Sunday Oregonian

ESTABLISHED BY HENRY L. PITTOCK.

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MAKING IT HARD FOR HIM.

In the last number of the Harney County News are three disconnected articles which, we think, can be combined to tell a story.

One is the announcement by the county agent of a field day at the agricultural experiment station, in which it is promised that all who come will be shown how the soil of Harney county, by proper use, can be made to produce 90 bushels of barley to the acre, or three tons of alfalfa in the first cutting.

Another is an article telling of the projected establishment of an air-mail service on September 1 between New York and San Francisco.

The third is an editorial on the cancellation of the mail clerk service on the Ontario-Crane branch of the Oregon Short line with the comment that Harney county had more dependable mail service thirty years ago, when mail deliveries were by stage over routes the longest in the country.

Harney county is the center of a vast area in central Oregon which invites development. The agricultural problems there are different perhaps from those of any other section. It is the effort of one public agency to solve these problems and bring this great area into a state of production for the benefit not alone of those who seek farm homes, but of the folk within the cities of the west who are now paying a high price for the halt in agricultural development.

Meanwhile another public agency hampers this programme by curtailing mail service down to a condition less satisfactory than that of the stage route service of pioneer days. The rural communities struggling against isolations that cannot at present be helped are to have further isolation imposed upon them, while the same department tickles the fancy of the great population centers with an air mail service.

In another connection it has been pointed out in these columns that despite the apparent movement from the farm to the city, a land hunger exists in fact. It was illustrated by countless inquiries concerning a recent opening of railroad land grants in Oregon and by the many pathetic instances wherein former soldier boys flocked to this state on the chance, in fact virtually hopeless, that they might acquire farms. There is still much unappropriated government land in Oregon, but it is in the sparsely-settled districts, and physical and climatic conditions make its use a problem for scientific solution. The agricultural college and the government agricultural department devote money and brains to the latter purpose.

For homes on the land men and women will endure necessary hardships. But needless hardships, even though comparatively small, become galling and finally discourage effort. The railroads have now penetrated central Oregon, but only two lines venture timidly into this area, which is as large as the state of Ohio. Fair means for giving central Oregon an adequate mail service which would relieve some of the tedium of comparative isolation are thus available and these means are improved by development of the automobile. But there is a lack of co-operation and helpfulness in one of the departments of the government. The efforts of other public agencies are discounted by its indifference. It hampers rather than helps the back-to-the-land movement. But it has money to burn for air mail between centers of population. The city man is to be given the inestimable pleasure of contemplating his letters and of marveling over the wonders of modern invention.

How romantic to look upon an envelope and realize that this scrap of paper has traveled across the continent on the wings of a bird! But the farmer can wait for his newspapers and letters, and do without his romance. Possibly Mr. Burleson believes the farmer should not be permitted to read at all. The food shortage requires all his time in the fields.

BACTERIA IN WAR.

The American surgeon who in London recently predicted that the next war would be won by the side possessing the most thorough knowledge of the destructive possibilities of bacteria has set certain of the medical journals of two countries to discussing the question seriously, but he is by no means the first to indulge in this line of fancy. It was H. G. Wells, if memory serves, who first suggested the infinite advantage the nation would possess which could develop a deadly ray, and the idea has been worked and reworked in a score of forms. It is interesting to discover that writers who have given thoughtful consideration to the subject have nearly always coupled the employment of disease germs and kindred agencies with the decline of chivalry and of regard for surviving remnants of distinction between combatants and non-combatants in war. For waging war by creating epidemics would necessarily include entire populations, sparing individuals because of neither age nor sex.

The drift in this direction may have set in longer ago than we now appreciate. The death of Lord Nelson was once held to have been in violation of the laws of "civilized" warfare, though no modern nation now hesitates to employ sharpshooters on the masts of ships if this will serve its purpose. But the real date of departure from the old traditions may be said to be that of the battle of Ypres, in which the Germans made their first gas attack. That they were subsequently beaten at their own game is beside the point, which is that when the bars were let down all sides were free to engage in the practice. We now know that in the next war there will in all probability be elaborate provision for gas offensives, as well as for defense against them.

"The final form of gas warfare, as I regard it," said Major-General Swinton, the British expert, "is germ warfare." There are none, perhaps, in this age of wonders who will declare that this is impossible, but it will be borne in mind also that science can hardly discover enough concerning disease germs to permit their use—as an imaginative writer, for example, has suggested, by sowing plague by airplane attack—without also learning something worth while as to measures of prevention. As the shield was the answer to the spear, and the gas mask to the gas attack, it is fair to presume that the bacteriologists who are now presented as our future soldiers will develop not only germ-sowing devices but also their appropriate phagocytes. It is so true that the two branches of warfare—defense as well as attack—universally develop in unison that we see nothing much in the prediction to justify us in losing sleep far in advance of the event.

CHAPLIN'S LATEST TUMBLE.

The fates might have spared us Charley. There were three before all others—Pickford and Fairbanks and Chaplin. To Charley we gave such tribute as princes do not receive. When the breath of scandal rose to a wind and rift us of his playmates—wafting them away to the seclusion of an ill-timed honeymoon—surely it were little enough to ask that we be permitted to retain our illusions concerning Charley. Yet there he sits in a divorce court, quite a different character from the happy, valorous vagrant of the films, whose quaint smile, huge shoes, queer little hat, rusty attire and jaunty cane were but the superficial garb of a genuine genius for merriment. Behind the farce and comicality of the Chaplin films the spectator always discerned chivalry and a refinement that rose above the custard pie barrage. It is only too apparent through the revelations of real life that the actor on the stage and the actor in privacy are two essentially varying characters. Of the merits of the Mildred Harris divorce suit against Chaplin no opinion need be ventured. A question suffices—why should scandal be a concomitant of the screen successes of these three?

They were children of the public, and badly spoiled children, at that. The bane of the adulation we accorded them was an engendered conceit that bade them believe themselves to be beyond the jurisdiction of the customary conventions. They walked apart from us, in an effulgent ether where to have one's way was to express individuality, reckless of the cost to others, and the canons of society were less than nothing to them—less than a maternal ordinance against jam is to the spoiled child. Censure should not be unmixed with pity, for Mary and Doug and Charley have lost that which may not be regained.

They had a debt to pay to the public—the debt of irreproachable private life. It was our right, as we paid at the window, to feel that the real characters of the three stars were as fine and genuine as those we endowed them with, through the films in which they played. Perhaps that would be asking too much, but at any rate it was our privilege to expect of them such conduct as does not lead to scandal and the divorce court. So each has lost a portion of capital, of the public confidence that made for supremacy. Never again will their more discerning following witness the pictures in which they star without the feeling that a fraud has been perpetrated; without a twist at the lips that signifies cynical appreciation of the joke or downright disapproval. One has the feeling that he has lost three friends, and that a trio of strangers confront him. But Chaplin, they might have spared him to us, just as he was.

HANDICAP OF INHERITED WEALTH.

Casual biographers of the late William K. Vanderbilt, who died in France recently, have unearthed a statement said to have been made by him some time before his death, to the effect that, whatever may be said of the man who makes money for the sake of making it, the one who is born with the proverbial spoon in his mouth is doomed to fall short of happiness. "Inherited wealth," he is quoted as saying, "is a big handicap to happiness. It is as certain death to ambition as cocaine is to morality."

Making due allowance for the hyperbole of an embittered man, it is possible to extract a grain of wisdom from the homily. It is unnecessary to assume that the chief end of existence is the accumulation of riches in order to reconcile with the probabilities Mr. Vanderbilt's suggestion that destiny was unkind to him because he was left from the beginning "with nothing to hope for, with nothing definite to seek or strive for." There have been sons of rich men who have made their way upward in the world, who have found zest in new problems, and who have made names for themselves in fields not associated with money grubbing. But it remains true that there is no motive that so sharpens the wits as the desire first to win in the struggle for existence and then to improve on its material conditions. As fruitful soils and sunny skies are apt to breed physical indolence, so great riches are likely to work unfavorably on those who are born to them. The youth who inherits the modest competence, the business and the sound traditions of a father who left him something to build upon may be better off than he who makes his start in grinding poverty, but there is small doubt that the chances are greatly against the over-rich. Even the satisfaction of building the foundation of a great fortune, whatever this may be worth, is denied him. "He must labor," as this descendant of the greater Vanderbilt put it, "simply to add to an oversufficiency."

It is not enough to say that those who are born too rich can give their money away if they want to, and start at scratch with the rest of the world. The answer is that it isn't done, and isn't likely to be done, nor do we suppose that our social problems would be even approximately solved if the potlach were to become universally fashionable. The Vanderbilt plaint contains no recipe for the sudden and artificial bringing on of the millenial dawn. But it does have a little value as showing once more that the lot of those who have nothing but money is not altogether enviable. Old Cornelius Vanderbilt got a good deal out of life, but the grandchildren and great-grandchildren can't begin to understand the kind of thrills that come to the average young man who is going through college "on his own."

RACING THE TRAIN.

A locomotive engineer of thirty years' experience comments, in an interview in The Oregonian, on the lack of precaution taken by the average motorist at railroad crossings, as compared with that exercised by the driver of a team a decade or so ago. The man in the farm wagon or carriage approached the crossing with care. He would usually stop, look and listen. The driver of the automobile dashes over the track without looking or listening.

So it appears to the man in the engine cab. Often this observation is correct, but we think that there is another element than wanton recklessness which has led many motorists into narrow escapes or made them victims of accident. They did look and did see the approaching train, and even so did not conceive that they were taking chances when they attempted to beat the train. They were reckless without knowing it.

In the days of highway travel by horse and wagon, the railway train was the speediest thing that man knew anything about. He was confined to a comparatively slow pace himself on the road and he had a wholesome respect for the thundering cars that ran on rails. Speed is now the companion of everybody who travels the road. It has bred not only contempt for the speed of other vehicles but an undue confidence in the speed of one's own vehicle.

The automobile driver has learned to judge speed in a way, also, but he overlooks the fact that this faculty is largely confined to judging the speed of a vehicle similar to his own. At the intersection of two country roads, or of two streets, when two automobiles are approaching in view of each other, either driver is able to tell with virtual exactness what will be the consequences if neither slackens his pace. Each is capable of judging the time at which the other automobile will reach the intersection.

The accuracy of this judgment is aided by the fact that each is generally traveling at approximately the same rate. It is further aided by the size of the other vehicle. Speed in such instances is unconsciously calculated from the rapidity with which objects on the other side of the approaching automobile are first hidden and then disclosed to view. The eye is capable of taking in the whole of the other vehicle and its velocity is mentally recorded without much difficulty.

Here we may find a reason why so many automobile drivers take what are apparently reckless chances at railroad crossings. They have become overconfident of their judgment of the speed of the approaching train as the result of ease with which they can determine the speed of an approaching automobile. But the train is usually traveling at two or three times the velocity of the automobile which competes with it for the crossing. By reason of its length one glance of the eye cannot take in its entire proportions. Objects on the other side of it remain longer hidden to view and it seems to be traveling at a much slower speed than is actually the case.

To attempt to beat a railway train over a crossing is one of the most dangerous things the driver of an automobile can do.

THROW OUT THE INCOMPETENTS.

What chance has Governor Cox to escape bearing the odium that attaches to the democratic party for the failure of the Wilson administration? The nationally-known correspondent, David Lawrence, himself a democrat, says that "the people are eager to know how far this democratic nominee is obliged to maintain in office incompetent democrats"; that "a large body of voters want a house-cleaning in Washington, and they don't care much who does it"; that "this element as well as the people who are democrats anyway but sick and tired of the Burlesons and the Creels and not altogether happy over Attorney-General Palmer's policies, can be reached by Governor Cox if he makes it very plain that he will do a thorough job of housecleaning if elected."

The main indictment which the people find against the Wilson administration is that it utterly fails to do the nation's business promptly and well, and does it badly at excessive cost. They trace its failure to the type of men that Mr. Wilson appoints and to his refusal to remove them, no matter how incompetent they prove, provided they please him personally.

Mr. Wilson is not content to appoint democrats; he must have democrats whose minds travel along with his own, who are subservient, lacking in independence and initiative, therefore dull, even stupid. If the law requires an appointee to be of some other than the democratic party, the president goes anywhere than to the republican party, which is the only other great party.

Effects of this method of selection became glaringly apparent during the war. Men whom he put at the head of departments failed miserably; for example, Baker, Daniels, W. B. Wilson, and the real work was done by men whom he called to their aid temporarily from outside the political field, like Baruch, Hoover, Stettinius, Ryan and others. The emergency no sooner ended than these men retired, and they were quickly followed by the most competent men in the cabinet—McAdoo, Lane, Redfield. The only incubus of whom he got rid was Creel, whose style of advertising the administration is contrary to the ethics of every ad club in America. He clings tenaciously to Burleson, who has outdone any predecessor in incompetent and tyrannical mismanagement of the postal service. He put Glass at the head of the treasury department just long enough to force further inflation of the currency at the precise time when deflation should have begun. He would not part with W. B. Wilson and Post, though they have constituted themselves guardians of the right of aliens to plot revolution. He makes no improvement in the war risk bureau, though it has had more than twenty months to catch up with arrears of work.

Affiliation of Mr. Cox with Murphy, Nugent, Taggart and Brennan is no ground for belief that, if he were to throw out the Wilson men, he would fill their places with better ones. Men chosen through such influences would probably be no less incompetent but would be far more rapacious. The thousands of useless clerks would not be discharged; their number would be increased in order to find places for "the boys." The sorry remains of the civil service law which survive the maltreatment of Burleson and McAdoo would be swept away, and we should have the spoils system undisguised. A Tammany administration might easily cost as much as a first-class war.

When even democrats pine for deliverance from a democratic administration, it is plain that the overshadowing issue of the campaign is the Wilson record. Failure to make peace and to form a league such as this nation wishes to join constitutes but one among many evidences of its utter incompetence.

CALL FOR MR. RILEY.

While the late Dr. James Hervey Hyslop, decidedly over there in that stygian incertitude we term the hereafter, continues to be heard from through various mediums in most fragmentary and inconclusive fashion, there apparently exists no difficulty whatever in locating and identifying various other shades of more or less illustrious fame. To those who patiently await the marvelous moment when the departed spiritualistic savant, Dr. Hyslop, shall reveal the whereabouts and the text of the test letter he secreted while on earth, some degree of satisfaction may be found in perusing the astral communications of those who are instant at the call of the psychic centrals.

There is the ghost of James Whitcomb Riley, for instance. A friend who loved him in the old days, ere he was "lost awhile," has received through the versatile ouija board a contribution of characteristic verse which he makes no doubt of, but readily asserts must have originated with the disembodied entity of the Hoosier poet. It jingles even as Riley's country poems did, with a wistful tang to it, like a sprinkle of rain on the bright leaves of autumn. Whereat the friend is moved to maintain that none other than the well-loved Riley himself made the meter and wrought the thought.

In the dark tangle of dissention over the question of life after death, and the authenticity of spirit communication, one guess is as good as another. Consciously, as a hoax, or unconsciously, as a telepathic phenomenon or the whim of the subconscious mind, the creation of a Rileyesque verse is no difficult matter. In life he had scores of imitators, of admirers whose fancy followed the lovely, homely humor of his rhythm. Imitation of Riley was far from perplexing to any wight with a sense of the metrical. That the imitations were at best but poor things, lacking the flame, did not lessen the superficial resemblance of the counterfeits. If Riley writes now through the ouija one must confess chagrin that his genius has been dimmed by the winds of space.

There are far too many of these purported proofs of survival. In their plenitude and inadequacy they are apt to discourage attention from the real marvel, if ever it comes. Folks will say that so-called psychic messages are unworthy drivel and will deny attention when the investigators cry out for it. If the shade of Riley contemplates this latest fafuity an amused smile must wreathe those unseen lips. For Riley was himself a master of the hoax. Did he not write in his youth an imitation of Poe that caused the critics to proclaim the discovery of a new and unpublished gem?

ARE VACATIONS NEEDED?

The cynicism attributed to the late Elbert Hubbard, "the only time a man needs a vacation is when he has just returned from one," shares the quality inherent in adages overhastily made. Returning wearily from a sojourn at mountains or seashore, on a train that is late, to a house that is gloomy and cluttered up, the citizen will be sometimes inclined to the pessimistic view. Resumption of the year's routine confronts him on the morrow. Almost any man with experience can analyze his feelings. "I said in my haste" that vacations are a nuisance. Of such flimsy material a vast lof of so-called aphorisms are made.

We do not suppose, notwithstanding the testimony of all the grouches who come home tired from their fortnight's outing, that a movement to abolish vacations would have the slightest chance of attaining even a limited popularity. For the same reason that weather superstitions by constant reiteration become reputable, anti-vacationists are able to assemble a certain amount of argument in support of their illogical cause. The exceptional event lingers longest in the memory, the usual is soon forgotten, and the smartness of the proverb atones for its superficiality.

To judge from a typical article by a lately returned pessimist one would be inclined to believe that vacations are a delusion and a snare, that they not only waste our money but menace our health and endanger our future happiness. As to the first specification, it depends, of course, on the views we hold as to what our money is for, and as to the second, there is plenty of competent scientific testimony that a change of occupation, if not complete cessation of labor, is a therapeutic necessity. Psychologists and efficiency experts have shown by elaborate tests that brain and body may cease to function capably because of the mere monotony of the demands made on them. The rest periods allowed in modern factories are cunningly contrived to give a maximum of refreshment with a minimum of loss due to necessity of getting back into the swing. The annual vacation decreed by custom is a more general application of the same principle. The trouble with the chronic objector to vacations is that he deliberately constricts his view. He either judges from the unhappy experiences of the few or he fails to take into account the effects of the vacation on the output of the whole year. In either instance, because his data are inadequate, his conclusions are unsound.

It probably is not true that most men mismanage their vacations, or return home sorry that they went away, or seriously resolve never to go through the ordeal again. The vast armies of those who return again and again to resorts that have caught their fancies, or who look forward with pleasurable anticipation to new and enlivening experiences in years to come, are a sufficient refutation of the all-work theory. This is true of perhaps 999 out of the thousand who take vacations, and the exception that tests the rule is proof of nothing except that some people are out of touch with the spirit of the times.

The fact is that the very anxiety manifested by some folks to get back to work is a sign that the vacation has done its perfect work. The zest that comes from rejuvenated brain cells supplies all the needed proof. One need only glance at any returning vacationist to discover that the medicine has been good for him. Vacation is an economic as well as a physical necessity; in the long run production will be fostered by the greater efficiency that it promotes.

MEDALS WITHOUT CLAIMANTS.

The war department has discovered a flaw in its deductive logic, and must plead a lack of understanding toward the young men who so recently served it and their country in the field and on the seas. When the Victory medal was designed and struck, for issuance to these veterans, the department prepared to supply 35,000 daily. Four months would have been consumed in the distribution. Yet in the first thirty days of distribution but 50,000 applications were received for the bits of metal that commemorate accomplished duty. At that rate at least six years will be required to complete the distribution, if all eligible applicants are recorded.

Lack of interest in the Victory medal presents no puzzle. The former service men are once more intent upon their own affairs. They have put the victory itself behind them, as an achievement of the past, and the receipt of a belated reminder in the form of a medal is a trivial matter to most of the veterans. Nationally speaking, the men who followed the flag to its latest triumph are not caught by the glitter of bronze nor entranced by a ribbon. Were the Victory medal near at hand, perhaps, they would accept it and even occasionally wear the token of their nation's pride. But they did not put on the olive drab in quest of decorations, and in civilian clothes they are even less inclined toward display.

Undoubtedly these men are both entitled to receive and to wear the decoration. In time, but in time beyond the original expectations of the department, the medals will probably be generally distributed. Meanwhile the average observer will not be critical of the veterans because they betray no insistent haste to obtain one.

DEADWOOD DICK.

The encyclopedias have not done justice to Deadwood Dick, a name brought newly to memory by the news that one Richard Bullock, supposed to be the original Deadwood Dick, is dead at the age of seventy-five in California. Whatever may have been the moral shortcomings of this wild western Robin Hood, he furnished the inspiration for a literature that was typical of more than appeared on the surface of it. Deadwood Dick and "Wild Bill" Hickok and Buffalo Bill and a few others to whom the grandfathers of the present generation owe more than they probably will admit were the forerunners of the real, live story of adventure in western America. But from the point of view of the literary and social philosopher they were more than that.

At about the time that the Deadwood Dick library became popular—openly with youths and secretly among grownups—we had been surfeited with the Rollo books and their ilk. William Taylor Adams, whose real name is forgotten by those who remember Oliver Optic well enough, had put the goody-goody boy on an undeserved pedestal. Dinah Mulock Craik's "John Halifax, Gentleman," published in 1853, represented a trend in books of the better class, but a still unsatisfactory one. Cooper and Marryat were on the shelves of everybody willing to make the slightest concession to the love of adventure that is the natural heritage of boys, but had a hard time making headway against the prevailing doctrine that books for the young must be highly "moral" and must deal only with "facts" to be acceptable.

The period of the Sunday school library, it will be conceded now, did not attain its purpose of inculcating the habit of reading in the young. "Thirty years ago," observes a Deadwood Dick panegyrist who writes in the London Nation, "there was a great wave of objection to all save hard facts." The writer is possibly mistaken as to his dates. The wave was at its height somewhat earlier than that; it was close to half a century ago that demand for something "better" than facts began to assert itself. George Borrow was being read—not for the facts he accumulated on his colporteuring tour of Spain and Portugal, but because he gave a new glimpse of the life of adventure—as far back as the early forties. The Nation's critic truly observes that "to well-intentioned elders the title was the book's transport," although the thing that was responsible for its being read was the irrepressible yearning of young people for the picturesque, but the necessity for camouflage had measurably disappeared by the time Verne wrote his "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea," just half a century ago. Even "Robinson Crusoe" had its trials, of a kind that a tolerant twentieth century will find it hard to understand, and it is like a breath from the ancient past to be reminded that it stood the fire only because of the protection of the name of Alexander Selkirk, who was a real character, though the "facts" of his life furnished little more than the bare suggestion for the marvelous tale by Defoe.

Then came the happy days of Deadwood Dick, and later Old Sleuth and Frank Reade and the hosts of their companions, to bring to juvenile literature, if not the cold facts of science and of realism, at least the facts as youth would like to fancy them. It is not too much to say that Deadwood Dick did more to make books in general popular with the young than did all the Rollo books—employing the term as descriptive of a class that ever set down the orderly comings and goings of a pious and precocious young blade.

The universality of the appeal that made the dime novel a serious problem in that period has since found recognition in better books, and, more than that, in more intelligent instruction in the art of reading. A curious fact about the adult of about two generations ago was his nearly complete lack of appreciation of what a child might really enjoy. Child study never had been systematically pursued. Froebel's early works, which laid the foundation for the kindergarten, which he established in 1840, did not rapidly penetrate the consciousness of educators and the fruits of them were not harvested until some time after his death, which occurred in 1852. For some years after Elizabeth Peabody began her uphill task of enlightening American mossbacks in the mental processes of children, little or no progress was made on this side of the Atlantic. We were well into the eighties before systematic effort to broaden the hard-and-fast curriculum of the primary schools began to be made. Meanwhile our youngsters had access to two kinds of books—chiefly those which they dreaded because they were so didactically moral or so obviously educational, and the kind their elders lumped under the classification, "trash." Nothing much was known about sugarcoating the pill of education. The old system, so far as its effect on the formation of reading habits went, was a failure. The dime novel, most often surreptitiously read, bridged a gap. More men than many will suppose who were youngsters in that time owe their first awakening of curious interest in books to the literature of which the death of the original of Deadwood Dick is so redolently reminiscent.

What more sincere tribute, for example, could be penned to a writer than that which, after nearly half a century, is indicated by the critic who recalls that it was the valor of Deadwood Dick that taught him how to take a "licking" from a callous school teacher who held all books not devoted to dispensing facts to be anathema. It was, strangely, only a teacher of literature who had any sympathy for boyish affection for the outlaw of the Black Hills and he must have been an exceptional teacher for his time. Something has been accomplished when a boy, in the age of self-consciousness, has been taken out of himself and speeded in his natural flights of fancy, a service which Macaulay performed with "Horatius at the Bridge." Deadwood Dick was only a more mundane Horatius, and there was not enough of the original Horatius to go around. He was a man of action and a man to inspire longings. As the critic says,

> I have forgotten exactly how he robbed the stagecoach that ran from the Platte through the sandhills of North Nebraska and on into the Black Hills and Deadwood. I have forgotten even if the express messenger was killed by him; but I have never forgotten the country into which he led me. . . . When I was a boy, and could travel only on the atlas, Deadwood Dick took me up winding roads, between scattered bull pines, into rising hills. The trees were very tall. The forest glades were very quiet. I sometimes wish I had a complete set of the stories in my library now, to turn to occasionally from the classics of the schools and from the discoveries of the coteries which are thrust at us with an intolerance worse than that which accompanied the advocacy of "Ministering Children." What are these compared with Deadwood Dick, donning his mask, and riding down the North Platte road in the golden twilight of youth?

We no longer need Deadwood Dick. He was the avant courier of better things. The original of him outlived the popularity of the tales. But a volume of the history of juvenile training might be written with this not altogether savory human character for a text.

The rainmakers continue to fail to make good their promises of artificially created moisture. An occasional attempt apparently succeeds, but the proof is clouded by the fact that rain occurs over a more or less wide area on the same date, and the department of agriculture sees no reason to withdraw its condemnation of the theory. And while it was about it, the weather bureau, which is a part of that department, gathered data that indicate that neither deforestation nor the plowing of large areas of the plains has any appreciable effect on rainfall. There are arguments enough against reckless destruction of forests; their preservation helps to maintain rivers at relatively uniform stage and is a check on soil erosion, but the records do not show that rainfall is affected. All the investigators agree regulation of rain is too big a job for any man or even a nation of men.

The secretary of state's office figures that there are automobiles enough in Oregon to carry the entire population of the state, and judging by observation on some of these pleasant Sundays, they come pretty near doing it.

The mysteries of foreign exchange are past finding out by the ordinary man, but we observe a general tendency not to crow so much over a favorable "trade balance" without comprehending just why it should be called favorable.

The owner of the fifth largest art collection in the United States died the other day, but it was necessary in order to identify him to recall that he was also a board of trade operator and former partner of "Bet a Million" Gates.

An anonymous individual has offered $5,000,000 francs for the French government's entire stock of Mumm's champagnes. He believes in keeping mum in more ways than one.

It's a queer form of human activity that doesn't contribute a new word or two to our language. Take moonshining, for example, with its early offering of "white mule."

We are far less interested in the recent "breaks" in the Chicago wheat market than we would be in a single break in the price of a loaf of bread.

The barrel apple crop is reported much larger than usual, but the apples in the middle of the barrel will be no bigger than they used to be.

The New York police would tell us, if they were asked, that there is nothing in the popular saying that "murder will out."

Another argument against campaign tours by party spellbinders will be found in that increase in passenger fares.

Underworked and underpaid! The sorrows of the poor vice-president are unique as well as heart-rending.

A woman of thirty who has taken five husbands can be set down at the start as a real optimist.

It begins to look as if there wouldn't be a bit of Turkey left by Thanksgiving day.

A lot of fathers nowadays are getting ready to work their sons' way through college.

Just now it is the average citizen of Denver who is holding the bag for a while.

What use can a reporter possibly find for $500,000?

BY-PRODUCTS OF THE TIMES

Gold Hoards in Old Missions of California Declared Fiction.

There are very many silly tales in books concerning the old Franciscan missions of California, but the silliest of them all is that one which is forever cropping up to the effect that many hundreds of thousands of dollars in gold were hoarded in these establishments, says the Los Angeles Times.

One has only to ask one's self, Where did this huge store of money come from? California had little traffic with the outside world in the days of the missions. Hides and tallow were traded to Yankee ships for clothing and ornaments, but not for money. And gold had not yet been discovered here.

Next to Junipero Serra himself, the most respected figure in the early history of California is Padre Lasuen. Even Bancroft glows over Lasuen. Surely the word of this venerated man may be taken for truth.

When the king of Spain once sent to the California missions for money Padre Lasuen answered the request as follows: "Inasmuch as the fathers are placed in poverty by their profession and in the Indian wards by their nature, I think that his majesty does not want of us a temporal offering. I am myself without even a stipend to which I am entitled, and the stipends that my brethren receive they turn over for the advancement of the missions."

Anything that purports to be history must be supported by the testimony of an authentic and reliable witness. And here we have the testimony unimpeachable of Padre Lasuen. There are a lot of lying books that should be fed to bonfires.

* * *

What's going to happen to the republic of Georgia if Americans and Europeans stopping there continue to carry off her fine looking girls? asks the New York Evening Sun. Next to bolshevism the principal product of this part of the Caspian sea district is beautiful women—big Brunhilda blondes and petite brunettes, as well as the strawberry type that follows in the wake of white horses. In fact, any variety of the fair sex one likes best can be found in Georgia, and British, French and of late many Americans have been doing the Lochinvar and bearing back Georgian brides to the west.

"Everybody in Georgia that is anybody at all is a prince or princess," explained Miss Katherine Dokoochieff, just arrived here from Tiflis, where she took refuge three years ago from bolshevism activities in her home, Samara, Russia. "And there is always a romantic lure to your western men in the vista of marrying a beautiful princess.

"But meantime Georgian men are getting uneasy. It's nice to have the men of other countries appreciate one's native women, but when they begin exporting them in great quantities it's time to look out for posterity.

"The visitors see these beautiful girls in the near east relief bread line or waiting at table with some of the Russian nobility in the restaurants and fall kerplunk in love with them. Then, next thing you know there's a Georgio-American wedding."

* * *

The constitution of the Confederate States of America, recalls the Kansas City Star, differed from that of the United States in the following important particulars:

1. The term of the president and vice-president was fixed at six years, and the president could not succeed himself.
2. Members of the cabinet were given seats in congress with the privilege of debate, but without the right to vote.
3. Foreign slave trade was prohibited, but slavery was sanctioned.
4. Congress was forbidden to make appropriations for internal improvement, to levy a protective tariff or to give bounties.
5. A two-thirds vote of both houses of congress was necessary to admit a new state into the confederacy or to make appropriations not asked for by the heads of departments through the president.

The first cabinet was composed of six men. With the progress of events changes were made and a number of other names were added. The following is a complete list of the cabinet members:

Judah P. Benjamin, secretary of state; Charles G. Memminger, secretary of the treasury; George W. Randolph, secretary of war; Stephen R. McHory, secretary of the navy; Thomas H. Watts, attorney-general, and John H. Reagan, postmaster-general.

* * *

"There are over 10,000,000 motor vehicles in the world and America manufactured more than eight-tenths of them. This country during the past six years has exported over a half million passenger cars and trucks valued at over a half billion dollars, and at this writing is supplying practically the demands of the world with automobile apparatus. During the year 1919 we exported nearly $50,000,000 worth of tires alone and almost $40,000,000 worth of automobile parts. In 1919 alone this country exported close to 70,000 passenger cars and 16,000 trucks, the combined value being about $110,000,000. The motor vehicle industry in this country has merely begun to supply foreign markets, manufacturers have just awakened to the fact that foreign countries ought to be considered as so many additional states."—Alfred Loomis in July Motor.

* * *

The success of a baby show in an adjoining town moves E. J. Melton of the Boonville (Ill.) Republican to a comparison between the baby shows of old time county fairs where the judge happened to be anybody who dared risk being hated the rest of his life. "Poor man!" writes Mr. Melton, "he could judge only from a winsome smile or the baby's frilly dress. Today the baby is scored by experts, weighed and measured, merited and demerited by judges who announce their findings with the coolness of army physicians. A baby show is more important than a pig club, as high as we value these organizations. Better babies are of more importance than better hogs.

* * *

A West Plains (Mo.) woman is explaining her early return from the Pacific coast. She declares that a vacation in her own little, solid Ozarks beats one on a California beach that is visited with five quakes in less than a month.—Kansas City Times.

* * *

Jud Tunkins says he's never going to allow any summer boarder to remain for more than a week, because it's too much to learn new stories to entertain the same old crowd.—Washington Star.

The Secret.

By Grace E. Hall.

Within the frame a canvas white and taut
Upon the easel stood; the pliant brush
Lay on the waiting palette; deep in thought
The artist lounged. The pulsing, vibrant hush
Of silent places, when the soul and brain
Bring forth a vision birthed of mutual love,
And offer it to man in joy and pain,
Throbbed like a benediction from above.

Since he had labored last his soul had known
A bitter sorrow; felt life's cruelest grief;
He heard upon the winds a well-loved tone,
But from the ache of loss had no relief:
The footsteps and the laughter loved of yore
Came back in memory's echo with a sting,
In silent gloom life passed his darkened door,
And all the hopes of years had spread a wing.

He seized the brush and pressed the tubes in turn,
The combination he alone must know,
Then spread the color, but as quickly spurned
The first result; then tried again, and, lo!
The master-mind, exalted, seemed to pierce
The waiting canvas; visioned one ideal,
He touched the lighting in with passion fierce,
Held to his thought—felt only that appeal.

Day followed day and still he slaved. His skill
Was known afar, yet always it had lacked
One element to win: It did not thrill,
Though painted by a master; and the fact
Was known to none so well as he; his heart
Ached with this failure—he had wrought in vain;
Until he mastered that defect in art,
He had his highest, noblest goal to gain.

* * *

'Twas finished! And they hung it with the rest
Upon the spacious walls. Wise critics came
And gazed and marked it—was it worst or best?
Ah, none could say, for in that hall where fame
Or hopeless death to high ambition falls,
And laurel waits the treasured thing of worth,
None knows 'til victory to the victor calls
With sweetest voice that's ever heard on earth.

The study was a child with golden hair
Within a snowy casket heaped with bloom;
A mellow radiance lingered in the air,
And through the seeming silence of the room
A line of shadow figures passed, to lay
A bud or broken blossom on the bier,
Then onward moved, to others giving way,
And on each cheek was seen the crystal tear.

* * *

The judges came and placed the victor's sign
Upon the frame; the crowds passed by and smiled;
The picture roused a sympathy divine,
For each had known and loved a little child.
The learned asked for reasons of the choice—
Though none had missed the touch upon the heart;
The judges answered: "Make some soul rejoice,
Or weep or pray—for that in truth is art."

FRENZIED FREEDOM.

The sky was clear and blue and still,
Without a current in the air,
Yet birds in terror swiftly flew
To hiding places everywhere.

Wild squirrels chattered in the trees;
The cougar growled in his lair;
No storm was seen from o'er the leas,
Nor hunter came forth unaware.

Eagles dropped to modest height;
Bears hid in mighty canyons, deep,
While hoot-owls, blinded by the light,
Awoke in wonder from their sleep.

A herd of cattle, long content,
Listened, sniffed, then gathered speed,
Ere like a shot away they went
Thru creek and wires in a stampede.

Whales jumped from the briny sea
Then turned tail and dove again,
As tho some great catastrophe
Caused their forms to writhe in pain.

And then a noise far up above,
A buzzing, whizzing, whirring strain
From some great object on the move
Outvying all within its train.

With pinions spread and head alert,
(All else seemed as standing still)
As tho with death it loved to flirt,
Spanning chasm, tower and hill.

The beasts and fowls of land and air
Were not prepared for such as that,
(And seldom fearful) 'tis not fair—
To scare them with a human bat.

But thus it proved that man is king
Of dauntless seas, of wild and main,
And man-made birds a monstrous thing,
E'en tho it's an aeroplane.

—MILTON C. ARMSTRONG.

MY FOUR BOATS: A MOTHER'S PRAYER.

I've four small boats in my port today,
Four small boats soon to sail away
Out of the harbor and over the bay,
Away from the shelter of home.

I know not when those boats will ride
The restless, rising outgoing tide,
At morning, noon or eventide,
Under the midnight dome.

I only know I shall gaze afar,
Where the untried seas and the surges are,
And wave, as they cross the distant bar,
Passing one by one from me.

Ah, gladly I'd sail with each little bark,
And gladly I'd brave the waters dark,
And smile amid storms and wreckage stark,
If only they safe might be.

But each must sail the sea alone,
Mid perils rare and ways unknown,
Till each young heart hath stronger grown,
And braver from every blast.

So I'll waft a prayer to those fairer lands,
Where the soft waves beat on golden sands,
And leave each bark in the Pilot's hands,
To guide safe home at last.

—ELIZABETH E. SHERMAN.
Salem, Or.