

Today and Tomorrow

By FRANK P. STOCKBRIDGE

Fleas

Something happened to the fleas of Germany that killed them all off. German scientific laboratories are paying as high as ten marks, or \$2.50 apiece for healthy fleas for experimental purposes.

Russia's infested with fleas and the Soviet government will not countenance any effort to get rid of them. They say that fleas are good for people, because they make folks turn over in their sleep, and sleeping on one side is bad for the heart!

California is still waging war on chipmunks or ground squirrels because they harbor the fleas which carry the bubonic plague. Every port in the world takes precaution to keep rats from coming ashore from ships arriving from ports where the plague has been, because rats carry the plague—fleas, too.

A book could be written about fleas. One of the world's most famous short poems, by the great Dean Swift, was written when those who spoke good English pronounced "tea" and "flea" as if they were spelled "tay" and "flay," as Dublin University men pronounce them today. It reads:

"So, naturalists observe, the flea
Has lesser fleas that on his prey,
And they, in turn, have lesser fleas
Upon their backs to bite 'em,
And lesser fleas have smaller fleas,
And so ad infinitum."

Some years ago the New York Sun printed what it termed "the shortest poem in the English language." Its title was "Fleas," and the entire poem read thus:

"Adam
Had 'em."

Eyes

Quite the most marvelous application of scientific research is the development of photo-electric eye, the sensitive little tube which not only detects the slightest change in the amount of light that shines on it, but can convert these variations into electric currents.

One electric company has an electric eye mounted upon a tower which automatically switches on the street lights of a big city when the darkness reaches a certain degree, and turns them off again when morning arrives. Working on the same principle, an electric eye is used in many homes, factories and offices to turn on the lights automatically on winter afternoons when it gets too dark to work without artificial light. In another application the electric eye acts as a sentinel in the stores and warehouses. The slightest flash of extra light, such as might be made by a burglar's flashlight or a fire, is caught by the electric eye which turns on all the lights in the place and at the same time rings an alarm for the police.

In one big mail order house the electric eye is being used to sort mail sacks going to different destinations. The sacks bear labels of different sizes and colors which reflect varying means of light as they pass under the electric eye on an automatic carrier. Depending upon the exact amount of light reflected from the label, the photo-electric cell opens one or another compartment into which the mail sacks drop.

Engineers are trying to combine the electric eye with an apparatus which will convert the letters on a printed page into sound. They say it is not impossible that a machine may eventually be built which will read a book aloud. I have long gotten over being surprised at anything.

Calendar

The Committee on Calendar Reform of the League of Nations has postponed its effort to put the calendar on a sensible basis, partly because of hard times and partly because certain religious bodies object to any change which would make their sabbath fall on a different day. That is a foolish objection, but perhaps more powerful than any reasonable argument. Eventually it is certain that the present calendar will be changed.

Telephone

German telephone exchanges have inaugurated a new system whereby, when a number called fails to answer, the person calling may be switched to an operator who will take a message for future delivery over the phone. This is an intelligent and practical thing to do, and ought to be adopted in America, as it doubtless will be.

Accidents

Recent statistics show some curious facts about railroad crossing accidents, which are difficult to explain. The number of automobiles struck by trains at grade crossings has been declining steadily since 1926, but the number of automobiles crashing into the side of moving trains is increasing. Evidently motorists are more careful in crossing railroad tracks than they used to be, but it is hard to imagine any person sane enough to drive a car, driving that car into a railroad train. Perhaps bootleg liquor supplies the answer.

Railroads have found it so much cheaper to elevate their tracks than to pay damages for crossing accidents that the time is coming soon when no important highway in America will cross a railroad at grade.

Bulwinkle Speaks at Lees-McRae College

Banner Elk.—In spite of cold weather and sudden snow squalls, Lees-McRae's first home coming day went off very successfully. The first event of the day was a buckwheat breakfast for the visiting trustees, the cakes being made from buckwheat grown and ground on the school farm, eaten with maple syrup from the maple grove at Grandfather Orphanage.

The trustees present for the meeting at 10 o'clock were Mr. Sam R. Sells, Chairman, and J. A. Summers, of Johnson City; Dr. H. H. Thompson, Bristol; Dr. E. D. Brown, of Statesville; Dr. Frazer Hood, Davidson; J. Harper Beall, Lenoir; H. A. Rouzer, Salisbury; C. A. Cannon, of

City; Dr. Roswell C. Long, Greenwood, S. C.; F. H. Stinson, secretary, Banner Elk.

The student program was at 10:30, with the address of welcome by Ellis Oates, president of the Alpha Literary Society. Galen Willis, president of the Omega Literary Society, gave a history of the literary societies at Lees-McRae. The principal address of the hour was given by John Forbes on "Lees-McRae Lives at Home." Music by glee club.

At 11 o'clock Major A. L. Bulwinkle of Gastonia, representative from the Ninth Congressional District, delivered the address of the day. Major Bulwinkle spoke of the increase of crime among the youth of the State and Nation as he has seen it in the courts ever since the days of his first law practice, and stressed the importance of an institution like

Lees-McRae in directing and moulding the lives of the young people of the mountains. Major Bulwinkle paid a glowing tribute to the memory of the Rev. Edgar Tufts, founder of Lees-McRae College, and the three-fold work at Banner Elk. He spoke of the last visit Mr. Tufts had paid him in Washington just the year he died and the great admiration and affection that Mr. Tufts inspired in all who know him.

At the barbecue over two hundred and fifty people were served cafeteria fashion by Mrs. Belle West Jones and her assistants, large bonfires making it possible to eat in comfort out of doors despite falling temperatures.

The ball game with Weaver resulted in a victory for the visitors of 6-0. Here again huge bonfires along the side lines mitigated the severity of the weather for the onlookers.

TEACHER MEETING CALLED OFF

The teachers' meeting called for Monday, the 9th inst., has been called off. Miss Deavers of the State Department of Education, at whose request the meeting was called, writes me that it will not be possible for her to attend at this time. Notice of meeting will be called later.

SMITH HAGAMAN,
County Superintendent.

Mistress—Now, Matilda, I want you to show us what you can do tonight. We have a few very special friends coming for a musical this evening.

Maid—Well, ma'am, I ain't done no singin' to speak of for years, but if you-all insists upon it you can put me down for "The Holy City."



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Bud 'n' Bub

By ED KRESSY

