

#### **GROUNDHOG DAY**

It's almost time now for a little animal to decide for us if we are to have six weeks more of winter or if spring is near at hand. For February 2 is Groundhog day and, ac-cording to a belief held by many persons, what Mr. Arctomys Monax (that's what the scientists call the groundhog) does on that day will be prophetic of weather conditions for the next six weeks. If Mr. Monax also, that he lives for the most part comes out of his hole on that day and sees his shadow, then he will return to his hole and six weeks more of winter must be endured. If, however, the sun doesn't shine that day, we can expect an early spring.

Now, the joker in all this business is this: Regardless of what the grounhog does on February 2 and whether the sun is shining or not when he comes out of his hole, shall have six more weeks of winter, anyway. For officially winter does not end until the spring equinox on March 21 and from February 2 to March 21, it's all of six weeks—and then some. More than that, scientists tell us that there's no dependence to be placed upon the ground-hog as a weather prophet. Government weather records for the last 50 years show that he has missed it much more frequently than he has hit it.

But regardless of what the scientists say, there are many people who more than half believe the truth of the Groundhog day superstition. The reason is that this superstition is rooted in traditions almost as old as the human race. Certainly it goes back before the beginning of the Christian era and the mod-ern tradition is another of those queer combinations of heathen and Christian beliefs. One inspiration for it, probably, was the spring festival in honor of Ceres, the Roman earth goddess of abundant crops, who was known as Demeter by the Greeks.

One day, so runs the myth, her daughter, Persphone, was plucking flowers when she saw a narcissus of great beauty. As she reached out her hand to touch it it sprang into life as Hades, King of the Dead, in a golden chariot.

The hated monarch bore her away, screaming, to his dark palace under-ground. The abduction was noted by Helios, the Sun, and by Hekate, who told the grief-stricken mother when she abandoned her duties and the society of the gods to look for Per-sephone. She refused to let the earth produce until her daughter returned unharmed. Barrenness and mildew wasted the fields.

the powerful but unpopular Lord of the Dead, sent his messenger to re-turn her to her mother. Because she had eaten a pomegranate seed given her by Hades she was doomed to spend the dark months of winter with him, but in planting and har-vest time she belonged to the suppy

European hedgehog, the porcupine, and have "Porky" do their weather predicting for them? But the fact remains that they didn't, and to the animal they did choose they gave two most inappropriate names woodchuck and groundhog. Part of the former title is correct. He does live mainly in the woods, but where does the "chuck" part come in? Of course there's the old riddle about "How much wood could a woodchuck

chuck, if a woodchuck would chuck wood?' to indicate a belief that this animal can "manipulate hypothetical quantities of timber." but that doesn't solve the question of this name for him. Nor is groundhog more than half correct. It's true in the ground but he is not a hog, nor remotely related to the hog. Like those other porcinely misnamed animals, the porcupine and the guinea, pig, he is a rodent and is related to

the squirrels and the rabbits. It is highly unlikely that whether the sky be bright or cloudy on Candlemas day the groundhog bothers to come up to look for his highly important shadow, at least north of the Mason-Dixon line. He is a very sound sleeper, and snoozes the winter away in his burrow, rolled up in a compact ball with his nose tucked into his tummy. If you find his home and dig him out he will not awaken, for the sleep of hibernation is much more deathlike than ordinary slum-ber, and a hibernating animal will stand the roughest kind of treatment without showing any signs of life.

Even when he does come out, with the real return of spring and plenty of green stuff to eat, the groundhog still a sleepy-head. He has no other waking occupation except eating, fighting occasionally, and taking care of his family during the breeding period, so that he has plenty of leisure time on his hands in summer. He spends that in sleep, too

The groundhog is not a beauty. He is from 15 to 18 inches tall and his coat is blackish or grizzled above and chestnut red below. His form is thick and his head broad and flat. He has a bushy tail and his legs are too short to make him handsome. The groundhog digs burrows deep into the ground when on the plains, or when he can find a hill he will burrow into the side of it. He also views as a favorable site for his home a large rock under which he may

dig. His burrow slants upward to keep out water. The groundhog is a vegetarian with a strong preference for alfalfa and clover. That does much to damage his reputation with farmers, who annually lose thousands of dollars because of his taste.

In the southern mountains, where he is known as the whistle-pig, he is all the more resented when on February 2 sleet finds the unstopped cracks in a log cabin and unseason-At last Zeus, who had arranged for the wedding of Persephone to the powerful but unpopular Lord of the Decederate bit with its scant covers. But the vio-lence that overtakes him there is due to his division of the second seco able chill penetrates the cornhusk bed

#### Danube's "Iron Gate'

The famous Iron gate in the Danube is not a gate at all. That is merely the picturesque name originally given by the Turks to a narrow gorge or pass where the river has cut its way through a spur of the Transylvanian alps a few miles below Orsova in Rumania. A real gate of iron could not have more effectively prevented the passage of Turkish fleets than the dangerous rapids and massive boulders which obstructed the channel for nearly two miles. In 1890 a Hungarian company began the removal of many of the obstructions by a series of blasting operations. The river through the Iron gate or Iron gates was declared open for navigation in 1896.-Exchange.

#### Paper Has Kept Growth

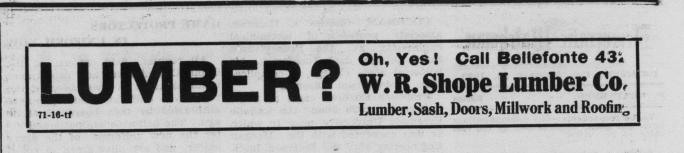
In the United States the history of paper is the history of the country. When the Revolutionary war broke out there was hardly enough paper available to wad the guns of the soldiers or upon which to write the orders of their officers. There was virtually no paper. By 1810, however, the use had increased to about one pound per capita per year. It had grown to over eight pounds in 1850. The Civil war greatly accelerated consumption. which reached 25 pounds in 1869. In 1899 it was 57 pounds; in 1923, 150 pounds. and today the people of the nation annually consume more than their own weight in paper.

#### Bell-Ringing Clocks

Perhaps the earliest tower clock with bell-ringing mechanism was one made by Peter Lightfoot, a monk of Glastonbury, England, about 1325, writes Satis N. Coleman in his book, "Bells." Connected with this clock were automatic figures which struck a bell on the hours. These performing figures pleased the public. and many of the town clocks of Europe were provided with such figures to ring the bells on the hours. They were used for proclaiming time long before the introduction of clock dials .- Detroit News.

#### Unbreakable Glass

The bureau of standards says that in general non-shatterable glass is of three distinct types. One of these is unusually thick; another consists of two or more layers of glass cemented together with an organic binder, such as celluloid, and the third is prepared by special heat treatment. The first of these can be identified by its relatively great thickness, the second by examining the edge of the glass for laminated structure, and the third by its irregular figures, seen when the glass is examined in polarized light.



The teacher gazed sorrowfully

"that these temptations can

at the small boy who had stolen an

apple from one of his schoolmates. "Bear in mind James," the teacher

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If you think you're the best, Tell them so. If you'd have it lead the rest,

Help it grow.

And that's so.

easily be resisted if you turn a deaf ear to them." The boy looked solemnly at her. "But teacher, he said, "I haven't got When there's anything to do Let them always count on you You'll feel better when its through. a deaf ear."

said

When a scholar from afar Comes along, Name your school, tell who you are. Make it strong. Never falter, never bluff Be a booster, that's the stuff.

Don't just belong.

WE FIT THE FEET

73-36 J. M. KEICHLINE, Agent 

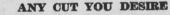
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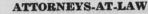


In our meat market you will find all the choice cuts that can be had. We buy beefs in the original quar-ters and can serve you with the best. Our stock is tender and fresh. It is the best meat that money can buy. Our regular customers would not go elsewhere. We want to add your patronage to our steadily growing

Market on the Diamond

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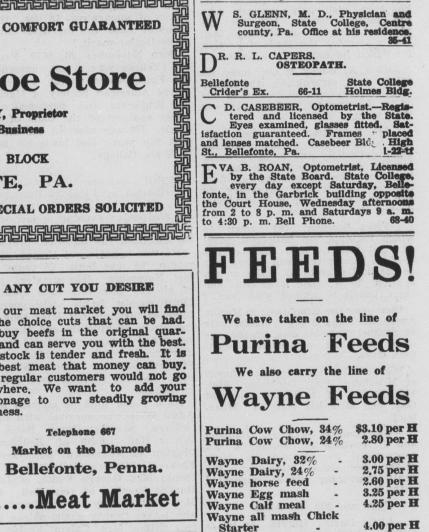
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PHYSICIANS

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vest time she belonged to the sunny fields and fruitladen groves of her mother.

Somewhat the essential idea of this myth is found in the beliefs as-sociated with Candlemas day, the name given to February 2 in the early Christian era. Candlemas day commemorated the presentation of commemorated the presentation of the Christ-child in the temple and the purification of the mother. The blessing of candles, to be carried in honor of the Virgin, became a rite of the early church. In ancient Eng-land the combination of the Chris-tian and heathen belief was most strikingly shown by the fact that it meant the disappearance of every Christmas green. For every leaf of holly left by a careless maid, so it was believed, she would be sure to see some terrible goblin.

Just when weather prophecy be-came a part of the Candlemas day tradition is unknown, but all over Christendom there persisted a belief in February 2 as a time for weather forecast. Especially was it true that a fair day on that date portended much winter yet to come. One Scotch couplet says:

If Candlemas Day be dry and fair, There'll be two winters in the year,

Another assures us:

If Candlemas Day be dry and fair, The half o' Winter's to come and mair.

If Candlemas Day be wet and foul, The half o' Winter's gane at Yule.

A more optimistic version had it thus:

When Candlemas Day is Come and

gone, The snow lies on a hot stone.

German legend also chronicles that:

May.

As for the association of the groundhog with the weather super-stition, the origin of that, too is wrapped in consderable mystery. So far as is known the Germans orig-inated that idea, only they made use of the badger as their weather prophet. In France and Switzerland it was the marmot and in England the hedgehog. Among the Scandi-navians there is a legend of the bear waking up in his den after the winter hibernation, seeing the sun shine into it and turning over to sleep for six weeks more, knowing that winter is only half over.

Just why the early English settlers in America should have picked upon an animal similar to the French and Swiss marmot (for the groundhog is a species of the mar-mot family one of his scientific names being Marmota Monax) for their February 2 weather prophet is not clear. They found badgers on this continent, so why didn't they follow the German tradition and select the badger? Or, since they

and that he has nothing whatever to do with deciding the question of "Can spring be far behind?—the belief in the Groundhog day tradition is pretty likely to persist indefinitely and on or about February 2 we can expect to see such newspaper stories as the following:

Dodge City, Kan—I give up. There must be something to it." So declared J. L. Hayes Dodge

City, as he wonderingly watched his groundhog playing about his yard in the bright sunlight this morning. The little animal had dug his way from his den, where he had remained since November 27 last, and was roaming about.

"I never believed in that gag," he said, "but what in thunder is a man to think now? I hid all my calendars, and that groundhog hadn't seen one I swear. How did he know this was the second of February? This is the first day he has been out since November 27. when he holed

up. "You can't blame it on me; that groundhog dug out on his own initia-tive. Look at him. It is six weeks more of winter sure. That ground-hog has convinced me there is some-

thing in the old superstition." Or it may be a "believe it or not" item such as the following: Mr. Hayes brought the groundhog

to Dodge City from Saguache Park, Colo., two years ago, to test the old superstition. Last February 2 the animal emerged from his hole at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, remained in the sunlight about twenty minutes and then re-entered his den, piling dirt in the opening until it was com-pletely closed.

Frank Nollier tells this one: A man back in Iowa says he is a firm believer in the groundhog theory. The man was out cutting wood on groundhog day and took off his coat and put it on a log. When he came

Far as the sun shines on Candlemas Day. to get his coat it was gone. He look-ed everywhere, but could not find it. Day. So far will the snow swirl until the May. He deverywhere, but could have a solution wood Six weeks later he was cutting wood in the same place. He happened to

look around and saw a groundhog come out of his hole and put his coat on the hog where he had found

That invitation is repeated by the writer of this article, and if you can tell a better one, he will incorporate it in his Groundhog day article next year!

He-"Did you ever study Latin?" She-"Yes."

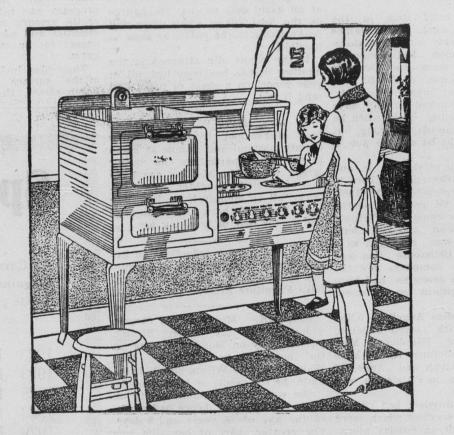
He-"What is the word for gold." She-"Aurum."

He-"Would you decline it?" She-"I should say not!"

Professor—"How do you say in Shakespearian 'Here comes a bowlegged man.'

Pupil—"What is that approaching on parentheses?" -The Mountain Echo, Altoona

And there was the absent-minded were English, why didn't they use professor who gave his finger-nails the American counterpart of the an examination and cut his class. BELLEFONTE COOKS ELECTRICALLY ... here is why!



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the evening, then put it in the oven and set the automatic control to turn on the current in the morning.

switch and a steady glow of clean place. Cook electrically for economy.

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