Where Monkeys Are An Actual Pest

Except for one bizarre plague, Durban, South Africa, is as charming a city as you'll find anywhere. Its curse is monkeys — conniving, thieving, cantankerous little beasts.

How the monkeys got there no one knows, but there they are, by the hundreds, as free from control as our own park squirrels. A law imposes a jail sentence or fine on anyone who maltreats a monkey.

Durban is divided into those who think that monkeys are just too cute and others who look on them as agents of the devil. The latter are people who live with the monkeys in the suburbs and on the edge of town. They know from sour, personal experience that the monkeys are rowdy, impudent and immoral — dead-end kids who will steal everything not locked up or riveted down.

If a resident leaves a window or door open, in come half a dozen monks. They eat everything lying around. They smash eggs and throw glasses against the wall. They open the ice boxes, eat what they can and strew the rest on the floor. They tip garbage pails and steal the silver and anything else that glitters. In one house they got hold of a stack of phonograph records and had a delirious time scaling them against a tree in the yard.

Outdoors, the monkeys climb the fruit trees and eat the mangos and avocados. They tear down grapevines by swinging on them. If you paint your house, the monkeys dabble in the wet paint, walk on the roof; they like its stickiness and color.

One irate housewife called up the Durban city clerk: "What do you think I am — a monkey tamer?" "Have you tried a dog?" the man asked. "Yes, I've tried a dog!" she cried. "He was a big, brave dog. The monkeys have made a snivelling, fear-ridden wretch of him."

The dogs do their best. They leap and bark, but what's so agile as a monkey? A monkey raid arouses every dog for a mile around and the monkeys love it. It's hubbub, din and pandemonium.

"The monkeys are bad because they don't get enough to eat," said a member of the City Council one day. "Let's feed them." The council argued a long time but finally voted to try the idea.

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals laid out scrumptious meals of carrots, cucumbers and tomatoes. Hitherto, the monkeys had been content merely to uproot garden vegetables, and scatter them about. Now they had a taste for them. No fence, scarecrow or other device of mere man could keep them out of the gardens.

The city elders were shocked by what the little angels were doing to the gardens. A prize of $50 was offered to anyone who could work out a way of ridding Durban of its gangsters — without hurting the gangsters.

"Give the monkeys brandy and get them drunk," wrote one man. "When they're sleeping it off, take them a couple of hundred miles away." A second proposed tear gas and nets; another, soaking food in morphine.

One man came along with a trap baited with bananas. It worked the first day, catching 20 monkeys. The second day the bag was exactly one monkey. After that, it caught none.

Letters by the pound were flooding into the newspapers. "They have ripped all the clothes off my line two weeks in succession now." . . . "The monkeys have stolen five priceless teaspoons that came to me from my great-grandmother in England." . . . "They have already caused $75 worth of damage. Who pays for it?" One man announced that, law or no law, he was going to shoot the next monkey that damaged his property. "I live at purgatory's door," wrote one "Distracted Housewife." That's fairly typical.

Meanwhile, each Sunday on one of the city's lovely drives, you see monkey-lovers lined up, hundreds of them, with peanuts and corn, chunks of pumpkin, bunches of bananas. The monkeys are cute little fellows, the kind we call organ-brinder monkeys, and they take the food right out of your hand. Let your hand dangle empty, and a monkey will bite it. Everyone has fun.

But even the most saccharine monkey admirers have had to admit that the people who live on the outskirts have a case. The council engaged a big-game hunter, Captain G. L. Jones, as official monkey-catcher. For an experimental period of five months, he was to catch at least 150 a month, and catch them alive. But he managed to catch only 48 in three months and then gave up and went off on a safari in Central Africa. The householders are still wondering how to get rid of the monkeys.

AFTER THE SHIN-DIG—Wallace Wender and his wife Jean display their plaster casts following an operation in which a portion of his shin bone was grafted to hers in an attempt to heal an old injury to her leg. Both casts will be removed soon if the operation proves successful.

Sure Of It

One of those super intelligent college seniors entered the dean's office, coughed to attract the dean's attention, and said:

"Sir, I am gratified to announce that your daughter has accepted my proposal of marriage. However, since marriage is such an important step, I wish to proceed with caution. Ah, er, may I ask, sir, is there any insanity in your family?"

The dean regarded the young man a moment in grave silence, then replied, quietly: "Yes, yes, I'm sure there must be."

Answer to Crossword Puzzle

What's New At The C.N.E.

Heard about that ham and eggs competition at this year's C.N.E.? Every campfire cook and Sunday morning breakfast artist in the country is invited to come along and try their luck with some ham and a couple of eggs. The Ex. will provide you with ham and eggs, then supply the stove, the frying pan and the flipper. And just like in the pancake-making contest last year, not even the winner will be forced to eat his own ham and eggs!

Contest takes place in the Coliseum, August 31, with $50 for the top winner, $40 for whoever comes second, $30 to the third prize winner, and $20 for fourth. Get your entry in now to the women's director, C.N.E., and receive a free admittance ticket for the big day.

Fear No More

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home are gone, and ta'en thy wages;
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
Care no more to clothe and eat,
To thee the reed is as the oak.
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning flash,
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash;
Thou hast finished joy and moan:
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

—Shakespeare.

Mystery Solved

When the new minister came to the little church, the congregation was naturally interested in learning something about his former life. They were told he had once worked in some business establishment, but he seemed loath to talk about it. When their new shepherd discouraged all inquiries about his earlier occupation, they were obliged to hope for a revealing gesture from the finger of fate.

Fate was not long in accommodating them. The other Sunday, near the end of his sermon, the new clergyman made this moving appeal:

"The Kingdom of Heaven awaits you today! This is your golden opportunity; it may never come to you again. Remember, this may be your last chance! Friends, what am I bid?"

CHRONICLES OF GINGER FARM

by Gwendoline P. Clarke

So many coincidences have occurred just recently — coincidences which, if a little romance were wrapped around them, would make good stories. As it is, they are all —well, just coincidences. Coming home on the bus from Toronto last week, I was talking to a fellow passenger whose wife came from Bournemouth, Eng., which is also the home of Partner's sister. I happened to remember this and said to him, "Tell your wife we have another visitor from Bournemouth." (Cicely was the first, and they met her last year). "Oh, is that so . . . and when did she arrive?" he asked. I told him. "Well, what a strange thing. My brother-in-law has just come over, too, and he also was on the Empress of France."

So you see what I mean — two people, unknown to each other, left at the same time, from the same town in England, traveled on the same boat, and then came to the same little town in Ontario. Now if they had been pretty much of an age, and unattached, just see the possibilities for a romance. But in this case the opportunity was wasted as the boy is 16 and my sister-in-law is older than I am. Too bad!

Then, how about this: Last week I went to our W.I. district annual. After the meeting, a lady came up to me and said, "You are Mrs. Clarke, are you not?" I had to confess that I was. "Then you came from Chaplin, didn't you?" Chaplin! I couldn't believe my ears. Chaplin is a little village on the Saskatchewan Prairie that we left 25 years ago. It is such a small place that I never expected to meet anyone again who had ever been there. And yet, here in busy Ontario, was someone who knew all about it. I was thrilled. During our all too short conversation, I discovered this lady had lived in the Chaplin district until eight years ago. "We were there all through the depression," she said. Just then I saw a fellow Institute worker with whom I had been given a ride, and I knew she was waiting for me, so I had to go. But ever since I met the lady from the West, her chance remark has haunted me— "We were there through the depression!" Just one short sentence and what a lot may lay behind it. Heaven only knows the depression down here was bad enough, but imagine living through a depression in the Dust Bowl of Canada. I hate to think of it. We were on the Prairie long enough for me to realize just about what that would mean. We think the heat and continued dry weather down here is terrible, but think what it would be like on the shadeless Prairie.

Yes, even in this, the worst drought this part of Ontario has ever experienced, I can still look around and think how much we have to be thankful for. We are going to be hard hit, there isn't a doubt about that, but surely once in a decade we should be able to take a poor year without too much grumbling about it. Generally speaking, we have good-to-average crops year after year. When winter comes our barns are nearly always well filled; mows loaded to the beams with hay and grain, and the cattle contentedly munching away at the good feed in their mangers.

Actually right now it is the cattle we worry about the most. There is so little feed for them and the poor things must feel the heat terribly. Fortunately, we have plenty of shady spots in our fields, but sometimes, when driving along the road, we see cattle pastured in fields where there isn't one bit of shade—almost as bad as those arid Prairie fields around Chaplin that I remember so well.

Some folks blame this torrid heat on zealous politicians — they say it will be cooler after the election. There may be something to that for there is certainly plenty of hot air circulating throughout the country, no matter where you go. As for the radio — I am afraid sometimes that all the tubes will burn out. A funny thing happened the other night. A very impassioned speech was being broadcast when suddenly . . . whiff . . . and a fuse gave out.

I am wondering how Partner's sister is standing this weather. We haven't heard from her so we are hoping she is enjoying breezes from the lake somewhere or other. There is something to be said for a cottage by the lake these days. And I have a standing invitation to visit in the Haliburton region! Wouldn't I like to go! It is too bad farm folks' busy time has to come in hot weather, isn't it?

"Now," began the architect, "if you'll give me a general idea of the kind of house you need—"

"I want something," replied the husband, "to go with a door-knocker my wife brought home from Java."

Fair Enough

The Sunday school teacher had just concluded a review of the day's lesson. "And now, children," she enquired, "who can tell me what we must do before we can expect forgiveness of sin?"

There was a pause, but finally one little boy spoke up. "Well," he mused, "first we've got to sin."

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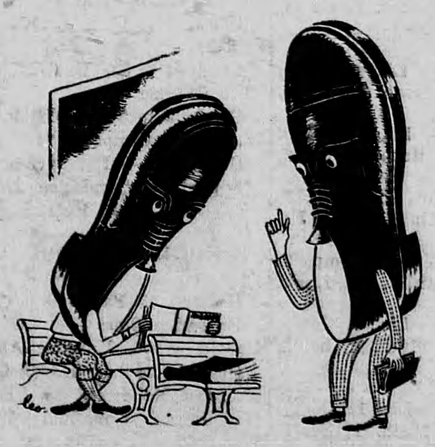

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HOW TO FIX IT

By Tom Gregory

JITTER

By Arthur Pointer