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Side Talks by Ruth Cameron

ON POKER CHIPS AND PAYING CASH.

RUTH CAMERON

Here is an interesting assertion I heard the other day.

If poker players played poker with actual money they would not be able to play with good judgment because they would be too greatly affected by the sight of the money going out. The game enables them to think of the chips instead of the money they are handling.

That fact interested me both for itself and because of a train of thought it started.

I immediately found myself thinking of some friends of mine.

Not because they play poker. I doubt if they ever played poker in their lives. But for this reason. They have recently made up their minds instead of having charge accounts or paying by check to go back to the ready money, cash payment days.

They Are Going to Handle Real Money.

Every week now the husband brings home his salary in ready money, divides it up into special sums for each purpose, and puts it into separate envelopes. Then when his wife buys groceries, or a suit, or a hat, or a coat, she pays for it in cash. A few items such as the milk and the ice bill that represent absolutely routine expenditures are paid at the end of the week but for all else, actual cash is laid out.

The reason for this change is that both of them feel that they will handle money more carefully (which the fact that they were saving almost nothing out of a reasonably good salary made them realize they ought to do) if they handle actual money.

And though they have only been doing it a few weeks they find it is really working out this way.

You Feel Sure Your Bill Can't Run Over $10.

You have a very different feeling about what you really need when you are paying for it out of $10 laid aside for groceries for the week and rapidly dwindling, than you do when you are just saying "Charge it" and feeling sure in a vague way that your bill can't run over $10 this week.

Of course you see the connection now between poker players and my friends who do not play poker. It is the same phychology with both. And it is sound phychology.

When I opened a checking account I said that I was sure I would not spend any money that I should not spend if I paid in currency. I have proved myself a hopeless optimist again and again.

Less Painful to Write a Few Figures.

It is far less painful to write a few figures on a piece of paper than to hand over crisp delectable bills. I do hate to drop from one hundred into another, but even that is less painful than parting with real money.

What queer creatures we mortals are! To know the money is going out ought to be the same as seeing it go. But it isn't. At least not with us ordinary folks. I suppose there are super-folks who are above such psychology. But I'll bet they aren't so far above it as they think they are!

Head Hunters of Eucador.

Wonderful stories are brought from Ecuador by members of the recently returned expedition of the American Museum of Natural History, who bring back to them over 2,000 birds and mammals, 1,600 animal skins. The narrative of their life, among the head-hunting Jivraro Indians, and the vampire bats is no dull reading matter.

Nine months ago the party set out for Ecuador, passed through the Panama Canal and landed at Guayaquil, the premier port. Then by boat across the Gulf of Guayaquil, past the island of Puna, to Santa Rosa. A mule journey with native drivers was collected, and the expedition proceeded across the Andes. In two days the Santa Rosa River, which in its contortions twists like tangled ribbon, was forded eighteen times. The trail was fair, the going not very difficult, the mules miraculously sure. Zarumas, an old mining camp opened in 1540 by the Spanish conquistadores, was reached, and the men made their headquarters with the United States mining men who are working the veins recently uncovered.

At Anthony and Cherrie Zumara found a convenient camping ground. From there they made trips. The first toward the east, over the Andean Ranges, some of which rise to the height of 12,000 feet. This trip had as its goal the country of the Jivraro Indians, of which the explorers had heard fantastic tales. From Loja, the last town on the trail, they decended the eastern slope of the mountains. The trail was so narrow and dangerous that the load on the mules, usually 300 pounds, pack-saddle fashion, was lightened to 100 pounds. Often the path overhung a drop of two or three thousand feet. The soil, soft and unstable, threatened to crumple and precipitate the adventures into the city. By grace of the mules the descent was made without accident.

Among the Jivaros.

The jungle is at the foot of the Andes. As you decend the mountain, cold and snowtipped at their pinnacles, vegetation grows more dense and the green is more brilliant, until, coming to the rolling country of the foothills, you strike the thick growth of trees hung with vines, and the undergrowth, rank and heavy, from which the heat rises all day long. It is in this tropical jungle that the Indians live. Their huts are made of poles interwoven with vines, thatched with large leaves. The Jivraros are copper-colored, short, stocky, men and women. They live in small groups, at the head of which are chiefs, who, however, are less powerful than some individual heads of families. The men are hunters, going out after game and fish. There is little cultivation of the soil, it is not necessary because of the richness of the vegetation.

Polygamy is practised, probably because of the war-like character of the men, who are headhunters and have thinned out the male population. There is a constant war-fare going on between groups for the sake of the women, who are taken captive and made members of the conqueror's collection. The children of the vanquished are adopted and reared in the family of the victor. Strictest chastity is enforced upon the women, who, if not controlled, exhibit a tendency toward polyandry. The punishment for adultery is strict and violent, the penalty for the third offence being death.

The Jivaros are not unique in their practice of retaining the heads of their vanquished enemies as souvenirs, but the custom of drying the head so that it preserves the aspect of a miniature and living decapitation, is not known in any other part of the uncivilized globe.

A Jivraro huntsman has destroyed his victim by means of the blowpipe, the ten-foot tube holding the poisoned arrow. He cuts the head away from the body and returns home in glee to his wives. The skull is removed from the skin after an incision has been made in the rear of the head. Hot stones are placed in the cavity and it is filled with hot sand and completely dessicated. The process is so skillful that the head retains its symmetry, and when all the operations have been accomplished it is about the size of a grapefruit, a dark tan in color, and the skin is leatherish to the touch.

A month after the completion of the drying, a dance in celebration of the victory is held. After the dance the distinguished owner of the head is free to barter it, if he wishes, for anything he chooses. As a matter of history, these heads usually find their way to the coast, where they are in demand among the Europeans.

For two or three months after the victory the successful Jivraro hunter does not eat meat, but confines himself to the vegetable products of the country, a custom handed down from generation to generation and is inviolable. It arises from the fear that the victor may be made heavy by meat and fall a victim to the relatives of the dead man, who are without doubt, on the vengeful warpath. And it is this continual feud that has depopulated the Jivraro men.

Worships the Devil.

For god the Jivraro has the devil, a mysterious creature, resembling the oracle at Delphi, to whom he betakes himself before setting forth on a lethal expedition. Chicha, the native drink, is imbibed, a small quantity of which induces delirium tremens in white men. The Jivraro head hunter retires to the "whispering place" in the hills, where he consults his adviser, the devil, as he names it, and receives a favorable or unfavourable answer, according to the humor of the god.

The explorers returned to the mines at Zarium and carried on their collecting of animals and birds. In the deserted mines of the Spaniards were found enormous quantities of bats of all sorts—large ones, small ones, and among these were the vampire bats, the one and only original vampire bat of Kipling fame. These beasts are the pest of South America. No larger than a mouse, with the wing spread of a gull; atrociously evil smelling, they make the life of mules and men a burden. They will slip into your tent at night, and if your big toe is out, or your nose, they will alight and drill you for the blood that's in you. Their stomachs are small, their istestines short, and adapted for liquid diet only. They have few teeth and those are razor-edged (so that you cannot feel them bite.) Secreted in the mouths are saliva glands. The liquid serves to prevent coagulation of the blood from the bite, so that a mule, when once nipped will bleed until morning, and you will find a pool of blood beside him. Animals stampede at the smell of the winged vamps, and Anthony tells of a horse that ran away because the rider tries to mount with a dead bat in his hand.

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Wedding Bells.

BASTOW—STAFFORD.

On Saturday morning, at the C. of E. Cathedral, Mr. Herbert J. Bastow, eldest son of Mr. M. A. Bastow, was united in the Holy bonds of Matrimony to Miss Amy Stafford, eldest daughter of the late Dr. Stafford. The officiating clergyman was the Rev. Canon Jeeves, Rector of the Cathe. The bride entered the church leaning on the arm of her uncle, Mr. Hitchcock, to the strains of Hoffman's Wedding Procession artistically played by Organist F. J. King. The groom was ably supported by his brother, Mr. W. A. Bastow, whist Miss Winnie Reid and Miss Marjorie Bastow acceptably did the honour of bridesmaids. Mr. Hitchcock acted as father-giver. After the signing of the Register the bridal party left the church to the strains of Mendelssohn's Wedding March and motored to Donovan's for breakfast, at which the health of the happy couple was duly toasted. Following the wedding breakfast the party motored to the residence of the bride's parents, Allandale Road, where a most enjoyable time was spent. The bride and groom left by the S.S. Rosalind for New York, where the honeymoon will be spent. The bride was the recipient of many useful and costly presents, testifying to the estem of her many friends.

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Our Book Review.

"Anthony Trent, Master Criminal," by Windham Martyn.
(Dicks & Co.)

"Anthony Trent, Master Criminal" is something itenrely new in teh world of fiction, and whilst in some respects it bears a marked similarty to "Raffles," a book with which most readers are familiar. It has, however, an originality in the working out of the plot which defies the accusation "copying" which some might be inclined to make against its author. Anthony Trent was a young writer of clever detective stories, but whilst his work was popular, the renumeration he received did not permit him to lead the luxurious life towards which he leaned. The idea struck him of putting himself in the place of the criminal hero of hs stories, and he follows it up, using his knowledge of criminology and his imagination with such effect that he soon becomes the cleverest criminal of his day. It would be manifestly unfar to give away any more of the plot of the book, but one thing I will say, and that is that beyond the immortal Raffles there is no hero whose adventures I have followed with more interest than those of Anthony Trent.

"The Enchanted Pen," by Editha L. Blakley.
(Dicks & Co.)

The publishers describe "The Enchanted Pen" as a Romance. I would prefer to call it a fantasy. When I say that it is a fairy tale I can imagine most people turning up their noses and saying "Fairy tale? Pooh! I finished with stories of that sort when I left the Kindergarten. They are all well enough for children, but for grown-ups, ridiculous!" But although "The Enchanted Pen" is a fairy story it is not one for children alone. It is a tale that even the most prosaic grown-up can read and receive a great deal of pleasure from. The ridiculous incongruity it presents of modern methods of living combined with the doublets and hose of three centuries ago is amusing, but there is something underneath the whole thing, something subtle which catches the readers interest and keeps it to the very last chapter. It is a book that should be enjoyed by both young and old.

HE—Where are you going, my pretty maid?
SHE—I'm going to BOWRING'S, sir, she said.
For why do you ask? Are you taking notes
On BOWRING Sales for WINTER COATS?
HE—Not altogether taking notes
On BOWRING'S Sale for Winter Coats;
But when I hear the ladies talk
Of bargains as they daily walk,
I lend an ear, and then I hear,
And learn to know the place to steer
For goods beside the ladies' wear.
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