

if one still has the courage to do so, with the effeminate and disintegrated XIX century works, one suddenly becomes humble. (Unless one is so superficial and childish as to believe that a greater knowledge of matter brings with it a corresponding deepening of man's powers to think and create.) Not to have seen Europe, is similar to not having read any literature, philosophical or otherwise, prior to 1800.

Art has been revived in our century. With much agony and chaos, but rescued nonetheless. Humility, greatness, authenticity have now begun (how slowly!) to replace ostentatiousness, grandiloquence and eclecticism. But not in church building. (Are there ten churches in the U. S. A. and Canada that merit to figure in a history of contemporary architecture? No architect worthy of the name would dare say so?) Through the mercy of God and notwithstanding the stupidity or ignorance of men, a new dawn seems to loom ahead. Already, a few small humble churches, built with love and care, wisdom and poverty, and with a great respect for the material employed, all of these virtues informed by taste and knowledge, have sprung up. Who knows but in a few decades, even cathedrals But sadly, one must admit that even the idea of a church that would be for New York what Notre Dame was for Medieval Paris, or St. Peter's for Renaissance Rome, a church that would have the noble simple grandeur of the United Nations Building, that would cry to God, in a modern idiom, the glory that is due to Him from men of the XXth century, towering boldly towards the sky its song of glass and reinforced concrete, such a church is still unthinkable.

But who knows? It may be that we do not merit it. God may want it in Moscow before the end of the century. If we are not blessed with great architects devoted to the Sacred, it must be that our hearts lie not with God, but with the State, the Bank, Comfort and Hollywood. Which explains why the finest architecture can be found in New York, the United Nations, Lever Bros, in Miami's hotels, in Mexico's State University or in California's theatres. How true that art is an incarnation of our own image.

We are the mirrors, the symbols and parables of God's goodness, wisdom and omnipotence; and ART is the image of our original greatness, of our redeemed goodness, and of our unfailing weakness.

Rev. Adrien Arsenault

DIETARY MADNESS

Many of these Dietary customs are of the past, yet it is still of interest to know them.

Just as do the birds, many Far Eastern people, especially the Chinese, eat pests. The Chinese have aided the war on insects by using these pests as both food and medicine.

It is generally known that some insects taken internally do have some degree of nutritional or medicinal value. The praying mantis, for example, contains 58% protein, 12% fat, 3% ash, vitamin-B complex and vitamin A. The insect's outer skeleton is an interesting compound of sugar and amino acids. The dried centipede, composed almost entirely of muscle protein, horny substance, mineral salts and other compounds, was

considered to be a potent medicine by primitive Chinese pharmacists for snake bites, facial paralysis, convulsions and demon possession.

Today, several species of insects still are used as medicines by Chinese pharmacists, apparently because of their protein and vitamin B content. Hornets' nests, for example, contain 7.5% nitrogen, 11.5% ash and 10% water. The dried pill bug of the Chinese pharmacy contains as much as 45% ash and 23% protein. These scientific facts were, and still are, not known to many of the good Chinese. They have used them for reasons other than those derived from the ash and protein.

Powdered dried horseflies snuffed into the nose is said to remedy eye-lashes that curl the wrong way. Horseflies suck the blood of horses, so in Chinese lore they are suggested for the relief of congestion and to help cure bruises and black eyes. Following the same principle, woodpeckers which pick grubs out of tree trunks, supposedly pick worms out of aching teeth if the dead bird is administered in pill form. The longhorn beetle, known as "heavenly cow" because the horns are like a water buffalo's, is used to treat severe convulsions in infants and as a facial cosmetic in the Chinese beauty parlor. Spiders fed on lard, killed and smeared on the feet will, it is believed, enable one to walk on the surface of water. It was also said that diving beetles cured circulatory diseases, and obstructions of the bowels, and that it stopped the night crying of children.

The stinkbug, called the "nine smell insect", may be prescribed for "weakness" of the kidneys. Five-hundred lice ground up are supposed to relieve a splitting headache when taken internally, or they may be applied locally to eat off warts. Seven insects boiled with two eggs was the old standard treatment for rabies.

It is quite acceptable, however, to use almost anything for medicine; but to use insects as food, that story should be more sensational.

Bee larvae were eaten by the ancient Chinese. And some Chinese today eat locusts, dragonflies, and bumblebees. Cockroaches and locusts were a favorite dish in Szechuan. In Kwangtung grasshoppers, golden June beetles, crickets, stinkbugs, wasp larvae and silkworm larvae are still used for food. Centuries ago ants, bees and cicadas were used by the Chinese for food, and sacrificial dishes contained pickled ants' eggs, which were eaten in the south by tribal chieftains. Termites (white ants) are eaten even today by the hill tribes of Burma.

The composition of Chinese honey is much the same as that produced in other parts of the world: a very concentrated form of sugar and a little dextrin. Its nutritive and laxative properties are well recognized. Orientals used honey to clarify vision and for cloudiness of the cornea.

The ancient Chinese banquet consisted of three hundred and sixty courses—from raw monkey brain to bear palms—and the whole banquet would last from five to seven days. Snakes, dogs and cats are considered to be "winter tonics" among the common people of South China. Birds-nest soup and shark-fin soup may sound strange to you but they are much liked by the Chinese. Bird-nest soup is just a general term. More specifically, it must be called the "sea swallow nest soup". The sea swallow is a species of the sea bird living on the high

cliffs of the South seas and they build their nests with their saliva. And I am sure you know what shark's fin is. They are rather expensive. So if you are invited by a Chinese to dinner, the first course of the meal will be either birds-nest soup or shark-fin soup. If, unfortunately, it is neither, I am sorry to say that you are being treated cheaply by your host.

—BY AGNAST '60

THE THIRD DAY

The woman standing before me was old and wrinkled. Her hair was snowy white which made a sharp contrast with the silk beret she was wearing. Her eyes were a bright blue and shone with a girl's eagerness. But nowhere have I seen a smile such as hers. The white haired woman became a mischievous girl when she smiled.

Older women in Iceland still wear the national costume in the streets. This particular person wore a costume of black silk embroidered on the front. She wore a shawl of the same color. But her greatest asset was that childish smile she loved to display.

"I see you are not from here. And you have not seen our Iceland yet. Tell me, how long have you been in Reykjavik?"

"Four days."

"Ja! Then you have only seen the city, the lake, the cathedral and the cod driers."

"That is all."

I will then tell you what to see. And this you must, because you cannot leave Iceland before. I will tell what it is and you will not regret my advice."

By now I was in a frenzy of excitement and she knew it. Her eyes were shining fires, and her smile never left her. She was having fun playing with me like a cat teasing a mouse.

"But what is it?"

"Come with me."

She took me to the main section of the city and walked up to a gentleman at a desk. She spoke Icelandic and kept tossing her head in my direction. I felt frustrated, not understanding.

"You go. Maybe you will not see me again, but—" she became almost melodramatic—"you will see something we are proud of, and you will not forget soon."

I stood there, not knowing what she had got me into, and I watched her walk off over the thick moss of the park.

I agreed to follow her advice and I never shall forget the spectacle offered me the next afternoon.

When I came to the bus at the Reykjavik depot, I heard an unearthly mixture of languages. Everybody seemed to be in earnest quarrel inasmuch as the whole group was talking a mile a minute and at the same time. Among the languages there was Icelandic, English, Danish, Swedish and a bit of German. In the Icelandic I was hearing one of the oldest and purest languages in the world. Icelandic dates back a thousand years to Leif Erikson. The only features of change is the addition of

a modern vocabulary to the old one. A schoolboy can read with no great difficulty the sagas of old, whereas no Frenchman can understand the Chanson de Roland, or no Englishman Beowulf without a translation.

The trip of about an hour and a half was made in a rickety old vehicle which would have been more at home as a museum piece alongside the Viking longships. Fortunately, for linguistic purposes, I was appointed to a seat beside a young English girl by the name of Erika. I had said a couple of words in Danish to her, and when she heard the frightfully painful performance, she took it for granted I was not a "Norseman". She was not exactly comely, but she had a way of talking that made one feel at ease. She turned out to be a photographer for an obscure London paper. She was travelling with the purpose of taking shots all over Iceland. She was just as excited as I was at what lay ahead since it was her first look at the great geyser, the one that gave its name to all others in the world.

The driver announced in Icelandic that we had arrived. But it was only because we stopped that I realized what was going on.

Before us was a great wasteland, bare of practically all vegetation save the ever-present moss—there is no wild grass in Iceland due to its structure and position. Instead a very light bluish-green moss two or three inches thick covers the rock. Here it had a sickening, burnt color and was dull under the sun. Neither Erika nor I could conceal our disappointment. Had we come to see a big open field?

We were ushered into a small restaurant where we met a man about fifty, now bent with rheumatism. His face had the texture of parchment but his eyes were young. As we walked in, he looked up, stroked the small beard he had worn for the last twenty five years, and sighed.

"English?" he asked. We answered affirmatively. He took us both under his wing and between bad English and Danish, he managed to elucidate the bewildering facts. He made us look through the window and pointed towards a yellow-brown mass partly concealed by men and women.

"Those people have picnic," he said. We nodded. "But soon they have to go. It not be safe." Again we nodded, not understanding. Now, for me not to grasp something immediately obvious was nothing strange, but for a newspaper woman such as Erika, this was, I thought, utterly hopeless.

"I see you not understand. I explain. You see, they sit now on top of geyser."

The impact of such a blunt and matter of fact statement gave rise to different reactions. The Germans, for whom all this was translated, gave a very dignified grunt and said, "Ach so?"; the Swedes and the Danes were much too blasé to care; Erika's eyes gleamed as she saw a scoop in the making; I stared blankly at the cone suddenly become some monstrous thing of dread.

"But geyser tired, he no—how you say—go up today."

Even the Swede and the Dane manifested their disappointment and a long incoherent argument ensued in which I took no part. I know enough German to have realized that the woman swore vehemently, a fact that