NOAH'S ARK IN A LONDON SLUM

Queerest Emporium in all London is a Freak Animal Shop—Strange Miniature Creatures From All Parts *of* the World

By Maynard Evans.

LONDON, Oct. 3.—Whitechapel's crowded ghetto is the last place in the world where one would expect to discover a collection of freak animals. And yet, in one of the narrow courts of this district, there is a modern Noah's Ark where are housed pigmy ponies, tiny "Teddy bears," queer kangaroos, "crowned" cranes and other weird specimens of animal and bird life. The keeper of these strange creatures is Albert Jamrach, whose name is a household word among animal collectors all over the world.

There are many odd places in the world's metropolis, but Jamrach's, popularly speaking, "takes the cake." In a dingy street abutting on an even dingier one, he houses his menagerie. Ask for "Jamrach's" anywhere in that district, and half a dozen barefooted, ragged youngsters will volunteer with one accord to show you the way, and, by the time you have reached your destination, you will be attended by a strange body guard of half a hundred youngsters, all eager for a peep at some of Jamrach's pets.

The first intimation you receive of being in the vicinity of the miniature zoo is the presence of two tiny ponies which are allowed to wander about in the open streets near Brittain's Court, where their home is situated. They are only 33 inches high, and play about the streets just like any other "children." Their owner seems to have absolute confidence in the honesty of the neighbors, for no guard is placed over them. The children of the streets do not attempt to worry them and they are as gentle and playful as a couple of kittens.

"I turn them loose and nobody ever troubles them," said Jamrach when the writer found him in his menagerie feeding a "teddy bear" not more than a foot high. "Everybody knows them about here. When they get hungry they know where to come for their meals, and they don't wander very far."

Jamrach's establishment occupies a three-story building which, in its palmy days, was evidently a residence of some proportions. Since the zoo invaded it, however, the interior has been fitted out with numerous iron barred cages instead of rooms, and only the four walls remain of the ancient mansion. Where human beings once dwelled, you now see pigmy ponies and tiny bears, diminutive Indian cattle, emus and armadillos, cranes and kangaroos, in fact, all sorts of queer animals, some of whose names are even queerer than themselves. For instance, in one corner of the room is a pair of wily wallabies who gaze at you with deceitful eyes, while not far away, even more suspicious looking, is a "flying phalonger."

In England, just now, there is a big demand for these freak animals and birds of all kinds. Americans in high society are taking a leading part in encouraging the strange fad. The Countess of Craven, daughter of the Bradley-Martins, has recently bought several pigmy ponies, while other wealthy members of the American colony who own fine country mansions have invested in cranes and kangaroos to add "decorative effect" to their lawns.

Hosts of English notabilities have also gone in for the new craze, which has even extended to royalty. Prince Adolphus Alfred de Rothschild has established a private circus on his estate at Tring Park. Among those who are competing with each other for the possession of these curiosities are the Marquis of Stafford, the Marchioness of Bute, Lord Hindlip, Lord Gerald Grosvenor, Lord Edward Cecil and many other lords and ladies.

Agents of Jamrach are in every seaport likely to be visited by freaks. In the early days, sailing vessels used to come direct to London, bringing their strange animal and bird cargoes as the pets of Jack Tar. Nearly every sailor had a fancy for some sort of animal or bird, and the diversity of their taste in this line was truly marvelous. Since the advent of the tramp steamship in place of the old "wind-jammer," however, Jack has been forbidden to bring pets on board, and hence the old and picturesque method of trading at the London dockside has been done away with. As the freaks no longer come to the dealers, the latter must go to the freaks, if not personally, at least through their agents.

"In all the Mediterranean and South American ports," said Jamrach, in describing his peculiar methods of acquiring members for his ark, "I have agents who make it a business to board incoming vessels and search for novelties in the animal and bird line. As soon as an agent makes a find, he wires me, asking what offer I will make. This business has to be done very quickly, as sometimes the ships only stop at the ports a few hours. I immediately wire an offer, if I am interested, and my agent buys the animal. He takes care of it and ships it to London. Of course, there is considerable risk, and sometimes the animals and birds die shortly after arrival, or during transit, in which case our losses are heavy. All things considered, however, a fair number of them manage to get safely through.

"Competition is so strong in this trade now," continued the modern Noah, "that my agents have to look very sharp. Besides, it is always necessary to invent new ideas; to create a demand, for instance, for certain things in the freak line."

Jamrach may truthfully claim to have "invented" the craze of pigmy ponies, though, of course, he had nothing to do with inventing the ponies themselves. These tiny ponies are in great demand, not only in Great Britain, but in America. The dealer always has a number of orders from the United States, "waiting" for fulfillment. The animals come from Ireland. They do not naturally breed as "pigmies," but their diminutive size is the result of a lack of proper food, owing to the sparcity of the grazing lands of the island. Out of every herd of ponies—the average size being about the average of Shetlands—there will be two or three undersized, or stunted, ones; and it is these dealers are after. Jamrach was the first one to recognize the advantage of the pigmy, or "lap" pony, as they have been nicknamed. The smallest one he has so far received was only 27 inches high, and it was immediately purchased on its arrival in England by Lord Alfred de Rothschild, who now has it in his famous menagerie.

Lord Rothschild's establishment at Tring is a place of strange sensations for visitors. On his lawns, one sees kangaroos hopping about in great numbers. They are thoroughly tame, and follow visitors about like dogs. Their antics are the delight of all the children whom Lord Rothschild frequently invites to his estate. Many of his animals are splendidly "educated," and could easily make a fortune for their owner if his lordship did not happen to possess so large a fortune already. Kangaroos are worth $150 apiece, and Lord Rothschild's "circus" also boasts wallabies—very small kangaroos—"demoselle" and "crown" cranes, both these varieties of crane being extremely rare, armadillos, pigmy Indian cattle, and other small "fry."

Of all the pigmy tribe, however, the popular fancy runs most to "Teddy bears" and pigmy ponies. The former are immense favorites. Whether it is the association with President Roosevelt, or not, the "Teddy bear" is always first choice in competition with other freaks. These bears come from Borneo, and Jamrach disposes of them for about $50 each. They are very hardy little animals and once tamed, are quite docile. One "Teddy" which Jamrach has in his London zoo is an immense favorite with the neighboring slum children, who play with him by the hour, whenever they get a chance. He follows any little boy who will bribe him with a handful of sugar.

Several of the English royal children have already provided themselves with both "Teddy bears" and tiny ponies. The two little princes of the Teck family called personally at Jamrach's recently and selected their "mounts," while an advertisement of a "Teddy bear" in the Times brought hosts of applicants, and several very prominent members of the aristocracy came personally to bid for him.

All things considered, the prices Jamrach asks for his freaks are not exorbitant. For instance, if you so desire you may procure pigmy Indian cattle at $60 each, emus at $75 each, "crown" cranes—tall, stately creatures, with a sort of feathery halo on their heads—at $125 a pair, wallabies, $80 each, pigmy ponies at $60 and "Teddy bears" from $50 to $60. Jamrach also goes in for "pigmy" sheep, which he sells for about $15 apiece. Before the "Teddies" and ponies became such great favorites, there was a run on these sheep.

In addition to his Noah's Ark in Brittain's court, Jamrach has another establishment just around the corner in St. George street. If possible, this latter place—as Alice in Wonderland would say—is "curiouser and curiouser." Apparently from the outside, it is an ordinary bird store, where parrots and other members of his feathered tribe disport their plumage and rend the atmosphere with their shrill calls. In the rear of the bird shop, however, Jamrach conducts you through several short passages, and opens a door when you find yourself transported into another world. In a large hall that resembles a sort of abandoned chapel, with beams and girders running across the roof, and a species of gallery extending all around the sides, is an enormous collection of eastern relics, old carvings, Japanese and Chinese works of art, clubs from cannibal tribes, implements of savage warfare, and endless oddities from all parts of the world. In one corner of the room a huge Chinese dragon threatens with instant destruction a tiny Japanese humming bird while a Buddhist monk, with a great dome of a head, looks on with a leer as if neither dragons nor humming birds appealed strongly to his aesthetic sense. Among some of the most curious things in this marvelous collection are little Japanese amulets, or "mascots," wrought in the ancient style of Japanese carving.

"Those little figures, the Japanese who come here tell me," said Jamrach, "should never have left Japan, and now Japs are buying them back. When the first white people began trading with Japan exclusively, they bought a lot of these little figures. They are, it seems, a species of heirloom which never should have left the country. Attached to them are the personal spirits of the grandfathers and other ancestors of the families to whom they belonged; and now the Japs are anxious to get all these spirits back into their country. They are buying them back and putting on the market instead a lot of close imitations of the same objects.

"Many of these figures are supposed to have luck attached to them," continued Jamrach. "You have no idea of the number of stock brokers and society ladies who come here to buy them. One stock broker bought a little lacquer figure from me about three weeks ago. He came back the other day and bought another, as he said that the day following his purchase of the first one he had cleaned up a big sum on the stock exchange. His faith in the winning power of the charm was very real.

"Society dames who wish to win at bridge or horse races often buy these little charms. Some bring them back if their luck does not turn out very well, and exchange them for others, with which they appear to be more satisfied."

Quite a large number of the articles in this remarkable collection were acquired by the father of the present owner. He bought cannibal clubs, masks and other queer things direct from sailors. He also bought many Indian relics taken from ancient temples which are regarded by connoisseurs and others as of great value. Jamrach refused to part with a number of these things, evidently believing, like the stock brokers, that they have brought him "luck."

Jamrach's customers hail from all parts of the world—especially America. The late P. T. Barnum used to buy a number of his "freak" animals from him, and several wealthy Americans have made special trips to London in order to inspect certain of his curious wares. One millionaire American, now living in Paris, invests heavily every year not only in eastern trophies, but also in freak animals and birds.

INTERIOR OF JAMRACH'S CURIO MUSEUM

PIGMY PONIES WHICH RUN ABOUT LONDON STREETS.

"TEDDY BEAR" PET OF WHITECHAPEL CHILDREN

OUR BELATED WEDDING PRESENT

WHEN we had unwound the sacking and brown paper, cut several hundred knots and removed a mile or two of cord Phyllis and I stood back and looked at our belated wedding present.

"What is it?" Phyllis wanted to know.

I hesitated. "Wouldn't you call it a sofa?" I hazarded.

"I shouldn't." Phyllis assured me. "It's more like a dromedary."

The comparison was reasonable and I admitted it. It occurred to me that a nearer view might be enlightening. I took a step forward.

The thing was upholstered handsomely enough in dark green leather and began like an ordinary sofa with an arm at the right-hand corner. Half way, however, the back appeared to recollect that its mission in life was to be a chair and rose precipitately in a hump, only descending just in time to give plausibility to the sofa theory again at the left-hand corner. Moreover, there was a curious depression in the seat two thirds of the way down it. I laid my finger along it curiously.

"Why, it's a hinge!" I exclaimed, "and—what on earth are you doing, Phyl?"

Phyllis raised a flushed face.

"Counting the legs," she said. "There are six, Claude. Whoever heard of a sofa with six legs?"

I felt underneath the seat. "And two of them," I observed, "are just underneath this hinge in arrangement."

"Take care!" Phyllis gasped suddenly, and dragged at my arm. I had touched some hidden mechanism evidently. Before our astonished eyes the left-hand end of the sofa was determinedly rising. It touched the end of the hump, gave a click, and, behold, the doubtful sofa was a very passable arm chair. Two of the six legs, however, were now superfluous and stuck out gloriously at right angles to the arm. I touched them, not without hesitation, and Phyllis gave a physical gasp as they subsided noiselessly and neatly into two prepared grooves.

We looked at each other in speechless amagement. Suddenly the explanation flashed across my mind, and I groaned.

"What is it?" Phyllis asked quickly.

"Oh, Claude, have you thought? Who sent it, and what does it mean?"

I stared at it with growing hopefulness. "Yes," I said, "I'm afraid it's from Uncle Gregory."

Phyllis' eyes widened apprehensively. "You, Uncle Gregory? But you said—oh, Claude, you said he was sure to give us a cheque for a wedding present!"

"Well, he didn't, did he?" I reminded her gloomily. "No-o. But you told me he was rather eccentric, and if it didn't come before we were married it was sure to come after."

"Well, I'm afraid this is it," I said, and went to look more closely at a curious lump on the side of the chair. There was a button near it and I pressed it. A brass bracket holding an electric reading lamp shot into position above the chair, and I laughed bitterly. "O, yes, this is it," I said.

Phyllis gazed at the reading lamp and put out a hand to steady herself. It fell on the arm of the chair. Instantly there appeared below the reading lamp a small shelf, with a glass fixed into a groove on it. Phyllis recoiled. "This is gruesome," she said faintly. "Is is alive?"

"No," I returned with concentrated venom, as I kicked one of its legs and produced a miniature tantalus, "it's only Uncle Gregory's idea of comfort, and of a wedding present." I went on pressing knobs and buttons savagely. When I could see no more we sat down opposite it and gazed. Besides the lamp, the tantalus and the glass, there was a sloping projection for the feet that ran out from underneath and ended in an adjustable fur foot-warmer, there was an ashtray, a piperack, a syphon, a bookrest, a paper-knife, opera glasses, a writing-pad, a newspaper-rack, and a "Bradshaw."

"It rivals the Stores," I snapped, "doesn't it?"

Phyllis got up and began to circle round the chair with a sort of dazed fascination.

"Here's another button," she observed, from somewhere at the back.

"Press it," I urged, hilariously reckless.

She pressed it and a scarlet umbrella shot into a vertical position, unfurled itself and completed the picture.

Our eyes met; simultaneously we succumbed to riotous mirth.

"So that you needn't," gasped Phyllis, between paroxysms, "be separated from it—even in—the garden!"

I began to feel more cheerful. Phyllis instantly detected it.

"I'm not I—laughing," she said hastily. I'm crying. It's—it's too desperate for words. This thing instead of the cheque that was going to furnish the second spare room, or the turf, the tennis-court, or pay for—"

"Don't!" I implored. "It's too unutterably low for Uncle Gregory. I should never have believed it of him."

"If it were even a decent useful piece of furniture," Phyllis went on exasperatedly. "But his freak—this warehouse—this crowning honor of amalgamation!" She wrung her hands. "Which must have cost pounds and pounds," I lamented.

"Yes, and which ought to quality its maker for a lunatic asylum! Where can he have bought it, Claude?"

I gasped. "Bought it? You — you surely don't think he bought it? Good heavens! you don't suppose there's a shop in the three kingdoms that sells this kind of thing? Why, it's his own work, of course. It's unique it's—it's pure Gregorian, don't you see?"

Phyllis looked at me resignedly. "Your uncle's a carpenter, Claude?"

"Yes, in his spare time. He's really a sort of mechanical genius, Phyl. You should see some of the things he's got in his own house."

Phyllis' voice trembled scornfully. "The one in ours is more than enough for me."

I got up. "Suppose I'll have to write and thank him for it." I remarked. "He meant well, I'm sure."

Phyllis glared resentfully at the chair. "Tell him," she urged, "that I'm grieved there's no sewing machine attachment, that I'm cut to the heart at finding no—no pocket gas stove, that I can't understand there being no mechanical parlor maid—that I—oh, Claude, tell him I hate him!"

When I returned a few minutes later it was to find Phyllis hovering excitedly over Uncle Gregory's gift. She had pushed back all the attachments and made the chair into a sofa again.

"It really looks almost ordinary this way," she threw over her shoulder.

"Ye-es," I consented. "Where shall we put it?"

Phyllis turned round with sparkling eyes. "We'll sell it," she announced. "Oh, Claude, don't look so blank. You don't want the thing, do you?"

I shook my head. The point is that nobody else will either.

Phyllis laughed. "You wait and see. Help me push it against the wall here. That's right. Now, who's to guess it isn't just an ordinary sofa? All the knobs are out of sight."

"And the—the hump?" I asked dubiously.

"The very latest improvement in sofas," Phyllis said with authority.

"That's how I shall explain it. Don't you see, it allows two people to sit in comfort instead of only one, like—prehistoric sofas."

"I see." I gazed at Phyllis admiringly. "All the same, I'm glad it's not I who have to sell it."

"Faint heart!" cried Phyllis. "There won't be the least difficulty. Why don't you understand, they'll buy a sofa, not the —the bed-sitting-room-veranda we know it is. They'll find when they get it home that they've got all that thrown in gratis."

"And be proportionately thankful," I anticipated with some alarm.

Phyllis was not listening; she was drawing up the advertisement.

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"Well?" I inquired with interest when I got home the day after the appearance.

Phyllis made a show of cheerfulness. "Oh, well, the thing isn't actually sold yet," she allowed. "But I've had three people looking at it."

"Really? What sort?"

"Well—dealers."

"Oh! Any offers?"

"N—not exactly. You see, they didn't have time to get so far."

"Not time?"

"N—no."

"Look here, Phyllis," I urged, "you might tell me."

Phyllis' lips suddenly quivered. "Dear," she said piteously, "I've had such an awful day."

"Poor darling! Tell me."

"The first one," Phyllis explained faintly, "wanted a thoroughly comfortable couch for an invalid lady."

I nodded. "Well, it's comfortable anyway," I remarked.

"Yes. But—just as he was explaining he kicked one of the legs, and the tantalus came out."

"Great Scott!"

"Yes; he said the same, only much worse. He said if he hadn't found it out in time, the shock would have killed the invalid, she's a teetotaler. And he said you—you never knew where you were with people who—drank."

I gasped. "Heavens, Phyl! Why didn't you ring me up? I'd have shown him where he was."

"There wasn't time. The second man arrived."

"Well?" I asked, anxiously.

"He was worse. He got curious about the hinke, and, of course, in the end, the thing turned into a chair, and he found all the knobs on the under side."

"Did he press them?"

"Of course; anybody would."

"So he saw," I reflected aloud, "the glass, 'Bradshaw,' ash tray, writing pad and pipe rack?"

Phyllis nodded.

"What did he say?"

"Lots. One thing was that our advertisement was money thrown away. He advised us next time to say—'Shop for Sale,' or 'Self-contained Flat.'"

"Impudent beggar!" I fumed. "You should have refused to see the third man."

"Oh, he was quite polite."

"Didn't he discover anything?"

"Oh, yes. He leaned back with a jerk, and it pressed a knob into the wall behind. The umbrella opened."

I sighed. "But he wasn't abusive."

Phyllis giggled suddenly. "He was overwhelmingly polite. He backed to the door, making soothing remarks to me, and then ran."

"Ran? What for?"

"Well, you see, he thought he'd better. I didn't grasp it myself at first, but it was natural enough he should think he'd run across a maniac."

I pondered. "You see, we shall have to keep it," I said.

Phyllis' chin rose obstinately. "We won't! If I can get only half a crown for it, I'm going to sell it."

"But, you see, you can't.

"I'm going to. I shall put some varnish on the legs on something when I advertise again, so that people can be told it's wet and they mustn't sit down. Then it will be all right."

This being settled, I was considerably surprised when one afternoon Phyllis rang me up.

"Come home at once," she said. "Oh, do be quick! It's the dromedary again."

She met me in the hall with a scared face, and pointed to the room that held Uncle Gregory's wedding present.

"He's in there," she whispered, "and he's putting it through its paces. Oh, isn't it a mercy I haven't sold it? He'd have altered his will and left you out of it! Oh, Claude, he loves it!"

"Uncle Gregory?" I gasped.

"Yes, he's in there waiting. We must go in."

"Haven't you seen him then, Phyl?"

She shook her head. "I didn't dare. He'd have guessed from my face. But I peeped through the window. He was pushing all the buttons one after another and revelling in it."

We went in together.

"Why, uncle, this is a pleasure!" I cried.

Uncle Gregory rose from his sofa regretfully. "Very glad to see you both," he said mechanically, and his eyes returned to his green leather atrocity.

"You're looking a bit run down," I observed. "Extra busy in the city?"

Uncle Gregory's tone became guarded. "I've been extra busy," he admitted. Then he laughed suddenly and became expansive. "I was forgetting," he explained, "that there was no need for caution here. I was thinking for the minute that I was at home with your aunt Emmeline."

No appropriate remark occurred to me.

"My wife," Uncle Gregory explained courteously to Phyllis. Phyllis nodded and smiled. "I haven't met her," she said graciously.

"You haven't met her—no." Uncle Gregory was obviously consumed with envy of anyone thus felicitously situated, but he tore his mind away from the subject. "As I was saying, I've been pretty busy the last week or two and I'm feeling the effects."

"But I can take a rest now."

"You're going abroad?" I asked.

"No, no; you misunderstand. I was referring to having found your advertisement."

Phyllis leaned against me suddenly. I stared at Uncle Gregory in helpless silence.

"What's the matter with you both?" he asked rather irritably. "Aren't you glad I've found it?"

"I—I—" Phillis began.

Uncle Gregory looked anxious. "You don't mean to say that you don't want to sell it, after all?"

"Why, haven't I been tearing all over the country for a fortnight after all sorts of sofas that sounded as if they might be mine? I'm nearly worn out with reading and answering advertisements; you must sell it now I've found it. If you didn't want to sell it you shouldn't have advertised." He glared at us indignantly.

There was a horrid pause.

"Do you mean to say," Phyllis asked at last, "that you've come here to buy back your own wedding present?"

"Of course."

Phyllis grew pink with anger, and threw discretion to the winds.

"Well, of all the mean things! If you knew it was so useless that we should be certain to try to sell it, why did you give it to us?"

Uncle Gregory's eyes rested wistfully on the dromedary. "I didn't want to," he said. "It was Emmeline. He sighed.

"You see, it was like this. I'd spent about £20 on it, and—and that annoyed your Aunt Emmeline. When you got married she insisted on my giving it to you for a wedding—present."

RUNNING DOWN "BLIND PIGS" IN DRY TOWNS--Temperance Workers Discover That Their Work is Only Just Beginning

By Dennis H. Stovall.

THE TEMPERANCE WORKERS in the towns and counties of Oregon that went "dry" in the election of last June, discovered within four weeks after the local option law was put in force that their work was less than half done. It was a big task, conducting a temperance campaign in the "wet" territory of the southern and eastern portions of the state, and the victory was one of which the anti-saloon champions could well feel proud. But the campaign work was easy when compared with the later task of running down "blind pigs." Men are just like boys—forbid them a thing, and they are sure to steal it, or make a desperate attempt to get it. Men who never had any desire to imbibe a convivial glass over a saloon bar during the "wet" days, find infinite pleasure in "dry" times sipping a drink from a jug or bottle behind a haystack, or in the back room of a "soft water" establishment.

Meeting the Issue.

Difficult as has been their task, the temperance people have met the issue with the same determination and purpose that they met the issues of the campaign. "Blind pig" keepers have been routed from their "sties." "bootleggers" have been caught "with the goods," and all violators have been brought before the courts for trial. In several instances convictions were secured and heavy fines imposed. Court rooms during the trials were filled with the best people of the community, an inspiration to the jury and prosecution, and showing most forcibly the real sentiment of the town and count. The fact has been proved both in southern and eastern Oregon that the local option law can be enforced.

But the enforcement of this law, the discovering and running down of "blind pigs," requires much earnest work. It requires a corps of workers in each town or county who are willing to sacrifice much time and considerable money. Without these two essentials the law fails and the condition of the community is really worse than before.

There is in Oregon what is commonly called a state "Anti-Saloon league." As a matter of truth, there is no such organization. There is merely a sort of "state committee" that, in a general way, looks after the anti-saloon affairs of the several counties. In the hard work of law enforcement this "state committee" is of little or no service to individual communities. The town that wishes to suppress "blind pigs" and enforce the law is thrown entirely upon its own resources; it must fight its own battle, furnish its own workers and pay its own bills.

In Southern Oregon.

An instance of this nature was furnished by a southern Oregon city. This is a mining town and the center of a vast lumbering region. It is a place where saloons have always flourished. But it went "dry" last election. The county court pronounced the law valid, and the 12 liquor joints closed their doors. A few of the buildings that had long been occupied by saloons were remodeled and changed into other places of business. The majority, however, opened the doors wide, raised the blinds, took the bottles from the shelves, removed the vulgar pictures from the walls and resumed business as "soft drink" establishments. They advertised liberally, announcing the fact that they now had all manner of "temperance beers" on tap. These beers came from the brewery in regulation kegs, and were served in "schooners" with the foam on top; in truth, some old-time drinkers declared that it "looked jest the same, tasted jest the same and jagged jest the same." Then there were "boot-leggers" on the corners, slying passing bottles and taking coin in exchange; and there were drunken men on the street. It was plainly evident that the law was being violated, and that in come respects conditions were worse than during the days of the licensed saloon.

Enforcing the Law.

A few determined men got together. They elected no president or sercetary, and passed no resolutions. They were all of the same kind and the same purpose. They knew the law was being violated. They must have evidence. But they knew they could not get it themselves. So an expert detective was employed. He was no amateur "whiskey spotter," but a man who had been long in the secret service, and who knew his business. When this secret service man came he was known to only one man of the town, as it was desired that his work be conducted in secret. He represented himself to be a real estate buyer, a man with considerable time and no little money at his command, and so was at once admitted into the "inner circle."

The whole purpose of the temperance people who had this secret service work in hand, was to secure evidence; yet they were determined to get it by just and fair means. They desired that the detective buy his liquor in the same manner that others of the "bunch" bought it. But the "blind pig" keepers were sly. They had an eye of suspicion for every new member admitted into the "circle." The new member was first plied with all manner of questions, as to his place of birth, age, business and other things that bordered on impertinence. Their purpose being, of course, to satisfy themselves that the new applicant was "O. K."

Secret Service Work.

The secret service man was duly accepted, and in a little while had his trunk full of "goods," all duly labeled and marked so as to be admitted as testimony in court. But in the sale of whiskey, gin and brandy the "blind pig" keepers used what is known as the "ostrich method." They would not hand the bottle out over the bar. Instead the buyer would be directed to a certain corner of a certain room. He would find the "goods" under a bucket or tucked snugly under a roll of old bedding; then, to make the transaction complete and "legitimate," he would leave the half dollar at the spot where the liquor was found.

The "blind pig" keeper believed that this "ostrich method" of selling liquor was not only legitimate, but absolutely safe. As the bottles were sold to only one at a time it was necessarily difficult for the secret service man to secure corroborative testimony; but this was finally done through the employment of a "stool pigeon."

Only whiskey, brandy and gin were sold in this way. The "temperance" drinks were sold openly over the bar, for it was believed that the mere announcement that they were "temperance" drinks made their sale legitimate. To secure convictions, or evidence for convictions for the sale of these drinks required the employment of an expert chemist. The local option law is not definite in its statement of the amount of alcohol a beverage must contain to be "intoxicating." The secret service man was himself a judge of liquor, and was satisfied that the "temperance" drinks were intoxicating, for he saw men get drunk from imbibing too much, but this sort of evidence would not count in court. So a number of bottles of "near beer," "digesto" and unlabeled "bottled beer" were purchased and given the chemist for analysis.

It was found that the so-called "temperance" drinks contained from four to eight per cent—considerably more alcohol than is in the "beer that made Milwaukee famous." The testimony of the chemist was accepted as competent evidence, and was a strong factor in securing convictions against the "soft drink" sellers.

Doctors Guilty.

The most difficult "pigs" to secure evidence against were the physicians; in fact, it was practically impossible. While it was known that several medicine men were dispensing brandy and whiskey pure as a matter of business, the fact that they did so through prescription made them safe. It was no trouble for the secret service man to buy liquor of certain doctors. He could get it of them more easily than of anyone else, even when he would tell them frankly that he was not sick and wanted it for a beverage. But the physician would write a prescription just the same, and put a label on the bottle, "use as directed." There is a law, much older than the local option law, which declares that a registered physician can give a patient anything he pleases—anything at least that his experience and knowledge tells him the patient needs. So it is no trouble for the doctor, even though brought before a grand jury, and after admitting that he sold a man whiskey, to say that he believed the man "needed" it, that he really "looked ill," and was apparently in an unhealthy condition. So the registered physician is a "greased pig," too slippery to be caught under the existing local option law, and it is doubtful if a law could be framed that would be "tight" enough to catch and hold him.

Trying the Cases.

The trying of the liquor cases is seldom done before the justice court. After the evidence is secured, and sufficient counts are found against each violator, the complaints are filed with the district prosecuting attorney, who brings them to the attention of the grand jury at its next regular session. The jury considers the complaints as made by the chief witness, and at once subpoenas other witnesses named, together with those against whom complaints are filed. If the testimony is considered strong enough, and the jury believes the law has been violated, indictments are ordered drawn, arrests are made and the trials set for a hearing before the circuit court. In this way the defendants have full opportunity to be tried before a regularly selected jury of 12, and to secure counsel; in this way, also, the full machinery of the state is set to work to secure conviction provided the testimony warrants it. And conviction does not mean a mere matter of paying a $10 fine, but of being assessed at least $50 and as high as $200 for the first offense. The second offense carries with it both a fine and imprisonment.

By convicting a few of the worst violators at an early stage of their manipulations, a check is placed upon illegal selling of liquor for a long period. The "blind pigs" scatter for the woods," being fully convinced that the temperance workers mean business.

Russian and American Caviar.

The center of the caviar trade in southeast Russia is at Astrakhan, on the Volga. There are, however, several fisheries on the river Don and the sea of Azoy. At several of the fisheries large quantities of caviar are prepared, but for home production only. In 1904 caviar to the value of $10,000 was exported to the United States from Astrakhan. Since then, however, its export has wholly ceased. This condition of affairs is thought to be due to two reasons at least. First, the catch of sturgeon in the United States has been unusually abundant, and, second, the quality of caviar prepared in the United States has proved to be far superior to the imported article.

Caviar is prepared in Russia in practically the same manner as in the United States. The roe, having been extracted from the fish, is rubbed through the meshes of a sieve in order that the eggs may be separated from the including sacks. It is then salted with from 5 to 10 per cent of good table salt, according to the time of the year when prepared. Afterward the caviar is put on finer sieves in order to allow the brine to flow off. After this has been accomplished it is placed in cans and hermetically sealed.

Bright.

"What do you think?" said Mrs. Gleeful. "I wrote James this summer that I wanted some light reading, and he sent me 'The House of a Thousand Candles.'"