

## The SNAPSHOT GUILD

CURING PICTURE BLINDNESS



Not a bad picture, as a whole, but would not a viewpoint to include only the section marked in white have been better?

ARE you picture-blind? Do you have what it takes to see a picture?

"None so blind as those who will not see," says an old maxim, which, applied to picture taking, means none so blind as those who don't know how to see and will not learn. In this respect camera users are, of course, differently constituted. There are those who are quite satisfied with snapping good record pictures, likenesses of their friends and relatives, their pets, treasured objects and the houses they live in. In many cases, that seems to be as far as they can go in seeking pictures, because they lack the instinct for picking out artistic composition in nature or recognizing picture elements in human activities when they encounter them. Artistic sense and the feel for human interest, both are qualities with which some are endowed more generously than others.

Driving along a country road on a summer's day, picnic-bound, camera in the car, one person comes upon a group of men and women in a farmyard. They are gathered about a shirt-sleeved man standing in a cart. The man is gesticulating and pointing to a moving machine. Other farm implements are about the place. To the left of the group stands a lofty haystack, like a giant mushroom. To the right, a dilapidated old barn. A dog and some chickens are running about. Behind the scene fields stretch to a patch of woods and above big lively clouds are drifting.

"Only a farmer's auction," he says and whizzes by. But the next fellow

halts his car, snaps picture after picture of the scene, close up and from a distance, making some shots with a filter over the lens as not to lose the clouds. For human interest, artistic setting and universal appeal, he is proud to match these pictures of a country auction with the other fellow's picnic pictures, precious indeed though the latter may be as souvenirs of a good time and memory pictures of friends.

For those who miss pictures the other fellow instinctively sees and are envious of his success, the solution is to learn, because it certainly can be done. Many have surprised themselves and achieved success by mentally framing sections of scenery as they travel about and asking themselves: "Will that make an interesting picture? Has it pictorial value?"

Practicing picture taking and comparing your prints with accepted examples of good pictures is another way to learn. And here is still another suggestion:

Many amateurs take good pictures without knowing it. Time and again, a well composed picture may be found in a small area of a print that as a whole is pictorially poor. Get out your old snapshots and search for small areas you think have the elements of good composition. Then from the negatives have enlarged prints made of these particular sections. You will not only learn a lot about composition, but chances are that among these enlargements you will get some amazingly good pictures you didn't know you had.

John van Gulder.

### Aardvark, First Animal

#### Mentioned in Dictionary

Like something out of a dipsomaniac's dream is the aardvark. It is one of the strangest of extant animals—extraordinary in appearance, in structure and in habits. While not one of the animals most familiar to the average person, it enjoys, because of the spelling of its name, the unique distinction of being the first animal to be mentioned in the dictionary and its name is one of the first words of any kind to appear in lexicons. The name comes from the Dutch, means "earth pig," and refers to the creature's piglike snout and its habits. However, in spite of its snout and its smooth, fat body, the aardvark is quite unrelated to pigs. In fact, according to Dr. Wilford H. Osgood, chief curator of the Field Museum of Natural History department of zoology, the animal has been something of a puzzle to zoologists and anatomists who have undertaken to find a logical place for it in schemes of classification of animals.

Aardvarks are common throughout much of southern and eastern Africa south of the equator. They live in relatively open, semiarid country wherever there is an abundance of the termites or "white ants," upon which they feed almost exclusively. Individual aardvarks reach weights up to about 150 pounds and appear always fat and well conditioned. For such a large heavy animal to exist upon tiny termites is rather remarkable and testifies to the abundance of such food in Africa.

### Osmium, Iridium, Thulium

#### of Platinum Metal Group

Discovered in 1803, osmium is a rare, blue-white to gray metallic element, difficult to fuse, not affected by ordinary acids and insoluble in aqua regia. It is the heaviest of the elements. A member of the group of "platinum metals," it forms an alloy with iridium, labeled osmiridium, which is used in making fountain pen points.

Like osmium, iridium is a rare metallic element, conspicuously heavy, states a writer in the Kansas City Star. Silvery-white, iridium was discovered in 1804. It is important commercially for its alloys, which are used for making standard weights and parts of scientific apparatus which must withstand the action of the atmosphere and other factors; in electrical apparatus for contact points and other parts required to resist high temperatures and active substances, such as chlorine.

Among later elements found to be present in the sun, thulium is extremely rare, occurring in Nature with other metals of the rare earth's group. It forms a number of compounds, the characteristic color of which is light green. Discovered in 1879 thulium has no commercial use.

### Red Honey Produced

Even reddish-brown honey can be produced, Paul Griswold Hayes writes in an article in Nature. Logwood blossoms on the island of Dominica in the West Indies produce a singular tasting variety, but the color comes from the sap of the tree, that contains a coloring principle much used in dyeing. Most famous of the dark honey of Europe is that from the Scottish heather, with a cheaper type being derived from the English heather. In Southern Europe the favorite honey is probably the Romanin, derived from the rosemary, and the Mt. Hymettus variety from the wild thyme of Greece. Although most ordinary honey crystallizes in six months after bottling, the white tupelo will remain liquid after 10 years. On the other hand, the blue-curl nectar granulates almost at once in the wax cells.

### Sea Lions Use Sense of Smell by Touching Noses

Sea lions, like dogs, use their sense of smell by touching noses to identify one another at close range, but fail to react to distant odors. They are adept at spotting moving objects from considerable distance. Except when off on fishing excursions, they are gregarious by nature, collecting in large groups on favorite rocks or rookeries and generally making a big fuss and noise over nothing. About the only time they ever become hostile is when their pet place in the sunshine is challenged.

The cows have only one pup a year. If anything happens to the mother the pup will die, because no other mother would adopt it. They are not like dogs or cats or other animals in this respect, says a writer in the Los Angeles Times. A peculiar habit of the cows approaching pupping time is to form "rafts" by lying belly-side up in the water with their flipper protruding above the surface. From a distance a string of eight or ten cows floating end to end this way resembles the charred remains of a boat that has burned to the water's edge, with only stubs of the ribs left showing. This is probably a means of absorbing beneficial rays from the sun.

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### The Refinement of Merrivel Jones

By NELSON S. CONN  
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"YOU want to buy a horse?" Merrivel Jones, despite the fact that he felt his announcement to be both reasonable and logical, reddened. To the two older men seated behind the desk he might just as well have said that he wanted to buy an elephant or a dirigible. Their horrified faces set Merry to thinking how like fish his lawyers, James and Aaron Rittner, looked.

"Yes—a race horse!" he insisted. "Now listen. I'll start from the beginning again. I'm broke. I need money. My next allowance isn't due until next month. I have a three day option on the privilege of buying in a part of Rye High, a horse slated for the Sweepstakes next Tuesday. I want an advance of \$5,000 on my allowance until after the race. When Rye High comes in you'll get your—or rather my—money back!"

Aaron Rittner cleared his throat. "Hrr-umm!" he said. "As I understand it, Merrivel, this money is to be used for gambling?"

"It isn't gambling," Merry explained carefully. "It's a sure thing. Rye High is a maulover for the race—and I have a chance to get in on the ground floor."

Mr. Rittner placed his finger tips together ecclesiastically. "As you no doubt recall, one of the provisions of your execution of your late father's estate was that we were to do everything within our power to break you of what your father considered to be a lamentable habit of wagering. To curb this, he imposed certain restrictions upon our administration of your income.

"I think both James and I can understand how you feel about tips, Merrivel, but we fear we are unable to advance any such sum as you mention on a matter subject to the laws of chance. Therefore, Merrivel, I fear our answer must be negative."

After the door had banged behind him, the two partners regarded each other silently. Aaron Rittner stroked a long hard jaw thoughtfully.

"You know, James," he said, "something should be done about that young man. His natural bent is entirely too frivolous. Perhaps it would be well to strive to inculcate in young Merrivel something of the culture and refinement that was his father's. But how can we accomplish this?"

James' immobile face registered silent accord with his partner's thoughts.

"I have it!" exclaimed Aaron at length. "The secret of the success of the elder Jones lay in his intense devotion to literature. All his life he was a great reader. His library is a veritable storehouse of knowledge and inspiration. Young Merrivel on the other hand probably has never read more than the minimum required on the school lists. Tomorrow—tomorrow, James, I will have the library of the late Mr. Jones delivered to Merrivel's apartment, accompanied by a personal letter. What do you think, James?"

The secretary entered. "Ah! Miss Evans," said Aaron Rittner. "I want you to take a note to Mr. Merrivel Jones, Jr."

"Dear Merrivel: These were your father's best friends and staunchest allies. Each is in itself a veritable treasure trove. We regret your recent disappointment, but trust that delving into these may serve to assuage in part, the judgment that we felt it necessary to make. With kindest personal regards..."

"That is all, Miss Evans."

Two weeks later Aaron Rittner, picking his way cautiously through down-town traffic, collided sharply with another pedestrian. It was Merrivel Jones.

"Oh, I say Mr. Rittner," grinned the young man picking up the lawyer's umbrella and restoring it to him. "I'm sorry! I guess I didn't notice where I was going. You see, I'm in rather a hurry."

"Apologies are unnecessary, Merrivel," replied Mr. Rittner genially. "It was the fault of both. You received my letter?"

The young man stopped and smiled broadly. "I should say so!" he said. "... And I must say it was swell of you. You're a good egg, Mr. Rittner."

Aaron Rittner stared. No one had called him a good egg for over thirty years. "Thank you, Merrivel," he said. "I try to do what I feel is best. I presume then, that at last you are learning the value of the better things?"

Merry's grin grew even broader. "I'll say so," he chuckled. "I'm sure a sly old dog," he added, digging the older man in the ribs. "Sort of have to kid that tight-mouthed brother of yours along I guess, don't you? Well, your letter gave me the hint!"

"The hint?" A dismal note of foreboding struck in the lawyer's voice. "Yes, you know. Merry was edging away impatiently. 'About those books being a veritable treasure trove?' They were. Practically all first editions. I got eight thousand for them—enough to get in on Rye High and lay some on the side. She romped home on Tuesday for a \$20,000 dollar purse at 7 to 2. Gotta go now. ... so long ... and thanks!"

Kit Carson's Service

On June 7, 1847, Kit Carson delivered to President Polk a letter which, with important military despatches, he had carried to Washington from California. In recognition of this service, the President appointed Carson, then a private citizen, as an army lieutenant. The next year, while again en route to Washington with despatches, Carson learned that the senate had denied confirmation of his appointment. Urged by friends to refuse to proceed farther, Carson writes that he decided: "As I had been chosen as the most competent person to take the despatches through safely, I would fulfill that duty; if the service I was performing was beneficial to the public, it did not matter whether I was enjoying the rank of lieutenant."

### Fire, Air, Earth, Water,

#### the Elements of Climate

Aristotle, one of the wisest men who ever lived, believed that matter was made up of four elements—fire, air, earth, and water. These four entities no longer are the exclusive components of matter. They are, however, the elements of climate, writes Dr. Thomas M. Beck in the Chicago Tribune.

By fire is meant the sun, of course. Without the sun the earth would have no climate or life. Everything, including the gases of the atmosphere, would be frozen into a lifeless, motionless, solid mass. There would be no climatic difference of a tremendous amount of energy, of which the earth receives roughly two-billionths. Yet in spite of this dilution the amount of solar energy received when the sun is directly overhead amounts to about a dozen calories a minute for every square inch exposed. This rate of heating is sufficient to melt a one-inch layer of ice in less than two hours if completely absorbed.

If the earth were a one-sided disk perpendicular to the sun's rays every part of it always would be exposed to sunlight of this intensity. There would be no climatic differences, for everything would be heated to the same temperature, which would be somewhat above that of boiling water. The fact that the earth is almost spherical in shape tempers such heat. At any given instant the sun is directly overhead at only one spot on the globe, the closest to the sun, and half of the earth's surface is completely shielded from the direct effects of solar radiation.

### Walls of Ancient Forts

#### Stand Guard Over City

Early in its reign as the Queen City of the Caribbean, Cartagena was strongly fortified. Historians have estimated that the walls about the port cost half a billion dollars in time, labor and loss of life. When Ferdinand VI of Spain was presented with the accounts of the building of the great fortifications he is reported to have climbed to the top of the towers of his castle and to have peered long and wistfully toward the west. When courtiers inquired as to what he was seeking he replied:

"I am trying to see the walls of Cartagena, because such a tremendous expenditure should have created such a conspicuous architecture that it ought to be visible from here."

The old forts of San Jose and San Fernando guard the mouth of the river leading up to Cartagena, while those of Manzanillo and Castillo Grande are attractive old sentinels closer to the city. All these ports were effectively used against pirates in the olden days. The channel from the sea runs a zigzag course for several miles through low jungle-grown banks to a beautiful land-locked bay, where Cartagena looms beyond a lagoon, compact within its encircling ramparts and topped by mosque-like domes and Moorish towers, looking much as it did in the days of the buccaners. Many of the buildings date back to 1533.

### Discovery of Hot Springs

Pioneer trappers who first penetrated Arkansas found a series of mineral springs at what is now Hot Springs. They bathed in the waters and praised their medicinal value. Soon their fame reached the ears of President Jefferson, who sent Lewis and Clark to investigate. Another famous series of hot springs is at Rotorua, New Zealand. The springs cover an area of 660 square miles and vary in temperature from 60 degrees to the boiling point.

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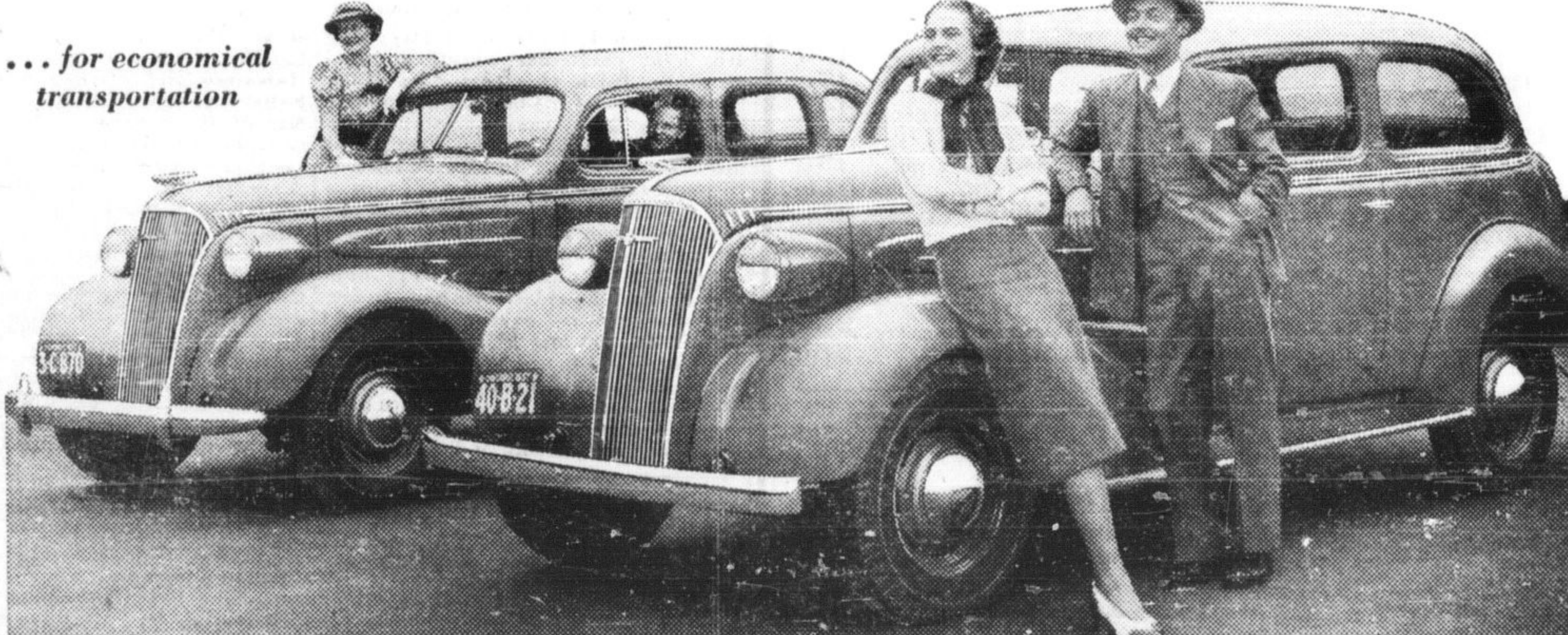
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