The Ad. Writer

By OSCAR COX

A young man entered the business office of Perkins & Young, book publishers, and asked for the member of the firm who attended to the advertising.

"There isn't any such man," was the reply. "We don't advertise. I'm the head of the firm."

"Don't advertise?" exclaimed the caller, with real or feigned astonishment. "How do you get business without advertising?"

"We use solicitors."

"And find them valuable?"

"Yes, we do—sometimes."

"Suppose I can prove to you that you could sell several times as many of a certain book by advertising as through your solicitors?"

"In that case you would make a regular customer of us. But I've paid for too many experiments in advertising already. I don't care to spend anything more in that line."

"But suppose the experiment costs you nothing?"

"You can experiment all you like on that basis."

"Very good. What book will you let me experiment on?"

"We have just issued Perkins & Young's Handy Cyclopedia. You can try your experiment on that if you like."

The young man thanked Mr. Perkins for the order with as much impressment as if he were to be paid a thousand dollars for it and withdrew.

One morning a week later the publisher on entering his office noticed that his mail was unusually large. Beginning at the top of a pile a foot high, he took down an envelope, opened it and drew out a letter to which was pinned an advertisement cut from a newspaper. He began to read the letter, which was as follows:

I have read with astonishment the inclosed notice of your Handy Cyclopedia. What must the books be that are advertised with so much ignorance?

This is the ad.:

Our Handy Cyclopedia is now ready. In its makeup we have employed writers with first class reputations in the subjects on which they write. Admiral Peary writes the article on the south pole, Sir Ernest Shackleton the one on the north pole. That the work is up to date is evident from the fact that the article on war is by Charles Dickens and that on the world's navies by Alfred Tennyson.

The letter continued as follows:

What unblushing impudence in a publisher to get out a cyclopedia containing such abominable blunders! Inquiry will teach you that Admiral Peary is fitted to write about the north instead of the south pole and Sir Ernest Shackleton about the south instead of the north pole. To prove your work up to date you say that Charles Dickens wrote the article on war and Alfred Tennyson that on navies. Almost any chronological table will inform you that both these gentlemen died during the last century. I am curious to know what you mean by announcing articles by these men, who shone in a different field from that of the army or navy. Please send me a copy of the work for inspection. If there is something wrong with your advertisement and I find the work satisfactory I will order a set, I being chairman of the committee on purchasing books for our university library.

Three-quarters of the letters constituting the pile before Mr. Perkins were from persons calling his attention to the blunders contained in his advertisement. Some were facetious, some ironical and some abusive. Nearly all contained an element of curiosity, especially those from persons who took the ground that there had been some mistake. In one of the letters the writer said: "Give me the name of that ignoramus who wrote the ad. for your cyclopedia. I want him."

When Mr. Perkins had gone through the letters commenting on his ad. he divided them into piles, the largest pile being from professors and schoolteachers, the next largest pile from librarians, then professional men, with a very large number scattering. There were 162 from persons who either gave a definite order to send the work or hinted that they would like to see a cyclopedia with "such funny blunders" in it. There were twenty-five orders from persons, conditional on its being a humorous work, and a great many suggestions that it be given some such title as the Amusing Cyclopedia.

When Mr. Perkins had turned over the orders to the proper person he looked for the card the solicitor had handed him, finding it in a drawer of his desk. There being a telephone number on the card, he called up the young man, asked him if it would be convenient for him to call, and in ten minutes the advertisement writer was in his office.

"I suppose," said the publisher, "that you wrote that ad. of our cyclopedia without looking up any information. You certainly couldn't have written it from the work itself. It's a pity you hadn't received an education. You wouldn't have had to blunder into a good thing. What kind of an education did you get anyway?"

"I'm a graduate of Princeton."

"The dickens you say! What's that old fashioned key you wear on your watch chain?"

"That's the badge of the Phi Beta Kappa, an honorary society composed of the best scholars of each graduating class."

"Oh, it is, eh? Well, you go over there and hang up your hat and coat. I want you. What's your price a year for writing ads.?"

"Five thousand dollars."

"Is that all? Well, after you've hung up your coat and hat come back here and I'll pay you your first week's salary in advance."

Death Through a Tarantula.

One of the quickest and most complete and justifiable killings that ever I saw came about through a tarantula. It was at a mine camp in the old days and the camp bully had a tarantula impaled on a stick. A man newly arrived from the east stood gazing, fascinated with horror, at the squirming reptile working its black fangs in the effort to reach something that it could fasten them into. Suddenly, without warning, the bully thrust the tarantula straight into the tenderfoot's face. His whiskers saved him from the fangs, but he let out a yell as if he had actually been bitten and jumped back. I fully believe, ten feet. Then, as the fellow came poking the tarantula toward him again, the tenderfoot drew his revolver and turned loose on his tormenter. His first shot would have been enough, as it went straight through the fellow's body, but the tenderfoot had his excitement to work off, and he never stopped shooting until his revolver had been emptied and the man with the tarantula was a sieve. "Served him right," was the verdict of the coroner's jury, and the case never went to court for trial.

Why Chinese Shops Are Small.

The average Chinese shop of any kind in Tientsin and Peking is a one story building without doors or windows to the street. The entire front is closed by shutters at night. In the day time the shutters are removed. These shops are fourteen to sixteen feet wide on the street, and the room is not deeper than this. Three or four feet back from the front a counter runs, behind which there is shelving. The storerooms are not deeper because of the peculiar arrangement of Chinese houses. The typical Chinese house is only one story in height and is built on all four sides of a square courtyard. If more room is needed there is a second courtyard in the rear with a communicating door, and so on. The yamens or official residences of the various Chinese officials of Tientsin are all erected in this way—one courtyard after another surrounded by buildings all opening into the court.

Opals and Ill Luck.

Many people regard the opal as an omen of ill luck, and the following will show how this superstition arose. Two or three centuries ago the stone was very popular in Europe, and the jewelers of Italy were especially cunning in its setting. At the height of its popularity came the plague which wrought great havoc in Venice. It was noticed by some observant persons in that city that when a victim was on the point of death his opal, if he wore one, brightened, while after death it became dull. The reason of this was the heightened fever made the stone become hot and consequently very brilliant, while after death the chill and damp of the body dulled it. It was however declared by many that it brought death and misfortune to their door, and as this superstition spread the sale of opals decreased, and to this day people believe that the beautiful stone brings ill luck.

Scot Free.

The expression "scot free," which is in use every day, harks back to the times of Scottish romance and tragedy so luminously described by Sir Walter Scott in "The Antiquary" and "Rob Roy." In these stirring tales we are told of one form of Scottish trials given certain offenders of justice. He who had broken the law was divested of all of his clothing and placed at a certain distance from archers who had bows and arrows ready, waiting the command, "Fire!" When the command was given the man under indictment would begin running and the archers would commence firing, and if in running this gauntlet none of the arrows hit him he was allowed to go scot free.

An Unusual Request.

A large, determined looking woman, undeniably from the country, entered the elevator in a well known New York dry goods establishment. She was carried up and down the elevator several trips, but showed no disposition to get out at any department.

Finally the man in charge ventured to address her:

"Where do wish to go madam?"

"Let me out as near Madison Square Garden as ye can," came the unexpected response.—Delineator.

Not Well Posted.

She—There's always a crowd round the dear old professor. He's such a wonderful conversationalist. He—Lor'! You really think so? I tried him just now on every possible topic—hounds, bridge, golf, music halls, everything, and he was simply useless.—London Punch.

She Had a Substitute.

Influential Member—I am glad to notice, doctor, that your wife never turns her head to see who comes into church late on Sunday morning. The Rev. Dr. Goodman—No, but she makes me tell her all about them after we go home.—Chicago Tribune.

Conserving Energy.

If one half the world could be prevented from prying into the business of the other half the greatest problem in conservation of energy would be solved.—Philadelphia Ledger.

The Brute.

Mother-in-Law—Has the young man who saved my life yesterday called upon you yet? Son-in-Law—Yes, indeed. He has already made his apology.—[illegible]

A gentle hand may lead the elephant with a hair.—Persian.

Her Patriotism

By ELIZABETH WEED

Louise Archer was a very high strung girl. Excitement was to her a necessity, and often she mistook her excitable nature for noble impulses. When the Spanish-American war broke out she was nineteen years old and had been every day reading of the tyranny of General Weyler and the sufferings of the Cubans.

Louise had a lover, Gus Saunders, a plodding, methodical chap, entirely different from her. Since she could not go and fight the dons herself she determined that Saunders should go. Impelled by the rattling of drums and the "gathering of the clans," she went over to where he was sawing wood and said to him:

"Why, Gus, I'm surprised at you! Everybody but you is rallying round the flag, while you are stooping over a log with a bucksaw. Aren't you going to enlist?"

"Enlist? What for?"

"Why, to right the Cubans' wrongs."

"I don't see why I should right their wrongs."

"Haven't you any patriotism?"

"I don't see any occasion for patriotism."

"I do. Our young men are flocking to the standard by thousands, while you are content to bend your back sawing wood. Oh, that I should have accepted a"—

The young man was deeply in love. The expression on his face changed to one of such pain that Louise was deterred from speaking the word that was on her tongue. Throwing down his saw, he said:

"Louise, I love you so well that I will try my best to live up to your standard. After all, it is no more the duty of others than mine to respond to the call for volunteers. I shall enlist at once."

"Spoken like a man!" was the enthusiastic response, and she impulsively threw her arms about his neck. "I am sure you will return a hero."

"A what?" asked Gus.

"A hero. Some of Napoleon's marshals rose from the ranks, and maybe you will."

"Just so—that is, if I have time."

"Time? What do you mean by that?"

"Why, how long do you think it would take a big cat to kill a very little mouse?"

"Oh, you're always looking on the wrong side of things. It's going to be a great war. Goodby. When you return with a general's shoulder straps just think how proud I'll be of you."

"You'll be true to me?"

"True to my soldier lover! Why, yes!"

A volley of kisses and he was gone.

A few months later a troopship unloaded a cargo of skin and bone on Montauk Point. Most of them were transferred to hospitals, the balance put in camps. One who had suffered from every disease known in Cuba was retained in hospital as long as there was a hospital at the point, then transferred to a more permanent home for the sick. He lingered between life and death till spring, when his doctors concluded that he would have a better chance for recovery if he could get a change. He was eager to go, assuring them that a sweetheart was waiting for him and his separation from her was keeping him back. Being discharged, he sought the location of his enlistment and, tottering along the road, met one who had known him as a hearty man, but who failed to recognize him.

"Is Louise Archer alive and well?" asked the ex-soldier.

"Oh, yes, she's alive and well, only her name isn't Archer any more; it's Gugliamento."

"Wh-a-a-t?" faltered the stranger aghast.

"Gugliamento, a dago fruit man, came along here just after you fellers went away selling California grapes for Malagas and such like. He had big black eyes and long black mustache and curly hair. He sold Louise some fruit and got to talking with her. He told her that the Cubans were all niggers, while the Spaniards were brave men who had owned the island ever since Columbus discovered it 400 years ago. She asked him to come in and tell her about it.

"Well, the feller twisted her right around. She had been one of the most patriotic girls of these parts; sent a lover down to fight these same dagos—more fool he. And after the fruit man went away she began to howl about the iniquity of the Spanish war. The feller kept comin' round every few weeks, and about a month ago she walked off with him."

The stranger stood looking at his informant out of his hollow eyes with pain and horror.

"Louise married a Spaniard!" he gasped. "Why, she"—

"Oh, yes, she was full of fight on the other side when the thing commenced. But, stranger, you seem awfully taken back at hearing about her. If you have any interest in her you needn't worry about the Spaniard. She came back a week ago without him. They say he dug out and left her to shift for herself."

The veteran turned and staggered away in the direction from whence he came.

But this is not all of the story. A day came when Signora Gugliamento secured a divorce from the fruit seller and, repentant, married the man she had sent to the war. If she was fickle, she paid for her fault by a lifetime of devotion to her soldier husband.

[illegible]

[illegible] Zenobia [illegible] slippers [illegible] You will see that this [illegible] is very valuable, because we will be able to make lots of money with it."

Zenobia became still and stood overcome with curiosity in front of her husband.

"Come," said he; "let us try it once."

She slipped on the left slipper and positively in the same instant vanished away.

"It is really true!" said the cobbler, astonished. "She is gone!"

Then he took the right slipper, went out of the house and threw it in the deepest well.—Fliegende Blätter.

Munich Royalty Is Modest.

As far as meeting royalty is concerned, Munich is a great contrast to Berlin. It is impossible to stay long in the Prussian capital without having one's path stopped or impeded by the passing of some prince of the royal house or, at all events, by the cohorts of police who safeguard them. One may stay for months in Munich without seeing more than a royal carriage driving past almost unnoticed except for the raising of hats. The popularity of the Wittelsbachs is genuine, and every Municher takes a lively interest in the ways and doings of the members of the royal house. The tragic history of the Wittelsbachs in recent times is perhaps the reason why the personalities of the present generation seem somewhat effaced. They at all events take care not to stand in the limelight.—Manchester Guardian.

Champagne From Sponges.

"Champagne makers of Rheims buy a lot of our sponges," said a wholesale dealer. "They squeeze champagne out of them. They must squeeze in the year's course a million bottles of champagne out of sponges. Mystified, aren't you? But there is no mystery about the matter. Champagne as it ferments is powerful stuff; it breaks the strongest bottles, and in the past all the champagne that broke its bottles and escaped was lost. Now, though, they pack the champagne bottles in clean sponges, and every day or two they go over the plant, and if any of the bottles have broken they squeeze into casks the wine that the sponges have retained. This wine, reclarified, refined and bottled again, makes a very good second quality drink."

How a Flea Jumps.

It is said that a flea leaps 200 times its height, and, while it usually does land on its feet, it often falls, especially when it falls on a perfectly smooth surface, where the claws can get only a slight hold. A flea has six legs, whose great length and bulk make them so heavy that they must be a great help in keeping their owner right side up when it makes one of those gigantic jumps, and when it lands upside down or in some other way its ability to kick is so great that not more than one wriggle is needed to set things right. A flea's wings are more smaller and of no use. But, small and worthless as they are, they tell the entomologist something about the proper classification of the insect. To the flea itself they have no value.

Compelling Use of Surnames.

Some folk have been compelled by law to change their surnames. In 1603, for instance, the name of MacGregor was proscribed, and those who had previously borne it were compelled to adopt another. In Ireland, also, as far back as 1465, an act was passed ordering the inhabitants of certain districts to "go apparelled like Englishmen, wear their head after the English manner and take English surnames." The act further directed that those concerned should take for their new names "the name of a town, as Sutton, Chester, Cork or a color, as White, Black, Brown," and that they and their wives should use this new surname under pain of forfeiting all their belongings.—London Graphic.

"To the Lamppost."

"To the lamppost" is a mistranslation of "a la lanterne." There was no lamppost. The lamp was hung over the middle of the street in the center of a cord, which passed over pulleys at the sides of the street. The lamp was let down, the person to be hanged was substituted for it and the ends of the cord pulled.—London Notes and Queries.

Poor Colors.

"I can't understand Mabel."

"Why not?"

"She's always trying to get things to match her complexion."

"What of it?"

"Haven't you ever noticed her complexion?"—Milwaukee Sentinel.

Always Some Flaw.

"Wouldn't it be fine to live in clover?" said the optimist.

"Huh! You'd only get hay fever," said the pessimist.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Try It.

A man never quite realizes how much furniture he owns until he tries to walk rapidly through his rooms in the dark.—Puck.

Describing Her.

Gibbs—Say, old man, that little widow of yours is a picture. Dibbs—More, she's a picture puzzle.—Boston Transcript.

A LOP HORNED COW

By M. QUAD

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[illegible]

The cow didn't hurry matters any. She waited until Mr. Jepson had planted his cabbage plants, and they had got fairly growing, and then she called one night and helped herself to 200 of them. The first the widow heard of the midnight raid was when she received a summons from a justice of the peace. Suit had been commenced by Farmer Jepson to recover $200 damages.

"So he's sued me, has he?" observed the widow as she doubled up her fists and fire came to her eyes. "Well, we'll see who comes out ahead."

After two or three adjournments the case came to trial, and it was in the courtroom that plaintiff and defendant first saw each other. Both were surprised, and both said something to themselves. What the farmer said was:

"Well, by thunder! I expected to see a fat and homely old two fisted widow, and I find her a good lookin' little bit of a female who ought to be sittin' on a husband's knee. Wish I'd seen her before I begun the suit. The blamed old cow damaged me, but I hain't going to swear very hard agin no woman like that."

"Lands o' massy, but he hain't no mean man!" exclaimed the widow after a look at the farmer. "Why, they said he was a big bully and bluffer and wanted to bulldoze me 'cause I'm all alone in the world. Say, now, but they are all wrong. He hain't the man to bluff and push in. Wish he had come to see me about the old cow. I'll be bound I'd have fenced her up. What are they bein' so hard agin me?"

[illegible] the defendant was and wound up by stating his hopes that the jury would render a verdict without leaving the box. Then the plaintiff was called to the witness chair, and, to the surprise of the widow and the disgust of his lawyer, he said he had forgotten the message the woman returned to him. He followed that up by declaring that his feelings had simply been shocked and that he had fully recovered from the shock in a minute and a half. As to the corn and cabbage, perhaps $10 would pay the bill. If a verdict for that amount was rendered he would take it on the installment plan at a dollar a month. He had once owned a lophorned, bobtailed cow, and he knew how hard it was to keep them at home o' nights.

"You jackass, but you have lost your case!" hissed his lawyer as the witness stepped down with a smile in the direction of the widow, whose lawyer was whispering to her:

"Now you get up there and give us some hot talk and your case is won. We've got Jepson on the skedaddle."

There was no hot talk from the widow. On the contrary, she cooed like a dove. She admitted to the ownership of the jumping, predatory cow, but was quite willing to pay reasonable damages. She didn't doubt the plaintiff's shocked feelings and was sorry for them and wished he had hit the old cow with the ax. One of the results of the suit was a verdict for 6 cents' damages, and another was that Farmer Jepson would call at her home for the money. He kept his word. A week later he drove up to the door and after an hour's interview was asked to call again. Three months later the disgusted lawyer was heard to exclaim:

"Prettiest case I ever had and [illegible]

[illegible]

Tears Not [illegible]

"My doctor tells me a good cry is beneficial."

The second woman [illegible] purse, displayed a first class ticket to Europe.

"A good cry gained me this," she said.—New York Press.

True Love.

Tom—But perhaps she doesn't love you. Jack—Oh, yes, she does. Tom—How do you know? Jack—Well, [illegible] told her that I had no [illegible] from her father.—[illegible]

The Deserting [illegible]

[illegible]