Sunday Oregonian

ESTABLISHED BY HENRY L. PITTOCK

C. A. MORDEN, Manager. R. B. PIPER, Editor.

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TWO PROBABLE ALTERNATIVES.

Congressmen who turn to payments by Great Britain on account of its war debt to this country while searching for means of paying a soldiers' bonus without levying new taxes would be wise to turn their thoughts to certain facts, probabilities and possibilities in Europe which are closely related to the British debt.

That debt is no greater an obligation than that of any other allied country to which the United States made war loans. If Great Britain pays, they should be asked to pay, but Great Britain has as good a claim on them as that of the United States, for it made loans almost equal to all of those made by the United States.

France is willing to pay, but cannot because Germany does not pay. Germany says it cannot pay unless it obtains a loan and is granted a moratorium for several years. The bankers refuse to underwrite a loan unless the sum demanded from Germany is much reduced.

Having already borrowed eighty billion francs in expectation of payments from Germany, France refuses to reduce its claim on Germany unless other nations reduce their claims on France. When saying this, France looks straight at the United States and Great Britain, for they are its two great creditors.

Failure of Germany to obtain a loan has depreciated the mark to a new low level, which has so reduced the purchasing power of the German workmen's wages that they can barely subsist. They are getting into the mood where they would start civil war to crush the monarchists and industrialists and would call on the Russian red army to help them in establishing a communist government.

Their hope of a loan and other help in economic reconstruction having been blighted at The Hague, the bolshevist chiefs are inclined to make a last throw in their gamble for power by launching the red army against the border states in an effort to overwhelm them and join hands with the German reds. When that crisis came, Great Britain, France and Italy would be apt to join Poland and the little entente in driving back the red flood and fighting bolshevism to a finish on German soil.

That would mean another general European war, adding another chapter to the story of destruction wrought in the world war that is still fresh in our minds. We should desire by any reasonable means in our power to avert such a catastrophe.

If France should be relieved of a large part of the debt to the United States and Great Britain on condition of consent to reduction of the German indemnity, Germany could obtain an international loan, the mark would rise in value, the distress of German workmen would be relieved so that they would abandon thoughts of a red rebellion, the German republic should then become strong enough to deal with the irreconcilable reds on the one hand and with the monarchists on the other, Poland when free from a German menace should be able alone to dispose of the red army as it did in 1920, and a general war would be averted.

These are two alternative lines along which events may reasonably develop in Europe within the next six months. When we considered the consequences of the former alternative, both directly to this country and indirectly through further devastation in Europe with its perils to white civilization, we might be willing to pay a high price in order to secure the second alternative.

That would raise the question of cancelling a large part of the French debt as far the lesser of two evils. Great Britain, as France's next largest creditor and being more deeply concerned in peace, would be called upon to consider the same question. Then would enter into the discussion the equity of requiring Great Britain to pay in full while forgiving much of the French debt, especially when Britain was making a like sacrifice and had been reduced to the necessity of borrowing from us by having made large loans to other allies.

This may seem to some people to be a remote contingency hinging on a chain of events, but so did a world war in the summer of 1914. A crisis is impending in Europe and it promises a shock to those pseudo-statesmen who insist that Europe's troubles are none of our affair.

The discovery that forgery of antiquities has again become a widespread practice in Mesopotamia will possess interest for scholars and a few others concerned with the authenticity of historical records, but it ought not seriously to disturb the ordinary run of men. It gives us opportunity to reflect on the relationship between intrinsic and adventitious values and their pleasure-giving qualities. A man buys an article of undoubted beauty, thinking it to be a thousand years old, and thereafter enjoys its possession in the fullest possible measure, until haply he learns that it was manufactured, as it were, but yesterday. Thereupon his dejection knows no bounds, the article in question ceases to charm his eye, the notion that others may have its duplicates destroys his selfish sense of exclusive ownership and all pleasure, so far as that commodity goes, is ended—whereas it is actually unchanged. A prudent revision of our conception of values might play hob with the business of dealers in antiques, but it would at the same time add not a little to the contentment of large numbers who now make themselves miserable over a matter of no great concern.

SPELL IT YOURSELF.

When Chief Justice McCoy of the District of Columbia ruled the sphygmomanometer out of court, let's hope he established a precedent that will be widely and faithfully followed. For the instrument with the jaw-fracturing name is none other than the lie-detector, heralded as the infallible agent of truth. The jurist is not to be regarded as favoring mendacity, by the appearance of his ruling—rather he is to be commended for rebuking the fallacy of the instrument itself.

The lie-detector is supposed to trap the delinquent by recording the fluctuations of his pulse while under interrogation. Thus, if it hastens or falters when he is asked a leading question, it is presumed that he prevaricates in his answer. Many a different man will testify that his reactions to such a devise would of themselves convict him, though he was as guiltless as his grandmother. To the contrary some sinner of poise and experience, well knowing that he was the culprit, would give answer with never a tremor, never a change in the steady rythm of his pulse. The sphygmomanometer, name and method, is scarcely less than inquisitorial.

The severest test of the true liar is the critical appraisal he undergoes by his fellow men, by jurors, for instance. What the lie-detector cannot hope to record, the fleeting changes of facial expression, the slightly altered tone of voice, the attempt at simulated virtue, are all apparent to a jury. As an object lesson in inutility the invention of the whatdoyoucallit challenges all rivals, including the wooden nutmeg.

OUR OPPORTUNITY IN CHINA.

Mr. Dingle's address to the Chamber of Commerce adds the judgment of a man thoroughly familiar with China to that of many others in support of American investment in that country with the diplomatic support of our government. Transportation is the key that unlocks the door of an undeveloped country. If American capital, engineering and constructive genius should be applied to building of railroads and highways and to improvement of rivers, development of neglected resources would follow, the earnings of the people would increase, the trader, manufacturer, mining man and lumberman would follow the railroad to the interior, and the market for our goods would be vastly expanded as the purchasing power of the Chinese grew and as they discovered new needs.

Transportation is the means by which the provinces of China can be united into a nation and by which a central government can establish its authority and grow strong. Railroads bound the western states to the union, the western provinces of Canada to the dominion, and are now carrying the white man's goods to the heart of what was half a century ago darkest Africa. It is the means of making remote countries accessible and of enabling them to exchange their products for those of the world at large.

American penetration by building transportation lines of all kinds and by sending business men of all kinds on the heels of the railroad-builder is the sure preventive of Japanese penetration. It would be far more effective than conferences or diplomatic notes, for it would make the American the man in possession of Chinese trade. This is the one nation which the Chinese trust, for they know that our people would go to their country with no desire to govern them, to change their institutions, customs or language, but simply to trade with them and to help them. Against our army of commercial invasion with no political end to serve Japan would be powerless, and the far eastern problem might be settled without the firing of a shot.

FANNIE COMES HOME.

Fannie Hurst accounts for her loneliness in Europe by the theory of soul magnesium. Hers, she says, was not in tune with theirs. Just what soul magnesium signifies is not apparent. The term must be one of those up-to-the-moment novelties created by the psycho-analysts. Yet we all of us know what Fannie meant. In all Europe she did not find anyone who thinks as Americans do, who feels as they do, who understands as they do. To Fanny was borne home the revelation that, while all men may be brothers, oceans and boundaries have held them so apart that one might be from Mars, another from Neptune, and a third from the moon. They have lost their identity of brotherhood, save in name only.

To Fannie Hurst it doubtless appeared that the American point of view is the sound one, in a world of unrest and unreason. She did not understand them, nor they her. And we believe that Miss Hurst was right in her assumption. We venture to assert that were the rest of the planet to think and feel as do the American people, the rest of the planet would be the happier for it and there would be fewer wars and fewer famines. "Europe," she observed, "is scarred and sick, with eyelids heavy and weary." Europe is precisely what Europe willed itself to be in its elder wisdom.

Miss Hurst found no literary material over seas. She cannot or will not write about that which she does not understand; and, as she says, Missouri and California and New York are a part of her being. "There is a warmth towards people that comes only with nativity." Six months abroad did not furnish her fertile fancy with a single plot, a single character, for she confesses that she was unable to receive "any great chemical reaction from foreigners." For this she apologizes, as one who has stated an unalterable fault that must be endured since it cannot be remedied.

There is no need for the apology. Some millions of Americans—by far the greater proportion of about 110,000,000—will rejoice to know that at least one prominent American—a thinker, too—has come home from Europe without an apology for America, without a half-belief in our inferiority, without the conviction that Europeans are of superior clay, take them by and large. They will be happy to note that Miss Hurst loves the land of her nativity unreservedly, despite the broadening influence of travel, and that moldered paintings and crumbling statues, and gaudy courts, and picturesque, dirty towns have not wrought such an artistic effect upon her soul magnesium as to kindle therein a glow for foreign supremacy.

"It seems to me," said Miss Hurst reflectively, "that tourists must decide to do one of two things. They must decide that either the United States is a very good place to be in, and stay there, or they must go abroad in a different spirit."

So it has seemed to many of us, Fanny. So it has seemed to many of us.

A REPUTATION ENFORCED.

Christopher Morley reminds us that the vagabond poet, Vachel Lindsay, is no vagabond at all, nor yet a broncho-buster—to which strenuous role we confess our fancy has never assigned him—but "a quiet and placable" celebrant of song, figuratively the "John Bunyan of the corn belt." He rambles shyly, we are told, "a thoughtful and quaintly ecstatic pilgrim among life's monstrous profiles." Whereupon, the better to prove the spiritual essence of the bard, Master Morley falls to quoting "The Golden Whales of California."

We shall see silver ships,
We shall see singing ships,
Valleys of spray today,
Mountains of foam.
We have been long away,
Far from our wonderland—
Here come the ships of love
Taking us home.

Where is our house to be?
Far in the ether sea.
There where the North Star
Is moored in the deep.
Sleepy old comets nod
There on the silver sod;
Sleepy young flowers
Laugh in their sleep.

There is more of the poem, and the resolve is to seek it out. Master Lindsay hath a deft and a delicate touch, which belies, as the good Christopher maintains, the rumor that his neck is rough and unshaven. Yet for the fiction there is none to blame save Vachel himself, who in his earlier explorations of poesy was somewhat of a strolling troubadour, paying the good wife's reckoning with the coin of song. For the matter of that it is but a few months since he was the blithest of vagrants in the Rocky mountains, to all outward appearance one of the guild of masterless men. The John Bunyan of the corn belt should not stray so far from his fields, or permit himself such whimsies, if he dislikes to be famed as a metrical ronin. (Ronin is Japanese for "wave-man"—wandering, wandering.)

Now we believe, and cite the two verses of the whales to our support, that altogether it was a fine thing that Vachel denied the humdrum and took to foot travel thither and yon. We believe that if more poets would seek the actual company of the stars they would write the better and the more understandingly of stars, than if their astronomical observations were narrowed by tall buildings of brick and steel and stone. If America is to produce a great poet—and, mark you, Master Lindsay does not lack for those who hail him—he will be one who has found the fellowship of the open well worth his while, and who is enabled by his memories, as by his spiritual perceptions, to please a grateful ear with something infinitely finer than neurotic introspection.

To return to Christopher's very proper defense of Vachel, it is said by his friend that the "poet has not been the least bit interested in the self-conscious pseudo-Bohemia of the small-time poets." At one shrewd stroke he has cleft the last joint of our dubiety. Master Lindsay really belongs.

HERE LIES THE DIME NOVEL.

Starshine paused from his mad gallop at the very brink of the cliff. As young Frank Fearless, our hero, leaned from the saddle to peer into the depths, his Sharps rifle half drawn from its holster, the seven ruffians were even then emerging from the deserted mine. Well he knew that they had fired the fuse and but scant time remained to him. He tossed the weapon to his shoulder and discharged it. Their leader plunged from the trail headlong to the mountain torrent. He sent another leaden messenger straight to the heart of the half-breed, and still another at the fleeing survivors. Then hand over hand Frank Fearless went down to the rescue—in the nick of time.

So sad, so sweet, the days that come no more! Yet the dime novel, banned by bell and book and parent in its day, at last reposes on the somewhat exclusive shelves of the New York public library—or, to be more precise, in the glass cases of a large and triumphal exhibit. There the lurid, tattered covers protest mutely against the tyranny of the past—when the curse of the younger generation was held to be the dime novel, the dime novel and the cigarette. To many a strolling elder the quaint collection must summon memories of old days—of mystery that crept into the hay loft to thrill a juvenile reader, of adventure that infiltrated the attic, of coarse yellow pages that, like the wishing rug, had power to transport one away from chores and corn fields into provinces where men were bold and gallant and redskins and rascals were their preordained targets.

The father of all dime novels, so to speak, was Erastus B. Beadle, who at Buffalo in 1750 published the first of that most prolific series. Others followed in his financial footprints, the heroes multiplied, but to Mr. Beadle rightly belonged the distinction of the pioneer. He it was who supplanted the precisely pedantic literary hero, a youth, alas, frequently too good to be true, with the Young Wild Wests who rode so well and shot so straight—in a word, with Cooperesque valiants humanized. His characters, created by the rapt scriveners who toiled for him, were singularly direct and obvious. They had no complexes. They were either good or bad. If the one, they worsted every death plot and were virtuously triumphant, as was their right; if the other, they died most incontinently and always by violence. The Beadle portrait, a tintype, is fittingly cherished with the collection of dime novels.

"He moved to New York from Buffalo," runs the chronicle, "and began the first of a series of orange-covered books, taking into partnership David Adams. A photograph of these two, taken at the height of their career, shows a couple of slender men sitting stiffly beside a Victorian table, hands thrust into coat fronts and heads half lost in whiskers and hair."

We confess a liking for this portrait of the late Mr. Beadle. It is in character. He had earned the privilege of pomposity, and though a million shingles were slivered because of him, time vindicated the soundness of his opinion. For within the past decade the once unrelenting dictum against the dime novel has mellowed to understanding. Captains of industry have confessed that light reading rests their gigantic minds, and that the dime novel is such a book as they would now approve of. Critics have discovered its structural merits—its terseness of style, fidelity of plot and character, and ease of narration. Of course, in the dime novel these favorable attributes of literature are manifest to an almost burlesque degree, but the fact remains that some of our finest fiction is often a bit tedious.

However, the dime novel in its former guise will never return. Truly it is with the days that come no more. Its modern counterpart, or at least its direct heir, sells for a dollar and a half at the book stalls, or flickers through the films. Beadle is gone, and all his colleagues. Not long ago there passed a man who was the veritable Belgian hare of letters—one who had sired thousands of dime novels, yet who died penniless. And in the light of modern reflection we have come to believe that, after all, the Beadle press agent was not so far from the truth when he tuned his muse for this jingle:

And still the envious critics tried
In vain to stem the Beadle tide;
For this the Beadle dreadful crime—
A dollar book sold for a dime.

CONQUERING THE SAHARA.

To thrust a railroad across the Sahara for a distance of 1500 miles would occupy not more than four years and create an expenditure not greater than the cost of two modern battleships. This is the most sanguine estimate of those French colonial enthusiasts who seek to conquer that ancient area of aridity by constructing a line from Algeria to the Niger in French West Africa, linking these colonial possessions by steel. More conservative engineers place the period of construction at from eight to ten years and the cost at $75,000,000. The amazing reflection, to the casual reader, is that such a project is feasible. To most of us the Sahara has always been visualized as a sandy sea of desolation.

We must, however, relinquish this concept of the great waste. Desolate it is for the most part, but it is far from waterless, and an abundant store of water awaits artesian drilling. M. Bruneau de Laborie, the French engineer who recently completed one of the longest African treks on record, and who followed for a long distance the proposed route of the French rail project, was at no time, he said, more than four days distant from water. Certainly such a statement, directly referring to the wildest portion of the Sahara, does not connote especial hardship. This explorer referred to the oases alone, those islands of fertility upon the surface of the denuded desert. It should be borne in mind that each oasis is an earnest of an abunance of fresh water held in subterranean storage.

The French already have proved this by the drilling of artesian wells. In nearly every instance they have tapped an inexhaustible supply and through this medium have already reclaimed extensive tracts. The historian Olympiodorus, writing in the fifth century, asserted it was a common custom of the dwellers of the Sahara to dig wells of 100 to 120 feet in depth, from which rose jets of pure water. Assuming that this statement was unexaggerated, it is evident that the practice long since passed into disuse among the tribes, who range a territory as great in area as all Europe. They number 2,000,000 individuals, which affords additional proof that the desert is not fiercely hostile.

It is apparent that the forbidding aspect of Sahara masks a very possible fertility. Once it was fertile, as the dry river courses attest. For the desert possesses the skeleton of a complete water system, and wide deposits of water-worn rocks and pebbles, together with the fossilized remains of fresh-water creatures. Those rivers which now flow toward it are lost in the rock and sand and vanish utterly, but the geological character of the country is such that their flow is collected almost everywhere beneath the surface and held in storage. The water, as is demonstrated by the boring of wells, is aerated and perfectly fresh, for the flow constantly brings to light living specimens of fresh-water crabs, of fish and of mollusks. With this resource it is not unlikely that the French rail project, if carried through, would stimulate settlement of the Sahara itself and beat back the desert.

The fecundity of the desert is evidenced by its oases, where grasses and fruits grow in abundance. It is, however, virtually without soil, being for the most part of exposed rock surface and sand dunes. Even in such territory it is comprehensible that irrigation from artesian wells would speedily transform its forbidding aridity to the lushness of the oasis. As for the dunes, which have been held to be an almost insurmountable barrier to development of the Sahara, it is now authoritatively denied that they shift to any appreciable extent. Sand storms, of course, are common, but the dunes themselves, often 300 feet in height, have attained a state of comparative equilibrium and are regarded as of permanent location. In districts where the French colonists already have attempted reclamation the sand dunes have been planted successfully to alfa grass, which binds the shifting sand. Once it is held by the grass roots they are set with peach, prickly pear, acacia and other trees and shrubs that will endure the torridity and flourish.

Rather a facer, it is to be told that the Sahara is even now rich in flora and fauna, though it has been arid these thousands of years. Science has not completely solved the riddle of its denudation, though the theory has been advanced that it was engulfed by the sea. There is evidence that portions of it have been, but the greater area is the product of natural geologic changes. It is the delinquent of the world's territories. In winter, the season of rains, such is its conformation and that of the adjacent mountains, that its winds are all outward borne, forbidding the encroachment of a cloud across its sky. In summer, when the winds are inward borne, the intensity of its heated surface is so great that humidity is virtually non-existent and it cannot receive rain. Modern methods of irrigation have, however, proved that rain is a nonessential for the desert if its thirst can be slaked artificially.

More than a chapter in the history of civilization is given to the record of strife against aridity. In many instances men have pitched their tents in a thirsty land and enforced a conquest of the desert. Worthless areas have been made fertile beyond the most sanguine hope, and conversely it is true that where men have abandoned—in their restlessness or through the decline of nations—their fields and cities the desert has returned to claim its own. The desert is not unconquerable, and the Sahara, it would seem, least of all. If for the cost of two battleships or thrice that many a railroad will be driven across the Sahara, the project will have far greater significance than the mere linking of two French colonies. The course of the steel, within a dozen years, will be traced in verdure over those same sands and barren plateaus that have bleached so many bones of the caravans.

THE SORROWFUL KNIGHTS.

There is something very valiant and brave about the picture of a knight in armor—he seems such a gallant and personable fellow. Almost do we forget, as we gaze raptly at the print or painting, that he must have been tremendously uncomfortable with an ant down his neck or a buzzing gnat inside his visor. He carried the weight of a fairly well stocked hardware store on his weary frame, and surely a deal of pride and strength was required to stiffen the knightly spine. Yet, so attired, he went rambling over the moors and into far lands, and rattled and clanged in the tourney, an rode jangling into battle.

They are always writing books on armor in England—quaintly spelling it armour, which reminds us, at a glimpse, of a packing house and not a paladin. The latest of these is called "The Twilight of the Knights." It records the close of the middle ages, the death of knight arrantry and the obliteration by dusk of those gleaming figures on their draft horses, broad-rumped stallions fit to yank a tractor from the ditch. For armor touched its zenith then, and sank into its decline, and chivalry perished as a profession; some say as a social grace.

It was the gun, the crude old matchlock, that decreed the decline of the armored knight—yes, and his fall, for that matter. Long before that time the stout long bow had made his seat precarious, and gunpowder clinched the argument. For, though in battle against lance or sword, the knight was tolerably safe, and confident in his own valor, he had but to be unhorsed to be the most miserable mortal that ever felt the accolade. Says Charles Boutell, who wrote of armor along about the time that armored warships were taking to the sea:

> When once on the ground, however, he might have been unhorsed or brought down there, the knight was at the mercy of the foot soldiers; that is, he was in their power, and, unless they supposed that he might produce an important ransom, he was certain to find no mercy at their hands. One chance, indeed, the knight had, even when on the ground and prostrate, and for this he was indebted to the strength of his armor. It was just possible that repeated blows from either spear, or dagger, or club, might be necessary before his armor was beaten through; and meanwhile his assailants might be assaulted in their turn, and before they had found time to complete their work and kill him, they themselves might have fallen.

At any rate his prospect when unseated seems to have been hazardous to an extreme—poor knight, to be banged and buffeted about like a tin of salmon. Fortunate was he whose mail gave evidence of a high and prosperous station, that he might be treated as a negotiable security and held for cash. In the White company, the stout roughneck, Hordle John, got him a Spanish knight of proud degree and made a good profit on the capture. The noble, as we recall it, was much chagrined to fall into base hands, and bitterly deplored his shame, but John was almost tender with him. He had sound reason to be.

These depictions of knighthood in less enviable postures somewhat lessen our warm admiration for the institution of armed knights. They are unhorsed in our fancy as on the field. Can there be anything more ludicrous or lamentable than a fallen champion, with a century or so of lineage and proud deeds behind him, when once he is flat on his back with a gleeful ruffian astride? We trow not. Like many another picture of war, this one, despite its tragic portent, seems a gargantuan and ghastly joke. And even then, in that far and fictional day, the knights were at the mercy of their profiteers.

It is recorded in "The Twilight of the Knights" that the armorers became lazy and careless. They scamped their work like any wartime contractor ever investigated by congress, and where the specifications of a knightly breastplate called for triple-X steel, hand-forged, they substituted sheet iron and concealed their rascality with folderols and fret-work. Much of the handsome armor that remains to us, in museums, guarded as priceless, is of this insincere craftsmanship. A knight might mortgage his shire to the money lender for the golden price of a modish suit of mail, yet when he tested his habiliments in battle or tournament be dismayed and vexed to discover that an adversary's lance had transfixed him from breastbone to vertebrae, and a cloth-yard beyond. Certainly he must have cursed his tailor roundly, while darkness swam in his helm and his gauntleted hands release the ash. So we have another version of the fine old days of chivalry that contrasts most illy with the trumpeting novelist. Sympathy? Oodles of it, but not a bit of admiration.

"A first-rate English archer," said Prince Louis Napoleon, "who in a single minute was unable to draw and discharge his bow twelve times with a range of 240 yards, and who in those twelve shots once missed his man, was very lightly esteemed."

No wonder that the mailed knight became unpopular with himself. An English archer, such as Alyward, contrary to popular belief, did not carry his shafts in a quiver across his back. They were tied with a slip-knot thong and thrust in his girdle, a dozen or so of arrows. When battle was toward these incomparable marksmen drew forth the sheaf, cast off the thong with a single jerk and dropped the arrows to the ground, feather at hand. The left foot they placed upon the arrows. Stooping, they seized one and fitted it to the bow. Thereafter it rained arrows and the air was resonant with the sharp melody of bowstrings. With such accuracy of aim as they possessed, according to all chronicles, and with such rapidity of fire, an advancing company of knights was shorne of advantage at the very outset. True, the arrow at a great range might not penetrate surcoat and hauberk, but it could and did find its way through the visor bars, and it killed horses. It was sufficiently deadly to decree the doom of the mailed rider.

The armored knight is far from being a romantic figure in fact. Such romance as hedges him round was applied by his subsequent admirers. In his day he was the most uncomfortable of men, and the more so for that to his bodily discomfort was added the virtual certainty that his gilded mail was very poor protection. Vanished though he is, his memory stands as a symbol of the ineffectual and futile might of arms.

The news dispatch relating how a chauffeur for the imperial household of Japan committed suicide because a tire puncture for which he regarded himself as responsible caused a short delay in the trip of the prince regent indicates that in one particular at least the fatalism of the east has not been conquered by the materialism of the west. An occidental, if he held himself to blame for a happening which he regarded as a matter of importance, might have believed it his duty to make amends by giving compensation, but it never would have occurred to him that making a sacrifice of his own life would serve any useful purpose. Even in our non-material, so-called age of romance atonement took the form of dedication to good works, which will strike the average westerner, at least, as being infinitely more sensible and more likely to promote the happiness of all concerned.

Many households have three or four empty milk bottles on hand all the time, through neglect and with no intention to hold them. This is dead stock to the milkman. Hood River dairymen allege the practice as one reason for increasing the price of milk. Just what relation to the total cost of milk does the idle bottle bear?

The esteemed Boston Transcript moans that "the fact that New England has a record-breaking apple crop will not, of course, be permitted to interfere with the New England demand for Oregon apples." Some recognition, when one comes to think of it, of the fact that quality as well as quantity counts.

In spite of all that may be said concerning the "delicate problem of spiritual expression," in connection with the discussion of book censorship, even the younger set of authors must know that pornography masquerading as literature usually deserves all that it is apt to get.

A traveler returning from the coast counties thinks that a fortune awaits the man who can find a way to utilize the enormous and never-failing salal berry supply. Perhaps one way to make them popular would be to give them a fancy name and market them at a high price.

The height of possibilities in synthesis would seem to have been attained in the manufacture of "artificial natural gas." But we have long had occasion to wonder where the boundary line was located between the natural and artificial in other respects.

Boys who romped on a green cement church floor without recking the potentialities of the Bertillon system of identification are likely to have the fact impressed upon them in a more painful, if not more indelible, way when they are caught.

Amundson has already chosen the place where he intends to alight after flying across the North Pole. Which suggests that in the bright lexicon of arctic exploration there is no longer such a word as fail.

We are distinctly not in need of a formal campaign of education in the dangers of inflated paper currency. Readers of the news from Russia and Germany already have the lesson learned.

The mark fluctuates, with a prospect that its general tendency will not be upward until something happens to the German paper supply.

An exceptionally heavy responsibility rests on campers this summer. The carelessness of one in a thousand of them may cause damage that a century cannot repair.

Then again, not all of those who are voting for a modification of the Volstead act would wish to be recorded in favor of defying the law while it remains the law.

In the coming campaign against traffic law violations it will be the meek who will come out ahead, even if they do not inherit the earth.

The Listening Post.

By DeWitt Harry.

One sometimes gets lots of encouragement from the movies.

Unusual dryness of the season and consequent forest fires and smoky atmosphere are without a doubt a detriment to the full enjoyment of the vacation period.

There is a newspaper man who is all set to make a trip to a certain mountain, known by one name at one place and by another name elsewhere. Yesterday was "ragging" time in the office.

"It ain't worth while," gloomily remarked the police reporter. "Just met a fellow who was going up there and telephoned ahead to one of the resorts. They reported they could not see the mountain, but thought it might be clearer on top."

"Worse than that," discouraged the city hall man. "Bill Smith just got back, all bunged up. Ran spang into the mountain before he saw it."

"Don't let 'em discourage you," broke in the young man from the railroad beat. "The park authorities have engaged a rotary snow plow and just as soon as the smoke gets a little thicker they're going to remove it."

"But it's awful bad now," said another. "I met one fellow who said he just had come back to get a decent smoke. Couldn't taste the tobacco. Just like sticking his head over the camp fire and trying to enjoy a pipe."

"Oh, well," replied the undismayed vacationist, "things happen suddenly in the mountains. If you don't believe it go to the movies.

"Saw a film last night where a party was snowed in in the mountains by a terrible blizzard. While a guide was on his way to rescue them, a forest fire pretty nearly wiped out the bunch. Didja ever think what a blessing it would have been if a forest fire had broken out when we had that silver thaw last winter? I'm going. Can't tell what may happen in the next few days. Maybe we'll have a summer blizzard to put out the fire. Anyway, if I don't get to see that mountain I'm going to feel of it."

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At one of the last formal dances of the season an immaculately clad young man of prepossessing appearance made quite an impression on a number of the young women present. His manners were exceptional, his grooming perfect, his company much in demand. Not a great deal was known of him, but the surmise was that he must be in some outdoor profession, possibly an engineer, for his hands were hard and his walk showed that his muscles were firm.

A few days later several of the women who had danced with him went as guests to visit a fine foreign ship moored at one of the docks. There they saw their hero of a few nights before. He was working 'longshore, trucking cargo in a gang of navvies.

* * *

Mercy, Bobby, Mercy!

A little 9-year-old lad was going to a party in the neighborhood at White Salmon. After giving the youngster's dampened hair a fond pat, she said: "Now, please do not be boisterous at the party, dear." He replied: "No, muh-ther, I won't; I'll be galstrous." BILBATES.

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Signing himself "Singed," a correspondent rushes in to inform all of us that this year's valedictorian at the Moler college chose "Hair" as the subject for his discourse. He is reported to have handled the matter with a deft touch.

* * *

RECOMPENSE.

What if the shades of the black night loom,
Shrouding the sea and each lonely bight?
If you'll only look—see that ray of light
Filtering faint through the murk and gloom!
Do you fear that the sun may not shine again?
It is steadily shining on some far grove
Which you may yet find: if, as you once strove,
You will rouse from your apathy, striving again.

What if the wild winds rage on the hills
And the beautiful leaves are dead?
While a chill pall of ice is spread
On the chattering, glimmering rills?
They but carpet the earth, these red, dead leaves,
That the flowers may bloom in the spring,
And the wild winds rage that winter may fling
His blanket o'er paths where the summer grieves.

There was never an evil, that some little good
Did not come from the fact of its being.
If your ears are hearing—your eyes are seeing—
And you're doing your part as you should—
You can find enough sunshine to make life less dense,
You can hear a song struggling to master the tears,
You can profit by what you have learned through the years—
And that's what we call recompense.

—JOSEPH ANDREW GALAHAD.

* * *

One of the simplest ways to detect the depot master, according to our best jokesmiths, is by means of his weird articulation. Who of all who hear can decipher the towns he calls when announcing trains, whether it be through a megaphone or not? It's odd how the habit spreads. Just a few months ago the street railway company stationed traffic aides at the principal loading points to speed up the service and insure a more scientific packing in the cars. It is part of their duty to announce the cars as they roll up. The big-voiced husky at Third and Washington did an excellent job for some time, but now he has gone over to the old school and bellows something like this:

"Blaa-wump-taad, looan bootens, hab jur fahs reedii!"

The Helpful Hen.

Sabetha (Kan.) Herald.

Mrs. Doc Wittwer recently gathered a White Leghorn hen's egg that measured eight and a half inches around the long way and six and a quarter inches around the smaller circumference. "You see," explained Doc Wittwer in telling about the big egg, "we always eat the big eggs and sell the small eggs. So we cracked the big egg and found a complete egg inside with a complete shell. Having eaten the big part of the egg, naturally we will sell the smaller inside egg, giving us one egg to eat and one egg to sell for the single laying."

Face to Face.

By Grace E. Hall.

If, coming down the street, sometime,
Aware of all who passed,
I chanced to see the face that's mine,
With all its faults, at last;
Looked frankly in the eyes of me—
Each feature scanned with care—
What would I judge that face to be—
The one that I must wear?

Each day I study people so,
And search their faces through,
Probe underneath the outer glow
To find the self that's true;
Some eyes are focused clear and far,
With visions beaming bright,
Sometimes a face is like a scar
That never can come right.

I study them—their ways, their looks—
Their color, dull or deep—
Why, faces all are just like books—
Some de luxe, others cheap!
Each has its story, sad or gay,
Its theme of right or wrong,
And some we read and cast away,
And some we cherish long.

Then, if I met myself sometime,
And read my face-lines, too,
Viewed every look that now is mine
And knew the prints were true,
Would I, in judging them, succeed
In being fair? I vow
I do not know; but this I hope:
They'd measure then as now.

A TREASURE CHEST.

In front of a big store window
The street crowds thronged and pressed.
The object of their attention
Was a beautiful cedar chest.
Its color was rich and handsome;
It was fashioned and formed with grace
And polished until its surface
Reflected each watcher's face.

But the cedar chest stood unheeding.
Its heart was far away
In the midst of a dim old forest
Where tall trees bend and sway.
Long ago it had stood in this forest
And laughed with the summer breeze
Or bowed it's head to the tempest
As it swept among the trees.

Now its spirit seemed crushed and broken.
No more would the breeze caress
Nor, safely hid in it's branches,
Would the wild bird build her nest.
But what was the salesman saying,
As he quietly took his place
By the side of a stately woman
With a stricken look on her face?

"'Tis a wonderful chest," he told her.
"It certainly is a prize."
"I'm sure I shall love it," she murmured,
While tears welled up in her eyes.
So the chest was removed from the window
To a room in a beautiful home
Where it seemed that nothing but music
And laughter could ever come.

But the woman knelt beside it
And on it bowed her head.
"Oh, cedar chest, help me to bear it
And guard my treasure," she said.
Then into its fragrant bosom
She gently laid away,
A baby's shoes and jacket,
And a painted soldier, gay.

Next, a school boy's cap and sweater
With a baseball and a bat,
Then, beside a belt and hatchet,
A well-worn boy scout hat.
Then came a college pennant
With programme of "Prom" and dance
And a much soiled football emblem
Then—letters postmarked France!

Over these she fondly lingered.
They must have been bold and gay.
"My brave boy," she softly whispered
As she finally laid them away.
Then last came a coat of khaki.
In the breast was a ragged hole
With a strange, dark stain beneath it
Where a bullet had taken its toll.

She cried, "Oh, God give me courage,"
As she clasped it to her breast,
And 'twas almost an hour before it, too,
She laid in the cedar chest.
Then the chest forgot its sadness
And gladly played its part.
For months it has stood as sentinel
At the door of a woman's heart.

It has jealously hid her treasures
Safe in its cedar depth
And been a silent witness
As over them she wept.
The trees may sway in summer
Or bow before the blast,
But to woman's love, this cedar chest
Stands guard until the last.

—GRACE PADDOCK EDGERTON.

A MOUNTAIN MORNING.

I stood in the door of my mountain home,
Today when the morn was young;
The canyons in mystic shadows lay
Save where an early sunbeam's ray
A light through their darkness flung.

The dew lay thick over bush and tree,
Afar rang a bird's sweet call;
A fresh breeze blew against my face
And stirred the fronds of ferny lace
That hung from the canyon wall.

I looked above to the towering crags,
Where an eagle slowly whirled;
Then higher still I raised my eyes
To where the radiant morning skies
Bent down to a waiting world.

A brooding peace infolded all;
A hushed expectancy,
As thought of great things to be done
Before another setting sun
Passed to eternity.

My soul in a transport of ecstacy
And reverence, bowed down,
For there before me another day,
Still damp from the hand of the Maker, lay,
Unsoiled, untried, unknown.

—GRACE PADDOCK EDGERTON.

AT TWILIGHT.

I watched, at window high,
A tiny bird, with wondrous skill
Evolve a magic nest.

All day with care she wrought,
Until each homely, ill-shaped thing
Was part of beauteous whole.

Then, perched on earth-nigh bough,
A thankful vesper sang, for love,
And strength, and joy of life.

But at her side stalked death,
And ere the song of praise was done
Her form knew life no more.

Aghast, my heart's blood froze!
Then reason unto me revealed
The beauty of it all.

Since death needs come to each,
What's better than to meet it fair,
With vesper songs of praise,

That work assigned our hands
Has been performed with skill and zest,
No hind'ring thought of fear?

May thus my work day close—
With carols glad at twilight hour
To him, for life and love!

PEARL GREGORY CARTLIDGE.
Oregon City, Or.