Fairbanks at the request of Mr. Smith (my father) made a rough pencil sketch from memory which was dressed up for publication." This, Mr. Smith says, is all the connection Mr. Fairbanks had with the picture.  
In the autobiography Mr. Smith says Mr. Fairbanks was four years of age when the cabin was burned, and Indians are pointing to the assertion that Mr. Fairbanks can sketch with accuracy a building that was destroyed when he was four years old as a demonstration of his wonderful memory.  
The author's son, William Wolff Smith, in reply to a recent article in an eastern weekly, has taken up the assertion that the autobiography is inaccurate and that the picture is one of a series of fakes resorted to for the purpose of promoting the vice president's political ambitions. William Wolff Smith has issued the following statement:  
"The picture of the cabin in which Mr. Fairbanks was born is a log cabin. This great question, which threatens to become an issue in the next presidential campaign is causing excitement among the sons of Indiana. In 'The Life and Speeches of Charles Warren Fairbanks,' by W. H. Smith, is shown a picture of a log cabin in which the vice president is reported to have been born.  
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## TRAGIC FATE BLIGHTS LIFE OF AMBASSADOR

IT is the irony of fate that at the height of his career, with no blemish on his reputation, and through no fault of his own, Baron Speck von Sternburg, should German ambassador, should stand upon the brink of diplomatic and social oblivion. But such is the tragic fate. A cancerous growth, terribly disfiguring the ambassador's face, has apparently ruined beyond repair a career full of promise and the social prospects of his beautiful American wife, and it is understood here that Germany will send another ambassador some time within the next six months.  
The baron caught this infection of the face, the nature of which physicians do not seem to understand clearly, during his service for the kaiser in India, and within the last year it has developed in the hideous fashion peculiar to such attacks, spreading well over one side of his face. He has, however, made a brave fight from the start, appealing to the foremost medical authorities of this country and Europe for aid, and his plucky effort to prevent the disease from spoiling his diplomatic career has won the keen sympathy of Washington people.  
The baron hurried across the water as soon as congress adjourned last spring and subjected himself to a heroic course of treatment at health resorts. From these places he went to the German Spas for the help they could give him. Reports that have reached this country, however, are to the effect that he has no more than held his own. The disfigurement continues. His friends here, then, felt no little apprehension when they saw a notice that Baron and Baroness Speck von Sternburg had been commanded to take breakfast with the kaiser. Sure enough within a day or two after the ambassador was the guest of his ruler a German paper which frequently has the right tip on court affairs published a report that Sternburg would be recalled. This was denied very mildly, indeed, by officials of the German foreign office. They stated that there was no intention to recall Sternburg "at present," or words to that effect.

**MEN BUSY CLEANING AND PAINTING WHITE HOUSE**  
THE White House will be spick and span, on the outside as well as inside, when the presidential family returns from Oyster Bay next fall. Twenty painters are now at work on the old building.  
The White House is constructed of Virginia sandstone, which is exceedingly porous. Mrs. Adams, the first mistress of the president's house, as it was then called, complained bitterly to her friends of the coldness and dampness of the building during her first winter there. There were no stoves or other heating apparatus except the large grates in the executive residence then, and the roads were so muddy that wood in sufficient quantity could not be hauled to supply the grates. This condition was overcome by painting the sandstone with a coat of white lead. Each year this has been repeated, until there is a layer more than a quarter of an inch in thickness on the walls.  
Last year, instead of putting on another coat of white lead, a chemical preparation was used to cleanse the walls. This caused the paint to crack and in many places peel off, making the building unsightly.  
The painters are now engaged in scraping off the century's accumulation of white lead. When this is done the building will receive several coats