

SEES CLOTHING AS BLESSING

Writer of Opinion That Some of World's "Big" Men Do Well in Covering Themselves.

Wherever one goes in Polynesia one is reminded, by contrast, of the cost physically to men of our own race of our sheltered way of living, writes James Norman Hall, in Harper's Magazine.

There on every hand are men well past middle life, with compact, symmetrical bodies and the natural grace of healthy children. One sees them carrying immense burdens without exertion, swimming in the open sea for an hour or two at a time while spearing fish, loafing ashore with no greater apparent effort for yet longer periods.

Sometimes, when they have it, they eat enormous quantities of food at one sitting, and at others, under necessity, as sparingly as so many dyspeptics. It would be impossible to formulate from their example any rules for rational living in more civilized communities. The daily quest for food under primitive conditions keeps them alert and sound of body, so that, whether they work or loaf, feast or fast, they seem always to acquire health by it.

I thought of the strange appearance certain of the chief men in America or France or England would make under similar circumstances, deprived of the kindly concealment of clothing. What a revelation it would be of skininess or pudginess! What an exhibition of scrawny necks, fat stomachs, flat chests, flabby arms!

To be strictly accurate, I had seen some fat stomachs among elderly Paumotuans, but they were exceptions, and always remarkable for that reason. And those who carried them had sturdy legs. They did not give one the uneasy feeling, common at home, at the sight of the great paunches of sedentary men tottering unsteadily along a strip of crimson carpet, from curb to club doorway.

HOARDER CHASTISED IN 1777

"Coffee Party," Composed of Boston Women, Confiscated His Goods, According to Old Letter.

"Females" of ye olde Boston, staging a "coffee party" in 1777 which rivaled in a small way the famous "Tea Party" in 1773, personally chastised a profiteer hoarder of foodstuffs and confiscated some of his stock, according to a letter from Abigail Adams to her distinguished husband, later second President of the United States.

Writing at Boston, under date of July 31, 1777, Abigail wrote to John, then attending the Continental congress at Philadelphia:

"There is a great scarcity of sugar and coffee, articles which the female part of the state is very loath to give up, especially whilst they consider the great scarcity occasioned by the merchants having secreted a large quantity. It is rumored that an eminent stingy merchant, who is a bachelor, had a hoghead of coffee in his store, which he refused to sell under six shillings per pound.

"A number of females, some say a hundred, some say more, assembled with a cart and trunk, marched down to the warehouse and demanded the keys.

"Upon his finding no quarter, he delivered the keys, and they then opened the warehouse, hoisted out the coffee themselves, put it into a trunk and drove off. A large concourse of men stood amazed, silent spectators of the whole transaction."

Those Who Dare Not Smile.

The ludicrous has its place in the universe. It is not a human invention, but one of the divine ideas illustrated in the practical jokes of kittens and monkeys. Curious it is that we always consider solemnity and encounter of wits as essential to the idea of the future life of those whom we thus deprive of half their faculties, and then call them blessed.

There are not a few, who, even in this life, seem to be preparing themselves for that smileless eternity to which they look forward, by banishing all gaiety from their hearts and all joyousness from their countenances. I met one such in the streets not infrequently, a person of intelligence and education, but who gives me (and all that he passes) such a rayless, chilling look of recognition—something as if he were one of heaven's assessors, come down to doom. I don't doubt he would cut his kitten's tail off if he caught her playing with it.—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Extraordinary Time Keeping.

Methods of reckoning time have always been a source of trouble to scientists. The first standard was the lunar month—that is, the period of about 29½ days between one new moon and the next. Twelve of these months seemed to correspond to the four seasons, and so the year was fixed at 354 days. They soon found that they were getting badly mixed, that the seasons did not correspond to the months; in the course of 10 years they were more than three months wrong. The Jews and Greeks stuck in another month now and then. They added seven months in 19 years and managed to keep a clumsy track of time.

MINUTE MATTERS MEAN MUCH

Statesmen and Others Wrong When They Scoff at Work Done by Research Departments.

The man who gives up his lifetime to putting science at the service of business finds himself eternally asked, "What's the use?" Statesmen rise from their seats and say:

"I see that some scientist fattening at the government trough has measured a hundred-thousandth of an inch. What's the use?"

Hard-headed—solid-headed—business men read of research departments and snort in disgust: "What's the use? The old rule of thumb is the common sense way."

We think of railroads as progressive—of railroad men as efficient. Are they? Not if the Railway Age is to be believed, remarks the Nation's Business.

There are only two test plants of locomotives in the country, one owned by the Pennsylvania, the other at the University of Illinois. Only a few railroads try out locomotives on road service by means of a dynamometer car. What's the use?

One road that did found that by putting an exhaust tip (three-eighths of an inch smaller on a Mikado type locomotive it increased the firebox temperature 400 degrees and saved \$57,000 a year in coal. On another line tests made it possible to alter a locomotive as to reduce its fuel consumption 10 per cent and permit it to haul three more passenger cars on less coal and water.

That's what's the use!

SAILORS MADE FIRST GLASS

According to Story of Its Discovery, It Was Entirely the Result of Chance.

One of the most useful materials in the world is glass. It is not only a domestic necessity, but a scientific essential. The development of chemistry would have been a far more laborious process had it not been for the many utensils manufactured from glass. So numerous and varied are its uses that one can hardly conceive of present-day civilization without this product. Yet the discovery of this valuable material was what might be termed an accident, Floyd W. Parsons writes in the Saturday Evening Post.

As the story runs, a merchant ship laden with natron, a brittle white carbonate of sodium, was driven ashore at the mouth of the River Belus in Phenicia. The crew prepared their food on the beach, supporting their kettles on piles made up of lumps of the natron. Later the sailors were amazed to discover transparent masses of stone among the cinders of their fires. The heat had melted the soda and the siliceous sand together, with the result that a crude variety of glass was formed. If the early records are correct the art of glass manufacture was exclusively an industry of the Phenicians. One reason for crediting this statement is the fact that the ingredients of glass—natron, sand and fuel—were abundant upon the coast of Phenicia.

Waterworks in the Desert.

In the big desert of Chile there is a considerable amount of brackish water, but no water that either human beings or stock can drink. Science, however, has come to the aid of the rainless section of the country in the form of an ingenious desert waterworks, consisting of a series of frames containing 20,000 square feet of glass. The panes of glass are arranged in the shape of a V, and under each pane is a shallow pan containing brackish water. The heat of the sun evaporates the water, which condenses upon the sloping glass and, made pure by this operation, it runs down into little channels at the bottom of the V and is carried away into the main canal. It is said that nearly a thousand gallons of fresh water is collected daily by this means.

Savage Wilderness Marauder.

The fisher is, taking it all in all, said to be the most savage, swift and crafty of all the marauders of the wilderness. In nine cases out of ten—perhaps even 99 out of a hundred—a fight between a porcupine and a fisher has but one result: The fisher eats the porcupine. And the porcupine is some defensive fighter. The fisher flips the victim over on his back, annexing as few spines as possible in the act, and he has an unprotected throat and belly at the mercy of his fangs.

The porcupine's quills, so deadly to other animals, have for the fisher comparatively few terrors. They do not poison or inflame his flesh, which seems to possess the faculty of soon casting them forth again through the skin.

Good Place to Keep Cool.

The ice caves of Iowa present one of the most interesting phenomena in this country. While the rest of the state sweaters in midsummer the temperature of the soil near the caves is not higher than 55 degrees. As a result trees and flowers exist which are usually found in the far north.

The caves owe their existence to the prehistoric seas which are supposed to have covered this territory, as they are found in limestone districts where the rock is porous. In the winter cold air is stored in the crevices and when summer comes this air comes out very slowly and the outside of the caves is covered with frost.

The Tunnel's Part in Progress.

In the history of civilization the tunnel has played a mighty part. In Europe the St. Gothard tunnel through the Alps is famous; it connects Goshenen with Alroto, in Switzerland and is over nine miles long. The Simplon, which also penetrates the Alps, is reckoned one of the sever modern wonders of the world; it is 12½ miles in length. Still another Alpine bore is the Wasserfuh, two miles in extent from entrance to entrance. Another notable tunnel is the Khojak pass, in India.

Among the important American tunnels is that which penetrates the Cascade mountains, in Washington; the Cumberland, under the Cumberland mountains in Tennessee; the Hoosac in Massachusetts, and the tunnel under the Detroit river.—Harry C. Drum in Leslie's.

Revolving Door Etiquette.

The etiquette of the revolving door has yet to be standardized. At present there are two schools of opinion on the subject. One holds that when a man and a woman approach a revolving door it is the man's place to go first, pushing the door slowly so as to allow his partner to follow in the next compartment without any effort on her part. The other contends that ladies first still holds sway. In good manners, these theorists say, the man to step aside, let the woman start the door revolving, and then jump into the compartment behind her. In this way, it is contended, the man may assume control of the door and guide it until the woman ahead of him is safely out. The bitter rivalry prevails between the two schools.—Argonaut.

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