

The Ontario Argus (Established 1896)

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The Pledge. I pledge my allegiance to my Flag and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with Liberty and justice for all.

A FALLEN IDOL. Years ago Robert M. LaFollette was the idol of a vast number of American citizens. Especially was he held in high esteem by thousands in Wisconsin and its neighboring states, where his vicious attacks on the corporations earned for him the nickname, "Fighting Bob."

So popular did he become as Governor and Senator that he was a contender of the presidency. Viewed in the light of history it must be admitted that the greatest service ex-President Roosevelt ever did for the country was in defeating LaFollette for the nomination by securing that of ex-President William Howard Taft in the Chicago convention of 1908.

CONSCRIPTING WEALTH.

There is considerable discussion these days about conscripting wealth, as well as men. Such a phrase is a handy catch for the sophist who would mislead the unthinking. Many who have not given the question serious consideration, or only half investigated what it would lead to, see in the failure of Congress to pass such an act an attempt to saddle the expense of the war on those who are least able to bear its burdens.

At the present time what America must do, first of all, is to win the war. Let theories of taxation and economic problems go hang, now, win the war is the first and foremost consideration at this time.

To win the war the efficiency of the instruments at hand is the next and all important consideration. Have the officials of the government shown such a degree of managerial capacity that the people are willing to entrust their now overworked departments to take over at this crisis the problem of managing everything in the United States. Do they want the men who months after they received appropriations of millions for air ships had not been able to add a single flier to the army or navy to conduct the work of producing all the ammunition, all the guns, build all the ships needed in this war?

These statements are made, not to discredit the government officials who are facing the greatest problem man ever faced, and are no doubt doing their best and performing many wonderful things, but to show the absurdity of asking men to do the impossible.

Under private management factories of all kinds for the manufacture of army supplies have shown wonderful ability, by relief from governmental red tape they have been

able to reach proportions that could have resulted only after years of delay in the mazes of department red tape. Let these men continue in control. Let them serve the government in the capacities in which they have been trained. Tax their war profits where they can be arrived at with accuracy, but to confiscate their property would merely drive them to other fields of activity and the government would lose that which it needs most in efficiency.

There is another consideration. Wealth is a volatile substance. It can withdraw from activity. It can be and is hid from the eyes of the government officials. Any tax roll proves that conclusively. To take steps to confiscate wealth at this time would be a colossal failure, just as it might be, and as it seems to some. Wealth and the capital it represents would leave the country to Canada, to England, to Mexico, to Japan, to every nation where no such measure exists. It might be well in that connection for those who advocate the conscription of wealth to consider the fact that they have been at war for years, have spent billions to our millions, that none of the warring nations have as yet enacted such a law. Even autocratic Germany, hard pressed though she must be, has taken such a step. There must be a reason for this, and the reason is found in their belief that wealth used for the government purposes is better than wealth merely in the hands of the government.

By raising the income and war taxes gradually, by the issue of bonds for the present, and imposing greater taxes on war profits with the next congress, in other words by giving wealth and those who handle it an opportunity of meeting changed conditions, congress will serve the nation best. Then after the war, when time will have been given to a more carefully planned scheme of taxation, a system can be devised for accomplishing what ought always to be the aim of the government, making those citizens pay the cost of the war and of all government, who can best afford to pay.

Ontario is not the only community with a water problem facing solution. The neighboring city of Vale, according to many of its citizens, is in a serious situation. Its water mains need extensive repairs. These repairs can not be met by the issuance of bonds for the city is bonded to its legal limit, or thereabout. It can not make the repairs by direct taxation for the taxes are high there now and to increase them would violate the recently enacted law of limitation to an increase of not more than 5 per cent, unless approved by the voters. Looking at it from every angle Vale is up against a "war" problem.

SPANISH IN THE HIGH SCHOOL.

The study of the Spanish language takes the transcendancy this year at the High school as the German vernacular passes into oblivion. Superintendent Douglass explains this fact as due to the increasing commercial relations of this country with South America since the war with Germany, and the necessity of becoming familiar with the Spanish language that we may deal intelligently. The unpopularity of Germany in the United States may account for the passing of the German language into oblivion.



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A Steeplejack and An Aeronautess

By WILLIAM CHANDLER

We are likely to adopt for an occupation what we have a passion for. Tom Gurley as soon as he could walk began to climb over the furniture, and his mother was in dread lest he get up on to a window sill and tumble out. A few years later his place of blissful rest was a treetop. Then he got to climbing water spouts and trellises on to roofs, and by this time, being old enough to go to work, he became a steeplejack.

Emily Radcliffe was built upon similar lines to Tom Gurley.

While Eben Radcliffe did not try to prevent his daughter from risking her neck in an aeroplane, he was very much averse to her marrying Tom Gurley, to whom she had become attached.

"What do you want to marry a steeplejack for?" he asked. "He'll break his neck and leave you a widow."

"No more than I'll come down with a thump in an aeroplane and leave him a widower," was the reply. Tom had one unfortunate trait. He was a spendthrift. Mr. Radcliffe in order to get the whip hand of him employed an agent to lend the young man all the money he wanted and draw the papers in such a way that if the funds were not paid at maturity he could arrest Tom and jail him. Of course the funds were not paid, and a constable was sent for Tom.

Emily got wind of the move and warned her lover. Tom kept an eye out for suspicious looking persons, and when he saw a man making a bee line for him he ran for his natural defense, a church spire. A tall elm stood beside the building, and Tom, catching a lower limb, pulled himself up and was soon in the topmost branches. The constable followed him, and Tom, climbing out on a branch overhanging the church, dropped to the roof.

The constable followed, and Tom, who had climbed the steeple before and knew every projection, climbed up to where the cone began. There was a lightning rod running to a point above the apex, and Tom went up by it and sat on the ball, holding to the weather vane.

This was more than the constable dared do. He descended by the way he had come and, once on the ground, settled himself to stare out the culprit. He had a good view of Tom, who must come down sooner or later and give himself up.

Now it happened that Emily needed to do some shopping that morning and passing the church saw her lover coiled on the apex of the church spire and the constable below watching him like a dog eyeing a coon. She took in the situation at once. She must help her lover out of his embarrassment, but how? Various plans suggested themselves. There seemed no way to help him unless she could feed him, and to convey food to the top of a steeple was not an easy thing to do.

"I have it!" she said presently, and away she went to put in practice a plan she had thought of. Going home, she made up a luncheon and put it in a pasteboard box, to which she attached a ball of twine. Then she got out her aeroplane and, rising in the air, made for a point above the steeple where Tom was a prisoner. Tom saw her and took heart. Creeping above the spire, she gradually drew nearer to a point where she could lower the box to Tom. He made several attempts to catch it and at last succeeded. Then he broke the twine, opened the box and proceeded to refresh himself.

The constable eyed the proceeding with chagrin. He reported it to his principal, who sent word to him that the prisoner could not stay where he was forever, even with food, and to keep on the job. So the constable had his food supplied from a restaurant. Tom looked down on his enemy eating comfortably from a table brought him for the purpose and wondered which of the two could hold out the longer.

When night came several assistants were thrown around the church to prevent the prisoner escaping under cover of the darkness. Tom winced. The weather was chilly and lowering, and he did not relish the kind of a bed he was subjected to for even a single night. Emily lay awake that night, thinking of her lover on his perch and worried lest he fall asleep, tumble off and be dashed to death.

If she could lower a box to Tom why could she not lower a rope to which he might cling and thus be carried away to safety? As soon as day came she arose, got out her aeroplane and, lashing a stout rope to it, knotted at intervals and a noose at the end, sailed for the steeple. When Tom saw her coming he supposed she was bringing him his breakfast; but, seeing the dangling rope, he saw at once what it meant and felt every confidence provided Emily could place it within his reach.

As good luck would have it, she succeeded the first time she tried in sailing right over him, and the rope grazed his shoulder. The dangerous part of the maneuver was leaving his seat without the rope being wrenched from his hold. He managed this dextrously and as soon as free from the spire lowered himself to the noose and, getting his legs into it, sat on it.

The guard below, seeing their prisoner sail away suspended from an aeroplane, gave up the watch and departed. Tom and Emily descended at a village miles distant from their home and decided to be married. After being united by a country parson they went back to the bride's father and were forgiven. But Tom left the profession of steeple climbing and went into business with his father-in-law.

The Argus Trade-at-Home Patronize Ontario Stores Department. Patronize Ontario Stores

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But the worst robber in all the world is a bad book. It has long been the devil's policy to keep the masses of mankind in ignorance; but, finding that they will read, he is doing all in his power to poison their books. Now, let's see what our rural friend is reading. Oh, sera avis! Oh, book without parallel in the history of commercial destruction! "The book" is a huge pictorial, tricolored retail catalogue.

The catalogues of mail order houses are a kind of leaky boat on the waters of temptation; some of the temptation will get in anyhow.

Mud is a Great Help Too. What is more natural with gloom, darkness, rain and mud surrounding a farmer or suburban dweller, when to venture forth means either a sacrifice of self or faithful horses, than for him to turn to the alluring catalogue for both pasture and a means of procuring the necessities of life? Thus it can be seen that the third and best factor in favor of the catalogue houses is mud.

Man is measured by his deeds, and it seems strange that after mastering the art of reading the stars, discovering the course of the planets, controlling the iron monster, the lightning, the sea and the wind, man shows his inability to conquer the one great problem which is proving such a drawback to the best expression of his life in rural districts as far as social and commercial conditions are concerned. Poor roads seem to be his heritage, his master.

A country's stability is measured by its agricultural importance, as the well being of a nation is like a tree - agriculture is its root; industry and commerce are its branches and its life. If the root be injured the leaves fall, the branches break away and the tree dies. Community pride begins where agriculture leaves off, and both are equal and inseparable in their importance to a healthy, happy, successful existence for man.

Blue Grass Roads Are Best. It is a pleasure to drive through the blue grass district of Kentucky, where they have what they call macadamized turnpikes. These roads are the equal of any paved city street and of course are passable at all seasons of the year. They cost approximately \$3,000 per mile. The highways in Kentucky are from thirty to sixty feet in width. It is estimated that were the highways of Illinois regulated to fifty feet \$25,000,000 could be added to the wealth of the farmers of the state. That alone would build more than 8,000 miles of road.

Spend \$150,000,000. This country today has about 2,250,000 miles of public highway, on which it is estimated that the people of the country are spending \$150,000,000 annually. Statistics say we also spend \$2,000,000,000 for alcohol, \$9,000,000,000 for tobacco, and it is said that the ladies spend \$25,000,000 yearly for candy. If all this money could be appropriated for road building we could have a turnpike to the moon.

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