

SUCCULENT SCUPPERNONG.

Texas, Editor Kings the Praises of the Juicest of Georgia Fruits. The scuppernong comes between watermelon, time and persimmons, and so completes the summer round from may-haw to persimmons. It is no pruned and coddled, staked and ridged product of the knife and spraying machine, says the Houston (Tex.) Post. It springs from one to two great trunks as big as a fat boy's leg, and spreads over the white land yard. It refuses to bear from its great clusters, to be gathered and sold for money, but in little bunches of two or three or on single wry stems that break at the skin it proclaims that it was built for home folks only—and for neighbors—without money and without price.

Whoever heard of selling scuppernongs? Just as soon think of selling a mess of greens.

In the cool of the morning or the shank of the evening is the time to eat scuppernongs. Happy is the man who is fat enough to stand flat-footed and pluck the pinkish, swivelly, sugary lumps of richness. Happier is the boy who is allowed to climb on top and eat as much as he wants.

Next to a boy the biggest consumer of scuppernongs is the hired man. He can come in before sundown with a broken back after picking 200 pounds of bumble-bee cotton, eat scuppernongs till plumb dark, and then put away four slices of fried bacon, two helpings of grits and gravy, a dish of cold collards, seven hot biscuits and a quart of butter-milk.

All the wishes I wish it is to be a boy again, or a hired man from sundown to bedtime.

The biggest time under the Georgia grape arbor is Sunday evening—not afternoon—There are no afternoons in Georgia. It is evening from after dinner till dark, and then it's night. Sunday evening about four o'clock, with three or four wagonloads of neighbors. Half a dozen bugles full of young folks a-sparkin' and enough children to get in the way and be stepped on. Takes about two hours to clean up the arbor, and there's enough skins on the ground to fill the hog troughs. By next Sunday there'll be just as much fruit as ever and a new lot of neighbors to get their fill.

The scuppernong is fertilized by the wild muscadine or bullies down there in the creek bottom.

Wish there were bullies in Texas.

OIL IS SCARCE AND HIGH.

Product of the Skunk in Maine as Important Article of Commerce.

Neither tradition nor the memory of living man runs back to the time when Prospect was not the skunk oil metropolis of Maine. Even in the times when anglemorm oil and snake oil ran skunk oil a close race for leadership Prospect maintained its reputation for producing more skunks to the acre and fatter skunks than any other town. In the days of the civil war Gen. Hearse, a veteran of the conflict with Mexico, gained a reputation for benevolence and a small fortune by extracting the oil from skunks and sending it to the army hospital for the relief of the stricken troops.

The harvest of skunk oil for 1905 has been very much below the average, due, it is said, to the fact that last June and July were cold and wet, and as grasshoppers hatch in those months the weather killed most of the insects in infancy, thus cutting off the food supply of the skunks. As an offset for the poverty in yield, the selling price of the oil has advanced from \$4 to \$5 a gallon, and buyers are busy collecting all the job lots on hand. In average years, a fat-sized skunk would yield a quart of pure oil, which was worth \$1, and this sum added to the 50 cents to \$2 received for the peat made skunk hunting an important industry for the farmers and their sons.

The skunk hunters say that the crime of substitution has afflicted their trade more than any other, as dealers who are unscrupulous do not hesitate to dilute the genuine product of the skunk with 50 per cent. or more of hen's oil, which resembles skunk's oil in every respect except in smell. By adding a small quantity of the flavoring extract which skunks keep in stock the imitation article can be sold to customers without fear of detection.

The practice of selling adulterated oils for genuine has become so widespread that the hunters of skunks say that they will ask the next legislature to pass an act making adulteration a crime punishable with a heavy fine or imprisonment. As science is unable to distinguish skunk's oil from hen's oil or goose's oil, by any test except its smell, it is feared that evidence sufficient to convict will be hard to secure.

Chinese Silverware.

One of the oddities of our nomenclature is that the combination of metals known as German silver contains no silver in its composition, and is of Chinese, and not of German origin. It was first introduced into Europe by the Germans, and for some time it was not generally known that they had simply borrowed it from the Chinese.

GLUTTONOUS SIOUX.

INDIANS SAID TO BE EATING THEMSELVES TO DEATH.

The Once Great Tribe Reduced to a Remnant and Very Largely Through Inordinate Appetite.

If Thomas A. Edison referred to the American Indians when he said that people were eating themselves to death, he could find plenty of corroboration of his theory on the reservations. Overeating is doing more to bring about the extinction of the Sioux and Yankton Indians than race suicide, fire water and all the diseases which haunt the wigwam of the red man.

The great tribe of Sioux Indians is disappearing. The members, it is declared, are literally eating themselves to death on account of the plenty about them.

With the new railroad being built through the White river valley the Indians will be enabled to secure supplies with greater ease. They are likely to become greater feeders than they are now, and thus to hasten the time of their disappearance from the reservations in South Dakota.

If corroborative evidence was not easily obtained, it would scarcely be accepted as true that in the course of a night of feasting, dancing and story telling the average Indian will consume from 10 to 15 pounds of meat, and if he has an abundance of food and can make his own selection of the parts to be eaten, he will swallow without inconvenience not less than 20 pounds of meat in a single night.

Carloads of canned meats are consumed by the overfed Sioux Indians, and some canned goods have become almost as sacred a dish with the red men as the fat dog stew of old for which the Sioux tribe is famous. Among the varieties of canned goods eaten to excess, the oyster holds first place. A hungry Indian will eat half a dozen cans and drink the liquor.

Besides the harm done by eating excessive amounts of food, the fact that it is not properly prepared makes it the more injurious. There is no variety or style about Sioux Indian cookery, no French methods, no necessity for titillating appetites already over keen.

A pot full of meat and water is put on the fire by the squaw and allowed to heat, but there is no definite time for the meal to cook and no point in the cooking process when it is done. The dinner is ready whenever her lord comes in and grunts about being hungry.

If the Indian is especially hungry he may begin on the contents of the kettle by the time the meat is fairly warm. There is never any fault-finding about the way in which the food is prepared, and whether it is half-raw or done to rags, no objection is made by the head of the family.

The Indians know the choicest tidbits of every animal, and how to cook them. The hunt at this time of the year gives the Sioux Indian the fullest enjoyment of his appetite, and during the next three months the average buck will devour enough meat to satisfy four ordinary men.

Condiments are in great demand by the Indians, and the Sioux Indians probably consume more black and red pepper per capita than any other people in the United States. Their former favorite condiment was the gall of an elk.

The Sioux Indians are responsible for the reputation which nearly all tribes have of eating dog meat, but there are few other tribes which ever served dog meat, even at the feast of important ceremonies. The Cheyennes, Shoshones and Apaches never touch dog meat.

From Nebraska Epicure. The bosom of the mallard duck, stewed down until there are no juices going to waste, a baked potato about the size of a goose egg, two slices of Boston brown bread, right out of the oven, and spread with butter that has no athletic reputation, a spoonful of raspberry jelly, a cup of Young Hyson, of moderate strength, a piece of pumpkin pie, man's size, and you have a dinner that ought to keep you in a good humor until curfew rings.—Nebraska State Journal.

Bad Excuse Better Than None. Judge—Here you bring me a man barged with intoxication, but I see you, too, are under the influence of alcohol. What have you to say for yourself?

Patriman O'Grady—Sure, yer honor, I'd ivil brathed in me face all th' way to th' station.—N. Y. Times.

Calendars in Russia. The new era in Russia will be marked by a change from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar. The Academy of Sciences has already submitted a plan to shorten the Russian February, 1906, by 12 days, and to begin March 1 in the new style.

As to His Nerve. Mr. Lingertons (looking at the clock)—I dare say it's time for me to go.

DIDN'T WANT THE ORCHIDS

Young Man Countermanded His Order When He Learned the Price.

The young man was from the country, and while he was mighty nice, he wasn't what might be called sophisticated. He had been to the hospital to see a friend who was ill, and he looked so pale and wan that the young man was imbued with the greatest sympathy for her, relates the Baltimore News.

"What sort of flowers do you like best?" he asked as he made ready to go, his tone pregnant with meaning.

"Orchids," replied the ill woman faintly. The young man only knew about orchids in a general way, and no good angel warned him, so he said good-by cheerily, and went at once from the hospital to a florist's.

"Got any orchids?" he asked the florist, inelegantly. "We haven't any on hand," he responded the merchant; "but we can get you some."

"I wish you would," said the misguided youth. "Get me two dozen, will you, and send them to Miss Blank at the Hogarth hospital. Send me the bill when the things are delivered, and I'll stop by and pay you."

The florist looked dubious and acquiesced to this arrangement, but slowly. His hesitancy caused the young man a burst of caution. "By the way," said he, "how much will they be?"

"Well, you see, we have to send to New York for them, and I would not be surprised if they cost two dollars apiece; but I'll try to get them for \$1.50 for you."

"Say," said the youth from the country, "I won't give you all that trouble. Just send a dozen American Beauties to the hospital, will you, and I'll pay you now." And he walked out a wiser and gladder man.

WAS HIS LAST HARANGUE.

Corner-Store Orator Cut Short in His Tirade Upon "Women-Folks."

A group of Cyrusville's citizens had gathered as usual round the stove in the corner store, and as often happened, James Corning was holding forth on the trials of his kind, relates Youth's Companion.

"What do women folks know of care and trouble?" he demanded of his audience. "Sheltered in their homes with just a few little household duties to make the time pass, and when night comes the privilege of sitting down to the evening lamp, while the man of the house puts on his hat and goes out into the darkness and often into the storm, and walks, maybe half a mile, to fetch home the paper, so's his family can have the news next day. No need for them to think of earning money—no—"

Mr. Corning's mouth dropped wide open as a stern-visaged woman stepped in at the door and up to him. "I've heard you'd been giving these little talks," she said, clearly, "and I've come down to wait for the mail, so's you can go home and take my place sitting by the evening lamp. You'll find a basket of your socks there with holes in 'em large as hen's eggs, and your overalls and Sammy's trousers."

"If you get those done," she added, relentlessly, as her husband tried to look at ease and as if it were all a good joke, "when you get 'em done, you can finish splitting the kindlings I've been at the last two evenings. I'm willing to come out into the darkness till you get the whole thing finished up. Now you step right along."

Black Hair Strongest. Black hair is stronger than golden tresses, and will sustain almost double the weight. Recently a German scientist has been experimenting, and has found that it is possible to suspend a weight of four ounces by a single hair, provided the hair be black.

Blond hair will give way at varying weights dependent upon the exact tint. A yellow hair will scarcely support two ounces, a brown will hold up three without breaking, while a very dark brown will sustain an additional half ounce. The greater vitality of the black hair is declared to be the reason for the preponderance of blond bald heads, and according to this experimenter, a person with jet black hair will still enjoy a full growth, while the blond will have been bald for seven and a half years.

Not Satisfied. A widower took his second wife home and introduced her to the children by saying: "This is your new mamma."

They looked at her critically, then the youngest blurted out: "Is that the best you could do, papa?"—Chicago Journal.

Plain Parterry. "What cured your husband? I understood the doctor had given him up."

"He had. I think Henry must have overheard my dressmaker telling me how well I looked in black."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

GUARD THE LETTERS

FORCE OF INSPECTORS PROTECT THE PUBLIC'S MAIL

Number of Post Offices Burglarized in the Last Year—Few Dishonest Employees in the Service.

"Are offenses against the postal laws on the increase?" repeated an old post office inspector to a Washington Star reporter. "That query covers a very broad scope of criminal investigation, too comprehensive to be briefly answered, but I will say that one serious crime against the postal laws has decreased during the past year, and that is the burglarizing of post offices. To give the public an idea of the operations of the enterprising post office burglar I will say that a trifle less than 1,600 post offices were burglarized during the last year, or about one post office to every 44 of the total number established of all classes."

This class of crime maintains about the same average year after year, with slight variations on one side or the other. But we got in our good work on the burglars themselves, however. For we ran the arrests of the perpetrators of this offense up to 17 per cent. increase over the number made the previous year. This is the highest percentage of increase in the number of burglars arrested over any year for over a decade.

There are many causes for the decrease of the number of post office robberies and for the increase of the number of burglars apprehended for this crime. The Bertillon system of measurement is used whenever practicable, and there are now on file the descriptions and histories of many criminals. In addition to this, the information compiled by the national bureau of identification is at the command of the post office inspectors. The standing rewards which an annual appropriation of \$25,000 for that purpose permits the postmaster general to offer for the apprehension of postal service criminals is a great incentive to the local peace officers and to the police and detective force throughout the entire country. There are few small individual appropriations made by congress which are productive of such tangible and gratifying results as from this little appropriation for rewards for postal crimes.

The most recent and important arrest of an employe in the service was that of the railway mail clerk who was caught with the goods upon him a few days ago in Baltimore. This man had not only been a postal thief for years, and had stolen enough to buy and stock a small farm in the environs of the Monumental city, but he had been base enough to make his mail, abstracted from the section of a fellow-clerk in the postal car, to throw suspicion on him. To the credit of the inspectors, who finally caught this fellow red-handed, he failed in his efforts, as his would-be innocent victim was not even under suspicion by our men, even though the letters came from his section and were handled at certain stages by him.

It is a mystery to me why men in the service yield to the temptation of stealing letters. Their detection is only a matter of time, perhaps not immediately upon complaint, but it is ultimately certain, and practically in all cases of actual guilt their conviction is a moral certainty. We do not take our cases into court until we have sure evidence for conviction.

Perhaps it is because they are not immediately detected that postal thieves have a sense of false security. They usually begin with a few petty thefts, secure small sums of money, and wait to see if these are discovered. Finding that no apparent notice is taken of their stealings, they flatter themselves with the belief that they are very shrewd and cunning, become bolder, and finally every piece of mail matter that seems to them to contain money is fish in their net. In most cases inspectors have been patiently watching them for weeks to secure the positive incriminating evidence, and very often the men working on either and sometimes on both sides of their cases are inspectors only biding their time to catch them with the incriminating letters actually upon their persons. We make of patience a fine study in our business of protecting the public."

Qualified. "So you want a position in our office," said the broker. "This business is one that requires the steadiest kind of nerves. Have you any recommendation?" "Yes, sir," was the quick response. "I once taught music lessons to a lot of stupid pupils without the use of an ax."—Detroit Free Press.

Few Genuine. Rodrick—So the old gentleman hasn't much faith in anything these days?

Van Albert—I should say not. When they told him the baby was born with a silver spoon in its mouth he wanted to have the spoon tested.—Chicago Daily News.

SQUIRRELS HIDING FOOD.

Contrary to General Belief, the Hollow Tree Is Not the Favorite Place.

While certain members of the squirrel tribe store their winter's supply of food in hollow trees, I think, writes John Boyd, in Recreation, most of them hide it on the ground, under old roots, brush piles and even beneath heaps of dead leaves. Their tracks in winter would seem to bear this out. While it may be that this frequency of the tracks indicates a scarcity of food, and the traveling about a desire to find a supply, I believe, in the main that these outings of the squirrels have a definite destination, because when you see them skip across the snow, stop short, and scratch a hole down to the ground, bringing up a supply of nuts or cones, placed there in the months of plenty, you are apt to attribute their luck more to a good memory than to any haphazard speculation.

Of the squirrel family the most prominent in winter are the blacks. He seems to be flowing over all the time with pent-up energy, which keeps him in constant motion, and you sometimes feel that you would like him to be able to talk and tell you how pleasant it is to have the joy which flows from a glad heart. Now watch him jump from limb to limb, rush headlong down the trunk and course across the snow in long, graceful bounds, with no apparent purpose but to exhibit the happiness within him.

His red cousin once in awhile may be seen at the entrance to his home in the heights of some tree, but in him is no sign of exultation. He looks around as if he were looking and wishing for spring to come, and clear away the snow, and no amount of coaxing will cause him to utter a note of scolding or alarm. Not all the red squirrels, however, keep to the trees. Many of them, through want of food, have to take to the earth, and their track in the deep snow is a heavy floundering of labored bounds as they go from tree to tree in search of the scanty provisions hidden beneath the surface. Here and there we find the gummy scales of the pine cones, the shells of the acorn, the seed cones of the birch and cedar scattered about on the snow, showing the food on which they subsist. In greater contrast to the delicacies just named, often one will find during long and severe winters that the squirrels have attacked the hemlock trees by stripping them of their bitter seeds. When one finds this it is evidence of great want, and a meriful act would be to bring some food and scatter it about to assuage the pangs of hunger which these little fellows are enduring.

WHAT "THING" MAY MEAN.

Word Used by Woman to Designate Many Articles in a Hardware Store.

"If there were no such word as 'thing' in the bright lexicon of woman," said the salesman in the hardware shop, according to the New York Sun, "woman could never buy hardware. Almost everything is just a thing to the ladies. 'And they get provoked if you don't understand at once what they mean. They use a great many gestures to help themselves out."

"A woman in here yesterday wanted a 'thing to make a hole.' That's the nearest she could get to gimlet. Another wanted a 'thing to hang over the gas."

"She held one hand like a drooping flower over the other. She got pretty angry, I can tell you, when we brought her ceiling protectors. She wanted an incandescent mantle."

"Still another wanted some very fine wire to go through the things at the sides of a picture she wanted to hang up. She kept up such a lot of thread-needle gestures to show me how they-eyed the things were that I got pretty dizzy."

Lamps give a great deal of trouble. It's easy to forget names of chimneys and hard to draw pictures of them in the air so that the drawing will suggest to the clerk's mind just what kind of chimney is desired. These air pictures are a great aid for them. It's wonderful—a woman's air picture of the latest patent in potato cutters or ice-cream freezers."

Mountains Lowered. All the mountains in Switzerland have suddenly been reduced in height by about ten feet. In 1820 the tip of a certain rock in the Lake of Geneva was calculated to be 378.88 meters above ocean level, and on this basis all the summits in the country were calculated. Recently the discovery was made that an error had been made in fixing the height of that rock, and that it is 2.28 meters lower than it was marked.

Story of the Streets. "I've got a good order from Bingle, down in Punkville," said the traveling man; "but I can't find out anything about his financial standing. Have you looked him up in Bradstreet's?" "Yes," answered the credit man, "and Bradstreet locates him on Easy street. Send him the goods."—Chicago Tribune.

KILLS MAN FOR "AD."

AUTHOR GAINS "FAME" FOR NEWLY-WRITTEN BOOK.

London Man Seeking to Call Public Attention to His Work on Yellow Peril—Slays Aged New Zealand Chinaman.

London.—Edward Lionel Terry thought he was a man with a mission and ought to make a name for himself. He could not bear the idea of settling down in the real estate and mortgage broker business with his old father in London. He was descended from an illegitimate son of Napoleon, and was educated at Oxford and Eton. Lionel, at 21, 5 1/2 feet tall, with the proportions of a blacksmith, enlisted as a private in a line regiment, without his father's knowledge. He was afterward transferred to the "Blues," magnetic and easy in address, he was liked by both officers and men.

In defiance of the rules of the service, he at once covered the walls of his quarters in the Windsor barracks with caricatures of the officers. The chaplain of the regiment was so tickled with a caricature of himself that he cut out the plaster on which it appeared, framed it and pleaded for a mitigation of the culprit's sentence.

After two or three years' soldiering, he was released through the efforts of his father, but could not remain long in London. Off he went to South Africa, enlisted in the mounted police and served through the Matabel war, taking part in 15 engagements. He was twice wounded and gained the friendship of the great empire builder, Cecil Rhodes. He returned to London and a tall hat but two years of this was all he could endure. The "wanderlust" seized him again. It was in British Columbia that he became convinced that Chinese cheap labor was ruining the white wage earner, and that it was his mission to check the "yellow peril." From Canada he went to Australia, earning his bread by mining and farming. Then he came to New Zealand's shores. Here he brought out his first book, "God Is Gold," wherein he attempted to convince New Zealanders that the Chinese were undermining their prosperity. He was then 31.

"I am going to make a name for myself," he wrote to his father, "but I don't want you to appear connected with me, for it may harm you."

One day recently Terry, while walking in the streets of Wellington, New Zealand, came upon Kum Young, a feeble, tottering old Chinaman. Life seemed a burden to the aged man. Here was Lionel's chance to become noted. He would shoot down the doddering old man.

After his deed of blood, Lionel coolly walked to police headquarters and surrendered. A murder charge was placed against him. Then he wrote to Gov. Ribblesdale:

"Sir: Having spent several years in various portions of the British empire inquiring into alien immigration, and being convinced of the evil consequences arising therefrom, I have decided to bring the matter before the public eye in a manner which will compel attention. To make this decision perfectly plain I have this evening put a man named to death."

Lionel is now "famous."

APPLE TEA IS THE LATEST

Being Tried in England as a Remedy for Many Ills—Discovered by a German.

London.—Said to be a cure for many ills of the body from rout to indigestion, apple tea is quite the latest thing in beverages, and has only just been introduced into England.

It is a substitute for tea, coffee and cocoa, and is the discovery of Prof. Ebhard, an eminent German doctor. Apple tea is made in Germany from a particular sort of apple, which will grow only in certain soil. The peel, which possesses such nourishing qualities, with about half an inch of pulp attached, is used. The pipes are also used and are slowly dried according to a certain process which effectually prevents mildew or rot, and when finished appear like bits of cork.

Apple tea is made in the same way as ordinary tea, and in flavor and color very much resembles good Chinese hyson tea.

\$250,000 FOR WEDDING GIFT

Detail of Marriage of Son of Rock Island Magnate Disclosed by a Check.

New York.—Frequent mention has been made of some of the presents given recently at the marriage of Nathaniel Moore of Chicago and Miss Fargo in New York, but there was one that has escaped notice. That was a check for \$250,000 given to the young bridegroom by his father, James H. Fargo, one of the "Big Four" in the Rock Island road and prominent as a promoter of industrial consolidations. This is the second big check Mr. Moore has given his son within a comparatively short time. When the young man attained his majority last year his father made him a present of a check for \$100,000. What he has left of the first check, added to the quarter of a million he received as a wedding gift, ought to make a tidy sum on which to start right housekeeping.

Glad Christmas Time. The average length of men's necks is said to be increasing, but at this season of the year it is the increasing length of the average man's leg that is most noticeable.