

Cheese Thermometer

As requested by the Lady Katerina De Barbershoppe on the twenty third night of March in bequest of Baron Von Munchausen to one Baron Celsius Von Barrow. Being transcripts of some merit.

I'd heard of you work in temperature in France. So how is it that you utilised the cheeses of France to invent a more modern thermometer than the old mercury thermometer?

Lord Peter: And how you didn't actually use the Eiffel Tower.

Well, at the time I believe it was on its way to Louisiana.

Lord Peter: I believe there were no rabbits involved whatsoever.

There were rabbits involved.

I was recovering from a cold at the time. My doctor recommended a light trampling - an American chap, you might know him?

Captain Sir Robert: Isn't it a fact, I'm afraid a well known fact, that Baronet Clive Masterly's doctor is totally insane?

I had reason to suspect when he, and I won't mention it as there are ladies present, where he had me put the thermometer. Actually I will, it was on Mercury. The problem with thermometers of course, is the import duties. Having recovered from a cold, and a few weeks in traction, not being as robust as Baronet Masterly. I was suspecting for a while that the cure was in fact worse than the disease. The noble cold being a fairly rarefied disease that I was privileged to get as proof of my high birth and standing.

I had to stick this thermometer on Mercury, and other unmentionable places. I use my team of racing rabbits. It's a big jump, but I find if I lure them with a vulture, a homing vulture, a Mercurian vulture obviously. The rabbits will get excited enough and pursue it.

Lord Peter: How did you manage to obtain a Mercurian vulture all the way from Mercury without having to go to Mercury first?

Racing vultures are raised in pairs, for long distance travel. You take an egg from anywhere on Earth, Louisiana, Paris, Beijing, and take it Mercury. You put it in a nest in any of the cities on Mercury: Celsius, not named after me - it was an honourable ancestor, or say Robertson to name one of the others. It hatches in a nest, it will then fly. Not immediately of course, several hours later at least. The Earth born vulture will feel out of place and shoot off to Beijing, or Paris...

Captain Sir Robert: I thought it was rather simpler than that? Mercury being up in the sky, all you had to do was push the egg off the edge and it would fall to the Earth?

You can do that, but not all eggs bounce. It's much more efficient to take down the egg. The key thing is, being a herd breed, your common racing vulture bring it clutch-mate. So it is the most efficient way getting Mercurian racing vulture to Earth. The cheese, I was getting to the cheese... Travel to Mercury was lovely this time of year. Mercury is in fact lovely every time of the year. It's close to Sun you see and therefore of a much balmier temperature all year around.

Lord Peter: So you made the entire trip in the day then?

Well you have to see, the vultures need to see their way, they're useless in the dark. This was a dashed inconvenience though as I'd recently come out of traction and wasn't feeling my best. It was a dreadful year - the Tuning Forks were on strike, I'd lost an Eiffel Tower, it was not a good time for me. So what I thought was - what I really need to do, is invent a better thermometer. I'm a dab hand at inventing thermometers, I've invented several in my lifetime. For reasons best not gone into, the returning vulture homed in on a landmark in Paris. Certainly not the thing you mentioned earlier. The largest museum in Paris. I found myself in the remains of a large gathering and a large amount of blue lard. I thought this would be the perfect thing for a thermometer. As you know lard, being a fatty thing, if exposed to temperature it becomes high. Unfortunately the lard had been eaten and I had to settle for the next best thing - cheese. Using this property of cheese to become high when exposed to large amounts of heat, I developed a new reliable thermometer.

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