Sunday Oregonian

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Published by The Oregonian Publishing Co., 135 Sixth Street, Portland, Oregon.

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Daily, Sunday included, one year	$8.00
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Postage Rates—1 to 16 pages, 1 cent; 18 to 32 pages, 2 cents; 34 to 48 pages, 3 cents; 50 to 64 pages, 4 cents; 66 to 80 pages, 5 cents; 82 to 96 pages, 6 cents. Foreign postage double rates.

Eastern Business Office—Verree & Conklin, Brunswick building, New York. Verree & Conklin, Steger building, Chicago. Verree & Conklin, Free Press building, Detroit, Mich. San Francisco representative, R. J. Bidwell.

PRICES OF THEN, NOW AND THE FUTURE.

To the multitudes who follow, with interested intensity, the price fluctuation in household commodities, a definite opinion has dawned. Perceiving the downward trend, gradual but clearly defined, in the hundred and one items that make for salvage or depletion in the family budget, they have been encouraged to the belief that prices will be even lower than they are at present. This is a pleasant thought to those who felt the pinch of profiteering, and it is most devoutly to be hoped that no rude awakening will prove it chimerical. Yet only an understanding of the existing price decline, compassing both its cause and probable effect, will avail to point the course that citizens should steer—if they are hereafter to avoid the shoals of excessive costs.

It is generally conceded that, with the flush of an easy prosperity upon the nation, and the effect of the country-wide spending spree yet noticeable in family finances, it was the average citizen who halted profiteering and even legitimately high prices by the institution of a "buyer's boycott" or "strike." Before high wages had waned, or the stress of occasional unemployment was felt, the individual purchaser returned to sanity and asserted that, come what might, expenditures were to be held at a minimum until a price level approximating that of the pre-war period was reached. Against this national sentiment manufacturers and wholesalers fought adroitly for some months, advancing serried ranks of argument to prove that an immediate recession in living costs was economic impossibility. There were the inflated payrolls, in many instances double those of four years ago, to be taken into account, and the stubborn stability of raw materials.

But in the end, as was certain to be the case when consumers lift the gage of battle, prices fell in the midst of a wild melee that bore some of the characteristics of a stampede. Affrighted jobbers, their warehouses stuffed with goods bought on the rising market for future profit, made haste to unload and to cancel the further orders with the manufacturer. The renowned Humpty Dumpty, in his misfortunate descent, may have dropped more speedily than did war era living costs—but without creating greater consternation than that which prevailed in jobbing and manufacturing circles when the "buyer's boycott" brought down the bacon, so to speak. It must not be assumed that these concerns were allied in a plot to maintain prices. The public in folly had reared them high, and in dudgeon it brought them low.

Retailers compute the price decline, since its altitude record of last January, at a general average of 25 per cent. The dollar that goes to market is invigorated to just that extent. There are items, of common demand, that have not decreased to the average, of course, and there are others that have slumped far below it. But the rehabilitated dollar is to the purchaser a sign and symbol of better days to come, and he looks with undiminished confidence toward a time when its present buying power will be doubled. Therein rests the reason why the offerings of the present are met with an element of indifference by the public—the eternally sanguine and only recently cautious consumer.

Item by item, with but few exceptions, the commodity lists reveal more than a tendency to make truce with the purchaser. Almost it could be called capitulation. Dress goods that sold for 45 cents a yard ten months ago are now offered at 25 cents; stockings that were haughtily offered at half a dollar are now on the bargain counter at a 50 per cent reduction. Suits that sold last January for $45—and that was accounted a genuine sacrifice—are now tagged with the far more moderate price of $25, while silk shirts have made precipitate retreat from $17 to $8. And speaking of silk shirts, now spurned and unregarded, they will be well remembered as the badge of easy money not more than a year ago. How are the vanities fallen!

Hams—the selected running gear of prize porkers, sugar-cured and savory—were by families of modest means regretfully passed by a brief twelve-month ago. The price was 52 cents a pound and almost prohibitively epicurean. Striving against the onslaught of economy the better half of breakfast "ham and—" has retreated to 41 cents and is plainly desirous of an armistice. Flour has declined almost 33 1-3 per cent, and everyone knows what happened to sugar. Even such items as tooth paste and safety razor blades held the bridge but feebly for a time, and left it to some more trenchant Horatius.

The department of labor, its statistical fingers upon the pulse of prices, discovered that retail food costs decreased 3 per cent in the monthly period marked by September 15 to October 15, while wholesale food prices during the same month declined 8½ per cent. The divergency in decline, here evidenced, indicates that cost decreases reach the public but slowly—a fact that should not awaken suspicious alarm, but that is largely due to the higher cost of the unexhausted stocks yet on the market. Lower prices in the immediate future may be safely predicted from this situation.

Such is the analysis, necessarily brief, of the retail market of the present. But the economic factors which contribute to that condition, and which will affect for better or worse the markets of tomorrow, are admittedly nebulous. He is a rare bird among retailers who will venture the prediction, even while his sales are advertised, that the existing price decline will continue its course or that it will not be halted and reversed to another rising market. For the comparative abruptness with which high-cost-of-living was brought to a standstill and later forced to retreat has exercised a dubious effect upon the maufacturing industry.

Cancelled orders closed many of the larger mills and reduced others to half-time production, while jobbers sought strenuously to save their own financial skins. The situation so created may react against the public welfare, for if these mills—engaged in the production of universal commodities—are not gradually returned to their full stride, then a second and higher price reversal may be confidently forecast. There will come a time when the stocks of the jobbers are exhausted, and when even the normal demands of the country will serve to deluge the manufacturers with such a flood of orders as to bring about the natural effect of largely increased prices.

The moral seems plainly indicated. It is that even a "buyer's boycott" may be carried a trifle too far, defeating ultimately its own purpose. Sane, conservative marketing in the present will not restore inflated costs, nor halt the downward trend. But a stubborn faith in greatly decreased costs, backed by refusal to buy until commodities are even lower, may disturb the economic balance with disastrous results. One would naturally dislike to feather the shaft that brought down his own pocket-book.

THE UNSHATTERED SOUTH.

The landslide engulfed some 119 members of the lower house of congress, including Champ Clark; and most of them will never be heard from again. The republicans will have more than twice as many members as the democrats—a majority of 179—and some of these will never be heard from again; for as soon as the political equilibrium is restored some old-timers who fell by the wayside will be re-elected, and some newcomers will go back to private life, and sit down to stay.

It is interesting to note that the congressional delegations of such great states as Illinois, Ohio and Indiana are solidly republican, while Pennsylvania has but one or two democrats and New Jersey has but one. Of the sixteen members from the ordinarily democratic state of Missouri thirteen are republican and rock-ribbed Oklahoma gives six republicans and two democrats. Michigan has one democrat among sixteen members and Massachusetts two democrats out of sixteen. Thus the northern and border states are saved from universal black republicanism.

But the reverse of the picture is found in the south, though it suffered a slight fracture in Tennessee and Missouri. No republican landslide is able to make the slightest dent in the stark democracy of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina, though one republican did slip through in Texas and another in Virginia. The Solid South is shaken but not shattered. It will be solid again and remain solid, so long as it is impervious to new ideas and impulses and so long as it lives in apprehension of negro domination.

It is a discouraging spectacle. It is the last surviving monument of sectionalism, and a formidable and ugly one. If it should find its counterpart in the north, where every state should be and remain republican, just as the south stays democratic, the future of the Union would be dubious.

THE COST OF DISEASE.

The review of the work of the Rockefeller Foundation by its president, Dr. George E. Vincent, gives a clear idea of the practical as well as the humanitarian value of the Foundation's efforts to stamp out diseases of the kind that require community co-operation for their extinction. The work is broadly as well as technically an educational one. It is shown, for illustration, that 800,000,000 inhabitants of the globe live within the zone of possible malaria, which in many regions is attended by an exceedingly high mortality rate. It is estimated that in India alone there are more than 1,200,000 deaths annually from this cause. But the mortality record does not tell the whole story. The proportion of victims who are seriously incapacitated is large. Many are unable to earn a living; poverty tends to loss of ambition and hampers efforts to organize against the disease; the vicious circle remains unbroken.

The accounts of work done in some communities in which anti-malaria campaigns have awakened the people—not to their peril, of which they already were aware, but to the fact that the remedy is in their own hands—give added interest to the report. It has been shown to be wholly practical to exterminate the anopheles mosquito, by which alone malaria is communicated, from a given locality. Stagnant pools are drained, minnows are planted in ponds to consume the eggs of the mosquitos, and small pools that cannot be drained are covered with films of crude petroleum. Screening of houses has been widely advocated, and help has been given to poor people who could not afford to buy screens. There is no mystery about the process, but it is not surprising to learn that there has been much opposition to overcome. Difficulty has been heightened by the circumstance that it has been necessary to rely on enlightened public opinion almost exclusively. The states in which malaria prevails most extensively are backward in enactment and enforcement of laws regulating health.

Fortunately there are two noteworthy object lessons ready at hand. The work of the late General Gorgas in the Panama canal zone made a practically complete job of getting rid of yellow fever and malaria, the former like the latter being a mosquito-borne disease. The more generally it is understood that but for this it would have been impossible to complete the isthmian canal, and that what has been done in the canal zone can be done in any American neighborhood, the easier will be the task of the authorities. Several years ago the scientists of the Foundation expressed belief that the day would come when the world would be free of both these maladies. The latest report indicates that the time is almost here. The one factor necessary is teamwork. Every malaria or fever-ridden community holds its fate in its own hands.

The scope of the Foundation's activities has been large, covering thirty-nine countries and many states. Hookworm is prevalent in thirteen southern states and in Brazil, China and Central America. Plainly the task of ridding the world of communicable disease is too large for any philanthropical organization, however richly endowed, unless the people respond. It is a fact that can be taken at full value, however, that Peru, one of the last to receive proof of the efficacy of modern methods, has adopted methods more drastically effective than have some of the states in our own country.

DEATHS FROM SHEER FOLLY.

A few years ago, when the Lower Columbia highway was yet in embryo, and its exact route had not been determined, a controversy arose over the location from Scappoose to West St. Helens (Houlton), in Columbia county. The old main road crossed the tracks of the Astoria railroad at Scappoose, and pursued a somewhat winding course for seven or eight miles to the county seat at St. Helens. Thence again it traversed the rails, and got west of the railroad, and after another divagation to the other side and back—this time by the fortunate medium of overhead crossings—took its uninterrupted way on the city by the sea. Between Scappoose and St. Helens there are five or six lateral roads, crossing the railroad at grade to reach the old highway and, if the new highway had been built there, the dangerous practice of getting from one side of a railroad to the other at the ground level would have been made permanent.

Simon Benson was heard from. Few persons had supposed that anyone would dare to challenge the local pride and interest of an important county by proposing to build a main road so as to avoid its official center. Yet Mr. Benson did it; and his action in this instance was one of the first conspicuous demonstrations of the far-sightedness and the courage of that remarkable man. He insisted that the highway should find a new location along the west side of the railroad, from Scappoose on, and when he was told that it was a waste of money, for it would cost $50,000, he said he would pay everything out of his own pocket above $5000. It is interesting to recall, also, that in this attitude, and in his financial offer as well, he was joined by Mr. J. B. Yeon, who has a mind and a method of his own; but it has usually been in general harmony with Mr. Benson's.

The Benson-Yeon project, at first strenuously opposed, finally prevailed, because it was sensible and safe, and it is likely enough that more than one life has been saved because the highway is where it is and its feeders do not now invite the always present risks of grade-crossings.

The mind goes back to this incident when it encounters the ghastly record of grade-crossing accidents on the Southern Pacific road alone. Between January 1, 1918, and September 1, 1920, one hundred and twenty-six (126) people lost their lives and five hundred and thirty-eight (538) were injured in tragedies, most, if not all, of them preventable, on the Southern Pacific system. The fault is, of course, not primarily with the railroad, but with the motor-driving public.

In the state of Oregon alone there are more than 100,000 motor cars of all kinds, and there are probably 200,000 drivers of all kinds. Only a small percentage of them are skilled; the great majority are amateurs to whom the propulsion of a car is a mere avocation or pastime. Automobiling is here to stay, and there can be no expectation, in an occupation so universal, that there will be a much higher average of efficiency among automobilists. The only recourse is to provide all possible safeguards; and one of them is absolute elimination of the grade crossing, or of gates and watchmen where elimination is not practicable.

FOR THE "SERVICE OF THE STATE."

A curiously medieval conception of the purpose of education is revealed by Henry Arthur Jones, the author, who made a vigorous protest to the British minister of education while the bill to expand the British system of popular education was under consideration in parliament, and who has elaborated his objections into a book. He holds that the war has brought England face to face with "many iron and cruel realities," and that as a consequence it will be necessary for a long time to come to give more thought to the welfare of the state and less to the desires of individuals. Wherefore "we must not give all our children, or even the majority of them, that education which we would desire to give them in their own individual interest, and which would most thoroughly develop their mental powers," because, Mr. Jones fears, this would only foment dissatisfaction. He would, on the contrary, furnish them only "with just that education which will make them most useful servants of the state."

"I," said a king of France, "am the state." It is easier to imagine an ancient satrap holding the belief that interests of "state" and people are dissimilar than a thinker in modern times. Czars have feared that education might breed discontent fatal to their own aspirations, but popular education rests on a different basis. The idea that discontent is the result of education may be founded on a wrong kind of education or on a faulty premise of another sort. For example, assumption that "85 per cent of the population have to earn their living by manual labor" and that "we are educating about 85 per cent in such a way that they will hate and avoid manual labor" is probably a pure misreading of statistics. The old habit of confounding manual labor with labor requiring no skill is strangely persistent. The proportion of labor that would not be lightened, at the same time that it is made more efficient, by training diminishes constantly. Only a few jobs remain in which brain is not desirable as well as brawn. Mr. Jones' description of conditions in his own country may be pertinent to the situation there—although it is doubtful—but it is hardly true of America. He says:

> Nearly every manual worker in the kingdom is in angry rebellion against his job; does not merely take no pride in doing it well, but hates it, shirks it, performs it only by the stimulus of computation or the lure of bribery; performs it not as a duty and a service to the community, but as a means of taxing the community of whom the immense majority are his fellow workers.

If this is true, the phenomenon cannot be justly ascribed to education, for unrest is world-wide; nor is dissatisfaction with the job peculiar to the present generation. More unrest than is popularly supposed may be due to lack of ability of the worker to do his work well. The square peg in the round hole is a proverbial trouble breeder, and this it is a part of the mission of education to remedy. Repair of the damage done by war will not be facilitated by putting a check on competency. The fact that it is more difficult to fill jobs requiring training than those which call only for undirected muscular exertion is attested by employers generally.

In greater degree than in America the institutions of higher learning in Great Britain have held to the academic traditions of the past. A kind of education frankly dissociated from so-called practical affairs has become the mistaken symbol of education as a whole. The flaw here is not in the principle but in its application. There is vocational as well as cultural education, though the latter ought not to be excluded from the former, and the schools still have a good deal to do to overcome ignorance such as always has been a bane to growth of the modern state. There are moral values in education which the British author seems to ignore; and his error is in condemning the whole, rather than in encouraging its development along lines defined by modern experience.

A NOBEL PRIZE WINNER.

The mantle of Bjornsterne Bjornson fell on the shoulders of a former conductor of an American street car when the 1919 Nobel prize for literature was belatedly awarded the other day to Knut Hamsun of Christiania. Bjornson was the recipient of the honor and its emolument in 1903. Between the two men there exists a gap far wider than the years. It is unlikely, judging from the specimens of Hamsun's work that have reached the United States, that he will ever be recognized as so distinctively a national product that, as Brandes has said, "the mere mention of his name in a gathering of his countrymen is like running up the national flag," yet the critics find in him much to praise. Americans, to whom a life of contrast irresistibly appeals, will find a good deal to interest them in the street car episode of his career.

"For those of us who worked at night," he has written in one of his accounts of himself, "the line was not at all safe, as a number of suspicious characters were abroad. Conductors had no right to shoot and kill people, for the street railway company would have had a heavy fine to pay in such cases." Thus Hamsun makes perhaps his first appearance as a realist, though it was not thus that he won the Nobel prize. It is believed that "Growth of the Soil," written by him in 1918, was responsible for that. "Growth of the Soil" is the story of a man, splendid, plodding, indefatigable, who finds happiness in his natural environment, poor in worldly goods but feeling himself rich in strength of body, the love of his wife and his faith in God. But his street-car experience has been elaborated in "Hunger," another of his books, which brought him success and fame before the prize was awarded to him. In "Hunger" he is seen as the egotist that he was in his earlier life; in his later years he is less inclined to regard himself as having been chosen by fate in the working out of an evil design.

One product of the street-car job was a story fantastically out of harmony with the rest of his work. It is the tale of a young man who has boarded his car and confided in him that his wife's affections are becoming alienated. At a certain point in the track there is a manhole and the young man has conceived the idea that if he will pretend to commit suicide, by climbing into the hole so that only his head is visible, his wife, who is to be on board the car, will take compassion on him and restore him to favor. The carmen, who are taken into his confidence and paid for their services, are bound by their compact to stop the car just in the nick of time.

All does not go well, however. The woman boards the car and is seen to hold conversation with the motorman. Later the husband's head appears above the street level, but the motorman does not stop. A year later the conductor meets the motorman in another city, where he is living on the interest of a bribe paid him by the wife to turn the tables on the hapless man. There have been efforts, as there always are apt to be where celebrities are concerned, to discover a hidden message in the story, but they have failed. It probably only reflects a mood of the writer after a bitter disappointment.

For Hamsun had many disappointments. Born in poverty and reared in the land of the midnight sun, he began striving at literary creation as soon as he learned to write. He consented reluctantly to be apprenticed to a shoemaker, but made little of the trade. A critic supposes that it may have been the six-months-long nights of the region in which he was reared that made Hamsun the dreamer that he is, but disregards the influence of days that were as long. Hamsun quit being a shoemaker to go to Christiania, where he hoped to support himself by writing while studying at the university. Editors and publishers would not buy his stuff and so he came to the United States, where he worked on a dairy farm, in logging camps, in a coal yard and on a road. His bosses said that he was a stupid workman. There was, as will be noted, no system of fitting the man to the task in that day. One either made good or was discharged, and unsympathetic superintendents had no way of discovering that they were entertaining a novelist and philosopher unawares. Matters will be regulated differently by the perfect state.

Still it will be said that Hamsun triumphed over many an obstacle. Poverty was only one of these. After his employment on the street car line on which employes were not permitted to kill people, he was transferred to another part of the city where the "public was better and I had to collect the five-cent pieces with gloves." These people interested him even less than the others had done. "There," he has said, "I had no strong sensations to experience, but I soon grew tired of seeing these villa dwellers and listening to their conversations."

From which the discerning reader will deduce that Hamsun's mind was open to impressions, and also that he hungered for the primitively emotional. Villa dwellers of the drab sort that dwell in the better sections of Chicago have no place in his books. The bohemians of Christiania, to whom he returned after his American visit, at least moved him to write a reprisal, published in 1893 as "Shallow Soil." They liked him no better than he liked them, but he had the advantage of the last word. But in "Hunger" he shows a different spirit. With no thought of taking revenge on the world, he attempts to set down the feelings of a man who has not eaten for three days, and who is compelled to undergo the same privation at brief intervals. "When I considered the matter over," he says, "it grew more and more incomprehensible to me that I of all others should be selected as an experiment for a Creator's whims. . . . I found the most weighty arguments against the Creator's arbitrariness in letting me pay for all the others' sins." But this, he makes clear, was but the vagary of a hungry man. In another sketch he shows, however, that he is much given to introspection; as for example in his description of his life as one of the crew of a fishing schooner:

> Month after month we remained on the ocean catching fish. We were not sailors but fishermen. A sailor is always bound for some port, some haven where he can rest after his long voyage. But we remained in the same spot, always fishing in silence. We could scarcely even remember how the land looked. We were no longer sentient human beings, but brainless fishing machines. Finally we were ourselves metamorphosed into strange, ugly sea-creatures, creeping over the ship in silence, or conversing in a language intelligible only to us.

Hamsun is a dramatist as well as novelist. He is also a writer of travel stories, among them "Under the Crescent Moon," giving his impressions of Turkey, and "In Fairyland," a description of his travels in the Caucasus. The Nobel prize consists of the yield of a fund of $9,000,000 left by the inventor of dynamite to be distributed annually among those distinguished for work in physics, chemistry, medicine, idealistic literature and promotion of peace. It amounts in each instance to about $40,000. Americans have won only four prizes—Dr. A. A. Michelson in physics, Alexis Carrel in medicine, and Theodore Roosevelt and Elihu Root for peace.

HAVE WE A NATIONAL TREE?

The American Forestry association's attempt to "elect" a national tree evokes thoughts of the difficulties attending the task. Yet if it fulfills no other purpose than to inspire study of the value of trees and the part they play in our natural economics, it may be worth while. To choose a tree that will represent all parts of America would be a practically impossible task. If, to be representative, it is to be required that it shall grow in some portion of every state, nearly every tree possessing dignity or distinction will be excluded. The maple is said to be in high favor because of its wide distribution and its undoubted utility, but it is necessary to include many of its seventy varieties under one heading in order to obtain the universality that some electors desire. The obstacles are at least as numerous as those which have prevented selection of a national flower. For a long time we tried this, but never were able to agree. Toward the close of the contest the goldenrod and the daisy were leading in favor, but the choice was put off and the question has been forgotten.

It may not be necessary, as has been suggested, to insist that our national tree shall possess both beauty and utility, since we have none that are devoid of the former virtue. But in utility, if not in habitat, it ought to be widely varied, and there is merit in the proposal that it shall be chosen also because it possesses some quality representative of the American people as a whole. The field of choice is not perceptibly narrowed by the most exacting restrictions. It is possible with a little imagination to construct a symbolism for any tree that is likely to be named. The oak is sturdy and long-lived; the hickory has a claim to residence running back to the era prior to the ice age and is probably the veteran of them all; the elm resides where our population is densest; the cedar is highly durable and useful; the birch is pre-eminently the tree of the American boy; and the fir is destined to enter into construction of American homes more largely than any of its companions.

If the northwest presents a candidate, we may take it for granted that it will be the Douglas fir. Yet if we were bent on honoring David Douglas, the botanist and explorer, whose amazing labors in the second decade of the nineteenth century did so much to enlighten the world as to the riches of this section, it would be necessary to remember that it was not Douglas' own favorite. That scientist had another predelection, as Professor F. G. Young pointed out when he said:

> It will be remembered that it is this Douglas for whom the Douglas spruce (Pseudotsuga Douglasii) was named. While it is quite fitting that the tree that is the monarch of the forest of the Pacific northwest—the largest and most important timber tree—should bear the name of this indefatigable explorer of the flora and fauna of the region, the reader of his journals and letters will be struck with the fact that it is the sugar pine (Pinus Lambertiana) that impressed him most. He was virtually a worshipper of it. There was no limit to the sacrifice he was willing to make to secure specimens of its cones and twigs. Having found it, he went into raptures over it.

Douglas himself said in a letter to Dr. Hooker, of the society under whose direction his scientific observations were conducted:

> I rejoice to tell you of a new species of pinus, the most princely of the genus, perhaps even the grandest specimen of vegetation. It attains the enormous height of 170 to 230 feet, with a circumference of 50 feet and cones from 12 to 18 inches long. This pinus is found abundantly two degrees south of the Columbia river, in the country of the Umpqua tribe of Indians, who collect its seeds in autumn and grind them in to a kind of cake.

This letter was written on March 24, 1826. But Douglas was not unmindful of the grandeur of the tree that now bears his name. In the elaborate appendix to his journal, he records that it is "one of the most striking and truly graceful objects in nature," and that "particularly is this true of those interspersed in groups or standing solitary," while in forest conditions they "arrive at a magnitude exceeded by few if any trees in the world." He records a stump behind old Fort George which measured forty-eight feet in circumference, without bark, three feet from the ground. The tree, he adds, had been burned "to give place to a more useful vegetable, namely, potatoes." Though the botanist probably did not foresee the immense utility that this variety would attain, he did not underrate its importance in other respects, and expressed hope that it would prove a beautiful acquisition to English sylva, "if not an important addition to our useful timbers." He noted its occurrence from the latitude of Cape Blanco to the Straits of Juan de Fuca, a range of some six degrees, and found a few stragglers as far south as Cape Mendocino. Douglas' largest recorded fir was 227 feet tall, with a circumference of seven and a half feet 159 feet from the ground. Lewis and Clark in their journal record that they found trees (probably of this species) that "measured forty-two feet in circumference at a point beyond the reach of an ordinary man," and calculated their height at 300 feet. Thirty years after Douglas, Lieutenant Henry L. Abbott, of the corps of topographical engineers engaged in exploration for a route for a railroad from the Sacramento to the Columbia, paid a higher tribute of appreciation. "The size of Abies Douglasii," he wrote, "has not been overstated. It is indeed the grandest of the group of giants that combine to form the forests of the far west." He called it Douglas spruce and declared that it was "common south to the Mexican boundary," a statement with which other explorers would not agree, and made official record of this description of its occurrence:

> The trees stand relatively as near each other and the trees are as long and slender as the canes in a canebrake. The amount of timber on an acre very much exceeds that of a similar area in the tropics, or in any part of the world I have visited. Were it not that vegetable tissue will burn readily, the immense mass of it which encumbers the surface of an ordinary farm, on the banks of the Columbia would bid defiance to any efforts that one man could make for its removal during the term of his natural life.

The tallest Douglas fir of record exceeds considerably the measurements of Douglas himself. Records of the American Forestry association contain an allusion to one specimen with a height of 380 feet, and to single trees which scaled 60,000 feet, board measure. Visitors to the forestry building during the Lewis and Clark exposition in Portland were as deeply impressed with the specimens of western fir as was Douglas himself with the Pinus Lambertiana which was to him the outstanding memory of his American expedition.

Deeds that conveyed to the state of Louisiana last week a tract of 500 square miles acquired by private subscription for use as a perpetual bird refuge settled a question that has vexed that state and also aroused the interest of bird lovers in other parts of the country. It is said to be the most extensive effort at game preservation ever made by private enterprise. A local citizen set the ball rolling by setting aside 60,000 acres of marsh land, to which the Russell Sage and Rockefeller Foundations subsequently added about 160,000 acres, and other large tracts were presented by their owners. In exchange for title to the property, the state has covenanted to maintain it forever as an asylum for wild life. Most of the land is unfit for agricultural purposes, and in the use to which it is now to be put it will serve not only Louisiana but other states north and south by furnishing migratory birds a safe refuge during the winter season.

Perhaps it is because of the stormy weather that the Red Cross rollcall lags, but it is a better guess that it is for the reason that a few people are unmindful of past services and others are unaware that the work begun by the Red Cross during the war is not yet completed. Work of the home service branch as a matter of fact is still exacting, and rehabilitation of sick and wounded service men, in which the organization is active, will not be finished until the last soldier has been cared for. Due allowance can be made for abatement of enthusiasm with the nominal end of the war, but the number thus far enrolled in Portland, slightly in excess of 11,000, is farther than it ought to be below reasonable expectations. There is more work for the Red Cross to do, and Portland has a reputation to sustain.

Enormous growth of the caribou industry in Alaska, reflected in establishment of refrigerating plants for the storage of reindeer meat, suggests that Stefansson's prediction that the tundras of the far north would some day furnish meat for the world may have been something more than a dream.

In Buffalo, N. Y., a physician's certificate of necessity is required in order to get a ton of coal. In Chicago the same certificate is demanded for a "hootch" prescription. What would we do without the medical profession?

A French politician has declined to fight his twelfth duel on the ground that dueling is a foolish practice, which shows that he has learned something, though it took time.

Judging from the country-wide comment that has been aroused by election of the all-woman city ticket at Yoncalla, there must be other communities ripe to try the scheme.

Would-be train robbers seem to be suffering the consequences of not keeping up with the news. Only a little reading ought to convince them that crime doesn't pay.

Perhaps when those wall writings are deciphered, it will be discovered that they relate to the occurrence of a higher flood than the celebrated freshet of 1894.

That storekeeper in the Grays Harbor country knows the way to foil a robber. Keeping cash out of harm's way is sure to make the industry unpopular.

Parley P. Christenson says in a post-election statement that he is planning the future of the farmer-labor party. So there is such a party, is there?

The organization that was powerful enough to force repeal of daylight-saving has also given State Grand Master Bouck something to think about.

The height of optimism would seem to have been reached by those who expect to marry happily by the mail order route.

Albany is said to be looking for a clarinet player. Wouldn't a flute player with a bad cold fill the bill?

Now Chile and Sweden, having arranged for arbitration in the event of trouble, can sleep in peace.

The disturbances in Europe may be the stamp collectors' gain, but they are the map makers' loss.

Government has all concerned in the loot of the fast mail near Council Bluffs and it was quick work.

The week of November 22 is to be our national "rough on rats" week.

BY-PRODUCTS OF THE TIMES

When Does Hospitality Cease to Be a Virtue?

A man invited three friends to spend a week on his yacht. The boat caught fire and, although all hands escaped, their valuables were lost. The three guests are now suing their host for amounts aggregating more than $50,000 to recompense them for the loss of clothing, pet dogs, gold cigarette cases and the like. It is charged in the complaint that the host, in violation of the law, had intoxicating beverages aboard the yacht and that, partaking thereof, he neglected precautions against fire.

So what was once the embodiment of hospitality now becomes the basis of gravamen. But the question which will be asked by many who are interested in yachts, bottles and gold cigarette cases, is this: Is it clubby to complain under such circumstances? Are there not thousands of persons who would willingly risk all their clothing, Pomeranians and gold cigarette cases for a trip on a yacht wetly provisioned? We fear so.

If the bountiful yachtsman has to pay, what of the future? If John Doe fall down stairs after sampling Richard Roe's home brew, does an action lie? If a guest burn his fingers while investigating his host's private still is he to collect damages? —New York Herald.

* * *

Propaganda, like surgery, has made some remarkable advances during the war. A correspondent in Berlin sends us a curious example of one development. It consists of two one-mark notes both of which have been torn through the center as a result of being folded too often. They have been joined together by strips of adhesive paper, and each strip bears a legend printed in red ink.

The translation of one runs: "Why is the mark worth only 10 pfennig? Ask Ludendorff and Ebert!" The other inquires, "Why is the mark so tattered? Because the state finances are tattered."

No private person is likely to have taken the trouble to equip himself with plasters that are at once adhesive and controversial. Presumably they are a government issue of the banks, so that worn-out paper money may be put on its legs again for further circulation and at the same time a blow be dealt to the government's old enemies.—Manchester Guardian.

* * *

"Butter tasters" is the name children give to the violet-tinted, worn fragments of clam shells that are to be found on most beaches. These "butter tasters" were an important medium of exchange among the Indian tribes living along the shore in their trading with other natives farther inland.

It can readily be understood that Indians sufficiently adept in the art of chipping arrowheads and other implements of hard flint could easily manufacture rude "money" out of the more attractively colored pieces of these water-worn shells; and this they did, giving to this medium of exchange the name luckahauk, somewhat after the style of wampum.

It may be surprising to many, especially to craft workers, to know what really beautiful "stones" these same so-called luckahauks will produce when cut and polished into symmetrical form from pieces of sufficient thickness and showing the rich and beautiful violet colorings that many of them possess.

Such as are found on the beach are necessarily dull, with no polish, due, of course, to the wear of the sea and sand, but by proper treatment on the laps are brought to a very high polish and look very rich, indeed, being entirely unlike any other "gem."

Having considerable hardness, they will wear almost indefinitely when once polished. The colors blend beautifully with silver, either in bright or antique finish, while their beauty is heightened by treatment or embellishment with small baroque, or seed pearls, small amethysts or other harmonizing stones.—New York Sun.

* * *

Two editions of "The Poems of Henry Van Dyke" have just been issued by the Scribners, in one and two volumes. The double volume set forms volumes nine and ten of the elegant Avalon edition of Dr. Van Dyke's works, sold by subscription only. The single volume is printed from the same plates but on lighter paper, so that the book of nearly 600 pages is not at all unwieldly. The collection is strictly up to date, including a number of late poems not before published in book form. It is quite possible that Henry Van Dyke's essays and stories have overshadowed his merit as a poet, for his prose volumes came first and established his reputation for facile and graceful writing. Now and then a Van Dyke poem flashed upon us. How many flashes there were in the dark while we slept we can only realize in viewing this large amount of poetry. The same charm exists here which marks his prose. It is too early to assign the genial preacher, professor, diplomat and author his ultimate rank among Amelrca's poets but it is certain that some of his work will go singing down the ages, and for present purposes there is a large amount of pleasure, of thrill, of uplift in these pages.—Springfield Republican.

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Maurice Dekobra, the widely known Parisian humorist, who wrote "Rat de Cave; or Burglary Considered As a Fine Art," and "Sammy, the American Volunteer," his reminiscences of the time he was attached to the A. E. F. as liaison officer, has arrived in this country, where he is going to deliver in English a series of lectures on the Parisiennes. He will talk on the character of French humor, on his bohemian days in Montmartre, and on other equally entertaining topics. M. Dekobra will be the first French author to deliver lectures in English.—The Argonaut.

* * *

Mary Ellen had just arrived at grandmother's house and announced herself as being thirsty. "Don't drink water, honey," said grandmother. "Here's a nice glass of milk you can have."

Little Mary Ellen demurred but grandmother insisted that she drink the glass of milk. Finally Mary Ellen looked at grandmother suspiciously. "Why, has it had a fly in it?" she asked.—Indianapolis News.

Achievement.

By Grace E. Hall.

Achievement is a most elastic word,
And fitted by each mind to its own thought;
For what to one may seem the most absurd,
Another holds as most divinely wrought.
One may enthuse o'er household duties done,
And these within their sphere have much of worth,
But to an artist, just a medal won
Is vast achievement, circling the earth.

The music master views his opus rare,
Counts o'er his treasure like a rosary;
The artisan, excelling, will compare
His handiwork with all that he may see;
The poet, of all laborers least pitied,
Will scan his lines with deeply-furrowed brow,
Convinced that he by some stranger power is fitted
To lift the race to new ideals somehow.

Yea, 'tis a most elastic word—achieve!
And who shall saw what labor counts the most?
The world must from each laborer receive
Its mead of toil; there is small cause to boast.
And he who does his best has done his all,
Comparison can never change the facts,
And since a million tasks forever call,
Who then shall rate men's victories or his lacks?

There are great triumphs never, never told,
The world in haste sees only things made plain;
And narrowed spheres have held true conquerors bold,
Who died yet rose supreme o'er self—through pain;
To die in truth is but the common lot,
But when o'er self a man shall rule complete,
That is achievement—O! deny it not!
And place life's choicest laurels at his feet.

DAYCLOSE.

Thou art gone, lovely day,
With my kiss on your brow,
And something I hid
In the gold of your hair;
Your hair, which gleamed so
With the mist and the spray,
Of the tears and the ache
And the longing and care,
Which came to your sisters
Forever and aye.
The gold of your hair
And the dreams in your eyes,
Too sober for mirth
And too chaste for despair,
Half born of the ocean,
The earth and the skies,
Like mountains in motion
Or lakes of soft dyes.
Birthed strongly and surely
Of hope and surprise,
Where my heart cast a shadow
As great as my soul,
In that enchanted gloom
We were one for awhile;
And the smell of your garments
Like gardens in bloom,
Which wax and which wane
O'er some exquisite isle,
Where the dirges of ocean
Unceasingly roll.
Ah, keep, lovely day,
In a casket divine,
Close hid in the gold
Of your wonderful hair,
The things which I told you,
Those secrets of mine,
As I hold never spoken
All the trust that was thine;
How destiny watched
At the end of the way
With black steeds and music
And mingling of wine,
To claim you and name you,
And bear you away.

GUY FITCH PHELPS.

BROTHERHOOD.

"Ye of one faith, one hope, one creed, are brothers and in all,
This truth should govern every day and prove a strengthening wall";
One morning thus the man of God in sanctuary said;
To prove this truth occasion came and soon my footsteps led.

From gray-haired man of learning, I claimed it for a son—
(A trusting younger brother who the right to it had won.)
Though of one faith the elder man in careless haste replied,
"It matters not in business," and thus the claim denied.

Unto a wise man of the law in further quest I turned;
Allegiance that I could prove by him alike was spurned.
And when I spoke of brotherhood, he with evasive smile,
Debated that a sum of gold was greatly more worth while.

He sought to prove the good man's words were but a fallacy—
A brotherhood for Sunday, yes, but all the weekdays free.
I asked the skies in mute appeal, are there no ties that hold?
Shall every claim be measured with and cast aside for gold?

L' Envoy

And mutely answering I beheld the chaos of the world;
Not loyalty and brotherhood, but greed and mammon ruled.

JANETTE MARTIN.

FORGET IT.

The tumult and the shouting dies,
Defeated candidates depart,
And once again we're swatting flies
Or paying coin to see Bill Hart.
It's over now, the noise, the fret,
And politics we can forget.

Far called, the beaten ones today
No