

### A VERMIN EXTERMINATOR.

#### A TALK WITH A MAN WHO HAS A NOVEL OCCUPATION.

#### Making a Business of Ridding People's Houses of Rats and Vermin—How He Works.

The cockroach killer is one of the curiosities of Chicago. Not on account of his personal appearance, but on account of his vocation. There are four or five persons who live by the death of cockroaches, rats and mice, but the best known is an old German, nearly 60 years of age, who has an office on Washington street. A reporter of the *Inter-Ocean* found the old gentleman in the other day in his place surrounded by the deadly compounds he needs in his business.

"Eat all you want, it's rat poison," cordially said the old man, as the reporter picked up a box of paste. "That stuff in the red boxes is cockroach poison, and the bug poison is in the yellow packages."

"What is food for the roaches is poison for the bugs, is it?"

"Yes. Bug poison won't kill cockroaches, cockroach poison won't kill bugs, and both of 'em won't kill rats; rat paste won't kill them, because they won't eat it."

"How do you kill cockroaches?"

"We blow 'em up with powder—not the kind of powder that kills men, though. See that funnel on the end of those blowers? Well, we put the powder in that, and then blow it through the nozzle into the cracks and crevices where they live. He doesn't live long after. We kill bugs the same way, using the other powder."

"Pays pretty well, doesn't it?"

"Oh, fairly. Most of it is contract work. We take contracts for cleaning hotels, restaurants, stores, dwelling houses, public institutions, bakeries, stockyards, racetracks, sleeping cars, coaches, etc., of bugs, roaches, water bugs, moths or ants, for so much a year."

"How much?"

"That depends on the size and character of the place. To keep hotels clear is worth from \$40 to \$100 a year. We've quit taking hotel contracts, because they are unsatisfactory. The powder only kills the bugs or roaches that touch or eat it. Sometimes they hide in their holes, and when the powder won't reach them, but when they get hungry and come out the powder fixes them. The trouble with hotel people is that they won't obey instructions, and close the rooms and not sweep up the powder before twenty-four hours have elapsed. They sweep it up before we're out of the house fairly, and then they howl because we didn't kill all the bugs."

"You said the bug and roach powders were not poisonous, didn't you?"

"I'll show you," he said, taking a generous pinch of each kind, placing it on his tongue and swallowing it. "It's not poisonous to men," he continued, "but it's because we don't breathe like bugs. They breathe like we breathe—through the pores. They have no lungs. The powder gets into the pores and closes them up, so they just die for want of breath. But a good many people die for the same reason, I guess."

"How about restaurants?"

"They're good contracts, next to private houses. I've cleaned a number of restaurants for over ten years. They are worth from \$10 to \$15; depends on the size; same way with saloons. Don't know why it is, but saloons and printing offices are the favorite domain of the cockroach. Maybe there's something in the coincidence, but mind you I don't say they're carried from one to the other. Perhaps they're fond of pretzels and pl."

"Do you make contracts and guarantee to keep private residences free from rats, roaches and bedbugs for a year?"

"Why, bless you, that's the main part of our business. We prefer private residences to any other buildings. I've been in the business fifteen years, and I've worked up an excellent trade. I have Phil Armour's house, Judge Tuttle's, the best houses on the North Side and West Side. The roach is no respecter of persons. He will invade the mansion of a prince with as much assurance and contentment as he will the lowest hovel in the Italian 'patch.'"

"What did you say you charged for private houses?"

"Well, say an average of \$10 a year for bugs and roaches. Rats are \$10 extra."

"How many trips do you make to a house in a year?"

"Usually one; rarely more than two. Of course, I go every time a bug or roach shows his nose."

"Suppose a person doesn't wish to contract for a whole year. What do you charge then?"

"For each bedroom, guaranteed for a year, \$1.50; if simply powder the room, 50 cents."

"Which insect or vermin is hardest to exterminate?"

"The moth. It gets into the lining of garments and is difficult to reach. The powder will not destroy the pupae, even if covered with powder, nor when it hatches, but the powder must be applied fresh to the larvae."

"A new bug has made its appearance in Chicago within the last two years. We call it the sewer bug, because it breeds in the sewers, and through them gets into the houses. They are hard to kill, and they destroy carpets, leather, and clothing. They are a species of beetle, but have no wings. This summer another new bug has appeared in Chicago, on the East. It has not reached Chicago yet. The name of 'buffalo bug' has been applied to it because it was discovered in Buffalo, New York, and literally abounds there. It's working its way West, and will probably be here next spring."

"You have a monopoly in your business, haven't you?"

"No, there are four or five others. Then there's the man who makes a specialty of rats. He kills them with ferrets. Perhaps you've noticed a little carriage with a very highly polished black body and the words 'Death to Rats' in gilt letters on the sides. The box is full of air holes, and in it he has about a dozen ferrets. He goes to a store, for instance, rips up one or two planks, and lets the ferrets loose. They get there without delay, and when they've killed the rats they simply walk out, and they come running to him just like a well-trained dog would. He makes lots of money, I hear."

"None of you lose much, do you?"

"Oh, we don't starve, but I can't remember a case where a man made a fortune killing bugs and roaches."

### NEWS AND NOTES FOR WOMEN.

#### Changeable velvets will be much worn this fall.

Feathers will drive flowers from bonnets this fall.

Beaded materials continue as much in favor as ever.

It is said that polonaises and redingotes are to prevail in the immediate future.

It is predicted that long velvet redingotes, with satin skirts, will be extensively worn.

A Texas woman has a pet alligator that wags its tail when his name is called.

Phloxes and lanterns are old-fashioned flowers, lately imitated in the fashionable floral jewelry.

Swiss lappis lazuli are favorite necklaces for young girls.

Brunettes should not wear pearls, but they have the exclusive right to amethysts and rubies.

New for bonnet trimmings are bands of feathers, arranged for winding around the hat like braid.

White felt sailor hats, with a white band around the crown, are worn with flannel dresses of any color.

A Florida woman has made a bed quilt containing 16,000 pieces, each less than the size of an average thumb-nail.

Clusters of nuts intermingled with tulle are a novel of trimming sometimes seen upon Leghorn and Manila hats.

There are only eleven different sorts of point lace in existence, and several of these never find their way to this country.

The women of the Presbyterian Church of this country have raised during the past sixteen years about \$2,150,000 for missions.

Miss Minnie E. Folsom, a near relative of Mrs. Grover Cleveland, has become preceptress of the Brookings Agricultural College in Dakota.

The Princess of Wales and other English women of fashion are wearing Leghorn bonnets, trimmed with large flowers, poppies, arbutus or roses.

The belle of West Virginia is said to be Miss Nannie Reynolds, of Charlestown. She is twenty years old, and a perfect representative of the mountain beauty.

Mrs. Floyd, of Boston, has invented a waterproof bonnet, which is handsome and dressy enough for almost any occasion, and is absolutely impervious to moisture.

Military styles will predominate in the jackets of next season. They will be adorned with Brandebourgs, frogs, fouragers and regular aiguillettes tagged with metal.

House waists are very popular, and a pretty form belt for them is made by winding a ribbon two inches wide three times round the waist and tying it through a heavy antique silver buckle.

Jet handkerchiefs are the latest idiosyncrasy. They are of net lace, with jet embroidered borders. When the jet wears off they may be utilized as darning cloths, but that is all that can ever be made of them.

French advices state that the polonaise increases in numbers and favor over all other styles of corsages. Made of thin materials they are sometimes loose, crossed on the bust, the waist being defined by a pointed girle.

Low shoes are very generally worn. They have rounded, not pointed, toes, are across the instep, and have medium high heels. Dull kid uppers with patent leather foxing, or at least tips of patent leather, are most used.

Earrings, while not entirely out of fashion, are not worn nearly so much as they were a few years ago, and unless one possesses a diamond set for state occasions there is very little interest toward earrings displayed.

Small, short curls are again worn on the back hair, sometimes with a coil or a Psyche knot, and again forming all the back of the coiffure. Nets of beads and of silver or gilt cord for holding the back hair are worn by Parisians.

Boston has a temperance club exclusively for young unmarried women. Miss Julia Surplus, Treasurer of the organization, says no member is permitted to accept the attentions of a man who drinks, no matter how moderately.

When ashes are worn with basques they follow the outline of the front, and may be folded narrow and flat, or left wide or loose, as is more becoming to the wearer. The loops pass under the position, making the back very bouffant.

Queen Victoria is mourning the death of her old nurse, Miss Skerritt, who recently passed away at the mature age of ninety-four. Miss Skerritt has been under Queen Charlotte and Adelaide; and had nursed Queen Victoria, the Prince of Wales, and other royal children.

#### New York's Millionaires.

The number of millionaires in the country has steadily increased, and the number of New York millionaires has increased with them though in a ten-fold ratio. The almanac records show this latter fact, and a recent statement of the number of millionaires, even in New York city alone, indicates the correctness of the former. There are scores of men there whose wealth ranges from \$1,000,000 to \$10,000,000 each, and many who go beyond either of those figures.

John Jacob Astor is probably the wealthiest man in the metropolitan area. His possessions being estimated at \$200,000,000. Jay Gould is thought to come next in rank, and there are those who judge him to be the wealthiest of the two. Estimates as to other New Yorkers are interesting. Cornelius Vanderbilt, \$100,000,000; W. R. Vanderbilt, \$90,000,000; Russell Sage, \$60,000,000; Winslow, \$50,000,000; D. O. Mills, \$40,000,000; Whiteley Reid's father-in-law, \$30,000,000; Pierpont Morgan, \$18,000,000; Bob Garrett, \$20,000,000; Fred Vanderbilt, \$15,000,000; Sydney Dillon, \$10,000,000; Addison Cammack, \$8,000,000; John Rockefeller, the Standard Oil man, \$10,000,000; H. I. Rockefeller, his brother, \$8,000,000; August Belmont, \$20,000,000; Cyrus W. Field, \$10,000,000; Deacon S. V. White, member elect of the new Congress, \$7,000,000; E. P. Flower, \$5,000,000; Wash. Cannon, Jay Gould's old broker, who has just married the divorced wife of the ex-lottery king, \$3,000,000; Victor Newcomb, \$4,000,000; Henry Hart, who is manipulating Pacific Mail, \$10,000,000; Oswald Ottendorfer, editor of the *Staats Zeitung*, \$5,000,000; James Gordon Bennett, of the *Herald*, \$10,000,000; Austin Corbin, \$30,000,000; Erastus W.iman, \$3,000,000.—*Manchester (N. H.) Union*.

The foot stove of our ancestors has a descendant in the muff warmer, which will be fashionable next winter. It is a small silver box, containing a fuse of some slowly burning material, which is to be carried in the muff to warm the fingers of beauty during shopping tours.

### FARM AND GARDEN.

#### Why Not Keep Bees?

"It has always been a question to our mind," says the *Farm and Home*, "why there are no diet more domestic or healthful than honey. It is within the reach of every one. There is not a housewife in this broad land who does not feel a touch of pride and satisfaction when she can place before her guests, assembled around her hospitable board, a dish of nice honey. The friends somehow feel that they have been especially favored and reassured of a hearty welcome. It is far superior to the doctored store molasses or sorghum, and can be had for less cost or labor. Your wife will have to pay more attention and bestow more labor in raising a brood of chickens than will be required for several colonies of bees."

#### How to Save Garden Seeds.

Peas and beans should be left on the vines until the pods are well wrinkled, when they should be picked and spread until they are quite dry. Small quantities may be shelled by hand; large crops are threshed with a flail. Keep them in a dry place.

Melon, cucumber, squash and pumpkin seeds should be taken only from ripe, perfect-shaped specimens. Get out in any way the seeds may be simply taken out, spread on plates or tins, and dried. Larger quantities have to be washed before drying, to remove the slime that adheres to them. When the seeds are thoroughly dried, tie them in bags and keep in a dry place secure from mice and rats.

Beets, parsnips, turnips, carrots, onions, cauliflower and cabbage will not produce seed until the second year. Get out in early May, strong, well-mannered plants of last season's crop. When the seed is ripe, cut the stalks and put under cover to dry. Then beat out the seeds and tie in paper bags.

Seeds of all kinds should be fully ripe when gathered, but it is also important to harvest them as soon as they are ripe.

For keeping small quantities of seeds, paper bags are preferable to cloth, as they afford better protection against moisture and insects. Always mark each package with the name of the seed contained in it, and the year in which it grew. Cold does not injure the vitality of seeds, but moisture is detrimental to all kinds.—*American Agriculturist*.

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