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Yokohama City University, contributed the
following cartoon (seminar announcement):

H. B. Sarnat & M. G. Netsky 著

Evolution of the Nervous System

Chap. 9 Cerebellar system 1/5

脊椎動物の脳は
如何に進化してきたか?



第2解剖学教室 読書会

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Exit Laughing

(from Field and Stream)

BY ED ZERN

Nobody knows for certain when man first discovered that spoken language could be pictographed on stone slabs, or cuneiformed on clay tablets, and that papyrus reeds could be matted and pounded together and then dried to make crude paper on which phonetic squiggles could be made with goose quills dipped in cuttlefish ink to represent the sounds of human speech, but I'm eternally thankful it happened, as otherwise I would be unable to leave notes for the milkman when I go on trips and would be up to my belly button in cartons of sour milk when I got back, nor would John Barsness, one of Montana's classier outdoor writers, have been able to write to me recently more or less as follows (mostly less, as I've omitted parts of his letter for lack of space):

"I've just read your latest *Exit Laughing* report on the Axolotl Society and wondered if any of the members have actually encountered an axolotl.

... When I was very young my parents spent summers in Virginia City, Montana, a partially restored gold-rush ghost town just over the hill from Ennis and the Madison River, where my father operated the old newspaper printing offices and my uncle directed the Virginia City Players, an acting troupe that performed 19th-century farces and vaudeville. Both Virginia City and Nevada City, just down the road, were owned, restored, and operated by a rather eccentric millionaire named Charley Bovey. He rebuilt the old shops and filled them with old merchandise and wax figures of storekeepers and shoppers.

"We lived in an old house at the end of Main Street and on more than one occasion tourists walked in the front door expecting another display. I recall one female tourist who gasped, 'It moved!' and fainted when my mother reached for the water pitcher. One of my earliest memories is of walking with my mother on the boardwalk on Main Street and then down into the cool hollow where the old brewery stood. I don't know for sure if Bovey owned the brewery but I suspect he did, because no one else would have hired the gnome who operated it. The gnome was an old prospector; there were several of these local characters, one of whom took to shooting arrows at tourists. I think he got tired of people pulling at his whiskers to see if they were real. They were, and so were the arrows.

"The brewery was built beside a creek, and in some of the old vats the brewer kept fresh creek water and what were locally known as mud-puppies, which appeared to be elderly salamanders and were actually axolotls from the five Axolotl Lakes which lie above Virginia City toward the Madison Divide. The brewer and his



axolotls are long gone, although axolotls probably still exist in the lakes. My memories of them are dim, as I was only three or four when I saw them, but I distinctly remember their color [muddy brown], size [approximating pan-size trout], and their Jurassic aura. They appeared even more primitive than any creature I've ever seen in Montana, including the prospectors.

"Each summer my cousin Eric and I plan a trip to the Axolotl Lakes in Eric's 'partially restored' Model A Ford sedan, but keep getting sidetracked. If we ever do make it we'll notify the Society."

This reminded me that I first visited Virginia City thirty-odd years ago with Martin Bovey, Charley's brother, who lived near Boston and made documentary films on wildlife, especially on waterfowl, and was active in Ducks Unlimited and Trout Unlimited. He introduced me to Charley, then a resident of Montana and a state senator, who seemed to be a nice guy, as was Martin. I don't know if they were millionaires, but I got the impression that neither of them was on welfare. We walked around the ghost town, then still in the process of restoration—I remember Charley was proud of his collection of old player pianos—but nobody shot any arrows at us. I'm not sure how many members of the Axolotl Society have actually seen an axolotl, but I'm sending John's letter on to the Supreme Salamander with a suggestion that John be considered for associate lizardship.

Another letter, from William A. Walker of Sacramento, California, wants to know if fishermen are always liars. And of course, the answer is no,

not always. There are, in fact, two circumstances in which fishermen tell the truth about their catches. One is a surprising circumstance, and one is an astonishing circumstance. The surprising circumstance is when the fisherman opens his tackle box and finds a mysterious vial in it. He opens the vial out of curiosity, and a strange greenish vapor emerges from it. The vapor then materializes into a 10-foot-high genie or djinn wearing a turban and a ferocious scowl and carrying a razor-sharp scimitar. The djinn then seizes the fisherman and, having unrolled a magic carpet, steps aboard it and the two of them are instantly transported to the djinn's castle at the top of a snow-covered mountain, where the djinn declares in thunderous tones that unless the fisherman tells within half a pound the exact weight of the large-mouth bass he had previously described as weighing "just under six pounds" he will be chopped into ten thousand bloody pieces, as will all members of his immediate family. Ashen with terror the fisherman then tells the true weight of the bass (3 pounds 4 ounces).

The astonishing circumstance is when the fisherman tells the truth of his own free will.