

## POISON OF BORGIA MIDDLE-AGE MYTH?

### Modern Science Sheds Light on Subject.

Of all the names in the vast rogues' gallery of history, none shines with such sinister effulgence as that of Borgia. The characteristic of the Borgias—Alexander VI, Cesare, and Lucrezia—which has made the great appeal to the popular imagination, is their ability as plotters and poisoners. They are credited with the most complex stratagems and with innumerable murders, committed with a most artistic subtlety and variety of method. The usual impression is that an endless procession of cardinals, dukes and princes dined with, drank the health of, or accepted rings from the fatal family, and died weeks later without visible symptoms of foul play. The legend is so terrible that it seems almost a pity it is not true.

However, the facts are that Lucrezia, supposedly the blackest figure of the three, was really nothing more than a rather immoral, and certainly very stupid woman with no provable criminal record at all. Cesare, her brother, was simply a mediocre free-lance soldier, raised to dukedom by the power of his patron, the pope. His outstanding murders—those of his brother, his brother-in-law, and Astora Manfredi—were rough, vulgar affairs of cold steel in the hands of servants.

Alexander VI seems to have been the only poisoner in the family; and the poison he chiefly affected, when diagnosed in the light of contemporary accounts of the deaths of his victims, is a disappointment; merely an arsenious solution comparable to modern rat poison.

There is no authentic support for the fable about his presentation of rings with small, sharp fangs on the inside, which scratched the victim and caused lingering death; there is, in any case, no poison suitable for administration in just this way except curare, which is even today exceedingly difficult to obtain and which was then unknown.

The only really picturesque mode of assassination in vogue anywhere near the period, in fact, is one mentioned by Benvenuto Cellini; poisoning by the administration of powdered diamond. Crushed glass, as is now well known, does not deserve the reputation it once enjoyed, nor, according to Cellini, do other crushed jewels produce the genuine diamond effect, their fractures being comparatively blunt and their material soft. The diamond, however, powders into innumerable needles with points of extreme fineness, which do not blunt, and which gradually penetrate the walls of the stomach.

### New York's Power Plant

The greatest station for generating electric power is being built by the New York Edison company at Fort-tenth street and the East river. The building and machinery will cost \$50,000,000, and the station will have a capacity of approximately 1,000,000 horse power, considerably more than the entire projected development of Muscle Shoals. This one station can supply current enough to light 3,000,000 houses—more than there are in the whole state of New York outside New York city. With this addition, the generating stations in New York city can produce as much lighting and power current as is used in all France. That gives an idea of the extraordinary use of electric light and power in the United States.—Youth's Companion.

### Avocations and Teeth

In an article on the relation of various vocations and dental diseases, the Social Democratic News service of Germany points out that bakers and pastry cooks are the worst sufferers from bad teeth, believed to result from the excess of sugar they consume. Leather workers are inclined to develop a brown discoloring of the teeth, while the molars of lead and silver workers have a tendency to turn blue. Copper workers, unless they brush their teeth incessantly, soon find them turning green in color.

### Gas Preserves Fish

The use of carbon dioxide gas refrigeration instead of ice in shipping a consignment of 15,000 pounds of fresh fish from Halifax to Montreal was so successful that, when the cargo was unpacked ten days later, the fish was found to be free from odor and the natural color unchanged. The gas is carried in cylinders in refrigerator cars, and the system is expected to extend the market for fresh fish.

## Cat's-Eye Has Many Points of Beauty

The dictionary describes the cat's-eye as a "gem exhibiting opalescent reflections from within, like the eyes of a cat. Specifically a variety of chrysoberyl or a variety of quartz or chalcidony, inferior to this in brilliancy. It is cut en cabochon." The distinguishing feature of the cat's-eye stone is the peculiar milky-white, bluish or greenish-white sheen which crosses and recrosses it with every play of the light as the gem is turned about. The explanation of this peculiarity is that the stone contains, packed in its depths, many closely-matted fibers of another strange mineral, familiar to us as asbestos. The thing that makes asbestos remarkable in the mineral world is that though it is rock, it does not crumble when crushed, but comes to pieces in the form of fibers. It is the streak of these fibers in the cat's-eye which causes it to reflect the light in its very lovely way, with every movement of the finger wearing it.

Of course, the beauty of the stone can also be greatly enhanced by the skill of the cutter. To say that the stone is cut "en cabochon" means that in this style of cutting the upper part of the stone is shaped like a low dome, and it brings out all the natural luster and color of opaque and translucent stones. Therefore, such stones as the garnet, turquoise, cat's-eye, etc., are usually cut in this way. The best cat's-eye comes from India and Ceylon.

### Locates the Pain

Vagrant aches and pains which often afflict the stomach and are hard to identify may now be accurately located and classified by an instrument resembling a miniature seismograph, the device with which earthquake tremors are recorded, according to Popular Mechanics Magazine. The pain finder, devised by Dr. W. C. Alvarez of the University of California, is said to register the course of such ills in almost any part of the abdomen and to clearly reveal every step of the digestive processes. By the recorder, the passage of food through the digestive tract can be closely followed, and the exact spot and instant of the setting up of any trouble definitely learned in a few minutes. The instrument, called the multiple-electro-entograph, is said to obtain its data by means of a pendulum swung in a vacuum tube and marks its records with a needle.

### Harp Loses Eminence

Tara's famous harp is disappearing and fast becoming but a memory. At the recent Fels Cecil at Dublin, the festival to which Ireland's budding musicians come annually to submit themselves to tests set by eminent adjudicators—there was only one entrant for the harp competition and only one, also, in the competition for a song, with harp accompaniment. It is explained that the harp is at a disadvantage as compared with the violin and other instruments of smaller bulk, since it is not easily portable for private entertainments, and being essentially an instrument of the individual, it can never hope to find a place as an item of household equipment as does the piano. But whatever the reason, the fact remains that the harp is becoming almost as extinct in Ireland as are the snakes banished by St. Patrick.

### Famous Royal House

The name "House of Bourbon" is given to the royal family that for many generations occupied the thrones of France, Naples and Spain, and still reigns in the last named country. The house of Bourbon was founded about 900 A. D. by Adhemar, lord of Bourbon, who traced his descent to Charles Martel. The first French sovereign of the line was Henry of Navarre who in 1589 became king with the title of Henry IV. The Bourbon family retained the throne of France until the French revolution when it was deposed in the person of Louis XVI. In 1814, after the fall of Napoleon I, it was restored to power and held the sovereignty until 1830, when the house of Orleans, a younger branch of the Bourbon family, succeeded it.—Kansas City Times.

### The Trusting Sex

"Well, dear," said Mrs. Jones, as her husband one evening draped himself wearily upon the porch steps and sat down with a sigh in his favorite rocker, "how did things go at the office today?" Mr. Jones sighed again, and fanned himself with his straw hat as he replied, absent-mindedly, "They didn't go well. They didn't go well. They didn't go well at all. I had a ninety-three and I should have had a ninety-two."

Mrs. Jones smiled. "Ninety-two orders in one day," she cooed. "I wouldn't call that bad for a beginner!"

### Contentment Recipe

To secure a contented spirit, measure your desires by your fortunes, and not your fortunes by your desires.—Exchange.

## Italian Fiestas Like Those of Olden Days

In innumerable village festivals that are celebrated with much sincerity and vivacity, is still found a survival of the old Italy in which every country village was politically a nation by itself. Many of these festivals have their roots deep in the Middle Ages. Genzano is a village on the shores of a volcanic lake, once the scene of the most solemn religious festivals of the Roman republic. Annually, on the feast of Corpus Christi, it strews its main street with the petals of flowers gathered in hundreds of bushel baskets from the neighboring fields. The petals are carefully sorted according to color and are so laid on the pavement as to form brilliant designs—circles, crosses, the arms of the king or the pope, fantastic beasts or elaborate traceries—over which the solemn religious procession passes at vespers. The effect, in twilight, is a fairy-like mingling of design and color. Recently the village of Neul, across the tiny lake, became jealous of the fame Genzano was reaping from this secular festival and initiated a "strawberry festival." There are athletic contests, bicycle races and races between the proudest cart horses of the neighborhood. Citizens compete to provide the most ingenious decorations for the windows of their houses. Strawberries are distributed as prizes.

### Some Character Tests

#### That Are Infallible

Show him \$100,000 in gold. If he blinks rapidly he is mentally alert.

Ask him to sit down and then pull the chair from under him. If he doesn't get up, he is lazy.

Demand his watch, his pocketbook and his cellar key. If he inquires why, he is stupid.

Inquire what time he got in last night. If answer consumes over ten seconds, he is careless.

Tell him to read a modern novel. If he reads it through to the end, he is obstinate.

Relate the story about Pat and Mike. If he assaults you, he has initiative.

Place in his hands a necktie of mixed lavender, red and mauve. If he says "Merry Christmas!" he has a good memory.

Charge him \$25. If he refuses to pay, he is hard to please.—Kansas City Star.

### Out of the Earth

I long ago convinced myself that whatever is on the earth and shares its life is of the earth, and, in some way not open to me, came out of the earth, the highest not less than the humblest creature at our feet. I like to think of the old weather-worn globe as the mother of us all. I like to think of the ground underfoot as plastic and responsive to the creative energy, vitally related to the great cosmic forces, a red corpuscle in the life current of the Eternal, and that man, with all his high-flying dreams and aspirations, his arts, his Bibles, his religions, his literatures, his philosophies—heroes, saints, martyrs, sages, poets, prophets—all lay folded there in the fiery mist out of which the planet came.—John Burroughs.

### Guinea Gold

One of the oldest European settlements in West Africa is in Upper Guinea, whence came the gold from which the first guineas were made and which were named for the country. Also the first guinea fowl were imported into England from that section of the world. "Abounding in gold" is the native meaning of the word "guinea." It is still unknown whether the gold coast was first discovered by the French or the Portuguese, but the prize has been fought over by half the people of Europe since a Portuguese expedition took possession of part of it in 1481. England entered the game in 1558 when her ships returned with 150 pounds of Guinea gold.

### Chamber of Horrors

The original idea of a chamber of horrors at Madame Tussaud's world-famous waxwork exhibition, which was recently destroyed by fire, came from a Cambridge don. When Madame Tussaud took her waxworks to Cambridge in 1818, figures of criminals stood in the same rooms as those of statesmen, churchmen and other celebrated people. The don suggested to Madame that this was "indecorous," and she adopted his idea, placing her "criminals" in a separate chamber, which, it is said, was often visited by the relatives of the murderers whose images it sheltered.

### Azalea Cultivation

The seeds of the azalea are used in propagating. They should be sown in fibrous soil and the moisture should be kept constant, either by keeping them in a frame covered with glass, or in a flower pot covered with glass. The seeds are put on top of the soil, and are transplanted to ordinary garden soil when the plant is large enough to move easily.

## WHY

### Fruit Growers Regard Lady- Beetle as a Friend

Insect friends—hundreds of them at once—are shown in the latest group put on exhibition by the entomological department of the American Museum of Natural History. When we hear of immense numbers of insects, we usually think of injurious kinds, but those shown here swarming over the rocks on the top of a Colorado mountain are "lady-beetles," insects that live from youth to old age by feeding upon either plant lice or scale insects.

There are many kinds of lady-beetles both in the East and in the West. The adult beetles pass the winter securely tucked away under stones, bark, or even in crevices of our own houses. Frequently a number of them hibernate snuggled up to each other as though for mutual warmth, and in the West uncounted thousands gather on the tops of hills and low mountains for their winter sleep.

This habit of the lady-beetles, or, to give them their originally longer name, the Beetles of our Blessed Lady, the Virgin Mary, is neatly turned to man's convenience by the fruit growers of California, who send pack trains to collect the beetles by the ton, keep them peacefully sleeping in cold storage until orchards become infested with man's insect enemies upon which these beetles feed, and then rush the beetles by parcel post to the scene of action.

### Why Success Comes to Young Men in Business

"I have watched many young men climb to the top," says a writer in the Efficiency Magazine, "and I have noticed that there are nearly always four reasons why they succeed.

"First, they make up their minds. They don't drift. They decide—that seems to be the beginning of every career. They choose the jobs that will suit them best and away they go.

"Second, I notice that they are always pleased with themselves and their jobs and their associates. They are happy and keen in their work. They smile their way through.

"Third, they are hungry to learn. They listen as well as talk. They study and think and appreciate the advice of other people. They are never cocksure and unteachable.

"Fourth, they finish what they start. This is a sure sign of a strong personality. There are scores of starters to every finisher. The average man gets stuck fast in his job. The obstacles bring him to a standstill."

### Why Insects Don't Sink

Certain insects are known as water skimmers, skippers or striders. They move about as freely on water as other insects do on a hard surface.

This they are enabled to do because of the surface film and because their feet are covered with a velvety substance which does not easily get wet, says Nature Magazine. The surface of a liquid acts as if it were covered with an elastic film like a thin rubber membrane.

If an ordinary sewing needle is carefully laid on the surface of water in a basin the needle will float, notwithstanding the fact that the density of steel is greater than that of water.

The needle floats for the simple reason that it is not heavy enough to break through the surface film. It bears down the surface of the water, yet does not break through it.

### Why Stamps Are Not Cash

Adhesive postage stamps are not redeemed in cash because there is no authority in law for so doing. It is a measure of protection against the use of stamps for remittances, which use is contrary to the interests of the postal service, since it diverts the postal revenues from their proper channel, causing the mailing post office to do the work while the selling post office gets the revenue. Another objection to redemption is that it would afford opportunity for post office burglars to realize upon their plunder.

### Why Smoke Hurts Trees

The Department of Agriculture says soft coal deposits a coating of carbon and coal ash upon the leaves of trees, which interferes with natural functioning of the breathing pores of leaves. Smooth-leaved trees, such as evergreens, suffer most because of the deposit that lies in close contact with the leaf surface. The hairy or woolly leaf coverings of some other trees prevent the forming of a compact coating over the leaf surfaces. Such trees endure a smoky atmosphere much longer.

### How Earthquakes Originate

The origin of earthquakes has been traced to two principal causes, the first of which is tectonic, and the second volcanic. The former refers to movements in the earth's crust, known as faults, possibly caused by the shrinking of the interior of the earth by reason of cooling.

## Poor Doggie

A woman called police headquarters on the telephone recently and sobbed out a tale that her "dear little doggie" had been captured unleashed, as required by the health officials, and was languishing in the pound. She was informed the pound would not be open until 8:30 a. m. next day. "My gracious, she'll die in that awful place overnight, and besides she is on a diet," pleaded the woman. "That's all right; your doggie will be treated all right and kept on the diet," the woman was informed. "And will you bathe her before sending her back?" she queried. "Yes, before we send her back," was the reply.—Detroit News.

### Water Fatally Charged

A brook near Schifferstadt, Germany, charged with electricity, proved fatal to one of a team of horses recently when the owner drove into the stream to wash the wheels of his carriage. As soon as the horses touched the water one of them fell dead, while the other after frantic efforts managed to break loose from the harness and galloped out of the water. Investigation showed that the brook was charged with electricity, transmitted from a subterranean installation of power plant.

### Sneeze Signs

In the ancient days of Greece and Rome, a sneeze was supposed to bear in its train far greater portents than a mere cold.

To sneeze whilst rising from the table or bed was said to indicate approaching death. Yet to sneeze between midday and midnight under favorable planetary conditions was an augury of happiness.

Again, if the Greek or Roman turned to the right while sneezing, it was regarded as a happy omen.

### Almost Frightened

John D. Rockefeller likes to tell a story of an Irishman employed by him who, in the early days of oil refining, was standing near a big tank when it exploded with a roar that could be heard for miles about. After the smoke had cleared, other workers came to gather up the fragments of the Irishman's body, only to find him sitting on a pile of debris and slowly filling his pipe. After he had filled it and ignited the tobacco, he remarked, "The darn thing sure nigh scared me."

### Excellence

Excellence may be considered an axiom, or a proposition which becomes self-evident just in proportion to the clearness or precision with which it is put. If it fairly exists, in this sense, it requires no further elucidation. To point out too particularly the beauties of a work is to admit tacitly that these beauties are not wholly admirable. Regarding, then, excellence as that which is capable of self-manifestation, it but remains for the critic to show when, where and how it falls in becoming manifest.—Poe.

### Vision of Animals

Men and monkeys have far better eyesight than any other animals, except birds. It has been found that most birds have powers of vision about one hundred times as great as that of normal man. Some birds can see a worm at a distance of 300 feet. The eyes of birds are especially adapted to see moving objects at great distances, so that the approach of an enemy is observed by them long before the human eye could detect it.

### Woman Suffrage

The first nation was New Zealand, which extended woman suffrage in 1893. The other nations since that time with the dates of enfranchisement are as follows: Australia, 1902; Norway and Iceland, 1913; Denmark, 1915; Finland and Russia, 1917; Canada, Great Britain and Austria, 1918; Germany, Belgium, Netherlands and Poland, 1919; United States and Czechoslovakia, 1920; Sweden, 1921 and Turkey, 1923.

### Blant and Animal Life

Plants and animals differ in two essentials. Plants are stationary, while animals can move from place to place at will; and plants make their own food out of sunlight and chemicals, while animals get their food by eating plants or other animals. Among the lower forms it is often difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between plant and animal life.

### At Any College

Homecoming day is the time when alumni come back to the old alma mater, criticize the furniture, freshmen and architecture of the house, reorganize the football team, weep mildly at the ivy, declare things weren't that way when they were in college, and express great wonder as to where the younger generation is going. Then it rains.—Colorado Dodo.

## Trapper Made Sudden Change in Fight View

Tradition has it that most of the early trappers operating through the Rocky mountains were serious characters. Such is far from the case, though. Many of them took great pride in exaggerating accounts of what they had encountered on their trips. A few even had a slant on life that would make a Mark Twain envious, says a contributor to the Frontier.

Joseph L. Meek was one of the best known of these frontier humorists. One of his experiences which is generally credited concerns an attack made on his party by a band of hostile Indians. While stopping for a rest the Indians were sighted as they were in the act of charging the trappers. The Redskins were but a few hundred yards away and mounted. The whites lost no time in mounting their animals and beating a hasty retreat. Meek, however, encountered some trouble with his mule which refused to budge.

"Boys, stand your ground, boys!" he screamed. "Stand your ground! We can whip 'em. Stand your ground!"

But the trappers failed to heed Meek and put all the territory possible between themselves and the onrushing Indians. About that time Meek's mule, seeming to realize its own danger, set its pedal extremities in motion. Within a short time Meek, astride the mule, had caught up with the rest of the party. Another minute he passed them. Then he turned in his saddle, and shouted back over his shoulder, "Come on, boys! We can't fight 'em. Come on, boys! Come on!"

### Many Put in Work on Bamboo Carving

When you gaze upon a beautiful piece of bamboo carving, which is to be seen generally in the Oriental sections of the museums, you are beholding the work of not one man but of many. Each workman has his specialty and when he does his share of work he passes the piece over to another, who does that part which he is especially trained for. The man who does the Chinese characters does nothing else. Another does mountain scenery and if there are any animals introduced into the landscape they are cut by another, while portraits are taken care of by a workman who does no other kind of work. Before the work is laid out, the surface of the bamboo is treated by a rubbing process which proceeds with the aid of a brick of fine clay and the operation takes place under water. After it is carefully dried it is turned over to the artist who marks out the design from one workman to another as indicated above.

### Land of Hot Tamales

Americans traveling in South America soon become acquainted with the "hot tamales" south of the Rio Grande. They are of the maize-and-meat variety, put up in corn husks. But "the elder brother of all tamales" is the Mongolian rice tamale. In America it can be found only in Chinatown. It is wrapped in rush leaves and is made like a miniature pyramid of rice pulverized with pork, pino nuts and chestnuts.

The largest tamale known is made in South America in the region of the Orinoco and the Amazon. It is called aliaha and is composed of minced chicken, chickpeas and pepper, well cooked and rolled up in banana skins.

### Early English Boxer

James Figg was the first recognized boxing champion of England. No date of Figg's birth is obtainable, but it is supposed to have been about 1695. Figg weighed about 185 and stood close to six feet. He was born at Thame, in Oxfordshire, England. He died December 8, 1734. Previous to 1719 Figg was known as a first-class swordsman, cudgeler and boxer. He was considered more adept as a back swordsman than a pugilist, but later he took more to boxing, defeating every man he met in stand-up fights.

### Great Writer's Nickname

The nickname "The Bricklayer" was given to Ben Jonson by his contemporaries. His father died a month previous to Ben's birth, and his mother subsequently married a master bricklayer. Jonson entered the University of Cambridge in his sixteenth year, but on account of straitened circumstances was obliged to leave college and assist his stepfather for a time as mason and bricklayer. It is said that he worked at the building of Lincoln's inn with a trowel in his hand and a book in his pocket.—Exchange.

### A Good Hunch

Father—My son, it gives me much pleasure to present you with this \$25 for your good behavior.  
Son—Why don't you give me fifty bucks and have an awful good time?

## FORECAST BY FISH DELIGHTS BATHERS

### Anglers Say It Is to Be Warm-Water Year.

New York. — Veteran fishermen cheer sea bathers this season with word that this is apparently to be a "warm-water" year inshore. The rate at which cold-water mackerel have been passing this coast without making the usual stop and warm-water bluefish have been flocking in is advanced as the basis for the forecast.

The ocean's present heated fringe along the coast, as indicated by the prediction of these finny weather vane, the one for cold, the other for moderate temperatures, is still further borne out, in the fishermen's mind, by conditions at sea. They cite the recent contrast between overcast weather reported in mid-ocean by returning tourists and the rising mercury found on approaching land.

Lay Effect to Gulf Stream. While the migration of fish and the behavior of the deep are largely a matter of theory, practical anglers admit they nevertheless explain the present atmospheric condition by the gulf stream.

The signs at hand show, they say, that the gulf stream mixed this spring in sufficient quantity with the cold currents coming down from the arctic to moderate the latter as they flowed down their southern grooves.

The condition is therefore regarded as fundamental and correspondingly permanent, in so far as Atlantic beaches are concerned this summer.

The fishing smack sharp's first became convinced of this when mackerel striking in off Cape May obviously felt the heat and kept on going.

Instead of idling up the Long Island shore until about June 1, as is their wont, it was found they continued without pausing for breath to gain more congenial deep-sea chills off Nova Scotia. Conversely, bluefish and weakfish began to move landward in response to the more attractive summer climate.

Opposite Condition Last Year. Last year it was just the opposite, fishermen recall. The gulf stream, according to their theory, did not mix sufficiently with the Greenland water. The result was that mackerel abounded in local fishing grounds all summer, something never known before. Bluefish and weakfish were comparatively scarce, and were only to be found, in fact, well out at sea.

The gulf stream explanation of the periodic disappearances of various varieties of fish apparently goes just so far. Anglers say complete mystery surrounds some of the vagaries of "sea beef" in its moods and actions.

Some years ago mackerel were "lost" so completely for several years that the government established a closed season to tempt them back. Now they are available in abundance. Bluefish have been "lost" off and on since 1914, so much so that their uncertain appearances disrupted a flourishing industry and largely caused the present dispersal of bluefish fleets.

Old fishing diaries treasured in Fulton market record that bluefish disappeared in 1821 for forty years. When they returned they suffered the fate of Rip Van Winkle after his two decades of slumber. Long island natives no longer recognized them and went for a long time in ignorance that they were merely the staple sea food of their fathers back home again.

### Society Woman Quits League; Killed Her Pet

Washington.—Mrs. Frances H. C. Burnett, poet and social leader, had a dog called Tinker Bell; but Tinker Bell is no more.

The dog was captured by the dog-snatchers of the Animal Rescue league, of which Mrs. Burnett was a manager, and killed. Now the society women behind that humane institution are at war over poor Tinker Bell.

The District of Columbia has three rival dog-snatching institutions. The league is run by prominent women of various society groups. Its avowed purpose is to save cats and dogs from brutal treatment at the hands of police officers and others.

No wandering dog is safe in Washington with three energetic groups after them. Many good ones disappear annually and go the gas route to the great dog beyond.

Until a few days ago Mrs. Burnett was a member of the board of governors of the rescue league, but quit cold when she discovered that Tinker Bell had been seized and gassed to death all within a few hours. She refused to remain on the board of an organization that made such quick work of a lost dog.

Three Avenue Miles Long.  
The length of the road in length, extending from the...  
It has an area of trees 60...  
Tree Avenue Miles Long.