

THE OCTOPUS.

What is an Octopus, papa? That crushes people dead? A thing with awful cloven hoofs And horns upon its head? Or is it something like a fish That has no tail or fin, And full of awful suckers that just pull the people in?

Saved by Marian's Quick Wit.

By Maude F. Smith Hymer.

"There's no use, Marian, it's coming faster, so we might as well give up," gasped Mr. Reed, as his daughter passed him with her arms full of stove wood.

Marian paused to look toward the rapidly flushing sky. The forest behind them was on fire, and the wind was steadily licking it toward them. In a moment it would be feeding on the piled wood with which they were working.

Let the fire destroy all this wood? she cried. "Oh, we can't we can't!" and desperately she struggled on.

For four hours they had worked together, rapidly, fiercely, in a brave attempt to outwit the fire. Again and again they had shifted the rows of corded stove wood seasoning for the winter's market, each time a few rods nearer to safety. But they could feel that the fire was gaining headway. The forest back of their little farm was full of smoke and flying cinders, and the few faint breezes that reached them were growing more and more heated.

"Come on, child; after all, it's only a woodpile. We must be thankful that the house and buildings are safe," said Mr. Reed, remonstratingly, as with feverish determination Marian kept at work.

"But it isn't only a woodpile—it's money!" she cried. "It is more than that, for it means eyesight for mother. We will never be able to pay for the operation from the crops and we hoped so much from this wood. Oh, we must save it!"

Her determination inspired the father and for a while they worked on again feverishly. Marian's face was tense and pale, her hair disheveled, her hands torn and bleeding. Her father, too was well nigh spent, his eyes smarting from the smoke.

"Just a few rods further. If we could only get to the edge of this plowed field," cried Marian, as he paused.

"We can't make it, Marian. It's almost here now," he said, as a hot breath fanned his cheek.

Marian groaned. "Oh, if the horses had only stayed by us! If somehow we could plow a space between the wood and the fire we could save it even yet, couldn't we, father?"

"Yes; but God knows where they are now, for they'll never stop running as long as they smell the fire. If only some of the neighbors were passing they would come in and help us."

In a spasm of renewed hope Marian scrambled to the top of the woodpile, and shading her eyes with her hand, looked off down the valley. A little red speck gleamed faintly in the road a mile or so away.

"Where are you going, child?" called her father, but Marian was running furiously down the lane toward the house, her hair tossed backward on the wind.

That gleam of red on the road—she had seen it pass going in the direction from which it was now coming just before the fire was discovered. It was an automobile, and instantly a strange plan took root in Marian's brain. It must pass their house soon—if she could only reach the road by the time it arrived there. She stumbled in her mad haste, but with a little gasping cry she sprang up and struggled on again. The plow—the wood! Oh she must save the wood for her mother's sake!

Leo, Challis brought his auto to a sharp standstill almost upon the girl. For a moment a fierce anger scorched him, for she had deliberately thrown herself in his way, and such recklessness was criminal! But before he could put his anger into words she was up and tugging open the heavy farmyard gate through which she had come.

"This way," she cried. "Please, oh, please come this way!"

Challis stared a moment, but her white eager face appealed to him. With a gesture of assent he paused beside her, reached out a hand to assist her to the seat beside him.

"Tell me about it," he said, soothingly, steering the machine smoothly up the wide lane.

"The fire!" she cried. "It's in the timber, and papa's cordwood will all be burned!"

"But I can't—" he began vaguely.

"And the horses are gone, so we couldn't plow around it," she continued.

In a flash he understood; the eager purpose in her face had communicated itself to him. "Where's the plow?" was all he said, as he pulled the lever

A DEMAND FOR GROOMS.

A COMPETENT MAN GETS HIS OWN TERMS FROM BREEDERS.

There is room in the business for All Grades of Intelligence—Not a Hard Apprenticeship—The Rewards Are Great and Sure.

That good groomers are scarce may be discovered quickly if a search is made. That they can command good pay is equally a fact. It is strange then that the supply is not equal to the demand.

For the last few years men capable of feeding and fitting show cattle, sheep and swine have been turned out in fairly large numbers by the experiment stations, but we do not know of one individual who has come from such a school with any extensive knowledge of feeding and conditioning horses for show or work.

There is surely something wrong here, for however valuable the cattle, sheep and swine may be the horses are still more valuable and require a higher grade of care. It is a far harder matter to put a big draft stallion or a Hackney in the show ring just right than it is to do the same thing with a bull, bear or ram.

Why then have our agricultural educators left this important matter almost altogether on one side?

A great many different qualifications are included under the general head groom. The man who may be an expert in the care of one sort of horse may know very little about the care of other sorts; indeed the men who are competent to condition properly light and heavy horses are scarce indeed.

There is no reason why this should be as the same general principles apply in the care of all horses. It is primarily the lack of education that is to blame. Few men keep both light and heavy horses. One sort at a time seems to be enough and hence the men who graduate from the hard school of experience know only about the one sort with which they have been connected.

The benign light of education would soon alter this condition and fit men to accept the care of any breed of horse with equal confidence.

This necessity for education becomes all the more apparent when it is considered that a man must be intelligent to make a good groom. The juffers never graduate beyond the stage of cleaning out the stalls, carrying water and the like. From the position of groom to that of foreman is not a long step; from that of foreman to manager is no longer, but to be a really good manager, the man must thoroughly understand how the work should be done and to do that he must be able on a pinch to perform the tasks himself.

It is not a hard apprenticeship however and the man who brings brains and willing hands does not spend much time before he graduates into some position of trust.

There is only just the one way, as stated, and that is to begin at the bottom. We know of one man high in the ranks of importers who has set his eldest son to learn the business from the ground up. The boy is caring for a string of eight horses and it will not be long before he will, be advanced. He takes his turn in the showing like the rest of the men, gets up at cockcrow to give his charges their exercise, handles the comb and brush like an old hand and in general is serving his novitiate. It is his intention to take a veterinary course at college in a year or two and when he has obtained his degree he will be admirably equipped to fight the battle of life. It would be better still if he could attend an agricultural college where the feeding and management of horses are taught as are the feeding and management of meatmaking animals, but at present it would be hard to direct him to an establishment where such equal advantages are in offer.

There is no doubt that the demand for competent grooms will remain active from this time forward. There is room for all high grades of intelligence. Some men are not born to reach beyond the grade of foreman. Some are not born to reach even as high, but the young man of average mind can readily master the principles required. This is not an argument to prove that there is nothing much in the care of horses, for there is, but there is no sleight of hand nor hocus pocus about the business. It is merely straightforward work which must be learned somewhere, somehow.

Turning now to the ramifications of the business it is not necessary to enumerate all the various lines in which a groom may succeed. A few of these branches will suffice. There is the head man in the thoroughbred stable, the head man in the trotting stable, the feeder of draft horses, of hackneys, of coach horses, the man who can show horses well in the ring, and a dozen others, all of whom earn excellent wages and whose services are in constant demand. It is within our knowledge that a sustained search to find a man competent to educate and show coach and hackney horses in the ring has borne no fruit during the last three months or more. Wages have not been considered. A competent man might name his own terms, but he has not been found. We are aware also of an unsuccessful attempt that has been made to obtain a feeder of draft horses competent to do a little rush work on some rather backward animals and despite the proffer

of large emolument the place is still open.

DESTRUCTION OF CORK FOR ESTS.

It Goes on in Italy at an Alarming Rate and No Check Seems Possible. The cork industry, which is quite an important one, will receive a fresh impetus, a new process having been discovered by which large pieces can be made out of small ones so that cork waste can be utilized in large quantities.

This is all the more important as the price of cork increases steadily, both on account of the growing demand and the lessened supply of the raw material.

Formerly Italy was a large producer of cork, but a great part of the splendid cork-oak forests has already been destroyed. In some provinces—as, for instance, in Calabria—the trees have been felled and used for charcoal making; in other provinces they have been cut down on account of their high potash contents.

Larger forests of cork-oak trees are still existing in Spain, Portugal, France, Algeria and Tunis. None are found in Asia Minor and only rarely in Greece and European Turkey, although the climates seem to be favorable for their growth. The area covered by these forests is estimated at 300,000 hectares (741,300 acres) in Portugal, 250,000 hectares (617,750 acres) in Spain, 280,000 hectares (691,850 acres) in Algeria, and only 80,000 hectares (197,750 acres) remain in Italy.

While Spain still furnishes 32,800 tons of cork annually, the production of Italy has decreased to 4000 tons. The value of the Spanish exports of cork amounts to \$6,000,000 per year, against less than \$250,000 for Italy. Only Sicily and Sardinia are still producing cork to any considerable extent in Italy, while the former great oak forests of Calabria are almost totally destroyed. It seems incomprehensible that this destruction has been permitted. The trees easily reach an age of 200 years. They yield cork in their thirteenth year and continue to do so every seven years. Seventy-five years ago the English demand for cork was supplied exclusively from Italy. The destruction of the remaining forests goes on uninterruptedly, and nobody seems to try to prevent it or to plant new forests in spite of the fact that Italy possesses the most favorable climate and soil for the cork oak, the most favorable conditions for its growth being found in the volcanic soil of the peninsula.

Substitutes for Wit. Chinese school teachers do not strengthen the brains of children with algebra and calculus, but stuff them with Confucian morals, says a writer in the Chicago Record-Herald. He further declares that in China he found no wit or imagination but tells the following incidents, which prove that the Chinaman has good unconscious substitutes for one or the other.

One day in Shanghai, when I was feeling sick, I called a Chinaman to me and said, "John, do you have good doctors in China?"

"Good doctors!" he exclaimed. "China have best doctors in world."

"Eh, over there," I said, pointing to a house covered with a doctor's signs, "do you call him a good doctor?"

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INDIANS FOND OF DANCING.

Woman Generally Takes Lead—Much Amusement in Sign Language.

To white persons the dance of the Indian signifies a grim ceremonial preliminary to a bloody slaughter, or at least to the torture of prisoners. Of course, those who have seen the dancing, according to the Indian custom, but apart from serious occasions, the aborigines, men and women, love to dance for pleasure.

It will probably be a surprise to the present generation and many of the older ones, for that matter, to learn that the modern society "german" or "cotillion" of the whites is stolen absolutely from the red men of the plains.

There is hardly a night in an Indian encampment that there is not dancing among the bucks and squaws. Little preparation is necessary for these affairs, and formal invitations are not considered essential, the call of the "tom-tom" being the only notice given those who may desire to attend.

There is no difference in social grade among the Indians, no social ostracism, no "four hundred." All meet at the dance on an absolute equality. The dances are usually held in tepees, two of them being pitched facing each other. In one of them half a dozen Indian bucks are squatted around a drum, each furnished with a stick for the purpose of making "music," and this is the entire orchestra. Each man has a particular piece on the drum to beat.

Very soon after the first tap on the drum those who desire to participate in the dance begin to appear. Even at the grandest dances there is no ceremony, and although there appears to be no particular sentiment against it, it is very rarely the case that a man accompanies his wife to or from the festivities, yet a married woman who would accept such attention from another man would commit a grave breach of propriety.

The men find their way to the tepee where the drum is beating and the women squat around the tepee that has been arranged for dancing. When the crowd of would-be dancers is thought sufficiently large, the women intimate what they would like to dance and the drummers begin their monotonous beating.

It is curious, but it is also a fact that at all of these Indian dances the leader is always a woman. The women all squat around the tepee until sufficiently inspired to take the center of the floor; the woman that does this first is the leader for that figure. She will dance around all alone for a moment or two and then up to some buck whom she chooses for a partner; then they dance around for a while and each takes a partner of the opposite sex. This continues until there is room for no more couples.

This is continued for perhaps 20 minutes, when the music ceases, the partners separate and each returns to his or her former place. There are any number of very pretty "figures" danced in this way. One that I recall is the "sign dance." After dancing around for a few minutes a woman will take a man, lead him into a circle, placing him opposite her, both in the meantime dancing hard. Then she will talk to him in the sign language of the red men something after this manner:

"What do you think of me, my buck; I am ready for you to make love to me."

His answer is in the sign language and he is at liberty to respond as he desires without giving the least offense. Frequently these sign conversations during the dance are outbursts of wit and sarcasm, which are received by the onlookers with great shouts of laughter and applause as the little thrusts are sent home.—Indianapolis Sentinel.

FOR THE HOUSEWIFE

How to Wash Windows.

The old-fashioned way of washing windows with soapy water followed by clear water, followed by dry cloths and polishing with newspapers or chamouis, is going out, fortunately for the window washer. The housewife of today washes her windows with water in which a little kerosene has been poured and finds that she can polish them at once with soft lintless cloth. Or she dips a rag in alcohol and then in whitening, rubs the glass with the mixture and polishes with chamouis.

Washing a Counterpane. The simplest, best and most convenient way of "doing up" a white counterpane is to put it, under a heavy press after washing it. Wash it in plenty of soapsuds, rinse thoroughly and put through bluing water. Hang it outdoors in the sunshine until almost dry; then slightly damp fold twice or more, lay on a clean ironing sheet and smooth out with the hands until free from any large wrinkles. Place under it a heavy smooth board on which arrange eight or more large irons or anything of heavy weight. Let it remain in this way over night or for twelve or fourteen hours. Remove it from this press and hang it on a line or clothes-horse to become entirely dry. The result will be a beautifully smooth counterpane.

For Needles and Pins. A convenience for the girl who is away on her vacation is a pin sheet. A six-inch strip of silk of the ordinary width is first covered with sheet wadding and then with six-inch sash ribbon of a contrasting color. The softer silk side is studded with pins, stuck in just as they are when bought in the paper. There are rows of safety pins in various sizes, pearl-headed pins, smaller pins with various colored heads to match different neckwear, and common black and white pins, all arranged in groups. At one end of the sheet is sewed two ribbons which match the lining silk, and the summer girl can roll up her sheet like a "housewife" and pack it in her bag when travelling. At the hotel she fastens it up on the wall by means of two stout pins or fine tacks stuck through the corners.

Making Oil Cloth. Oil cloth for floors is made on stout hemp canvas, which is woven very wide, so as to have no seams in it. This canvas is first stretched tight over a frame, then is covered with thin glue, or size, and rubbed down with pumice. This is to fill in the space between the threads and make the whole very smooth. Then a coating of thick paint is spread over the surface and rubbed in with a trowel. When this is dry another coat is put on, and after that another and then a coat of thin paint, laid on with a brush. All of these are of one color, and after they have been put on and dried, the pattern of the oil cloth is printed on by means of wooden blocks. The outline of the design is cut on these blocks and for different colors different blocks are used. Oil cloth for table covers is made of light cloth or canvas on which two coats, or perhaps three, of common paint are laid on, and the design is then printed in the same way that calico is printed.—M. F. Feurt in the Epitomeist.

Recipes. Creamed Onions.—Cook Bermuda onions in water until tender, adding a rounding teaspoon of sugar when first put on to cook and a level teaspoonful of salt a few minutes before they are done. Drain and pour a cream sauce over. For the sauce melt a rounding tablespoonful of butter in a small saucepan, add a level tablespoonful of flour and cook until frothy, then add one cup of hot milk and cook three minutes, beating hard all the time, add a pinch of pepper and a salt spoonful of salt.

Potato Roses.—To two cups of well-seasoned mashed potatoes, add the yolks of two eggs and white of one, and beat them well together. Place it in a narrow bag with a tube pressing it through. As the potato comes from the tube, guide it in a circle, winding it around until it comes to a point. The little piles of potato will resemble roses. Touch them lightly with a brush dropped in egg, and place a bit of butter on each one. Put them in the oven a moment to brown slightly. The edges touched by the egg will take a deeper color. Potato roses make a good garnish for meat dishes.

White Bread.—Mix one cup of scalded milk, one cup of boiling water, one level tablespoon of butter, a level teaspoon of salt, and a level tablespoon of sugar together, and cool until lukewarm. Add one-half yeast cake dissolved in one-half cup of lukewarm water. Mix with six cups of flour and stir well, then add enough more to make a dough that can be kneaded. Knead a few minutes, put into a bowl and cover closely; let rise over night. In the morning knead ten minutes, then cover and let rise again, shape into loaves, put in pans, and let rise again until nearly twice the original size, and bake well. If the weather is warm the second rising may be omitted and the bread shaped for the pans after being kneaded well.

The Shoe Shampoo. Willie is a precocious youth of about three summers. He was out with the boys the other evening, and among his dissipations was the indulgence in a shoeblack in a real up-to-date shoeblack's chair. Next he got his hair cut, and when the barber asked him if he wanted a shampoo he replied: "Suttinly, I want all the fixin's."

Recently when his father came home Willie had a chair in place and was ready to do business like a professional shoeblack. He addressed his father as follows: "Say, dad, get into de chair and I'll give you shoes a shampoo."

He got his words a trifle mixed, but there was one feature of the business he had down to the queen's taste. To humor him his father got into the chair and the boy went through the shoe shining operation in pantomime, which was so true to nature that every one laughed. The operation over, the youngster called out in a brisk tone: "Next! Five cents, please!" at the same time holding out his hand for the coin. He got it and immediately closed his shop until he could spend the nickel.—Albany Journal.

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FOR THE HOUSEWIFE

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