

THE SACRED TOAD THAT WEEPS TEARS OF BLOOD.

Curio dealers of the Southwest annually sell to tourists thousands of horned lizards, the sacred toads that weep tears of blood. This is an abominable traffic, viewed from whatever angle. The tourist buying a live lizard has a creature doomed to an early death. It is unreasonable to expect that little creature to live in captivity out of its environment. The purchaser of a dead specimen has no better excuse. The demand of the curio dealer took the little animal out of its field of usefulness forever. Surely any one knowing the horned lizard's place in nature's plan of checks and balances would hesitate to buy when offered one as a curio.

The "horned toad" is a misnomer. It is not even related to the toad family. It is a lizard of the genus Phrynosoma, of which there are nineteen known species and sub-species. All but eight are found in the United States, these eight being distinctly Mexican.

The horned lizard has a flat, oval body covered with keeled, spiny scales and a circlet of horns upon the head. Horns and scales are moulted annually.

This lizard's size varies according to species. The pigmy has a body not larger than a thumb nail, while that of the largest species may be four or more inches in diameter. Its head is short and somewhat triangular in shape, with a sharp projecting margin. The tail adds length, that, too, depending upon the species.

The circlet of horns is a distinctive feature of this lizard. On the defensive it lowers its head and raises its scaly back to receive any blow. This circlet of sharp horns is a protection against its greatest enemy, the rattlesnake. Dead rattlers have been found with the horns of their victims protruding through their bodies. Others have been found with the lizard stuck in the throat. Such incidents were undoubtedly the basis of the Indian tradition that a horned lizard was able to burrow its way out of a snake's stomach.

The horned lizard is an expert at camouflage. It is always the color of the ground it inhabits. If on white sand, it is very white; if on black, almost black; and those found amid vari-colored rocks of mountain slopes show red and sometimes blue. A change of color, however, seems to require from one to two days.

The early settlers of the Southwest called the horned lizard the "sacred toad" because it "wept tears of blood." This is indeed a strange habit. The first indication of the phenomenon noticeable is a swelling of the eyelids so that they bulge from the head. All the time the eyes are tightly closed and the animal is perfectly quiet. Suddenly a fine stream of blood shoots up from beneath an upper eyelid, with force enough to send it six or eight inches before breaking into a spray that may reach two feet. No one seems to know why the lizard does this. Some claim it is due to fear, while others argue that it is the lizard's defense. It appears that the creature has the power to increase the blood pressure in the region of the eyes so that the veins burst to release a shower of blood. Not every lizard of this genus can be induced to "weep tears of blood." I found only three out of a total of forty-five examined.

There are in this world many people who can see no reason for protecting any wild creature, especially one not serving as food for man, but there is a very good reason for protecting the horned lizard.

The sum total of our annual destruction by ants is an enormous one in the Southwest. A great sum is spent for control. Because ants sting and contain a disagreeable acid, birds and animals pass them by when in quest of food; but there is one exception, the horned lizard. In early morning the little animal may be seen near the entrance of an ant's burrow. As soon as an ant appears, the lizard raises its well up on its legs to avoid being bitten, darts for the ant to catch it on its viscid tongue, then settles down to swallow and await another. Why the lizard is not stung internally has not yet been explained by science. No doubt the lining of its stomach must be particularly adapted to withstand the poisonous sting of the ant. When the ant stings the lizard externally, the latter shows great discomfort. I once put a lizard—with good intention—in an inclosure around an ant's burrow. The ants attacked it in force and would probably have stung the lizard to death had I not released it.

How many ants does a horned lizard require for a meal? No one seems to know. Once I watched while one gobbled up eighty when a passing dog frightened the lizard away. Think of eating eighty fiery red ants! Evidently the ant population of that particular burrow was exhausted, for two days later I could find neither the lizard nor a single ant. Had the ants of the burrow been left unmolested they would have eaten every bit of vegetation within a radius of ten feet.

The "horned toad" should be renamed "America's ant-eater," and its destruction prohibited except when really necessary for scientific research to redound to its benefit and with a view of conservation.—By George Ballard Bowers.

—It's all in the "Watchman" and it's all true.

Since Volstead.

We see that the price of land along the Canadian border has increased thirty-two quarts an acre.—Washington Dirge.

—Get your job work done here.

FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

DAILY THOUGHT.

So much we miss
If love is weak, so much we gain
If love is strong. God thinks no pain
Too sharp or lasting to ordain
To teach us this.

—Helen Hunt Jackson.

How would you help your child to stand straight?

The old-fashioned way was to say "throw your shoulders back" or even take hold of them and pull them back. Now we know that this is beginning at the wrong place, that it not only makes the child mad, but it jerks the shoulders into a forced and tiring position and hollows the lower back too much.

Instead, begin at his feet, see that he is toeing straight forward, tell him to take hold of the floor with his toes and push up the top of his head or "grow tall." As he does this, press your right hand tightly against the abdomen, your left hand as lightly against his upper back and urge him "up." Mind you, not "back." The effort should be up, all the way from the floor, arches, abdomen and top of head, leaving the shoulders loose and the chest moving with normal breathing.

It may take a few minutes of your precious leisure time to help your child to good-posture habits, but these few minutes will pay big dividends in the future health, appearance and happiness of your little one. For "good posture," some one has said, "is essential to health, happiness and success in life."

You might, even if you "haven't time," take the time to do this with all the children once or twice a day, as essential in the household routine as hand-washing before meals.

It is difficult to have fresh, crisp crackers always on hand, so instead of rolling croquettes in cracker-crumbs roll them in crushed corn-flakes, or bran. It gives a delightful flavor.

A snap clothespin is very handy around the cook-stove. Use it to lift off hot kettle lids, pull hot sauce-pans around in the oven.

Use a pen nib for removing stones from cherries when preserving or preparing canned ones for salads.

Use a strip of muslin tacked across the top of quilts or blankets where they are apt to become soiled. This can be taken off and washed as often as necessary.

Use a pair of strawberry-hullers for removing the eyes in pineapples.

If your clothes-closet is small and you are short of space, get the wheel off of an old velocipede or wagon, enamel it and attach it to a shelf or rod so it will swing around. The rim of the wheel will hold many hangers.

If you have a large kitchen, put your work-table on casters. In this way you can roll it to the stove, sink or cupboard, thus saving many steps.

Keep the uneven strips of linen left when you hem your new table-cloth. Threads drawn from these are the best possible for darning the table cloth later.

A narrow shelf about three inches wide, between other shelves in the pantry used for small bottles and cans, will save time hunting among larger articles for them.

To get the flavor of onion in a cooked food without the disagreeable effect of pieces of the vegetables, cut rather finely and put in an aluminum tea-ball. The onion may then be cooked with the food and easily removed before serving.

The housewife who uses electrical appliances should be familiar with their construction in order to use them most intelligently and to understand their emergency repairs. Practically all electric toasters, hot-plates, percolators, vacuum cleaners, electric fans, etc., have a connecting cord which bears on the other end a plug with two prongs. This is so made for a definite reason. The electric current which we use in our homes comes from the central dynamo or supply station and follows a definite circuit or path from the generating station to, through and from the device. The current follows one of these paths into the device, next goes through the device, giving us power or heat, and then leaves by the second path, thus making a complete circuit. If this path or flow of current is broken at any point, we have what is called an open circuit, and our iron fails to heat or our toaster lies dormant.

Of many causes for an open circuit or for the failure of an electric appliance to work properly, the most common is a fraying cord or a loose connection of the cord as it enters the plug. This frequently happens with the cord of an electric iron, percolator or vacuum cleaner, or with the cord used on a lamp connected to a base-plug or other convenient outlet where there is considerable pull or strain on the cord itself.

Now, examination of any cord shows that it is made up of two separate groups of braided or twisted wires called conductors, each conductor furnishing one of the paths over which the electric current is received and returned. Copper is used for these wires and is stranded or twisted together because it makes a flexible and strong connection which may be bent and coiled under a great deal of average use without becoming damaged.

Macaroni sticks to the bottom of the pan very easily if not stirred. Try cooking it in a wire flour-sifter in boiling water. It can be drained without being removed to a colander.

Place the lid to a glass baking-dish across your recipe book. It holds the book open perfectly, you can read recipes through it, and it is a protection to the book.

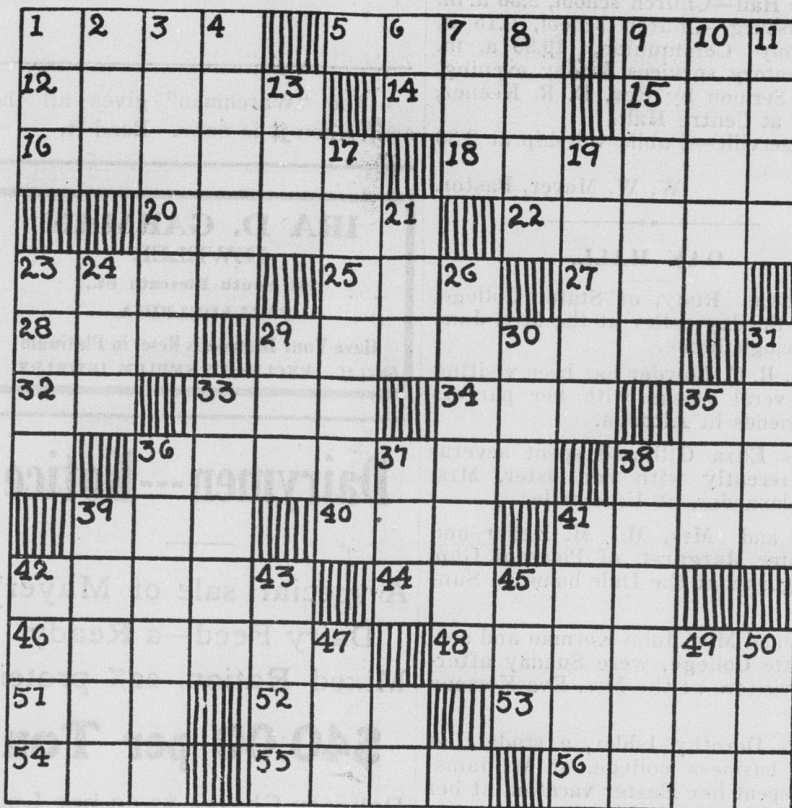
Sprinkle a little coconut on top of meringue for pies or puddings. It adds to the taste as well as to the looks.

—The "Watchman" gives all the news when it is news. Read it.

HOW TO SOLVE A CROSS-WORD PUZZLE

When the correct letters are placed in the white spaces this puzzle will spell words both vertically and horizontally. The first letter in each word is indicated by a number, which refers to the definition listed below the puzzle. Thus No. 1 under the column headed "horizontal" defines a word which will fill the white spaces up to the first black square to the right, and a number under "vertical" defines a word which will fill all the white squares to the next black one below. No letters go in the black spaces. All words used are dictionary words, except proper names. Abbreviations, slang, initials, technical terms and obsolete forms are indicated in the definitions.

CROSS-WORD PUZZLE No. 3.



(© 1926, Western Newspaper Union.)

Horizontal.

- 1—Two-wheeled vehicle
- 5—Branch
- 9—Distant
- 12—Cognizant
- 14—Also
- 15—Puss
- 16—Kind of nut (pl.)
- 18—Wicker container
- 20—Kind of duck
- 22—Vessels
- 23—To condemn
- 25—The point
- 27—Skill
- 28—Before (poetic)
- 29—Accessory for loading old-fashioned fowling piece (pl.)
- 32—Part of to be
- 33—To occupy a chair
- 34—Same as 28 horizontal
- 35—Three-toed sloth
- 36—Hastened
- 38—Burial vase
- 39—Watering place
- 40—Color
- 41—Insects
- 42—To break down, as an auto
- 44—Distributed
- 46—To swerve
- 48—Low, coarse
- 51—Part of to be
- 52—Drunkard
- 53—Coin of India
- 54—Carmine
- 55—To halt
- 56—Stingy

Vertical.

- 1—Bottle top
- 2—Reverential fear
- 3—A type of simple indeterminate inflorescence with flowers attached at intervals
- 4—String of cars
- 6—The thing
- 7—Crowd
- 8—Serpents
- 9—East Indian mendicants
- 10—One well versed
- 11—Decays
- 13—Terminus
- 17—Member of one house of congress
- 19—To darken
- 21—Alcoholic beverage
- 23—Costly
- 24—Branch
- 26—Grower
- 29—River (Spanish)
- 30—Ordinance (abbr.)
- 31—Pointed piece of wire (pl.)
- 33—Weighing instrument
- 35—Skill
- 36—Accorded mercy
- 37—Boy's name
- 38—To unbind
- 39—To gaze fixedly
- 41—Photograph book
- 42—Mark left by wound
- 43—Minus
- 45—Atmosphere
- 47—Negative
- 49—Meadow
- 50—Lair

Solution will appear in next issue.

Nation-Wide Network of Gas Mains soon to Replace Many Coal Cars.

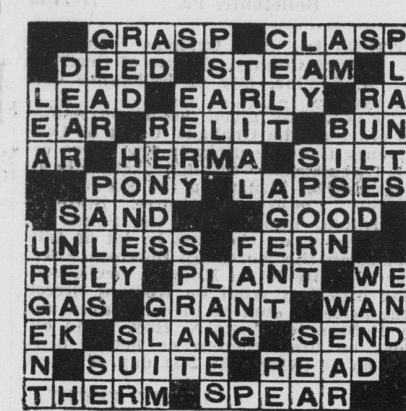
Coal must continue to be the country's chief source of heat, and with waning supplies of oil and natural gas, the efficient use of coal becomes a matter of increasing economic and social importance, declares Floyd W. Parsons, in Nation's Business.

"The idea of carrying heat units about in trucks and buckets is no less ridiculous in this modern age than it would be for us to revert to the practice of getting our water from a well in the back yard," he says.

"When a ton of raw coal is burned in the average household furnace, only about twelve million heat units are utilized effectively. But if this same ton of coal is burned in a modern gas plant, at least twenty million heat units are made available for effective work. Millions of dollars can be saved by producing all of our heat units in great central stations at strategic points instead of continuing the present practice of having small, inefficient, isolated gas plants in cellars of our homes and other buildings. If we are awakened to the necessity of revolutionizing our fuel practices, we shall develop a new and great industry devoted to the distillation of coal and the distribution of heat units.

"Every smoking chimney will represent an inexcusable attempt to waste the valuable constituents of coal, shut off God's sunlight, and destroy health and property. Instead of the great users of heat regarding coal as merely a minor factor entering into their plans of production, the ultimate outcome must be the development of organizations whose business it will be to make one burning of coal answer for all purposes. The raw coal will start at one end of these great refining plants, while out

Solution to Cross-word Puzzle No. 2.



of the other will come gas, coke, electricity, oil, tar and fertilizer.

"Such a method of treatment is not coming as a matter of sentiment or merely because we feel an urge to conserve our resources, but is being forced upon us because it is the only course of procedure that will insure a maximum of profits.

"Simultaneously with the construction of a nation-wide network of power lines to carry electric current, we may build an equally extensive system of pipe lines to carry gas. Of course, there are difficulties. But in the light of coming developments we shall be amazed at the insignificance of the problems that now deter us."

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- Butter Spreaders, Set of Six . . . \$3.40
- Medium Forks, Set of Six . . . \$3.75
- Medium Knives, Stainless Blade . . . \$5.00
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- Cold Meat Forks, each . . . \$1.10
- Gravy Ladles, each . . . \$1.30

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