

SMUGGLERS IN PARIS

Methods by Which They Avoid Duty on Alcohol.

DISPLAY INGENUITY.

Hollow Beams Containing Gallons of the Prohibited Article—Funeral Wreath That Concealed Pure Alcohol—Cleverly Hidden Tank in the Roof of a Cart.

Alcohol without a doubt is the article most often smuggled through the gates of Paris, and this is due to the fact that the tax upon it has steadily increased during the past few years.

Under our very eyes, writes an officer of the Paris custom house in the Scientific American, these men annually pass thousands of gallons of valuable spirits into the city, where it is readily disposed of at high prices.

Nor can any one question the severity and conscientiousness of the inspection, as the men under my orders have a share in the proceeds of the sale of any alcohol seized at the barriers.

Roast veal served with a thick white sauce makes, says a well known chef, a most satisfactory substitute for the breast of chicken, and therefore it does not come altogether as a surprise to learn that the breast of one "chicken" has been known to satisfy twelve hungry diners.

"The staff take good care of the breast of a chicken," was the comment of a waiter who was, being for the first time initiated into the mystery of how to feed a dozen people off one chicken.

Perhaps the cleverest deception practiced by eminent chefs is the art of manufacturing the lobster patty, so dear to the heart of the epicure. This appetizing dainty would at first sight seem to defy even the most ingenious cookery faker.

For several months smugglers disguised as stone masons carried wooden beams through the gates without our suspecting for a moment that they were hollow and contained large quantities of alcohol.

During a period of more than six months the customs employes at the various barriers at Paris saw two men regularly pass before their offices carrying a very large funeral wreath. Naturally they never asked them to pay dues on such an article as that and never suspected for a moment that it contained 40 litres of pure alcohol.

Among the many smugglers whom I have caught red handed there was one man who disarmed suspicion for months by his pleasant manner. He would come up most friendly way imaginable, shake me by the hand, wish me bon jour, ask after my health and talk for half an hour at a time about the news of the day.

Nothing save the casks of beer and cider was to be seen and he was about to let the man pass when a drop fell on his hand from the roof of the covered cart. He looked at the spot of liquid, smelled it and at once detected that it was alcohol.

INGENIOUS COOKERY FRAUDS.

How Cod Becomes Salmon and Beef Becomes Veal.

It has almost passed into a proverb that many of the dishes served up in cheap restaurants where nothing is wasted are, to put it mildly, mysterious.

But, on the other hand, most people who patronize fashionable and more ambitious restaurants are generally content to accept the menu for what it is said to be.

Another popular trick as practiced by the restaurateur is to serve as veal beef done up overnight in salted bandages, while a skillful chef has very little difficulty in palming off whiting for sole or epicures who pride themselves on the soundness of their judgment of cooking.

Good peas at certain seasons of the year are naturally a luxury quite beyond the reach of the man of average means, while even caterers for fashionable hotels themselves frequently have the greatest difficulty in getting a sufficiently large quantity to meet the demand.

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ENGLAND'S ELECTION MANNERS

The Speaker is Aware He is Subject to Interruption.

If America is the paradise, England is the purgatory, of the political speaker, says a writer in Harper's Weekly. He is very far from being allowed in England to have things all his own way.

During the hurry of the business season he had no time to think or grieve over the coldness of boarding house comfort.

When the dull season came the leisure hours dragged heavily, he could not help thinking how delightful it would be to have an agreeable companion and a little home of his own.

Up to a few years ago, it is said, only seven patents on umbrellas had been issued in the United States in one hundred years, this despite the fact, says the American Interior, that the annual production of umbrellas in this country is close to 15,000,000.

The ribs and stem of an umbrella are generally made in factories having a specialty of these items and are sent thence to the real manufacturer.

When the supper was over a third young lady entered, and was formally introduced as one of the sisters, Miss Sarah. He was not a little surprised to find that the supposed servant girl, whose handwork had won his admiration, was one of the sisters.

He found her cheerful and accomplished, more graceful than Miss Julia, who was older, or Louise, who was younger than herself.

In the morning, after a night's sound asleep, he was jolted at breakfast by Julia and Louise, and, although their greetings and smiles were acceptable, yet he missed something, and it was not until Sarah entered, that he felt just right.

There she was with rosy cheeks, in calico, with a clean, white apron, bringing a plate of cakes as light as a snowflake, beautifully baked by her own hands.

"I wish," he thought, "that one of those girls would take Sarah's place in the kitchen, that I might find out some of their housekeeping qualities and that I might have a little more chat with her."

He, however, found opportunities for conversation, and discovered all he wished to know, just then, about her mental qualities.

At all that remained was to ascertain what Sarah thought about becoming Mrs. Henry Waters.

At the close of the fourth day of his visit, just before he retired to sleep, he slapped the white bed quite emphatically and said to it— "as there was nobody in the room of course, he must have spoken to the bed quilt or the bedpost— and said to it, "She's the wife for me."

The next day was the limit of his visit, and as he stood at the window after breakfast, he saw Sarah wearing that becoming white apron, looking as neat as a Quakeress, and so pliant and pretty, that he rushed out of the house to join her, quite oblivious of the two handsome girls at his elbow.

THE BACHELOR'S CHOICE.

Henry Water was a sober, sensible bachelor of twenty-seven. He had made for himself a reputation for industry and integrity, and consequently had arisen from an apprenticeship to a partner in a mercantile firm.

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But what will not man do when head and ears in love? He was so much under the tender influence of the tender passion that all perplexity as to "which of the three?" was over, and he then and there told Sarah in the most approved style that he decided at first sight to ask her the particular question.

FOR SPINSTERS AND WIDOWS

Funds for Their Benefit Established Many Years Ago.

A veritable "old maids' paradise" is located in Scituate. That ancient South Shore town bears the distinction, says the Boston Globe, of possessing a fund of which the proceeds are devoted to the care of dependent maiden women.

So far as the Scituate selectmen know there is not a life fund under the supervision of a town anywhere in the state. More than a quarter of a century ago Miss Eliza Jenkins decided that when approaching the "ere and yellow leaf of life, who had, like herself, remained single from choice or otherwise, should be provided for when they became dependent wholly upon themselves.

The Jenkins fund has always been in charge of the selectmen in the last few years they have placed about \$20 each in the hands of half a dozen persons. This odd fund has benefited persons in Scituate for so many years that the townspeople have come to regard it as a very common institution, it is available only for native born women, and this is about the only restriction its donor made.

Many a person has been helped in the last 25 years to pay off a mortgage, buy fuel for the winter months or purchase seeds for the spring planting through this fund.

Soon after Miss Jenkins thoughtfully provided for the "old maids" another maiden woman, Miss Lucy Thomas, originated the idea of a similar fund for widows.

The most interesting contemporary American country houses are apt to be the houses which cost between \$20,000 and \$150,000, says the Architectural Record.

When the girl entered and greeted the table so gracefully and quickly—as if she had made such duties a study as a science,—that she won a glance of admiration as a pretty servant, a model of a "help."

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WATER OF THE DESERT.

Mistake Made by Travellers in the Arid Wastes of the Southwest.

One of the chief dangers to travellers in crossing such dreary and arid wastes as the far famed Death Valley in Nevada arises from ignorance as to the character of the infrequent pools of water along the route," said T. E. Smalley, a mining engineer of Denver.

The tendrifoot, growing faint under a blazing sun, will want to quench his thirst when he comes to a shallow hole, whose water, clear as crystal, seems absolutely pure. He can with difficulty be restrained from drinking it by some experienced companion, who knows that one draught will probably cause serious if not fatal illness.

"Curiously enough, the only water in the desert that is safe to drink, is foul looking, and is inhabited by bugs and snakes. When you come to a muddy pool on the surface of which insects are depositing themselves, however repulsive it may be both to the eye and palate, you may drink it with impunity, despite its looks, as a man will who is crazy with thirst produced by the burning sands and merciless sun."

Probably Not Far Wrong.

"You made a mistake in your paper," said the indignant man, entering the editorial sanctum of a daily journal. "I was one of the competitors at an athletic entertainment last night and you referred to me as 'the well-known lightweight champion.'"

After five years, work Australia's rabbit-proof fence has been completed. Its length is 2,036 miles, and the cost of its erection has been nearly \$250,000.

Science so far has failed to furnish any explanation of the mystery of seedless fruits. They are not the outcome of the work of man. Man perpetuates them; he does not more. The seedless orange was found in a state of seedlessness.

In India the printed book is regarded as vulgar, if not irreverent, and no devout Hindoo would allow his sacred writings to be contaminated by contact with leat or prepared from the hide of some animal's dead body.

Ivy growing over the walls of a house renders the structure cool in summer and warm in winter. It also keeps the walls dry. It is, however, very destructive to woodwork, forcing the joints apart.

A black and white spotted and a yellow lizard, full grown and alive, were found in the heart of an oak log split by Joseph McCloskey, near Bellwood, Pa. The log had been cut from a tree more than 50 years old.

There are five capital offenses under the British law—murder, high treason, piracy, arson in the port of London and attempts to destroy public arsenals.

In Saxony practically all the live stock is stall-fed 300 days in the year, and the largest portion the full 365 days.

Never live in darkened rooms from morning till night for fear a gleam of sunshine will fade carpets or curtains.

For a sharp tickling throat cough a teaspoonful of honey taken every few minutes is very good.

Italy leads the nations of the world in the matter of theatres.

Every gem known to the lapidary, has been found in the United States.

The great secret about winning is not losing.

A poor excuse is better than coming blank empty.



The Three Species of Moose.

There are supposed to be three species of Moose: The European moose or elk, found in northern Europe and adjoining part of Asia; the common moose of eastern America, distinguished chiefly from its European congener by the skull being narrowed across the maxillaries, also by its greater size and darker color, and the Alaskan moose, separated by its giant stature, its narrow occiput, broad palate and heavy mandibles.

The Scandinavian elk is a small gray animal with little palm and many spikes on its antlers.

The Canadian is a large black animal with much palmation and always a separate brow bunch of spikes. I have seen hundreds of Canadian moose antlers, but never a pair that did not show a well-developed separate group of prongs in front of each brow. I have seen a score or more of Swedish elk, but never saw one that did have a separated brow group of prongs, though I confess I have seen figures of such.

The Alaskan is a richly colored, black, gray and brown giant, not only the largest deer alive today, but believed to be the largest that ever did exist, since no fossil has been found to equal it in bulk. Its antlers differ chiefly in size from those of the Canadian moose, but Mr. Madison Grant claims that they are also more complex and have in the brow antlers a second palmation which is set at right angles to that of the main palmation.

"If this resemblance indicates any close relationship, we have in the Alaskan moose a survivor of the archaic type from which the true moose and Scandinavian elk have somewhat degenerated."—Ernest Thompson Seton, in Scribner's.

The woman who buys a pair of shoes thinks that anything will do in a pinch.

A Source of Natural Soap.

It is said that in a mountain near Elko, Nevada, there is an inexhaustible supply of pure soap. One may enter the mine with a butcher's knife and cut as large a piece as he wants. It is beautifully mottled, and on being exposed to the air hardens somewhat. The mountain of clay is of fine texture, and it contains boracic acid, soda, and borate of lime. Its color is given by the iron and other minerals. In its natural state it is rather strong in alkali, and removes ink and other stains readily. At one time it was used on the Pullman cars, but when its peculiar origin became generally known passengers appropriated it so extensively for souvenirs that the company was forced to go back to the common soap of commerce.