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MISSISSIPPI HAD CAMELS.

When It Was a Sandy Desert With a Tropical Climate

The geology of mountain regions is generally more difficult to master than that of plains, because the rocks have been more broken and tilted about, but the geology of certain parts of Mississippi is almost as difficult as that of a mountainous region, because certain widely distributed formations bear few definite identification marks, particularly remains and impressions of plants and animals that lived at the time the deposits were formed.

A peculiar sandstone, which geologists have called the Catahoula sandstone, has been studied with care by G. C. Matson and E. W. Berry of the United States geological survey, department of the interior, who have been able to identify and follow the sandstone by means of the remains of plants.

Among the plants found were plums, ferns, leaves of date palms, tropical myrtles, figs, and a tree closely related to the present day Mexican and Central American sapots, from which most of the material for chewing gum is obtained. These fossil plants show that at the time the sandstone was formed—perhaps 5,000,000 years ago—the climate of this region was tropical, and bones of camels found by other geologists in the region and the similarity of the sand composing the sandstone to certain tropical desert sands have a similar implication.—Geological Survey.

THE KNOTTY FOOD PROBLEM.

A Scientist Finds Its Solution in a Nutty Proposition.

Leave it to the bewhiskered old boys of science, they of the square spectacles and ear muffs, and this world will be pulled through its rather precarious existence. Some time ago somebody who needed the money wrote an alarmist article for a magazine, stating that in a very short time—in fact, within 8,000,000 or 9,000,000 years—the earth's food supply would be entirely exhausted.

This set all the scientists going like gyroscopes, and in the dizzy whirl of investigation some very interesting things came to light. It was up to the scientists to find something for the people to eat 8,000,000 or 9,000,000 years hence. It was not wholly a new problem. Scientists long ago evolved the scheme of sawing up timber into breakfast food and said that a man could go forth with a bucksaw and get enough sawdust out of a fence rail to keep himself and his family supplied for some time.

One learned scientist thinks that he has solved the problem for all time. He says that the nut trees could in a pinch supply food for the entire world.

This knotty question has become a nutty question and one which he has apparently solved. Those who are on earth now should be of good cheer. They will not have to starve 8,000,000 years hence.—Topeka State Journal.

Like a Scene From the Middle Ages.

The oldest and largest university in the world is El-Azhar at Cairo. Founded in 975, it has been from the start a national institution, the khedive being the rector. The minimum age of entrance is fifteen, and the applicant must know half the Koran and be able to read and write. The curriculum consists of virtually nothing but theology and canon law, the final examination fifteen years after matriculation being upon these, together with traditions of the prophet; Grammar, etymology, rhetoric and logic. It is the same instruction which has prevailed for centuries, and one who goes into the great court where the circles of students are sitting at the feet of their Gamallels looks upon a scene preserved from the middle ages, "a perfect specimen, living, breathing and entire."

A Request.

"I shall never forget," says the eminent man of wealth during the course of his little speech on "How to Become as I Am," "I shall never forget how I saved my first hundred dollars."

At this juncture a weary individual in the audience, who has heard this story many times and has read it many times more, interrupts:

"Well, if you can't forget it, for heaven's sake give the rest of us a chance to."

Why He Did Not Know.

"Papa, what is a bricklayer?" asked Harry.

"Now, what a silly question!" said his father. "What makes you ask questions like that, son? Any fool would know."

"Yes; but, papa," said Harry, "I ain't a fool."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Individuality.

To each intellect belongs a special power. We belong to ourselves, and we lose control of our own when we try to be some one else. The original mind is a magnetic center for the attraction of other minds. But the lodestone loses nothing by attraction. It remains the same.

Rays and Raize.

"Everybody emits rays. An angry man emits violet rays; a contented person emits pinkish rays."

"Sounds interesting. I wonder if my boss would emit a ten dollar raise of salary?"—Exchange.

Opposites.

Wigg—I suppose we should all marry our opposites. Wagg—Yes, but there is no reason why a man with a future should marry a woman with a past.—Philadelphia Record.

BOUNDARY LINES.

A Clearing 875 Miles Long Separates Alaska From Canada.

Boundaries between countries, states and counties and between cities and the country surrounding them are marked in various ways. Sometimes it is by a stone post or monument; often a county is separated from an adjoining county by a public road, which is surveyed purposely on the county line.

In some of the southern states counties which allow cattle to run at large are often separated from those which do not by a fence. The boundary between Alaska and Canada is marked by a clear strip in the woods 875 miles long.

When a highway passes from one country into another the traveler is made aware of the fact by the customs officials. Sometimes also, as in France, a tax is collected on country produce entering the cities. But in thinly settled sections of the United States the boundaries between counties and even between states are not always marked, and, though known to the inhabitants, are often not to be recognized by a stranger.

One notable instance of a marked boundary is the great wall of China, which extends for a distance of more than 1,500 miles along what was once the frontier of that empire.—Christian Herald.

FOUR POSTER BEDSTEADS.

A Legacy From the Days When People Slept in Boxes.

In medieval times, when life was very insecure, it was usual for people to sleep on a bed which was surrounded by sides of boards with strong posts at the four corners. These sides contained sliding doors, which could be fastened inside.

When men retired to rest they took a weapon with them. If attacked in the night they were aroused by the noise made by the crashing in of their wooden defense and were able to defend themselves.

When the law became strong enough to protect human life the sides of the bedstead were gradually dispensed with, but the four posts remained. The boxlike bedstead still survives in the rural parts of Scotland and is almost necessary where the earthen floors and imperfect ceilings cause much damp. Emily Bronte in "Wuthering Heights" describes one of these bedsteads in the old mansions as forming a "little closet." Mr. Lockwood, who had to sleep in it, says, "I slid back the panel sides, got in with my light, pulled them together again and felt secure."—London Standard.

Penalty of the Peach.

The Egyptians appear to have been acquainted with what is commonly called prussic acid, the most deadly of poisons. It is held that they distilled it from certain plants and trees, notably the peach. In the Louvre there is an ancient Egyptian papyrus from which the following has been deciphered: "Pronounce not the name of I, A. O. under the penalty of the peach." This has been supposed to be a death warning to those who might be tempted to reveal mysteries in connection with the religious rites of the priests.

The Romans probably learned of prussic acid from the Egyptians. History has it that in the reign of Tiberius a Roman knight accused of treason drank poison and immediately fell dead at the feet of the senators, a significant circumstance, inasmuch as no other poison has the almost instantaneous effect of prussic acid.

A Poor Press Agent.

Max O'Reil was exceedingly popular as a lecturer, and the way in which his mother viewed the suggestion that her son should take to the platform is worth repetition. She wrote to him from the native village which she had never left for more than a day to say that she did not think appearing before audiences to be reputable business, and when he replied that he had decided to do it and had signed a contract to that effect the dear old lady wrote back that she was "still" his loving mother and that she would tell no one in the village about it.

One Beyond.

Willis—Do you think that moving pictures are the ultimate development of dramatic art? Gillis—No. There will be one more. On the legitimate stage you can get along with brains and no beauty; in the movies you can get along with beauty and no brains, and the next stage of development will be one where you can get by without either.—Life.

Perfectly Reasonable.

The picture show had started and seven-year-old Ruth sat watching intently when she heard a man behind her exclaim pettishly: "I can't see a thing, madam." "Mother," demanded Ruth, "why does he come here if he can't see?"—Photoplay Magazine.

Disappointed.

"So you advise me not to sue?" said the client.

"I do," said the lawyer.

"Well," returned the disappointed client, "it seems strange that when a man pays for advice he can't get the kind he wants."

Limited to One.

Friend—Woman, as some one has said, is a creature of moods. Henry Peck—My wife ain't. She's always in the imperative.—Boston Transcript.

Be wiser than other people if you can, but do not tell them so.—Chesterfield.

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THE BIRD WAS THERE.

A Surprise For the Man Who Investigated the News "Fakes."

Some years ago strange, weird stories used to float into Washington from Kitty Hawk, N. C., describing a great bird, seen only at night, hovering over the sand dunes and brushwood of the locality.

It was so preposterous that Kitty Hawk was soon eliminated as a news source in every metropolitan newspaper office. Washington would not accept such stories under any circumstances. The boys on Newspaper row were too experienced to be caught by North Carolina fakers.

Kitty Hawk was wiped off the news map.

And yet the reports of the "great bird seen only after nightfall" were absolutely true. After some of us had exhausted our fund of oriental lore about the roc—that gigantic bird that was of such use to anxious Schahermade of the "Thousand and One Nights" in rescuing Sinbad and other unlucky travelers from danger—and others had gone so far as to suggest a return of the fabled dodo in stupendous proportions, it was finally suggested that somebody go to Kitty Hawk and expose the faker.

"Not on your life!" said I. "There are as many fakes right here in Washington every twenty-four hours as I care to expose."

The one man who finally went with deep reluctance fathomed the mystery and literally "discovered" that two young Ohio boys, the Wright brothers of Dayton, had solved the "impossible" problem of aerial flight.—Julius Chambers, in the Brooklyn Eagle.

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