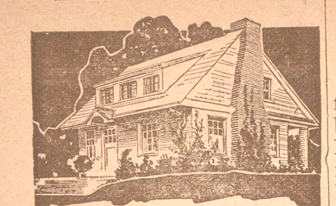

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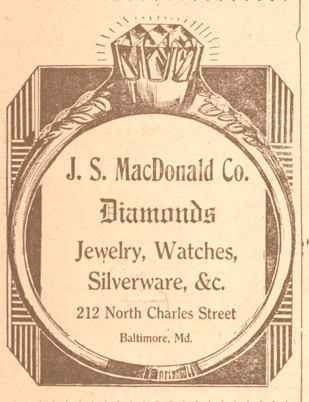

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Those unfamiliar with ancient firearms are frequently puzzled by finding certain characters or letters, or both, stamped on and into the barrel of a gun or pistol. In their ignorance they take them to be the initials or marks of the maker, and from these seek to gain light as to his name.

It is true that Spanish and German arms usually have, instead of the maker's name, a seal, frequently of gold, depicting characters—animals and letters—from which, if possessed of of a list of such seals, one might determine the manufacturer of the weapon, and hence its approximate date. English and French gunmakers, however, if marking the arm at all, did so by placing their name and that of their town on the lock-plate or barrel, or on both.

The marks known as "proof marks" were stamped on, usually by a Government official, after he had tried out and "proven" the arm to be all right. As a rule the method of "proving" was to load the piece with several times its normal amount of powder and shot, and then discharge the same. If it survived the test it was considered "proven" satisfactorily. Thus, as different marks were not adopted until a certain date, we may ordinarily be assured that an arm bearing them was not manufactured before that date.

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INDIAN TRIBES OF MISSOURI

Missouri, unlike many States, never had a large number of Indians, Indian tribes, or warlike chiefs of ability. The Osage Indians were the only tribe peculiar to and historically native in Missouri. The "Missouris," who took their name from the river, were living there when Marquette and Joliet made their famous trip in 1673, but they had originally come there from the vicinity of Green Bay, Wisconsin. They were never a strong tribe.

Other Indian tribes in Missouri came late, as the Sauks, Foxes, and Delawares. These originated east of the Mississippi and settled in Missouri during the Spanish period.

The Osages were the distinctive Indians of Missouri, and well might the State be proud of them. The great artist, Cathn, states that the Osages were "the tallest race of men in North America, either of red or white skins." Few Osage braves were under six feet in height, many were six feet and six inches, and some were seven feet tall. They were well-proportioned and good looking, and in movement they were quick and graceful. In war and the chase they equalled any. Although living close to the white man for decades they late retained their primitive customs and dress.

On November 10, 1808, by a treaty with the United States Government at Fort Clark, near Kansas City, Missouri, the Osage ceded all their lands east of a line running due south from Fort Clark to the Arkansas River. They later ceded their Missouri land lying west of this line. They are today the richest single class of people in the world, their wealth averaging over one thousand dollars per person.

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St. Mars was English and many of his stories were of English animals, birds and insects. Naturally he called them by the names used in England. In this country the name used in England sometimes designates an entirely different animal. For example, some of his storiees mentioned polecats. In America polecat generally means skunks. What St. Mars said of the English polecat (Putorius foetidus) is true of that animal and probably at least approximately true of the real American polecat or black-footed ferret (Putorius nigripees), but not true of the common American skunk, who is of an entirely other genius (Mephitis mephitica) or of his smaller brother of our West and South (Mephitis Spilogale).

It is interesting to note that on his stories laid outside of England, of Europe, there have been no criticisms of his unfailingly exact knowledge of fact and then to note that St. Mars had never been outside of Europe. If he is a safe guide in countries he has never seen, it seems reasonable to trust him in the country in which his observations were made at first hand during a life-time of study.

THE ELEPHANT'S BABY

"Uncle Louis," said little Eleanor, "do you know that a baby that was fed on elephant's milk gained twenty pounds in a week?"

"Nonsense! Imposssible!" exclaimed Uncle Louis. "Whose baby was it?"

"The elephant's baby," remarked little Eleanor.

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Of all the words infolonel,
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Which seems to me
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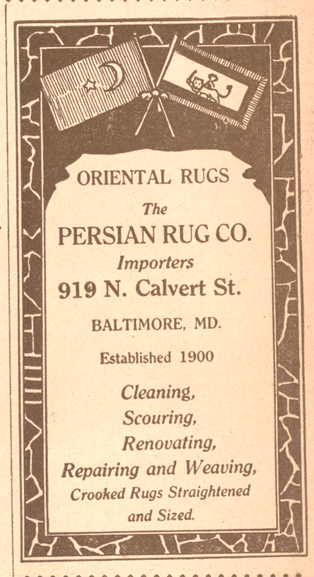

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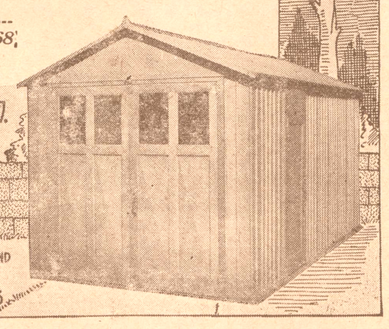

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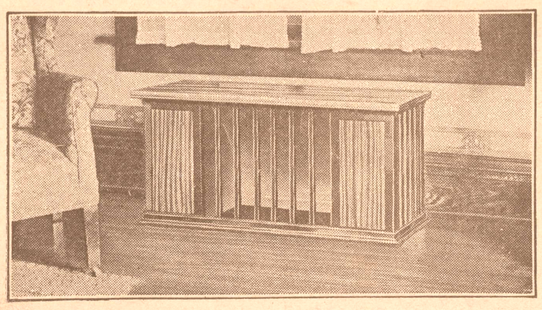

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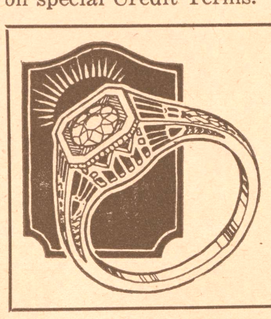

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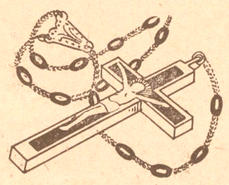

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