DUCHESS OF ABRUZZI VS. THE AMERICAN PRINCESSES

Trouble Brewing in Italy for Miss Elkins Among the American Girls Who Have Married Italian Titles—Open Declarations Made That They Will Not Cringe to a Commoner

By Constance Harriman.

ROME, Nov. 15.—As the date of the Abruzzi-Elkins wedding approaches, interest in the possible reception to be accorded the American girl by aristocratic circles here grows.

There is a very general opinion in well-informed quarters that Katherine Elkins saved herself many a heartache in insisting that her marriage take place in the United States rather than in Italy. Arriving as a royal princess, she cannot be subjected to many of the petty slights which were undoubtedly awaiting her as a plain American girl, especially from her own countrywomen who have married titled Italians and reside in this country.

Injudicious Talk.

There has been a great deal of open discussion of the hostility which the American princess-to-be would encounter at court, and there is but little doubt that these rumors have grown out of injudicious talk on the part of the various American princesses, duchesses, marchionesses, down through the scale to Donna So-and-So and the plain signora, who feel most bitter and who have been emphatically declaring that they will cringe to no commoner; that they will not be peacocked over by an Elkins; that their good republican blood boils and rebels at the mere thought of kissing the hand of a fellow American.

One American princess of Rome, especially, a lady who ruthlessly cuts out of her visiting list all persons who do not have a title, making a few, but very few, exceptions in the case of the simon pure Newporters, has been very emphatic in her rebellion, almost threatening to shake the dust of debased and dishonored Italy from her dainty shoes. Gathering about her a few equally disgusted compatriots in solemn meeting she deliberated what was best to be done. Passive resistance was decided upon. But alas, for human weakness, there were, before long, defections, and when the Duchess of the Abruzzi arrives it is a hundred to one that even the aforesaid princess will apply to be made a lady-in-waiting.

Sees Herself Outdone.

This hostility is aroused in a great measure by the fact that heretofore the American lady of title has carried everything before her, through her riches and beauty added to the position of her husband. Now she sees herself outdone and she does not like it.

The Italians are in a different position. Many belong to families quite as old and proud as the House of Savoy and are allied to numerous royal houses. Thus their amour propre is hurt, as they argue that if an Italian prince did not wish a royal bride, he might, at least, have sought a commoner among Italians, as his father did before him.

Thus the situation is that the American royal princess will arrive to an atmosphere charged with envy, malice and all uncharitableness, which, however, a little tact will probably overcome. Has Miss Elkins the necessary qualities?

The duke, by the time he becomes a benedict, will have taken the grade of admiral, and a land post will be found for him. The choice of residence lies between Genoa and Venice. It was thought in the beginning that the former would be chosen, but I am told that lately Venice has been almost definitely decided upon. This will, perhaps, please the duchess better, as being more

ITALIAN CASTLE OF PRINCESS BRANCACCIO.

picturesque and more a center of society. The young couple will take up their residence at the royal palace, which has a garden on the Grand canal, suites of rooms full of historic and artistic treasures, looking onto the Piazza di San Marco, and a grand entrance on the piazzetta, opposite the famous Doge's palace.

Of Many Dates and Epochs.

The palace is of many dates and epochs, but the most characteristic part is that formerly known as the library, and which opens onto the piazetta. It was built by the famous Sansovino, about 1537, and is the finest building of its epoch in Venice. Its plan consists of a double colonnade with arches and embedded columns, and was said by Aretino to be "superior to all envy." Palladino says of it, "nothing more sumptuous or beautiful had been invented since the age of ancient Rome." On the walls and ceilings are masterpieces of Paul Veronese and Tintoretto, while between the windows are rows of philosophers, the arrangement of which Ruskin pronounced the finest thing of the kind in Europe. The Tintorettos ran great risk at the time of the fall of the Campanile, which took off a slice of the palace, as though cut by a knife, and left the room of the Tintorettos exposed to the elements. In such an atmosphere Americans can think of their princess, with surroundings which money could not buy, and which only time can accumulate.

Ladies-in-Waiting.

The duchess will have ladies-in-waiting; just how many she must decide for herself. In any case there will be two or three. Who they will be has not yet been decided, but most probably they will be chosen from the Venetian aristocracy, which contains such historical names as Tiepolo, Morosini, etc. The duke will have two households, a civil and a naval one, which means at least four or five gentlemen in attendance at one time, all with their respective establishments. So that, without outside society, the duchess of the Abruzzi will live in a little world all her own, over which she will reign as absolute sovereign. When she travels, trains, officials, all the world will be at her disposal; when she receives, society will tumble over each other to be present, when she eats her diminutive domain will tremble if her appetite fails, and when she sleeps they will stand with finger on lip, suspended. When she fights with her husband it can never be in private, and the world and his wife will point their fingers at them, and when she softens to him, Mrs. Grundy will sniff.

It is easier to say what her royal highness will not be able to do than to enumerate her privileges. For example, she, ardent horsewoman that she is, will never be able to run to the stables, choose her steed of the moment and be off for a glorious lonely gallop. Instead, the princess must state her will to ride to a gentleman of her household, who will transmit her royal highness' orders to another gentleman, who in turn will pass them on until they eventually arrive at the ears of the head groom, who begins a like process in his little kingdom. At last a horse is saddled and ready with a groom in attendance, to say nothing of a gentleman of the household.

Not Worth the Candle.

If the princess thinks of all this ceremony she will most likely swell with pride, but if the American happens to be on top, she will probably consider that the game is not worth the candle. Her walks will be on a like plan. Alone she will not be allowed to go by etiquette. At least one lady-in-waiting must be always with her. Her purchases will be noticed, and if large or in any way remarkable, be chronicled in the newspapers. If the caprice comes to go to the theatre she cannot throw on her cloak, take her husband's arm, and be off like an ordinary citizen. She is the vice-queen, and as that must go in state.

She will not be able to order baked beans, eat apples with the skin on, or look at sweet corn on the cob; she will not be able to wear slippers when they have grown comfortable, or gowns when they have become endeared to her by custom; she will never again lie on a grassy bank on her back on a bright spring day, and for her the reading of a forbidden book on the sly will not be counted among the delights of the future. In other words, she leaves her free American life, where, as a woman, she is a queen to every man, to become hedged in, circumscribed and watched, even if the position is gilded by power and deference. Only she and time together—and perhaps they will keep the secret and the world will never know—will be able to tell if her exceptionally charming husband, one of the best "good fellows" of Europe, is worth it all.

On State Occasions.

The new duchess wil stand very near the head of the procession on state occasions; that is, before the world. First, if they all happen to be present, will come the queen, followed by the queen mother, then the Dowager Duchess of Aosta, the Duchess of Aosta and then the Duchess of the Abruzzi. But a general gathering of the class is scarcely ever possible; Queen Margherita and the Duches of Aosta, the latter of whom is very ill, may be said to never appear, so that the American duchess has a very fair chance of appearing on most occasions as third in the royal procession.

Besides the great asset of the best of husbands, who is perfectly disinterested, proved by the fact that he could have married almost any lady of his own rank in Europe, who would have brought him as large a dot as that of Miss Elkins, her royal highness will have distant but not desperate hopes of one day seeing her son on the throne. The king has one son, a baby, who is subjected to "experiments" to keep him healthy, which is always dangerous. Then come the two boys of the Duke of Aosta, whose mother is dying of consumption, the Count of Turin is a confirmed bachelor, and then come the possible boys of the Abruzzi.

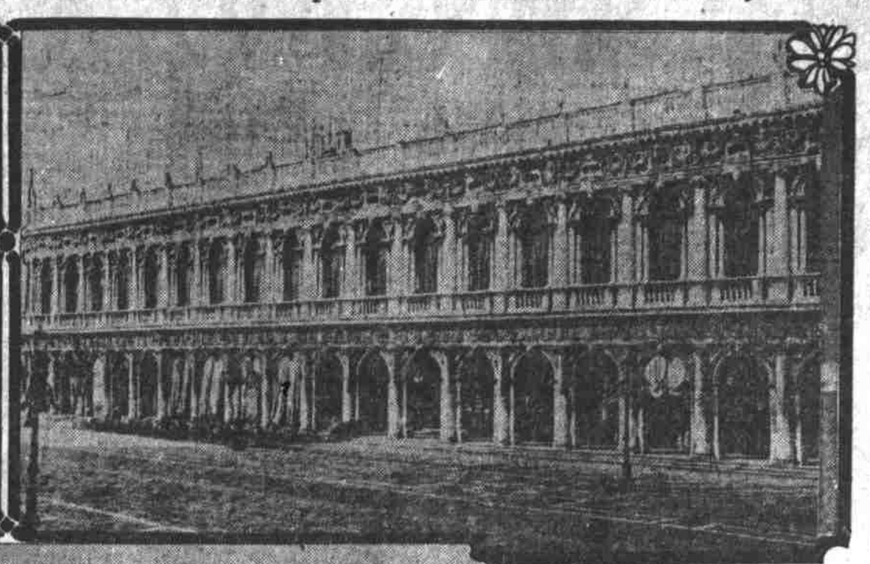
International Marriages.

The question is often asked if the international marriages of Italy are a success. The answer all depends upon the point of view. It is yes, decidedly yes, where there has been no question of interest—that is, the usual title on one hand, and dollars on the other. When it is a genuine love match it is the exception that the happiness is not lasting, but these are the obscure, if numerous, matches that the public never hears anything about.

The other kind—the "exchange marriages"—cannot be said to be more unhappy that loveless contracts all the world over. The man gets, or thinks he will get, means for his pleasures; the woman gets, really gets, position, title and a train of more or less "great" lovers. If the couple are sensible neither complains; they live as good friends, and the world pronounces the marriage a success." If they have "kinks" in their characters, they quarrel, and it is a "failure." After years of observation I can emphatically assert that neither party is a "victim"; it is a contract and nothing else. In no case that I have known has the young and innocent girl of popular fancy been "lured into a base marriage," or been induced to accept a title by her parents. These ladies are always women of the world, and it must be said for them that they do not howl when badly bitten.

Rome is full of American "great" ladies; they run up into the hundreds. There is Princess Ruspoli, nee Eva Broadwood, of New Orleans, who has fallen badly, as they say in Italy. The prince has spent her fortune and nothing remains but her title, her children and a few ancestral castles; Princes di Poggio Suasa, nee Miss Curtis, of New York; (here was one of the best of the international marriages; her husband was mayor of Rome at the time of his death and was devoted to her); Marchioness Theodoli, nee Lily Conrad, of New Orleans, a professional beauty, whose charms drove at least one man to suicide; Countess Savorgnan di Brazza, nee Cora Slocum, of New Orleans, whose husband adores her, and who has done so much for the Calabrian peasants; Countess Gianotti, nee Kinney, of New York, whose husband is grand master of ceremonies at court; Princess di San Faustino, nee Miss Campbell, of New York, who shares her husband's roof, although they are certainly divided in their pleasures; Princes Bourbon del Monte, nee Miss Walsh, who continues to live with the prince; Princess Brancaccio, nee Miss Field, of New York, lady-in-waiting to Queen Margherita, who lives in the most perfect domestic harmony; Donna Elsie Torlonia, nee Miss Moore, of New York, who married a man more than usually talked about. And so on, some happy and some otherwise, according to what the lottery of life and their own temperaments have brought them.

VIEW FROM THE BEDROOM OF THE AMERICAN PRINCESS TO BE.



ROYAL PALACE, VENICE FACING THE FAMOUS PIAZZETTA.

THE MISCHIEF OF ANOPHELES

By Elliott Walker.

A QUICK puff of the south wind, rising as the sun slowly sank over Knob mountain, stirred the coarse leaves of the low-lying swamp growth, rippled the surface of the stagnant pool and wafted Anopheles from the society of her singing companions to the brink of the little hill which by reason of its elevation afforded the country highway an opportunity to secure to itself, man and beast, an airy and comfortable location.

Anopheles was frail, ephemeral and insignificant. She was also hungry and very wide awake. Short as had been her existence, it had served to demonstrate three important relative conditions, appetite, ingenuity and the use of weapons.

The armament of Anopheles scientifically studied with the aid of a powerful glass is both interesting and unpleasant. It served to leave the seeker of information with a deep sense of thankfulness that the originator of the Pipiens family decided to make this branch no larger. That well beloved section of the northern continent, commonly known as New Jersey, received especial favoritism in the matter of development along this line, and is consequently of world-wide reputation.

Before Anopheles had innocently alighted upon the calf which had strayed into the swamp lot, she had been a vegetarian in diet, but being possessed of the necessary implements for torture and the extraction of sustenance, and animated doubtless by hereditary traits of blood-thirstiness, she had carefully inserted her favorite weapon of seven parts, and the deed was done.

Now, transformed into a diminutive bird of prey, her proboscis quivered with delight, as carried by the breeze she spied the recumbent form of Oscar Caine, sleeping the alcoholic slumber of the unjust, beneath the shade of the great rock maple by the roadside.

Oscar was a man to be feared, but Anopheles feared no man.

There was probably no more atrocious specimen of humanity in western Massachusetts than Oscar Caine. A combination of utter meanness, unbridled temper, bad habits and disrespect of all law, moral and otherwise, he ranked as a magnified star of general worthlessness.

Overcome by a decoction of cheap alcohol, brown sugar and water, which he had mixed at the spring half a mile below, a desire for repose had overtaken him and Oscar was no man to wrestle with desires.

Therefore, wrapped in unconsciousness, he made no objection to the lancing and gorging of Anopheles, who approached him with the slogan of her tribe, and was not even awakened by the rattling of the covered meat cart which half an hour later bore his tormentor away to the neighboring city, clinging to an inside canvas, refreshed and satisfied.

Later, as he toiled on to the solitary hovel he dignified by the title of home, he scratched vigorously at his neck.

"Dum th' flies!" he observed. "Can't take a nap nowhere without gittin' bit."

It was quite dark when Anopheles reached Badgeville, and her serene slumbers were rudely disturbed by the cart running into a beer wagon. Flying hurriedly out into space, she rose up with the night air, attracted by a ray of light.

Now she was cautiously stealing in at a high window and reconnoitering her strange surroundings, her appetite returning after the long ride.

Byron Fidley—fat, good-natured, honest Byron—the man whose happy disposition was the pride of his family and the delight of his friends, lay snoring peacefully in his bed.

A warning hum, rising to a shrill note of satisfaction, a bit of deliberate fiddling for a choice spot, and Anopheles was at work—engaged in a compound task of removal of excellent germs and the transmission of equally disagreeable ones.

A grunt, a sleepy slap, and Fidley rolled ponderously over, while Anopheles discreetly retired to the ceiling, there to cling with her long hind legs dangling until a wish for nutrition should again start her upon mischievous wanderings.

Fidley awoke early. "Early to bed and early to rise," was his invariable custom.

Somehow as he performed his toilet a strange spirit of irritation assailed him, an angry, complaining, disgusted sense of annoyance. He yanked viciously at his collar, his shoe strings and suspenders. "D—n the things!" exclaimed he in exasperation. "What's the matter anyway?"

This burst aroused his spouse.

"Why, Byron, my dear, don't swear!" she murmured sleepily.

"Shut up!" said her husband fiercely, "or get up! You're lazier every day. Where's my cuff buttons? Where's my blacking brush? You hide everything!"

Sarah Fidley sat up suddenly in her bed. Consternation was upon her. Never in her 25 years of matrimonial life had she experienced this.

"Byron, you're sick! You'd better get back to bed!" she cried with alarmed eyes.

"I'll make you sick! Don't talk to me! Get up!" returned Fidley glaring. "Come! I'm in a hurry for my breakfast. Never saw such a lazy set!"

The micro-organisms of the worthy Byron Fidley were rapidly multiplying as his blood became heated, and he banged out of the room, kicking the cat who greeted him in the hall, and shouting lustily to arouse his slumbering family who always got up an hour later.

Breakfast was like a nightmare. Hurried, scolded and roundly abused, his family relapsed into meekness and horror, believing him demented, and both servants promptly announced their intention of leaving that very day.

Byron did not care. "Been here too long, anyway," he commented angrily. "No good and never were."

Then he grubbed in the sideboard for the seldom-used bottle of brandy, found it, drank an alarming portion and threw the glass at Herrick, his son, who was studying for the ministry, because he refused to join him.

They all breathed more freely when he had stormed out, after purposely breaking a favorite vase of his wife's.

"He must be controlled!" gasped Herrick, trembling.

"I'm going right after Johnson!" cried Mabella. "He'll know what to do!"

The plan was eagerly applauded. Mr. Johnson Dix was six feet two and capable. He had been engaged to Mabella for a year and was a great favorite of Byron's.

Two hours later Dix walked into a very upset office and confronted four horrified clerks talking in an excited group.

"Where is Mr. Fidley, boys?"

"Lord knows, Mr. Dix. He's discharged us all. What ails him? He has always been the very best man we ever knew."

"I know that, but where did he go?"

"Out after Deacon Polk. Said he was going to get even with him. I never saw a man in such a mean temper—ugly mean!" answered Gately, the bookkeeper. "He swore he'd put us out if he found us here when he returned—but we can't leave the work. What do you advise?"

"Well, something's wrong—I don't know what—but you stay right here. I'll take the responsibility. Where does old Polk live?"

"No. 126 Southard avenue. He's in town, too. I saw him yesterday."

Dix dashed out. "If he's crazy, he may do mischief," he thought. "He has an old grudge against the deacon, but I never dreamed he'd harbor it." He thought of the girl he loved. "I'll drop everything until this is cleared up," he muttered. "I swear it doesn't seem possible—that big-souled man to go this way!"

Deacon Polk always took a long walk on Wednesdays. His favorite tramp was out along the country roads, across the fields to Knob mountain.

The black-coated, tall, gaunt figure was well known among the farmers, for he often stopped and haggled for the price of a lunch, being of a thrifty mind.

Strolling along, well satisfied with life, he little dreamed of the man he had cheated years before—a man now prosperous and stout, and always forgiving. Yet this man was upon his trail, had followed him for an hour, chewing the cud of bitter recollection; and, worse, had cut a stout club and intended to use it.

Byron Fidley toiled on in the dust, his countenance hot and wrathful, his heart full of evil desire for revenge. Yes, he would overtake his old enemy in some secluded spot. He would know what to do then.

It all seemed natural and right—this chasing the deacon. The cunning, the ferocity, the awful thoughts—he liked them. Yes, he must catch the deacon, and the heat and exertion were nothing.

A mile behind, a stalwart young man was coming on a dog trot, stopping here and there, making inquiries, scrutinizing clumps of trees, then running again, anxious and perspiring.

So the three went on. At last the deacon turned aside, clambered over a fence and stood for a moment gazing back over his route.

"I'll go over to the spring," he thought. "Mercy on us! Who is that sneaking in the bushes? And there is a man running on the road. I'll wait here until they go by."

The man in the bushes was crawling near. The man in the road was coming fast and calling—what?—yelling at him. In a moment he could hear him more plainly.

"Run, run, deacon, for your life—run! He's after you—he's crazy!"

A fat, infuriated man sprang out from the stunted spruces with a snarl. Off went Deacon Polk, his long legs leaping rocks and hummocks. On came his pursuer with execrations, waving his club. Then he stumbled and his prospective son-in-law was on him.

"I was only trying to scare him!" growled Byron. "Let me be, you ape!"

"Oh, no," said the "ape," panting. "Not until the deacon is out of sight."

"You'll never marry my daughter—I tell you that. I heard you say I was crazy. That's a dirty lie! Just a little matter between Polk and me. Now, let go!"

His struggles were vain. "You're going home with me and see the doctor," said Dix, "and behave or I'll shake you up a bit!"

About noon a farm wagon stopped before the house of Fidley and that gentleman was ignominiously bundled into his domicile by an unrelenting hand. The doctor was already there.

Byron submitted to examination in sullen protest, and, being much exhausted, consented to the proposition of bed, and clamored for his dinner with words of profane inconsideration.

"Beats me!" mused the old physician, sitting in the corner of the bedroom. "Nothing the matter that I can see. No fever—not a trace of insanity. Just a burst of deviltry—but what brought it on?"

A fat mosquito buzzed down from the ceiling and rested upon his hand. A sudden light cuff and Anopheles passed.

"Hullo!" said the doctor, "this isn't a Culex." He examined the remains with curiosity. "Spotted wings, eh?—long palpi. The rascal is bloated with somebody's gore. It might be—it might be!"

Byron grumbled at having to take such a nauseous medicine every two hours, but gradually became better natured, and at last fell into a deep sleep.

"If I am not mistaken, he will be all right in the morning, announced the physician, "and I doubt if he has any connected recollection of the doings of today. Say nothing of it to him or anyone. I will see Deacon Polk, Johnson."

"What have you in your hand, doctor?" asked Mrs. Fidley.

"Only a mosquito. I'm going to take it home to examine. It isn't the commonest kind. Good-night."

"What under the sun did I do yesterday? I declare I believe my memory is failing," smiled Byron at breakfast the next day.

Perfectly Able.

From the Louisville Courier-Journal.

"He seems weak," said the first physician. "Do you think he's able to undergo an operation?"

"Sure," answered the second physician, "I've looked him up and he's worth all kinds of money."

THE EPIC OF THE WHEAT

By George L. Knapp.

WHY should there not be epics of feeding men, as well as epics of killing them? Why should the occupation of the soldier, who slays, be deemed a better theme for a tale than that of the farmer, who sustains? Why is not the plant which keeps life in the bodies of men as well worth celebrating in song and story as the sword or lance or "nine-point-two" that lets life out? So far as we can see, the plan has all the best of it, and we shall here try to tell something of the greatest of the food plants, to bring together the materials for the future epic of the wheat.

Wheat is not only the greatest of the food plants, but, considered from the point of furnishing a food that will build up human tissues as well as generate human energy, wheat is the best food plant. Wheat feeds more people now than even rice, and feeds them vastly better. Next to meats, it is the most nutritious food of which there is any considerable supply in the world. And here is a curious thing to note in passing. For years scientists were troubled by the amount of nourishment wasted in making flour, and protesting against the "craze" for white bread, in which the waste was greatest. You all remember the old "Graham" bread, in which that wasted nourishment was supposed to be saved. Perhaps it was, but not in the form that the human stomach could use. For a better developed science has proved that the taste was right and the older test tube wrong. The whiter the flour, the more nourishment it contains in usable form, and the "waste" so much lamented is as indigestible as sawdust. That would be very "nourishing," too, only our stomachs are so slow in learning it.

It's a very old plant—the wheat. When Homer's heroes were talking and jawing and sometimes fighting, on the plains of Troy, wheat was doubtless growing in the same neighborhood, making vastly less fuss and doing vastly more work. They had already been raising wheat in Egypt for several dozen centuries, more or less. Wheat was raised by the Swiss lakes so long ago that the farmers had to cut it with tools made of flint, like our Indian arrowheads. Twenty-three centuries ago the great Greek civil war was decided when the allies managed to smash the Athenian fleet, and so shut off the supplies of wheat from the Black sea. For Athens was fed from abroad, just as England is, and was subject to the same dangers on that account.

Today there is not a continent in which wheat is not grown. The world's crop in 1906, the record year, was 3,423,700,000 bushels. Of this the United States raised a little less than one-fourth—734,000,000 bushels. Russia came second, with several hundred million bushels less. Here is the wheat crop for the continents in that year:

Europe, bushels	1,825,608,000
North America, bushels	871,875,000
Asia, bushels	444,782,000
South America, bushels	155,337,000
Australasia, bushels	77,694,000
Africa, bushels	48,404,000
Total	3,423,700,000

Quite a sizable amount, isn't it? Yes, it was practically all used for seed and for food. The next year's crop was several hundred million bushels less, and the world had to eat less wheat and more rye and barley and corn. This year we shall, apparently, have as much wheat as in 1906, and the demand for it, in spite of the hard times, is fully as keen.

There is no single article of commerce which is so widely distributed, and marketed with so much care, as wheat. Most of it is consumed in the countries where it is raised, of course. But each year from 550,000,000 to 650,000,000 bushels must be shipped from the lands which have it to the lands which have not. The British Islands alone import from 200,000,000 to 220,000,000 bushels each year—four-fifths of all they use. Germany has become a heavy importer, in spite of her tariff. Belgium, with her 70 persons to the square mile, is, of course, an importer of wheat; so is Holland, and even France, with the third largest wheat crop in the world, takes a few million bushels nearly every year. This wheat comes from the very ends of the earth. The United States and Russia are about tied for first place as exporting countries. Argentina is just behind us, for her population is so small that she ships three-quarters of all the wheat she raises. Canada will some day be the greatest wheat exporter in the world. India usually has some to spare, famine or no famine; the Balkan states add a goodly sum. Australia sends a little to the world's markets; Hungary does her part. All over the sparsely settled parts of the world, unless they be too close to the poles or the equator, are great lakes of wheat, from which 10,000 rivers of commerce run toward western Europe—the human sea in which the wheat is swallowed up.

And yet the world has just begun to use wheat. Three-quarters of all the human beings on earth eat wheat seldom or never. They want it, but they cannot afford it. They make out as best they can on rice and rye and barley and oats, and other inferior foods. But the wealth of the world is increasing steadily, and as the world increases the diet grows better. In Britain and America a better diet means more or better meat and fruit. In other countries it means more wheat. The Russian peasant dreams of the day when crops will be so good that he won't have to eat black bread for a month. The Chinese of the coast, and the Japanese are getting a taste of American bread. And James J. Hill spoke truly when he said that our white flour was like the lotus of old—no people who have once tasted it will ever be content with poorer fare. Some day the Russian peasant will refuse to eat rye that his landlord may sell wheat in Liverpool. Some day the 400,000,000 Chinese will demand at least a little wheat—a bushel or two apiece each year. France and Belgium use eight or nine. And where is the wheat coming from to satisfy this increasing demand?

From just two sources—the new lands not yet cultivated, and the old lands put to better use.

Some day a good deal of wheat will very probably be raised in Siberia and Manchuria. But that is a long way in the future. What is more to the point is that a billion bushels a year can be raised in the lands of Canada now being settled, and nearly as much more in Argentina. It will take time to get this full amount, but not so long at the present rate. Canada's crop this year will crowd the 150,000,000 bushel mark, and Argentina last year raised 200,000,000 bushels. New fields are being opened daily in both countries. With better railroad facilities and more machinery these two countries alone will soon be in a position to supply the present European demand. Then there are the dry lands of the United States, good for an indefinite amount.

But a large part of the needed increase will come from old lands which are now only scratched, but will some day be really tilled. The average crop in this country is a little under 13 bushels per acre. The average crop in France is 22 bushels per acre. We have about 50,000,000 acres in wheat this year, so that a crop like that raised in France would mean an increase in our total supply of 450,000,000 bushels. We can get this any time we really go after it. It is a matter of two things—intelligent handling of the land and intelligent selection of seed. With the first alone, the Minnesota experiment station raised the yield of a piece of ground from 14 to 30 bushels per acre in 10 years. And with the last anything is possible. The miracles which have already been worked in the peach and prune and orange orchards will be repeated in the wheat fields as soon as a goodly number of investigators really turn their attention that way. Race suicide will have to be more unpopular than it has been for a long time if the world really lacks bread for some generations to come.

The epic of wheat. The epic of the lakes of green and gold, and the many-hued rivers of commerce, and the all-devouring human sea. It is worth more than a Homer—and some day he will come.

STRAY TOPICS FROM NEW YORK

New York, Nov. 7.—The Society for the Prevention of Crime, which, in former years received a great deal of free advertising in consequence of the famous "Parkhurst Investigation," must find another president. Dr. Parkhurst has resigned and seems determined to resist all efforts to induce him to remain at the head of the society. There is considerable speculation concerning the reasons for Dr. Parkhurst's resignation. It is stated that Dr. Parkhurst gave his reason that he was getting too old for the strenuous work connected with the position, but as he is only 60 years old and shows no sign of physical or mental debility, the reason given by him is not considered adequate to account for his sudden withdrawal. Some pessimistically inclined persons have suggested that Dr. Parkhurst has at last recognized the hopelessness of regenerating sinful Gotham and that he has become tired of the constant strain of maintaining a fight against vice without the slightest prospect of accomplishing anything. It is said that he shares the opinion of Dr. Aked that, "if New York can be saved, there is no city on earth beyond redemption," but has strong doubts concerning the possibility of saving New York. He, if any man, ought to know.

Ever since Eve, the mother of the human race, got herself and her affinity, old Father Adam in trouble by poaching on the apple reservation in the Garden of Eden, apples have been the cause of all sorts of trouble in this world. The apple, which Paris awarded at the Olympic beauty contest caused an ugly row between the sea-born Aphrodite, the prize beauty, and her less fortunate competitors and kicked up a lot of trouble during the Trojan war. An apple, falling from a tree, was responsible for the discovery of the law of gravitation, and how much worry and trouble that law has caused the schoolboys of every generation since that time will have experienced to their chagrin. One particular variety of apples, the "malus viridis," vulgarly called "green" apple, seems to possess greater power to get people in trouble than any other variety. How many men are there who have not, in their boyhood, suffered physical and mental tortures and well localized pains as a result of partaking of that particular kind of fruit?

Now it has happened that even a prospective military genius, earning $13 a month, with clothing, board and lodging, as a private in the regular army, has fallen a victim to the traditional hoodoo of the green apple. For eating green apples in disobedience to an order of his superior he was court-martialed, sentenced to six months' imprisonment in a military jail and dismissed from the army, becoming thus deprived of every prospect of being placed on the retired list with the rank of major-general. This case should be a wholesome warning to American boys, especially those living in proximity to orchards.

The New York court of appeals rendered an important decision the other day, which has caused considerable comment throughout the state. The decision is to the effect that every person, irrespective of sex, color, nationality or creed has proprietary rights to his or her own face, which cannot be infringed upon or violated with impunity. This decision caused general surprise, as nobody ever suspected the existence of such a right. The fact that thousands of persons in all walks of life do not even own their souls is so generally known that it was naturally surprising to hear from good authority that there is really something not owned by the trusts, but by the individual citizens. The people of New York are in great luck!

The active members of the New York Ananias club are green with envy over the phenomenal display of genius by one of the Boston members of the society. That star member of the guild returned the other day from a trip to Europe and celebrated his safe return by unloading upon an unsuspecting public the most marvelous yarn ever spun by any member of the club from the day of its foundation to the present day. The story, which found its way in the public press, was to the effect that while the steamer Ligones passed Diamond Shoal, it was nearly sunk by a living wave of fish which cast millions of live fish, tons and tons of them, of all sizes, shapes and varieties upon the deck. According to the story it took the whole crew a full day to shovel the mass of fish back into the sea. Compared with this wonderful yarn even the most brilliant efforts of the Coney Island press agents dwindle to pale insignificance. It is to be expected that the New York members of the club will now make a supreme effort to win back the laurels which the clever Bostonian has carried off by his remarkable effort.

An amusing illustration of the slipshod methods of New York courts was furnished the other day, when it was discovered that the referee appointed by Justice Stapleton to hear testimony in an important lawsuit was an ambitious barber employed in a barbershop on lower Broadway. Referees appointed by the courts are supposed to be lawyers, admitted to practice in the courts. The appointee in the case referred to, however, although ambitious to become a lawyer, is still far from his goal. He has just begun to wrestle with the intricacies of Blackstone and Kent in his spare hours and between shaves. How did it happen? As usual in such cases nobody can explain. The judge said he made the appointment immediately after he had ascertained that the man recommended by Senator Travis was not qualified for the position of referee. What a beautiful state of affairs if such things can happen! The fact that the appointment was made upon the suggestion and recommendation of a politician does not lessen the gravity of the judge's faux pas.

It would be interesting to ascertain the motives which prompted so many persons in this city to apply for splinters of the "King's Oak" in Central Park, which was chopped down the other day. The tree was planted by King Edward, when he was still Prince of Wales, with small prospect of ever ascending the throne. The royal tree did not thrive in the republican soil and became so decayed that it was considered unsafe to let it stand. It was cut down after a thorough examination had been made. The splinters and small branches were burned, while the trunk and the large branches were put aside to be divided up among the numerous historical and hysterical societies of Greater New York. Since then such an avalanche of requests for chips and splinters from the "King's Oak" has poured in upon the park authorities, that its members sincerely regret the recklessness of the gardeners who ruthlessly destroyed the valuable fragments of the royal tree. The extraordinary demand for such fragments can scarcely be attributed entirely to the fact that souvenir-hunting is an extremely popular fad. It is quite possible that a majority of the requests came from that numerous class of Americans in New York, whose greatest ambition in life seems to be to become connected with royalty, or at least with nobility, be it by marriage or a chip of rotten wood.

Graft in the Vanderbilt Lines.

Burton J. Hendrick in McClure's Magazine for November.

With the exception of the Harlem River road, Vanderbilt remorselessly watered every property he got. He signalized his control of the Hudson River by issuing $7,000,000 worth of new stock, at least one half of which represented no actual value. A year after taking over the Central, he increased its capitalization by $23,000,000, practically every dollar of which represented inside profits for himself and friends. Vanderbilt went about the matter with characteristic secrecy. Only two members of his board of directors voted on the proposition. William H. Vanderbilt, his own son, afterwards declared that he had been kept in ignorance, and had even sold, at a great loss, large blocks of Central stock a few days before the operation went through.

On this occasion Vanderbilt must have voted profits ranging from $8,000,000 to $15,000,000 into his own pockets. A few days before passing this bonus issue, it was said, he had quietly picked up 130,000 shares of Central stock. The day before the deal became known, Central stock sold at $120 a share; the day after at $160; and Vanderbilt's purchases therefore represented more than $5,000,000 in profits. In November, 1869, Vanderbilt consolidated the two properties into one corporation—the present New York Central & Hudson River railroad—and on this occasion he again increased their capitalization by nearly $23,000,000 worth of watered stock. In these years he thus poured nearly $60,000,000 of fictitious value into the Central railroad—two thirds its entire stock capitalization.

Sign Language.

From the Dallas News.

Wilbur Wright is to be banqueted at Paris by the Aero club of France. Wilbur does not speak French, but being a good American, he knows how to make signs with his knife and fork.