Long Spell of Sickness

It was simply awful. I never had such a tough time in my life. First I got anginapectoris followed by arteriosclerosis. I was just through these when I got double pneumonia and phthisis. Then they gave me hypodermics. Appendicitis was followed by tonsillitis. I really don't know how I pulled through it. It was the hardest spelling test I ever had.—Pathfinder Magazine.

Aviation Requirements

It is not every one who can learn to fly an airplane. One has to have a sense of balance, perception of depth and accurate judgment of distance. Also one has to have the mental capacity as well as the physical capacity for flying. In the government flying school one is not allowed to enter without two years of college work to his credit.

Physical Science

Generally the science of physics is held to treat of the constitution and properties of matter, mechanics, acoustics, heat, optics, electricity and magnetism. Sometimes the term is applied in a limited sense, and embraces only the last four divisions; more generally and loosely it includes all physical sciences.

Tree-Climbing Skunk

The common skunk or polecat cannot climb trees. There is only one member of the skunk family that does climb trees to avoid pursuit. This is the kind called the "little spotted skunk" or the "hydrophobia skunk" and is found chiefly in the southwestern and western states.

First Map of World

Anaximander of Miletus (Sixth century) is credited with the first attempt to draw a map of the then-known world. Gerhard Kramer, generally known as Mercator, invented the first developed projection and published a map of the world in 1569.

Steel Needles Old

The Chinese appear to have been the inventors of the steel needle, its use spreading throughout the Moslem world and reaching Europe through the Moors. The industry was first established in Europe at Nuremberg, in 1370.

Literary Teamwork

I look forward to the day when a prime minister will recommend a novel because the home secretary has suppressed it, and the home secretary suppresses a novel because the prime minister has recommended it.—Sir G. S. Robertson.

Laws of New England Harsh on Malefactors

The children of the early days in New England did not learn the letters of the alphabet in such simple fashion as "A stands for Ape, and B stands for Ball." But letters sometimes were used to mark the transgressor.

Lack of chastity was indicated in the scarlet A which Hester Prynne wore. The drunkard could be and was disfranchised, and must "wear about his neck and so as to hang above his outer garment a D made of red cloth and set upon white, and to continue it a year and not to leave it off when he comes among company."

The letter B did not escape being a mark of ignominy. "Any person who commits burglary by breaking up any dwelling house, or shall robb any person in the feild or highwayes, such a person so offending shall for the first offence bee branded on the forehead with the letter B; a second time a second B, and for a third time bee put to death. If the offence is committed on the Lord's Day, for the first offence he shall have one eare cutt off; the second eare for the second offence, and bee put to death for the third offence."

Smoking Among Women Alarmed Men in 1868

In 1868 the growing practices of smoking and dipping snuff by refined women in both North and South, writes Arthur Train in the Saturday Evening Post, were stigmatized by Schuyler Brightley in the April number of "The Galaxy" as shockingly on the increase.

In the South particularly, owing to the influence of their negro mammies, "young and tenderly nurtured girls, belonging to the richest and proudest families in the neighborhood, smoked to an extent that would be regarded as dangerously excessive even among men, and not cigarettes or cigars or yet elegant little chibouks or nargiles, fashioned to suit their delicate lips, but short, black dudeens from the North, and pipes of native invention made of a reed stuck into a bowl of red earth or a corncob."

War Prisoners Made Slaves

All armies sent out from Rome were accompanied by speculators in the slave trade, who bought the captives as they were put up to auction after a battle and then undertook the transport to Rome of all who were suited for employment in Italy or were not brought up in the province which was the seat of war. Fowler says: "After the campaign of Pydna and the overthrow of the Macedonian kingdom, Aemilius Paullus, one of the most humane of the Romans, sold into slavery, under orders from the senate, 150,000 free inhabitants of communities in Epirus which had sided with Perseus in the war. . . . Caesar, like Aemilius Paullus, one of the most humane of Romans, tells us himself that on a single occasion, the capture of the aduatici, he sold 53,000 prisoners on the spot."

"Faint Heart Never—"

They were talking of a fellow club member.

"When I come to think about it," said one man, "I don't think I've seen old Harry for nearly a week."

"I'll bet you haven't," agreed another man, entering at the moment. "He's been dead three days."

"Dead How did that happen?"

"Well, you know his wife had a little habit of making him carry everything she bought. Last week she bought a grand piano."

"But he didn't have to carry that, surely?"

"No; he took one look at it, though, and passed away without so much as a sound."

Unusual Mirage

To the tired and thirsty traveler in the desert there sometimes appears the tantalizing vision of an oasis, green with trees and sweet with running water. The camels wearily pad toward the promised spot, and, alas, the mirage slowly fades, leaving only the hot, cruel, desert sands! Dwellers on the shores of Lake Constance were enchanted the other day by a clear and vivid picture of that part of the town of Immenstadt with the Herzberg palace appearing in the heavens and remaining visible for some time. This is the first time a mirage has ever been recorded on Lake Constance.

Dikes Long Employed

The dikes which protect the Netherlands and the German coasts of the North sea go back to the old Roman times. Apparently even before the Romans appeared the Batavians at the mouth of the Rhine protected themselves by dikes. Dursus, after the conquest of Holland, 10 B. C., built an elaborate system of artificial canals and dikes. Pliny the Elder gives an interesting description of the artificial hills which were erected as places of refuge during the floods.

Yes, Please

The little boy had been sent to the drug store to get some liniment and a special kind of china cement.

"Do you want the two things in separate parcels?" asked the druggist, as soon as he had attended to the boy's demands.

"Yes, please," answered the little fellow. "I think it would be as well. The cement is for mother; she wants to mend the teapot. The liniment is for father. Mother broke the teapot over his head."

Scottish Shrine

Within a short distance of "Ellisland" lie the "bonnie braes" of Maxwellton, scene of the wooing of Annie Laurie, says a National Geographic society bulletin. Tradition states that fickle Annie proved unfaithful to her Jacobite poet lover and married the lord of broad acres some miles away. Not far across country are the ruins of Lag tower, castle of Sir Walter Scott's "Redgauntlet."

Subscription to the Transcript $1.50 per annum.

Name "Peony" Traced to Legend of Mythology

In the days of the Greek gods and goddesses, the peony first came to the world's attention. Leto, Apollo's mother, was the one to introduce it. Apollo was known as the god of healing and his son, Aesculapius, was the god of medicine.

It seems that a pupil of Aesculapius named Paeon was the physician of the gods, and to him Leto first gave the plant which he employed to cure Pluto of a wound received at the hands of Hercules during the Trojan war.

The fact that his pupil could surpass him in effecting such a cure made Aesculapius angry, with the result he attempted to kill Paeon, but Pluto, indebted to Paeon for his own life, rescued the physician of Mount Olympus from death by changing him into the plant that had saved his life. Until this day that plant bears Paeon's name and is known to us as the peony.

The history of the peony in China and Japan is of a sentimental nature. Fittingly enough, the words "Sho Yo," meaning "Most Beautiful," were applied to the herbaceous peony, while the tree peony held sway as the "King of Flowers."—Kansas City Star.

Only Dame Nature Can Freshen Mind and Body

"The earth is the great reservoir of physical forces, and whilst no scientist has yet been able to discover how intimate or how perfect is the connection between the mental and the physical, there exists, no doubt, a correlation between the processes by which the body and the soul are kept healthy and vigorous by drafts on the great reserves of nature.

"One grows tired of books and cloyed with all manner of art. Then comes a hunger and a thirst for nature. Real thought gathering is like berry gathering—one must go to the wild vines for the racy-flavored fruit. Art and nature are really the antipodes of each other—one is original, the other second hand. When we go from the library or the studio to the woods or fields, we go to get back what art has robbed us of—the freshness of nature. The suggestions of nature come—out of the mysterious, invisible generator; but art merely reflects its suggestions back upon nature."—Maurice Thompson.

Near the Crater

There be two men whose ways we cannot fathom; yea, there are three we do not understand. The first of the twain is the man who has two wives at the same time. The other is the clerk or accountant who steals from his employers and covers the theft by falsifying his books. The third? He is the man who builds his house on the edge of a volcano that erupts every year or so.

All three are alike in that they know something is going to blow up under them. Peace of mind has been called the summum bonum; it is the one thing they have put out of their reach. Of the three we think the man on the volcano's marge has the most sense. After it lets go, there is a chance that he can build again somewhere else.—Cincinnati Times-Star.

Garden Memories

Three thousand years ago the Magus Zoroaster, it is said, met his own image walking in a garden; nowhere else, we must suppose, but in a garden's cloistered peace could such a meeting have been arranged. And when a man lets his thoughts drift back to the happiness, so deep and often so illusory, of his childhood's home, it is in the garden that his memories crowd the thickest, not in the house itself. The Golden age was green with the shadow of boughs and silver with the luster of dew upon the grass.—Exchange.

Strangled From Space

Scientific interest is being directed to a 35-ton formation recently discovered in southwest Africa which has all the appearances of being a meteor. It was discovered on a farm near Grootfontein and is quite different in every way from any of the rocks to be found in that part of the country. This is almost as large as the meteorite which was brought from Greenland in 1907 by Commodore Peary, and if the African find proves to be a meteor by answering certain scientific tests, it will be regarded as a very valuable find.

The Penalty

Five-year-old Freda had taken her watch to be repaired over a week ago, and was now seeing what had happened to it.

"Ready on Tuesday, miss," declared the man behind the counter.

"You promise" asked the little maiden seriously.

"I promise," replied the other, with a smile.

But on reaching the door the little girl turned round again.

"Mind you," she said gravely, "if it isn't ready by Tuesday I shall sue you for breach of promise."

Nation's Backbone

Newspaper headlines are filled with stories of men and women who went down to defeat in the face of adversity. But in the scattered communities of America there are daily examples of how difficult situations were overcome by the ingenuity that has become the chief characteristic of Americans.—American Magazine.

Definite Cabinet Term

The postmaster general is appointed for a term of four years. The other cabinet members serve at the pleasure of the President.

Think It Over

Some of the most worthy people in the world go unloved and unappreciated because of their bad manners.

Not Much of a Mountain

Ben-Nevis in Scotland, although only 4,406 feet high, is the highest mountain in the British isles.

Duration of Twilight

Twilight ends when the sun is about 18 degrees below the horizon, consequently its duration varies with the latitude and the season, depending on the declination of the sun.

Age of Commercialism

"Sentiment," said Hi Ho, the sage of Chinatown, "is commercialized. A gatekeeper made me pay money for the privilege of weeping at the tombs of my ancestors."—Washington Star.

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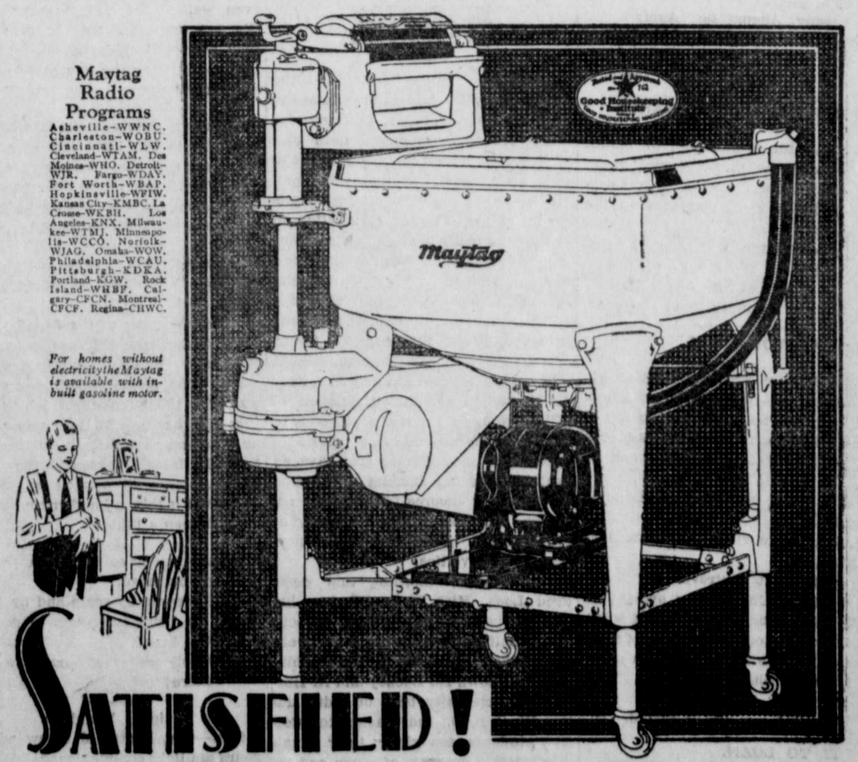
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