

Commentator Fellow Is Traced to the Caveman

Less than ten minutes after instrumental music made its first appearance in the world the commentators were on hand to start reading meanings into it. That hairy ancestor of ours who discovered that you could blow fine blasts through an animal horn had barely got back to the cave and begun to strut his new accomplishment before his lady when a pair of shaggy neighbors dropped in to dispute about the significance of his music, observes Edward Barry in the Chicago Tribune.

According to one, the louder blazes expressed courage and defiance, while the more sober tootlings carried a suggestion of the blower's secret fear of the very tribes or hosts he was defying. The other scoffed at this interpretation and declared that the widely spaced tones represented the steady tread of men and that the quicker sections depicted the mincing of women and children.

The astonished composer hemmed and hawed, then guardedly admitted that each commentator was partly right. He could not offend his guests by disclosing the fact that both interpretations were complete surprises to him!

There never has been a time in the history of instrumental music when self-appointed commentators were not busy explaining meanings and concocting stories. Because of the many vivid and undisciplined imaginations which have engaged in this very dubious work some of the world's best music is loaded to the sinking point with a cargo of non-musical meanings.

Insects Have Own Tools to Bore Holes in Wood

Insect egg-laying requires many tools, of which some are surprisingly like man-made tools. The Sirax saw-fly, for example, says a writer in Pearson's London Weekly, uses a gadget very like a gimlet, with which it bores holes in wood to house its eggs. Another type of saw-fly has at its tail two tiny saws fitted with sheaths. These cut slits in stems or leaf veins in which the eggs are placed.

The ichneumon fly works hard for an hour to drill a hole more than an inch deep in tough wood.

And the ichneumon fly is well aware, in a way mysterious to us, that it will strike a grub in the wood on which to lay its egg. Its young will then have living food to eat when they are hatched.

Also there is a locust which lays its eggs in the earth by boring the soil with a tool like the cobbler'sawl, and working on the same principle.

The hypodermic syringe of the surgeons injects fluid under the skin; so does the sting of an insect. Actually, when we knock the bee off our skin, his sting, and part of his body, are left behind. Consequently, the bee soon dies. And that is why it was thought bees could sting once only.

But, given time, the bee can remove his sting and fly off to do more damage with it. The remarkable apparatus he uses to inject poison has barbs which attach it securely to our flesh.

The wasp, as it happens, stings a caterpillar, not to kill it, but to paralyze it—as by our anesthetics.

Pioneers in Smoking

The Encyclopedia Britannica says that the introduction of the tobacco pipe to Europe is generally ascribed to Ralph Lane, first governor of Virginia; in 1585 he brought an Indian pipe to Sir Walter Raleigh and taught that courtier how to use it.

Another authority, "The Social History of Smoking," says that the honor of having first smoked a pipe of tobacco in England is divided among several claimants. Captain William Middleton, Captain Price and Captain Koet having smoked together in London. The same author states that pipes were smoked in England before 1584, the plant having been introduced into Europe about 1550 and been under cultivation in England by 1570. Raleigh first brought the practice of smoking into common use and it is probable that he was initiated in the art by Thomas Hariot, whom he had sent out to Virginia for the specific purpose of inquiring into and reporting on the natural productions, including of course tobacco.

Growth of the Fleas

Fleas, like all insects, go through stages, from egg, through grub and pupa, to adult insect. The grub feeds on the bodies of dead beetles and other stony animal matter. Then it turns to a pupa, which never eats, but just lies in the dust, in cracks and crevices in the floorboards in houses. It is very sensitive to vibrations. Directly a footstep touches those boards, the vibration makes all the pupae wake up and hatch out. From each pops a hungry flea.

Swans Cruel, Feroceous

Swans are among the most cruel and ferocious of birds. Not only have they frequently battled one another to death, says Collier's Weekly, but they have come on land and killed dogs and other animals, and attacked and seriously injured many human beings. They also have been known to beat children into unconsciousness and then drown them.

GOOD TIMES COMING

By ALICE DUANE
McClure Newspaper Syndicate, WNU Service.

IT WAS Jane Pratt's first day in Stacey's bargain basement. In fact, it was her first day behind the counter of a department store. She was a school teacher, out of a job, with debts and unpaid salary behind her. Before her, she hoped, was a brilliant career—perhaps as a buyer, a head of department, a member of the advertising staff—in Stacey's.

It was Stacey's custom, as it is the custom of most department stores, to give their employees a few days preliminary training before they were assigned to actual selling. But Stacey's was having a rather unaccountable boom. And when Jane, hired on Saturday, had appeared before the proper percentage in the employment department early Monday morning, she had been sent directly to an overworked bargain counter.

"It's not customary," this personage had said to her sternly, "but we're up against a hard day. You go and do the best you can. Miss Stanley will give you what information you need in the next half hour about making sales, the stock you are to handle, and so forth. Then in a day or two we'll give you the customary training. And for heaven's sake be careful how you work today."

So Jane went on the floor, elated. And all through the morning's hard work of making many small sales—her counter held collars, and cuffs, handkerchiefs, belts, and many other women's knickknacks priced at a quarter apiece—her mind danced ahead.

Through rigid economy now she would pay up her debts.

She'd make good. She knew she should.

And before long there would be advances and promotions until she'd be in charge of the counter.

By mid-afternoon she felt as if she had been working behind that counter for a week.

A pretty and smart looking woman pushed herself to the front of the crowd around the counter and smiled at Jane.

"Aren't these things darling?" she said to Jane. "I never saw such sweet things for so little. I want some."

Jane breathed a sigh of relief. She was bored with the women she had been making sales to—women who examined each article with as much care as they would employ if the things cost four times their bargain price.

Here was somebody it would be fun to wait on.

"There are some pretty things here," said Jane, as her already practiced eye roved around the stock for a certain collar that she thought the best buy of all. "This, for instance."

Jane held out the simple batiste collar for the customer's inspection. But the customer was not looking. Her head was turned; her glance was darting over the crowd behind her.

"Oh—yes," she said, in a moment, turning her attention again to Jane. "Yes—I'll take a couple of those. Just send them C. O. D., please."

"Oh—" Jane interrupted, "I'm sorry, but we don't send these downstairs things C. O. D. This is all cash and carry, you know."

The woman looked annoyed.

"All right," she said shortly. "Hurry them up, will you?"

And she opened her handbag, just a crack, and slipped her bare hand within its depths. She withdrew it carefully, gave an exclamation of annoyance, thrust the hand back again, and brought it out a moment later with a small coin purse in her fingers.

But Jane had seen the cause of her annoyance.

As she pulled out her hand the first time a beautiful hand-made collar—Jane recognized its finely run tracks, its real lace, its exquisite workmanship and expensive materials—caught on her ring.

A price tag attached to the part that protruded from the hand bag for the moment it took her to unfasten it and thrust it back.

Now what, thought Jane, did a sales person in Stacey's basement do with a shoplifter?

For suddenly Jane was sure the woman before her was trying to get away with something she had picked up on the floor above.

In her short training that morning for her duties, Jane had learned nothing of store detectives and shoplifters. But she knew there must be a regular procedure for salesgirls when they thought customers were walking away with goods they hadn't paid for.

"Pardon me," said Jane—"I saw that lovely collar in your hand bag. May I look at it? It's just like one I saw the other day and I was crazy to have a good look at it."

In the meantime her eyes sought desperately for help. If she could only see the floor manager, the salesgirl at the opposite counter, somebody to help her.

"Pushing through the crowd, just behind the customer, Jane saw a man coming—"Harold Penton, as I live," thought Jane. "I'd rather he didn't know I worked here, of course. But maybe he'll help me."

"Mama! Mama! I Don't Wanna DIE!"

BUT SHE DID DIE! Poor kid, only 8 years old . . . prettiest little girl you'd ever want to see. It was horrible to see her lying in the street . . . bloody and broken. Her Mother hysterical . . . holding her in her arms for the last time. And the man who killed her was there too. He didn't look like a murderer, but you could tell by his face that he felt like one. He just stood there thinking . . . thinking that if he had only been driving a little slower . . . watching where he was driving instead of rushing to get home a few minutes earlier, that child would still be living. But all the "ifs" in the world wouldn't bring that little girl back to life. It was too late!

And pity that driver . . . he will always see that scene . . . his punishment is life imprisonment to a horrible memory. No, Mister, you don't want to be that way . . . just remember when you drive your car that "ifs" can't bring back the dead, or restore the crippled to health . . . drive carefully and there won't be any "ifs!" Please Drive Carefully!



Leon Stace
SECRETARY OF STATE

Space for this advertisement is donated by this paper in the interests of life-saving.