

The Hermiston Herald

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Mocking Bird and Robin

To the South the mocking bird is what the robin is to the North. He is known as far north as British Columbia, but is seldom found nesting there, while those found in the southern United States live there the year round, writes a contributor to "Bird Lore."

The female builds her nest the latter part of March, lays her greenish-blue eggs, speckled with brown, early in April, and by May the eggs are hatched. A second brood is often reared by the same pair of birds. The mocking bird's back is ashen gray, his wings a brownish tinge with a large white patch, and his throat and outer tail feathers are white, with the under parts brownish white.

It is when the mocking bird works himself up into a passion of song that one realizes the wonder of his voice. He imitates the sounds of the woods and the other birds, but he improves on them.

Camel's Great Value

Conditions in central Australia are said to be more primitive than those of the rural world during the time of Abraham. It is a roadless country traversed only by camel caravan and yet a land of great possibilities. It has been the camel which has held central Australia—the camel first, and then the goat (for its domestic value), and after that the donkey as a fine off-sider. The camel performs wonders in endurance and reliability amid big distances. The importance of the goat is great in the scheme of things. There is no family without a goat herd. Like the camel, it is marvelous what they live on. Amusing incidents often occur connected with the extraordinary appetite of the goat, which, so far as food is concerned, has no fastidious habits.

Quite a Bright Idea

A well-known author on leaving his house one morning forgot a letter he had intended to mail. During the afternoon something recalled it to his mind, and as it was of considerable importance he hurried home. The letter was nowhere to be found. He summoned the servant. "Have you seen anything of a letter of mine lying about?" "Yes, sir." "Where is it?" "Mailed, sir." "Mailed! Why, there was no name or address on the envelope." "I know there wasn't, sir, but I thought it must be in answer to one of them anonymous letters you've been getting lately."

Old American Roadway

The old Spanish road, built across Mexico in the Sixteenth century, is believed to be the oldest road on the North American continent. It was built in the form of a letter "Z", with the lower point of the stem starting at Vera Cruz on the Gulf. The northern prong touches the Pacific at San Blas and the southern tip at Acapulco. Because of this road the west-bound convoys from the Philippines were spared the dangerous navigation around Cape Horn. There is still evidence that this old trail was used by the Indians before the Spaniards broadened it from a pack-mule path to a highway.

Silly Idea, Don't You Know!

The man in the dock was a regular customer at the local police court and he had spent quite as much time inside jail as out. His particular line was breaking into shops of the smaller tradespeople in the early hours of the morning. On this occasion he was charged with breaking into a jeweler's shop, and as he stood in the dock with a constable on either side the magistrate asked: "Any witnesses?" "Course not!" replied the accused with a sneer. "Why, you silly old fool, do you think that when I go out to crack a crib I takes witnesses with me?"—London Tit-Bits.

Don't Be Too Hasty

The trouble with the mentality tests is that they grade intellect according to mental agility and cunning. Outside of geniuses, the highest grade of brain is slow thinking. If you have ever consulted a white-bearded philosopher, you know that the oracle hears your case, ponders it with deliberation, views it from all angles, then in a terse sentence utters the decision of wisdom. The fast thinker arrives at wrong conclusions oftener than the slow thinker.—Topeka Capital.

Courtesy Among Kafirs

In Africa when one hears a native host say to his departing guests: "Hamba gachle" (Go in peace) and the response of the guest, "Lala gachle" (Rest in peace) it is hard to imagine oneself among untamed savages—if one keeps one's eyes closed. A courtesy peculiar to the native African is his manner of receiving even the most trifling gift. No matter how small the object, he receives it in both hands cupped together like a bowl. Try it. It is most expressive.

The premium list for the 1924 Dairy and Hog Show is out and distribution will start soon.

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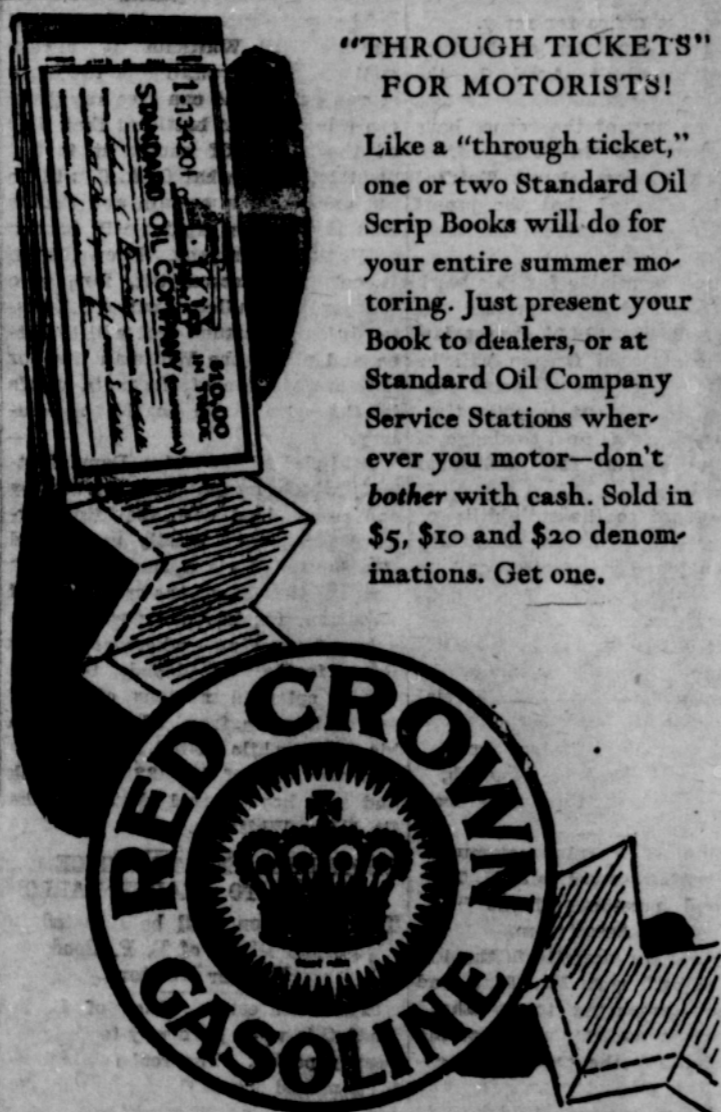
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Mine Brought Wealth to Fortunate Mexican

Pachuca, capital of the state of Hidalgo, Mexico, is one of the world's greatest and most famous mining centers, according to a bulletin of the National Geographic society. One of Pachuca's silver mines, the Real del Monte, contained the counterpart of Nevada's famous Comstock lode. An inconspicuous muleteer became the owner of the Pachuca's mine in 1739, when its value was unknown. His pick opened up a bonanza vein such as seldom has been uncovered. Soon he was a multimillionaire, in a day when even millionaires were rare. He presented several fully equipped warships to the king of Spain and for his happy thought was made a count—Conde de Santa Maria de Regla. The famous mine came to a tragic end soon after the count's rise to fortune, by the bursting into it of a subterranean river. Its drowned riches remained untouched until near the middle of the Nineteenth century, when efforts to reopen it by British engineers led to frenzied speculation and a crash among London investors rivaling those of the Mississippi bubble. Local Pachuca's bought up the bankrupt company and promptly found a second bonanza vein even richer than the first.

Writer Would Welcome Return to Simplicity

People who complain about the increasing burdens of life do not always use plain, common sense to ease themselves of these burdens. We do not have to have many of the things that we now enjoy and pay for. It might not seem easy or pleasant to sacrifice some of these encumbrances, but we could do it. More frugal fare at the table, with a smaller variety of viands, is one way. Another is the wearing of clothes a little longer than the arbiters decree. Then there are the places of amusement that claim our too-frequent attendance. And how many other forms of indulgence there are that have no real purpose to serve, the lack of which our fathers never seemed to find a deprivation. Simplify your life. Quit paying the tax on excess baggage that adds no single benefit. Do it openly and above board as a frank confession that you cannot afford to do otherwise, and not with the half-ashamed air of one who is apologizing for being alive.—Rochester Times-Union.

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Able to Endure Long Periods of Fasting

Some curious facts with respect to the capacity for fasting as exhibited by various animals are cited by Siegmund Urahn in the Umchau (Frankfurt), according to the Detroit News. He begins by observing:

"The power of the camel to do without taking food is regarded in most works on zoology as representing scientific peculiarities of animals. But if there were a general knowledge of the ability of many animals to fast for very long periods of time these instances would not be so overemphasized. It is, indeed, generally known that even mammals are able to fast for months during their winter hibernation, but it seems to be almost unknown that the same power exists among the lower animals. The power of fasting is much more widespread in them than was formerly supposed."

Mr. Urahn then refers to an experience of his youth when he put certain snails which had already withdrawn into their shells and closed the opening thereof, as is their custom, into a box, whereupon he forgot them for a period of more than a year and a half. He supposed they were inevitably dead, but when he put them into a vessel filled with water, much to his surprise, they came out of their shells and crawled gaily about on the table.

Plants Set Traps for Unwary Insects

Certain plants, like certain people, require strong foods. Not satisfied with the nourishment derived from the soil, they require flesh and blood. Such plants exist by the consumption of insects and small animals, and are to be found in bogs and marshes in tropical countries. All carnivorous plants are endowed with a sense of taste, and a tasty morsel of meat is speedily devoured! The side-saddle plant, found in parts of America, sets water traps for its victims. This plant holds up to the sunlight vase-like leaves, around the mouths of which are glands that secrete honey. Tempted by the scent, the insects make their way across the leaves to the mouth of the plant; farther and farther they wander down the tube, looking for the honey. Detentive hairs prevent their exit and, tired and weary, they eventually fall into the pool secreted at the bottom of the leaf. The common sundew captures dragonflies and ants. Attracted by the gummy appearance of the rosy leaves, the feet of the visitors become securely fixed to the gum, and the red tentacles close in on the unwary insects.

Superficial Existence

We live in the sun and on the surface—a thin, plausible, superficial existence—and talk of music and prophet, of art and creation. But out of our shallow and frivolous way of life, how can greatness ever grow? Come now, let us go and be dumb. Let us sit with our hands on our mouths, a long, austere, Pythagorean lustrum. Let us live in corners, and do chores, and suffer, and weep, and drudge, with eyes and hearts that love the Lord. Silence, seclusion, austerity, may pierce deep into grandeur and secret of our being, and so diving, bring up out of secular darkness the sublimities of the moral constitution. How mean to go blazing, a gaudy butterfly, in fashionable or political salons, the fool of society, the fool of notoriety, a tople for newspapers, a piece of the street, and forgetting the real prerogative of the russet coat, the privacy, and the true and warm heart of the citizen!—Emerson.

Birds of the Night

Nighthawks and whippoorwills work chiefly at night, when most other birds are off duty, and at daybreak their work is taken up by the swifts and swallows. These birds are provided with big scoopnet mouths, and as they swing through the air over wide areas of country they scoop up almost unbelieveable numbers of insects.

Homing pigeons probably are closer to the human family than any other form of winged life. The birds have remarkable intelligence. They mate in pairs and the female of each union has exercised her right of suffrage to the extent that the male helps her in hatching out the eggs and in caring for and feeding the young.

Traced Tropical Scourge

The first intimation we had that yellow fever was not a contagious disease and that the infection was due to some external cause, appeared during the occupation of Cuba. It was in 1900 that surgeons and soldiers of the United States army at the risk of their lives, proved that yellow fever, the supreme terror of the tropics, was not a contagious or fifth disease, but was transmitted from one human being to another solely by a mosquito of a particular type, the stegomyia.

Punctual Monarch

All the clocks at the royal estate at Sandringham for more than half a century have been kept half an hour in advance of standard time. The idea was introduced by the late King Edward VII when he was prince of Wales, and was borrowed from a neighbor, the late earl of Leicester, to whom the late King Edward VII, in the early days of their married life, the then prince and princess of Wales were frequent visitors. It was the earl's custom to keep all the clocks at Holkham half an hour fast to secure punctuality. So punctual was King Edward in keeping his appointments that he gained the reputation of "never being late."—London Mail.

Pepsin Has Rival

Pepsin, the digestive substance derived from the pig and largely used by medical men in treating cases of digestion, finds a rival in pharmacy in "papain," a digestive ferment isolated from the juice of the half-ripe fruit of the papaw tree. This substance is said to digest fibrin and albumen more readily than pepsin does. The fruit is sometimes made into jam, though the necessary boiling would probably kill the digestive ferments. Anglo-Indians say that a tough steak becomes tender when placed for a few minutes between two slices of papaw fruit, or even placed near a papaw tree.

Northern Lights

Prof. Lars Vegard, attached to Christiania university, by assuming that frozen nitrogen is responsible for the beautiful greenish hue that preceded any outbreak of the northern lights, has dissipated the mystery of the green hue that has always been unexplained by scientific men. The scientific world has not entirely accepted his assumption, but regards it as more satisfactory as an explanation than the old theory that certain luminous gases caused this exceptionally beautiful effect just before the fantastic flashes.

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