

The Market for Perfection.

Supreme excellence always finds a market and a good price. No matter what one does, if it is done better than anybody else can do it, it meets a demand. A man who can play 20 games of chess at one time while he is blindfolded earns a large wage by his skill. The peaches put up by a woman who can prepare them so that they taste a little better than any other canned peaches command twice as high a price as the product of a less successful rival. It is not only the artist like Paderewski or Caruso who makes fame and fortune by his unique gifts. In varying degree, it is anybody who in the most humble sphere of life achieves unique excellence. The Youth's Companion tells of a certain New England hotel that is famed for its good cooking. The secret of it is largely this: the proprietor seeks far and wide through the region for women who have a reputation for making some single dish. Mrs. Brown's fried chicken, Mrs. Smith's doughnuts and Mrs. Johnson's pandowdy are famous. The shrewd hotel keeper offers these women a handsome sum of money to fry chicken and make doughnuts and pandowdy for six weeks for his fortunate guests. So superiority again finds its market and its praise. Ambition to excel is good common sense. A great king may build himself a monument designed to eclipse all other royal monuments. A rich man may try to roll up a fortune bigger by millions than other fortunes. But neither king nor millionaire can become exclusive possessor of the rewards of superiority. Good, plain work superlatively well done fits into the scheme of the universe. It makes the world richer, by contributing its share to that perfection which is civilization's constant quest.

American Gastronomy.

It is generally recognized that the digestive organs of the American are fearfully and wonderfully made. In no respect is this more apparent than in the consumption of so-called "sea food," from the Atlantic seaboard to the Mississippi valley. The Chicago epicure may be forgiven for liking Cape Cod and Blue Points opened a thousand miles from tidewater. But among the strangers who sojourn in New York hotels and dine in New York restaurants, there is an unhalloved taste for fish which should either disgust the eater or induce ptomaine poisoning, or both. Weak fish, when served under the alias of "sea trout," are devoured by visitors from the west, in season and out, whether softened by hot sun or hardened and spoiled by cold storage. The wise man, disregarding all the time-honored warnings, knows that he may eat his fill of lobsters and crabs, and may even wash them down with milk, provided they were alive when cooked. But not all the digestive tablets in America can act as antidote to bluefish which have been dead for days in the hold of a smack, or have been laid out in the arctic atmosphere of a cold storage plant, to be resurrected after several moons have waxed and waned. A good sauce may (temporarily) conceal the fact that fish cannot be embalmed. So, says the New York Post, we suppose the Bostonian will go on eating red snappers from the Gulf of Mexico, while the Galveston gourmet enjoys "live cod" beneath a tropical sun.

A "Burning" Subject.

Prof. Flux, who has just edited a new edition of Jevons' "Coal Question," first published 40 years ago, shows that that writer has been much misunderstood, and generally reassures the British public as to the day when it must do without coal. The rate of increase of coal consumption during the last 20 years Prof. Flux proved to have been materially less than during the preceding 20. But this diminution is not constant, as the increase was slower in the decade 1885-94 than in the decade following. The average annual increase Prof. Flux puts at two per cent. If the present rate of increase is maintained till 1954 the total output a year will then be 569 millions of tons, according to the London Tribune. As there is a visible supply of 100,000 millions of tons, with a probable, as yet unproved, supply of 40,000 millions more, four-fifths of the former will still be intact in 1954. So that even the great-grandchildren of the present generation will not feel that the danger of a coalless hearth is pressing.

Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona, meet and form a point upon a spur of the Carizo mountains. At no other place on the globe do we find four states, territories or provinces uniting to form such a junction, remarks the Boston Traveler. The states are so evenly divided that there is but one "four corners" in the country. This point is not easy of access, and few tourists ever see it, yet a monument stands at the point, erected by United States surveyors and inscribed with the names of the states whose boundaries meet there.

A Fair Guide and a False

By Walter E. Grogan

(Copyright, 1906, by Joseph B. Bowles.)

"You understand your instructions perfectly, captain?"
"Perfectly, sir."
"It is a matter of grave importance."
"It shall be accomplished."
"You are very certain. I may remind you, captain, that there have been occasions when—well, when instructions have not been carried out quite successfully."
I drew myself up to my full six feet of height.
"General," I said, "these others were bunglers."
"I know you are brave, but—" He paused, shuffling some papers uneasily. "Remember, carry this safely to Beresford, and we have Monsieur D'Eaubain and his cavalry in a nutcracker."
"It is already done, sir."
"You will take Barestro with you as guide."
"As you will, general, but I have little faith in him."
The general looked up sharply. "Why?" he asked.
"In truth, sir, I lost a matter of seven sovereigns to him at ecarte, and I am a master of ecarte. Ergo, he cheats; ergo, he may not be trusted."
"Pshaw!" said the general, testily. "You take Barestro with you as guide."

I saluted and clattered through the door.
Within an hour I rode out at the head of my half-troop. The day was fair; a royal sun, a broad, blue sky, and a soft breeze to temper the heat. With me rode Barestro, a lank, lean, ungainly man, a cowardly fellow with a face like parchment stretched over a death's-head. I carried a rough map, on which were marked the positions of the French troops as far as we had located them, and it was this map I had to carry to Beresford.

We rode forward all that day, making a considerable detour to avoid falling in with the French. It was difficult ground, hilly and rough, and as night approached and found us in a wilder country than ever, my doubts of the rascal guide grew.

"Barestro, you will ride by my side on the left," I said grimly. "It is better so."

The rogue turned pale at the gleam of my pistol barrel. If ever I saw guilt, it was in that rascal's parchment face and his narrow, furtive eyes. "Indeed, I am guiding you aright," he protested. "In a moment we turn to the right, and there below you shall see the village of Talmiera. And Gen. Beresford's army is but half a day's march further on."

I grunted, and presently below us we saw the village, only a matter of ten minutes' ride.

There was an inn standing in the street, and in front of this I halted my men. In answer to my shout, the host came running to me. He was a subservient fellow and bowed most prodigiously.

On the first landing of the crooked stairway we now ascended there were two doors fronting us. At one stood the host, bowing like a treacherous mandarin and waving his trembling hand towards it. We had reached the last step when a woman's cry, loud, shrill, imploring, rang out from the second room.

"God! What is that?" I cried.
The host came forward, beaming with one of the most atrocious smiles I have ever seen.

"My prisoner, senor."
"Your prisoner!" I echoed in amazement. "What! Are you a belligerent, that you make prisoners?"

"Senor, I am Portuguese. She is French spy. I lock her up." He grinned ingratiatingly. "She not like being locked up. She scream—but no matter."

"I will see her," I said suddenly.
The host looked troubled and eyed the door doubtfully.

"She is very safe, senor," he said.
"I must examine her," I answered.
"She may give me valuable information."

I took the key, inserted it and pulled open the door, for, by some freak of the bulider, the door opened on to the landing.

As I jerked open the door, I disclosed a picture. Before me stood a small, graceful figure in a very frenzy of passion.

She caught her breath quickly, looked from the host to me, from me to the host.

"Ah!" she cried. "You are a British officer!"

"Capt. Netherton, of his majesty's—th Light Dragoons," I acknowledged.
"Oh, I am so glad, so glad! I have been locked in by this creature, and—oh! it is such a long story, and—ah—!" She broke off in an exclamation of terror.

"That man—why is that man with you?" she asked hurriedly, pointing at Barestro.

"He is my guide."
"Your guide! Then you are in danger, sir—in great danger! He is a traitor, a scoundrel, a villain! He is a spy for D'Eaubain!"

I swung round at that and slapped my hand on my pistol. Barestro opened his mouth wide at the lady's disclosure of his guilt, and was about to speak when he saw the movement of my hand. Suddenly ducking his head, he charged straight at me, catching me about the center of my belt. When I had recovered my breath, he had flown down the stairs and was racing

up the main street. The innkeeper also had disappeared.

I turned to the lady.
"Madam," I said, "I have a duty to perform. I must question you. These rogues have said you are a French spy."

"Yes. How clumsy a device! As though they could expect to blind you, Capt. Netherton!"

Although a pretty tribute that went straight to my heart.

"My name is Grace," she commenced.

"Most apt," I murmured.

"This morning I escaped from Corbora."

"This morning!" I exclaimed, jumping up. "From Corbora?" We knew that Corbora was the headquarters of the pillaging cavalry.

"Yes. I hid in a wood all day and came here but an hour ago."

"But Corbora is 25 miles away!"

"Oh, no—not more than four."

"Not more than four! Egad, but this is Talmiera!"

"Yes," she answered. Then she rose. "Ah, I see! Oh! how treacherous! Your guide has led you towards Corbora when you—wanted to go elsewhere."

"To Gen. Beresford."
"And your map? It was rough, was it not? Talmiera not marked? No? Or, if so, he made the map? Yes?"

I took out the map and we both examined it by the light of a candle.

"Talmiera is not marked! You trusted Barestro! You came from Gen. Boxall? Yes? But do not lose heart. I know the country. I will guide you. I long to do something for my beloved England."

"But—" I commenced.

"You do not doubt me? Why, a small party of the French are bivouacking only a mile from here. Come, I will show you their fires, and you will no longer doubt me."

She showed me from an upstairs window not more than two miles away, the lights of a bivouac fire. I was ashamed of my excess of caution, I hesitated no longer.

In a few minutes we rode out, with as much haste as we might make. Miss Smith was mounted on a horse



Her Head Touched My Shoulder.

I had borrowed from the inn, and rode as my guide beside me. All that night we rode as fast as might be, for at the start, on high ground, we could distinctly catch the sound of a pursuing squadron. When morning broke, we were badly spent, jogging up a hill towards a wood. From our advantageous position we could see a matter of seven miles, and not a trooper was in sight. We had outdistanced our enemies.

Seeing the condition of our horses, I determined to bivouac in the wood, and halting my men, rode forward with the corporal to find a suitable place.

I placed the sentries most advantageously and then went back to snatch an hour or so of sleep. I had spoken to the sergeant-major, and seen to my charger, when I chanced to miss my fair guide. She was not in the camp. I questioned the men hurriedly. The corporal had seen her ride towards the road from which we had diverged to the clearing. I strode in that direction with the first tremor of a vague misgiving in my heart.

Something white on the bole of a tree caught my eye. It was a sheet of paper pinned to the oak by a small knife. I took it down. It was a short note addressed to me.

"My dear Capt. Netherton," it ran. "Thank you for your most agreeable escort. I need it no longer. Your guide was right, after all—Corbora is not near Talmiera, but is near here. I fear you have been riding away from your own troops all night. Those were the bivouac fires of Gen. Beresford's advance guard we saw last night. I fear also your plan will fail, for I shall see Gen. D'Eaubain in a short while. You see, my mother was English, but my father is French. I take after my father. A thousand thanks for all your care of me. Adieu.—Adele Bredigny."

I smothered a curse, tore up the note, and turned to meet the squadron of the—th Hussars, who had chased us all night.

Champion Scottish Deerhound.



From stereograph, copyright, by Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.
This grand specimen of Scottish deerhound is St. Renan's Ranger, the property of Mr. Edmund L. Mackenzie of New York. This hound has won more championships than any dog of his breed in the world.

RAISE POULTRY OR MOVE

HAWKEYE TOWN THAT IS ONE LARGE INCUBATOR.

Unwritten Law of Montezuma Is That All Residents Shall Breed Chickens or Be Excluded from Society.

Montezuma, Ia.—"Love me, love my hen," is the motto which could be written with propriety over an illuminated gateway to this little town. If you do not raise chickens you cannot live in the town, enjoy its society or send your children to school.

A few have tried to live in Montezuma without engaging in the poultry industry either for pleasure or profit, but they have always found their dislike for chickens growing into a sort of barrier against friendly intercourse with their neighbors and they came to be almost social outcasts. Their children were hooted at school, called "snobs" and told that their parents were too lazy to work or raise chickens.

These unpleasant conditions and real ostracism from the society of Montezuma were endured long, but at last the victims yielded. A delivery man left a jag of lumber and a few rods of wire netting and several mysterious boxes, from which flitted noisy, clucking and crowing chickens. The next day the family joined the chicken raisers and took its place in society.

This little town raises more chickens per capita than any other town in America. Here everybody who is "anybody" raises poultry. The back yards of every resident are dotted with chicken houses and exercise pens, while the town is practically hedged in with chicken farms. Every householder, man, woman and child, knows how to breed, hatch, rear, feed and care for broilers, roasters, layers and exhibition fowls; how to build sheds, coops, brooders and houses for large and small assortments of chickens. Almost every man and woman is a specialist on diseases of poultry, knows how much red pepper to give and when to use real castor oil.

Those who believe that dead chickens are the only good variety to have on the place simply cannot live here. Gardening is mingled with the lost arts. There is little to do but raise poultry. The industry has woven itself with the affairs of life here until social evenings, as well as the meetings of the town council, are given over to discussions of the poultry industry.

PREACHER SOLVES PROBLEM.

Declares Sphinx Has Given Him Message He Won't Reveal.

Binghamton, N. Y.—Baffling the wise men of the ages for untold centuries the Sphinx stone face has at last given up its mysterious message to Rev. Dr. J. W. Phillips, a noted archaeologist and pastor of one of the largest churches of the state, if the announcement made by him to-day proves correct.

By special invitation he will give his answer to "The Riddle of the Sphinx" at the spring meeting of American Archaeological society of New York.

Dr. Phillips spent a year in excavating among the Egyptian ruins and brought to America many inscriptions which he has since translated at his leisure.

This study has led to what he believes to be the successful solution of the world's greatest riddle. Dr. Phillips said to-day that he is not yet ready to make public the details of his discovery.

He said, however, that in substance his answer to the riddle proves that the ancient Egyptians were monotheists and not pantheists and that the Sphinx is a stone embodiment of their religious beliefs.

In answer to correspondence from him he has received appreciative letters from the American Archaeological

industry and the rights of owners. Montezuma is a big incubator and brooder for the poultry markets of the northwest.

FINES FATHER AND MAYOR.

Young Prosecutor Even Made Out a Warrant for His Own Arrest.

New Britain, Conn.—This city boasts a Spartan prosecuting attorney in Charles H. Mitchell. He fined his own father for not keeping his sidewalk clean. He fined the mayor, too. As the supreme exhibition of his civic courage Prosecutor Mitchell issued a warrant for himself, but it was not served.

A policeman read "Charles Mitchell" from a long list of citizens who had not cleaned their sidewalks of slush. The Spartan prosecutor thought he was the offender, but it proved to be his father, Charles H. Mitchell, who was United States patent commissioner under President Cleveland.

Mayor Landers also displayed noble public spirit. Said he to Mr. Mitchell, after pleading guilty in court. "The policeman who served the warrant told me that, being the mayor, I could settle this case by paying a two dollar fine. I do not like the idea of being treated more leniently than anybody else."

"Do not worry," exclaimed Papa Mitchell, arising among the spectators. "Don't worry, Landers. You'll not get off too easily. Why, he has even hauled up his dad."

The mayor's wish was granted; he paid the same fine as the others.

The Sleep of Butterflies.

Washington.—The scientists in the employ of Uncle Sam are forever making queer experiments tending more or less to the extension of scientific knowledge. The oddest, perhaps, of experiments of late years has been those conducted by an official of the botanic gardens, who has been watching the sleep of butterflies. The official contends that butterflies are rendered secure from their enemies at night by reason of their peculiar colors and markings. Thus, large red and brown butterflies, with silver spots on the under side of their wings, which are conspicuous by day can hardly be distinguished at night when sleeping on golden rods and other flowers that form their favorite roosts. At such times their bright wing colors blend with the hues of the flowers, while the silvery spots glisten like the dewdrops around them.

RED TIE SPOILS ELOPEMENT.

Man's Return to Get Lurid Piece of Neckwear Discloses Plans.

Waterbury, Conn.—When Miss Julia Tonpense crocheted the most lurid red necktie that ever graced the neck of a Waterbury Adonis and worked in a number of pretty sentimental inscriptions upon its fiery floss she little thought that the same necktie would shatter her hopes of an elopement.

Albert Vernice, the young woman's fiancée, has neither a red tie nor a wife to-day and is awaiting some one to appear in the courthouse to go on his bond for \$300. He is charged with abduction.

Miss Tonpense's father, fearing an elopement when she wanted to go to New York, insisted on accompanying her to the station. The young couple had everything arranged, so when Vernice saw the father with the girl he hid in a freight car until the New York train was just starting. Then he made a running jump and landed on the rear platform.

When the young couple arrived in New York, the bride-to-be discovered that Vernice had forgotten his red necktie. He was sent back post haste to get it, as Miss Tonpense refused to be married with him wearing any other neckwear. When Vernice got back to Waterbury Mr. Tonpense was at the station and had him arrested.

ODD PHOTO ALBUM

BOOK WHICH CONTAINS ONLY PICTURES OF THE HUNTED.

Likenesses of Men with Record for Misdeeds Kept in Unique Collection at Detective Headquarters in Chicago.

Chicago.—The strangest photograph album in Chicago is what is known as "Billy" Lothart's "Big Book." None of Lothart's friends has his picture in this mysterious book. When a person is represented there it is pretty certain that he has killed some one, has run away with money, escaped from the penitentiary or has been lost or stolen. The odd thing about this book is that a picture goes in whether the original does or does not care. Besides all this, it's pretty hard for a man to stay in Chicago without getting into jail if his picture is in the book.

Big, thick, canvas covers and mysterious looking printing on the back make "Billy" Lothart's album an object of pious interest at the central detective offices in the city hall. Between those covers there is the queerest lot of pictures ever seen in one book, excepting, possibly, in an amateur snapshot fiend's collection. But these are pictures every one of which tells a story; a sweetheart slain, a trusted employe's defalcation, the murder of an enemy, the theft of thousands of dollars. These are some of the little tales retold by the sketches that fill the heavy pages. And there are thousands of pictures and sketches, too, with more coming in every day.

This collection contains the photograph of Paul O. Stensland, with descriptions and rewards printed in seven different languages. That picture is now considered obsolete. Anyhow, there are others with rewards which aggregate large sums.

Robert L. Dix, who escaped from the Jefferson county jail at Birmingham, Ala., is worth \$1,500 to the man who finds him. William "Bossie" Francis, the alleged murderer of Miss Mary Henderson, near Columbus, Mo., has a reward of \$3,750 offered for his capture. The state of Missouri agrees to pay \$300, the county court \$500, the city of Columbus \$700, and even his dead body will bring \$500. For evidence that any white or black person aided him in the deed \$500 more will be paid. If it can be proved that he was harbored, fed, supplied with money or helped to travel, the informer will get \$150. Besides all this a special reward of \$1,000 will go to anyone who proves that persons have libelously connected the name of W. C. Hyatt with the murder.

Michael Liebel disappeared from his home in Erie, Pa., according to this cosmopolitan book, and the one who finds him alive will get the snug little sum of \$5,000. The story of a New York elevated railway wreck is told by one circular which bears the picture of Paul Kelly, a motorman, who is alleged to have disregarded the signals. His possession, says the circular, is worth \$500 to the city's police. The picture of an intelligent, bright looking young man, William Robert Vice, serves as the guide post for a search instituted by the Union Pacific railroad. Gambling is said to have caused the already wealthy Vice to embezzle thousands of dollars from his employers and hide from place to place after the posting of a \$1,000 reward for his capture.

The person of the murderer of Sol Bardenheier, who was found dead at Blooming Grove, Wis., is good for a \$600 reward the minute he is captured. Tom Jones' escape from the Colorado state penitentiary will cost that state \$200 if he is caught. So it goes on through the list of new fugitives and old ones whose activities have made them wanted by the police. From Maine to California, men with a record of misdeeds behind them are represented in this Chicago photograph album and their faces are eagerly scanned day after day until the word comes that they are in jail or dead.

RED TIE SPOILS ELOPEMENT.

Man's Return to Get Lurid Piece of Neckwear Discloses Plans.

Waterbury, Conn.—When Miss Julia Tonpense crocheted the most lurid red necktie that ever graced the neck of a Waterbury Adonis and worked in a number of pretty sentimental inscriptions upon its fiery floss she little thought that the same necktie would shatter her hopes of an elopement.

Albert Vernice, the young woman's fiancée, has neither a red tie nor a wife to-day and is awaiting some one to appear in the courthouse to go on his bond for \$300. He is charged with abduction.

Miss Tonpense's father, fearing an elopement when she wanted to go to New York, insisted on accompanying her to the station. The young couple had everything arranged, so when Vernice saw the father with the girl he hid in a freight car until the New York train was just starting. Then he made a running jump and landed on the rear platform.

When the young couple arrived in New York, the bride-to-be discovered that Vernice had forgotten his red necktie. He was sent back post haste to get it, as Miss Tonpense refused to be married with him wearing any other neckwear. When Vernice got back to Waterbury Mr. Tonpense was at the station and had him arrested.