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WATCHING THE GROUND HOG

Old Father Time has a way of mowing down weeks and months in a hurry, and here we are back to the time when the men who make our weather forecasts take a back seat while the ground hog makes his.

Customs change, but not this one. There will be just as many people around here wondering this time "if the groundhog saw his shadow" as there ever was before on February 2 And this community is not an exception to the rule—the groundhog's movements will be watched and inquired about in every state in the union. Older citizens accept it as gospel that if he sees his shadow we are due for six more weeks of winter weather. And even though the younger generation of weather sharks wink an eye when discussing the subject they, too, always manage to cock the other eye skyward on Feb. 2 to see if the sun is going to shine.

There may or may not be anything to the belief that the little animal can forecast for a period of six weeks ahead; we don't know and we don't want to get into an argument by venturing an opinion, since sentiment is pretty well divided. But this we do know, that if the groundhog can offer as many alibis for missing it as are offered by some of our local forecasters then he is entitled to qualify for the Ananias club.

ROADS THEN AND NOW

So rapid has been the improvement of rural highways in 10 years yet almost without our realizing it, that the entire diet of the American people has been changed in that brief period of time. Not only that, but the paving of roads has caused a revolution in agricultural methods as well. For every mile of improved highway laid down some farmer has added something to his production of green vegetables marketed in the big centers of population.

In North Carolina, for instance, farms where nothing but tobacco was grown for years and years are now green with truck crops of all kinds. Dairying, too, has sprung into prominence in many states where it would have been impossible to get milk to a city 10 years ago. Farmers who once depended almost entirely on one staple crop—corn, cotton, tobacco, wheat—are now going in widely for vegetables and fruits, which would have been too perishable to have been grown profitably under old transportation conditions.

You can note a big change of this kind right around here if you want to study the subject a little. Our people are now able to grow many things they didn't grow 10 years ago because good roads and the auto have made it possible for them to get better position to fight for our share of prosperity than we ever were before. We've found out that paved highways are essential to farm success. And since success in practically every field depends on success on the farm, it looks as though there is no longer any place in the United States for the man who fights a good roads movement of any kind.

THE CLOSED GARAGE

There is hardly a newspaper that does not at least once a year publish a warning about those death-dealing fumes emitted by running auto engines in closed garages. Yet in spite of this people are still careless and insist on warming up the old bus behind closed doors. The result is a large number of deaths each winter. we are not yet over the dangerous period. That is why we want to sound one more warning to car owners. Exhaust from auto motors contains from five to 13 per cent carbon monoxide, a colorless, tasteless, odorless gas that is capable of producing death in two minutes. In warm weather it evaporates before it can reach the lungs. In cold or chilly weather, however, it does not pass so easily. Enough will come from the exhaust pipe of an ordinary car, running in a closed garage, to kill a dozen people. Don't be thoughtless, don't take chances. Open the garage doors—and leave them open before you start the car.

It's hard sometimes to tell whether people are trying to be as disagreeable as the weather, or whether the weather is trying to be as disagreeable as some people.

Not all of the people who are hard to talk to are deaf. Some of them are just dumb.

A fool motorist is one who thinks a locomotive is whistling just to keep up its courage.

One secret of success is to go off where nobody knows you and pretend that you amounted to something where you came from.

What some of the younger set really need is a car with two horns, one to say "Look Out" and the other to say "I told you so."

A lot of fellows never put their best foot forward—now that brass rails have been abolished.

Experience is about the only thing in this world that you can't buy on the easy payment plan.

The community is safe as long as a majority of men prefer the old-fashioned night-shirt to embroidered pajamas.

PETROLEUM PLANT ROBBED SIX TIMES

The old superstition about the third time being a charm is all bunk according to Otis Engle and Arnold Jensen, in charge of the Kenton plant of the General Petroleum Corporation of California, who are just getting straightened around after the sixth robbery at Kenton in two years.

Although on previous occasions robbers were successful in stealing several hundreds of dollars in cash, this time they were forced to be content with leaner pickings. In lieu of ready cash, they appropriated 25 gallons of gasoline, a couple of cans of such products to market. We're in oil and Jensen's driver's uniform. While Engle and Jensen expressed themselves as being duly appreciative of the good taste shown by the intruders in selecting Violet Ray anti-knock gasoline for their motoring needs, they are nevertheless hoping that six will prove to be the charmed number. Repairing broken locks and smashed windows get tiresome, they say.

MORE DEADLY THAN THE MALE

Sue Core

A whimsical master artist in the craftsmanship of words once proclaimed himself the friend and ally of masculinity throughout all time to come, by hurling straight into the teeth of the world the statement that the female of the species is more deadly than the male.

Both the words and the sentiment of the phase have been used as a battle cry of the sex ever since that day; made to fit all times and occasions while serving beautifully as alibi explanations of anything and everything masculinely catty that can be printed, said or sung about the female of the race.

Leaving the human element to fight the matter out on a 50-50 basis, it is rather interesting to glance around at the rest of the organism which struggle for a foothold upon the earth's surface, just to see how they stack up. male and female.

Albeit grudgingly, a fair observer must admit that the teeth, claws, stings and dispositions among the lady faction of the beast ,bird reptile and insect world do rate a rather high voltage when compared with those of their male concomitants Intrusted by Nature with the responsibility of looking after the young, they were logically given proper defense tools to work with. Evidently in the job of apportioning these defense attributes where necessary a bit of carelessness entered in, and she was often endowed with in, and she was often endowed with abilities and instincts for which there seems, to human observers, no logical reason for her having.

Just why the hen mosquito of the virulent, disease-carrying varieties should be given the power of innoculation, denied to the male, is as inexplicable as it is true. Where the male of the family merely sings and stings, the female goes him one better. She not only sings and stings, but gives the victim malaria or yellow fever while she is about it. There are certain feminine flies credited with noticeably more vicious biting powers than their masculine mates, while it is a well known fact that among the deadly wallops packed by various snake families, that of the lady faction is considerably more potent and more likely to be forcibly distributed than that of their respective men folks.

It is interesting to note the almost human manner in which some of these superiorly equipped feminists exercise their suffragette rights The cold, lifeless corpses of masculine drones lying on hive doorsteps furnish conclusive evidence of how gently tolerant are the lady workers therein, toward masculine loafers for whom the hive no longer has any need.

To the female member of one special family of tropical spider, however, goes the blue ribbon and the title of being the most unreasonable ably vicious representative of the sex which is universally accused of being coldly and calculatingly heartless. For a certain period after matrimony, the spider couple seem to agree fairly well. They swing head downward, amicably catching and devouring unwary insects or scuttling out of sight at the approach of danger. Neither seems to harbor any special grudge against the other, and, were it left to the bridegroom, this period of felicity might prevail indefinitely.

Running true to sex, however, the missus of the family grows peevishly fretful as her approaching motherhood draws near, and, as usual, her nearest and dearest has to bear the brunt of her irascibility. Perhaps she is exasperated by his indifferent, unsympathetic attitude; maybe she blames him for her physical discomfort. It may be that she is just sick of having him hanging around.

Whatever the reason, shortly before she gives birth to her bouncing baby spiders, she knocks her lord and master over the head, and then, while he is still unconscious, she calmly sits down and eats him for her dinner. Any qualms she may suffer do not in the least interfere with her evident enjoyment of the meal he makes for her!

The queer part of it is that, even though these cannibalistic habits of hers are well known, still and all there are reputed to be no old maid spiders. A cynical philosopher might go so far as to observe that male spiders are quite human. No matter how badly their women folks treat them, they keep right on coming back for more!

The addition of a teaspoonful of powdered sugar to the French dressing improves the flavor of most salads.

OUTLOOK REPORTS BEING PREPARED

College to Aid Farmers Plan for Years Crops; Nation, State Pool Facts

Oregon farmers seeking guidance on what to plant this season in view of state, national and world situations in agriculture, will be aided by the forthcoming appearance of the 1930 state and national agricultural outlook reports which will be ready early in February. In Oregon these will be issued through the state college extension service.

L. R. Breithaupt, extension economist, has been called to Washington, D. C., to represent this state in preparing the national outlook report, and on his return late in January the state report will be prepared immediately.

That the national farm board is depending on increased use of these reports is indicated by a recent announcement to cotton growers that "the board cannot protect farmers when they deliberately over-plant." The extension service is planning to distribute about 5000 copies of the full state report and 40,000 to 50,000 copies of separates dealing with poultry, dairying, livestock, field crops, and horticulture.

USE OF RIVER IS PREDICTED SOON

Starting of open river navigation on the Columbia within a year or two was predicted at the annual meeting of the Eastern Oregon Wheat league in Pendleton where that subject was one of the two major issues considered, the other being the new plan of cooperative wheat marketing which was given full approval.

That such development will bring substantial benefits to the entire state and will result in practical and immediate relief to inland empire agriculture, was freely expressed by those sponsoring the movement and by leading farmers who have been agitating the matter for years.

At present federal and state agencies are cooperating in final surveys of condition of the river. Later it is hoped that channel improvement and even canalization will follow.

The league indorsed the new cooperative marketing plan and asked that formation of temporary local units be continued pending completion of final contract forms. Many other matters were acted upon at the meeting which was conducted in the form of a conference.

Officers for the coming year are John Withycombe, Arlington, president; Harry Pinkerton, Moro, vice-president; and Charles Smith, Heppner, secretary-treasurer.

Stable manure, best organic fertilizer, is high in nitrogen, but low in potash. Five tons of stable manure, supplemented by 250 pounds of superphosphates per acre per year makes an ideal fruit or nut fertilizer, finds the Oregon Experiment station.

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