

THE IRON PIRATE

A Plain Tale of Strange Happenings on the Sea

By MAX PEMBERTON

CHAPTER I.

The train moved slowly over the sandy marsh which lies between Calais and Boulogne. Roderick was asleep, and Mary's pretty head had fallen against the cushion. As I reclined at greater length on the cushions of the stuffer compartment, I thought how strange a company we were then being carried over the dull, drear pasture land of France, to the lights, the music and the life of the great capital.

Roderick and I had been at Orléans College, Cambridge, together, friends drawn the closer in affection because our conditions in birth and kin, in possession and in purpose, in ambition and in idleness, were so very like. Roderick was an orphan 24 years of age, young, rich, desiring to know life, caring for no man, not vital enough to realize danger, a good fellow, a gentleman. His sister was his only care. He gave to her the strength of an undivided love.

For myself, I was 25 when the strange things of which I am about to write happened to me. My father had left me £50,000, which I drew upon when I was of age; but, shame that I should write it, I had spent more than £40,000 in four years, and my schooner, the *Celsis*, with some few thousand pounds, alone remained to me. Of what was my future to be, I knew not. In the senseless purpose of my life, I said only, "It will come, the tide in my affairs which taken at the flood should lead on to fortune." And in this supreme folly I lived the days, now in the Mediterranean, now cruising round the coast of England, now flying of a sudden to Paris. A journey fraught with folly, the child of folly, to end in folly, so might it have been said; but who can foretell the supreme moments of our lives, when unknowingly we stand on the threshold of action? And who should expect me to foresee that the man who was to touch the spring of my life's action sat before me—mocked me, dubbed the Perfect Fool—over whose dead body I was to tread the paths of danger and the intricate ways of strange adventure?

But I would not weary you with more of these facts than are absolutely necessary for the understanding of this story, surpassing strange. Mary and Roderick slept, while the Perfect Fool and I faced each other, sick to weariness with reflections upon the probability of being late or arriving before time. At last he spoke, and, speaking, seemed to be the Perfect Fool no longer.

"They're both asleep, aren't they?" he asked suddenly. "Would you mind making sure for I have a favor to ask."

He was looking at me with a fitful pleading look unlike anything he had shown previously. I assured him at once that he might speak his mind; that, even if Roderick should overhear us, I would pledge my word for his good faith.

"I wanted to speak to you some days ago," he said earnestly and quickly, as his hands continued to play with a paper. "It must seem curious in your eyes that I, who am quite a stranger to you, should have been in your company for some weeks, and should not have told you more than my name, Martin Hall. As the thing stands, you have been kind enough to make no inquiries; if I am an impostor, you do not care to know it; if I am a rascal hunted by the law, you have not been willing to help the law; you do not know if I have money or no money, a home or no home, people or no people, yet you have made me—shall I say, a friend?"

He asked the question with such a gentle inflection of the voice that I felt a softer chord was touched, and in response I shook hands with him. After that he continued to speak.

"I am very grateful for all your trust, believe me, for I am a man that has known few friends in life. You have given me your friendship unasked, and it is the more prized. What I wanted to say is this, if I should die before three days have passed, will you open this packet of papers I have prepared and sealed for you, and carry out what is written there as well as you are able? As for the dangers, they are big enough, but you are the man to overcome them as I hope to overcome them—if I live!"

The sun fell over the lifeless scene without as Martin Hall ceased to speak. I had thought the man a fool and witless, flighty in purpose and shallow in thought, and yet he seemed to speak of great mysteries—and of death. In one moment the jester's cloak fell from him, and I saw the man behind.

"Tell me, are you quite certain that you are not talking nonsense?" I asked. "If you are not playing the fool, Hall, you must be more explicit. In the first place, how did you get this absurd notion that you are going to die into your head? secondly, what is the nature of the obligation you wish to put upon me? Why should you, who are going to Paris, as far as I know, simply as a common sightseer, have any reason to fear some mysterious calamity in a city where you don't know a soul?"

"Why am I going to Paris without aim, do you say? Without aim—I, who have waited years for the work I believe that I shall accomplish to-night! I will tell you. I am going to Paris to meet one who, before another year has gone, will be wanted by every government in Europe; who, if I do not put my hand upon his throat in the midst of his foul work, will make graves as thick as pins in the wood there before you know another month; one who is mad and who is sane, one who, if he knew my purpose, would crush me as I crush this paper; one who has everything that life can give and seeks more, a man who has set his face against humanity, and who will make war on the nations, who has money and men, who can command and be obeyed in ten cities, against whom the police might as well hope to fight as against the white wall of the South Sea; a man of purpose so deadly that the wisest in crime would not think of it—a man, in short, who is the product of eliminating vice—him I am going to

meet in this Paris where I go without aim—without aim, ha!"

"And you mean to run him down?" I asked. "What interest have you in him?"

"At the moment none; but in a month of the interest of money. As sure as you and I talk of it now, there will be fifty thousand pounds offered for knowledge of him before December comes upon us!"

I looked at him as at one who dreams dreams, but he did not flinch.

"To-night I shall be with him; within three days I win all or lose all; for his secret will be mine. If I fail, it is for you to follow up the thread which I have unravelled by three years' hard work. Dare you risk coming with me—I meet him at eight o'clock?"

"Dare I risk!—poor, there can't be much danger."

"There is every danger!—but, so, the girl is waking!"

It was true; Mary looked up suddenly as we thundered past the fortifications of Paris. Roderick shook himself like a great bear; the Perfect Fool began his banter, and roared for a cab as the lights of the station twinkled in the semi-darkness. I could scarce believe, as I watched his antics, that he was the man who had spoken to me of great mysteries ten minutes before. Still less could I convince myself that he had not many days to live. So are the fateful things of life hidden from us.

CHAPTER II.

The lights of Paris were very bright as we drove down the Boulevard des Capucines, and drew up at length at the Hotel Scribe, which is by the opera house. Mary uttered a hundred exclamations of joy as we passed through the city of lights; and Roderick, who loved Paris, condescended to keep awake!

"I'll tell you what," he exclaimed, "the beauty of this place is that no one thinks here, except about cooking. Suppose we plan a nice little dinner for four?"

"For two, my dear fellow, if you please," said Hall, with mock of state—he was quite the Perfect Fool again. "Mr. Mark Strong condescends to dine with me—don't you, Mr. Mark?"

"The fact is, Roderick," I explained, "that I made a promise to meet one of Mr. Hall's friends to-night, so you and Mary must dine alone."

Hall and I mounted the stairs of the cozy little hotel, whose windows overlook the core of the great throbbing heart of Paris, and so until we were alone in my room, whither he had followed me.

"Quick! the word," he said, as he shut the door, and took several articles from his hat box. "One pair of spectacles, one wig, one set of curiosities to sell—do I look like a second-hand dealer in odd lots, Mr. Mark Strong?"

I had never seen such an utter change in any man made with such little show. The Perfect Fool was no longer before me; there was in his place a lounging, shady-looking, green-haired Hebrew. The haunching of the shoulders was perfect; the stoop, the walk, were triumphant.

"It's five minutes from here," he said, "and the clocks are going eight—you are right as you are, for you are a cipher in the affair yet."

He passed down the stairs and I followed him. So good was his disguise and make-up that the others, who were in the narrow hall drew back to let him go, not recognizing him, and spoke to me, asking what I had done with him. Then I pointed to the new Perfect Fool, and without another word of explanation went on into the street.

We walked in silence for some little distance. Finally he turned, crossing a busy thoroughfare and stopped quite suddenly at last in a narrow street. "He had something to say to me."

"This is the place," he said. You carry this box of metal"—he meant the case of curiosities—"and don't open your mouth. Keep a hold on your eyes, whatever you see or whatever you hear. Do I look all right?"

"Perfectly—but just a word; if we are going into some den where we may have a difficulty in getting out again, wouldn't it be as well to go armed?"

"Armed!—pish!"—and he looked unutterable contempt, treading the passage with long strides, and entering a house at the far end of it.

Thither I followed him and found myself at last on the third floor, before a door of thick oak. Our first knocking upon this had no effect. Then I heard a great rolling voice which seemed to echo on the stairway, and so leapt from flight to flight, almost like the rattle of a cannon shot with its many reverberations. For the moment indistinct, I then became aware that the voice was that of a man singing and walking at the same time.

When the noise stopped at last, there was silence, complete and unbroken. Hall stood motionless. After that we heard a great yell from the same voice, with the words, "Ahoj, Splinters, shift along the gear, will you?" A mumbled discussion seemed to tread on the heels of the hullabaloo, when, apparently having arranged the "gear" to satisfaction, the man stalked to the door.

"Hullo—the little Jew and his kick-shaws; why, matey, so early in the morning?"

The exclamation came as he saw us, putting his head round the door, and showing one arm swathed all up in dirty red flannel. He was no sort of a man to look at, for his head was a mass of dirty yellow hair, and his face did not seem to have known an ablation for a week. But there was an ugly jocular look about his rabbit-like eyes, and a great mark cut clean into the side of his face, which were a fit decoration for the red-burnt, pitted, and horribly repulsive countenance he betrayed. I looked at him and drew back repelled. This he saw, and with a flush and a display of one great stump of a tooth which protruded on his left lip, he turned on me.

"And who may you be, matey, that you don't go for to shake hands with Roaring John? Dip me in brine, if you was my son I'd dress you down with a two-foot bar. Why don't you teach the little Hebrew manners, old Josfos; but there," and this he said as he opened the door wider, "so long as our skipper will have to do with shiners to sell and land barnacles, what can you look for?—walk right along here."

The man who called himself "Roaring John" entered the apartment before us, bawling at the top of his voice, "Josfos, the Jew, and his pardner come aboard!" and then I found myself in the strangest company and the strangest place I have ever set eyes on. So soon as I could see things clearly through the hanging atmosphere of tobacco smoke and heavy vapor, I made out the forms of six or eight men, not sitting as men usually do in a place where they eat, but squatting on their haunches by a series of low narrow tables, laid round the four sides of the apartment. Each man lolled back on his own pile of dirty pillows and drier blankets; each had before him a great metal drinking cup, a coarse knife, long rolls of plug tobacco, and a small red bundle, which I doubt not was his portable property. Each, too, was dressed exactly as his fellow, in a coarse red shirt, seaman's trousers of ample blue serge, a belt, and each had some bauble of a brooch on his arm, and some strange rings upon his fingers. They were men marked by time as with long service on the sea; men scarred, burnt, some with traces of great cuts and slashes received on the open face; men fierce-looking as painted demons, with teeth, with nose, with four fingers to the hand, with three; men whose laugh was a horrid growl, whose threats chilled the heart to hear, whose very words seemed to poison the air, who made the great room like a cage of beasts, ravenous and ill-seeking.

Martin Hall put himself at his ease the moment we entered. He made his way to the top of the room and stood before one who forced from me individual notice, so strange-looking was he, and so deep did the respect which all paid him appear to be. He sat at the head of the table, but not as the others sat, for there was a pile of rich-looking skins—bear, tiger, and white wolf—beneath him, and he alone of all the company wore black clothes and a white shirt. He was a short man, black-bearded and smooth-skinned, with a big nose, almost an intellectual forehead, small, white-looking hands, all ablaze with diamonds, about whose fine quality there could not be two opinions; and what was even more remarkable, there hung as a pendant to his watch chain a great uncut ruby which must have been worth five thousand pounds. One trademark of the sea alone did he possess, in the dark, curly ringlets which fell to his shoulders, matted there as long uncombed, but typical in all of the man. This then was the fellow upon whose every word that company of ruffians appeared to hang, who obeyed him, as I observed presently, when he did so much as lift his hand—the man of whom Martin Hall had painted such a fantastic picture, who was, as I had been told, soon to be wanted by every government in Europe.

Hall was the first to speak, and it was evident to me that he cloaked his own voice, putting on the nasal twang and the manner of an East-end Jew dealer.

"I have come, Mr. Black," he said, "as you was good enough to wish, with a few little things—beautiful things—which cost me moosh money."

"Ho, ho!" sang out Captain Black, "here is a Jew who paid much money for a few little things! Look at all his boys—the Jew with much money! Turn out his pockets, boys!—the Jew with much money! Ho, ho!"

His remark set all the company roaring to his mood. For a moment their play was far from innocent, for one lighted a great sheaf of paper and burnt it under the nose of my friend. I remembered Hall's words, and held still, giving banter for banter. In what sort of a company was I, where mere seamen were diamond rings. Hall gathered up his trinkets and proceeded to lay them out with the well-simulated cunning of the trader.

(To be continued.)

Puzzled.

"I don't know whether to be offended at Miss Snythers or not!" declared Stax, seriously.

"What's the matter?" asked his friend.

"About 11 o'clock last night when I was calling on her," he continued, "she said in the sweetest kind of way, 'Mr. Stax, what in the world does that funny word 'skidoo' mean?'"—Detroit Free Press.

Her Forgetfulness.

Mrs. Nexdore—Your husband seemed to be in a very good humor this morning when he left the house.

Mrs. Nagget—Did he?

Mrs. Nexdore—Yes, I couldn't help wondering what was the cause—

Mrs. Nagget—Good gracious! I know! I forgot to ask him for any money!—Philadelphia Ledger.

An Underhand Trick.

Creditor—So you want an extension of two weeks. What would happen if you were to die before the time elapsed?

Debtor—Sir, I am too much of a gentleman to do that!—Translated for Tales from Fliegende Blätter.

A Woman's Way.

Jack—I apologize for kissing you. Will you forgive me?

Jill—Never!

Jack—Was the act so unpardonable?

Jill—The kiss wasn't, but the apology is.—Cleveland Leader.

Too Late.

"Ah, darling," sighed the romantic youth, "I would gladly lay the world at your feet."

"But of course you can't," replied the practical maid, "for it's there already."—Chicago News.

Misnomers.

She—What's in a name?

He—Not much; I've often seen women that just hated each other drinking out of the same "loving cup."—Detroit Free Press.

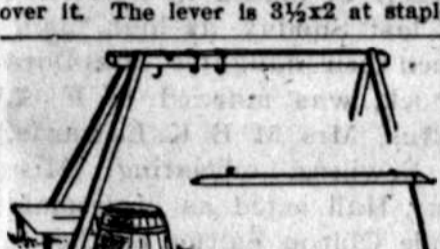
The Church of England has an income of \$75,000,000 a year.



FARMERS' CORNER.

Farm Hog-Killing Outfit.

As all farmers who kill their own hogs know, the old way of butchering is very inconvenient and tiresome. The following arrangement, illustrated in the Queenlander, makes the labor comparatively easy. The top piece is 2x5 inches, and 12 feet long. The mortises for the supports to fit in are made five inches from the ends of piece, and are one-half inch deep, 2 1/2 inches wide at bottom, by 1 1/2 inches at top, thus only one bolt is needed to hold them together at top. The upright supports are 2x2 1/2, and seven feet long; cross-piece, 1 1/2x2 1/2, and at one end this should be bolted on upright pieces, down low enough so that bench will set over it. The lever is 3 1/2x2 at staple.



DEVICE FOR HANGING THE HOG.

and shaved down to 1 1/2 at end. Staples made of five-sixteenths inch rod iron, and long enough to clinch. Clevis where chain is fastened is made of three-eighths inch iron. The end of the lever is iron, 6x2 1/2, bent, as shown for gambrel stick to rest on, while lifting pig to the pole hooks, which are made large enough to slip back and forth easily on upper piece. Rods one-half inch, bent to hold gambrel stick. A hook not shown in cut made of one-half inch iron, attaches to B and provides a fulcrum for the lever A for dipping hog in the barrel and raising carcass to the gambrel hooks. Bench, 19x1 1/2 inches, 20 inches high, 8 feet long. Barrel to be set in the ground one-quarter its length.

No Profit in Farm Alcohol.

The Department of Agriculture, through Dr. H. W. Wiley, chief of the bureau of chemistry, has undertaken to educate the farmers regarding the manufacture of denatured alcohol. Two bulletins on the subject have been issued.

From Dr. Wiley's discussion of the subject the conclusion is reached that the manufacture of alcohol on a very small scale is not likely to prove profitable, and because of revenue regulations it is evident that the farmer must be content with producing the raw materials. The bulletin on the subject of sources and manufacture says:

"The principal uses of industrial alcohol are illumination, heating, motive power and the manufacture of lacquers, varnishes, smokeless powder, medicinal and pharmaceutical preparations, vinegar and ether. When industrial alcohol is made at a price at which it can compete with petroleum and gasoline, it doubtless will be preferred for the purposes above mentioned, because of its greater safety and more pleasant odor. Under the present conditions it is not probable that industrial alcohol can be offered upon the market at much less than 40 cents a gallon of 95 per cent strength."

Dr. Wiley expresses the belief, however, that by paying attention to unused sources of raw material and with improved methods of manufacturing and denaturing this price can be diminished.

To Rid Animals of Lice.

A bulletin recently issued by the Oklahoma experiment station gives the following formula for making kerosene emulsion to rid farm animals of lice. Hard soap, one-half pound; kerosene (cheap grade) two gallons; water, one gallon. Cut the soap in shavings and boil in water until the soap is dissolved. Remove the soap solution from the fire and add kerosene, and churn or spray back until a thorough emulsion is made. To set emulsion add seven gallons of water, and use this for spraying or dipping. This emulsion may be applied to any of the farm animals by means of a sponge, brush or spray pump, without any injury whatever, and when thoroughly applied it will rid the stock of lice. This emulsion may also be used to free poultry from lice. Place the emulsion in a vessel of convenient size and dip the fowls, being sure to get all portions of the body wet, and hold them in the dip one minute. After treating the fowls the emulsion may be used to spray the roosts and coops, and in this way rid them of mites and lice.

Ginseng in Missouri.

According to the Missouri experiment station bulletin, the cultivation of ginseng for the Chinese market has become an important industry in that State, notwithstanding the fact that it takes five or six years to mature a crop. While the crop is exceptionally valuable, the cultivation of ginseng has been found to possess disadvantages the same as most other cultivated crops. It appears that several fungus diseases have broken out in the ginseng plantations, some of which are extremely serious and infectious, large areas often being destroyed in a single week. However, the particular organisms causing the damage have been recognized and methods for keeping the diseases under control have now been worked out.

Onion Growing.

The period between killing frosts in Montana is placed at 100 to 120 days, while the time required for onions to mature from seeding is 135 to 150 days, and if onions are not thoroughly ripe their keeping quality is injured, according to a report prepared by R. W. Fisher, of the Montana Station. The experiments are recorded in detail for each year, and yields given by both methods of culture.

Generally speaking, the yields from transplanted onions were from 50 to 200 per cent larger than from seed sown in the field, where there was but little or no increase in cost of labor. The transplanting insures an even crop, the maturity of the crop and the keeping quality of the onions. Prize Taker gave the largest average yield of the fifteen varieties grown, and was one of the best keepers, though not usually advertised as a winter onion. The seedling bulbs of this variety, however, kept poorly because the growing season was not long enough to properly mature them. The use of well-rotted manure increased the yield of both field-sown and transplanted onions. Suggestions are included for making beds.

Milk Cows.

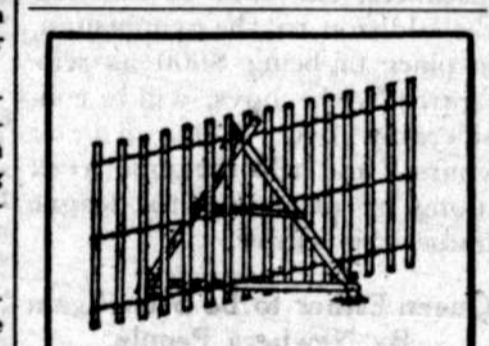
The Hollanders evidently breed and feed for milk first of all. That they succeed is proved by the large milk yields of their cows. That large milk flow, seemingly regardless of butter-fat percentage, pays them is proved by their prosperity. The dairyman here thinks it necessary to pay small prices for dairy cows that annually yield from 3,000 to 4,000 pounds of milk. What the financial result to him is, the wretched records show only too plainly. He is the worst-paid farmer in the land. What could he do, instead of breeding, buying, feeding and milking cheap cows, he were to breed, feed and milk cows of the 11,500 to 14,500 pound class? The Frieslanders and other Hollanders, with their gigantic cows, make money on milk produced on soil that costs from \$50 to \$200 an acre or rents at from \$50 to \$200.

The Onion Maggot.

The onion maggot and cabbage maggot can only be distinguished by an expert, as they are very nearly alike. The maggot is the larva of a small fly. There is no known "sure" remedy that can be applied. Sprinkling powdered sulphur around the plants is a partial remedy, but it does not always bring relief. Making a small hole near each onion and pouring into each hole half a teaspoonful of bisulphide of carbon, covering the holes with earth, is claimed to be a remedy, but such method is expensive and laborious. Liquid manure applied to the plants is claimed to be a remedy. The best preventive is to grow the onions on land that has not before produced a crop, but of course such can not be done until next season. This change of location of the onion patch is the only partial solution of the maggot problem.

Saving Fence Supports.

For fence posts or supports that will not rot off or break off, for picket or ulme-wire, take two boards 2x6, cross at the top so as to leave a crotch for top wire. Fasten together with 8-penny nails. Put a crosspiece in the middle for middle wires to rest on and fasten with staple and a crosspiece at bottom for bottom wires to rest on and fasten with staple. Then anchor with a small stake on each side to prevent



SUPPORTS FOR FENCE.

wind from tipping over, and you have a good post for picket fence. Nail or wire post to the stake. This makes an excellent post for repairing an old picket fence.—Farm Progress.

Studying Evaporated Cream.

The Massachusetts board of health has been conducting extended investigations as to the composition of the so-called evaporated creams offered in the local markets, and has discovered that most of these are misnomers. Numerous determinations show these products to be merely unsweetened condensed milk, which, while possessing the consistency and appearance of cream, have neither the taste nor physical characteristics.

Dust Bath Is Important.

Do not forget the dust bath; it is a cheap luxury, and will go far toward keeping the fowls free from lice and mites. Any ordinary box obtainable at the grocer's will answer the purpose. It must be kept dry, filled with road dust or garden soil (which must be secured in dry weather before freezing), to which should be added from time to time a liberal allowance of sulphur. Some use wood ashes in place of dust.

Points in Pruning.

In pruning the trees all stems half an inch or more in diameter should be covered with some waterproof substance, like grafting wax or shellac of the consistency of cream. The bark and outer wood will thus be preserved, and the wound will in a season or so be covered with new bark. If this precaution be not taken the end of the branch may decay from exposure to wind, rain, heat and cold.

POLICE SLAVES OF A BABY.

Turns the Station Upside Down for a Period of Two Weeks.

The officials of the Children's Society breathed a sigh of relief when they got rid of a 2-year-old baby boy who was on their hands the last two weeks. There have been hundreds of 2-year-olds in the society rooms since the organization was founded, but none ever compared with the little unknown who made things so lively that there wasn't an hour's peace while he stayed in the place.

On the night of Oct. 4 little Samson, as he was quickly called, was found in Corlears Hook park, where he had been abandoned. He was turned over to a cop, who took him to the Delancey street police station. Thence he was shipped to the Children's society. He was a pretty little youngster, with light hair, big blue eyes and fair complexion, and he was fairly well dressed.

Although unable to talk, he made it known that he wanted a drink of water and a couple of cops on reserve made a rush to wait on him. When the tot drank his fill he let the dipper fly and caught Policeman Sullivan over the eye. He laughed in glee when he saw the cop rubbing the sore spot and straightaway bawled for all he was worth until the dipper was handed back to him. A second time he let it rip and it crashed through a window of the back room.

Seeing that he had done some destruction, he appeared to be happy for a while, but once his eyes rested upon the checkers and dominoes on the table he slid off the bench and toddled over. The big cops didn't like the interruption of the game, but there was nothing to do but quit then and there. Samson gathered all the checkers and dominoes together and then let loose a fusillade. Laughing and chucking, he threw every one at the cops, who dodged and fled from the room.

Left alone, Samson toddled across the room and kicked over every cuspidor, overturned benches and chairs and with a mighty effort tipped the heavy table. The sergeant, hearing the racket, rushed in and just nailed Samson in the act of hurling a brush through a pane of glass. The cops were accused of cowardice for not standing their ground and the doorman was threatened with charges. Two blue-coats were detailed to watch the youngster, while the others were set to work straightening out the disordered room.—New York Sun.

QUEER STORIES

"It is nine hundred years since the failure of a bank in China," said a bank examiner. "Over nine hundred years ago, in the reign of Hi Hung, a bank failed. Hi Hung had the failure investigated, and to his indignation found it had been due to reckless and shady conduct on the part of the director and the president. Hi Hung at once issued an edict that the next time a bank failed the heads of its president and directors were to be cut off. This edict, which has never been revoked, has made China's banking institutions the safest in the world."

The Washington State Fish Commission reports that fish can be frozen solid and thawed back to life, if not exposed to the sun or allowed to get more than twelve to fourteen degrees below the freezing point. Salmon from the Pacific coast could be frozen and transported to the Atlantic coast and resuscitated to full life under proper conditions. The results of this test will be that live salmon, frozen in blocks of ice, may be shipped to the Atlantic coast market before long. The test has not been made, but a company at Taku harbor, in Alaska, will make the experiment.

The Geneva correspondent of a London paper thinks the sums done in a Swiss school sufficiently extraordinary to telegraph some of them to his Journal. The father of a schoolboy, aged 8, living at Chaux-de-Fonds, sends to the impartial following problems as specimens of the home work the youngster had recently been set to work out at the cantonal school: Multiply 5,101,520,253,035 by 3,530,252,015-105. The boy obtained the following answer: 18,009,852,153,375,778,242,963,675. Divide 71,421,283,542,000,000 by 24,538,714,212. After some hours' work the youngster obtained as answer 2,910,555,523. The mere reading of those terrible figures should make every small boy glad he does not live in Switzerland.

In Western Beaver County, Oklahoma, what is known geologically as the Dakota sandstone rises from its dip under the plains, and isolated fragments of striking contour stand like sentinels in the silence of the lonely country. Erosion by wind and rain has worn these pyramids of sandstone till they resemble tall chimneys of fantastic design, cap lying on cap till it would seem that a push would topple them to the ground. Many natural formations alleged to resemble human faces, etc., require a stretch of imagination to fill in the detail. Six miles east of Kenton, however, is a Dakota sandstone-chipped and chiseled by the elements till its likeness in silhouette to the head of a woman is perfect. Every feature, chin, mouth, nose and brow, is cut against the sky in clearest outline. The head rounds gracefully to the neck, which offers a slender support to the mass of rock above it. The face is that of an aristocratic Colonial dame.

Don't bet on your popularity.