

THE OBSERVER

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Entered in the Post Office at La Grande, Oregon, as second class matter.

Advertising rates on application. All copy for display advertising must reach the office the day before the ad appears. Address all communications to

THE OBSERVER, 1710 Sixth Street. SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

Daily, single copy 5c
 Daily, per week 15c
 Daily, per month 65c
 Daily, six months in advance...\$3.50
 Daily, per year in advance...\$7.00
 Daily, by mail per year, in advance...\$4.00
 Weekly Observer-Star, per year in advance...\$1.50

WESTERN CANADA DEPRESSED.

In eastern Canada the financial strain occasioned by war is being relieved by the receipt of large war orders which will provide work for the industrial population. One such order for \$83,000,000 worth of war materials, so overwhelmed the dominion that three-quarters of the total contract was sublet to American firms. The wheat country profited somewhat by the increased price of wheat, but a short crop in 1914 reduced income from that source. British Columbia, however, has neither manufacturing plants nor wheat prairies. The province must bear all the strain of war without any compensation whatever, and even more of a strain than the average because her overseas trade has been badly dislocated.

Therefore British Columbia declares a moratorium in all contracts relating to land. As long as the moratorium obtains, judges are authorized not to enforce the "payment of moneys relating wholly or in part to principal due or accruing interest." No land owner can be forced to pay the interest due on a mortgage loan; no mortgage can be foreclosed. The writ, furthermore, has a retroactive effect, "since it applies to actions pending in the provincial courts."

The object of this legislation, of course, is to protect land owners from being sold out according to the terms upon which they borrowed. The law relieves one class of citizens living up to their contract obligations while other debt contracts not based on land remain in force.

If this moratorium applied only to bonafide settlers it might be justifiable in reason if not in law. But it applies

equally to lumber companies, mining corporations and all speculators and exploiters in public domain. As long as the moratorium continues these can continue without cost to their grip upon the natural resources of the province.

How much of the distress which the moratorium discloses is due to the war and how much to the natural reaction following years of booming the province will never be known. British Columbia, all of upper Canada, was in bad shape before last August. The bucket of business was already full of rotten spots when Mars kicked it over. But it is easy enough to read the effect of this artificial aid to solvency upon the future of the province. Capital, cheated by government of its contract rights, will fight shy of British Columbia for years to come. In common with all new and undeveloped districts the province will long need investments from outside. Outraged economic law sooner or later has its revenge.

Of course every girl wants a model young man, but she prefers the latest model.

JAPAN'S RAID UPON CHINA

What Japan exacts of China is the surrender of its sovereignty. Japan asks more of China than Austria asked of Serbia last July.

The demands made upon China by Japan contemplated the political, commercial, financial and social conquest of a nation of 400,000,000 by a nation of perhaps 70,000,000.

What Japan demands of China is that it be permitted to build, own and manage some of China's most important railroads; that it have a virtual monopoly of mining, agriculture and manufacturing in important districts; that it be accorded control of Chinese governmental and military affairs; that no other power shall ever be given, by cession or lease, any territory in China, and that China shall be bound forever to purchase one-half or more of its munitions of war from Japan.

In the war now raging in Europe, Japan is ostensibly an ally of Great Britain. With true Oriental cleverness, it subscribed to the high ideals professedly upheld in London. It was outraged by the oppression of Serbia. It was shocked by the wantonness of the German invasion of Belgium. Yet what it is doing now, and what it has been doing ever since it engaged in the strife is to make scraps of paper of treaties and other engagements quite as important as that which was torn up by the German war party at Liege.

Japan is taking advantage of the situation, much as some Christian nations similarly placed might do. In the quarrels of Christendom it finds its opportunity. To the aggression and bad faith of Western civilization it appeals for example and instruction. A nominal ally, it assumes in its own case to make sure of the spoils of victory long in advance of victory or peace, not yet in sight so far as its breath in arms are concerned.

Much is to be said in favor of Japanese influence in the Far East, wisely and justly exerted, but there can be no defense of Japanese arrogance and greed. Japan's policy in China is an affront not only to its allies but to the United States. It is in violation of solemn obligations. In due time it must ultimately be reviewed and corrected by a world that cannot always be mad.—New York World.

Some Forms of Rheumatism Curable

Rheumatism is a disease characterized by pains in the joints and in the muscles. The most common forms are: Acute and Chronic Rheumatism, Rheumatic Headaches, Sciatic Rheumatism and Lumbago. All of these types can be helped absolutely by applying some good liniment that penetrates. An application of Sloan's Liniment two or three times a day to the affected part will give instant relief. Sloan's Liniment is good for pain, and especially Rheumatic Pain, because it penetrates to the seat of the trouble, soothes the afflicted parts and draws the pain. "Sloan's Liniment is all medicine." Get a 25c. bottle now. Keep it handy in case of emergency.

THE BLACK BOX
(Continued from Page 2.)

"In just the same way," he explained, "that I am sending her this message at the present moment—a message which she will receive and understand wherever she is hidden. Would you like to know what I am telling her?"

The man shivered. His eyes, as though fascinated, watched the little instrument.

"I am saying this, Craig," Quest continued. "Craig is here and in my power. He is sitting within a few feet of me and will not leave this room until he has told me your whereabouts. Keep up your courage, Lenora. You shall be free in an hour."

The trapped man looked away from the instrument into Quest's face. There was a momentary flicker of something that might have passed for courage in his tone.

"Mr. Quest," he said, "you are a wonderful man, but there are limits to your power. You can tear my tongue out from my mouth, but you cannot force me to speak."

Quest leaned a little farther forward in his chair, his gaze became more concentrated.

"That is where you are wrong, Craig. That is where you make a mistake. In a very few minutes you will be telling me all the secrets of your heart."

Craig shivered, drew back a little in his chair, tried to rise and fell back again helpless.

"My God!" he cried. "Leave me alone!"

"When you have told me the truth," Quest answered swiftly, "and you will tell me all I want to know in a few minutes. . . . Your eyelids are getting a little heavy, Craig. Don't resist. Something which is like sleep is coming over you. You see my will has yours by the throat."

Craig shook his head. A very weak smile of triumph flickered for a moment at the corners of his lips.

"Your torture chamber trick won't work on me!" he exclaimed. "You can never—"

The whole gamut of emotions seemed already to have spent themselves in the man's face, but at that moment there was a new element, an element of terrified curiosity in the expression of his eyes as he stared towards the door.

"Is this another trick of yours?" he muttered.

Quest, too, turned his head and sprang instantly to his feet. From underneath the door came a little puff of smoke. There was a queer sense of heat of which both men were simultaneously conscious. Down in the street arose a chorus of warning shouts, increasing momentarily in



"Mount Those Stairs, Craig."

volume. Quest threw open the door and closed it again at once.

"The place is on fire," he announced briefly. "Pull yourself together, man. We shall have all we can do to get out of this."

Craig turned to the door, but staggered back almost immediately.

"The stairs are going!" he shrieked. "It is the kitchen that is on fire. We are cut off! We cannot get down! We are out for us on his hands and knees, fumbling under his trucklebed. He pulled out a crude form of fire escape, a rough sort of cradle with a rope attached.

"Know how to use this?" he asked Craig quickly. "Here, catch hold. Put your arms inside this strap."

Yard by yard, swinging a little in the air, Craig made his descent. When he arrived in the street there were a

hundred willing hands to release him. Quest drew up the rope quickly, warned by a roar of anxious voices. Then he commenced to descend, letting himself down hand over hand, always with one eye upon that length of rope that swung below. Suddenly, as he reached the second floor a little cry from the crowd warned him of what had happened. Tongues of

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flame curling out from the blazing building had caught the rope, which was being burned through not a dozen feet away from him. He descended a little farther and paused in mid-air.

A shout from the crowd reached him.

"The cables! Try the cables!"

He glanced round. Seven or eight feet away, and almost level with him, was a double row of telegraph wires. Almost as he saw them the rope below him burned through and fell to the ground. He swung a little towards the side of the house, pushed himself vigorously away from it with his feet, and at the farthest point of the outward swing jumped. His hands grasped the telegraph wires safely. Even in that tense moment he heard a little sob of relief from the people below.

Hand over hand he made his way to the nearest pole and slipped easily to the ground. The crowd immediately surged around him.

"Where is the man who came down before me?" he asked a bystander.

"Talking to the police in the car over yonder," was the hoarse reply. "Say, guv'nor, you only just made that!"

Craig pushed his way through the crowd to where Craig was speaking eagerly to French. He stopped short and stooped down. He was near enough to hear the former's words.

"Mr. French, you saw the man come down the ropes and swing on the cables? That was Quest, Sanford Quest, the man who escaped from the Tombs prison. He can't have got away yet."

Quest drew off his coat, turned it inside out and replaced it swiftly. He coolly picked up a hat someone had lost in the crowd and pulled it over his eyes. He passed within a few feet of where Craig and the inspector were talking.

"Say, boys, Sanford Quest is in the crowd somewhere. He's the man who jumped on the cable lines. A hundred dollars for his arrest!"

Quest turned reluctantly away. Men were rushing about in all directions for him.

(To be Continued Tomorrow.)

A MAN-POWER RAILROAD.

The railroad that pays the biggest dividends on the capital invested is, according to the Technical World Magazine, the Grand Island railroad. It is in northern Alberta, Canada, 200 miles from any trunk line or feed. It is only a quarter of a mile long and built of scrap iron on wooden rails. Its rolling stock consists of two battered freight cars which are pushed along the road by the men who ship the freight, no locomotive being used. The freight that is handled on this road consists principally of furs, which are towed up the Athabasca river on scows hauled by men, are laden on the cars, pushed down the railroad and shipped again on other

scows, thereby circumventing the dangerous Grand rapids. Returning, the scows carry all sorts of freight for the Hudson Bay company's factories and are floated down the river. The Hudson Bay company charges \$2.50 a ton for all freight on this little railroad, and the shipper must handle his own goods and push the cars himself.

A woman politician in Paris, Ill., has been arrested on the charge of paying \$2 apiece for votes. So it seems that in cases of emergency women no longer wait for things to be marked down to \$1.98.



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