

Study in Contrast

It is all a matter of contrasts. The fetish worshipers of Africa kill through ignorance, superstition and distorted reasoning. Civilized people kill for greed, for love, for hate, for political power. In the last analysis, it is easier to forgive the savage slayer than the killer of an enlightened race. Civilization must progress far before it protects human life adequately, and that progress is needed as badly in New York, Chicago, Paris and London as in the jungles of the "dark continent."—Richmond Times Democrat.

Not Much of Buffalo Carcass Went to Waste

It is generally known that the slaughter houses of Chicago utilize all parts of slain cattle, but it is not so well understood that the Indian of half a century ago was nearly as economical of the buffalo he shot down on the western plains. How the bison carcass was used was related by Dr. Melvin R. Gilmore, curator of ethnology of the University of Michigan Museum of Anthropology.

The flesh and fat, dried and packed in leather cases and sealed over with fat, kept as food for long periods. The hides made clothes, robes, bedding, tent covers, moccasins, ropes, skin boats and minor articles.

The shoulder blades were used in the manufacture of hoes and squash knives, spades and other tools; the long tendons were twisted into thread and made into cordage; the horns served for spoons, cups and war-club heads, and to make tops and other toys for children; the hair was twisted into yarn, the teeth were fashioned into beads, and the hoofs, muzzle and tough forehead skin were boiled down to glue.—New York Times Sunday Magazine.

Spices in History

A favorite dish of wealthy medieval Romans was "liver of the capon, steeped in milk and beccaficoes, and dressed with pepper." Dante refers to one Niccolo of Sienna, "who first the spices' luxury discovered." The pharoahs of Egypt were after death preserved with spices, whose antiseptic and preservative qualities were as famed as their fragrance and flavor in those times.

At one time Venice controlled the trade in spices, which were brought overland from the Orient in immense caravans until the sea route around the Cape of Good Hope was discovered by the Portuguese. It was in quest of a shorter route to the East Indies, home of the spices, that Columbus was sent off by Queen Isabella on the voyage which resulted in the discovery of America.

Big Tree on Stilts

A mountain birch has been found in the Great Smoky Mountains National park area which apparently stands on stilts seven feet high. The explanation, according to Dr. Herman S. Pepoon, Chicago botanist, is that the birch seeds commonly germinate in the moss-covered prostrate trunks or stumps of decaying hemlocks or chestnuts. The seedling roots penetrate the mossy covering and go on down into the earth. As the log or stump decays, the seedling grows stronger and stronger. Then when the original tree soil has entirely vanished through decay, the young tree is left high in the air, its roots resembling stilts. The greatest elevation of such a birch so far observed by Doctor Pepoon is this seven-foot one, with eleven roots acting as stilts.

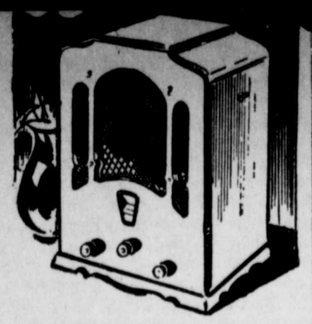
Let Young Fish Hide

Plants are useful to those who wish to raise young fishes. Parents may be cannibals and the adults will hunt down anything that moves and looks like food. So plants which grow in dense masses, like crystalwort, small bladderwort, and Elodea, make excellent hiding places for the young fishes. If the aquarium is in the dark no plant growth takes place, while in the sun it heats quickly and the tiny plant grows and makes the water green. Green water is not harmful but it is unpleasant. A northern or eastern exposure usually gives the best growing conditions for the aquarium plants.—Exchange.

Middle Age Materialism

The corroding materialism of middle age is more deadly to the soul than the hot passion of youth. It is more deadly, because its peril is not recognized and no shame is attached to [illegible] of passion society has [illegible]d as shameful, and that [illegible] shame attached to them [illegible]ning against them. But [illegible]ld, absorption in the [illegible]ealth and power, is [illegible]ce. It rather [illegible]t, and therein [illegible]ce.—Montreal [illegible]

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THE MEEKER GIRLS

A Broken Dream Restored

By Fannie Hurst

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EVEN with such terms as "old-maid," and "maiden-lady," practically gone out of the language, there was something about the five unmarried Meeker sisters that did suggest them.

The Meeker girls were so apologetically unmarried. Each and every one of them met you on the supposition that you questioned her standing.

The old homestead, inherited from their parents, was filled with twittings among themselves and to their friends, when they called, of opportunities that might have been.

If Lily had cared to accept Tom White!

It was known, among the Meeker girls, that in 1899, during a two weeks' trip to the Adirondacks, Edith had three times refused a young Canadian trader from Quebec who had since become a coal baron.

Meta, long and affectionately indicted by her sisters as the flirt of the family, had "turned down" right and left.

After the battle of Vimy Ridge, Ella confessed to a secret fiance who had fallen.

Teena, the youngest, although non-committal, gave you the feeling that life had not passed her by. Besides, it was a fact that Nicholas Lang, a widower of standing in the town, was calling on her.

Every girl, at one time or another in her life, has a chance to marry, the Meeker girls were forever protesting, perhaps too loudly. Thank goodness, not one of us has ever felt the need to marry just for the sake of being married. Naturally we've had chances. Not that it's the sort of thing we discuss . . .

Strangely, this defense-mechanism was not one which the girls employed solely with the friends outside the home, who as time went on began to refer to them collectively as "The Meeker Girls." It was something they practiced assiduously among themselves, keeping their spirits agog, on the buoyancy of a self-induced state of mind.

"Meta, it's an outrage the way you treat men! After all, no one expects you to feel called upon to marry every one who asks you, but surely you might let one or two of them call at the house."

"If I were to let every man call who drops into the office to ask me, we'd have the neighbors all talking. Just because I happen to be a stenographer in a law office doesn't give them the right to presume, and they might as well know it."

With Lily now, it was different. After all, the affair with Tom White was one to leave its imprint across a lifetime. The world thought Tom White had died of influenza following the World war. The Meeker sisters knew better. Tom White, just as surely as if they had seen it disintegrate, had taken to his bed of a broken heart, after Lily had spoken her sorrowful refusal. It was somehow fitting that Lily should continue to keep her heart locked in its tower. . . . Ella, too, for that matter. Poor Ella, whose secret garden had been blasted in full bloom. . . .

And so it went among themselves. And life, in the Meeker homestead, if it appeared monotonous to the beholder, was far from that to the girls.

There was Meta. Evening after evening, around the pleasont sitting room fire, Lily, seated as usual, Turkish fashion on the sofa, Ella stitching away at handiwork, the girls would listen to Meta.

Oh, but she was a naughty, darling, heartless sinner! No wonder, even with her equal share in the comfortable little estate shared by the sisters, Meta had decided to venture out into the business world. She was just the type to make contacts, or rather, as the girls giggled among themselves, to avoid them.

The way Meta handled the difficult situation of the men about her in the office was masterful! Naturally they swarmed about her. Even at thirty-eight, there was a sparrow prettiness to Meta, but lots of good it did the men. Evening after evening, filled with drolleries, merciless in her high-handedness and oh, so comical in her world pictures of the luckless creatures who wooed her, Meta recited her days.

"And he comes into the office where I am sitting pretending to be bent over my typewriter and says: 'Miss Meta—'"

"You don't let him call you Meta, do you darling?"

"That's what I'm coming to, honeys. If you'll let me. 'Miss Meta,' he says, 'the boys tell me you're just the coyest young girl in this office and make all the flappers look like prayer meeting.'"

"Nerve!"

"Nerve doesn't express it. Nothing in the world on his mind but dating up with me. Oh, you have to be in business to know what it means to keep a man in his place."

"Would he propose, Meta?"

"Would he propose? Give a man in their places."

If it percolated through [illegible] the Meeker girls, who in th[illegible] and fifties, were lean and rather plucked-looking, that pathos and amusement were blended in the attitude of their friends, certainly that consciousness was slow to reach the close little inner circle.

Romance brushed this circle night after night, sat in flushes on the dry flushed cheeks of the sisters, warmed the recesses of the draughty old house.

Then came the time when, outside that inner sanctum, the amusement of friends became laughter and the laughter, derision.

Man-crazy as the Meeker girls. That sounds like a Meeker pipe-dream. Hear the latest? Another secret lover has sued for Lily Meeker's hand. Accent on the secret!

That was the beginning of a strange and deadening thing that began to happen to the Meeker girls. Delicately bred, sensitive to the intonation or the suppressed laugh, there seemed to seep slowly into that home, as the girls wore on in years, awareness that the cat of pretense was out of the bag. More and more silently the girls gathered about their little circle, evenings; less and less they came to discuss, with friends, the repudiated amours and woolngs. Even Meta, as time wore on, came more and more to maintain silence concerning the many overtures of the men about the office.

It was during the period of those silent, rather dreadful years in the great old house that had used to ring to the tales of conquest, that Nicholas Lang, seventy-one, took Teena Meeker, fifty-three, off one day to the town of Greenwich, Conn., and married her!

A Meeker sister had succumbed. A Meeker sister, marrying, had proved to an all too cynical world that she was desirable in the eyes of a man. It gave authenticity, it gave reality, it gave authority, not only to Teena, but to the Meeker sisters.

Something flowed back into the eyes of the remaining four. The old light of conquest. The old vistas of romance. The old air of desirability.

The Meeker sisters are once more reciting with authority the sagas of the suitors who have sued in vain.

There is even about Teena, the wife, a slight air of sheepishness toward her sisters, for the humanness of not only having permitted herself to be wooed, but won.

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Real Beauty Matter of Form, Color and Taste

Many persons believe that to be beautiful and artistic the work of man must be expensive. Cheap things are considered tawdry and even vulgar. Articles that are useful are also barred by some individuals who consider themselves capable of judging.

Edward P. Richardson, educational director of the Detroit Institute of Arts, holds different ideas. He declares beauty to be a matter of form and color and that good design need not be expensive. To prove that his theory is correct Mr. Richardson started out with a reasonable sum of money provided by the Junior league to buy useful articles that would conform to the requirements of artistic beauty.

By visiting department stores, hardware establishments, chinaware emporiums, Mr. Richardson collected 188 different articles, not one of which cost more than 50 cents and most of them much less, and assembled them in a corridor of the art institute where an exhibition of American painting was on view. They included tableware, glassware, curtain materials, table covers and napkins. The exhibition attracted much attention and there was no dispute regarding the claim that the expert had proved his contention.

Pepper and salt shakers need not offend the lover of the beautiful, and cups and saucers can be decorative and at the same time have the element of utility. By keeping this fact in mind housewives can make life more pleasant. Manufacturers would do well to examine the collection made by Mr. Richardson, and if they will learn the lesson he set about to teach they will improve the standard of taste and find it profitable.—Miami Herald.

Parents of Presidents

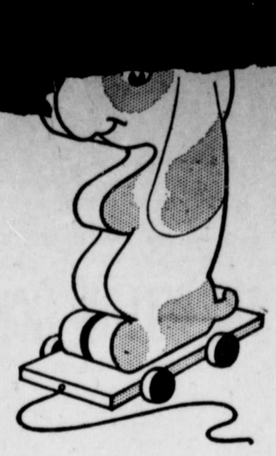
The parents of Washington and Adams were of English descent; those of Jefferson, Welsh; those of Madison, Monroe and J. Q. Adams, English; those of Jackson, Scotch-Irish; of Van Buren, Dutch; of Harrison and Tyler, English; of Polk, Scotch-Irish; of Taylor, Fillmore and Pierce, English; of Buchanan, Irish; of Lincoln, Johnson and Grant, English; of Hayes, Scotch; of Garfield, English, though his mother was of Huguenot descent; of Arthur, Scotch-Irish; of Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison, English; of McKinley, Scotch-Irish; of Roosevelt, Dutch; of Taft, English; of Wilson, Scotch-Irish; of Harding and Coolidge, English; of Hoover, Swiss.

Odorless Skunks

The much maligned polecat, mophitis mephitis, to give his scientific name, is on the way to losing its one claim to notoriety. Thanks to intensive breeding experiments, the odorless skunk has come to stay. Not only has careful breeding, supplemented by veterinary surgery, removed the objectionable feature of close companionship with the wood "pussy," but the animals also are stripeless. Although experiments are not fully concluded, it is felt that these hygienic polecats have reached a stage of development where they may be offered to the world's fur market.

Tail Spin in Aviation

A tail spin is the result of a stall. After stalling, an airplane falls off on one wing, the nose drops and the airplane revolves in the opposite direction to which the rudder is applied. The tail revolves, making the nose the approximate center of the turn. If the rudder is applied to the left wing, it becomes a left spin. A tail spin is used as a stunt and also as a means of losing altitude. It becomes dangerous only when the pilot loses control of the plane.



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