

### Strange But True

By F. H. MacArthur

During the time that strange but true has been running in the Guardian, I have been telling my readers mostly about the strange customs and superstitions to be met with in other lands. Wasn't it Montaigne who observed that "since man has never been able to create a worm, he makes divinities every other day." But let us not forget that there can be found in our own province many otherwise rational and sensible people who are afraid to start any venture on the 13th day of the month, especially if the 13th falls on Friday.

Are we not all familiar with those who refuse to accept the third light from a match, or the chap who knocks on wood or crosses his fingers, or carries about on his person a lucky charm or a rabbits paw to ward off bad luck? We must therefore, be indulgent towards the people of other nations when we hold on to so many superstitions of our own.

The first white child to be born within the Arctic Circle was the son of Captain and Mrs. Murray. The child was baptised by the Rev. J. Lofthouse at Repulse Bay. The island of Java which is a little smaller in area than the state of New York, supports a population of 48,000,000. Yet only 65 per cent of the island is under cultivation.

The Javanese people speak two distinct languages, both of which are spoken by all. Yet strange as it may seem, the Javanese have a third language called Mady, which is only used by persons of equal social standing. Then there is a fourth language which contains not more than two hundred words and which is used only in speaking to the deity.

The most married couple in the U. S. A. is 106-year-old Isadore Nagel and his 104-year-old wife, Mary, who recently celebrated their 82nd wedding anniversary. This remarkable old couple were married in Poland on September 15, 1871. They are the oldest residents of the Jewish Home for the aged in Detroit, Michigan.

Back in 1940, Roger Peret of Perigueux, France, lost his wife's bracelet. Last December a Paris butcher found it in the stomach of a cow!

The first iron bridges fabricated in Canada were built at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, in 1877.

In Switzerland, people hang their Christmas trees from the ceiling and decorate them with candy, apples and nuts.

In Wales, wool is still washed on the sheep's back before shearing. This custom dates back to the days when the country was first settled.

Ever since Joe Jinks, a colored man, broke his leg after receiving his week's salary in two dollar bills, the negroes of the Southern States won't keep a two dollar bill in their pockets any longer than they can help.

William Harrison, ninth president of the U. S. A., was inaugurated on March 4th, 1841. He died 31 days later.

Kail, India, is unique in that it is owned by one hundred sons, all of one father. The family name is Haldra, and they've owned the place for three centuries. Strange but true.

Believe it or not but the equator passes right through the center of the island of Borneo. This results in no marked variation either in the weather or in the temperature, and rain falls only during the night.

Every afternoon produces magnificent mirages, and phosphorescent displays frequently occur in the water off shore. While he was digging a grave, Jack Ganier, 73, of Pontiac, Michigan, fell dead of a heart attack and fell right into the grave he was digging.

This may soon be a woman's world. Why? Well here are some figures that show which way the trend is going: The bureau of statistics in an analysis of the 1951 census says the number of females in Canada has climbed by almost one and a half million in the past 10 years, while the poor male increased only by 1,553,873.

The barrel cactus, found in most arid regions, derives its name from the barrel-like shape and more especially because its barrel holds water. Natives and travelers have only to tap the trunk in order to get a cool drink.

Rats and insects destroy 250 million bushels of grain every 12 months in this country alone.

It is interesting to note that no bats have ever been seen in the polar regions though they are to

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be found in every other part of the world.

When fined \$25 for driving his car without a muffler, Leonard Ulinger, 18, of Phoenix, Arizona paid the amount in pennies. But the judge had the last laugh. He made Ulinger count the pennies and wrap them in 25 cent rolls.

Jacques Bourdon, who was baptized at Boucherville, in Canada, February 18, 1680, was a pioneer Fenichman with an Indian wife. He was the father of 8 children, 6 boys, two girls, and strange but true, the 6 boys looked every bit as much like an Indian as their mother while the girls were typical french types.

The term "skipper," is applied to that singular fish which starts from the water and skips along by striking and flapping the surface with its tail.

### HEARD IN COURT

SUNDERLAND, England, (CP)—A man summoned to court here for breaking a window, explained: "I broke the window to ventilate my grievance."

### Ottawa Report

By Patrick Nicholson

Sparked by Prime Minister St. Laurent's speech to the West German Cabinet during his world tour, an interested group of Senators and MPs here are making fast progress in the first step leading, they hope, to the establishment of an Atlantic Parliament.

Mr. St. Laurent told the Germans: "We believe that the people living around the great basin of the Atlantic should seek the solution to their problems in increased integration of their machinery of government."

These far-sighted politicians, representing all parts of Canada and all political parties, deplore the fact that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was forced to become primarily a military alliance, owing to the urgent threat of the Russian war machine. Looking further ahead, towards the objective of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all free men, they are anxious to achieve the non-military NATO goals of free trade, international co-operation, free movement of individuals and widespread freedom from want.

### The Canadian Clause

This attainable dream is the objective of the famous "Canadian Clause," Article Two of the North Atlantic Treaty, which was proposed by Mr. St. Laurent himself.

As a first step, the group of supporters of Article Two among Senators and M. Ps here want to lift the whole NATO organization out of the control of the military chiefs and civil servants who now run it, and put it in the hands of the people, in the form of their elected parliamentary representatives.

Canada as the Father of Article Two, if not of the whole NATO idea, is appropriately giving a lead to her allies, in being the first group to form this NATO Parliamentary Association. It is confidently expected that our thirteen NATO allies will quickly follow our example and form similar NATO associations of members

of their own legislatures. The first more widespread social step is then to hold the inaugural meeting of all these Parliamentarians from all the NATO member countries in Paris next Easter.

In the five years since the North Atlantic Treaty was signed, it has grown into a huge and secretive monolithic military organization; nothing has yet been done towards attainment of the objectives of Article Two. This, rather than the military field, is where the Parliamentary Association can play a key role, by padding the backs of those governments which are holding back. In the matter of freeing trade, for example, possibly the greatest offender is our great neighbour, but it may be questioned whether Canada's own skirts are entirely clean.

The significance of the broad NATO project is that it offers an idealism towards which the free world can work positively, in place of our present negative approach of merely opposing communism. We have to our south an example of the great economic strength and individual prosperity which can be built up by a huge modern state, enjoying free trade, free movement of individuals, and co-ordinated overall control of external affairs and internal policies. The NATO target is to repeat this example on an even larger basis, by abolishing the outdated nationalism which carves the western world, especially western Europe, into a number of small self-contained sovereign states hedged around with barriers and restrictions.

The projected Union of the Atlantic Basin would not involve surrender of national sovereignty, but would replace it by democratic co-operation in fields of common interest, such as foreign affairs, trade and defence. The result would be to offer better jobs, lower taxes, cheaper goods, freedom from war, freedom from want and the ability to af-

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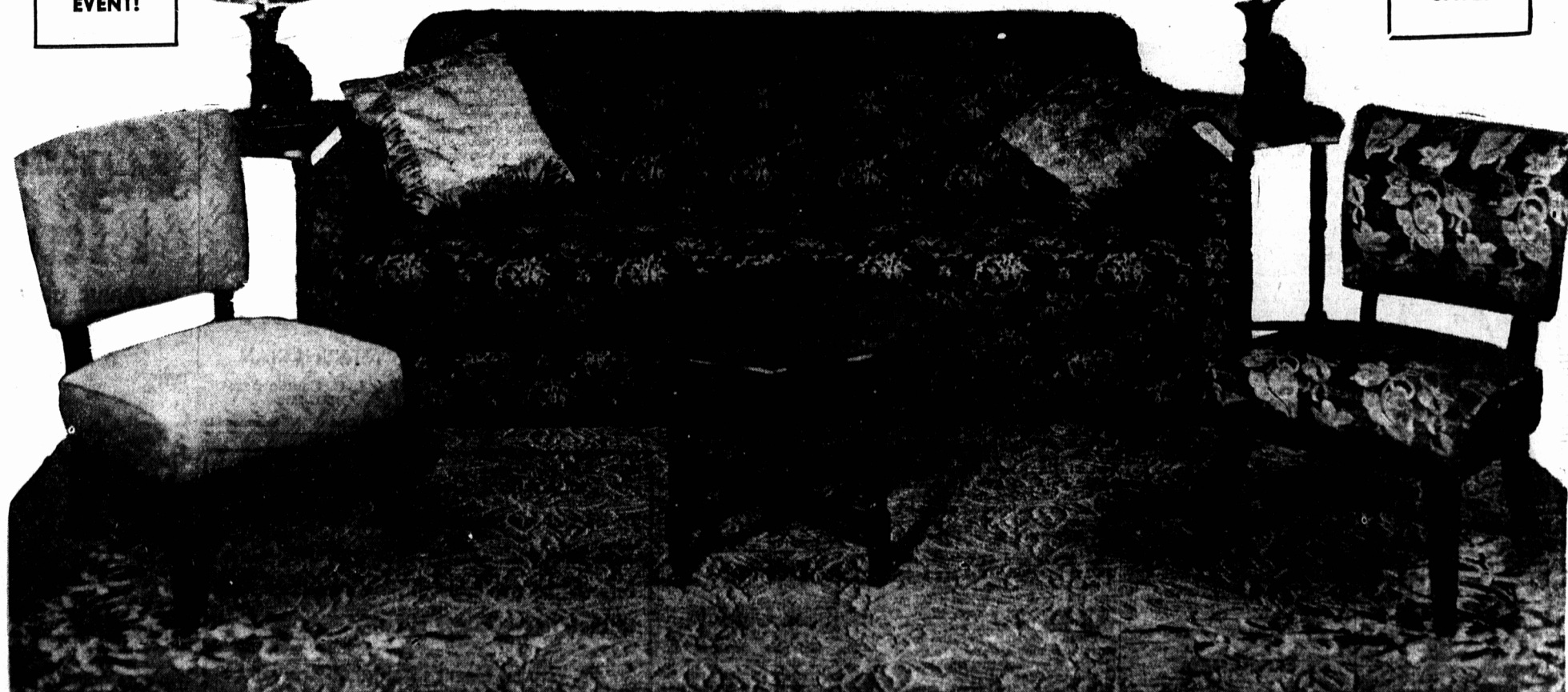
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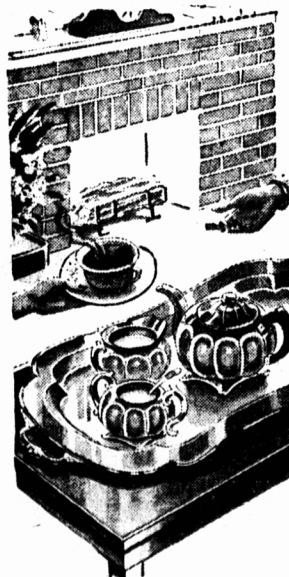
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