

APRIL FOOLISHNESS



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The first of April, some do say, Is set apart for All Fools' Day; But why the people call it so, Not I, nor they themselves do know. But on this day are people sent On purpose for pure merriment. But 'tis a thing to be disputed, Which is the greatest fool reputed; The man that innocently went, Or he that him designedly sent. —Poor Robin's Almanac, 1769.

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

ONE of the most famous warnings of all history was that uttered to Julius Caesar—"Beware the Ides of March!" But the Ides of March, however fatal they may have been to the great Roman, are of little concern to us of modern times. Another day which will soon be here is the one when we do most of our "bewareing." That's the first of April and unless we're very alert some one is sure to make an April Fool of us.

The practical joker is with us always, but April 1 is the day when he is at his best. We may ignore the hat lying on the sidewalk (with the brick concealed under it) or the pocketbook (either nailed down or attached to a hidden string which whisks it from under our hands as we stoop down to pick it up) and then unsuspectingly accept an explosive cigar which a friend hands us or bite into a tempting chocolate cream and find it filled with cayenne pepper. We may avoid all of these familiar pitfalls for the all of these familiar pitfalls for the unwary and then be "taken in" by a fake telephone call. "Mr. Lyon wants you to call him," they tell us. (Or it may be Mr. Wolf or Miss Ella Phant.) But when we call the number and ask for that person, a disgusted voice at the other end of the wire tells us "This is the zoo." Or it may be "Mr. Fish" whose telephone number turns out to be the aquarium or "Mr. Snow" at the weather bureau or "Mr. Coffin" at some undertaking establishment.

Some of the foolery, however, is on the decline. Large candy factories report that they no longer make April Fools' candy. Not that one cannot buy cotton balls disguised as sweetmeats; the obscure shops still supply them. The larger dealers, however, say that not only are calls growing fewer for such trick bonbons, but that they themselves run into the foreign substance law. Today, as every one knows, candy must pass a certain test. The pure food law has sounded the death-knell of the china baby doll dipped in bitter-sweet chocolate.

Where did this April Foolishness originate, anyway? The answer to that question is necessarily a difficult one, for this custom, like so many others, goes back so far and has developed in so many different forms in so many different countries that it is impossible to ascribe it to any one period or any one nation. There is evidence that the custom was prevalent in Asia in ancient times, tracing back to the celebration with festival rites of the period of the vernal equinox in Persia. It was the day when the Persian New Year began and was very close to the old English New Year's day of March 25. The sun was then entering into the sign of frisky Aries and on that day "the season of rural sports and vernal delights" began.

In India the Huli festival on March 31 for centuries has been a general holiday and time for jest. One of the favorite diversions consisted of sending people on long errands of fictitious import. Colonel Pearce, a British army officer and writer of a century ago, says: "High and low join in it. The late Suraja Dowah, I am told, was very fond of making Huli fools, though he was a Mussulman of the highest rank. They carry the joke so far as to send letters making appointments in the name of persons who must be absent from their house at the time fixed upon; and the laugh is always in proportion to the trouble given."

From the Orient the custom came into western Europe many centuries ago. The ancient Romans took delight in many sorts of practical jokes in connection with their Feast of the Saturnalia and there are those who declare that the first April Fool joke was that one which Romulus and his "early settlers" in Rome played upon the Sabines by inviting them to the regular April First celebration in honor of Neptune and then carrying off by force the Sabine women.

For centuries the French have held a Festival of Fools on April 1, in which "every kind of absurdity and indecency was committed." Their term for April Fool is "poisson d'Avril," a term which means, according to one explanation, a young fish and therefore a fish easily caught. When Napoleon married Maria Louisa, Archduchess of Austria, on April 1, 1810, it gave the waggish Parisians an excellent chance to whisper among themselves that he was "un poisson d'Avril." But the classic French April Fool story is that of a young woman who stole a gold watch from the house of one friend and hid it in the house of another friend. She then turned the case over to the police. But they were sadly lacking in the imagination necessary to appreciate this joke. She was arrested for the theft and the judge, entering into the spirit of the occasion, sentenced her to jail for a year with the remark that she be discharged on April 1 the next year as "un poisson d'Avril!" Another French classic is the escape on April 1, 1700, from prison by the duke of Lorraine and his wife, who shook back to their guards the French equivalent of "April Fool!"

April Fooling has been prevalent in Great Britain for centuries. There it mostly took the form of sending innocents upon "sleeveless errands." A boy might be sent to the cobbler's for "a pennyworth of his best stirrup oil" and then be mightily amazed when the angry shoemaker applied this "oil" to his back. Or he might be dispatched to the milk-vendor for "half a pint of pigeon's milk," to the bookseller's for "The Life and Adventures of Eve's Mother," to the butcher shop for a "meat auger" or to the bakery for "a pie-stretcher."

In northern England and Scotland this practice was called "Hunting the Gowk." An old couplet says: "On the first day of April Hunt the Gowk another mile."

The word "gowk" in reality means a cuckoo and was used metaphorically for fool, which undoubtedly is the origin of the modern slang phrase: "To knock a man cuckoo." There are plenty of connecting threads among all these words, "Gauch" in Teutonic is a fool, whence we get our word gawky, and "geac" in old Saxon was a cuckoo, whence is derived "geck," meaning one easily imposed upon. Remember the words of Malvolvo to Olivia:

Why have you suffered me to be imprisoned And made the most notorious "geck" and gull That ever invention played on?

Although April Fool's day appears to have ceased to challenge literary wits, there was a time in England when it brought forth observations from such scholars as Joseph Addison and that prolific and satiric writer Jonathan Swift. Swift seems to have entered into the spirit of the day and to have enjoyed the liberties granted to the practical joker on April first. He writes to Stella under date of March 31, 1713, about a jolly evening spent with two good friends "in contriving a lie for the morrow."

One of the commonest forms of April Fool jokes during past years in this country was the practice by newspapers of printing on April 1 some exciting story of an event which never happened and not revealing the fact until the reader came to the end of the yarn. There have been innumerable variations of this stunt, ranging from "sacre" stories about the blowing up

of the city hall and the assassination of city officials or the escape of all the animals in the zoo to more innocent stories about the discovery of buried treasure or the exhibition of some marvelous and seemingly impossible feat of skill or strength.

Some 40 years ago a Cincinnati newspaper printed a big story regarding a monster of fiendish aspect and unknown species which had been found inhabiting a cave in the hills east of the city, which had already carried off several children in its slaving jaws and had spread terror in the neighborhood. There was even a picture of the Thing, drawn from the descriptions of the two or three persons who had seen it clearly, and for malignant hideousness of aspect, that monster made all Callabans, dragons, Harlotumbos, demons and octopi look tame.

Finally, down at the latter end of the story in very small type, so small that many readers overlooked it, was set the legend, "April 1, 1888." Even some who noticed that date didn't grasp its significance, but continued to shudder with fear at the thought of meeting the monster.

Some Philadelphians still remember the story about the big iceberg that was "being towed up the river." Thousands went to the river front to see the spectacle and then denied that they had been taken in.

A quite modern hoax is told as follows by one who was in Ireland when it "happened":

Peace, of a kind, reigned in Dublin on March 31, 1922. There was tension in the air for the Irreconcilables, who refused to recognize the truce with England, had taken over the Four Courts and were known to be preparing resistance to the terms which Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith had signed. Anything was likely to happen.

About 1 o'clock on the morning of April 1 the Morning Post of London, the paper which reflected the views of those who thought that any truce with the Irish was a betrayal of Great Britain, received a telegram from Dublin stating that the Kildare Street club had been seized by the Irreconcilables, that the members residing there had been driven into the streets in their pajamas and that this social stronghold of British aristocracy in the Irish capital had been transformed into a stronghold of the enemy.

With due solemnity and with headlines that had not been surpassed since the declaration of the Armistice with Germany the telegram was published. And that night Dublin was flooded with correspondents—American, English and French—all prepared to cover the new "war." The British cabinet was called to Downing street for breakfast, and the world sighed in dismay and mourned that the Irish, when peace seemed in sight, "were at it again."

Only a few know the true story behind the April fool telegram that started this furore. There was in Dublin at the time a Major Clarke who had served with distinction during the World war, but who had never been the same since his experiences in Flanders. They had developed in him a "sense of humor" that was peculiar. On one occasion he collected all the boots left to be cleaned outside the bedroom doors of the largest hotel in Dublin and dropped them down the elevator shaft.

He was barred from the same hotel for throwing cream-filled eclairs at the guests during dinner. And it was he who sent the telegram. He was tired of peace and he thought it would be a good joke to start the Anglo-Irish struggle again. And, strange to say, he nearly accomplished his object, for the suspicious Irreconcilables thought the wire had been sent by the Free State government as a bait. But they were not yet prepared. The break did not come for almost three months.

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Community Building

Care at Proper Times Needed to Save Trees

To preserve trees properly it is necessary to have a complete knowledge of their nature and the trouble that may befall them. And it is only through such knowledge that tree surgeons are able to save trees from the diseases and dangers that so often prematurely destroy them.

Most of the few remaining survivors of former forests or of old-time planting are gradually going to pieces. The process is slow, unobserved, unnecessary. A little care given at the proper time would have saved these trees. Some can still be saved if cared for promptly.

It is an encouraging fact, says an authority, that during the last twenty-five years most cities have been increasingly active in the planting of street trees.

But unfortunately, for lack of adequate care, a large proportion of these trees have become cripples, doomed to an early death. Lawn trees and park trees are going the same way. Perhaps one reason for this is that people too frequently see only the foliage of the tree and the shade that it offers. They fail to observe the ravages of decay, resulting from poor pruning or injuries from storms, vehicles, or from any number of other causes. The trees are largely neglected. Neglected city trees have a poor chance for long life, for city conditions are unnatural and trees have extreme difficulty in withstanding the conditions under which we ask them to live.

Architects Plead for Saving of Shade Trees

The American Institute of Architects, through its committee on city and regional planning, deprecates the extent to which city trees are sacrificed in street widenings and extensions. The committee recognizes the necessity for removing street and boulevard trees in some instances, but believes the destruction is far greater than would be necessary if due consideration were given ways and means to avoid it.

Attention is called to a California law which authorizes the planting of roadside trees where widenings make removals necessary. Other states, it is said, are providing extensively for shade tree planting.

When we consider the cost and care we give to grow city trees, the importance attached to trees in the development of new residential sections, we cannot but marvel at the ruthlessness with which beautiful old elms, oaks, maple or poplars are destroyed when a feasible change of planning might preserve them. — Kansas City Times.

Business Man's Problem

Many business men lose sight of the fact that the man who attends a country fair is there for a day only, at inconvenience to himself, and that he will perspire and have his feet stepped on and will eat peanuts and drink whatever they offer him, because he is there temporarily to satisfy a desire of his heart.

But when business is a fixed proposition, involving perhaps several generations in its making, with the traditions that are back of the organization of a city or town, and the consequence of the investment of money and the best thought of the human mind, the business man must be careful whether he says, "I want my store so situated that only the first few who get there can be conveniently served."

Unless he treats this problem unselfishly with respect to that which the direct attributes that lie beyond give to him, he sooner or later is going to face the problem that he is losing trade, because that factor in trade, human contact, is not being adequately maintained.—George W. Elliott, general secretary Chamber of Commerce of Philadelphia.

Home Fire Hazards

The annual fire loss in the United States approximates \$500,000,000, of which a large proportion is occasioned by fires in residences.

A part of the heavy yearly loss to home owners is due to the fact that the home, being a private institution, is not subject to the rules and regulations imposed by law upon factories and business properties, has no paid watchman, no compulsory clean-up, and if systematic fire inspection is carried on, it is done at the discretion of the owner.

Inexpert repairs and alterations inside the home and lowgrade or wrongly installed appliances may constitute serious hazards.

Construction Needs Study

It is necessary that the area and height, thickness of walls, general structure, and the position of the outlets of the chimney with reference to nearby buildings should be carefully noted and observed in selecting or building a flue.

Rectangular shapes should never have a difference in width and length of more than the ratio of two to one. No flue should be less than eight by eight inside diameter and not less than 30 feet in height.



Sore THROAT

The daily press tells of increasing numbers of cases of sore throat. A sore throat is a menace to the person who has it, and to those around him. Don't neglect the condition. Check the soreness and the infection with Bayer Aspirin! Crush three tablets in 1/3 tumblerful of water and gargle well. You can feel the immediate relief. The soreness will be relieved at once. The infection will be reduced. Take Bayer tablets for your cold; and for relieving the aches and pains common to colds. Bayer Aspirin brings quick comfort in neuralgia, neuritis, rheumatism, etc. Get the genuine, with the Bayer cross on each tablet:

BAYER ASPIRIN

"First Aid—Home Remedy Week" Coming

Chicago.—First Aid-Home Remedy Week, Sterling Products' "better merchandising and greater advertising baby," celebrates its tenth anniversary March 15-21. Druggists everywhere will co-operate. "Fill That Medicine Chest Now!" is the slogan of action. The National Association of Retail Druggists sponsored the event in 1922, and with the National Wholesale Druggists' Association and National Association of Retail Drug Clerks have, with other organizations, massed their energies for success of this movement for the abolition of much needless suffering and often the salvage of life.

Dr. W. E. Weiss was first to okay the idea as a splendid aid to preparedness for unexpected illness or accident. This is stressed as sensible insurance for immediate relief.

The every-spring festival of sales is a fixture of housecleaning time. Sterling Products is giving a tenth anniversary surprise party to every druggist in America—for the Dominion as well as the States—endorses this idea of a more intensive advertising effort in Druggom. Replacing the old streamers there has been adopted a colorful poster representing a filled medicine chest displaying the slogan of each past success: "Fill That Medicine Chest Now!"

Pride and Pluck

The Grand Duke Boris said in an interview on his arrival in New York: "We Russians, when we consider Russia's plight, have to be as plucky as the street musician."

"A street musician was cheerily blowing 'Christmas Awake' on his cornet on Christmas day in a driving snowstorm."

"The snow fell fast and furious, a bitter wind blew, and as the musician tooted away a pretty girl passed. The musician looked down at his feet, buried in the snow to the ankles, and then he said to himself:

"Oh, thank heaven for this deep snow! My shoes are split and full of holes, but she can't see them."

Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription makes weak women strong. No alcohol. Sold by druggists in tablets or liquid.—Adv.

A man has as much intuition as a woman, but he doesn't call it that.

It is better to be young in spirit than young in thought.

No Doubt Whatever

Brown—You ought to brace up and show your wife who's running things at your house.

Potts (sadly)—There's no need. She knows.—Montreal Star.

Garfield Tea

Was Your Grandmother's Remedy

For every stomach and intestinal ailment. This good old-fashioned herb home remedy for constipation, stomach aches and other derangements of the system so prevalent these days is in even greater favor as a family medicine than in your grandmother's day.

Hardy Field Grown Charleston Wakefield and All Head Early cabbage plants, 20¢; 75¢; 1.00; 1.25; 1.50; 2.00; 2.50; 3.00; 3.50; 4.00; 4.50; 5.00; 5.50; 6.00; 6.50; 7.00; 7.50; 8.00; 8.50; 9.00; 9.50; 10.00; 10.50; 11.00; 11.50; 12.00; 12.50; 13.00; 13.50; 14.00; 14.50; 15.00; 15.50; 16.00; 16.50; 17.00; 17.50; 18.00; 18.50; 19.00; 19.50; 20.00; 20.50; 21.00; 21.50; 22.00; 22.50; 23.00; 23.50; 24.00; 24.50; 25.00; 25.50; 26.00; 26.50; 27.00; 27.50; 28.00; 28.50; 29.00; 29.50; 30.00; 30.50; 31.00; 31.50; 32.00; 32.50; 33.00; 33.50; 34.00; 34.50; 35.00; 35.50; 36.00; 36.50; 37.00; 37.50; 38.00; 38.50; 39.00; 39.50; 40.00; 40.50; 41.00; 41.50; 42.00; 42.50; 43.00; 43.50; 44.00; 44.50; 45.00; 45.50; 46.00; 46.50; 47.00; 47.50; 48.00; 48.50; 49.00; 49.50; 50.00; 50.50; 51.00; 51.50; 52.00; 52.50; 53.00; 53.50; 54.00; 54.50; 55.00; 55.50; 56.00; 56.50; 57.00; 57.50; 58.00; 58.50; 59.00; 59.50; 60.00; 60.50; 61.00; 61.50; 62.00; 62.50; 63.00; 63.50; 64.00; 64.50; 65.00; 65.50; 66.00; 66.50; 67.00; 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