

EARLY EASTER BAD ON TRADE

Shopkeepers Forced to Get Busy Much Earlier in Year.

Not since 1856 has Easter come so early in the year. It is the occasion of much activity among milliners and florists. Usually Easter comes in April, but this year it falls on March 23.

To the average woman it is of little consequence when the festival arrives, whether it is earlier or later in the year, but there is a commercial element which is vitally affected by the earliness or lateness of the date of Easter.

Flowers must be forced into bloom so that the markets can be supplied at the proper time.

Usually with a late Easter the flower markets are easily supplied and nature alone is responsible, but when the date comes early in the year, then the ingenuity of man is necessary, that plants may be made to bloom before their natural time.

Lilies, azaleas, hyacinths, tulips and other favored flowers are greatly in demand for Easter.

It is the one church festival of the year which calls for floral decorations. The churches are burdened with floral fragrance. The altars are decked in white and flowers in profusion can be found in all Catholic and Protestant churches.

It is not only the florist who becomes anxious over an early Easter. The shopkeeper who supplies the Easter gown and the Easter bonnet looks to Paris for his spring importations with more or less uncertainty. The stores must display their spring wares before the time is quite suitable.

Easter may fall this year upon a snow covered country and the climatic conditions may not be exactly compatible.

Lent began Wednesday, February 5. One has to go back 161 years before he reaches an earlier date on which Ash Wednesday fell. If he chooses to go back to Feb. 3, in the year 237 A. D., he will find the very earliest Ash Wednesday ever known. It is quite probable that floral displays were not featured on Easter at that remote age.

What would Fifth avenue and Broadway do without this royal display of femininity which is displayed every Easter? The girls and gowns, the splendor of wealth and the fragrance of flowers are all now deeply associated with the day.

The most interesting point is that Lent comes this year within two days of the world's record for an early appearance, and nothing that has ever matched it has occurred for fifty-seven years.

DUCKS ARE WELL WORTH BREEDING.

Meat and Egg Production is a Valuable Feature.

Of all the branches of poultry culture, there is none more profitable than the breeding of ducks for meat thrive on land quite unsuitable for the keeping of other fowls; and if allowed to forage they will find most of the feed they need the greater part of the year. The secret of success in the production of ducklings, or egg for eating or hatching purposes, lies in the good management of the stock birds at a time when

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they are mostly dependent upon their owners for food and shelter. Many people suppose that no harm can come to them if they are sheltered in any kind of a house. Such is not the case, however. Damp sleeping quarters are fatal to the well-being of birds kept for the production of eggs during the winter and early spring months. So long as ducks keep moving about wet ground does them no harm, but when they are compelled to lie on the damp floor of ramshackle structure throughout long winter nights, they soon contract leg troubles and other ailments.

Without it must not be supposed that ducks need an elaborate abode. Essentials in the structure are a dry floor and adequate means of ventilation. Ducks dislike stuffy quarters and the more fresh air they get without draught the better they will thrive and breed. In addition to dry earth floor in the house the birds will need dry litter to sleep on. Any rough material that is dry, such as dried grass or leaves, will do.

To insure the highest percentage of fertility in the eggs, stock ducks need bathing water but this does not necessarily mean that they must have a stream or lake on which to disport themselves. If running water is available, all well and good, but if not, a trough made of concrete or wood and large enough to hold at least half a barrel of water, may be sunk into the ground to provide facilities for bathing. Indian Runner ducks will breed without having water for bathing but better results will be obtained even from this breed if the bath is provided.

As stated above, ducks are capable of gathering greater part of their feed in the summer months if allowed to range. Unfortunately, however, ducks that are intended for breeding purposes during the winter and early spring, do not have this advantage, and the problem of supplying a ration that will nourish them equally well, presents itself. Poorly nourished ducks will lay eggs that are low in fertility. The birds must be supplied liberally with animal matter and an abundance of green food. Steamed clover meets the latter requirements admirably. Domestic ducks are apt to lay thin shelled eggs, a failure that a plentiful supply of green food will correct. The best grains for ducks are oats, wheat and corn. These should be fed in the evening just before housing the birds for the night.

These three varieties of grain will be rendered more digestible if soaked in warm water for one hour. Ducks are very fond of boiled corn, and when the weather is cold it may be fed to them while yet warm. It should be remembered that ducks require grit just the same as other fowls do, and they should have access to it at all times.

MOURNERS GREET LIVE MAN.

Police Official, Victim of Hoax, Arrives Safely in Liverpool.

Inspector Hunter of the Liverpool police was the most surprised man in the world when, arriving in Liverpool recently from Canada, he found assembled his friends and relatives all dressed in deep mourning.

They believed he had been killed during the voyage by a fall down the companionway. The report was based on a cable received from the liner announcing the fatality, the origin of which is a mystery. The Inspector's wife and family were verjoyed.

PIRATES GET STANDARD OIL.

Chinese Freebooters Board Trust's Junk and Kill Captain.

The disorderly elements in the province of Fukien have become so formidable that the authorities are unable to cope with them. Traffic has become unsafe except for very strong parties, and these are compelled to keep to the principal roads.

Pirates are very frequent on the Dragon river, even large vessels being attacked. A junk chartered by an American oil company was boarded by pirates recently, and the captain was killed.

1,176 Swains in Gloom.

There are 1,176 letters in the dead letter office for "Miss Z. X. Radcliffe of Elgin, Ill." This mysterious person wrote to the mayor of San Francisco some time ago and asked him to help her get a husband who would appreciate a good girl and \$30,000. Her letter was published in San Francisco papers. Answers rained into Elgin, but nobody called for them.

"The Traveling Salesman" at the Lyric on Thursday night.

POLAR EXPLORER PLANS NEW TRIP

Captain Roald Amundsen to Try Arctic Next.

WILL USE WIRELESS SYSTEM

Discoverer of South Pole Says Project Will Cost \$200,000 and Consume Six Years of Effort—Likes Dog Meat. Describes Equipment For Next Venture—Fram is Virtually Unsinkable.

Captain Roald Amundsen, the Norwegian explorer who discovered the south pole in December, 1911, arrived in the United States recently and is delivering interesting lectures about his experiences. He has given out an entertaining interview on his future plans.

Speaking of his proposed trip to the arctic, he said he hoped to leave San Francisco in August, 1914, and get back to civilization in 1920. He plans to drift with the ice north of this continent and be the first man to go from the Pacific to the Atlantic by the northern channel.

He intends to equip his ship, the Fram, with wireless apparatus in order to keep in communication with the rest of the world and to use it in his scientific work. It may come in handy should the party get in trouble.

"The Fram," said Captain Amundsen, "will remain in Buenos Aires about a year. It will be put in drydock shortly. If the Panama canal is working by the time she comes out she will be taken through it and up to San Francisco. If the canal is not working she will be carried around through the strait of Magellan.

May Reach the North Pole.

"We will go directly up the coast to Alaska, where we will take on board some dogs and maybe an Eskimo or two. We will just drift around and may reach the north pole, although we won't try especially hard to. That has been discovered once, and that is plenty. We will study the currents of the ocean and the air, which will be of great help to weather forecasters. The Fram will be equipped practically as she was for the trip to the south pole.

"On that trip we carried 120 dogs at the start, but we ate some and fed some of the others to the remaining dogs. We got them in Greenland and carried them to the south pole. We took them back to Australia, and now thirty of them have gone back into the antarctic circle again with the Australian expedition. Dog meat is fairly good. It is a little tough, but at that it is better than lots of steaks you get right here in New York.

"There was one peculiar thing about the trip to the south pole. After we crossed the great ice barrier there was no sign of animal life. Just before reaching the barrier we saw great schools of whales—thousands of them in a single school—but the other side of the barrier absolutely nothing, not even a gull. We built little piles of snow every three miles and in them put a piece of paper telling the exact longitude and latitude of the pile. There are at this time leading from the barrier direct to the pole these piles of snow. We cut out about 9,000 pieces of snow crust to build them with.

Only Six Men at the Pole.

"There were but five men with me from the time we left the station until we reached the pole. At the pole and on the return trip we gathered much material, such as minerals, corals, and the like. None of the minerals, so far as I know, bore precious metals, and the whole time I was within the circle I did not see any coal. It has been reported there are vast coal fields on the hidden continent. If they are there I didn't see them. Only once did we run into the Shackleton party, and then I did not see them myself. Some of Shackleton's men called on the men in my camp, more out of curiosity than anything else, I imagine.

"As food the men and myself had hot chocolate and biscuits for breakfast and pemmican, granulated milk and chocolate for dinner. We had but two meals a day. The men ate two pounds of pemmican a day, and each of the dogs was given a pound until it ran out, and then we began to eat dogs."

Motor sledges do not appeal to Captain Amundsen. Only dog sledges he thinks suitable to ice travel.

"The Fram," said Captain Amundsen, "is practically unsinkable. It cannot be crushed. It cost the government about \$75,000, and Norway has been amply repaid by the work that has been accomplished. I do not know what the trip to the south pole cost, as I have not looked over the accounts yet. The trip to the north will cost something over \$200,000, of which \$100,000 has already been appropriated by Norway. There has been some talk of establishing wireless stations on Point Barrow and in Siberia, so that observations may be taken with the apparatus on board the Fram. I do not know whether this will be done or not."

Captain Amundsen, who laughed at the idea of wearing an overcoat in a climate so balmy as New York's, had a very bad cold when interviewed. He's wearing his overcoat now. He will remain in the United States delivering lectures and accepting gold medals until the first of June. Then he'll go back to Norway and return to New York in March, 1914.

PITTSBURGH DECLINES TO INSURE WORKERS IN ZOO.

Employees May Use Stomach Pump on Tigers, but at Own Risk.

The city of Pittsburgh will not be responsible for the employees of the Highland park zoological department who use stomach pumps on Bengal tigers or who extract aching teeth of gentle wolves.

C. A. O'Brien, city solicitor, submitted this opinion recently. It was prompted by an operation performed on a veteran Bengal tiger which had suffered several days with extreme "tummy ache."

Potomaine poisoning was the diagnosis of Ernest Tretow, head keeper. Tretow "doped" the old jungle terror, gave him an anaesthetic, roped and gagged him and used a stomach pump. He and his men came through the operation without a scratch, although once the big Bengal showed signs of reviving and causing some disturbance. The operation was such a dangerous one the employees immediately sought an opinion as to their rights in event of injury.

Mr. O'Brien said: "In such a case there is no legal liability on the part of the city. I find that a man in the capacity of keeper at any time, in trusting to the gentleness of a wolf or the playful frolics of a lion or tiger, is liable to be chewed up in whole or in part, hip or thigh."

CAKE DIMINISHES IN POST.

Woman Charges Mail Carrier Ate Part of Parcel.

With half of what had once been a fine sponge cake in her hands, an indignant suffragette, weighing slightly more than 200 pounds, called at the Flushing (N. Y.) postoffice recently and demanded from Postmaster Lowerre the name of the letter carrier who had eaten half of the cake which had been sent her through the parcel post by a friend.

It was in vain that Postmaster Lowerre pleaded that the cake was the victim of its environment; that it probably had for its bosom companion in the mail pouch sections of a family cooking stove or a scuttle of coal sent on from the anthracite regions.

His words fell on deaf ears. Half of the cake was missing and the woman wanted Uncle Sam to investigate. She said the way to her house was long and cold, and she knew that the carrier got hungry on the route and fed on the cake. Making a note of the complaint, Postmaster Lowerre dismissed the woman, who went her way declaring things would be different when women got their rights.

PLAN INVISIBLE AEROPLANES.

U. S. War Department to Have Machines of Transparent Material.

A newly discovered material for the manufacture of aeroplanes—a material transparent and that makes part of a machine invisible in flight—is being used in the construction of war aeroplanes for the United States army.

Major Edgar Russell of the aeronautic division of the war department said recently: "We are experimenting with a semi-transparent material to be used as parts of the wings and understructure of the flying machine. One object of that is to give the operator of the machine a better vision of things below. The material is not celluloid, but celluloid enters into its composition."

This new material is a liquid. It is lighter per square foot than canvas and is noncombustible. It is admitted that the occupant of the machine and its frame will be always visible, but the experts contend that the wings can be made invisible at 1,000 feet.

WOULD PUT ROD IN SCHOOL.

Professor Urges Establishment of Regular "Spanking Stations."

Professor Frank M. McMurray of the Teachers' college, Columbia university, believes that spanking in the public schools of New York is a necessary adjunct of education and that the law forbidding corporal punishment in any form is unwise.

Furthermore, he asserts that it is not enforced and cannot be. He thinks the proper course would be to convert some of the city schools at convenient distances apart into what in effect would be spanking schools, presumably in charge of husky teachers. Unruly pupils from all over the city who need the rod could then be transferred to these schools and their cases properly attended to.

Professor McMurray was engaged by the city to investigate certain branches of the public school system. He reported his theories recently.

DEFEATS MASKED ROBBERS.

Canadian Bookkeeper Frees Self From Rope and Fires.

Working himself free of the rope with which he had been bound, Clare West, a bookkeeper of the Bank of Nova Scotia, in Edmonton, Canada, reached his revolver and drove off two masked robbers who were rifling the safe one day recently. The pair fired several shots at West as they dashed out, one bullet lodging in his arm. The robbers escaped.

Flier Incorporates Self.

Colonel E. S. Cody, erstwhile American aviator, now a full fledged Britisher, formed himself into a limited liability company recently in London with a capital of \$600,000. He is to make aeroplanes.

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