

STORKS

"Subjectively objective browsing" I guess my quest for knowledge might be called, since I did it with a definite and purposeful end in mind, yet without ample know-how concerning the location of the answer.

Originally, my stork search led me directly into the realms of the psychology, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, and lotta-more "ologies" of the human sex life. Far from reluctantly, they discussed the whole business, but left storks out completely. Blindly, it seems, they dismissed altogether any scientific discussion of the human origin.

Well, I reasoned, perhaps something concerning infants and pre-adolescents only would solve the situation. Basic instincts, family love, amazement at and amusement from various physical manifestations, puppy love, and intense affection for Van Johnson: they were all covered, abounding in page-space and dictionary-sized terms. But storks? Nope, no storks.

In desperation, I turned (it seems that everybody is always turning to something "in desperation," and I don't feel much like being different today, so I'll turn that way, too) to Thurber's "Leave Your Mind Alone"—the part on sex and machinery. And that was confusing and totally unhelpful in strictly laymanish vocabulary. Evidently, he too takes storks for granted — not once did they flap their way into this flop-house of human humor.

So my hopes of becoming a second Darwin are shattered. I know no storks personally, and no authoritative "ists" consider them. I can go no farther now until I find out where the storks come from.

I ASK YOU

For years there has been in the back of my mind a most persistent question: can one really be dignified if he knows there is a hole in his sock which is exposing his heel to the cold glare of the world? I ask you . . .

Can one stride across the campus with the grace and ease of an Apollo, the arrogance of a prince, or the confidence of a Horatio Alger hero if he knows all the time that the girl walking behind him is noticing not the magnificent set of his shoulders, not the proud carriage of his head, but the hole in his sock? Can he enter the Dean's office, poised and pleasant, aspiring to a position of great aid to his fellow man, knowing that he is poorly heeled? I ask you . . .

Think of the effect of this hole on the entire personality of the student. All of his fine dignity torn down because of a tiny tear in his sock! In class he props one foot over the other to keep it from showing, but the teacher makes him go to the board and find Utopia on the map. He can't find it because he knows everybody is looking at that infernal hole, and it disconcerts him.

He goes to his lab session—two solid hours of exposure—knowing full well that every test tube, beaker, and burner he handles will, thanks to his mental stress, crash to the floor at his feet—more publicity.

By the middle of the next period he is ready to believe anyone who tells him that the Queen of Sheba is living on the tennis courts. He is even willing to hunt a rifle report. He has become distraught. All over a single tiny hole in his sock.

I ask you—could you be normal under such circumstances? (Sure, all you have to do is forget it!)

Woman: "What's the trouble?"

Street Conductor: "The street-car just hit a dog."

Woman: "Was the dog on the track?"

Conductor: "No, lady, we chased him up an alley."

MATERIALISTIC! NOT ME!

Ah, the joys and advantages of roommates! Though they whistle when we try to study and talk to us while we're running bath water or brushing our teeth, though they complain because we don't have their favorite brand of chewing gum, though they are fresh air friends, we like 'em; if not for what they are, for what they have. They may be very nice, in themselves, but if they have things we can use to advantage, they're even nicer.

Judging by purely materialistic standards, ye scribe seems to have done extremely well in choices of bunkmates. In tabulating the usable assets of my various roommates, I find three electric irons, two clothes racks, two ironing boards, five lamps of varying degrees of brightness, two hotplates, one thermos bottle, three radios and four alarm clocks (which were supplemented by the roommates themselves). This list doesn't include the clothes borrowed, or the boxes from home shared. One of 'em had a boy friend who bought me coffee, lent me books and took me driving in his car.

My next *Companero de cuarto* must have a clock, radio, hotplate, ironing board, iron, and clothes rack, fluorescent lamp, lotta boy friends (with cars and generosity), good standing with all dorm officers, at least five suits, six hats and three pairs of shoes I can wear, or else I shall turn in my moocher's badge and revoke my lifetime license from the International Deadbeats' Association, and go home.

Materialistic, did you say? 'Course not! Honey chile, has you got rocks in yo' haid?

QUIZ 'N' QUOTES

Do you tear your hair out nightly trying to concentrate on your studies? Are you endangering your personal sanity in a vain attempt to cram learning into your noggin? Well, harken to the advice of the oldtimers and your worries will soon be over. Here is what some of the "brains" at Mercer have to say in answer to the following question: What is your method of studying?

Beverly Fay Culbertson (Veteran member of the Dean's List): "I study in the library. Everything has to be quiet and the atmosphere just right for me to concentrate. Otherwise, I spend my evening looking at the people who wander in and out of the library."

Hugh Wamble: "I either study sitting up in bed leaning against the wall, or else I lie flat on my back."

Carlisle Minter: "I take notes in class, then make an outline of each subject, containing the important facts. You can't study in bed. I sit in a straight chair at a desk. I always have a pot of Joe at my elbow."

Francis Stewart: "I prefer to sit in a straight chair and put my feet on the table when I study, but generally my roommates object."

Joe Chapman (Who's majoring in Introduction to Spanish): "I'll tell you this about my position of studying: my feet are always up higher than my head. Then I'm about semi-crouched and ready to go."

Christy Harp: "I don't."

Alvin J. Oglesby: "I curl up on the bed with a big fat pillow, fold the pillow—lay my book just beyond it—and then go to sleep."

Joe Harrell: "I put my books in a neat pile on the mantel, then make an immediate about face in the direction of the Co-op for a coke."

Bernie Reynolds: "I prefer to study with my feet on the desk. I like a pot of coffee and doughnuts around, but if not those, a bottle of ginger ale and Ritz crackers will do. Also, a radio and a detective novel add charm to study."

CLOSETS

Vertical footlockers, always wide open, and infinitely more messed up than those weekly inspected things of yore—that's them.

There has recently been made on campus a cross-sectionish and fast survey of men's closets. Our Gallup poll, you might say. The results of this scientifically conducted venture, though interesting, aren't nearly as fanciful as the excuses we had to dream up to satisfy the boys as we poked around the shoes, travelling bags, loose socks, and boxes.

"Bug inspectors," we told some. "I've lost my wife someplace," we told others. Or, "Somebody swiped my left garter." The few that we told the truth to wouldn't believe us.

But, back to our tabulations: Total utilitarianism is strictly the by-word of all the lads. Exactly no per cent of the shelves and floors are unused. No more than ten per cent have tie racks; the

others use hangers or have gayly adorned dressers, chairs, tables, and door-knobs.

One inventive duo have their closet resplendently decorated with colorful bed-spreads — to keep out the dust, they say. It also seems to keep out those jumbo mumbles: perhaps the mental hazard hanging before their intended target makes the use of the laundry bag and dresser drawer more popular.

Significant is the difference noted between the joes and the graduate students. In the latter's are more apt to be found books, two threadbare serge suits, and fewer shoes. In the former's — well, look in your own . . . hmmm, look at the cobwebs on our broom, would ya!

And all our wanderings haven't gone completely for naught. We have formulated two well supported observations:

1. Demobilization is here, and
2. It sure looks complete.

TWO CHILLINGS

Man is apt to discover things to be what he had not first thought them to be. For instance, when on September 9, 1942, I arrived at Goat Island, off the southern coast of Jamaica, which was used by Henry Morgan, the notorious pirate of the early colonial period, I had no idea that I was about to have my already-determined definitions of a few words shaken from me, and a group of definitions pertaining to a monetary system placed in their stead.

I went to the PX. When I say PX, I know that I am creating a false impression. There are a few things which it had in common with other PX's: the building had one of the modern conveniences of our most up-to-date skyscrapers, air conditioning. They didn't process the air with any gigantic machinery, they merely strained the impurities of the tropical air, except for mosquitoes, lightning bugs, creepers, and numerous other insects, as well as sandy, gravel-like dust, through the chicken wire net which hung two to three feet from the roof to the flimsy walls. Thus, we had the breath of the tropical waters blown directly into our nostrils . . . and I might add, our eyes, our mouths, our ice cream, and our hair.

When I entered, I was greeted with "Hi, chicken," from the three-by-three Italian who ran the PX. I was highly pleased at the huge supply of goods which took up a small part of one of the two four-foot shelves used after a ship had brought supplies. I ordered some shaving cream (for a friend, of course), a tooth brush (to clean my beloved rifle), and a pair of shoe strings (to sew the canvas bunk). Toni waited on me with the haste of one who cares not about pleasing his customers, telling his jokes as he served me.

"Two chillings, tuh pence," he said.

"Two chillings" is not even a close estimate. Chills were going up and down my back, for I was getting that "glad-to-meet-you-Boot" greeting which seven months veterans always give to the recruits who have served only six months. I didn't flare up in anger because he had called me "tuh pence." After all, I logic-ized, I had just come in, so, of course, Toni would not know my true name.

The "two chillings, tuh pence" turned out to be "two shillings, two pence," Limey for forty-three cents. Though I had spoken English, in a Dixie fashion, all of my speaking life, I didn't understand Toni. Friend and brother Marine that he was, he immediately began to instruct me along the lines of money translated (commonly called exchange) from American currency into British flax and alloy. After that, we got along fine.

ORIENTATION

If you're not a freshman, read no more of this. The info contained in the following lines is not for the benefit of the uppercrust, but has been gained through decades of experience at Mercer and should be helpful to all greenhorns.

First and "natchery," freshmen should not only be able to recognize upperclassmen, but they should be able to determine sects or clans, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. It has been suggested that one spend several hours in the library just sitting. Each person who enters should be torn to bits (not literally), scrutinized, and classified.

When someone nonchalantly walks in, head at an angle of 45 degrees, and saunters over to the magazine rack for an *Esquire*, then eliminate no longer. That man can be none other than a sophomore. The Joe who has his head on his back is no doubt a junior. They usually can be seen in corners playing "jackstones" or drawing pictures of Lena, the Hyena in an encyclopedia. Don't worry about seniors; they don't go to the library. Oh yes! If someone does come in and ask for a book, you should immediately know that that person is either post-graduate or faculty.

It is comparatively simple to establish recognition of the "upperclass-lady." Just look at her, one quick glance will do. Sophomore ladies are the ones who throw spitballs in Chapel, send home the sugar in the Co-op, and spend most of their time with the Dean getting cuts excused. Juniors are those who "put 'em up" to the throwing, mailing, and cutting. And the seniors frown officially and secretly yearn for their youthful days and corresponding pranks.

A little more comprehensive view now: Freshmen should always wear their rat caps. In days gone by, while serving out their first term, freshmen have even showered in those orange and black nightcaps.

Now, dear frosh, one last word. Wear those ornaments cheerfully, but keep your good eye ready for the annual flag rush event in November. On this day, not to be confused with Sadie-Hawkins Day, you will get your only chance to prove that freshmen and sophomores are "fond-of-mentally" the same.

The Molarly Grind

It is a happy state of affairs, indeed, that nobody in my room grinds his teeth when he sleeps (or "her teeth" either, since we're all unmarried and meticulously moral), but one guy is a slight pain in the cuspid. After a long, ard evening of 99% "just gabbing," we all make that midnight meeting of our backs to our bunks. Then he sounds off, vocally, not grindingly.

"Boy, aren't you glad nobody grinds teeth in here?" OR, "Say, have you guys ever heard Joe chomp away at his dentures while he's asleep?"

And that isn't the end of it all. He goes on from there. An involved discussion of how it sounds. A long explanation of the harm it does to the participating individual. A nerve-wracking discourse on the effects it has on the listener's disposition. (Not to speak, I might add, of the effect his talk has on our disposition.)

The only reason we haven't already stuffed a pillow down his throat is that his new false teeth take up so much room in there that a pillow wouldn't fit.

Paging Davey Jones

Anyone wanting a ready-made best-seller has only to go down to the Azores and swim around with his eyes open.

Now that's a rather odd proposition. After all, it isn't everyday we get a chance to chase novels, especially unpublished ones, down to Davy Jones' Locker. This is a special novel, too, and would net a pretty penny. Also, it would hardly be banned in Boston. There would probably be a great demand for it; the subject is a great American thing.

Another thing, you probably won't find it very easily, because it was meant to be lost. Also, you'd better take along something with which to bring it to shore. Maybe you'd better take along a husky companion who can help you with it—it is wrapped in a barrel. And you might also take along a couple of Ph.D.'s who can read Italian written on parchment.

Oh yes—one more thing we forgot to tell. The novel is a little over 464 years old and was written by Christopher Columbus after his first visit to the new world on October 12, 1492.

FRUIT STAND

According to the manual of harms and goods that new freshmen get, that long-suffering old Fruit Stand is very much "on campus"—except from eight to ten at night. The grey-headed ex-baker, Joe Ussury, is practically a required course, and his output is a text-book for tummies.

Maybe you have never noticed it, but there is still a gas pump standing—the location has not always been given over to fruitful disposal. Until the war and gas rationing started, it was a fuel-friend for passing motorists. The station, however, decreased into oblivion; for a year nothing was there.

Then somebody got the banana bug. Several, in fact, because it changed hands readily and rapidly until Joe took over a year ago. Since that time, shelves and more chow have been added to the menu (of course the shelves aren't very tasty), an augmentation to the dining hall for many.

He readily admits that business isn't bad. During the summer his tourist trade is high, descending to superlatives of nothingness when the heat beats it. The town folks, naturally, are his steadiest customers, some even from Thomaston and Butler. And the student body makes up the rest—the important rest, we all say.

So next time in that direction, don't blindly trip over it; either go in it or around it.