

GREEDY PORPOISES.

They are as cunning as Monkeys and as strong as Ponies.

Latest advices from the south of France intimate that the porpoise is lording it in a most annoying fashion on the Mediterranean coast. Your sea swine is an aggravating beast, full of cunning and prompt at a practical joke, and he is more than the municipal council of St. Nazaire can any longer put up with. This body has requested the French Minister of Marine to form a Commission "to study the physiology of porpoises," that by so doing it may be discovered how to secure their absence from the neighborhood of the shore during the fishing season. The porpoise is an intrusive neighbor, and he will call at the very moment when the inhabitants of St. Nazaire and other places have pressing engagements of a different nature. However, though we may smile, it is really no laughing matter, and the Minister has taken up the question in all seriousness. He has appointed a committee for the purpose of studying "la physiologie des marsouins," and the report of the Chairman (Prof. E. Perrier) is in our hands. It will be melancholy reading for the Council of St. Nazaire.

It appears that it is an old complaint that the porpoises of the Mediterranean commit intolerable depredations. It appears that each generation of porpoises is a little cleverer than its forbears; and, whereas the porcine rascals used only to drive the fish into nets or shallow water, they now encourage them to be caught, that they may themselves feast on the netted captives. The Department of Marine has often been asked to interfere, and as early as 1865 the commander of the Mediterranean fleet formed a scheme for the destruction of porpoises, which was like one of the wolf-laws of the middle ages. A fee of five francs was offered for every head of a porpoise, a sum raised at last to twenty-five francs. Special nets were devised, and the fishermen of Marseilles, Narbonne and Port Vendres put their heads together to entrap their enemies. As a matter of fact they found it easy enough to catch the porpoises, and plenty of fish as well. But here came out original sin in the wicked cetacean. The nets were slyly drawn close; the porpoises meanwhile ate the fish, their fellow prisoners, until, just when the space within the net began to lessen seriously, with the inevitable grace of a flap of their tail fins, they lightly sprang, like salmon, over the edge of the net and into the ocean. The fishermen of Marseilles, Narbonne and Port Vendres, wild with rage at being fooled in this way, once more brought the conduct of the porpoises before the notice of the Government.

The Minister was shocked, but could suggest nothing. Three other communes thereupon requested the department itself to undertake the chastisement of the porpoises. There was a long delay; but at length two gunboats, the *Ayene* in 1883, and the *Albatross* in 1884, were sent to punish the sportive pirates. They shot torpedoes among them, and fired cannon galore. The result was melancholy in the extreme. A few porpoises were killed, but not many; the majority fled out to deeper waters; but, alas! the fish fled with them, so that it was more than a week in each case before the fishery could be recommenced. And when the fish came back, like the ghost in the laureate's poem, the irrepressible porpoises returned in their company. The new report is not more encouraging than the former ones have been. It says that the porpoise is an animal "fort agile," and that the use of artillery against him is worse than useless. It can only suggest in a melancholy way that "the fishermen who complain of the depredation of these cetaceans would do well to unite in organizing porpoise hunts, or else in forming a mutual insurance against the injuries they commit. Meanwhile the department might continue to indemnify to a certain degree the proprietors of nets which have been injured in any 'very preposterous degree.' This is cold comfort, and is, in fact, another way of saying that nothing can be done with beasts that are as slippery as trout, as cunning as monkeys, and as strong as ponies.—Saturday Review.

Lesson in Pronunciation.

The correct sound of the vowel *u* is among the niceties of English pronunciation, but after all, it is not half so important as politeness, a fact which a certain small boy seems to have forgotten.

"Mr. Featherly," said Bobby at the dinner table, "how do you pronounce d-o?"

"Do, Bobby," replied Mr. Featherly indulgently.

"How do you pronounce d-e-e?"

"Da-u-ee,"—and Mr. Featherly put on a genteel air for the benefit of Bobby's older sister.

"Well, then, how would you pronounce the second day of the week?"

"Tuesday, I think."

"You're wrong."

"Wrong? How would you pronounce it, Bobby?"

"Monday."—N. Y. Times.

A Valuable Salesman.

Juvenile customer (doubtfully)—I'm afraid you haven't any ribbon of the kind I want. Mamma said I must be sure to ask for mouse color.

Salesman (equal to the emergency, producing a bolt of fiery red ribbon)—That's what this is—crushed mouse color. How many yards?—Chicago Tribune.

—During a recent thunderstorm at Superior, Wis., lightning knocked the pipe out of a man's mouth, and discharged a rifle which was near by.

TRICKS IN PRICE-MARKS

A Shrewd Customer May Sometimes Learn the Cost of the Goods Offered.

Recently a Western merchant came to a large wholesale cloth house in New York to buy goods. He was known as a very shrewd and rather tricky merchant, who had a fondness for learning the prices at the various houses, and then trying to beat them down. Knowing this, the salesman who waited upon him put an extra price on every article that he showed him. In no case was the price made so large as to arouse suspicion. The buyer seemed very much disappointed, and his brow was knit in a way to show that he was very much puzzled over something. When he had gone away the clerk turned to the writer and observed:

"I think I have blocked that fellow's game very nicely. You saw what he was trying to do, didn't you?"

The writer admitted his ignorance.

"Well," said the clerk, "he was trying to discover our secret mark."

As he spoke the clerk pointed to a little tag attached to a piece of cloth in his hand, on which were inscribed three different letters.

"That mark," he said, "means \$2.50. If I had told him what it was he would have very easily learned by comparing the various marks on different pieces of goods just what our mark was. For instance, if K. L. M. meant \$2.50, he would know that K. was 2, L. 5 and M. 0. By then inquiring the prices of various pieces of cloth he could easily select those which would have different sets of letters on them, and he would soon have gotten at the whole secret. I told him the price was \$2.65, and according to that the K. was 2 and L. 6 and the M. was 5. I also changed the interpretation of each mark, and the result was that if he arrived at any conclusion it was a very wrong one."

There is nothing particularly dishonorable about this, for merchants try it very frequently, and as a rule they succeed in learning the mark. Every business house has a private mark of this kind. The ordinary buyer in the retail house would never, of course, learn this, but in wholesale houses, where buyers frequently see the same characters, and can compare them, it is a matter of great difficulty to prevent their learning the firm's secret. Where firms are especially anxious to avoid discovery they change the marks frequently. A mark may be a name, a combination of arbitrary figures or characters. Some firms use the Greek alphabet. Some use the firm name changed slightly.

The most intricate marks are made with what are known as repeaters. That is, there will be one or more characters, each of which is used simply to repeat the character immediately preceding it.

I remember a case very similar to this you have witnessed, where a fellow from the West came in. Our mark at that time had two repeaters. He recognized the first one very soon, but became completely mixed up when he came to the second. He afterward acknowledged this and I made him set up a bottle of wine. Sometimes these marks come in very handy, as in the present instance. Whenever we get hold of a customer who is known to have the habit of beating down prices we simply put a fictitious value on the goods.

The mark always contains ten characters, at least, and as many more as there are repeaters. An arbitrary phrase such as "John stands," could be used just as well any thing else, and is as little likely to be discovered. J. H. S. would in that case mean \$135, or it might mean \$1.35. Where it would be desirable to represent the figure 133, it would be more the rule to use the J. H. and a repeater than to write J. H. H.

Among the merchants in any one city the marks, unless frequently changed, are soon known by the different salesmen. Retail houses frequently have their retail prices marked in plain figures, while the cost is represented in characters. Where this is the case the salesman of one retail house soon learns the cost mark of another. While this is frequently not desirable, the main object with retail houses is to keep the customer from learning the cost. In the largest retail houses, where there is only one price, the cost mark is seldom put on the goods, and it is only where it lies within the discretion of the salesman to reduce the price that a cost mark is used.—Boston Globe.

Christian for Revenue Only.

Say that contact with Sunday-schools and missionary societies does not improve the average Chinaman! Mistake, it does. There is a Methodist Episcopal Chinese Sunday-school on the corner of Seventh avenue and Twenty-third street. Not far from it an enterprising Yung Wo has started a laundry. Facing the entrance to his shop hangs a large motto framed in regulation style. It reads:

The Peace of the Lord Abides in This House.

Then below it hangs a big printed placard announcing that

Washing is Done Here for Church Members at Reduced Rates.

Yung Wo is probably, like so many of his countrymen, a Christian for revenue only.—N. Y. Graphic.

—A thief at Parkersburg, Pa., lately dug up a field of potatoes during the night and carried them off.

THE VANILLA PLANT.

How One of the Most Interesting of Tropical Growths is Utilized.

In flavoring our ice-creams and cakes, and the various dishes that will receive it, with vanilla, we seldom remember that we are turning to utility one of the most interesting of tropical growths—an orchid that grows as few other orchids do, by actual climbing, clamping itself along its way on aerial roots, and which has to be fertilized by insects or else yield no fruit, except when the fertilization is done by hand in an artificial process. The odor of the vanilla, like its flavor, has an interest of its own to those of a fanciful tone, for it belongs not to the full tones of odor, so to speak, as the rose and the honeysuckle may be said to do, but to the half-tones—the flats and sharps—sharing a part of that chromatic scale in which the orange, the heliotrope, the lemon, are to be found. A curious thing about this same vanilla, in relation to its use as an extract, is that its essential quality, that which gives it perfume and savor, vanilline, can be produced artificially from the sap of pines. Vanilla has a long and poetical history in its use in Spanish and Oriental cookery, in chocolates and dressings, and in various Mexican dishes, from before the time of the Montezumas, and the thought of it brings up the scenes of many a repast with the picturesque adjuncts between palace or monastery walls. It is not without significance in this connection that, used in excess, it develops poisonous qualities. It is obvious that the first step beyond the pure necessities in the way of food is taken by adding a flavor to the food, and such simple additions as the rose and the vanilla must have preceded much costly cookery and ransacking of seas and forests for novel and stimulating substances. We read in the tales of the Thousand Nights and One Night of incessant marketing, flavoring, and feasting; but it is all made up of the same general line of articles—the lamb and the kid, rice, pomegranates and quinces; much of the rest is in the added flavors, and the charm of the cookery seems to be more in the flavors than in the food itself. Among the varied extracts used now among ourselves in cookery are absolutely harmless, as the lemon and the orange and other fruit flavors; the genuine almond, peach, and nut flavors are comparatively safe, but not altogether so; but the vanilla is to be used with care. For, whether justly or not, the vanilla has been made to bear the odium of various cases of poisoning by means of ices flavored with it. But used with discretion and in small quantity, it is one of the choicest and most delicate additions that we have to our sweetmeats and sauces, having not only a pleasant piquancy, but leaving a certain tonic and cleansing effect upon the palate.—Harper's Bazar.

COMMON-SENSE MAXIMS

Some Things of Which a Wise Man Should Never Be Guilty.

Never, unless you are an expert horseman, attempt to show off a spirited animal before your friends, else you may be made to kiss the dust; for the horse is a sagacious brute, and soon discovers the incapacity of his rider.

Never indorse a promissory note, for when once "on the ice," it is impossible to predict the result.

Never laugh at your own jokes, at least until the risibility of the company has been excited, when etiquette may perhaps permit you to give a gentle guffaw by way of accompaniment.

Never, in talking to your next neighbor, vociferate as if you were hailing a ship at sea; it is the custom of uneducated bores, with whom you stand a chance of being classed.

Never condemn your neighbor unheard, however many accusations which may be preferred against him; every story has two ways of being told, and justice requires that you shall hear the defense as well as the accusation; and remember that the malignity of enemies may place you in a similar predicament.

Never get into a passion because others will not agree with you in opinion; you are not infallible, and, moreover, diversity of opinion is the very life and soul of conversation; at the same time, we confess that there are some dogmatists who never speak "thyme nor reason," and who sadly try the temper.

Never trouble others with the recital of your misfortune; communications of this description are very pleasing; and, at all events, sympathy can not counteract the decrees of fate; and, moreover, if you are given to such disclosures, you will be dubbed "knight of the rueful countenance"—a personage who is no favorite at convivial meetings, or, indeed, anywhere.

Never harbor animosity towards a friend for a mere hasty expression; forgiveness is a godlike quality, and a true friend is so scarce a commodity, that he should not be repudiated on slight grounds; but those who injure you from "malice prepense" should be shunned as you would avoid a tiger.—N. Y. Ledger.

THE MEANEST MAN.

He Lives in Massachusetts and is Entitled to Every Body's Contempt.

"You may think, possibly," writes an observant friend, "that you know all about the meanest man. You may call to mind the classic case of the thrifty powder manufacturer in New York State who, when his mill exploded and blew a number of his employes up into the blue empyrean, charged the survivors for lost time while they were up in the air. You may identify the meanest man in the one who, when he goes to church Sunday mornings (I believe he is still living and not far away), takes pains to wrap up a two-cent piece in a bit of paper and put it in his waistcoat pocket, in order that, having very poor eyesight, he may not make a mistake and get out a nickel when the contribution box comes around. Possibly you may imagine that the meanest man was that other Yankee who not only never gave more than a cent on Sunday, but sat in the rear pew in the meeting house in order to save the interest on his money while the contribution box was coming around."

But these, I fear, are all more or less traditional examples. Whereas I, with my own eyes, have seen the meanest man in Massachusetts. He comes in on the railroad from a near suburb every morning. In the station there is a box into which passengers, by request, frequently put the newspapers that they have done reading for the patients at the hospitals. The box has a cover which lifts up. Well, I have twice seen this man, who is decently dressed and apparently in comfortable circumstances, come and lift up this cover and, instead of putting in a newspaper, take one out and carry it away with him. If that is not the meanest way to supply one's self with reading matter that you ever heard of, I would like to have you furnish me with an example.—Boston Transcript.

How Musk is Obtained.

Most people take it for granted that because musk is sold in what is called a pod, therefore it is a vegetable product. But the truth is that it is entirely an animal product, being a substance found in a two or three inch sac in the body of the little musk-deer of Asia. This sac, when tied up and dried, goes by the name of a pod among the hunters who bring it into market. Probably there are few things subject to such adulteration, as one part of pure musk will scent thousands of parts of some other powder mingled with it; and as the pods sell for from fifteen to twenty dollars apiece the adulteration has its profit. It is indeed so pungent that when just fresh it has been known to produce violent bleeding at the nose, and many people are so susceptible to it as to have sad headaches brought about by contact with the pure article; and while a suspicion of it is very agreeable to many persons, one atom too much becomes offensive, as the case is with patchouli and many other odoriferous substances. It was formerly largely used in therapeutics, especially in the Orient, having become disused as much from the difficulty of obtaining it in a pure state as from any thing else, and it is now seldom given except in hysteria and hicough.—Harper's Bazar.

—There is a great deal of poetry about poverty, no doubt, but it takes the poor man's well-to-do neighbor to discover it.—Somerville Journal.

THE ARIZONA KICKER.

Every-Day Happenings of Editorial Life in the Far West.

The last issue of the Arizona Kicker contains the following:

PLEASE EXCUSE.—In explanation of the absence of our agricultural department this week, we desire to state that the literary genius who has been presiding over that department for the last six weeks is off on a drunk this week. It is the prerogative of every man in this country to get drunk. It is a privilege which can't be denied them with safety. This chap agreed not to go on a spree oftener than once a fortnight, but has been swizzled half his time. It is our third attempt to run an agricultural department, and it will be the last. The space will hereafter be occupied with recipes for baldness, remedies for bow-leggedness, and short talks on the diseases of mules and how to cure them. We can steal this stuff from our exchanges and have nothing to burden our mind.

GOSE HOME.—During the past week Major O'Connor, Judge Pegram and Hon. Tacony Jones, shining lights of this neighborhood and leading members of society, have been called for by Eastern detectives and returned to their several homes towards sunrise to be tried for various crimes. While we are sorry to see our population thus depleted, we know that justice must be done. The only wonder is that so few were called for. We are certain that at least twenty-five of our leading citizens break into a cold sweat every time a stranger strikes the town.

HE GOT.—We were deputized at a meeting held in this office last Wednesday night to wait on Turkey Bill and offer him one hour to leave the town. Turkey is a little too precious for this community in his way of handling a gun, and it was deemed best to give him a gentle hint. We found him in the Gem saloon, offered him his choice between the highway to Tucson and a hangman's rope, and he took the highway. He didn't take the hour, but started as soon as he could get a glass of whisky and a cold rabbit sandwich.

NO REBATE.—We desire to state in the most explicit manner that no rebate will be allowed to any of our subscribers who may be obliged to leave town for the benefit of the community, or who may be hung and buried for the same reason. In several late instances friends of such subscribers have called on us and asked to cash up for the unexpired term, but we have invariably refused. Subscriptions to the Kicker run for one year. We contract to deliver the paper for that time. If the subscriber is arrested, driven off or hung it is no fault of ours. Please bear this in mind and save yourselves trouble.

HE MISSED.—Our esteemed contemporary down the avenue didn't like the way we showed him up last week, and on Monday he borrowed a revolver from Sam Adams as long as his leg and lay in ambush for us at the corner of Apache and Cactus avenues. As we appeared, on our way to the post-office, he opened fire, and six shots were fired at us at a distance of no more than ten feet. Not one of them came within a foot of us, but the shooter did manage to wound a \$200 mule belonging to Lew Baker, and to kill a \$50 dog belonging to Judge Stoker. When he was through shooting we knocked him down and hammered him until he hollered. We understand that he has settled with the others for \$150 and that he thinks of leaving town. He'd better. If he ever had any standing here he's lost it now for sure. A man who holds a gun in both hands and shuts his eyes to see that is of no account in this district. The coyotes wouldn't even bark at him.—Detroit Free Press.

THE SHAH AND HIS DENTIST.

One of the most honored of the Shah's suite is the imperial dentist; and M. Hybennet has probably seen more of English high life than any person of his calling, except, of course, Mr. Evans. In his second diary his Majesty frequently alludes to the Persian dentist-in-chief, who is, I believe, a Swede. One characteristic passage runs thus: "M. Chretien, also a dentist, who was known to me through having on my former voyage amused himself with my teeth, came some days ago with Dr. Tholozan. Hybennet had filled a hollow tooth of my left upper jaw, but the filling had become loose, and Hybennet could not get it out; but when Chretien had worked at it for some days it finally came out. I was very glad, and am going to have the tooth filled anew." This was in 1878, but Hybennet has still charge of the imperial teeth.—London World.

A Leaky Stable Floor.

We suspect it is true that a farmer can better afford to have a leaky roof on his barn than a leaky stable floor. A ton of the solid excrements of the horse is worth, for the nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash in them, \$1.35 per ton, while the liquids are worth \$3.63 per ton. In cattle the solids are worth eighty-six cents per ton and liquids \$3.14. The values are based on the commercial value of nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash in the market. Notwithstanding these truths, thousands take no pains to save the liquid—they even contrive the easiest way to waste it—but sweat profusely to get solid fertilizers upon the soil, and deem themselves good farmers if they do that, whatever becomes of the liquids.—Hoard's Dairyman.

—An antidote for the elixir of life will prove a very important discovery if the victims continue to loom up at the present rate.—Hutchinson (Kan.) News.

PUNGENT PARAGRAPHS.

—Many a man could buy his wife a pony phaeton with the money he spends for pony brandy.—Texas Siftings.

—An Uncertainty.—Husband—"What kind of cake is this, wife?" Wife—"Why, my dear, can't you tell marble cake?" Husband—"I thought it was either marble or granite, I wasn't sure which."—Omaha World.

—Daughter—"I don't intend to marry. I intend to study." Mother—"That's absurd. The men will think the less of you in the end if you know much." Daughter—"O, mamma! You always expect other men to be like papa."—Time.

—Father—"William, you are running up enormous debts around town. You must remember your uncle is not dead yet." His Uncle's Heir—"Yes, but he has discharged his doctors and is undergoing treatment by a Christian Scientist."—Life.

—"It's always a relief to me when it comes time to pay off Bridget," said Mrs. Housekeep. "Why?" inquired her husband. "Because," that is the only time when I feel positive that she doesn't employ me."—Washington Capital.

—"Aw, Miss Belle," said Gus de Jay, "do you know I've been thinking?" "Indeed?" "Ya-as; thinking of doing some work." "Then you better hurry up, or you will be so tired thinking that you won't have any strength left to work with."—Merchant Traveler.

—Two brothers named Hart were arrested for buncoing a farmer. As the judge sentenced them to five years apiece he said it called to his mind that touching passage, "Two souls with but a single thought; two hearts that beat as one."—Judge.

—"Why are the stars hung so high?" asked Rollo, looking out of the window upon the star gemmed canopy of heaven. "So that the class of '89," said his Uncle George, who graduated in '73, "can walk around at night without knocking off its hats."—Brooklyn Eagle.

—Mr. Algernon Nibbs—"Miss Grace, I have something very important to say to you, if your mind is wholly unpreoccupied and receptive." Miss Grace—"I assure you it is, Mr. Nibbs. I have just been reading your article on 'The Elements of Culture,' and there isn't a single iden in my head."

—Miss Yellowleaf—"I can not understand why you call Mr. Sheighman bashful. I talked with him over an hour last evening and he seemed perfectly at ease." Miss Flyppo—"I'm sure I never said he was bashful. In fact I have often heard that in the society of old ladies he was a most charming talker."—Terre Haute Express.

—Brown—"I am glad to see you have recovered from your recent attack of typhoid fever." Smythe—"Thanks, old man. You're very kind." Brown—"What has been the worst thing you had to contend with in connection with your illness?" Smythe—"The stories I had to listen to from people who have had typhoid so much worse than I."—America.

JEWS IN JERUSALEM.

Their Condition Worse Than That of Any of Their Race the World Over.

The Jews of Jerusalem have many paupers among them and their condition is worse than that of any of their race the world over. The numbers who have been forced here by persecution are supported almost entirely by the different Jewish churches over the world and the number of different denominations of Jews and Christians who are so supported has made Jerusalem a city of mendicants. At certain hours of the days bread is given away at certain places and the people come to these in crowds. The Jews themselves in the fewest of cases change their religion, but the different denominations of begging Christians move about from church to church as the supplies rise and fall, just as the bad boy changes his Sunday-school according to the prospects of presents at time of Christmas. Such giving has made Jerusalem the hot-bed for the propagation of beggars, and this is true of other people than the Jews. The number of alms-takers among them has made the Jerusalem Jews, as a class, regardless of their personal appearance and they live in dirt and squalor. I have visited a great number of their houses; whole families live in one cave like a room of the size of a hall bedroom with no windows, and lighted only by the door at the front; both walls and floor are of stone. There is little furniture to speak of. There is only a bed or two for the grown people and the rest of the family must bunk on the floor. The kitchen is in most cases a little box just high enough for the woman of the house to stand upright in and not more than three feet wide and four feet deep. At the back of this there is a rude stove of stone for the burning of charcoal, and somewhere in the catacombs, which make up the tenements of a score of families, there is a well, which is the common property of all. On the door posts of each dwelling, whether it be of only one room or more, there is tacked a rolled up strip of white parchment six inches long on which is written the name of Jehovah and the ten commandments, and every one of these Palestine Jews wears the commandments tied upon his arm under his coat. They have in some cases phylacteries for their foreheads at time of worship and the most of them are very devout. They do not approve of wearing any other than the Jewish dress, and most Jews who come here adopt the dress which I have described.—E. G. Carpenter, in Chicago Times.