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OUR EARLY PAINTERS.

Benjamin West Started His Career as an Infant Prodigy.

Naturally the early painters in colonial times were immigrants. They were for the most part men whose names have long since perished and were probably of little account even in their own day. We picture these men with their paint boxes and rolls of canvas packed upon their knapsacks, trudging up hill and down dale, begging an occasional ride, putting up at road inns and painting a new sign to settle the landlord's score. As late, by the way, as 1788 Matthew Pratt, a resident painter of Philadelphia, found signboards as profitable a subject as portraits.

Benjamin West may be reckoned the earliest of native born American painters, for, although his birth occurred in 1738, a year after that of John Singleton Copley, his rise to notice preceded the latter's. West, in fact, began by being an infant prodigy and never quite got over it. It was a remarkable fact in itself that an artist should be born of a Quaker family in a little Pennsylvania settlement, amid the rigors of frontier life, and that without any known encouragement from his family and surroundings the child at six years old should have unmistakably shown artistic tendencies. The story is that while left in charge of a baby sister he tried to make a portrait of her in red and black ink. Then the following year some Indians showed him how to make red and yellow colors, while his mother allowed him to dip into her indigo tub and even made a brush for him from the fur of the cat. With these rude materials he executed some colored drawings that attracted the attention of a Mr. Pennington of Philadelphia, who presented him with a real box of paints and some engravings after Italian pictures. He made such rapid progress that before he was twelve years old he was practicing as a professional portrait painter in Philadelphia. By the time he was twenty-two he had saved enough money to visit Rome, whither his fame had preceded him. Three years later he reached London and was received with an enthusiasm that at once launched him into a success which only grew greater as the years went by. Finally he was elected president of the Royal academy and held this position until his death, when a great public funeral was given to his remains in St. Paul's cathedral. Circle Magazine.

Falsifying an Old Proverb.

The adage "Happy is the bride that the sun shines on" is one that is unknown in many lands. A Breton bride likes to have a wet wedding and takes it unhappily when the day of her wedding dawns bright and sunny. Rain on her marriage morn is held to signify that all her tears are shed and that she will therefore have a happy married life. It is said that the Erza of Simbrisk call the day before the wedding the weeping day, and the bride and her girl friends weep as much as possible, with the idea of getting the mourning of life over, so that only what is joyful may remain. In some countries this result is expected by sousing the bride with water. The Greeks think that a thorough drenching of the bride will bring her lasting good fortune.

The Quiet Way.

As the mother tossed aside her gloves the daughter looked up from her novel with a yawn.

"By the way, ma," she said, "have you found out yet what pa cut out of the paper?"

The mother sneered. "Yes, bother it," she answered. "I bought another copy downtown and read the thing all through from start to finish. But for the life of me I can't see anything wrong with it. It's just an article on the healthy exercise housework gives."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Why Paperhangers.

Wall paper does not hang, and yet the person whose business it is to paste it up is called a paperhanger. The reason is simple. Long before the introduction of wall papers Arras, a town in France, was famous for its tapestries, called "Arras." These were used as wall coverings, and the men who were employed to put them up were called "hangers." When paper succeeded tapestries as a mural decoration the name "hangers" stuck to the men, though instead of being tapestry hangers they were now paperhangers.

A Use For Brains.

John Bright used to tell how a barber who was cutting his hair once said to him: "You've a large 'ead, sir. It is a good thing to 'ave a large 'ead, for a large 'ead means a large brain, and a large brain is the most useful thing a man can 'ave, as it nourishes the roots of the 'air."

WAITED FOR DAWN.

Four Poker Hands That Were Held All Night in the Dark.

A soldier told this poker story, which incidentally accentuates the distrust with which poker players regard one another "when friendship ceases" and the faith a man has in the hand he holds:

One night after taps four men gathered in a tent to do away with their pay. It was the night of pay day, and there was no convenient place in which to spend their money except over cards.

The game had gone on with varying fortune here and there. It was after midnight. The sentry was a chum and had been told not to see the light in the tent. At last a jackpot was on the board and had been "sweetened" until it was very tempting. Every one was in it, and it was worth before the open about \$20. When one of the players opened it, every one stayed and drew cards.

The age had a full house, the next man four tens, the third man four queens and the dealer four aces. The opener threw a dollar into the pot. The next man raised, and it was raised and reraised until it was beautiful to see.

At this point there was a scurry of footsteps outside. The sentry rushed in, grasped the lantern and dashed it out, jerking and extinguishing it as he did so. As he disappeared he whispered hoarsely: "Officer!"

Instinctively four hands went out in the darkness and spread themselves over the pot, while four other hands closely clutched five cards each.

"Hold on, fellows," whispered the dealer. "Every one take his hand off the table and keep it off until the light comes back. We'll just sit here and nurse our cards. My hand is good enough to wait for."

"So's mine," said the others.

Then they waited. Slowly the night passed, growing chillier and more chill in its going. The sentry was cursed, the officer was cursed, but still they sat. At last the first glimpse of gray appeared in the sky, and as soon as it grew light enough the four played their hands and tumbled in for a few minutes' sleep before the bugle called them out again.—Exchange.

An Indeterminate Sentence.

During a lull in the program the members of a feminine literary society were discussing the case of three criminals who, though sentenced to the penitentiary for life, yet stood a chance under the law of being pardoned after fifteen years' imprisonment.

The crime of these men had been particularly atrocious, and one lady of the party was most emphatic in her denunciation of the criminals and the law of the state which opened an avenue for leniency.

"All that you say is true, Mrs. S.," said one of the members. "But did you ever consider that not one criminal in a hundred sentenced to life imprisonment ever serves out that term?"

"Why?" queried Mrs. S. innocently. "Don't they live long enough?"

Changed the Sign.

In the outer room of a Wall street office this sign was posted a few days ago: "Please Do Not Whistle. We Do All That Ourselves." The messenger boys on service in the building evidently saw a funny side to the notice, for within an hour more than twenty of them asked, "When do you whistle?" "When does the concert begin?" "How much for a ticket?" and similar queries. The sign came down after two days, and the manager of the office has had it replaced by one bearing in aggressively bold letters simply the words, "Don't Whistle."—New York Tribune.

Removing Scorch.

An old negro laundress is responsible for the following cure for badly scorched places caused by too hot irons: A half pint of vinegar is put on the stove in a porcelain lined saucepan. To this are added the juice of a large onion and two ounces of fuller's earth. The mixture is boiled for five minutes, strained, cooled and bottled. In removing the scorch a little of the mixture is put on a clean white linen rag and rubbed over the scorched place until it disappears. Several applications may be necessary. —New York Times.

The Largest Flower.

The largest flower in the world is the *Rafflesia arnoldi* of Sumatra. Its size is fully three feet in diameter—about the size of a carriage wheel. The five petals of this immense flower are oval and creamy white, growing round a center filled with countless long, violet hued stamens. The flower weighs about fifteen pounds and is capable of containing nearly two gallons of water. The buds are like gigantic brown cabbage heads.

THE SQUID'S HUES.

Why the Creature is Able to Change Its Color.

One of the most interesting of the discoveries of science is the secret of the means whereby certain animals change color. The most familiar and celebrated example in this line is the lizard called the chameleon, but there are many other creatures both on land and in the sea that possess a similar power.

Noteworthy among them is the common squid. If a specimen of this interesting kind of mollusk, fresh out of water, be laid on a table and watched, its hues will change so constantly that literal waves of color seem to be passing over it from moment to moment. That this happens in response to impulses conveyed through the nervous system of the animal is manifest, a mere tapping with a finger on the table causing a rush of the color waves described.

The secret lies in the fact that immediately beneath the skin of the squid is a sort of network of small channels, in which are frequent larger spaces occupied by pigment cells. These cells are under direct control of the nervous system, which causes them to contract or expand. When they contract the color disappears, which is what happens when the squid dies, for then it turns dead white, although its normal hue in life is reddish brown.

Even in death, however, the pigment cells beneath the skin of the squid may be distinguished by the eye as minute specks. In life these specks expand to the size of a big pinhead and run together, thus producing the brown tint. It is substantially the same phenomenon that is accountable for the rapid changes in color observed in the chameleon, in many fishes and in various other creatures—changes which are evidently for the purpose of disguise, enabling the animal to escape observation by assuming a likeness to its surroundings. Thus the common sole imitates with its coloration whatever kind of bottom it may be resting upon, whether pebbles, sand or what not.

The pigment cells referred to are called "chromatophores," and sometimes they contain two or more different kinds of pigments, some of which disappear, while others persist, the result being that, as in the case of the chameleon, a considerable range of colors may be displayed.—Saturday Evening Post.

A Fair Exchange.

At a gathering of medical men one of the number was a noted practitioner who is almost as well known for his shabby attire as he is for his skill as a physician.

When the gathering was about to disperse the doctor in question could not find his hat. Instead, to his great surprise, he found a nice new glossy silk hat, which happened to fit him as though made to his order. When he got home he exhibited his headpiece with considerable pride.

The next day, however, a fellow doctor turned up to claim the hat.

"Permit me, my dear doctor," said the second medico, "to apologize for my little trick, which grew out of the fact that yesterday you carried an umbrella, while I had none. It occurred to me that, while my new silk hat would be ruined by the rain, yours would not. Accordingly I took the liberty of leaving mine in place of yours. Many thanks."—Harper's Weekly.

Not Like a Tax Receipt.

Accustomed to have the political boss of his ward provide him with a tax receipt, an organization follower went to the same boss with a demand for a favor. "Will you get me a marriage license?" he asked. "That I can't do," explained the politician, "because you have to appear in person when you get a marriage license." This answer to the political worker seemed evasive, and he demanded to know: "How is it that you can get me a tax receipt every time there is an election? The marriage license costs just the same." To this further inquiry the politician gave a long explanation, but it was not quite satisfactory to the humble worker in the cause of organization.—Philadelphia Record.

Chicken Fritters.

Sift a cupful of flour, melt a tablespoonful of butter in a small cupful of warm water and pour by degrees on the flour, salt to taste, beat well and add last the stiffly beaten white of one egg. Mince cold chicken, season with salt, paprika, a little chopped parsley and a tiny bit of onion. To a cupful of chicken add a small half cupful of thick white sauce. Mold into small balls, dip each in the batter and drop from the spoon into very hot fat. Drain on brown paper in the oven. Arrange on a napkin and garnish with lemon and parsley.—Circle Magazine.

Oregon Agricultural College.

This great institution opens its doors for the fall semester on September 20th. Courses of instruction include: General Agriculture, Agronomy, Animal Husbandry, Dairy Husbandry, Bacteriology, Botany and Plant Pathology, Poultry Husbandry, Horticulture, Entomology, Veterinary Science, Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Mining Engineering, Highway Engineering, Domestic Science, Domestic Art, Commerce, Forestry, Pharmacy, Zoology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, English Language and Literature, Public Speaking, Modern Languages, History, Art, Architecture, Industrial Pedagogy, Physical Education, Military Science and Tactics, and Music.

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