

Playing Safe Or?

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One week last summer a story and a statement were brought together in my reading and while it may not have been love at first sight, ever since they have been keeping company in my mind. The story was told by Dr. Cadman, and you probably read it where I did.

"A Georgia cracker sitting, ragged and barefoot, on the steps of his tumbledown shack, was accosted by a stranger who stopped for a drink of water. Wishing to be agreeable, the stranger said, "How is your cotton coming on?"

"Ain't got none," replied the cracker.

"Didn't you plant any?" asked the stranger.

"Nope," said the cracker. "'Fraid of boll weevils."

"Well," said the stranger, "how is your corn?"

"Didn't plant none," said the cracker. "'Fraid there wa'n't going to be no rain."

The stranger was abashed but persevering. "Well, how are your potatoes?"

"Ain't got none. Scairt o' potato bugs."

"Really, what did you plant?" asked the stranger.

"Nothing," said the cracker. "I just played safe."

The statement was a personal disclosure by Sir Wilfred Grenfell—"An invaluable rule for me has always been: When two courses are open, choose the more adventurous."

"I just played safe." "When two courses are open choose the more adventurous." One ignominiously failed, the other achieved magnificently, and the reason is too obvious for explanation. The long story of human progress, individual and social, is written in the romantic language of adventure. Emerson said: "Every institution is the lengthened shadow of a great man." It would be just as true to say "Every institution is the lengthened shadow of a adventurous spirit." The great endeavors and achievements that have enriched the life of the race are the gift of men and women who have lived daringly, often dangerously—a Columbus, a Cartier, a Nightingale, a Fry, a Shaftesbury, a Wilberforce, a Pasteur, a Booth, a Grenfell.

It's All in Your Point of View

I once talked to an old cannibal who, hearing of the Great War raging then in Europe, was most curious to know how we Europeans managed to eat such enormous quantities of human flesh. When I told him that Europeans do not eat their slain foes, he looked at me in shocked horror and asked what sort of barbarians we were, to kill without any real object. —Bronislaw Malinowski

A white youth in Hawaii, seeking the advice of an older Japanese man as to his courtship of a Japanese woman, asked: "Will she object to my color?"

"Not to your color," was the reply, "but perhaps to your ancestry."

"Why, what's wrong with my ancestry?"

"Well, according to your traditions, you are descended from a monkey; while according to her traditions, she is descended from the sun goddess."

—Clifford Gessler, *Hawaii: Isles of Enchantment* (Appleton-Century)

Great souls have wills, feeble ones have only wishes.

—Chinese proverb.

Museums

Dinosaur Mausoleum

On the 190-foot wall of an artificial canyon in Dinosaur National Monument, Utah, will be shown, in high relief, the actual bones of giant reptiles which ruled the earth in Jurassic time, 125,000,000 years ago. The stratum that is now being excavated was then the bottom of some lagoon or river estuary, where the dinosaur carcasses sank and were eventually buried—monsters with bodies big as boxcars, necks like palm tree trunks, and interminable tails. Their skeletons, now being partially unearthed, will be left in place and protected by a roof. Spotlights will play on each one, and in the center of the excavation will stand models, made to scale, of each animal. On the other wall of the canyon a gigantic mural will show the topography of the country, and the flora and fauna of that faraway time.

—Dr. Frank Thone in *Science News Letter*

Table-Top Museum

The entire museum of Dr. George Henshaw Childs of the American Museum of Natural History, complete with elephants, lions, tigers, zebras, giraffes, birds, and habitat groups, can be placed on the top of a dining-room table. The animals are from one to three inches in size; backgrounds are painted in oil, foliage is made from knotted thread, tree trunks of wire and plaster. Single models of animals are mounted under glass domes, groups are in illuminated glass display cases. In the space of a few inches are exhibited groups which would require 15 to 20 feet in a full-sized museum.

—Ralph T. Gardner in

This Week, N. Y. Herald Tribune

Amateurs in Science

The largest amateur museum in the country, The Bug House Laboratory, Washington, North Carolina, founded about 15 years ago by a group of small boys, today sponsors the Washington Field Museum, a center providing all young people in the city with opportunity for scientific study. The museum's entire program is planned and financed by its membership—young men and women between 16 and 30, and a junior associate group of boys. Visiting professors often lecture, but the regular class work is directed by experts among the young people. There are weekly classes in bird life, photography, astronomy, insects, reptiles and amphibians. Originally housed in someone's cellar, the museum now has its own five-room building in the city park.

—Alice Bodwell Burke in *Youth Canine Hall of Fame*

At Yale's Peabody Museum of Natural History there will eventually be preserved a perfect specimen of each of the 104 breeds of dogs now recognized by the American Kennel Club. Already on exhibition are a champion French bulldog, a Scottish deerhound, dachshund, pomeranian, cocker spaniel, a Great Dane, a saluki, an international champion shepherd and, most famous of all, Toga, member of the dog team which carried diphtheria serum to stricken Nome in 1925. Several champions now living have been allotted their future place in this canine hall of fame. The exhibition includes, in addition, specimens of the dog's ancestral stock: jackal, dingo, hyena, wolf, coyote and the African wild dog.

—Bascom Kennady in *Baltimore Sunday Sun*

Model Home, 2000 B.C.

A house in which our ancestors lived 2000 years before Christ is shown restored to its original condition at a new open-air museum at

Lubeck, Germany, where lived the tribes that colonized Britain and gave rise to our Anglo-Saxon culture. It is a New Stone Age farmhouse—a rectangular building with steeply pitched roof of thatch and framework of rough, unsquared timbers. The walls are "wattle and daub"—coarse wickerwork plastered with clay; the windows square and small. Within is a central hearth of stone, with a hole in the roof to let the smoke escape. Shelves on the walls and strings from the beams support cooking and table utensils—well-shaped, decorated pottery vessels of assorted shapes and sizes. A bow and stone-tipped arrows, spear and stone war ax, lean against one of the wooden supporting posts.

—Dr. Frank Thone in *Science*

A Magnet for Youngsters

About 8:30 every Saturday morning, throngs of children of 10 to 15 years begin to gather before the big white art museum at Toledo, Ohio. When the doors open at 9, three or four hundred youngsters are waiting to crowd in; at the end of the day the turnstile will have recorded around 3000.

They are all there voluntarily—for the fun of attending classes in drawing, modeling and painting. There are even 15-minute classes for three- and four-year-olds. It's the purpose of the museum, which ranks among the first dozen in the country, not so much to uncover hidden genius as to develop an appreciation and understanding of art which the children may carry into their daily lives.

—*Fortune*

Flowers of Glass

Around 270,000 people visit Harvard's Peabody Museum each year to see the glass flowers of Leopold and Rudolph Blaschka. These are marvels of beauty as well as perfect botanical specimens; the showy lady's slipper has a bee entering the saclike lip; the cornflower is entertaining a butterfly; there is a bunch of familiar black-eyed Susans, a spray of mountain laurel, a stalk of goldenrod 30 inches long.

The collection was begun in the late 80's, when Leopold Blaschka sent over the first models from his home near Dresden, and has been added to nearly every year since, until it now numbers 160 plant families. Leopold taught the art to his son, Rudolph, who, now 80, still carries on the work. His house is surrounded by a garden of nearly all the plants of temperate North America, and near-by is a notable collection of Central and South American flora. He works in a small room that must be kept at a temperature of 85 to 95 degrees, wearing a mask lest his breath disturb the glass; his tools are mainly a Bunsen burner and a pair of tweezers. Part of the color is fused in the glass, part added while it cools, and part applied afterward. He is content only with perfect work—he once made the 20th model of some peach blossoms before achieving the exact shade and texture he desired.

—Anne Roorbach in *American-German Review*

Grave Voices

Every night, the Reverend E. O. Jolley and Brother H. C. Artley station themselves, equipped with megaphones, on either side of the Hollywood Cemetery, near Atlanta, Georgia, to scare away petting parties. Just as the boy friend say to the girl, "Let's have another little drink, honey," comes the strident admonition from the darkness: "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." In most cases, this puts a sudden stop to the exchange of pleasantries.

—A. D. Manning in *Atlanta Constitution*

Strange Time

In a little American backwoods town is a clock with no machinery except a face, hands and a lever. The lever is connected with a geyser which shoots out an immense column of hot water every 38 seconds, each spout moving the hands forward 38 seconds. Since the spouting never varies the tenth of a second, the clock keeps perfect time.

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In Switzerland, clocks are now being made without faces. To tell time you press a button and, by means of phonographic internal arrangements, the clock calls out "Half past five," or whatever the time may be.

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A Munich professor has invented a sickroom clock. When a button is pressed a magnified shadow of the clock's hands is thrown on the ceiling so that an invalid may see it without craning his neck.

—N. Hudson Moore, *The Old Clock Book* (Stokes)

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Putting out about a foot from the side of a house in Fez, Morocco, are the butt-ends of 12 rafters. Precisely at each hour, an attendant places a flower pot upon the end of one of the rafters. At midday, all the pots are cleared away and the whole thing starts all over again.

—E. K. Gann in *Telephony*

QUESTION BEE

1. A good thing to season meat with, at the dinner table, would be (a) potassium hydroxide, (b) copper sulphate, (c) sodium chloride, (d) bichloride of mercury.

2. Poliomyelitis is the medical name for (a) hardening of the arteries, (b) influenza, (c) measles, (d) infantile paralysis.

3. Carnivorous animals (a) live in caves, (b) eat meat, (c) have four legs, (d) can climb trees.

4. Keen-edged tools like pocket knives, chisels, and plane blades are sharpened on (a) a touchstone, (b) a Rosetta stone, (c) an oilstone, (d) a keystone.

5. An escapement is (a) a jail delivery, (b) the place in a dam where excess water overflows, (c) part of the driving mechanism of a clock.

6. In a historic demonstration staged by Otto von Guericke of Magdeburg, Germany, before Emperor Ferdinand III, two teams of strong horses were unable to pull apart (a) the first iron chain ever made, (b) a Gordian knot, (c) a pair of close-fitting copper hemispheres from which the air had been exhausted, (d) an automobile tire and its demountable rim.

7. Ruminants are (a) inhabitants of Rumania, (b) remedies for rheumatism, (c) animals like the cow.

8. You should never (a) saw wood across the grain, (b) touch an electric-light socket while standing in a bathtub filled with water, (c) light three cigarettes with one match, (d) put oil in the crankcase of a motor car.

9. Litmus paper is (a) sensitized paper for making photographic prints, (b) a modern substitute for sandpaper, (c) a parchment-like paper for cooking vegetables, (d) treated paper used in testing for acids and alkalis.

10. Red corpuscles in your blood (a) fight germs, (b) carry oxygen from the lungs to all parts of the body, (c) clot the blood in a wound.

11. Two pieces of machinery adjusted to run at exactly the same speed are said to have been (a) syndicated, (b) syncoated, (c) synchronized.

12. If your car won't run, the

Baby Cries Most During First Four Months Of Life

Parents fast wearing down under the strain of the new baby's crying can look for some relief when he reaches the age of four months. This is the month when babies do the least crying, Drs. Mary Cover Jones and Barbara S. Burks found in research at the University of California's Institute of Child Welfare.

Before the baby is four months old, he cries because of internal hurts and bodily needs such as hunger or other discomforts. After the relatively quiet fourth month, baby starts to cry again but for different reasons. He is older now, has begun to take more interest in the world around him and his crying is stimulated by external causes. He now cries because he wants to be picked up and petted, or because he is angry.

—*Science News Letter*.

trouble may be in the (a) spark arrester, (b) gasometer, (c) ohmmeter, (d) transmitter, (e) carburetor, (f) "B" battery.

13. A Leyden jar is (a) container for vacuum-packed food, (b) a prized variety of pottery, (c) a receptacle for liquid air, (d) a device for storing electricity.

14. What makes your feet try to use the floorboard as a brake, when someone else is driving, is (a) a conditioned reflex, (b) deductive reasoning, (c) an inferiority complex, (d) an inhibition.

15. Plywood is (a) a very flexible wood that can be bent double without breaking, (b) wood built up of several thicknesses glued together, (c) an extremely light wood that is often used for building model airplanes.

16. If ice cubes freeze together after you have taken them from the tray, you can blame it on (a) regelation, (b) convection, (c) sublimation.

17. A French curve is (a) a shape discovered to be acoustically perfect for violins, (b) a drafting tool, (c) a banked turn in a road or railway, (d) a form of graph sometimes used for business statistics.

18. Rapidly moving pieces of machinery appear to stand still when they are viewed with a (a) stethoscope, (b) stroboscope, (c) horoscope, (d) bronchoscope.

19. The radiator of an automobile (a) keeps the occupants warm in winter, (b) makes the car easy to start in cold weather, (c) helps to keep the motor from overheating.

20. Wave traps are (a) machines to harness the power of sea waves, (b) tuned radio circuits, (c) accessories for a trap drummer.

21. Hung from massive steel cables, the great Golden Gate bridge at San Francisco is an outstanding example of (a) an arch bridge, (b) a suspension bridge, (c) a cantilever bridge.

22. Nonsense syllables like "dal," "bik," and "noor" have been found useful for (a) memory tests, (b) helping poets to make lines rhyme, (c) attempts to communicate with Mars.

23. Antimony is (a) money paid to a divorced spouse, (b) a brittle bluish-white meal, (c) the opposite of harmony.

24. A slide rest is used upon a (a) lathe, (b) microscope, (c) locomotive, (d) plate camera.

25. No first-class meteorological observatory would be complete without (a) a marimba, (b) a divining rod, (c) a Bessemer converter, (d) an anemometer, (e) a hurricane deck.

—*Popular Science Monthly*