

RURAL ENTERPRISE

An Independent—Not neutral—news paper, published every Wednesday, by Wm. H. WHEELER

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SCRAPS OF PAPER

The Germans have never admitted that they were responsible for the war. It was some other nation, they claim.

Their military leaders have always proclaimed that they were not defeated by their opponents and that they could come back yet and win.

Their representatives have signed treaties and admissions and promises, but even they did so with their fingers crossed, and in their own land there were always many—presumably a majority—who shrugged shoulders, denied the admissions and proclaimed the invalidity of the documents, claiming that signatures thereto had been obtained under stress and therefore were only scraps of paper.

They have never complied with any of the stipulations of the treaty of Versailles. They continued to manufacture arms and munitions of war in face of its strict inhibition, and to keep several times as many men under military training as its terms permitted.

They deliberately bankrupted their treasury to avoid making the reparation payments the treaty called for.

Now when the allies refuse to evacuate territory given into their control as security for those payments the Teutons rage and gnash their teeth and declare that the action, taken in strict accord with the treaty, amounts to a violation of it and makes it more than ever a scrap of paper, to which no one pays any attention.

They will conform to the treaty and to their subsequent agreements in line with it just as far as threatening bayonets compel them to.

The German obedience to treaties resembles the obedience of our runners and moonshiners and bootleggers to the prohibitory laws. But the latter laws are being made more drastic and being enforced more every day.

The league of nations shows wonderful vitality. It has been "scrapped" so many times that one might suppose there wouldn't be a scrap of it left by now. All the same, it has smoothed out many controversies that threatened war. Argentina, which once withdrew from the league has returned. The United States remains the only responsible nation outside and her business managers are cudgeling their brains to find some way to collect loans and reparations claims without the league and without war.

TO RETAIN LAND OFFICES

Washington, Idaho and Oregon Appropriations in Senate Bill.

Washington, D. C.—The interior department appropriation bill, as reported to the senate carries the amendment forced into it in the house by Chairman Sinnott of the public lands committee, retaining the land offices at Burns and La-Grande, Or.; Walla Walla, Waterville, Yakima and Vancouver, Wash., and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

The bill also restores provision for the retention of the surveyors general, who, under the bill passed by the house, would have been deprived of office July 1. All of the difficult conditions imposed by the house in appropriating \$375,000 for the Kittitas irrigation project in central Washington, including a provision for 5 per cent interest on deferred payments of settlers, were stricken from the bill by the senate committee on the motion of Senator Jones.

Oregon Woman, 105, Dies at Union. Union, Or.—Mrs. Elizabeth Godfrey died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Sarah Ricker, at the age of 105. Mrs. Godfrey was born in Maine in 1813, and had she lived until April 5 would have been 105 years old.

Federal Reserve Bank Earnings Low. Washington, D. C.—Earnings of federal reserve banks in 1924 were the lowest since 1917, it was announced at the treasury. Net earnings last year fell off \$9,000,000 compared with 1923.

Death Rate Decreased in 1924. Washington, D. C.—The death rate in the United States decreased in 1924, the census bureau announced. The rate last year was 125 per 10,000, compared with 130 in 1923.

Thanks, Contemporary Scribes

Witness the evidence of brotherly comity between Linn county newspaper men. The Brownsville Times and Albany Democrat republished the editorial statement the Enterprise made of the reasons for the recent change in this paper.

The Harrisburg Bulletin said: "The purpose is to take in a larger territory than the Halsey field, yet at the same time to maintain a local paper for Halsey people. The Bulletin believes that country paper cannot do too much for the farmer. In fact that is and always has been one of the chief missions of the small town paper. If Brother Wheeler has something up his sleeve that is more far reaching his move is commendable and the Bulletin wishes him every success."

The Scio Tribune remarks: "Just why the editor changed the name from Halsey Enterprise to Rural Enterprise was not given in a lengthy editorial, further than to state that he was carrying out plans he had in mind at the time he purchased the paper three years ago. From the standpoint of community building and keeping Halsey to the front, the dropping of the name of the town and substituting the word 'Rural' will have a tendency to build over the years it took to establish the Halsey Enterprise. The same policy to be carried on under the new name could have been handled more successfully under the old name. However, Brother Wheeler, may your every hope be more than doubled."

Halsey is a rural hamlet, depending for its existence upon a rural population. There is a great deal of enterprise in the activities of that population—rural Enterprise, if you will. This paper aspires to be an exponent of that enterprise. It will continue to be known as the Halsey Enterprise, as the Morning Register is known as the Eugene Register, the Morning Oregonian as a Portland Oregonian and the Oregon Journal as the Portland Journal. It is a Halsey paper in the same sense as those are Eugene and Portland papers, though their files is much broader than those municipalities.

Three in Bank Holdup Identified. Seattle, Wash.—Three of the five men held here for Canada in connection with the \$42,000 Nanaimo, B. C., bank robbery of December 12, 1924, were identified by witnesses from Portland, Or., as members of the gang of five bandits who held up the George N. Bates & Co., bank in that city on October 15, 1924. J. S. Birrell, cashier of the Portland bank, and two young women employes brought to Seattle, were taken to the King county jail and here pointed out Harry Stone, T. H. Johnson and George Bagley as three of the men who held them up.



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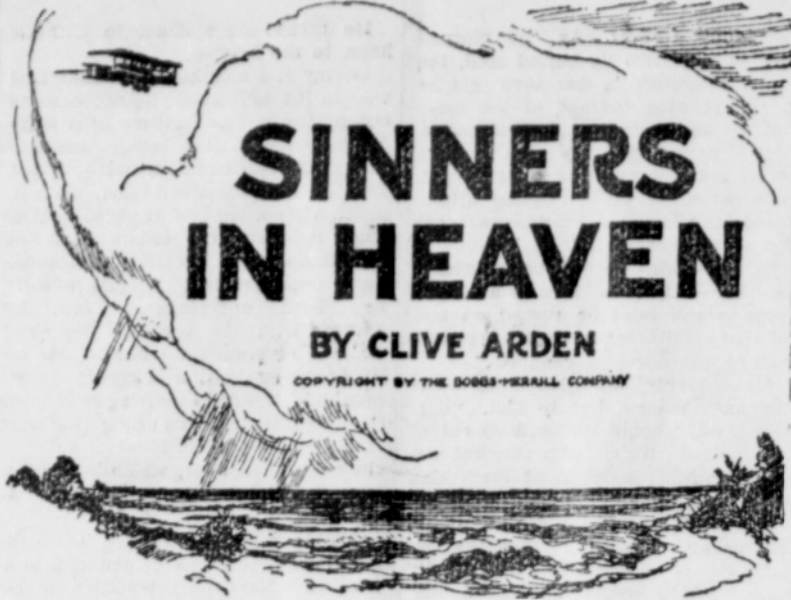
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(Continued)

X

The next few days were strangely happy. The faint chance of rescue caused their little hut to seem dearer, the wild free life more enchanting. The spirits of both had never been so high. Barbara, having conquered the sex problem with such sublime simplicity, cast it from her mind, surrendering herself wholly to the engrossing happiness of the moment.

That her very subterfuge, proving all it did, had been the death-knell to her object, never entered her head.

On Christmas eve they collected armfuls of greenery, the girl clinging with unconscious pathos to the old customs in which she had been reared.

"Ah!" she cried inconsequently. "Isn't it all—beautiful?"

"What?" he asked, yet knowing full well.

"Oh—everything! Christmas—here! Freedom from Mr. Horne!" She sprang upon a suitcase, trails of vine in her hands, and laughed down at him.

He came close to her, the same ecstasy lurking in his own eyes.

"I wonder if you realize all you have implied?"

"What?" She looked startled.

She turned away, and fastened a vine tendril to the bamboo. He watched her silently, noticing the change wrought in her by these past months. The wild-rose air had vanished; in its stead the warm blood flowed red beneath a sunburned skin; her feet were brown and hardened. Yet, where the depths were concerned, remained the old timidity which was, paradoxically, her greatest lure and protection. One false step and she would, he knew, be "off on the wing," scared as a young partridge. But Alan's small store of patience had been drained to the last drops.

Finishing the decoration, she paused beside him, considering the effect. Ferns and palm leaves swayed in the corners; trailing greenery decorated walls and roof; flowers stood upon the cabin table.

"Cozy, isn't it?" she asked, looking up for his approval.

"Very cozy," he replied, looking only at her. "What a little home-maker you are."

She flushed, and again turned hastily away.

"We'll hang this remaining vine over the entrance, outside. Will you bring the suitcases?"

He carried out the substitute for a ladder; and up she sprang. Deftly, with the art of experience, she caught the trailing foliage up here, letting it hang in clusters there.

"And that middle cluster?" asked Alan, beside her. "Is that for mistletoe?"

Her head rose quickly, as that of a young deer scenting danger. With a quick glance down at him, she stretched out her hand toward the bunch; but he put up a long arm to prevent its removal. And, in a flash, all the security of the past days fell to ruins. For, while she strove again to seize the vine leaves, the suitcases overbalanced, and she toppled down upon him.

He caught her and held her. He clasped her close to a thumping heart, and buried his face in her hair.

For a moment she lay inert; then she began to struggle, gasping, sobbing.

But his self-control was going. His grip became fierce; she felt his hot breath upon her neck.

"Alan!" she cried wildly. "For God's sake—"

The fear, as of one drowning, in the cry, steeled his reeling senses. Still clasping her in his arms, he sank down upon the rock. His darkened eyes mesmerized her own; the abyss yawned wide at her feet. . . . she was conscious only of being swept along, caught in some remorseless torrent, toward the edge of the precipice. . . . slipping, falling. . . . his lips were close to her own.

"Alan!" with almost superhuman effort she managed to gasp his name again. "I can't bear it. No! No! Be merciful!"

Faintly, with parched mouth, the desperate petition seemed wrung from her very soul.

His arms relaxed abruptly, a subtle change coming into their grasp when he realized her trembling.

"Why are you afraid?" he murmured unsteadily.

She raised herself, her face very white under its sunburn.

"Don't you see? If you do—this, how can I go on living with you here?" He smiled faintly, the mad tumult of

his blood abating.

"Where else would you live? With the natives for—chaperonage?" She drew a sobbing breath, looking around with a pathetic gesture of helplessness which touched his heart. The passion faded yet more from his face. He pressed her against him again, this time protectively.

"It's a d—lonely position for you!" he exclaimed. Then he rose, with such precipitancy that she nearly fell. He began walking up and down outside the hut.

Instead of hurrying away, she hesitated, watching him in bewilderment—conscious of a strange longing to remain near him, to saunter together on the shore, as was sometimes their habit at night.

But when, at last, he paused near her, he made no such suggestion.

"Go to bed," he said rather curtly; "it's late. And, Barbara, don't lie awake all night, or cut off the rest of your hair! It's all—useless."

With that he turned away, and went off alone to the beach, leaving her staring after him.

Strangely enough, she did not lie awake this time. Those few passionate moments had embodied hours of emotional strain. The force which had seemed to be sweeping her from all moorings had caused her to struggle violently, both mentally and physically, to retain her own individuality, to prevent it from being submerged in his. His lips on hers would have been sheer physical pain, unbearable, overpowering. . . . Afterward, a numbness fell upon her mind. She felt too desperately tired to attempt coherent thought. This volcano upon which, nowadays, they lived, must take its course! Since the moment when she had seen the shark, a lifetime of tumultuous emotions had whirled her mind and heart round like this ledwound. Confused, yet subtly, gloriously elated, she slept till dawn.

A fusillade of sticks and stones roused her, but she did not see Alan. And a sudden overwhelming shyness restrained her from calling to him.

But there was no trace of last night's passion about this man of a hundred moods when they met; and her self-confidence revived. While she was packing the old tin box with food, he arrived, fresh and damp from the river. He gaily deposited a large bundle at her feet, and wished her a merry Christmas.

With surprise, she uncovered a cunningly contrived hammock made from tree fiber, airplane canvas, and aerial! As this was exactly what she had often wanted upon hot afternoons, her pleasure was unbounded.

"I have nothing for you, Alan!" she regretted, with compunction.

"Oh? Well—we'll see about that!" he replied enigmatically; then hurried their departure.

They walked quickly, saying little, over the rough ground which, covered with low scrub, sloped upward on the east of their bay.

They paused to rest and eat, in the eastern wood, meaning to remain there during the midday heat. The shady branches stretched out over the beach were welcome to eyes dazzled by the glare without. The intoxication of the morning's beauties, their own radiant health and spirits, the strains of the wild sweet orchestra rising all around, lent enchantment to that little picnic.

Barbara had, as it were, caught at reeds during the last few weeks; but they had broken in her grasp. Onward she was madly whirling. She knew it; could not save herself; could not quench that light in his eyes, and her own foolish weakness in his proximity.

Abruptly, he went to her and took her by the shoulders, saying nothing, but gazing into her face as if searching for something he wished to learn there.

Suddenly, apprehension in her eyes deepened to horror; a cry burst from her lips; she became rigid in his hands.

With such precipitate haste did the whole incident occur that she could never afterward clearly remember how it happened that, in a flash, the face of the whole world changed. . . . She was conscious of a dark bulk, a savage face she knew well, looming suddenly up amid the trees—of a spear-arm uplifted, preparatory to hurling the weapon into the back of an unsuspecting enemy.

Her man was in danger! That was her only coherent thought. Instantly she had whipped out the revolver, and, with deadly calm, raised it.

A sharp report and a puff of smoke; a wild howl of pain and fear; then a stream of blood oozing from the black shoulder in front of her, as the smoke cleared away. Those were the outward impressions of which her mind was dimly aware; but, they seemed un-

HALSEY STATE BANK Halsey, Oregon CAPITAL AND SURPLUS \$35,000 Commercial and Savings accounts Solicited

real, of no account. She heard the spear fly wide into the tree at her side; then Baboo's running footsteps and retreating cries. . . . Croft, astounded, had barely caught a glimpse of the dark face which he had often seen covertly watching him, before it was momentarily blotted out in smoke. He started forward in hot pursuit; then, arrested by a choking cry, halted abruptly, and looked at the girl. . . . She stood motionless; her eyes, luminous as stars, fixed upon him, her mouth a little open, the still smoking weapon lying at her feet. It had been no mild idea of causing Baboo's fear which had impelled her action, but a furious, savage desire to kill! She had hurled herself to the rescue, regardless of all else.

Afterward, all power or desire to move seemed to leave her. A veil fell from before her eyes; and a brilliance streamed in, illuminating, scorching—full of such ecstasy that she stood as though transfixed, paralyzed with the wonder of it all, gazing upon him whom this brilliance had newly revealed.

The breath caught in the man's throat; the blood raced madly through his veins; his eyes blazed, answering the glory of her own.

Like the Wagnerian lovers after drinking of the love potion, they stood a few feet apart, under the sun-flecked foliage of the trees, awed for a moment by the miracle. She raised her hand at last, as if inviting. . . . The spell broke.

Instantly his arms were around her. With an inarticulate cry, she was swept off her feet, clasped to his throbbing heart, his burning lips pressed hers, her hands clinging round his neck. . . . all her individuality merged irrevocably into his, as a stream, falling through arms of rock, merges into the resistless waves of the ocean.

The sun was sinking, a fiery ball in an almost violet sky, its last rays shimmering golden-red across the water, when at last the two returned to the hut on what wonderful Christmas day. A new world greeted their eyes at every turn. Never had reef or sea or sky appeared so splendid. The superb, absolute egotism of newly found lovers enveloped them both; no thought save of each other disturbed the shining hours. Like one still walking in a dream-world, Barbara entered the central hut, gay with its decorations. The line of golden light entering with her pierced the dusk within; and, falling upon the opposite wall, drew her

eyes unconsciously that way. She stopped. Hugh's face smiled down at her, with all its old confidence! Violently the dream-world crashed around her as she met the faithful, dog-like look she knew so well. Had he been there in flesh and blood, she could hardly have been more disconcerted. She felt as a traitor might, when meeting the unsuspecting eyes of the sov-

ereign he has betrayed. For, however faithful she might remain in word and deed to her bond, her heart would ever be traitorous. His ring was still on her finger; it seemed to burn there, an outward sign of the world of fact with its prosaic realities, its duties, its sense of honor, its materialism, its sacrifices. . . . A cold foreboding swept over her. It was as if in the midst of glorious sunshine, a thunderclap had sent its warning of storms not far away. . . . She sat down, propping her face upon her hands, in self-abasement—fearful, yet, behind all, exultant.

She Stopped. Hugh's Face Smiled Down at Her.

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