

WHERE MOLE BEATS MONKEY

Simian is Comparatively Helpless in the Water, as Are Many of the Land Birds.

Have you ever noticed a gull dropping on the sea—how it spreads its wings high so that the feathers shall not be wetted? If a gull's wing feathers get wet it cannot rise until they dry, says a writer in London Tit-Bits.

Throw a mouse into the water. It can swim a little, but as soon as its fur is soaked down it goes, and drowns. So, too, in the case of a rabbit. As soon as its fur is wet it is done for.

A mole can swim like anything, but a monkey is very helpless in the water.

Almost all land birds drown very rapidly if unlucky enough to fall into the water. They strike out with their legs, move round and round in a circle, but cannot get off the water.

Lions and tigers are very good swimmers, and do not share the common cats' hatred for the water. But of all the cat tribe, the South American jaguar is the finest performer in the water. It seems often to plunge in for mere joy of a swim.

A rabbit, as we have said, drowns as soon as its fur is soaked through, yet curiously enough its near relative, the hare, swims quite well, and will often cross a river when hunted.

Bears are good swimmers, even those that usually live far from large sheets of water, and the common rat is no mean performer.

One of the best of animal swimmers is the horse. Horses have been known to swim a river nearly a mile wide simply to get back to their old stables.

Deer, too, can all swim well. There are cases of caribou having swum across lakes ten miles wide when escaping from forest fires.

ALCOHOL GROWS ON TREES

Liquid Declared to Be Plentiful in Blooms Which Flourish in Provinces of India.

Alcohol in these days has attention from governments in diverse ways. England has had a committee studying the possibilities of increasing the production of alcohol to be used in generating power.

The opportunities discussed by the committee are interesting. Of course, potatoes, artichokes and cereals come in for attention. But it seems there are less known sources of alcohol. For example, there is the flower of the mahua tree, which flourishes in Hyderabad and the central part of India. This flower, when sun dried, contains 6 per cent of its weight in fermentable sugar, and apparently is to be gathered by the ton. Then there are the fertile gases of the coke ovens. They are so rich in surprises to the everyday man that it is not very startling to learn they contain ethylene, which by synthetic processes somewhat developed under the stress of war may be converted into ethyl alcohol.

With the coal beds about to produce alcohol, and the trees of India fairly blossoming with it, the man with a motor car may quiet the fears aroused by the scientists' figures which show that we are in sight of the end of petroleum and gasoline. There is nothing like being easy in one's mind.—The Nation's Bulletin.

American Buys Franklin Portrait.

A portrait of Benjamin Franklin, painted in Paris in 1778 by Joseph Siffred Duplessis, and showing him as the American ambassador whom Parisians of that period knew, has arrived in this country, the property of Michael Friedsam, the New York Evening Post states. Franklin presented the portrait to the Feres Perier, engineers and owners of the Chaillot fire engine, when he left France, and it was from the Perier family that Mr. Friedsam purchased it this year.

The portrait, whose gorgeous frame of the period is carved in the form of a serpent, is said to be typical of the best work of Duplessis, who was made a member of the academy in 1774, and was later appointed conservator of the museum of Versailles. In Versailles is a street called Duplessis, and a statue of him stands in a public square of the city.

Only Live Okapi in Captivity.

The only live okapi in captivity has been brought to Antwerp from the Congo. The okapi is the survivor of a distant ancestor of the giraffe. An adult stands about five feet high, and although it has the general shape of the giraffe, its neck is relatively shorter and its forelegs are not so high in proportion to the hindquarters.

The sides of the animal's head are light fawn color, and the general coloration of the body is a dark purple. The most striking characteristic is that the rump, and the upper part of the legs are transversely striped with black and white. It was first known in 1901, having been found in the Semliki forest, haunting low undergrowth and swamps.

Getting On.

"How did that actress ever secure an engagement, I wonder?" "Why, didn't you read about it? She applied to a manager who refused to listen to her and she shot him. Then she had several offers."

TOWN HAS FINE CATHEDRAL

Otherwise Sleepy Little Leon, in Northern Spain, Has Nothing to Attract Tourists.

Surrounded by its prosperous wheat fields, the shabby little town of Leon in northern Spain seems peacefully indifferent to its out-at-elbow appearance, and to the fact that its streets are not enlivened by the bustle of modern industry. A few mule carts rattle recklessly over the road, but otherwise it might easily be Sunday or a holiday and every one away from home.

The humble dwellings of the Leonese lie in the very shadow of one of Europe's most wonderful cathedrals, made possible by their ancestors' generous gifts and wrought by a master. The cathedral is the center from which radiates the tranquillity and harmony felt throughout the town. Its spires and towers of softly yellowed stone rise in gracious welcome above a mass of trees. A multitude of windows give promise of a bright, sunlit interior. Carved columns and figures frame the portals, and quaint gargoyles glower from nooks in the cornices, as if to ward off all evil.

Inside, the hall is vast and silent, lighted by scores of stained glass windows. The maker of the windows indulged his taste for bright and glowing color to an extent that would have been disastrous in a small church; but through the sweeping length of the vaulted nave the colors blend and fall in soft, rich shades. In this sanctuary of light rests the king who first planned the cathedral and made Leon a city of wealth and palaces. Since his day the city has been destroyed and plundered and rebuilt. It never again reached its former greatness, but the king's cathedral rose from its ashes, and stands now more beautiful than the founder had planned.

FINEST OF ALL EATABLES

Ideal Food for Both Body and Brain Is American Pie, According to This Enthusiast.

This is the height of the pie season in all parts of the United States. Pie-plates in every household are juicy with the good stuff between the crusty roof and the less crusty foundation. Of course, it will be said that it is a matter of taste, but we speak for green-apple pie as the best of the season's offerings.

Every day in the year is the height of the pie season in New England. A westerner who lived for a year at Framingham is on record as saying that he had pie three times a day, 21 times a week, and—do the rest of the multiplying yourself—some thousand times in a twelve-month. From only one meal was pie missing, and on that day the housewife, momentarily careless, allowed the delectables to be burned up in the oven, and the neighbors were unable to lend because they had just enough for themselves.

All sorts of shameful things have been said about the New England pie. It is just as good as middle western pie, and no better, but this is speaking in high praise of all the pastry from Rhode Island to Maine, inclusive.

There are persons who say that Emerson, Whittier, Longfellow, Holmes, and Lowell, while they wrote well, would have written better if they had cut out pie as a steady diet. We do not believe it. Pie is food for the body and food for the brain. It is America's surpassing dish. Apple, peach, berry, cherry, pumpkin, lemon, squash, custard, mince—and a proper slice of each is a full quarter, and then repeat.—Denver News.

Russians Flocking Into Japan.

A minor, but none the less particularly interesting, outcome of the anarchy in the former empire of the czars, is the extensive Russian immigration into Japan. There are Russians everywhere in the land of the chrysanthemum. In Kobe and Yokohama particularly every available domicile is taken up by Russians. For at least two reasons Japan welcomes this influx into her borders. The Russians find everything very cheap in Japan, after their country's high prices, and are good customers. The other reason is an outcome of the fact that many of the refugees belong to the old revolutionary strata of Russian society, and there are many expert chemists among them. These men have opened laboratories in their new home, and are organizing an industry which bids fair to make Japan independent of the German market. Thus Japan is reaping a valuable reward for her hospitality to her former foes.

LOSS OF EYE

Said to Depend Largely on Time of Life at Which the Accident Occurred.

What actual disability is involved in the loss of one eye? Accident insurance companies usually estimate it at 50 per cent, but Sir Arthur Pearson told the British committee on the administration of soldiers' and sailors' pensions that this was absolutely absurd, and suggested 25 per cent as a more reasonable estimate.

It depends largely upon the time of life at which the eye is lost. By binocular vision, says the Lancet, we fuse two slightly dissimilar images of an object, which are focussed upon the two retinas, and this enables us to estimate correctly the relative position or distance of objects. This power, however, is not confined to those of us who possess two good eyes. The man who has been blind in one eye from infancy possesses it in almost equal perfection with the possessor of two eyes. For many other factors unite to compensate for the absence of stereoscopic vision. These are atmospheric and shadow effects, parallax and, above all, memory of what the shape of objects really is, according to knowledge which has been acquired in early years, largely by the sense of touch.

On the other hand, if one who possesses this faculty is suddenly deprived of it he will be considerably handicapped, especially at first. A woman may find she cannot pour from a teapot into a cup without spilling the tea. A hammerman may take some time before he can hit the nail on the head with his former accuracy; indeed, whether or not he can ever attain it again is doubtful.

WASTE COUNTRY MADE RICH

Enormous Rubber Plantation in Sumatra Developed by American Industry in Ten Years.

Perhaps the most surprising thing about the enormous rubber plantation that covers nearly 100,000 acres in Sumatra, recently described by a writer in Commerce and Finance, is that less than ten years ago one could have traveled these acres without seeing a rubber tree. The land was acquired by an American company, and the rubber trees followed. Today they count up to something like 5,000,000, tended by an army of about 16,000 laborers, most of whom come from the neighboring island of Java. The land

rises to a slight eminence overlooking the sea of rubber trees which stretches for miles in every direction, with here and there glimpses of the fine roads over which motor cars travel the plantation on business or carry passengers between the bungalows of the estate managers. Sixty-five miles of narrow-gauge railway run through this remarkable rubber forest, with every tree raised in response to the twentieth century commercial demand for rubber.

Electric Transmission.

How different it is now, in the transmission of electric power, from what it was, say, 25 years ago, when there had to be relay stations for the trolleys every ten miles or so. For example, in California, physical connection of three large hydro-electric systems has been made by means of which power generated near the California-Oregon line is transmitted continuously for a distance of 300 miles to the San Francisco bay region. Experts were wont to say in the nineties that nothing like this could be done. But it is being done, and experts are now proclaiming that other and greater things contemplated in electric power transmission are impossible. Time will perhaps show that they are not.

Airplane in Collision.

Losing the engine from his plane while flying at an altitude of a mile did not disconcert a young American airman while flying at an overseas field, according to Popular Mechanics Monthly. Collision with another craft tore the engine from his machine, but at a moment when the plane was gliding on an even keel, he climbed on to the top of the fuselage at full length and in some manner managed, by continually shifting to prevent the craft from fluttering into a direct fall. While maintaining balance with his body he also manipulated the controls and guided the machine earthward.

Friday the Thirteenth.

Here is how Friday the 13th will occur in the years to come: 1919, June; 1920, February, August; 1921, May; 1922, January, October; 1923, April, July; 1924, June; 1925, February, March, November; 1926, August; 1927, May; 1928, April, July; 1929, September, December.

About a Foot.

"Darling," her ideal man murmured mournfully, "I've just been in to speak to your father." "Oh, Harry; tell me how you came out." "Just a moment too late."

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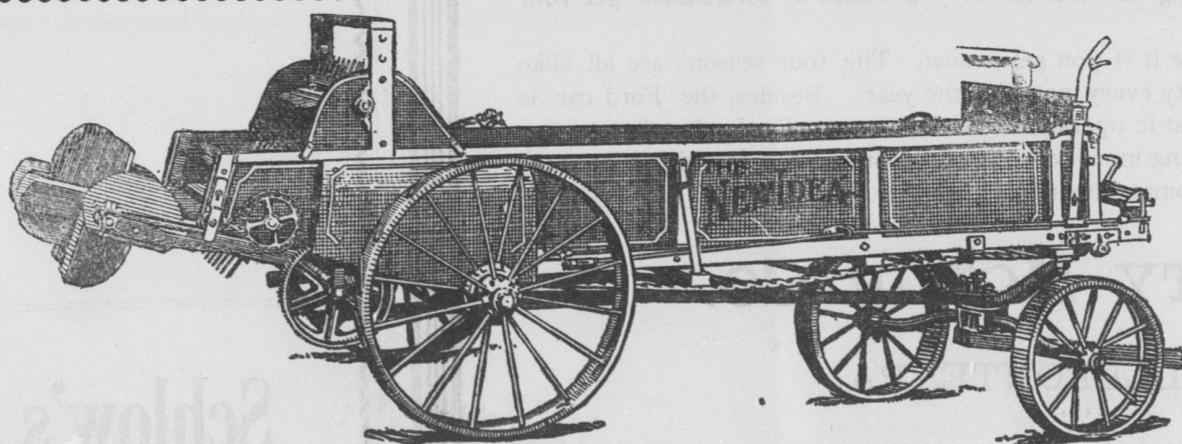
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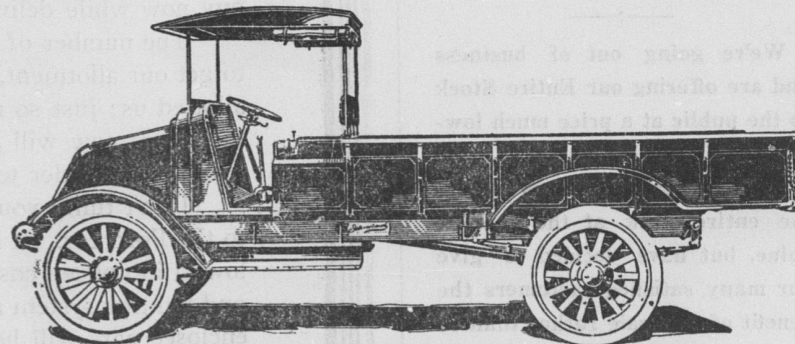
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